

Canberra Region Languages Forum Update

December 2017

1. Promoting languages at the Multicultural Festival

The ACT Bilingual Education Alliance is assisting with a languages information stall at the Multicultural Festival in Civic on

- Sunday 18 February 2018, 10.30am-4.30pm.

The festival is visited by thousands of people each year so this is a great opportunity to publicise the benefits of knowing more than one language and to promote language learning and teaching opportunities in the ACT area. If you would like to help to staff the stall and share your enthusiasm and knowledge and/or if you have brochures or pamphlets about a language program you are involved in that you would like to display, please email Mandy at canberrabilinqual@gmail.com

Note: ACTBEA gratefully acknowledges support from the Canberra Academy of Languages and the ACT Government's 2017-18 Participation (Multicultural) Grants Program for its activities at the festival.

2. Mother tongue multilingual poetry at the National Multicultural Festival in 2018!

Come and share a poem or join the audience! You can read or recite a poem in a language other than English - or more than one language - at one of the MT showcases:

- Friday 16 February, at 5.00pm; and
- Saturday 17 February at 8.50pm.

You will have 4 minutes to read or recite your own original poem, or a favourite in your language, and give a short explanation or a translation in English. Some poets write in a mixture of languages, including some English. There are a limited number of performance spots, so get in touch soon.

Other Mother Tongue events to look out for:

- performance at the Multicultural Festival on Sunday 18 February, and
- multilingual poetry night on Monday 12 February at Smiths Alternative – you can meet other multilingual poets and have a practice run at reading your own poem to a small and supportive audience.

For more information: see <https://www.facebook.com/mothertonguemtc/> or email mothertonguemtc@gmail.com

3. Some opportunities to learn languages over the summer

Indigenous Languages Summer School 8 - 19 January 2018

Charles Darwin University is working in collaboration with the ANU to offer the inaugural Indigenous Languages Summer School in Sydney in January 2018

For more information: <http://www.cdu.edu.au/sikpp/aili>, email sikpp@cdu.edu.au or contact School of Indigenous Knowledges and Public Policy (08) 8946 6477

Elementary Arabic at the ANU

The Centre for Arab & Islamic Studies at the ANU is running a 4-week elementary Arabic (MSA) course over the summer (16 Jan-15 Feb) for absolute beginners. It's not for credit, but anyone interested is encouraged to sign up by emailing CAIS (cais@anu.edu.au).

More info: <http://cais.cass.anu.edu.au/news/arabic-summer-course-2018-expressions-interest-open>

French with the Alliance Française de Canberra

Workshops and intensive courses available in January 2018. For adults and children. All levels.

For details: <http://www.afcanberra.com.au/>

4. Back to Your Roots Writing Competition for ACT Youth Aged 8–18

A writing competition sponsored by Elizabeth Kikkert MLA, Shadow Minister for Families, Youth and Community Services and Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs. The aim is to encourage children and young people of all backgrounds who live, work or study in the ACT to learn more about their cultural heritage and draw closer to their families. It is also a chance for them to show their creativity and share their diverse cultural heritages that give them a sense of place and identity in the world.

Submissions must be in English and made by 26 January 2018. Winners will receive cinema tickets for themselves and four others. Select entries will be published on the Back to Your Roots website. For more information: <http://www.back2yourroots.org>

5. Languages education in the discussion of the Future of Education in the ACT

Since February 2017, the ACT government has been seeking input from Canberrans about what they want for the future of schools and education in the ACT. A key focus is equity. From feedback received to date, ten themes have been identified – for a summary see: https://www.education.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/1113414/Future-Of-Education-Themes-final-doc.pdf

There is little or no mention of languages in the themes or discussion so far.

While the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families are mentioned in [Discussion Paper 1](#) as one of the developmentally vulnerable groups at the start of kindergarten, there is no mention of the value of the multilingual resources that many children bring with them to school. There is also no mention of the benefits of learning languages in general, or how a focus on language education relates directly to some of the major themes identified in community feedback so far. For example,

- ‘Learning for the future by developing 21st century skills’
Skills listed include critical thinking, problem solving, adaptability, creativity, collaboration, cultural literacy and relationship building - all skills that have been linked to learning languages.
- ‘Wellbeing and Life Skills’
Valuing and supporting home languages can promote family, social and emotional wellbeing. The study of other languages in general helps students engage with other perspectives and cultures, and reflect on their own identities and place in the world.

