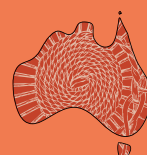


# Report on Best Practice Implementation of the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages



Yalbilinya:  
National First  
Languages  
Education Project



FIRST  
LANGUAGES  
AUSTRALIA

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# Report on Best Practice Implementation of the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages



**Image credit:**

*Kungkarrangkalpa (Seven Sisters)*

by Angilyiya Tjapiti Mitchell

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This report is the first outcome of Yalbilinya: National First Languages Education Project. *Yalbilinya* means learn in Wiradjuri. The name was provided by the Parkes Wiradjuri Language Group and is pronounced yal-bill-in-ya.

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# Introduction

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the first Australians with the oldest continuing cultures in human history. Governments across Australia affirm the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to maintain languages and cultures and acknowledge their deep cultural associations with the land and water.

– *The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy, 2015*

In December 2015, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) released the *Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*, which is known as ‘the Framework’. The Framework guides Australian schools in the teaching and learning of the languages of this country from Foundation to Year 10, and clearly states its definition, structure, role and contents.

The report presented here examines the implementation of the Framework. It highlights progress toward best practice in each state and territory and provides examples from the public, independent and Catholic sectors across each of the learner pathways outlined in the Framework. It identifies gaps that need to be filled in order to achieve best practice and offers resources currently available to assist educators, teaching teams and the community in implementing the Framework. A list of relevant discussion papers has been included at the end of this report to promote further constructive development of strategies for Framework implementation.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages project, of which this report is part, is a collaboration between First Languages Australia (FLA), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres, educators and the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. It builds on collaborations with language centres and teachers nationally with support from the Indigenous Languages and Arts team within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications. It further aims to support the development of Indigenous language educators and seeks to encourage the long-term uptake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Australian school classrooms. The project consists of three pillars through which to boost Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages education.

These are:

1. Research into best practice implementation of the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*.
2. The development of resources to promote best practice implementation of the Framework.

3. The development of a culturally appropriate Indigenous language education workforce strategy.

This report provides a summary of Pillar One: Research into best practice implementation of the Framework. In focusing on this pillar, First Languages Australia has examined how the Framework is being implemented by schoolteachers across Australia to identify and promote best practice. This includes:

- How the Framework is being implemented by schoolteachers across Australia, including, but not limited to the:
  - development of state and territory policy statements, practices and resources used in the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools
  - identification of gaps in teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools
  - documentation of case studies from each state and territory and from a mix of government, Catholic and independent schools.
- Identifying best practice resources already currently available to support implementation of the Framework, including in regional and remote communities.
- Identifying best practice models, including, but not limited to:
  - how to effectively integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language and cultural learnings into the classroom
  - how to appropriately engage with local Indigenous communities about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching
  - how to promote community involvement in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages education
  - how to identify and apply appropriate community protocols for the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, including:
    - who can teach a language and where
    - guidance for non-Indigenous staff and Indigenous staff off-Country.

This report recognises that the sustainable implementation of the Framework requires diverse actions across four core areas: government and policy, teacher training and employment, knowledge and resources, and school community relationships. Individual authorities, communities and school programs are making progress in the implementation of the Framework through dedicated work in the areas that are of highest priority to them. However, at a national level, support for all the needs outlined in this report will result in strong Framework implementation benefitting all learners and stakeholders.

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## Terminology

In this document the terms ‘languages’, ‘first languages’, ‘local languages’, ‘Indigenous languages’, ‘Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages’ and ‘community languages’ are used. In this document they all refer to the traditional languages of a local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community, independent of whether this is the language that the language custodians first learn to speak as children.

While the term ‘community’ means different things to different people, in this document it refers to the group of people with a shared connection to a particular language. These people may or may not speak this language daily, or have learnt the language as children. They may live near each other or be spread across the globe. Wherever they live and whatever language they use for daily communication, in this document these people are referred to as the language ‘community’.

The definitions of different types of language learners come from the Australian Curriculum *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*.

This report uses the terms ‘educator’, ‘teacher’, ‘assistant teacher’ and ‘community teacher’. These terms are employed differently by different authorities. In this report, the term ‘teacher’ may be used to describe community members who teach their languages independently or in teaching teams at schools, and/or in community programs, registered training organisations, early learning centres and universities.

Although this document does not focus specifically on the teaching and learning of new Indigenous languages (such as Kriol, Yumplatok and varieties of Aboriginal English), they are the languages many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children learn first and are the language of daily communication in family and expressions of individual and local identity across Australia. The recognition of students’ home languages by schools – and the fact that many students will be learning English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D) – is essential for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

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## Companion documents

This report is a companion to *Yakilla: Professional learning opportunities in the languages field* (2020) which provides an overview of the types of learning programs available to assist language workers and teachers in building their professional skills. It builds on the reports *Nintiringanyi: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching and employment strategy* (2018), which identifies systemic issues that need to be overcome for the sustainable teaching of local languages; *Global Lessons: Indigenous languages and multilingualism in school programs* (2018), which examines the benefits of teaching Indigenous languages, what success means and the support structures required to be successful; *Policy and Practice: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching in Australian public schools* (2019), which details policy and practice relating to teaching and learning Indigenous languages in Australian public schools; *Indigenous Language Programmes in Australian Schools: A way forward* (2008), an ACER report which provided a snapshot of the national situation and recommendations to strengthen the quality of Indigenous languages programs in schools; and the *National Policy on Languages* (1987).

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# Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages

The Framework is the national curriculum document that supports the teaching and learning of local Indigenous languages in Australian schools. Its release represented a significant step in acknowledging the national importance and value of our languages.

The Framework is intended to help schools and language custodians who wish to work together to develop language teaching and learning programs ensure their programs are to the same standard as other language learning programs in terms of teaching, learning and assessing. It is designed to be very flexible and to be adapted for each unique language, community and school.

The Framework can be adapted for teaching all Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages, including:

- languages used in everyday communication within a community
- languages being revived
- any of the many contemporary Aboriginal languages that have evolved through the history of language contact in Australia, such as Kriol and Torres Strait Creole.


To cater for the differences between the language situations and learner backgrounds, the Framework has three pathways:

- First Language Learner Pathway (L1)
- Second Language Learner Pathway (L2)
- Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR).

Each pathway recognises that the two key variables are ‘the learner’ and ‘the nature of the language’.

## Rationale

Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages are the original languages of this country. Each language is unique to its Country. When the language of the land is spoken, it brings together all of the elements of the landscape and its people. Language binds the relationships of people with each other and with the landscape, now and forever.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages are complex and diverse. Engaging with the study of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language can develop:

- communication skills in the language
- insight into diverse Indigenous Australian cultures and knowledge
- understanding of language change and language revival in its historical context.

As the following quote (originally published in the Framework) illustrates, schools can play a vital role in facilitating access to language learning and supporting community language revival and maintenance.

Ngathaitya, ngathu Kurna Warra nguthu-atpama, ngai tidna kuinyunta yartangka ngatpanthi. Naku'athu, yailty'athu ngana ngai tiyati. Ngai kararrinthe ngaityu warraku, ngaityu tapa purrunaku kuma. Ngai padlurninthe ngaityu warra pirrki-apititya ngapidluku, ngana padlurninthe yuringkarnititya, tirkatitya, kumangka ngathaityangka padnititya.

To me, teaching Kurna means sinking my toes into this sacred soil and embracing who I am. It means being so proud of my language and culture that I want to share it with whoever wants to listen, learn and be a part of my journey.

– Taylor Power, Kurna language teacher, Gilles Street Primary School  
Kurna translation assistance from Rob Amery, Head of Linguistics,  
University of Adelaide

Along with the academic benefits of additional language education, learning these unique languages can play an important part in the development of a strong sense of identity, pride and self-esteem not only for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students but for all Australian students.

Thonar ina thanamulpa lak ngoeymun muruygaw yangu ngurpay ayman, thana setha ngoeymun yadayl gal moerali koey moebaygal matha igililmayl; na bal ngoeymun muruygaw yadayl matha karngemipu mura goeygiya pawpa bangal.

When our children get to know our languages, they get to strongly understand our culture and our way of life. If they don't know our languages, they don't get to fully grasp and understand our culture and our way of life.

– Dana Ober, Torres Strait Linguist

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## Community control

Across the country language custodians are working to ensure their languages are strongly spoken into the future. In Australia this is no small task. With the long-term future in mind, as well as considering their families today, each community prioritises their personal time and resources in their effort to reach their language goals. Deciding to work with a school – with an awareness of the high level of regulation, required reporting, staff turnover and ever-changing administrative priorities this entails – is a significant commitment and risk. However, for some community language teams, schools and learning institutions are prioritised as critical sites of language activity.

Schools need to be aware of the delicate balance that community/school collaborations require and of the personal responsibility that the community members involved will be shouldering on the school's behalf. It is essential that where a community is willing and available to collaborate with a school to deliver a local language curriculum that the community is given full control over the program and is sufficiently supported to realise mutual goals.


With this in mind, the Australian Curriculum *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* was published to support thinking around how a local language might be taught and assessed in a school context. However, there is much important work that needs to happen between the community and the school prior to examining the Framework in the detail.

Each of the following first steps will be a significant milestone for the community/school partnership, with the order of progress more important than the time spent at each point in the process.

The collaborators must:

1. Decide whether the language will be taught at local schools.
2. Determine the main themes, content and context in which the language will be taught.
3. Identify protocols under which the language can be taught and document these in agreements between the school and community. This includes determining how the teaching teams will be structured, who has responsibility for each aspect of the program and how resources will be developed.
4. Work together to see where the Framework might align with the community priorities identified in step two.

In addition, while working on the milestones above, significant time and resources will need to be allocated to identifying community teachers and the teaching team, policy and resource production, and professional development for



all involved. These aspects have been outlined in further detail throughout this report.

To maximise community capacity and minimise the individual efforts of the schools and communities that have committed to walking this journey together, First Languages Australia is advocating for a future where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres are well supported in their work with schools and education providers.

These are exciting times. Increasingly, communities are expressing an interest in working with schools to share their languages. As this is happening, schools are growing an awareness of the extensive benefits that result from offering a local language curriculum at their school. Established community organisations – skilled and ready to provide their expertise – are eager for collaboration with interested schools and the Framework provides an example of what might be taught.

Language is my connection to my Ancestral Dreaming and country. Teaching Gumbaynggirr in schools benefits the whole community. It breaks down barriers, leads to a better understanding of Aboriginal people, and brings Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people together. This kind of sharing is our cultural way.

– Michael Jarrett, Gumbaynggirr speaker, learner, teacher and advocate



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# Framework structure

## Learner pathways

To cater for the differences between the language situations and learner backgrounds of potential students, the Framework has three learner pathways. Each pathway is suitable for a different set of learners and for different language situations.

The First Language Learner Pathway (L1) is designed for students where:

- the language is currently used for everyday communication by the whole community across all generations
- teaching takes place on Country
- learners are mostly from the community and mostly speak the language as their first language.

The Second Language Learner Pathway (L2) is designed for students where:

- the language is currently used for everyday communication by a whole community across all generations
- teaching takes place off-Country
- learners may or may not be from the community and mostly do not speak the language as their first language.

The Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) is designed for students where:

- the language is not currently used for everyday communication in any community
- the language is being revived, renewed and reclaimed by speakers
- teaching takes place on or near Country
- learners identify with the language and culture or have some connection to it but, in general, do not yet speak much of the language.

The LR pathway is the most common pathway. Language revival includes situations of language revitalisation, renewal and reclamation, as outlined below.

- Language revitalisation refers to a situation where there are some fluent older speakers of the language but intergenerational transmission of the language has been interrupted. Younger generations may understand some of the language and may use some words and phrases but do not speak it as their first language.
- Language renewal refers to a situation where there are some older

speakers who use the language to varying degrees in the community but not 'right through', and where other language resources can be drawn upon to renew the language.

- Language reclamation refers to a situation where there are people who identify with the language but there are no current speakers. Historical and archival documentation can be drawn on to reclaim the language.

It is not necessary to distinguish between the three types of language revival when choosing the Language Revival Learner Pathway (LR) as all of these situations fall under this pathway.

### **Year levels, bands, strands and threads**

The Framework is written in three bands. Each band covers three- or four-year levels: Prep to Year 2; Year 3-6; and Year 7-10.

Students are assessed on what they learn over the course of a whole band, not just what they learn in one term or one year. Students should be able to demonstrate all aspects of the achievement standard by the end of the band.

The Framework is organised into two strands for learning:

- **Communicating:** using language for communicative purposes in interpreting, creating and exchanging meaning
- **Understanding:** analysing language and culture as resources for interpreting and creating meaning.

These two strands are the same across all languages in the Australian Curriculum (e.g. Indonesian, French, Japanese, etc.).

Within each strand there are sub-strands. The sub-strands reflect different ways that language is used and ways that we can think about the structure, grammar and history of language. Strands and sub-strands are the same for all pathways and band levels within the Framework.

Within each sub-strand are threads. The threads are different depending on the pathway (L1, L2 or LR) and the band level (F-2, 3-6 or 7-10) of the students.

Threads give more detail about ways of communicating in a language and how to develop an understanding of language at different levels. They describe language and cultural content that can be taught and learnt. Examples of what to teach within threads are called 'content descriptions' – some teaching teams call these 'themes'. For each content description there are also elaborations provided in the Framework. Elaborations are more detailed examples of ways that particular content might be taught.

Achievement standards are what students are assessed against. Each achievement standard describes what students are expected to learn over a three- or four-year period (F-2, 3-6, 7-10). Schools need to work with language

custodians and teaching teams to adapt and develop content descriptions and achievement standards that are relevant to the language and learners.

It is usual for a teaching team to develop a teaching and assessment plan for each band that measures the ability of students to demonstrate the achievement standard by the end of Years 2, 6 and 10. This plan is called a 'band plan'. The band plan can include a table showing which aspect of the achievement standard will be assessed in each unit, term, semester or year. Evidence of learning is also gathered during each teaching cycle to build up a picture of each student's achievement over a period of time.

### **Assessment and reporting**

The main purpose of assessment is to establish where learners are in an aspect of their learning at any given time. Assessment can be formal or informal, but always plays an integral role in improving learning and informing teaching. All language programs are likely to include an assessment in order to help teachers understand how their students are learning and continue to adapt their teaching methods accordingly. Assessment tasks can also help students actively learn by requiring them to do something related to their language learning, rather than just passively taking in the content.

Reporting is mainly related to communicating with parents about how students are progressing with their language learning. Reporting can also include communicating with the school and community about how students in general are participating and progressing. Each state may have specific reporting requirements that schools need to follow. Where there is flexibility in reporting, schools should work with local communities and language owners to develop guidelines and processes for reporting progress in language learning.

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## Framework implementation

Each state and territory have individual responsibility for Framework implementation. As summarised by Samantha Disbray in her article ‘Realising the Australian Curriculum *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*’ (*Babel*, Vol. 54, No. 1/2, 2019), each educational authority has acted to implement the Framework in their own way. These are outlined as follows:

- The Northern Territory has revised its existing Languages and Cultures Curriculum with consideration of the Framework, publishing seven curricula to support local curriculum development based on four learner pathways.
- Victoria has adopted the Language Revitalisation Pathway for the Victorian Curriculum.
- Queensland and Western Australia are using the Framework without adaption.
- New South Wales is reviewing its Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus and developing language-specific programs for its NEST languages: Bundjalung, Paakantji/Baarkintji, Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Yuwaalayaay, Gumbaynggirr and North West Wiradjuri.
- At the direction of language custodians, lutruwita (Tasmania) is not yet offering a local language curriculum.
- In the Australian Capital Territory, the Ngunnawal community is in the process of reawakening its language and the Education Directorate is collaborating with the Winanggaay Ngunnawal Language Group to support it to develop language resources for schools and the broader community.
- South Australia has adopted the Framework with its three language learner pathways as part of the Australian Curriculum used in government schools. The SA Department of Education is working with several communities to develop suggested language content for a Reception to Year 10 curriculum in the most appropriate learner pathway for their languages. The first round includes Adnyamathanha, Bunganditj, Kurna, Ngarrindjeri, Narungga, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara.

The following section provides a more detailed outline of implementation of the Framework in each region, and includes examples provided by each region’s authorities.

## State and territory policy statements, practices and resources used in the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools



### Northern Territory

#### ***Keeping Indigenous Languages and Cultures Strong: Plan for the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages and cultures in Northern Territory schools***

As outlined in *Keeping Indigenous Languages and Cultures Strong: Plan for the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages and cultures in Northern Territory schools* (2016):

- All Northern Territory students should have access to education in Indigenous Languages and Cultures that reflects and respects their background and develops knowledge, skills and understandings.
- Schools should develop meaningful programs in Indigenous Languages and Cultures by listening to, observing and working with Indigenous Elders as the custodians of the languages and holders of the knowledge.

The Northern Territory's Department of Education recognises the continued use of Indigenous languages as the main medium of communication for a majority of the Northern Territory's Indigenous population. This means that in a number of population centres, the teaching and learning of Indigenous Languages and Cultures has particular significance for Northern Territory schools, as Aboriginal peoples identify the maintenance of their languages and cultures as essential to the survival and maintenance of their identities as cohesive social groups.

The Plan recognises that this is the case for students who:

- continue to speak these languages as their first or primary language of communication
- identify with a specific language and the Country and family associated with that language, and who may speak another Indigenous language (including new forms of traditional languages such as creoles and mixed languages)
- do not speak or have an existing connection to an Indigenous language.

