

Canberra Region Languages Forum Update

February 2018

1. Promoting languages at the Multicultural Festival

There will be a languages education information stall at the Multicultural Festival on

- Sunday 18 February 2018, 10.30am-4.30pm
- City Walk between the merry-go-round and David Jones (Stall E6)

The festival 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. Please contact Mandy at canberrabilingual@gmail.com or 0408 089 235 if you

- would like to help to staff the stall and share your enthusiasm and knowledge and/or
- have brochures or pamphlets about a language program you are involved in that you would like to display

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

- Friday 16 February, 5.00 – 5.45pm, Stage 4, Akuna Street
- Saturday 17 February, 8.50 – 9.35pm, Stage 7, Petrie Plaza
- Sunday 18 February, 12.15 – 12.35pm, Stage 4, Akuna Street

For more details of the above, plus a free event at Smith's Alternative on Monday evening 12 February which includes open mic poetry and panel discussion about writing in different languages, see Mother Tongue on Facebook at <https://web.facebook.com/mothertonguemicro> or email mothertonguemicro@gmail.com

3. Language activities for children at the Multicultural Festival

If you have children or grandkids be sure to visit the Children's Sanctuary

- Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 February
- Civic Library (Saturday 11am-3.30pm) and Canberra Museum and Gallery (CMAG) (Saturday 10am – 4pm and Sunday 11am - 4pm)

A place for children and their families to play, create and take part in a range of cultural and language activities.

For details: https://www.multiculturalfestival.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/1160966/2018-National-Multicultural-Festival-Childrens-Sanctuary-program.pdf

For information about other events at the Multicultural Festival: <https://www.multiculturalfestival.com.au/experience>

4. Mother Language Walk Sunday 25 February 2018

Come and celebrate your family language/s and the many other languages spoken in the ACT area by joining the 2018 Mother Languages Walk across Commonwealth Bridge in Canberra. This walk commemorates International Mother Language Day on 21 February, the date declared by UNESCO in 1999 to be observed annually worldwide to promote awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and multilingualism.

When? 10am Sunday 25 February 2018

Who? Anyone and everyone! Free event.

Where? Meet under the flags, near the National Library in Canberra.

- Sing in your family language during the walk
- Wear something traditional or colourful
- Bring banners, posters or anything else that celebrates your language identity
- Bring a picnic and meet other multilingual Canberrans at the end of the walk in Commonwealth Park

For more information: <http://imlm21.org.au/> or email imlm.21feb@gmail.com

5. Raising Children in more than One Language Sunday 4 March

A seminar for families raising children in more than one language and others with an interest in bilingualism and bilingual education

- Sunday 4 March 2018 1.30pm-4pm
- Law Theatre, ANU College of Law, 5 Fellows Road, Acton
- Free entry and light refreshments

Discussion will be led by a multilingual panel of parents, older children who have grown up bilingually and an educator and/or academic involved in bilingual education. Questions and input from audience members are encouraged, and there will be opportunities for networking.

Children welcome but must be under parental supervision

RSVP via Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/seminar-raising-children-in-more-than-one-language-tickets-42865057541> or contact canberrabilingual@gmail.com or Mandy on 0408 089 235

ACTBEA gratefully acknowledges funding through the ACT Government 2017/18 Participation (Multicultural) Grants Program and the Alliance's auspicing organization, Canberra Multicultural Community Forum Inc, for support for this event

6 Languages education in the discussion of the Future of Education in the ACT

As noted in the previous Update, the ACT government has been seeking input from Canberrans about what they want for the future of schools and education in the ACT since February 2017. The ACT Bilingual Education Alliance has recently made a detailed submission highlighting the importance of languages and languages education. The submission addressed three of the themes that have emerged from the public conversation to date: 'Learning for the Future', 'Inclusion', and 'Individualised Learning'. The key ideas underpinning ACTBEA's submission are that:

- Learning languages has great educational value for all students and should be given higher priority in ACT schools
- The skills of bilingual students should be fully acknowledged and better utilised in the classroom
- Community Language Schools are a great potential asset that need to be further supported and developed
- The skills, learning styles, and educational needs of CALD students need to be explicitly addressed in relation to the 'Inclusion' and 'Individualised Learning' themes.

A copy of the submission can be downloaded from the ACTBEA website at http://actbilingual.weebly.com/uploads/4/4/9/1/4491774/actbea_submission_2018_1.pdf

It is not too late for you to add to the discussion and share your views. To find out how see: <https://www.yoursay.act.gov.au/futureofeducation>

7. ANU Diploma of Languages discontinued

The Diploma of Languages is a one-year undergraduate degree which gave students the flexibility to study a language alongside their main degree program, no matter in which academic area they were majoring. The Diploma will not be offered to new students in 2018 due to significant reductions in federal government funding for university diplomas. This is despite federal policy to increase language learning in schools and growing recognition of the advantages of having another language. As one student quoted in the ANU student newspaper 'Woroni' said:

"It seems every employment website or job application you look at preferences someone who is bilingual ... I went to a careers fair for the AFP and they really pushed learning another language as something that would set me apart from other candidates...I'm already doing a double degree and the diploma was my only way to include a language in my degree".

For the full Woroni story, see: <https://www.woroni.com.au/words/anu-diploma-of-languages-has-been-removed-due-to-federal-government-funding-cuts/>

8. Canberra Languages Network (CLN)

Since 2008, Canberra Region Languages Forum has been represented at quarterly meetings with the ACT Education Directorate and various community groups involved in promoting language maintenance and learning. These meetings were originally established at the behest of Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF) to facilitate the sharing of information and to encourage and facilitate cooperation across sectors. In November 2017, the group re-named itself the Canberra Languages Network (CLN), and has formalised its role and objectives by drawing up Terms of Reference. The following umbrella organisations will be represented at CLN meetings in the future:

ACT Education Directorate – Teaching & Learning Branch, CMCF, ACT Bilingual Education Alliance, Canberra Region Languages Forum, ACT Community Language Schools Association, University of Canberra – Education, Modern Language Teachers' Association ACT, Australian National University, an indigenous languages organisation (yet to be identified) and other co-opted members with particular expertise, as appropriate.

The network will next meet on Thursday 15 March, and meeting outcomes will be shared with Forum members through a future Update and/or posted on

<http://canberrallanguages.blogspot.com>

For more information and/or a copy of the Terms of Reference, email languagesact@gmail.com

9. Motion in Federal Parliament on Monday 12 February 2018 to observe International Mother Languages Day (IMLD)

Mr Matt Thistlethwaite (Labor), member for Kingsford Smith NSW, will call on the Government to observe IMLD on 21 February across Australia and to promote the preservation and protection of all languages used by the people around the world through:

- a) promoting the active participation, revitalisation and maintenance of local Indigenous languages;
- b) continuing the National Library of Australia's collection of oral history and available alphabets of spoken languages as a means of preserving the multi-lingual inheritance of the people of Australia; and
- c) supporting second language instruction in Australian educational institutions.

This is expected to be debated at about 5pm as part of the Business of the Federation Chamber. If you are interested in attending, please contact Dr Ajoy Kar, local Mother Language Conservation (MLC) Movement Team Leader on 0422 340 462. Note: you will need photo ID to gain entrance.

FEEDBACK ON UPDATES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO FUTURE UPDATES WELCOME

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