To comment on the themes identified so far, or to share your ideas about the Future of Education in the ACT, see www.yoursay.act.gov.au/futureofeducation

A submission by the [Canberra Academy of Languages](#) advocating for improved and more equitable senior secondary languages education in the ACT can be downloaded at: http://www.cal.act.edu.au/docs/CAL_Submission_to_ACT_Government_on_the_Future_of_Education_2017_web.pdf

For a post on the Languages Forum blog: <https://canberralanguages.blogspot.com.au/>

6. Language on the Move

A peer-reviewed sociolinguistics research site devoted to multilingualism, language learning and intercultural communication in the contexts of globalization and migration. Based at Macquarie University in Sydney, Language on the Move aims to disseminate sociolinguistic research to a broad global audience.

Find out what the group does at <http://www.languageonthemove.com/>. You can also subscribe to the Language on the Move newsletter in the footer of that site, and follow them on Facebook [@languageonthemove](#) or on Twitter [Follow @Lg_on the Move](#)

7. A new agreement with Open Universities Australia to share online language courses developed at the ANU

From 2018, Australians will be able to study six important Asian languages that are rarely taught nationally thanks to a new agreement with Open Universities Australia (OUA). Under the agreement, ANU courses in Hindi, Sanskrit, Tetum, Thai, Tibetan and Vietnamese will be made available online through OUA from first semester 2018.

For more information: <http://chl.anu.edu.au/news-events/news/907/anu-asian-language-courses-be-available-online>

8. ACT Libraries: hubs for language learning and teaching

Are you making the most of the free resources and programs at ACT libraries? These include:

- Bilingual picture books in 36 languages, including Arabic, Farsi, Hindi, Mandarin, Vietnamese and Bengali.
- Magazines and newspapers in many languages.
- Mango Languages, a free online app with modules in over 30 languages, including English for native speakers of several languages.
- Online resources for kids, including Tumble Books and Story Box Library, where you can hear stories being read aloud; mainly in English but some other languages too.
- Activities such as English conversation groups, story times for kids, and, beginning in 2018, regular bilingual story times
- English books for students to read and borrow - for all ages and interests.
- Audio books to listen to - great for practicing and learning English.

ACT libraries are located in Gungahlin, Tuggeranong, Belconnen, Kippax, Dickson, Woden, Kingston, Erindale and Civic.

Joining the library is free and easy. Find out more at www.library.act.gov.au/library_services, call 6205 9000 or consult staff at any library.

9. ACT libraries are looking for volunteer adult literacy tutors.

Would you like to help adults improve their literacy skills and enhance their lives? Libraries ACT are looking for experienced tutors to help adults improve their literacy skills and benefit from the resources and services in our libraries. Tutoring will be one on one, learner centred and focussed on a practical goal. This program is focussed on helping adults from an English speaking background.

For more details: email libraryvolunteers@act.gov.au, call 6205 9671 or visit <https://www.volunteeringact.org.au/volunteers/opportunities#/opportunity/109734>

10. This is a Voice exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney

If you are visiting Sydney, why not check out this exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum?

Experience the human voice, how it locates us socially, geographically and psychologically, and learn how the voice is utterly flexible and can be altered with treatment and training. The exhibition features the Sydney Speaks app, developed by The ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language, an interactive tool that involves hearing clips of speakers and matching them with social characteristics (occupation, region, ethnicity and age).

On now until 28 January 2018. For details: <https://maas.museum/event/this-is-a-voice/>

11. ACT Bilingual Education Alliance (ACTBEA)

For news and articles about bilingualism and language learning, with a focus on children, follow ACTBEA on facebook at <https://web.facebook.com/ACTBEA/>

FEEDBACK ON UPDATES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE UPDATES WELCOME

Copies of previous Forum Updates are available at
<http://canberralanguages.blogspot.com/p/forum-updates.html>