The Plan includes the revised Indigenous Languages and Culture (ILC) curriculum which aligns the teaching of Indigenous Languages and Cultures in the Northern Territory to the Framework and 'provides a long-term vision and goal for building the capacity of our Indigenous leaders, sector and school leaders and classroom educators to implement teaching and learning programs in Indigenous Languages and Cultures'.

## Indigenous Languages and Cultures Curriculum

The Northern Territory's revised Indigenous Languages and Cultures Curriculum (ILC) is complete and available for schools.

As outlined on the Northern Territory Government School Policies website, cultural knowledge is the heart of the curriculum which is organised across three strands: Country/Land, People and Kinship, and Natural Environment. Due to the diversity of students' linguistic needs in the Territory, the ILC Curriculum provides four broad learner pathways:

- First language pathway
- Language Revitalisation pathway, including Revival and Renewal
- Second Language Learner pathway
- Language and Cultural Awareness pathway

Seven curricula have been published to support local curriculum development based on the four pathways. The choice of pathway is based on the community language profile and the knowledge situation of the languages. Schools negotiate the choice of the focus language and the best language learning pathway with the relevant school community.

The Northern Territory Government's *Guidelines for the Implementation of Indigenous Languages and Cultures Programs in Schools* was developed with the long-term goal of building teaching and learning capacity across the Northern Territory. The guidelines have been developed for all Northern Territory schooling contexts and outline the roles and responsibilities of the regional and corporate office business units in supporting schools.

In addition to the guidelines, the following curriculum documents have been prepared to support implementation of the Framework in the Northern Territory:

- *Keeping Languages and Cultures Strong: A plan for the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages and cultures in Northern Territory schools*
- ILC Curriculum: *First Language Bilingual (L1B)*
- ILC Curriculum: *First Language Maintenance (L1M)*
- ILC Curriculum: *Language Revival: Revitalisation (LR)*
- ILC Curriculum: *Language Revival: Renewal (LRN)*
- ILC Curriculum: *Second Language Learning (L2)*
- ILC Curriculum: *Language and Cultural Awareness (LCA)*
- ILC Curriculum: *Culture: Cultural Knowledge and Content*
- Template 1: Stakeholder Engagement Plan

- Template 2: Consultation Feedback Register
- Template 3: ILC Committee Terms of Reference
- Template 4: ILC Program Agreement

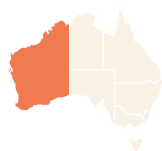
### **Bilingual education**

Currently, seven schools in the Northern Territory run a bilingual program where the language of instruction is the students' first language. In these programs, the students' first language is the medium of instruction for the teaching of initial literacy and across all learning areas. English is taught as an additional language, gradually introduced as the language of instruction, then becomes the major language of instruction in Year 5.

In 2018, the Northern Territory Government indicated that under a policy of community-led schools where communities were interested in bilingual education, this would be accommodated. The existing schools are each supported by a Literature Production Centre (please see the 'Resource centres' section of this document for further details, page 50). Funds for additional resource centres will be necessary to enable other schools to introduce bilingual education.

### **Strong Aboriginal Language Teachers (SALT)**

A new program titled 'Strong Aboriginal Language Teachers' (SALT) is being developed to meet some of the needs identified around languages education and language teacher training in the Northern Territory. As a first step, the Northern Territory Department of Education is training a cohort of staff as assessors for the provision of new program pathways for community teachers into formal training.



**Western Australia**

The Western Australian Department of Education is strengthening its commitment to supporting Aboriginal languages revitalisation and the long-standing Aboriginal Languages Teacher Training (ALTT) course (described further on the following page).

Key initiatives for this process include:

- employing additional staff
- the formation of the Aboriginal Languages of Western Australia Reference Group and Working Party to oversee the development of guidelines for the implementation of Aboriginal languages in public schools and guidelines for Aboriginal languages teachers' recruitment and employment
- working to expand the number of schools offering Aboriginal Languages

through the development of a flexible digital Noongar Language Program that can be integrated into primary classrooms

- the establishment of Aboriginal Languages Support Schools and coordinators (11 newly appointed coordinators across the state) who will provide localised support and leadership opportunities within their region
- the development of a nationally recognised credentialed training course based on the current ALTT course. The new course is to be accredited by the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) and recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The aim of the course is to provide employment pathways for Aboriginal educators to become qualified Aboriginal languages teachers.
- exploring ways to strengthen mentor support for Aboriginal languages teacher trainees during their three-year in-school traineeship
- continuing to provide the ALTT course.

### **Aboriginal Languages Teacher Traineeship (ALTT)**

For the past 20 years, the Western Australian Department of Education has provided professional learning through the ALTT course for language speakers interested in teaching their languages in school. Western Australia remains the only state with such a training program. The traineeship incorporates language revival and maintenance strategies, language teaching methodology and the development of language-specific resources for teaching. This is a practical, competence-based course in which trainees are assessed on their skills in planning and teaching, as well as in their language use in the classroom.

The course runs over three years, during which applicants teach at least one language class every week. The training is comprised of a two-year in-school traineeship, which includes five block-release study intensives, and a third probationary teaching year.

On completion of the course and achievement of competency in all areas, graduates are eligible to apply to the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) for Limited Registration status.

When registration is complete, graduates are qualified to teach their language and are eligible for appointment as an Aboriginal language teacher. They are not eligible to teach any other learning areas. It is expected that most teachers will continue at the school in which they trained.

In 2020, the Department started the process of researching accreditation of the ALTT program. Further details of this program are provided on page 67 as part of the 'Learning opportunities' section of this document.

### **Year 11 and 12 syllabus support materials**

The Western Australian Department of Education has developed Aboriginal Languages of WA, a general course that provides opportunities for Year 11 and



12 students to ‘appreciate the interrelationship of language, land and culture and the importance of linguistic and cultural diversity through learning a traditional language and learning about traditional cultures’.

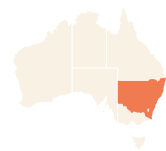
<<https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/languages/aboriginal-languages-of-wa>>

### **Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework**

Through the *Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework* (2015), the Department has made a commitment to building the capacity of school leaders and support staff to further develop their knowledge of local Aboriginal histories, peoples, cultures and languages.

While the teaching of languages is not a focus of the *Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework*, it highlights the importance of languages to students and their families, as well as the need for schools and school leaders to be aware of and engage with the languages and cultures of their students.

<<https://ikon.education.wa.edu.au/-/access-the-aboriginal-cultural-standards-framework>>



### **New South Wales**

The NSW Department of Education *Aboriginal Education Policy* (2008), commits to:

- working, in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. and Aboriginal communities, to implement Aboriginal Languages programs in schools
- consulting with local Aboriginal communities and support teachers to provide all students with opportunities to develop deeper understandings of Aboriginal Languages.

These aims have been explored through a number of projects, several of which are outlined below.

### **Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests**

In 2013, the NSW Government launched *OCHRE: Opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility, empowerment*, a community-focused plan for Aboriginal Affairs in NSW. Aboriginal Languages and Culture Nests, which fall under OCHRE, are part of a broader set of government priorities to revoice and revitalise critically endangered Aboriginal languages in NSW, as governed by the *NSW Aboriginal Languages Act 2017*.

The OCHRE plan identified five key outcomes for the Nests, based on community feedback, research and evaluations. These desired outcomes are:

- to improve knowledge of, and competency in, local Aboriginal languages
- to strengthen Aboriginal identity, pride and community resilience
- to increase the number of language learners
- to increase the number of language teachers
- to contribute to increased school attendance and retention.

The OCHRE plan named the NSW Department of Education as the lead agency of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests initiative. The OCHRE plan aligns with the Department's commitment to teaching Aboriginal languages in NSW public schools and helps meet the NSW Premier's priority for Aboriginal education, which is to 'increase the proportion of Aboriginal students attaining Year 12 by 50% by 2023, while maintaining their cultural identity'.

An Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest is a network of schools within a footprint area that teach their local Aboriginal language to students. Nests allow Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students (where agreed by the relevant Aboriginal community) to learn local Aboriginal languages and culture. Each Nest has a local reference group which discusses and sets direction and priorities for their Nest footprint area. Reference groups are community groups which have the right to self-determine their functions and processes.

Each Nest also has an Aboriginal Language and Culture Officer employed by the Department of Education attached to it. The Nest officer's work is to collaborate with schools, local Aboriginal language holders and/or speakers, and reference groups across their respective Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest. (Note that satellite Nests do not have this position.)

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests aim to:

- teach more Aboriginal languages and culture to build people's pride and identity
- increase the number of language learners and tutors/educators
- improve the knowledge of and competency in local Aboriginal languages
- contribute to increased school attendance and retention
- strengthen Aboriginal community resilience.

The current Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests and satellite Nests are located in seven regional areas across New South Wales. These locations are:

- Bundjalung
- Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Yuwaalayaay
- Gumbaynggirr
- Paakantji

- North West Wiradjuri
- Dunghutti (satellite Nest)
- Gomeroi (satellite Nest).

The Languages, Culture and Communities team within the NSW Department of Education is responsible for the development, coordination and management of the policies, programs and frameworks governing the Nests. The Department works in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. to deliver services for the Aboriginal Languages and Culture Nests. The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. is NSW's peak non-for-profit Aboriginal organisation providing advice on all matters relevant to education and training with the mandate that this advice represents the Aboriginal community viewpoint. Under the formal Partnership Agreement between the Department and the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc., both bodies are committed to supporting Aboriginal children and young people to become proficient in the language of their Country/culture or of others (with permission).

### **Whole-of-school approaches to language and culture**

The Department, in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc., is currently piloting a research action program to ensure that schools involved with the Nests are taking a whole-of-school approach to language and culture teaching. Senior school executives and classroom teachers will come together for accredited professional learning which will build capacity to support such teaching.

Participants will be familiarised with the relevant scope and sequence of the program and with their local Aboriginal culture. Site visits to places of importance will convey the importance of on-Country learning and the connection and importance of Country to Aboriginal language. The pilot program will run across 2021 and includes a reflection and evaluation component.

This project is designed to increase participation and engagement of school staff in Aboriginal language lessons. In turn, this will improve their cultural understanding and competence, and enhance their capacity to support and deliver Aboriginal language and culture activities.

If the pilot is successful, it is intended that it will be rolled out across the Language and Culture Nest program.

### **Languages outside the Nests**

Separate from the Nests, government schools in NSW have the flexibility to establish and implement an Aboriginal language program using their school's Aboriginal equity-based funding, and they are encouraged to work with their local community if they choose to use that funding.

The Department has instituted staffing arrangements to ensure dedicated

attention to and support for language learning outside of the Nest footprint areas, and is currently developing plans to identify areas of need in order to deepen engagement with communities outside the Nests.

### Language learning in early years

The Department is currently funding an initiative for NSW government preschools which have a high enrolment number of Aboriginal students to deliver Aboriginal language programs through engaging an appropriate Aboriginal community organisation or individual. In the first instance, this initiative will run throughout 2021.

The aim of the initiative is to increase and strengthen Aboriginal languages, culture and identity in Aboriginal children; support Aboriginal children in learning their language and culture; support Aboriginal children to be bilingual speakers; and to increase and strengthen the Aboriginal language and culture programs being delivered in NSW government preschools.



Forty-four Aboriginal language groups have been identified in Victoria. All of these languages are 'revival languages'. The Victorian Government has committed to supporting Aboriginal languages through the *Victorian Aboriginal Affairs Framework 2018-2023 (VAAF)*, specifically in objective 19.1 which aims to 'support the preservation, promotion and practice of culture and languages'.

All Victorian schools are required by legislation and as a condition of their registration with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) to provide instruction in the eight learning areas, including language. Teaching an Aboriginal language is an option available to schools to fulfil their registration requirements, subject to agreement by traditional owners and availability of language teachers and resources.

The *Marrung: Aboriginal education plan 2016-2026* was developed in partnership between the Department of Education and Training and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc. (VAEAI), along with the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) and Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO). *Marrung* supports increasing the teaching of Aboriginal languages in schools and early childhood services through action by (as outlined in point 2c under 'Creating a positive climate for learning and development'):

... increasing the number of Koorie language programs in Victorian kindergartens and schools, by supporting community efforts at language learning through working with VAEAI and the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, and providing assistance to support Koorie

community members to undertake relevant language and teacher training courses.

The Department of Education and Training also works in close partnership with VAEAI, the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) and the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) in the development and implementation of all Aboriginal languages initiatives to ensure that appropriate community protocols around the teaching and learning of Aboriginal languages are observed.

In 2016, the VCAA, in conjunction with VAEAI and VACL, developed the F-10: Victorian Aboriginal Languages curriculum, which is closely aligned to the Framework. The latest available data indicates that in 2019, 2,278 Victorian students studied an Aboriginal language across 20 government schools. Languages taught include Dhudhuroa (in conjunction with Murrinhpatha), Barkindji-Marwara, Yorta Yorta, Dhauwurd Wurrung, Woiwurrung, Wemba Wemba and Gunai/Kurnai. Students are able to undertake Aboriginal language study in Years 11 and 12 under the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation study design, which is currently being reviewed by the VCAA.

Aboriginal languages education is also delivered through the Early Childhood Language Program, which commenced in 2019, providing funding to Victorian kindergartens to deliver language programs. There are currently 16 kindergartens delivering an Aboriginal language program, with a further seven services working closely with communities and traditional owners to gain approval to commence a language program.

### **The delivery of Certificate III and Certificate IV for community teachers**

As all Victorian Aboriginal languages are currently endangered, there is a shortage of Aboriginal community members with the language skills and knowledge required to teach language programs in education settings. In order to support community language learning, the Victorian Department of Education and Training partnered with the Victorian School of Languages (VSL), VACL and VAEAI to deliver the Certificate III in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language to a multilingual student group. The twelve-month pilot course commenced in October 2018 with a class of 19 students from around the state.

The Certificate III in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language is for Aboriginal participants targeting their heritage language. The course was delivered in block intensives giving the learners the tools and linguistic skills to study their heritage language through exploration of published and unpublished materials and own-community engagement.

From 2020 and into 2021, the Certificate IV in Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language has been delivered to graduates of the Certificate III course. It is anticipated that graduates will enter into, or continue their work in, the early childhood and VET sectors, or work with schools to deliver a local language curriculum in collaboration with a registered teacher. In addition to

this, registration for Aboriginal Language teachers without an Undergraduate or Post-Graduate teaching qualification is being explored in order to enable them to teach under the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) framework.

Note: as the Certificate III and IV courses are no longer accredited, the Department is currently speaking with Tauondi Aboriginal College to have Certificate II, III and IV in Learning/Teaching an Australian First Nation's Language delivered to meet their training needs.

### **The Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Victoria website**

The Aboriginal Languages and Cultures Victoria website has been developed to support the teaching of Aboriginal languages in Victorian schools. The website links to the Victorian Curriculum F-10: Victorian Aboriginal Languages course and includes a range of resources, including protocols for establishing an Aboriginal language program, links to classroom resources and sample units of work. The site also contains interviews with seven Aboriginal community leaders talking about the importance of Aboriginal languages and cultures being introduced into Victorian schools.

### **Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages**

Established in 1994, the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL) is the peak body for Aboriginal languages revitalisation in the state of Victoria. The organisation has been a national leader in the field of language revitalisation, resource development, research and the development of community tools to support language learning. As the peak body for Aboriginal languages in Victoria, VACL works to:

- revitalise and strengthen Aboriginal languages across the state of Victoria and adjacent borders where same language groups live
- actively engage in the practice of Aboriginal languages, first and foremost for language communities across Victoria
- develop resources that support revitalisation work carried out by Victorian language groups
- advocate and consult in all matters related to the revitalisation of Aboriginal languages
- investigate, record, secure and analyse data emerging from forty-four language groups across Victoria
- facilitate training, mentoring, workshops, education and advice in all areas of language revitalisation
- expand collaborative work with institutions, organisations and partners whose interest in language revitalisation and practice is in alignment with community goals.

VACL has a long history of collaboration with communities, government,

universities, training organisations and commercial services providers with mutual goals. While the organisation has been greatly successful in its work, the radical funding disparity between VACL and its partners undermines the realisation of community language aspirations.

As a key representative of traditional-owner-driven language revitalisation in Victoria, VACL works to ensure ethical practice by privileging community voices in all aspects of its work. VACL asserts that, first and foremost, Aboriginal languages must be supported in a holistic manner. While collaboration with external partners has broadened the reach of language activities, rarely has this channelled the necessary resources to communities to establish the foundation of community language skill required for sustainable activities.

VACL supports, in principle, the learning of Aboriginal languages from early learning/kindergarten through to primary, secondary and tertiary education settings where that language program and the development of the program is led by the language custodians' self-determined priorities and agenda.

With this in mind, VACL asserts that communities need to be resourced to learn their own languages, and to be able to fully develop resources, practices and retention before they are well positioned to share languages with non-Aboriginal people. This privileges the language custodians and is also necessary to develop the pool of community members available to lead language activities, including school programs.

The importance of recognising and teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander languages is mentioned in several of Queensland's Department of Education and Training statements, State Schools Policies and supporting documents.

*Advancing Education: An action plan for education in Queensland (2016)* recommends supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's access to their heritage by maintaining, learning or researching their traditional cultures and languages. It also indicates that the state will provide professional learning and targeted scholarship programs for teachers to enhance language and teaching skills.

