

Policy Greenhouse Collaboration Initiatives: Project Brief

Towards a National Indigenous Languages Policy

Project lead: Jane Helen Simpson, School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics (SLLL), CASS

ANU collaborators: Dr Carmel O'Shannessy, SLLL, CASS; Lesley Woods, Indigenous PhD student, SLLL, CASS; Yonatan Dinku, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), CASS; Professional staff from ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language (CoEDL).

Policy Context

Speakers of Australia's Indigenous languages currently face large barriers to maintaining their languages. This has been highlighted in 2019, the International Year of Indigenous Languages. The Australian Government therefore, has undertaken several actions in support of Indigenous languages, including the commissioning by the Department of Communication and the Arts of the National Indigenous Languages Report. This commitment presents an opportunity for the ANU to focus attention on this long-neglected aspect of Indigenous disadvantage, and to have a real impact on a new area of federal government policymaking.

Project

The National Indigenous Languages Report is close to completion. The aim is to leverage the publicity generated through this by holding the public panel discussion following the launch. A public panel event will publicise the NILR's findings, as well as putting them into the context of policy development. The public event will be recorded, creating a lasting resource for policy and decision-makers. A summary report of actions and recommendations from the workshop will be widely disseminated.

Expected outcomes

A springboard to far more extensive consultative and evidence-based policy work that builds on the momentum created in 2019 by the International Year of Indigenous Languages and the NILR work. This would set a good foundation for 2021 as the start of the proposed International Decade of Indigenous Languages.