Queensland's *P-12 Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Framework* states:

- schools are strongly encouraged to offer a languages program from Prep to Year 12
- the provision of languages is required in Years 5 to 8
- principals, in consultation with their school community, will make

decisions about the choice of language and the year levels of provision

- schools can choose to provide Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Preceding the Framework, in 2011 the Department released *A Guide to Implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Syllabuses: Information for principals* alongside Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages P-10 syllabus. The document contains four sections designed to lead schools through the process of starting an Indigenous languages program. These sections remain relevant today and are as follows:

- Section one provides suggestions about researching the local language landscape and initiating the consultation process.
- Section two discusses forming and maintaining a local language advisory group, reaching agreements, and designing a curriculum to suit the needs of the school and the local community.
- Section three is an overview of the Queensland syllabus with links to further information.
- Section four details a range of organisations that can support the development of a school program and the required resources.

In addition to these documents, the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Statement (2018)* is a strong document stating that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Queensland have three kinds of language significant in their lives and schooling. These are the students' traditional languages, contemporary languages and Standard Australian English. State Schools policy and practice prioritises a 'three way strong' approach which depends on teachers being aware of and supporting all three kinds of language.

To achieve the three-way-strong language approach, the document states that the Department has committed to:

- providing leadership, information and approaches to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools
- strengthening relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and stakeholders
- supporting schools to develop local solutions to teaching traditional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages
- increasing the skills of the workforce to value and recognise students' home languages
- delivering high quality explicit teaching and learning that builds Standard Australian English.

The Languages Statement can be summarised as follows:



- the core of any traditional language program is the custodians of that language who are committed to the task of teaching that language
- schools in Queensland should be provided with a fair amount of autonomy regarding budget allocations
- ongoing relationships with schools and communities are essential in order to effectively support the work that, in many places, has already been carried out by teachers and the community for decades.

### **Many Voices: Indigenous languages policy**

In 2020, the Queensland Government launched the *Many Voices: Indigenous languages policy*. The policy aims to ‘support Queensland activities that help preserve, grow and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional and contemporary languages’.

The policy includes four case studies, each of which demonstrate the practical ways that communities are working with schools and early learners. These studies focus on Kuku Yalanji at Mossman State Primary School, the Yarrabah Languages Project, Guugu Yimithirr at Hope Vale State School and the Yuwibara Languages Project in Mackay.

The policy states that:

The Queensland Government will continue to work with community to support languages through the roll out of language programs in state schools under the Australian Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) Senior Syllabus Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages short course 2019.

The next stage of policy implementation is the development of a whole-of-government action plan to build on the four priority areas, all of which are at the core of school-based language programs. The plan will include:

- Creating pathways: training and employment pathways for speakers of First Nations languages such as interpreters, teachers and linguists.
- Action and activation: creating language resources and expertise.
- Restoration and transmission: increasing the number of people speaking language, for example in early childhood development.
- Recognition and promotion: growing community awareness of First Nations languages, including place naming.

### **Indigenous Language Grants**

One of the flagship initiatives under the *Many Voices: Indigenous languages policy* has been the introduction of Indigenous Languages Grants in 2019, co-funded by the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP) and the Queensland Department of Education. These grants are

awarded annually. In their first year, 17 of the 30 grants were provided to groups associated with schools and early learning centres.

The grant information sheet highlights the following types of eligible activities that are relevant to school programs:

- language revival programs that support community members to speak language again
- preservation and renewal projects drawing on communities' oral tradition where language speakers do not have full language knowledge
- language reclamation programs relying on historical and archived sources
- statewide youth or adult language leaders and language champion initiatives
- language teaching study tours and professional learning activities between different language owner groups
- language learning programs where language is taught to a range of learners in school or community settings
- projects to record Elders and community members and provide safe local storage of recorded material, to be used in the production of community resources or education programs.

<<https://www.datsip.qld.gov.au/resources/datsima/programs/grants/ilg2020-faqs.pdf>>

In lutruwita, the teaching of Aboriginal language in schools is determined by the Aboriginal community's statewide policy. Only one Aboriginal language – palawa



**lutruwita (Tasmania)**

kani – is spoken throughout Tasmania. palawa kani was retrieved and revived by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre from the 1990s.

<<http://tacinc.com.au/programs/palawa-kani/>>

The Aboriginal community's policy of the 1990s – to retain language only within the community until a strong body of speakers was established – has relaxed gradually over the decades as reflected in a revised policy in 2019. The public is encouraged to use palawa kani place names, 14 of which have been gazetted in the Tasmanian naming system, and over 200 can be accessed on an interactive web map. Other resources developed specifically for schools and students are:

- *tipara waranta kani nina-mapali-tu? What Can We Tell You?*, a presentation which advises educators on ways to include Tasmanian Aboriginal content in learning programs specifically related to Aboriginal

language

- *palawa kani Information and Entertainment*, a document which shares links to activities engaging children and educating adults.

palawa kani is shared through the 50 Words online portal, and through many video and audio clips produced by the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre, the Australian Broadcasting Commission, First Languages Australia and others. Examples include animated films, Welcome to Country, and cultural awareness sessions.

With approval, palawa kani words and phrases are used by many schools and other educational facilities across the state for naming, interpretations, and in creating Welcome to Country, songs and stories in short sessions conducted with language workers. The Education Department and schools have welcomed this access to the language and are open to establishing a formal arrangement with community to enable palawa kani to be taught through the school system. Community acceptance of school language programs and how these might happen are a focus of current discussion. The importance of having Aboriginal teachers, teaching resources and policy documents to support culturally appropriate teaching are vital considerations.

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach their potential is a key focus for the ACT Education Directorate. In adhering to the



### Australian Capital Territory

Cultural Integrity Framework, the directorate seeks to instil cultural integrity across all ACT public schools and the Education Support Office.

As stated on the ACT Government's website, the implementation of cultural integrity means ACT schools will:

- be culturally safe places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and staff
- be accountable for meeting the aspirations, learning and wellbeing needs of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- develop staff and student understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages and knowledge systems through professional learning and curriculum delivery
- develop and maintain genuine, collaborative and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander parents, families, local community members, service providers and agencies
- actively represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and contributions to contemporary society in their physical infrastructure

and online presence

- support and provide opportunities for all staff to build their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, languages and knowledge systems
- regularly evaluate and refine their practices to ensure that Cultural Integrity is achieved and retained.

<<https://www.education.act.gov.au/public-school-life/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-education>>

### **Supporting schools and teachers to embed cultural integrity**

Professional learning is key to the successful implementation of cultural integrity.

This can be achieved through the following avenues:

#### **Book clubs**

Book clubs operate across Canberra for educators from different schools to come together to share ideas and resources for incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in their teaching. These book clubs provide a forum for sharing a wide range of experiences, including ways of engaging community, working on Country, incorporating Indigenous languages, showcasing school initiatives and promoting other professional learning opportunities. As Canberra is home to a diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, these clubs are also used to promote bilingual and other texts representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language groups.

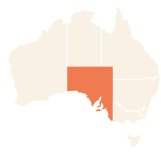
#### **Cultural immersion for school leaders**

An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural immersion program for all school leaders has been rolled out to support the implementation of cultural integrity in ACT public schools. The program has been designed to promote awareness and knowledge in cultural integrity and develop the capability of school leaders to introduce and lead cultural integrity in their teams.

#### **Introduction to Australian languages**

The Directorate facilitates pre-language workshops for Australian Capital Territory teachers. Run by AIATSIS colleagues, the Introduction to Australian languages workshops provide guidance in pronunciation of words from many Australian languages, and cover theory and practical components regarding language sound and structure.

South Australian government schools use the Australian Curriculum to plan learning and assessment programs for students to engage with the content of the



## South Australia

eight key learning areas, as well as the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities described in it. Through the Australian Curriculum, the expectation is that all students will have the opportunity to learn a language, from Reception to at least Year 8.

<<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/curriculum-pedagogy-assessment-and-reporting-policy>>

Schools can choose from several Australian Curriculum languages to fulfil this requirement, including a number of Aboriginal languages whose presence in schools has the active support of traditional owners. Aboriginal languages thereby achieve a mainstream role in the school curriculum, often being taught to mixed classes of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. The number of students learning the languages has grown steadily, from 2,000 in 1999 to an anticipated total of over 6,000 in 2021. A continuation of this growth is one of the key initiatives of the South Australian Department for Education's *Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019 to 2029* (outlined on the following page).

Anangu schools and preschools in the far west and north-west of the state, with support from the Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Education Committee, are developing an enhanced role for the first languages of the over 700 children and students enrolled there. The Australian Curriculum's *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* L1 learner pathway will have an important role in these developments, in the context of harmonising the Australian Curriculum and *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The early years learning framework for Australia* (2009, modified 2019) to the educational aspirations of Anangu communities.

Students in other parts of the state who learn Aboriginal languages mostly follow the LR learner pathway and schools that teach the languages maintain close contact with their local Aboriginal communities. This consultative work is coordinated and supported through the Department's Aboriginal Community Language and Culture Partnerships (ACLCP) project, which fosters collaborative curricular, professional and resources development.

In addition to L1 and LR learner pathways, there is a smaller number of L2 programs teaching strong languages off-Country. Pitjantjatjara is the most common choice, which is reflective of the increasing number of Anangu families choosing to reside for extended periods outside the Anangu Lands.

The Framework will be enriched by local Aboriginal content at the level of content elaborations developed through the ACLCP project. The first round of work has shown that it is effective to have small teams consisting of language and culture experts and schoolteachers working under the guidance of the local Aboriginal language authority. It is expected that the first set of LR curriculum

documents will be trialled from mid-2021 with a view to eventual online publication.

To support the development of tertiary pathways, the ACLCP project contributed to Tauondi Aboriginal Corporation's work toward the registration of the First Nations' languages qualifications at Certificates II, III and IV levels (see page 65).

Several new L1 resources for Anangu schools by Anangu authors and translators have been published recently in both Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara. These include:

- *Ngayulu Paku Pulka!* by Sally Deslandes translated by Karina Lester (SA Department for Education, 2020)
- *Kunmanara* by Sally Deslandes translated by Karina Lester (SA Department for Education, 2020)
- the *Ara Winki* series of booklets, created to support the the Ara Winki No.1 App, a multilingual educational tool (Ara Irititja, 2019-2021).  
<<https://irititja.com/products/the-app-arawinki/>>

### Aboriginal Education Strategy

The Department's *Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019 to 2029* is underpinned by five principles, one of which is 'Culture and identity':

We will acknowledge, value and respect Aboriginal knowledge, wisdom and expertise, including our existing Aboriginal staff and students and we will adopt local approaches to teaching Aboriginal histories, cultures and languages.

The strategy identifies language as one of six key areas for reform. As outlined on page 19 of the strategy, it aims to:

Strengthen and reinvigorate the learning of Aboriginal languages in children's centres, preschools and schools, including language revival and maintaining strong active languages. Recognise the linguistic rights of Aboriginal children and students, building on home languages through family and community engagement. Move toward a bilingual education model that ensures proficiency for Anangu children in Pitjantjatjara or Yankunytjatjara and Standard Australian English as an additional language.

The strategy highlights language, along with culture, identity, Country and belonging, as fundamental to the strength of each learner. It acknowledges students' rights to access an education that respects and promotes their own culture and language, in line with the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2006, Article 14) and *The Coolangatta Statement on Indigenous Rights in Education* (1999). Referring to the Australian Curriculum, the strategy identifies 'school years as a critical time to develop quality educator, child and young person relationships and to engage with families and communities to support language learning participation' to the benefit of both

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students. As such, the strategy states that South Australia has ‘the highest expectations for Aboriginal children and young people acknowledging the importance of maintaining and developing first languages’ to ensure that ‘Aboriginal children’s experience of learning is relevant to their own lives, as it is reflective of the identity, language and culture of Aboriginal people’ (page 14 of the strategy).

Key language initiatives in the first three years of the strategy are to:

- expand opportunities across the board for school students to engage with Aboriginal languages and cultures
- increase resources, support, professional learning, and pathways for the Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara languages and culture
- implement a professional learning and capability framework for teachers of Aboriginal students for whom English is an additional language or dialect.

In identifying the need for the Department to be a strong, culturally responsive organisation, the strategy refers to the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (2011, focus areas 1.4 and 2.4) and the *Australian Professional Standard for Principals and the Leadership Profiles* (2014, under ‘Leadership professional practice 5: Engaging and working with the community’), stating that South Australian schools ‘will be strengthened by creating teaching and learning environments that respect the culture, languages, knowledge and experience of Aboriginal people’ (page 17 of the strategy).

### **Aboriginal languages programs at senior secondary level**

Senior secondary students in South Australia and the Northern Territory have been able to learn and study Aboriginal languages since the mid-1990s under the subject ‘Australian Languages’, which covered first, second and revival learner pathways. This subject was revised in 2019 and split into three separate related subjects according to these pathways, which were implemented in 2020.


<<https://www.sace.sa.edu.au/web/australian-languages>>

### **Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee report on the state of Aboriginal languages in South Australia**

In June 2020, after a year of hearings, research and visits to communities across the state, South Australia’s Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee reported on the state of Aboriginal languages in South Australia. The intention was to ‘lead to a better understanding of the power of Aboriginal languages to improve and develop our community of South Australia’.

The committee recommended several government agencies collaborate in the following six areas of development:

- an overarching Aboriginal languages policy for South Australia

- 
- increased funding support for language programs across the state
  - formal recognition of South Australian Aboriginal languages by the South Australian Parliament
  - increased formal qualifications for teaching of Aboriginal languages
  - collecting data on program implementation and on health outcomes resulting from learning Aboriginal languages
  - the establishment of a state languages centre.

It is expected that the government will soon respond formally to the report.

<<https://www.parliament.sa.gov.au/en/Committees/Committees-Detail>>

### **Aboriginal languages schools list**

The Department publishes updated information on languages taught in government schools, including Aboriginal languages. Projected figures for the 2021 school year can be found at:

<<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/aboriginal-language-schools-offering-program>>



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# Gaps in the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools

While each authority continues to work toward Framework implementation, a significant increase in resourcing will be required if Australia is to see the sustainable development and delivery of local language programs in schools.

In this section we highlight major gaps to sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language teaching in schools under four broad headings:

- Structural support: government and policy
- Teacher training and employment
- Knowledge and resources
- School community relationships.

Following on from this section, this report looks at how these gaps could be filled by examining what best practice would look like in these four core areas.

## Structural support: government and policy

### National legislation

Australia needs to legislate the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to use their languages as they wish. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages legislation must cover all areas of government with a strong commitment from the education sector providing the ongoing foundation for work in all other areas. Legislation is essential so that commitments negotiated with one government cannot be discarded once the government changes. Legislation that reinstates and encourages the use and teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages into the future will reduce the ongoing advocacy burden on language custodians and government at all levels – time better spent delivering programs that support the language needs of communities across Australia.

First Languages Australia identifies that the provision of such national infrastructure will produce significant advances in Framework implementation and the teaching of local languages in schools.

The Australian Department of Education is well placed to work with First Languages Australia; the Indigenous Languages and Arts team in the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications; and the National Indigenous Australians Agency to realise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages legislation that includes strong

implementation strategies and commitments to resourcing the gaps outlined in this report.

### State and territory policies

Each state and territory should publish education policy statements that clarify how they will support the delivery of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs in schools where it is the wish of the local language custodians. If gaps are addressed at policy level, then others can be enabled to work with those policies to bring change in schools and the broader community.

### Growing excellent principals

It is clear that where local language curriculum initiatives thrive, they are supported by exceptional school principals. Excellent principals see the value in local language programs for their students and understand the need for the language custodians to have control of, and be highly involved in, the programs' ongoing development and delivery. Principals also control the school budget and employment, and plan ways to assist and support language programs. Great principals are able to work collaboratively with their local language community, parents and carers, teachers and support staff to build a school context in which a local language curriculum can grow and be sustained to the benefit of all students.

Teachers such as Nathan Schrieber at Yarrabah State School recognise the efforts of the principals he has worked with in supporting his career progression. In the article 'From the Ground Up: How Aboriginal languages teachers design school-based programs in their local language ecology, with Carmel Ryan, Marmingee Hand, Nathan Schrieber and Michael Jarrett' (Babel, Vol.54, Issue 1/ 2, 2019), Nathan discusses his work. In summary, he says his work has been supported by principals who have taken actions that include the following:

- encouraging him to undertake a teaching degree when he was an assistant teacher in Cairns and inviting him back to teach at the school once he had graduated
- inviting him to move home to teach at Yarrabah State School
- encouraging him to develop and deliver the language program at Yarrabah State School, including understanding that he and the community needed to have full control of all aspects of the program
- employing Alfred Gray as an assistant teacher for the program
- releasing Nathan to undertake the Master of Indigenous Languages Education offered in block release mode aligned with the NSW school holidays, which do not often coincide with Queensland's school holidays
- releasing Nathan and Alfred to attend regional, national and international Indigenous languages events and conferences as part of their ongoing professional development

- releasing Nathan to teach in programs that help build the language teaching skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members nationally (e.g. First Languages Australia's Young Champions initiative).

Longstanding language teachers in the Northern Territory, both in bilingual schools and those that offer the Indigenous Languages and Culture Curriculum, are used to watching their language programs wax and wane based on the interest of their stream of principals. Across the state, strong programs have been seen to fail and never recover with the change of school principals, while in other language regions community teacher networks have been able to work together and hold on through times of little or no support from principals.

Exceptional principals, such as Preston Parter at Eidsvold State School (who was himself encouraged to join the school by his predecessor in order to grow their Wakka Wakka program), see the need for numerous staff and community members to be involved in the language program. Furthermore, they see the benefits of supporting other schools in their language regions in developing language programs in the hope of creating opportunities to share the work of resource production between the school's reference groups.

While there is an increasing group of school principals interested in offering a local language as a subject, a significant effort needs to be made to bring school leaders to an understanding of how such language programs might be developed and implemented. The implementation guidelines developed in the Northern Territory and Queensland provide a good foundation for discussion, as does the Professional Development program offered by the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW). (See page 70 of this document for further details.)

First Languages Australia identifies that exceptional principals need to be supported in their efforts and encouraged to share their experiences with less experienced school leaders. To that end, collaboration with the Australian Primary Principals Association (APPA), Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA), the Australian Secondary Principals' Association (ASPA) and the Australian Catholic Primary Principals Association (ACPPA) to develop and share professional development resources would be of value.

### **Initial teacher training**

Ideally, new teachers should be able to go to their schools with an increased understanding of the rationale for embedding the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language in schools. Currently, most initial teacher training programs include one subject pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Language is only one of the vast number of topics to cover in this subject which aims to build preservice teacher awareness of Indigenous issues from ignorance to classroom ready. Preservice teachers also undertake one subject pertaining to teaching students for whom English is an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D). In this subject, the traditional and contemporary language needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language students should

be discussed but this is not always the case. The focus of these courses is at the discretion of the delivery team. Creation of additional resources to support the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages would be of benefit to the teachers of these programs. These resources would help grow preservice teacher understanding of the needs of their future students and therefore improve the training programs in general.

### **Data collection**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who work in schools daily with or without their languages make strong statements regarding the improved outcomes they see for their students through the delivery of school-based language activities. However, there is very little data collected to record the success (or otherwise) of these programs.

The collection of data on the effectiveness and benefits of language curriculum delivery for the participating students, whole of school and broader community (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) would provide a strong tool with which to analyse and review investment.

Good baseline data from the ground level would include:

- information about the schools that are running programs, the type of program and the language being delivered
- details of program delivery including student language proficiency levels, teacher language proficiency levels, school community relationships, and student behaviour, wellbeing, attendance and academic achievement
- identification of communities interested in working with schools to teach their languages, the resources they have available and the schools that are connected with that language region.

With appropriate systems established, regional education offices would be well placed to collect the data that is needed to monitor program delivery. The inclusion of such data in triennial reporting processes would make the data collected available to authorities at all levels.

### **Linking potential teachers with schools**

Across the country, state and territory education departments and Independent Schools associations are receiving high levels of calls from schools expressing an interest in delivering a local language curriculum. There is currently a need to link schools and communities where relationships do not currently exist. There is also a role to be played by each authority to prevent overburdening the limited resources of the language community with demands from multiple schools. This involves helping willing community teachers to find interested schools, supporting those schools to engage with their local communities and encouraging schools in the same language region to work together. (See under the heading 'Working regionally' on page 48 of this document for further details.)

## Teacher training and employment

### Employment pathways

The lack of adequate teacher training is a major gap that needs to be overcome to achieve the sustainable implementation of the Framework for any language.

Nationally, there are only two programs that train people to be independent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers. These are the Western Australian Aboriginal Languages Traineeship (ALTT), a three-year program delivered as Professional Development by the Western Australian Department of Education, and the Master of Indigenous Languages Education offered by the University of Sydney to people who already hold a Bachelor of Education or similar teaching degree. An undergraduate education degree as part of a pathway that supports the needs of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who wish to teach their languages in schools is needed.

Further details of these programs are outlined in this report on pages 66 and 68 respectively, as part of the 'Learning opportunities' section. The section also includes suggestions to help fill significant gaps in training options for community members interested in teaching their languages in schools.

### Flexible delivery

Flexible courses, specifically designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, enable Indigenous people to remain within their local community and at work while completing a Bachelor of Education. Historically, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory have all offered teacher training and registration through a flexible delivery mode which included block release, a method of delivery that allows students to maintain other commitments while studying. However, Queensland is the only state in which the delivery of a flexible teacher training program still continues.

Flexible delivery needs to be considered in the development of any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teacher training. Allowing flexibility in these courses gives university access to students who would otherwise not be able to gain a tertiary qualification.

Ideally, a flexible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduate language teaching program would mirror the successful model implemented by the University of Victoria, Canada (UVic) in its Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization program.

<<https://www.uvic.ca/education/areas-study/indigenous-language/index.php>>

The Canadian program embeds vocational courses in language learning and language revitalisation within a language teacher training pathway to a Bachelor of Education. (Further information on this program can be found on page 71 of this report, as part of the 'Learning opportunities' section.)

## Professional development

Ongoing professional development is necessary for any teacher. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers have particular professional development needs. These include:

- ongoing language learning and opportunities to talk with other language speakers
- language teaching practice and methods
- curriculum development and implementation
- resource production
- classroom management
- community capacity building
- project management
- supporting students with diverse learning needs
- networking with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers.

Professional development that seeks to cover these needs would assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teachers in effectively carrying out their roles as teachers, and in being effective members of the school and broader communities.

## Teacher registration

Each teacher registration body should enable the provisional registration of language educators who have the training, qualifications and school support identified by the department as sufficient.

For example, this could be done with the implementation of a model similar to the Western Australian traineeship (ALTT) for language teachers, or the provision of the Certificate IV in Teaching a First Nation's Language (or predecessor) along with supervised classroom mentoring.

While Queensland and Victoria are in conversation with their registration bodies regarding this, little progress has been made to date. A national model for the registration for Indigenous language teachers may assist in enabling registration bodies to provide provisional registration.

## Industrial guidelines

The successful implementation of the Framework requires the employment of language specialists to provide instruction. As it is essential that schools work with communities to provide language instruction, not all people who work together to design and deliver language programs will be registered teachers. All language instructors and support workers need to be appropriately recognised and remunerated for their work in order to implement these aspects of the

Framework. The development of appropriate industrial guidelines around recognition of the skills of language specialists who are not registered teachers is essential to support schools and communities in the employment of language specialists with diverse skills, qualifications and training.

### Language knowledge

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers need to be provided with opportunities to increase their own language knowledge and skill. In the early days of curriculum delivery, it may be that the teachers are only a few steps ahead of their students.

In order to teach their languages, Indigenous language teachers need to be continually growing their personal language skills. For teachers in revival communities, substantial time is required for own language learning and research. This may involve constant work with a small team of community members in eliciting information from elders or retrieving and interpreting materials from archives and it may involve working with Indigenous language teachers and linguists from other regions. In more established language communities, this may also involve working intensively with other community members to ensure the culturally appropriate transmission of the language within the community, sometimes in specific places or at particular times depending on the content.

Schools and their language teachers need funds available to enable collaborations with language centres or local language teams when building the teachers language skills and encourage language use within the community. Working together in this way will also increase the pool of potential teachers and mentors, supporting the growth of a sustainable language curriculum.

### Knowledge and resources

#### Funds, budgets and resourcing

Specific budget allocations that cover the work required at the levels of the Commonwealth, states and territories, regional offices, schools and language communities are needed for successful implementation of the Framework.

For example:

- The Commonwealth needs to be working toward a national languages legislation, overseeing Framework implementation and data collection, building school leader awareness of the rationale behind offering a local language curriculum, and working toward a national model for language teacher training and registration.
- The states and territories need to develop and establish policies, provide teacher training opportunities, develop implementation guidelines and industrial relations tools, and offer professional development opportunities.

- Regional offices will require funds to undertake data collection, link schools with their local communities and support collaboration between schools in each language area.
- Individual schools need budgets to cover specialist staffing, curriculum development and ongoing community collaboration.
- The local language custodians will need to be supported in ongoing resource production, school collaboration and adult language learning to grow the pool of teachers.

Without adequate funds, the actions required to implement the Framework will not be sustained.

### A clearing house

Throughout this project, it has been clear that educators – whether they be departmental staff, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers, or principals and support staff – are keen to learn about the work of others and share their own stories. To that end, First Languages Australia has been acting as a clearing house for the collection and distribution of information relevant to the needs of its collaborators. FLA proposes that the provision of an online clearing house to support the implementation of the Framework would be a useful tool in providing links to the materials listed in this report. This would allow the information to be searched for and accessed into the future as required, with a focus on resources that provide structural support, and be a complement to Patyegarang, the Indigenous Australian languages education website (detailed on page 77 of this document) which has been ‘designed to answer questions about the teaching of Australian languages, with a particular focus on language revival. These are modelled on the kinds of questions regularly asked by Australian languages educators and revivers’.

### Time allocations

The number of teaching hours per week and continuity of teaching across the school years are strong predictors of language learning. As a learning area, it is currently expected that the time allocated for the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language at least matches the recommended time allocation for the teaching of all other languages, as outlined in the Australian Curriculum.

In 2017, the South Australian Government published the *Review of Languages Education Policies in Australia* which details time allocation recommendations in each state and territory.

First Languages Australia is continuing discussions with stakeholders to establish recommended time allocations for the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. As an example, the Northern Territory recommends at least two hours per week for the teaching of Aboriginal languages. These recommendations are outlined in the NT Indigenous Languages and Cultures



Curriculum guides for each learner pathway as shown below.

### **First languages maintenance**

As a component of the Australian Curriculum, there should be at least 2 hours a week of programmed language study in Transition–Year 9. However, it is recommended that students in the Early Years have the opportunity to learn in and through their language for at least one hour a day.

A strong base in their first language is required for students to learn, maintain and extend their achievement in Standard Australian English, including mastering reading and writing. Links have been made between the Culture component and other Australian Curriculum elements that could be covered.

<[https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/715232/ntilc-l1m-nov18-03.pdf](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0020/715232/ntilc-l1m-nov18-03.pdf)>

### **First Language Bilingual**

A bilingual program will use the students' first language to teach appropriate aspects of the Australian Curriculum, as well as local cultural knowledge through the NTILC curriculum. Students will be immersed in their first language for most of the school day in the Early Years of Schooling, and for at least 5 hours a week from Years 4–9. Links have been made between the content of the Culture component of the NTILC and related content in the Australian Curriculum Learning Areas. Other Learning Area content and skills can also be taught through the students' first language.

While students are learning in and through their first language, they will be learning English as an Additional Language in a carefully planned English as an Additional Language program.

<[https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0019/715231/ilc-curriculum-first-language-bilingual-pathway-l1b.pdf](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/715231/ilc-curriculum-first-language-bilingual-pathway-l1b.pdf)>

### **Language Revival: Revitalisation**

As a component of the Australian Curriculum, there should be at least 2 hours a week of programmed language study in Transition–Year 6 and 2 hours a week in the Middle Years 7–9. Ideally this would be programmed across at least three lessons throughout all years of schooling. For students to achieve fluency in the language and to revitalise the use of the language, additional time using the language will be required. Opportunities to use the language to learn across other areas of the curriculum or participate in experiences and activities where students are immersed in the language are most effective.

<[https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/715236/ntilc-lr-nov18-03.pdf](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/715236/ntilc-lr-nov18-03.pdf)>

### **Language Revival: Renewal**

As a component of the Australian Curriculum, there should be at least 2 hours a week of programmed language study in Transition–Year 6, and 2 hours a

week in the Middle Years 7–9. However, for students to achieve fluency in the language, additional time to learn and use the language will normally be required.

<[https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/715235/ntilc-lrn-nov18-03.pdf](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/715235/ntilc-lrn-nov18-03.pdf)>

### Language and Culture Awareness

As a component of the Australian Curriculum, there should be at least 2 hours a week of programmed language study in Transition–Year 6 and 2 hours a week in the Middle Years 7–9.

<[https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/715234/ntilc-lca-nov18-03.pdf](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/715234/ntilc-lca-nov18-03.pdf)>

Where communities seek language proficiency, it is necessary to maximise the time and intensity of language classes through structured content language integrated learning (CLIL) and bilingual programs, boosting the time allocated to learning, and learning through, the target language.

Support for bilingual, immersion and on-Country programs where it is the wish of the local community will greatly increase the outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs.

### Bilingual schools

In some communities in Australia, traditional Indigenous languages are the primary languages used by families. In others, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children speak a contemporary language at home, for example Kriol or Yumpalatok. The greater majority of these children are taught in English-only programs. This is nonsensical; it sends the message that their home languages and cultures are not valued, radically disadvantages the students as most teachers lack skills and experience in teaching English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D), and undermines the academic achievement students would attain if they were being taught in a language they understood.

Published by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, the 2004 report *Bilingual/Immersion Education: Indicators of good practice*, shows that students in well-structured bilingual schools reach the same level of their peers across subjects, reaching academic proficiency in the second language in Years 5 to 8 of formal tuition. These students reach academic achievement equal to, and often above, their monolingual peers across the curriculum and have the added benefit of being multilingual.

Bilingual schools are a necessity if we are to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and languages grow strong into the future. The immediate focus of attention should be bilingual schools in all regions where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children speak a language other than Standard Australian English within their family.

Specialist resources including time, expertise, facilities and materials are required to successfully implement bilingual education. These resources, which are not available elsewhere, draw on local knowledge and appropriate learning experiences for students in the school. Local communities need to have ownership and control of the process of resource development to ensure all materials are appropriate for the learners.

Resources and teaching materials to be developed include:

- curricula and teaching resources in the local language
- a workforce with the capacity to teach through and in the Indigenous language and EAL/D
- a range of community and school-based instructional materials in L1 including print, visual and digital materials that support the teaching and learning of identified learning areas across the Australian Curriculum
- a school leadership team to lead the collaborative development of a whole-school curriculum and instructional model for bilingual education
- professional support for planning and delivery by bilingual teaching teams
- a pool of additional language workers over and above the teachers and assistant teachers required by the program to assist with the development of a range of teaching materials for use across the curriculum in L1.

As outlined above, bilingual schools can be of huge benefit to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their communities. In the words of Dr Marika:

What we see happening in the school is a process of knowledge production where we have two different cultures, Balanda [non-Indigenous] and Yolngu [Indigenous] working together. Both cultures need to be presented in a way where each one is preserved and respected.

– ‘Milthun latju wana romgu Yolnu: Valuing Yolnu knowledge in the education system’. Ngonjook, No.16, Dec 1999, pages 17-120.

### **Content and language integrated learning (CLIL)**

Bilingual programs are generally offered in communities where the language that is being introduced at school is different to the language being spoken by the students at home. In contrast, content and language integrated learning (CLIL) is an approach where students learn a subject and an additional language at the same time. A science course, for example, can be taught to students in the additional language and they will not only learn about science, but they will also gain relevant vocabulary and language skills.

The Commission of European Communities’ *Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An action plan 2004 – 2006* highlights CLIL as particularly useful as:

... it provides effective opportunities for pupils to use their new language skills now, rather than learn them now for later use. It opens doors on languages for a broader range of learners, nurturing self-confidence in young learners and those who have not responded well to formal language instruction in general education. It provides exposure to the language without requiring extra time in the curriculum, which can be of particular interest in vocational settings.

It's important to note that CLIL teaching is not a means of simplifying content or reteaching something students already know in a new language. CLIL programs should truly integrate language teaching and content teaching in order to be successful – and success is determined when both the subject matter and language is learnt. In recognising the success of CLIL, the European Commission promotes the training of specialist teachers to deliver such programs.

As outlined in First Languages Australia's *Global Lessons: Indigenous languages and multilingualism in school programs* (2018), in New Zealand and the United States, where these styles of programs operate alongside less time-intensive programs, data shows that the intensive programs are most effective for language revitalisation, student language learning and overall school achievement. Case studies of programs for Māori in New Zealand and Ojibwe in the United States show that these can 'have a profound impact, improving language revitalisation' and increasing language use.

In Australia, well supported CLIL programs should be part of the range of program options available to schools and communities as collaborations progress. Like bilingual programs, these will require specialist resources and teacher training.

### Classroom resources

The language chosen for curriculum development should have a sizeable set of resources in a variety of media, such as local documentaries, bilingual narrative and descriptive texts, and educational materials in print and digital form. Learning is enriched and authenticated by interaction with visiting Elders.

– *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* (2016)

Across Australia, there are few languages that meet the above criteria, yet increasingly schools are realising the value of offering a local language curriculum. At the same time, language custodians are becoming more willing to collaborate with schools on such programs. While particularly intensive in the first few years, resource production is an ongoing need for any program. Each language community needs to be supported to work with schools to develop a range of high-quality resources for use in the classroom now and in the future.

There are a number of ways to continue the development of local curricula and materials that build on previous work achieved within the learning community. These include:

- regional language group workshops
- school and community workshops
- team planning
- consultations with community members and Elders
- specialist staff involvement
- partnerships with external consultants and organisations
- school literacy and numeracy plans, school action plans, and documentation of plans and programs.

Establishing efficient and effective systems for the storage and management of resources produced is essential to program sustainability. Resource production efforts will also be assisted by the development of resource templates which language custodians can adapt for their language and program.

### Local curriculum development


The development of a local language curriculum will require a team of people including teachers, language community members and people with curriculum experience. The Framework is a tool that schools and communities can explore as they develop a local language learning program that meets the needs of their learners.

For people who are not familiar with working in schools, the process of developing a local language curriculum is likely to be daunting. To help demystify the process of local curriculum design, the New Zealand Ministry of Education has published a suite of resources on its bilingual education portal, Te Kete Ipurangi.

At the heart of the local curriculum is improved learning for all students. In order to meet the needs of learners the Ministry states that the local curriculum should:

- be responsive to the needs, identity, language, culture, interests, strengths and aspirations of [its] learners and their families
- have a clear focus on what supports the progress of all learners
- help students understand Te Tiriti o Waitangi – its past, present and future
- help learners engage with the knowledge, values, and competencies so they can go on and be confident and connected lifelong learners.
- *Local Curriculum: Designing rich opportunities and coherent pathways for all learners.* New Zealand Ministry of Education

It is important to remember that most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages have never before been taught in a classroom. This means that there are no resources around which to structure lessons and it is not possible to source



relevant materials online. Thus, in the process of developing unit plans, where a teacher of any other subject might list series of relevant resources that they have collated for use in the lessons they are planning, a local language teaching team will need to design and create each of those resources themselves. For many, this will also require searching out and learning the relevant language content in preparation for teaching.

It is reasonable to expect that for a language that has not previously been taught in schools the process will take at least a year. In some regions, it is likely to be many years before the teaching team is ready for delivery. However long the initial work takes, all parties will need to recognise that the process of curriculum development is not a one-off activity; it will require review and adaptation as the teaching team trials the plans and tests the resources developed in terms of student interaction and learning outcomes.

### Support for community programs

When considering the development of a local language curriculum, it must be remembered that the language belongs to the community – therefore community needs should remain the priority throughout the program. The concept of ‘community control’ may seem simple; however, people within the community may have a different interpretation of ‘control’ to those in the school.

As outlined in First Languages Australia’s *Nintiringanyi: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching and employment strategy* (2016), education authorities can maximise community control of the program by:

- providing funding for resource development and teacher training
- developing partnerships with other schools in their language region so that the cost of resources and teachers can be shared
- funding the necessary community discussions for the establishment of regional programs
- being patient while appropriate resources and curriculum are developed in line with community needs
- providing professional development for school staff to ready the school for the introduction of the curriculum
- entering agreements with the community, language centres and other partners to provide a solid foundation for the delivery of a local language curriculum
- collaborating in activities and events that build community capacity with regard to program development, delivery and review
- promoting the program.

## School community relationships

### Community driven

Each Aboriginal language or Torres Strait Islander language is recognised as belonging to a group of people who are its owners or custodians. This means that permission and consent must be sought from the owners when developing language-specific curricula and planning language programs, including visits, excursions to the Country/Place and use of cultural material as part of the teaching and learning program.

Sufficient time and resources should be allowed for thorough and ongoing consultation processes in accordance with local contexts and situations ... The ultimate authority regarding the choice of language rests with the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community.

– *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* (2016)

In addition, schools need to recognise that the involvement of language custodians cannot cease once the program is well established. Though levels of involvement may differ as the program progresses, the ongoing involvement of the community in the school program will always be necessary. Whether it be through resource production, teaching, program review and renewal, or as school students and parents, the guidance of schools by the community will be required in all aspects of the program.

### Implementation guidelines

#### For schools

As outlined under the ‘Resources available to support best practice implementation of the Framework’ section of this report (page 56), New South Wales, Queensland and the Northern Territory have developed guidelines to support schools in the process of considering how to build the relationships required to offer a local languages curriculum. These documents set out the roles and responsibilities of all parties and provide an essential foundation for sustainable program delivery. It is recommended that all states do the same.

#### For language advisory groups

Language communities also need guidance in how to approach making decisions as to who is best to teach in a school, as well as how to enable that person to do the teaching. This includes guidance in tricky conversations within the community around individual community members’ language knowledge and classroom teaching skills. In addition to conversations with the school around control of the program, community needs and the production and management of resources must also be considered.

### Working regionally

As the initial costs for the preparation, development and delivery of a language curriculum can be high, it is important that schools collaborate across language regions. Schools may be able to share:

- teachers
- professional development
- resource production
- succession planning.

A local curriculum and associated resources can be shared with other schools and communities where the same language is spoken. Sharing also allows for rigorous profiling, moderation and verification within and across schools and regions.

In regions that are fortunate to have a language centre, working collectively with the centre to support planning, training and resource development will maximise outcomes by pooling the limited resources each school has available. However, it needs to be understood that while language centres are well placed to undertake this work, they are not currently funded to support such collaborations.

Working regionally provides support for the language teaching teams that otherwise have little or no collegial support in their work. Good examples of strong regional work include:

- The Warlpiri teacher network, currently coordinated through the Warlpiri Education Trust. As far as possible, the teachers come together for planning twice a year.
- Eidsvold State School, under the leadership of Principal Preston Parter and with support from the Queensland Department of Education's Central Queensland Region Office, which is supporting other schools in the Wakka Wakka region to initiate the necessary local discussions toward offering Wakka Wakka as a subject. The expectation is that each school within the 'cluster' will have its own Language Advisory Group to oversee the program, and that over time the resource production efforts can be shared.

Collaborating across the language region also supports the associated community activities that can serve to bring schools and the local language custodians closer together. Working together on activities such as festivals, competitions and networking events will inspire and upskill the next generation of language learners and teachers.

### Whole-of-school support for professional development of school staff

Schools considering establishing a local language program will need to provide professional development programs for all their staff.

This includes:

- team teaching for teachers working in co-teaching relationships



- local language awareness for all school staff
- use of the local language to enrich student learning in line with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority
- inductions on two-way and three-way teaching.

The cost of delivering the above professional development programs will be greatly reduced over time if Indigenous language awareness programs are embedded in preservice teacher training.


### Resource centres

Resource centres are essential in the development of materials for use in and around school programs. Offering an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language curriculum is not like offering Japanese or French for which there are countless resources to select from. For Indigenous languages, whether it be texts, readers, curriculum, lesson and activity plans, audio visual materials, worksheets or assessment tools, each language community will be developing resources for their school programs from scratch. Having a resource centre enables the ongoing production, sharing and archiving of, and rights in, materials to be coordinated in a way that limits the need for individual schools to shoulder the responsibility and bear the full cost of resource production and management.

The Northern Territory saw the need for Literature Production Centres (LPC) in the establishment of its bilingual schools. Over the years, these centres have produced the necessary readers, activity sheets, posters and audio-visual material resources in each subject for the schools to which they are attached (as noted in *Literature Production Centres in Aboriginal Bilingual Programs*, Russo, 1981). With diminished support for bilingual programs in the Northern Territory since they were first established in the 1980s, only a few LPC remain.

Across the country, language communities have different visions for how resources for school programs should be developed and managed. In some regions there is a language centre that is a natural fit for resource production activities. Language centres generally have access to community language specialists, historical materials and linguists, as well as the people and tools specifically required for resource production such as graphic designers and artists, computers and printers, etc. Unfortunately, where language centres exist, they are scantily funded and are not in a position to produce materials for school programs without payment – be that for the purchase of existing materials or the creation of new resources. However, with the appropriate funding, existing language centres could provide a perfect coordinating centre for ongoing school resource production and management.

In other regions, individual community members have established small businesses around the production of resources in their language. Where these individuals are approved by the language advisory groups working with schools, these businesses can provide a strong support base for the delivery of a language curriculum.



Increasingly, we are seeing collaboration between schools within a language region to produce the resources they need to deliver their local language curriculum. The NSW Language and Culture Nest is such a model with language resources being produced by the Nest teacher for use by language tutors working in schools across their regions and housed in an official keeping place. Less formally, schools in Queensland are beginning to network with other schools in their regions as clusters with a view to being able to share the work of resource production into the future. (For further details, refer to ‘Working regionally’ on page 48 of this report).

In addition to the necessary production of new material, across the country there are many resources which were created prior to the digital era that are still valuable today. It has become increasingly critical for LPC, language centres, schools and communities who hold these resources to develop and implement current digitising and archiving practices. With appropriate funding in this area, this earlier material could be preserved and managed more effectively thereby safeguarding it for use now and into the future.

### **Resource ownership**

Though it may take the legal offices within education authorities some thought to rationalise, it is important that the ownership of resources developed for the program rests with the local custodians. As the Framework states, schools should:

... ensure that language and cultural materials produced by their language programs are kept in safe-keeping places with appropriate deposit and access processes in place. In these ways schools will be supporting communities to build and keep safe a range of resources for their language programs.

While a school or teaching team employed by an education department might make resources that the education department might usually assume ownership of, in general, it is appropriate for language resources to be owned by the language custodians. Ownership of the resources therefore would belong either to a teacher who is a language custodian, to a language advisory group or to an external organisation. Schools need to have agreements in place that allow them non-exclusive use of any materials created for use in the program. While authorities may invest a great deal of time and resources in a program, these efforts cannot be compared to those of language custodians working across their regions to maintain and revive their languages in order to see them used strong into the future.

### **Language teacher identification and support**

While in some regions the initial identification of a language teacher may be obvious, in other regions it will require a great deal of effort, discussion and planning. The decision about who is able to teach the language will ultimately rest with the community. As a general rule, a local language custodian will teach the language, be that independently or in a co-teaching relationship. There are

particular cases where the language custodians have approved skilled teachers who are not custodians to teach the local language in schools, but these are usually exceptions made in specific circumstances. Schools and language advisory groups need to be on the constant lookout for interested community members who would make great teachers and work together to support them in growing their language and teaching skills on their journey to the classroom.

For Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander language teachers, teaching one's own language at school, while rewarding, is a task that comes with significant community responsibility and workload in addition to that of other schoolteachers. Growing a pool of teachers at different levels of their careers and with different roles in the language program, the school and the broader community will be taking a strong step toward the sustainability of the school's language program.



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## What would best practice look like?

First Languages Australia has been collaborating with partners to identify best practice models for working with local communities toward Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching, including promoting community involvement, establishing protocols, producing resources, and identifying and training teachers.

While there are currently excellent examples of particular aspects of Framework implementation around Australia (see ‘Implementation examples’ on page 56), without filling each of the gaps outlined in this report, current efforts are not sustainable.

Overall, best practice will see strong language teachers who are well recognised and resourced within their school and backed by supportive language communities who are also active in the school program. Students will achieve language proficiency and have contexts for using language outside the classroom. This will result in increased school participation and academic achievement.

The following section outlines in further detail what best practice will look like in each of the four areas where gaps have been identified.

### Government and policy

Best practice in government and policy would see:

- national legislation providing clear guidance around the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to language education
- funding to support the sustainable delivery of local language programs in schools where this is the wish of the language custodians
- state and territory policies that are aligned to the rationale and guidelines for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages
- regional offices working with language communities to manage the needs of schools across each language region, including assessment of community capacity, available resources, local solutions, and the establishment and delivery of local language curricula
- school leaders being educated about the rationale and guidelines for offering a school program
- all undergraduate teachers educated about the rationale and guidelines for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages through which the school is able to meet the needs of their students
- funding allocated at the state/territory level to support established programs throughout changes in school leadership

- schools required to report on their progress toward, or delivery of, a local language curriculum through a triennial review process
- bilingual and content language integrated learning (CLIL) programs are well supported and usual
- previously established programs are consistently well resourced with appropriate time allocation from K-10 and senior school
- pathways are established for vocational, tertiary education and employment.

## Teacher training and employment

Classroom teaching practice, growing teachers' language knowledge, and language pedagogy, andragogy and heutagogy need to feature strongly in any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language teacher training program.

Best practice in teacher training and employment would see:

- diverse pathways for language custodians into classrooms
- each state and territory funding training programs that see community members building skills in language, revitalisation and resource development as a progression to language teacher training, with access to such activities not limited by previous education or employment by a school
- industrial guidelines established to support the employment of language specialists in schools as teachers, assistants, support workers, consultants, etc.
- accredited language learning and language teaching courses supported by each authority to grow the pool of available language teachers and the cohort of people who will provide community support to the educators
- regular professional development opportunities, based on action research models, offered to build language educator skills that are delivered nationally and in each region as appropriate
- the Master of Indigenous Languages Education program well supported and stable with each state and territory offering annual scholarships to support teacher attendance
- undergraduate and vocational education scholarships made available to community members who wish to commence a career in teaching their languages
- school-based vocational programs providing a foundation for moving into language professions such as teaching
- specialist learning opportunities made available for educators across L1, L2 and LR, content language integrated learning and bilingual programs

- educators supported by mentoring and coaching from language authorities, local teachers and linguists
- learning programs that meet the needs of educators who have different cultural backgrounds, live great distances from each other, have different languages of daily communication and diverse living conditions
- training bodies and schools be made well aware of cultural barriers that educators may experience, including avoidance systems, family structures and preference for team teaching rather than the mainstream model of one teacher per class
- Standard Australian English proficiency and literacy offered as a training option for educators with other language backgrounds.

## Knowledge and resources

Best practice in knowledge and resources would see:

- language communities being supported to develop a wealth of resources made available for use in schools through appropriate local licencing and purchase agreements
- language specialists, educators, educational resource designers and illustrators collaborating in the production of the materials that schools require
- schools working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service providers such as language centres and training organisations to develop and deliver programs, support teachers, produce resources, etc.
- collaborating schools and communities have a clear understanding of how to develop, deliver and revise their local curriculum as the level of language spoken by the community outside the school grows
- gaps in language documentation supported through relevant revitalisation and reclamation projects in order to support the development of new content where needed from early to higher years
- historical resources be reviewed, updated and modernised by incorporating new media and content to keep them relevant to learners.
- resource centres and keeping places identified or established for each language
- schools and communities recognise that their responsibility does not end at the school gate and must continue with collaboration in events and activities (e.g. celebrations, festivals, camps, excursions) both on the school grounds and across the language region.

## School community relationships

Best practice in school community relationships would see:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs delivered by custodians of the land on which the school programs are delivered
- languages from other areas delivered, where this is sought by the local community
- guidelines supporting schools and language advisory groups in their journey toward a local language curriculum
- schools, where possible, working with external service providers such as language centres to develop and deliver all aspects of the program
- regional offices collaborating with language groups in their region to build capacity toward school community collaboration, particularly where there are multiple or many schools within a language region
- all school staff gaining a deep understanding of the benefits of language activities in order to ensure schools are safe places for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, teachers and families
- teachers and staff in schools where programs are being delivered be made aware of the program and its rationale, and be encouraged to contribute to the program in a way that is relevant to their role at the school
- schools and the local communities working together to identify and encourage new people into language teaching
- strong and sustainable collaborations that go beyond service provision in genuine partnership led by custodians, and which provide mutual benefit to the school and language community.

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# Resources available to support best practice implementation of the Framework

## Implementation examples

Variouly called ‘illustrations of practice’, ‘case studies’ and ‘program profiles’, resources that provide examples of how language programs are being established and taught in specific schools provide important insights and stimulus for educators elsewhere.

### Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership

In implementing an Indigenous language program, school leaders at Mossman State School collaborated with local Aboriginal Elders in the Mossman and Daintree area to develop a language program for teaching Kuku Yalanji. The language program is taught by an Indigenous Language Teaching Assistant, with the support of colleagues throughout the school.

<<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/implementing-an-indigenous-language-program>>

### Teaching an Indigenous language

In a short video, the Indigenous Language Teaching Assistant at Mossman State School shares his Kuku Yalanji language expertise with students and colleagues. He describes the impact of the language program on building students’ confidence and identity, increasing students’ language proficiency, and supporting the shared community goal of embedding Kuku Yalanji within the community.

<<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/teaching-an-indigenous-language>>

### Community perspectives on an Indigenous language program

Kulai Preschool Aboriginal Corporation in Coffs Harbour has a strong focus on Indigenous culture, including the daily teaching of the local Indigenous language. The Indigenous language program is highly valued by the local parent/carer community, who see benefits for local culture and language preservation. Kulai Preschool emphasises community and pride in Indigenous heritage.

<<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/community-perspectives-on-an-indigenous-language-program-illustration-of-practice>>



### Teaching an Indigenous language in preschool

Kulai Preschool is dedicated to the education of Indigenous children in the local area, including the teaching of the local Gumbaynggirr language. Children spend several lessons a week on Indigenous language, with some lessons conducted entirely in Gumbaynggirr. The program is highly regarded throughout the community, where strong connections have been developed. It is run by both the preschool teachers themselves, and experts from the community. Local Elders have a strong involvement in the preschool, ensuring a truly community-based approach.

<<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/teaching-an-indigenous-language-in-preschool-illustration-of-practice>>

### Early career Indigenous language teaching

Children at Kulai Preschool regularly engage with Indigenous language and culture through their teachers, Aboriginal organisations and the community, and have made strong connections with each. The program is run by an early-career teacher. She shares her experience in a video, found at the following link:

<<https://www.aitsl.edu.au/tools-resources/resource/early-career-indigenous-language-teaching-illustration-of-practice>>

### Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

ACARA has published three illustrations of practice to support the teaching and learning of Aboriginal languages and Torres Strait Islander languages. The illustrations have been developed in collaboration with schools and language custodians in Leigh Creek, Kununurra and Adelaide and illustrate different contexts for, and flexible ways of, using the Framework. The summaries below have been adapted from the ACARA website.

The illustrations recognise that for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, learning language benefits their overall learning and achievements. They show how educators can enhance students' understanding of language, culture, Country or place, land, water, sea and sky, and how this contributes to their overall wellbeing. For all students, learning an Aboriginal language or a Torres Strait Islander language provides a distinctive means of understanding Country/place including the relationship between land, the environment and peoples. The revival, maintenance and development of languages contribute to reconciliation.

<<https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/resources/framework-for-aboriginal-languages-and-torres-strait-islander-languages/>>

### Leigh Creek Area School

Leigh Creek Area School has implemented an Adnyamathanha Aboriginal language revival program in consultation with the community, Adnyamathanha Elders and the Adnyamathanha Language and Culture Committee (ALACC) and with the support of a regional Aboriginal language centre. The language

program is timetabled for three 45-minute lessons per week for students in Foundation to Year 9 and five 45-minute lessons per week for Years 10 to 12. This illustration of practice demonstrates the whole school and community approach to Adnyamathanha language and culture teaching and learning, with students from F-12 learning and engaging with Adnyamathanha Language and culture in the classroom and on Country. The illustration includes a series of five videos along with unit and lesson plans and other support resources.

### **Keller Road Primary School**

Keller Rd Primary School has introduced the Kurna language of the Adelaide Plains as the school's second language and works closely with the Kurna Warra Karrpanthi Aboriginal Corporation (KWK), Kurna leaders and the community in the program's design and delivery. This illustration of practice demonstrates how Keller Road Primary School implements Kurna language at the school, with all students learning and engaging with Kurna language through Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers. Culture is taught by a Kurna person. The language of each unit of work is built around cultural and thematic concepts. This illustration consists of three videos discussing the program and how the program has been implemented respectfully through a consultation process and by following protocols.

### **St Joseph's School**

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School in Kununurra has engaged the services of the Mirima Dawang Woorlab-gerring (MDWg) Language and Culture Centre's Miriwoong Language Nest to provide Miriwoong lessons to students. The Miriwoong Language Nest, currently in its fifth year of operation, began as a pilot program in 2013 with a small group of children. Now, over 400 children in the Kununurra community participate in Language Nest sessions each week. The lessons enable students to access the Miriwoong language and culture in an immersive environment as part of their regular school learning program. This illustration of practice demonstrates how St Joseph's engages with the Miriwoong Language Nest to deliver language lessons, with Year 3-6 students learning Miriwoong Language and culture facilitated by Miriwoong educators. This illustration also includes a series of three videos along with lesson plans designed by the WA Department of Education Aboriginal Languages Curriculum Support and other support resources.

## **Quality teaching and learning, Northern Territory**

### **Ti Tree Languages and Culture – teaching practice**

The Northern Territory Government has published a short video made with staff at Ti Tree School in which the principal makes a strong case for the teaching of Indigenous Languages and Cultures (ILC) within the school, including the provision of a dedicated ILC teaching space.

<<https://video.ntschoools.net/#/videos/d1f8a1b5-68d9-442b-8f8b-f7911691b4ea>>

### Koorie Language Programs across Victoria

The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association's (VAEAI) Languages Education & Curriculum Unit has published case studies on each of the Victorian Aboriginal Language programs in schools. These stories are useful tools for showcasing the programs and their diversity across the state. They make information available to new schools and communities to explore as they build the relationships required to deliver a language curriculum.

The following is a list of current programs:

- Bright P-12 College Dhudhuroa and Murinpatha Languages Program
- Scotch College VCE Dhudhuroa
- Wooragee Primary School Dhudhuroa Language Program
- Mildura Primary School Barkindji-Marawara Language Program
- Buxton Primary School Taungurung Language Program
- Robinvale P-12 College Yakilla Yarna Thalingi Program
- Gowrie St Primary School Yorta Yorta Language Program
- Melton West Primary School Woiwurrung Language Program
- Thornbury Primary School Woiwurrung Language Program
- Bruthen Primary School Gunai-Kurnai Culture Program
- Swan Hill Primary School Wemba Wemba Program
- Heywood and Districts Secondary College Gunditjmara Languages Program

<<https://www.vaeai.org.au/koorie-language-programs-across-victoria/>>

### Independent Education Union Queensland and Northern Territory branch

In considering how to best work with relevant stakeholder and employer groups to support and encourage more schools to offer first language instruction, the Independent Education Union Queensland and Northern Territory branch (IEU, QLD NT) have identified the documentation and dissemination of best practice case studies from their membership as a key area of future work. As outlined in their *First Languages Workplan 2021-2023*:

The non-government sector, throughout Queensland and the Northern Territory, contains a significant number of schools with high proportions of First Nations students. Teachers and support staff in those schools skillfully adapt their practice to cater for those students for whom English is an additional dialect or language.

Documenting the ways in which school staff work with their local First Nations communities, modify educational programs and incorporate First Language instruction, and sharing this information with other practitioners, will support and enable progression of First Language instruction in all schools.

This workplan commits our union to overseeing collection and collation of case studies throughout 2021 and concurrent promotion of these through member publications (print and on-line).

Following compilation of case studies, a second phase of the work will involve extraction of key principles and practices to inform guidelines for best practice, as a platform for ongoing advocacy and a precursor to development of industrial frameworks for First Language teachers and instructors.

The case studies, along with other support resources, are being published under the heading 'First Language Instruction campaign' on the 'Reconciliation' page of the IEU (QLD NT) website.

<<https://ieuqnt.org.au/reconciliation/>>

The first case study showcases the program at Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College, Northern Territory:

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College is located in the town of Wadeye, approximately 230km southwest of Darwin. With a population of approximately 2,300 people Wadeye is the largest Indigenous community in the Northern Territory. Although the Kardu Thithay Diminin people (the local First Nations inhabitants) speak numerous Indigenous languages, a large proportion speak Murrinhpatha and the local language program at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr offers Murrinhpatha instruction in two contexts:

- Murrinhpatha Language maintenance
- Bilingual/two-way teaching and learning.

<[https://ieuqnt.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/WP20\\_045as-First-Language-Case-Study-Wadeye-Catholic-School.pdf](https://ieuqnt.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/WP20_045as-First-Language-Case-Study-Wadeye-Catholic-School.pdf)>

### **NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)**

#### ***A Practical Guide to Teaching Aboriginal Languages***

Published by the NSW Board of Studies in 2012, *A Practical Guide to Teaching Aboriginal Languages* included a 35-minute classroom session with Miklo Jarrett with his Gumbaynggirr class in Macksville.

<<https://vimeo.com/103620327>>

#### **Learning from each school's experience, NSW**

From 2004 to 2007, the Board of Studies Project Officers worked intensively on

their Aboriginal language programs with a range of school/community teams. Text and video case studies were published with the following schools to help others on their language journey:

- Brewarinna Central School
- Broulee Public School
- Forbes North Public School
- Hillston Central School
- Lightning Ridge Central School
- St Joseph's Walgett
- Bourke High School
- Bowraville Central School and Nambucca Heads High School
- Dubbo College
- Lower Darling River Schools
- Menindee
- Parkes High School
- Vincentia High School.

<<https://ab-ed.nesa.nsw.edu.au/go/aboriginal-languages/learning>>

### **Quality Aboriginal Languages Teaching, NSW**

Throughout 2009, the NSW Department of Education and Training collaborated with the then NSW Board of Studies, the University of Newcastle and dedicated Aboriginal language teachers from across the state to develop a series of videos and associated resources to support the teaching of Aboriginal languages in NSW. Contributors included Wiradjuri, Ngemba-Wayilwan, Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay and Wangkumarra educators. The resources demonstrate, and document group discussion of, teaching evaluation tools. While the Quality Teaching Framework is no longer a focus within the NSW education system, the teacher interviews, guidance, demonstrations and discussions recorded remain relevant. The materials were published on the Quality Aboriginal Languages Teaching (QALT) website, which has been archived by the National Library of Australia. It can be accessed via Trove.

<[https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20110408012243/http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/secondary/languages/languages/aboriginal/abl\\_qt/index.htm](https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20110408012243/http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/secondary/languages/languages/aboriginal/abl_qt/index.htm)>

### **Teaching Aboriginal Languages**

*Teaching Aboriginal Languages*, published in 2001 by the then NSW Board of Studies, shares case studies of the following schools so that schools and

communities in NSW wishing to establish an Aboriginal Language program can gain from these experiences:

- Bowraville Central
- Shepherds Park SSP
- Brewarrina Central
- St Joseph's Primary, Walgett
- Walgett High
- Yipirinya Northern Territory.

<[https://ab-ed.nesa.nsw.edu.au/files/aborlang\\_casestudies.pdf](https://ab-ed.nesa.nsw.edu.au/files/aborlang_casestudies.pdf)>

### **Pama Language Centre**

The Cape York Partnership has published a short video of Guugu Yimidhirr teacher Lillian Bowen in action. Guugu Yimidhirr classes were reintroduced to the Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy at Hope Vale in 2010, where students from Prep to Year 6 have twice-daily lessons. The Pama Language Centre provides teaching support and resources.

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IF9RD6gtlfE>>

The principal, Glenn White, says:

What I see from our language program is it gives children that sense of pride in their own language. The language is being more encompassed in the school. We're trying to use it more frequently, and I've noticed the kids are becoming more fluent.

The Pama Language Centre has also published a six-minute discussion video showcasing the work of Lillian and her class in creating and performing their school play in Guugu Yimidhirr.

<<https://www.facebook.com/1841823342764548/videos/1849797631967119>>

### **Adaptable resources**

Language teachers nationally are on a constant lookout for resources that they can adapt to support their students' language learning. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators do not have access to the sorts of texts and resources that support the learning of other languages in the classroom – all materials need to be developed from scratch. The following template resources have been developed for adaption by local language teams.

### **Classroom posters and books**

Batchelor Institute Press has produced a range of posters and books which are perfect for classroom use. The posters, and many of the books, are adaptable to any language.

Posters include illustrations and accompanying words for body parts, face parts, counting, weather, colours, clouds, sky, kangaroo, turtle, life cycles, family, time, water cycles, sounds, opposites and sign language.

Books include *Yaringkoorl: Opposites and Naatj ngordo ngany kadak?: How do I feel?*, as well as a series of early childhood reading sets.

<<https://batchelorpress.com/>>

### Picture-based language learning activity resources

First Languages Australia is collaborating with the University of Queensland and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education to develop a teaching activity resource book designed for and by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers. The project has grown from activities collated around the launch of the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) picture dictionaries in Central Australia.

Picture-based activities are an important component of a language teacher's toolkit. The implementation of the Australian Curriculum has prompted a rise in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs in Australian schools, however Indigenous language teacher training, teaching resources and guides remain scarce, motivating the investigation and creation of practical, usable and sharable resources. This project is creating two related sets of resources, informed by the practices and needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, lexicographic research and language documentation. These are a teaching activity workbook and a library of illustrations.

### Teaching activity workbook

The teaching activity workbook will comprise activities contributed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers nationally to support language learning in both the classroom and the community. The foundation of the workbook has been provided by Central Australian language teachers with the activities developed and collated over the past 20 years in association with the launch of the IAD picture dictionaries in each community. First Languages Australia is working with the project team to extend the reach of the document and is sourcing activities from teachers in other regions to make it relevant nationally. Each activity will specify the relevant age, stage, learner pathway and language context. The activities will be mapped to the Australian Curriculum where appropriate.

### Library of illustrations

A library of illustrations for use by language teachers is being collated, beginning with approximately 1000 line-drawn images developed for the IAD picture dictionary series. A digital catalogue of the images and associated metadata is being prepared so that the illustrations can be easily accessed and appropriately referenced. Approvals for free, perpetual use by language teachers are being sought from the six individual artists who created the drawings and from the IAD.

## Binabar Aboriginal language teaching resources

Binabar books produce useful publications, as outlined on their website:

Binabar Books publishes a range of colourful children's story books and associated materials which incorporate Aboriginal languages in the text suitable for educational programs in the early years, prep to lower primary.

The books contain orthography notes to assist with pronunciation, as well as a list of related additional vocabulary which can be used in extension work. They are designed to be adapted to any language and can include sound recordings.

<<https://binabar.com/>>

## Art of Reading image set

SIL International's *Art of Reading* image set has over 10,000 black and white line drawings collected from artists around the world. The images are suitable for use in a wide variety of literacy materials, newsletters, bulletin board displays, and other cultural awareness materials. They are indexed and are an excellent resource for educational materials.

<<http://lingtransoft.info/apps/art-reading>>

## Learning opportunities

While the WA Aboriginal Languages Teacher Traineeship (outlined in this section on pages 65 and 66) provides for limited teacher registration in that state, other states and territories lack such a pathway. The following training and professional development programs provide suggestions of the styles of learning opportunities that will be useful to community members who are looking to teach their languages in schools.

## Growing Our Own

As outlined on the project's website:

Growing Our Own is a long-term project launched by Charles Darwin University (CDU) in partnership with Catholic Education NT. It is a unique model incorporating elements from a long history of initial teacher education initiatives in remote Australian communities.

The vision of Growing Our Own is two-pronged: to empower Indigenous educators to combine culturally relevant ways of being, knowing and doing with contemporary school curricula, and to empower non-Indigenous teachers and mentors to understand culturally relevant Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing. These objectives are intended to strengthen opportunities for Indigenous students' continued learning.

<<https://btgfoundation.com.au/growing-our-own.html>>



## Certificates II, III and IV in Learning and Teaching First Nations Languages

For the past four years, Tauondi Aboriginal Corporation (Tauondi Aboriginal College) has delivered the TAFE Certificate III in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language in partnership with Kurna Warra Karrpanthi Aboriginal Corporation (KWK) for Kurna language, Miwi-inyeri Pelebi-ambi Aboriginal Corporation (MIPAAC) for Ngarrindjeri language and Burrendies Aboriginal Corporation for Bunganditj language. Certificate III subjects were delivered and organised in various arrangements such as day and evening classes, weekly, fortnightly and by block training, meeting the needs of the participants and increasing opportunities for more Aboriginal people to access learning language.

Due to the expiry of the previous Certificate III in Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language in December 2020, and in response to the community demand that Tauondi continues to offer Aboriginal language learning programs, Tauondi decided to undergo the accreditation process for Aboriginal language learning and teaching. The process was supported by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications' Indigenous Languages and Arts Program and the SA Department for Education's Aboriginal Community Language and Culture Partnerships (ACLCP) project.

A Course Advisory Group (CAG) was established, which consisted of representatives from First Languages Australia, state education departments, KWK for Kurna language, MIPAAC for Ngarrindjeri language, and the tertiary and private education sectors. The CAG met monthly and developed two courses in learning at AQF level II and III and one teaching course at AQF level IV.

All stakeholders mutually acknowledged the demand by the community to learn a language and the need to increase the pool of accredited Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander educators. They have proactively participated in the feedback process, which effectively and efficiently contributed to the construction of the accredited courses. The courses are designed to provide students with structural knowledge and skills to assist in undertaking language acquisition, and to learn how to share their knowledge of language to teach others in schools, in the vocational education and training (VET) sector, early childhood centres and community centres.

In October 2020, the courses received accreditation by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) and have since been entered on the National Register. The courses are as follows:

- 10890NAT – Certificate II in Learning an Australian First Nation's Language
- 10891NAT – Certificate III in Learning an Australian First Nation's Language
- 10892NAT – Certificate IV in Teaching an Australian First Nation's Language

Tauondi is working with First Languages Australia and state governments in exploring options (e.g. a licensing agreement and/or a third party agreement) to make these accredited courses available to Aboriginal language groups nationally.

### **Language teacher traineeship: The Western Australian model**

In order to meet the continued demand for Aboriginal languages teachers, the Western Australian Department of Education has for the past 20 years been running a traineeship for people who want to teach their languages in schools.

The Aboriginal Languages Teacher Traineeship (ALTT) is a three-year program, completion of which allows the graduates' schools to apply for Limited Registration (LR) to teach. The program includes:

- two years in-school traineeship
- four block release training intensives
- a third probationary teaching year.

Aboriginal language teacher trainees are supervised in the classroom for two years to give them the opportunity to develop practical skills. The theoretical component of the traineeship includes a total of 20 days block release in four sessions of five days, two delivered in-term and two in school holidays. The block releases are for intensive live-in/residential training held in various locations across the state. These locations depend on student location and the availability and cost of venues. Trainees must attend all block releases, as each block release builds on the skills acquired in the previous block.

After block releases, trainees return to schools to teach language classes, applying skills acquired and using materials developed during the block releases. All costs are covered by the Department.

On successful completion of the course and all assessments and additional requirements, the graduates' schools are eligible to apply to the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia for Limited Registration (LR). When registration is complete, graduates are eligible for appointment as an Aboriginal language teacher who is qualified to teach their language but no other curriculum areas. It is anticipated that the teachers continue at the school where they undertake the training.

As of 2021, participating schools are provided with incentive funding for a teacher mentor. Mentors are expected to meet weekly with the trainee and sign off on their progress. Tools have been published to ensure that the schools, trainees and mentors are each aware of their responsibilities and the learning requirements through each stage of the traineeship. Local mentors are an important component of the program as given the distribution of schools, the trainers are able to visit the trainees a maximum of once a month.

The training program has been at capacity for the past three years with interest exceeding the 20 places available annually.

The Western Australian approach is considered a model of best practice. The model could readily be adapted to meet the needs of other states and territories. The Department is currently working toward program accreditation (see details below).

While the program is very highly regarded, remote language centres have advised that the teachers in their regions would be further supported by the provision of the block programs locally to reduce the need for the teachers to travel so far to participate.

### **Certification of the WA Aboriginal Languages Teacher Traineeship (ALTT)**

As outlined above, for the past 20 years the Western Australian Department of Education has been running a three-year traineeship for people who want to teach their languages in schools.

Throughout 2020, the Department began the process of researching and developing a new registered program based on the traineeship, with a proposed timeline of unit writing in 2021, registration in 2022 and first delivery in 2023.

The registered course will provide a clear pathway for the graduates into a degree program should they choose to continue their teacher training. It is anticipated that graduates of the program will be eligible to enter a four-year Bachelor of Education course at second year.

While the new program is in development, the Department continues to offer the traineeship and is looking at how to appropriately recognise prior learning in order to support those historical graduates who wish to continue their studies with a Bachelor of Education.

### **Developing Anangu language skills**

Anangu educators working in the SA Department for Education's Anangu Lands Partnership have identified first language literacy development as a need and, to this end, the Department is providing both face-to-face and online professional learning programs focused on Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara literacy development. These courses take the literacy focuses and approaches of the broader government schools' system, including the 'Big 6' of reading (oral language, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension), and contextualise these approaches for Anangu languages. The most successful approach to engaging with the online course has involved teaching teams working through the content together in structured times made available by school leadership.

Non-Anangu teachers are also supported to engage with Anangu languages and cultures through a range of initiatives, including a scholarship program to attend the University of South Australia's Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara Language and Culture Program's Summer School in January each year, and the development of a modular online language and culture awareness course designed for new

teachers to work through following their arrival in an Anangu community. This course provides explicit links between Anangu language sounds and structures and teaching English as an additional language, as well as providing insights into Anangu kinship structures, approaches to learning and educational aspirations.

### **Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools**

The Alice Springs Language Centre delivers the following accredited VET Certificate II and III in Applied Language with language industry workplace visits to school students wishing to work as interpreters, translators, language teachers, liaison officers and/or broadcasters after they complete their senior studies:

- 10297NAT – Certificate II in Applied Language
- 10661NAT – Certificate III in Applied Language.

The centre has also offered traineeships to aspiring language teachers completing their senior studies. The trainees support the Arrernte language teachers in the early to middle year classes and work on community language initiatives.

### **Master of Indigenous Language Education: University of Sydney**

Developed specifically for Indigenous teachers, the University of Sydney's (USYD) Master of Indigenous Languages Education provides students with a broad knowledge of the linguistic features of Indigenous Australian languages. The course covers theories of language acquisition, integration and application of linguistics, and language education theory and practice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Teachers do not need to be fluent in their language to enter the course. They do need to have completed a Bachelor of Education with at least one year's teaching experience.

Embedded courses are the:

- Graduate Certificate in Indigenous Languages Education
- Graduate Diploma in Indigenous Languages Education.

<<https://www.sydney.edu.au/courses/courses/pc/master-of-indigenous-languages-education.html>>

### **Languages Professional Learning Program (LPLP)**

All South Australian teachers of languages in government schools have access to the statewide Languages Professional Learning Program (LPLP), which in 2020 was moved online. This program provides a basis for language teachers to develop their understanding of a conceptual approach to language teaching and learning, to identify literacy opportunities in teaching languages and to design learning and assessment that takes these key ideas into account. As of the end of 2020, teachers of Adnyamathanha, Kurna, Ngarrindjeri, Nharangga and Pitjantjatjara had participated in the program.

## **Bachelor of Education Primary: Charles Darwin University**

Charles Darwin University (CDU) offers their Bachelor of Education Primary, with Indigenous perspectives as a particular focus. Within the Bachelor of Education at Charles Darwin University, all students undertake studies in Indigenous languages and literacy as well as examining specific strategies for enhancing educational outcomes for Indigenous children. The degree is offered in person or online at CDU in Darwin, Alice Springs, Adelaide and Melbourne. Indigenous students are not a special cohort.

Since 2018, the degree has offered the following two units as part of the Indigenous knowledges Specialist Elective group. The units are intended for students who speak an Indigenous language and who wish to teach it, or for those who are interested in facilitating the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools.

The information below comes from the course webpage:

### **EST211 Learning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language in Schools**

This unit provides a deep understanding of the policy context and programs related to Indigenous language learning. Pre-service teachers critically examine the global and Australian contexts of Indigenous language learning in schools for first language speakers and for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children who are learning an Indigenous language for the first time. Through this unit, pre-service teachers analyse the socio-political contexts and rationales of Indigenous language learning in relation to policies, curricula and programs. Pre-service teachers critically analyse the inter-relationships between learner needs, community needs, and Indigenous language' curricula and programs and apply this knowledge to propose a language program.

### **EST311 Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language in Schools**

In this unit, pre-service teachers critically examine Australian, state or territory Indigenous language and culture curricula and pedagogies, and identify the implications for teaching Indigenous language to first and second language learners in schools. Pre-service teachers examine the inter-relationships between curriculum, pedagogy and context and apply this knowledge to plan for Indigenous language and culture learning.

<<https://study.csu.edu.au/courses/teaching-education/bachelor-teaching-primary>>

## **Community-based Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander teacher education electives**

TAFE Queensland (in liaison with the Queensland Department of Education and James Cook University through the RATEP program) has added the following two language electives to their Diploma of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Education (10753NAT) and Certificate III in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education (10751NAT) courses:

**CHCEDS029 - Assist teacher to develop Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language and culture lessons**

This unit describes the skills and knowledge required to assist a teacher to develop a series of lessons relating to local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander languages and culture. This unit applies to education support work in a variety of contexts and work is to be undertaken with appropriate guidance, support and supervision by a nominated teacher or other education professional.

**Diploma Elective Unit: AIELAN001 - Create stories in language for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children**

This unit describes the skills, knowledge and performance outcomes required to create and publish stories for children that incorporate Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander local language and culture. Successful completion of the unit requires the ability to source, draft and produce stories aligned with the parameters of the Australian Foundation to Year 6 Curriculum, cultural protocols and intellectual property law.

**Professional Development: Introducing Aboriginal Language Programs into your School**

Developed by the Association of Independent Schools of NSW (AISNSW), this course is delivered in partnership with Dr Christine Evans, Associate Professor of Practice at the National Centre for Cultural Competence at the University of Sydney. The program is offered to Indigenous and non-Indigenous principals and teaching teams across the state in order to build an understanding of the relationships and foundations required for the successful delivery of a local language curriculum.

<<https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/courses/pages/CourseDetails.aspx?cId=55cd3ab81b4946ac8afae36599761b8b>>

**Practical advice for language teaching**

The NSW Education Standards Authority has published practical advice for Aboriginal language teachers and schools interested in working with communities to teach their languages at school. The advice covers the following topics:

- What is language revival?
- Why learn an Aboriginal language?
- The sounds and writing systems of NSW Aboriginal languages
- Language learning in the community
- Getting a school program started

- Taking the team approach
- Writing a teaching and learning program
- Making written resources
- Funding and endorsements.

<<https://ab-ed.nesa.nsw.edu.au/go/aboriginal-languages/practical-advice>>

### **Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization, University of Victoria (UVic), Canada**

With the aim of rapidly increasing the number of community language speakers qualified to teach in schools, the University of Victoria in Canada developed a flexible pathway program toward a Bachelor of Education. First Languages Australia believes that a degree of this type would be a forward step in addressing the need for language teacher training nationally.

The following information is taken directly from the course website.

To honour and support the language revitalization goals and work being undertaken across British Columbia and Canada, University of Victoria offers a community-based Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization that seeks to support communities to retain their language, through education programming.

#### **Program overview**

The Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization is designed with ladder steps which provide exit and entry opportunities. Offered through the Department of Indigenous Education, the program offers flexibility so that Indigenous communities can focus on their specific language revitalization goals. Each delivery is specific to the language community partnership and community.

There are two options community partners can choose from in the first year of the program:

- Option A, which leads to the Certificate in Indigenous Language Revitalization, (developed and delivered through UVic Continuing Studies, Department of Linguistics and En'owkin Centre) providing understanding of language reclamation practices and theories, and
- Option B which focuses specifically on language learning and proficiency building, and leads to the Certificate in Indigenous Language Proficiency.

The second year includes an introduction to language teaching contexts and can lead into the Bachelor of Education, or can continue to focus on building stronger speakers.

The final three years focus on completing the coursework for the Bachelor

of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization and professional BC teaching certification, while maintaining language growth.

Depending on funding and student numbers, at least the first two years of course work follow a cohort model that is physically and culturally situated in individual language communities. The ladder steps include the following:

- Year 1: Option A: Certificate in Indigenous Language Revitalization (CILR) or

Option B: Certificate in Indigenous Language Proficiency (CILP)

- Year 2: Diploma in Indigenous Language Revitalization
- Year 3 & 4: Bachelor of Education in Indigenous Language Revitalization

### **Community based delivery:**

The Bachelor of Education is designed for community-delivery, where the first two years (minimum) are delivered in partnership with a language community or group of communities. The final two years may be delivered in a combination of face-to-face (both on-campus and in community) and distributed learning, bringing cohorts from around the province together OR the individual language community cohorts may continue as a group if student interest and funding warrants.

In addition to UVIC faculty and sessional instructors, the program will utilize local language instructors and resource people to ensure cultural and linguistic contexts are maintained, and to honour the knowledge existing within the community. These community-based cohorts are negotiated as partnerships between the University and the language community, as either two-year diploma or four-year degree programs.

### **Introduction to Aboriginal Languages**

In collaboration with the ACT Education Directorate, AIATSIS has been offering Introduction to Australian Languages workshops to ACT teachers as an introductory guide to pronunciation of words from many Australian languages. The workshops provide theory and practical components regarding language sound and structure.

### **Butmama wuwitj: Online training**

First Languages Australia worked with Living Languages in 2020 to run a series of short online training sessions for young language workers and educators. The sessions covered the following topics:

- Project planning and project team building
- Language teaching principles & basics
- Language teaching techniques



- What is linguistics
- Morphology: How to build words
- Pronunciation.

### **Wangkaku Nintirri: Learn for the sake of our languages**

Wangkaku Nintirri is a collection of short training videos for language workers about working with speech. Each film is accompanied by a worksheet to support learning.

The films were produced by the Goldfields Aboriginal Language Centre in collaboration with First Languages Australia and are outlined on the FLA website as shown below:

#### **Working with speakers to record natural speech**

Tjupan language speaker Edie Ulrich explains how to record natural speech with language speakers. Edie talks about how to make the elicitation sessions enjoyable for everyone whilst gathering the maximum linguistic material, how to manage your own feelings and ensure the elicitation session stays on-task.

#### **Transcribing for Language Workers**

Tjupan language speaker Edie Ulrich talks about how to transcribe speech from an elicitation session, what to include in the transcripts, marking time codes, using Audacity as an audio playback tool, how to work on noise and click reductions, and how to export segments of an audio. Sound linguistic protocols are used to follow for managing transcriptions.

#### **Parts of Speech for Language Workers**

This film looks at the parts of speech that may be found in languages - verbs and conjugations, nouns, pronouns, descriptors/adjectives and adverbs, and prepositions/post positions in an easy to understand way.

<<https://vimeo.com/showcase/7143827>>

### **Funding**

Funding is an ongoing issue that each authority must address if we are to see the sustainable teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in schools.

### **NSW Aboriginal Languages Community Investments Program**

The Aboriginal Languages Community Investments Program 2021 aims to progress the functions of the *Aboriginal Languages Act 2017* (NSW) by supporting the raising of awareness, reawakening, growth, nurturing and promotion of Aboriginal languages in communities across NSW.

As outlined on the NSW Government website:

The Aboriginal Languages Trust is investing \$800,000 in local Aboriginal community groups and organisations who have a focus on delivering:

- Aboriginal language activities
- building workforce capability
- promoting the appreciation and use of Aboriginal Languages.

To be an eligible recipient, organisations must be a not-for-profit incorporated Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation and located in NSW.

<<https://www.nsw.gov.au/news/applications-open-for-aboriginal-languages-community-investment-program-2021>>

### **Queensland Indigenous Languages Grants**

In 2019, the Queensland Government's Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DATSIP) launched a small grant round to support the development of language resources and community language activities. The grants are 50 per cent funded by the Queensland Department of Education and specifically target schools that wish to work with their local language custodians toward the delivery of a local language curriculum. It is a requirement of the grant that any resources produced are owned by the community.

<<https://www.qld.gov.au/atsi/grants-funding/languages>>

### **South Australian grants supporting Aboriginal languages**

Through its Aboriginal Community Language and Culture Partnerships (ACLCP) project (introduced in 2012), the SA Department for Education collaborates with a number of Aboriginal language communities to build local Aboriginal community capacity to lead long-term language maintenance and revival through education. Expertise from language communities and the department is coordinated through funded partnerships to develop both human and material resources to support this goal. (More detail on current projects can be found on pages 32-35 of this document).

Aboriginal Languages Programs Initiative (ALPI) grants have been offered since 1999 to support the teaching and learning of South Australian Aboriginal languages in government schools for all students from Reception to Year 12, as well as the development of Aboriginal languages as an option in the Australian Curriculum and at senior secondary level.

Cash grants are available annually on application in order to promote the presence of Aboriginal language and cultural expertise in classrooms. Schools may use the grants in a range of ways, including to help meet the costs for hourly paid instructors, professional learning, collaborative planning, and for developing and purchasing language teaching materials as part of a sustained language learning program. First Languages Maintenance and Development

(FLMD) grants have been available since 1986 to support Aboriginal children to learn their own language in the primary years. These also support students of first languages present in the classroom that are not being taught as an Australian Curriculum language in the same school.

FLMD grants provide Full Time Equivalent (FTE) salary allocations annually on application. Since 2016, 5.00 FTEs have been provided each year to support first language learning in Anangu schools and LR and L2 programs across the state. The Innovative Language Program Grants (ILPG) were established in 2019 to reinvigorate the study of languages, including Aboriginal languages, in primary education. Leigh Creek Area School was one of five schools to receive the grant, which it used to employ culturally responsive pedagogies to collaborate with community on Country to build, strengthen and learn the Adnyamathanha language (from the greater Flinders Ranges). The language program at Leigh Creek Area School is captured in an ACARA illustration of practice (see page 57 of this document for further details).

## Guidelines

The Northern Territory, New South Wales and Queensland education departments have published guidelines to support the establishment of language programs in their schools. These guidelines have been made public and are relevant nationally. They are outlined below.

### Guidelines for the implementation of Indigenous Languages and Cultures Programs in schools

The Northern Territory Government developed these guidelines to assist Northern Territory government schools to deliver Indigenous Languages and Cultures (ILC) programs in line with the Northern Territory Board of Studies (NTBOS) plan. The plan (*Keeping Indigenous languages and Cultures Strong: A plan for teaching and learning of Indigenous languages and cultures in the Northern Territory schools*) was developed in conjunction with the NTBOS Indigenous Languages and Cultures Reference Group.

<[https://education.nt.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/471712/indigenous-languages-and-cultures-guidelines.pdf](https://education.nt.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/471712/indigenous-languages-and-cultures-guidelines.pdf)>

### Implementing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages syllabuses

Published in 2011, *A Guide to Implementing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Syllabuses: Information for principals* aims to support principals to engage effectively with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities in order to implement the Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority's (QCAA) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages syllabuses. It provides strategies to assist with the process of developing and running a language program in Education Queensland schools. While the Queensland syllabus has been superseded by the Framework, this guide remains a useful tool for schools in beginning their language journey.

<[https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p\\_10/snr\\_atasi\\_languages\\_11\\_implement.pdf](https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/snr_atasi_languages_11_implement.pdf)>

### **Language: A key to understanding**

Published in 1992 by the Queensland Department of Education, Peninsular Region, *Language: A key to understanding* remains relevant today in guiding language communities and their schools through the process of deciding what language program will suit the needs of their students.

<<https://jarrak.com.au/entry/Language,%20a%20key%20to%20understanding>>

### **Teaching Aboriginal language and culture: A guide for schools**

In 2014, the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSW AECG) published *Teaching Aboriginal Language and Culture: A guide for schools* as a tool for all NSW Department of Education and Communities staff involved in developing and delivering local Aboriginal language/culture programmes within NSW public schools. The guide preceded the release of the Australian Curriculum *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages* but remains a useful tool for schools looking to establish the relationships required to implement a local language curriculum.

<[https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Aboriginal-Language-and-Culture-Programmes-Schools-Guide-1\\_June2014.pdf](https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Aboriginal-Language-and-Culture-Programmes-Schools-Guide-1_June2014.pdf)>

### **NSW Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests guidelines and support resources**

The NSW Department of Education Aboriginal Education and Communities Directorate has published *Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Guidelines* (2019). The guidelines outline the roles and responsibilities of individuals and stakeholders involved in delivery of Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests (ALCN) and make clear the governance processes designed to ensure ‘smooth and effective program delivery, data capture and reporting’.

<[https://www.education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/aec/media/documents/Aboriginal\\_Language\\_and\\_Culture\\_Nest\\_Guidelines\\_-\\_December\\_2019.pdf](https://www.education.nsw.gov.au/content/dam/main-education/teaching-and-learning/aec/media/documents/Aboriginal_Language_and_Culture_Nest_Guidelines_-_December_2019.pdf)>

The NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (NSW AECG) has also published the following support resources for language and culture Nest communities:

- *Foundations Framework: Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests (ALCN) in New South Wales* (2013)

<[https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Foundations-Framework-ALCN\\_June\\_2014.pdf](https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Foundations-Framework-ALCN_June_2014.pdf)>

- *Implementation Plan: Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests (ALCN) in New South Wales* (2013)

<[https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Implementation-Plan-ALCN\\_June\\_2014.pdf](https://www.aecg.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Implementation-Plan-ALCN_June_2014.pdf)>

These tools were developed to enable NSW Aboriginal people ‘to set up, run, monitor and extend’ their community-based language and culture initiatives within the Nest framework.

### **Community capacity building tools**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres and programs have developed a number of tools to support custodians in their work toward language strength. The following information has been adapted from the First Languages Australia and relevant language centre websites.

#### ***Junyirri: A framework for planning community language projects***

First Languages Australia developed *Junyirri: A framework for planning community language projects* to assist the establishment and ongoing development of community language programs. *Junyirri* draws on the shared experience of many different languages projects and programs within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

The framework is intended to guide people to think about their current language situation, their aspirations for the use of language in their community, what assets their community has available, and the types of language programs that might be suitable for their situation.

*Junyirri* can help community/school collaborators to:

- assess the current language situation
- define the community’s language goals
- identify and list the assets available to help them reach their goals
- consider whether training will help reach these goals
- choose language activities based on the available community assets
- make an assessment of the likely outcomes of the chosen activities
- define where project outcomes fit in relation to the broader goals
- write key performance indicators for a chosen project.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/junyirri>>

#### **Patyegarang: Indigenous Australian languages education website**

Patyegarang is a website that answers questions about the teaching of Australian languages frequently asked by Australian languages educators, with a particular focus on language revival.

Patyegarang offers both original material and links to existing resources that can assist educators to improve their teaching as part of their language revival

process. The website is published by staff of the Master of Indigenous Languages Education course at the University of Sydney in order to share information with interested community members who are not eligible for entry to that program. Patyegarang is a work in progress that will grow over time. The authors are open to suggestions and contributions from users and others working in the field.

<<http://www.indigoz.com.au/language/index.html>>

### ***Peetyawan Weeyn: A guide to language revival planning***

Published by the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages (VACL), *Peetyawan Weeyn* is a framework for Aboriginal language reclamation work to support communities in managing their own language revival process. The guide offers ways of tracking the development of community projects over several years. It outlines possible paths to take, aspects that should be considered when reviving a language and the importance of taking time to regularly consider program progress across each of the areas identified.

<<https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/165469493>>

### **Meeting Point: Language revival typology project (and associated tools)**

Throughout 2012 and 2013, VACL was part of the Meeting Point project, a research project which resulted in a suite of holistic language planning tools that help communities to not have to ‘reinvent the wheel’ each time they need to develop resources, and helps linguists to understand how to work with the living languages of the present as well as the historical records of the past.

<<https://vacl.org.au/white-papers/search>>

### ***Warra: Building teams, building resources***

Published by First Languages Australia, *Warra: Building teams, building resources* is a tool to assist people who are thinking about developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language resources. It was compiled to help families, communities and educators with the work of maintaining and strengthening Australia’s traditional languages. The following outline is from the FLA website:

Developed in collaboration with national language centres and programs, *Warra* showcases a wide range of language resources and highlights important considerations in community resource production. Project examples and photographs highlight a range of successful projects to guide and inspire future work.

Experienced language project teams around the country contributed to the guide to help make the collaborative work of producing Indigenous language resources easier for all involved.

*Warra* has eight parts, each covering some key points to consider in resource production:

- Before getting started
- Building the language resource project team
- The consultation process
- Choosing a product, choosing a design
- Funding your project
- Community control and ownership of resources
- Archiving the material you collect
- Marketing, selling and distribution.

Warra was developed to save time and effort for everyone involved in language resource production.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/warra>>

### **First Languages, Law & Governance Guide**

Terri Janke and Company's *First Languages, Law & Governance Guide*, is written to assist in managing the legal and governance challenges of working on language projects. The guide provides an overview of the legal issues and the support resources available that language workers need to consider in the development of language projects.

<<https://www.terrijanke.com.au/first-languages-law-governance-guid>>

### **Yaale: Tools for language work**

Developed by First Languages Australia, *Yaale: Tools for language work* collates and shares information about the various tools that are useful for language work.

The project aims to identify the tools and templates that language workers and educators find most useful in supporting their work. Information is being collected from a diverse range of people involved in language projects in order to provide a broad overview of the types of tools available to support local language activities. Information about contributors' personal skills and experience has also been collected to provide background and context to the way the tools are meeting community needs.

*Yaale* is a growing collection. Teachers are able to email First Languages Australia at any time to contribute information about the tools and templates that they find most useful.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/yaale-tools-for-language-work>>

<<https://yaale.com.au/>>

### **Yakilla: Training tracks: Professional learning opportunities in the languages field**

Throughout 2019 and 2020, First Languages Australia worked with partners to identify the learning opportunities currently available that are relevant to language work. These have been published in the report *Yakilla: Training tracks: Professional learning opportunities in the languages field*. Some of the listings included are still in development, while the registration of others has expired. Each have been included to ensure that new programs build on the work that has been done before and that overlap in offerings is minimised. The opportunities identified have also been compiled on a database website for easy search access, along with a poster to promote the resource and facilitate access to the contents.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/yakilla-training-tracks>>

<<https://yakilla.com.au/>>

### **Wandan: First language collections portal**

Trove is the national search engine through which people can explore the collections held by Australian libraries, universities, museums, galleries and archives. It's free and is a great resource for educators and advisory groups looking for language resources to support their programs.

However, searching for old documents that contain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages can be difficult. The different spellings often cause problems for people researching their languages as historical spellings do not often match those accepted today. For example, AIATSIS's language database Austlang lists 51 different spellings for 'Gamilaraay'.

To help make it easier for community members and educators to find relevant language resources in the major collections, First Languages Australia has developed Wandan: first language collections portal, a search tool that links the various historical spellings.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/wandan-collections-portal>>

<<https://wandan.com.au/>>

### **Policy and reference documents**

Education authorities have been working for a number of years to profile the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. This has been done through the policy documents highlighted below.

#### **South Australia**

- *Aboriginal Education Strategy 2019 to 2029 (2018)*
- *Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee Report on Aboriginal Languages in South Australia (2019)*
- *Curriculum, Pedagogy, Assessment and Reporting Policy (2020)*



## Queensland

- *Many Voices: Indigenous languages policy* (2020).
- *Indigenous Language Grants 2020*
- *Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Languages Short Course Syllabus 2019* (Senior short courses)
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Statement* (2018)
- *Advancing Education: An action plan for education in Queensland* (2016)
- *A Guide to Implementing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Syllabuses* (2011)
- *Embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Perspectives in Schools* (2011)
- The Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) also published a resources page for the P–10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages Syllabus, which has now been replaced by the Framework.

## New South Wales

- *Aboriginal Languages K–10 Draft Outcomes and Content* (currently being updated)
- Aboriginal Languages Community Investments Program 2021
- *Walking Together, Working Together: Partnership agreement between the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc and the NSW Department of Education 2020-2030*
- Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests
- *NSW Aboriginal Education Policy* (2008)
- *Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus* (2003)
- NSW Education Standards Authority website (currently being updated) contains resources to support the teaching of Aboriginal languages.

## Northern Territory

- *Keeping Indigenous Languages and Cultures Strong: A plan for the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages and cultures in Northern Territory schools* (2016)
- *Guidelines for the Implementation of Indigenous Languages and Cultures Programs in Schools* (2019)
- Indigenous Languages and Cultures curriculum documents
- Language and Culture Nest guidelines (December 2019)

- OCHRE: *Opportunity, choice, healing, responsibility, empowerment* (2013)
- *Aboriginal Education Policy* (2008)

### Victoria

- *Marrung: Aboriginal education plan 2016-2026*
- F-10 Curriculum: Aboriginal Languages and Culture Victoria resources page

### Iutruwita (Tasmania)

- *tipara waranta kani nina-mapali-tu? What can we tell you?*

### Australian Capital Territory

- Cultural integrity in ACT public schools

### Western Australia

- *Aboriginal Cultural Standards Framework* (2015)
- Curriculum K-10 outline in reference to the Framework: Language Revival
- Aboriginal languages of WA: senior syllabus and support materials
- Expressions of interest for Aboriginal languages teacher training (2017)

### Independent Education Union Queensland and Northern Territory Branch

- *First Languages Workplan 2021-2023*
- *First Language Instruction* position paper (2020)
- *Working with First Nations People and Communities* policy (2020)
- *Review and Endorsement of Teaching Resources with a First Nations Component* position paper

### Discussion papers

The following publications are highlighted as further reading. They provide significant background and historical context to the teaching of languages in schools and to the recommendations made in this report.

#### *Nintiringanyi: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages teaching and employment strategy*

First Languages Australia's *Nintiringanyi: National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages teaching and employment strategy* highlights key actions for consideration by each state and territory in appropriately developing and supporting Indigenous language teachers in schools. The document includes

examples of activities and strategies that have been successfully implemented in schools. These activities and strategies can be adapted elsewhere to provide sustainable teaching of first languages where that is the wish of the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language community.

As outlined on the FLA website, *Nintiringanyi* prioritises actions across five key areas:

- language teacher training
- learning the language required to teach
- teacher registration
- community protocols
- working regionally.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/nintiringanyi>>

### ***Global Lessons: Indigenous languages and multilingualism in school programs***

Developed by First Languages Australia as a companion to *Nintiringanyi*, *Global Lessons: Indigenous languages and multilingualism in school programs* (2018) looks at the benefits of teaching Indigenous languages, what success means, and the support structures required for success and sustainability.

The report includes case studies that demonstrate the requirements for successful collaborations between language communities and their local schools. *Global Lessons* is available as a PDF or online. The online version of the document includes video links that demonstrate the activities in action.

<<https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/resources/global-lessons>>


### ***Our Land, Our Languages: Language learning in Indigenous communities***

In July 2011, The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs was asked to inquire into and report on Indigenous languages in Australia. The resulting report, *Our Land, Our Languages: Language learning in Indigenous communities* (2012), made several recommendations concerning increasing training and career development opportunities for language workers, in particular teachers and interpreters.

<[https://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary\\_business/committees/house\\_of\\_representatives\\_committees?url=/atsia/languages2/report.htm](https://www.aph.gov.au/parliamentary_business/committees/house_of_representatives_committees?url=/atsia/languages2/report.htm)>

### ***Policy and Practice: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching in Australian public schools***

In October 2019, the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Council (NATISIEC) prepared two reports for the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment. These are *Policy and Practice:*



*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teaching in Australian public schools* which is to do with teaching, and *Policy and Practice: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce in Australian public schools* which looks at the needs of the Aboriginal education workforce.

### **The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015**

The Australian Government's *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Strategy 2015* was endorsed by education ministers in September 2015. The strategy acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as 'the first Australians with the oldest continuing cultures in human history' and states that 'Governments across Australia affirm the right of Aboriginal and Torres [Strait] Islander people to maintain languages and cultures and acknowledge their deep cultural associations with the land and water'. It sets the principles and priorities that act as a framework to guide jurisdictions in developing and implementing localised policies and actions to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It also outlines the first of a series of national collaborative actions.

<[http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ATSI%20documents/NATSI\\_EducationStrategy\\_v3.pdf](http://www.educationcouncil.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/ATSI%20documents/NATSI_EducationStrategy_v3.pdf)>

### **Indigenous language programmes in Australian schools: A way forward**

The 2008, the Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) commissioned a report by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations. The report, *Indigenous Language Programmes in Australian Schools: A way forward* (2008), provided a snapshot of the then national situation in Indigenous languages education in Australian schools as a basis from which to strengthen the quality of Indigenous languages programs in schools. The report made a range of recommendations, including that federal, state and territory education departments support the maintenance, revitalisation and rebuilding of Australian Indigenous languages by creating opportunities for students to learn an Indigenous language as part of the Australian Government's School Languages Program (SLP).

<[https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=indigenous\\_education](https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1017&context=indigenous_education)>

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## Stakeholders

First Languages Australia identifies the following project stakeholders as key to the successful implementation of the Australian Curriculum *Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages*.

### The first language network

First Languages Australia (FLA) is the peak body in Australia that is committed to ensuring the future strength of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Our organisation supports the network of language centres and community language programs around the country, while advocating on behalf of the language communities to governments at all levels. First Languages Australia takes a leading role in the promotion of first languages to raise awareness of their diversity and importance to all Australians.

First Languages Australia sees our young people, educators and language workers as particularly vital project participants as these people are the carriers of our languages into the future. Within the first language network, there are four key audiences that this project targets: language centres, young champions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language educators and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers. These groups are all stakeholders in this project and each is outlined below.

### Language centres

As far as possible, regional language centres support the needs of language communities within the regions they cover (from five to over 100). Each language centre is different and works to its local community's priorities. All have demands that radically outstrip current capacity and significant funding is needed to ensure that language centres, programs and communities are able to work sustainably with schools to mutual benefit.

These community-focused language organisations require continuous and uninterrupted financial support for their ongoing work, including the adoption of new technologies to maintain communication, teaching and learning resources. Language centres across the nation invest significant effort creating and adapting the systems and resources that are needed to grow language strength.

It is essential that organisations with longstanding expertise in Aboriginal languages are supported in their work toward the implementation of learning, training and teaching programs. When properly resourced, the sharing of tools and resources within and among language centres and programs will radically decrease the level of expenditure required to support each individual language.

### **Young champions**

First Languages Australia has a strong commitment to fostering the engagement and enthusiasm of our next generation of language leaders and is working to support and mentor Australia's bright young language 'champions'.

The Young Champions program was established to encourage, promote and mentor our next generation of language workers. Through this program, First Languages Australia invites young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to participate in language mentoring activities.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language educators**

Our language teachers work to share their languages with others to ensure they are learnt so that the community of speakers grows. These educators may work primarily in community or family settings, community organisations or within the formal education and training sector, including early childhood, school and adult education.

### **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language workers**

Language workers strive to embed languages across all fields of life. The term 'language worker' can cover a broad spectrum of people from language custodians, support staff and volunteers working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language centres to community language teachers, community linguists, schoolteachers and university-qualified linguists.

### **Key partnerships**

The following groups, organisations and people are important stakeholders in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages project. First Languages Australia sees partnerships with these stakeholders as an integral part of the successful implementation of the Framework.

#### **The Commonwealth of Australia**

While this project and the Framework are the responsibility of the Department of Education, Skills Development and Employment, sustainable Framework implementation requires a whole-of-government approach, working toward community language strength nationally. The Department of Education, Skills Development and Employment, National Agency for Indigenous Australians and the Indigenous Languages and Arts team within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications are well placed to lead this work.

#### **Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)**

ACARA is the independent statutory authority developing and overseeing the Australian Curriculum. ACARA developed the Australian Curriculum which provides teachers, parents, students and the community with a clear understanding of what students should learn, regardless of where they live or

what school they attend. In December 2015, ACARA released the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*, which supports the development of language curricula in collaboration with local language custodians.

### **The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)**

AIATSIS has interdisciplinary research teams and support staff that work to build networks and partnerships for research across academic, community and public sectors. This project will work closely with the newly formed Education team as well as the longstanding Indigenous Culture and Policy team (which includes the Languages group).

### **Education institutions**

Schools, early childhood, vocational and tertiary education institutions have a unique role in supporting Indigenous languages by linking communities, language centres, and local, state and federal governments. Education institutions will work in diverse ways to share local languages driven by their local language communities. State and territory jurisdictions and the school sectors (public, Catholic and independent) are responsible for policies, programs, curricula and strategies that enable Indigenous languages teaching.

### **State and territory education departments and directorates**

The states and territories are charged with implementing the Australian Curriculum in their regions. Since 2016, they have been working with First Languages Australia to identify community needs concerning the implementation of the *Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages*, exploring ways to meet the needs of language groups across their regions.

### **Non-government education authorities**

Like the states and territories, non-government education authorities are responsible for delivering the Australian Curriculum, including decisions about implementation timeframes, classroom practices and resources that complement teaching the Australian Curriculum. There is a long history of Catholic and Independent schools working with local language communities to provide local language classes in schools and to support bilingual schooling.

### **Academic language educators, linguists and language researchers**

Academic language educators, researchers and linguists play an important role in working with communities and groups of Indigenous educators. Academics may be based in institutions or located directly within organisations seeking to preserve languages, such as language centres. Some institutions and research centres have teams with a particular interest in Indigenous languages education or with particular connections to language communities working with schools.

### **Resource designers**

Language centres, literature production centres and community publishers are examples of organisations working to develop and publish resources to meet the needs of language teachers, workers and communities.

### **Training providers**

There are a number of organisations in the vocational, community, private and tertiary sectors that are also developing or providing programs to support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language teachers and workers.

### **State and territory Indigenous education consultative bodies**

Aboriginal education bodies go by different names in each state and territory. They are non-profit organisations that provide advice on matters relevant to education and training, and work to increase the presence and voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in education decision making.

### **Education unions**

The Australian Education Union (AEU) represents Australian public school, early childhood and TAFE teachers, education leaders and education support staff. The Independent Education Union of Australia (IEU) represents all employees working in non-government schools and institutions across Australia. As well as the federal organisations, there are branches of both unions in each state and territory.

### **Networks of other language teachers**

The Australian Federation of Modern Languages Teachers Association (AFMLTA) and Community Language Australia (CLA) each have networks of language teachers who may be able to support the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages teachers.

### **Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)**

AITSL exists to lead significant education reforms across Australia under the direction of the Australian Government and with guidance from the Education Council. The organisation works to promote excellence so that teachers and leaders have the maximum impact on learning in all Australian schools and early childhood settings.

### **The Education Council**

The Education Council provides a forum through which strategic policy on school education, early childhood and higher education can be coordinated at the national level and through which information can be shared, and resources used collaboratively, to address issues of national significance.







First Languages Australia is the peak body committed to ensuring the future strength of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

[firstlanguages.org.au](http://firstlanguages.org.au)

We share the stories of the people, the histories and the diversity of our languages; we work to bring the best tools and technologies to our communities to enrich their teaching and sharing of language; and we pledge that by bringing strong partners to share our commitment, the first voices of this land will be heard clearly and loudly into the future.