

Published by
The Multicultural Education and Languages Committee (MELC)
Department for Education

Contact
Executive Officer
Multicultural Education and Languages Committee
GPO Box 1152
Adelaide, South Australia, 5001

Telephone (08) 8226 1191
Email: education.mecs@sa.gov.au
Website: www.education.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/minister-education/melc

Contents

Introduction from the Chair	1
The committee	2
Role and purpose	2
Terms of reference	2
MELC membership	3
MELC secretariat.....	4
MELC meetings	4
Meetings with the Minister	5
Provision of policy, strategy and advice	6
Review of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians.....	6
Provision of advice to the SACE Board’s Response to the SACE Stage 2	7
Primary school Languages: strategies for improved provision.....	7
International Baccalaureate Diploma Languages programs.....	8
Multicultural Legislative Review 2019.....	8
Discussion forums	8
Professor Joseph Lo Bianco (AM)	9
Professor Rachel Nordlinger FAHA.....	10
Professor Constant Leung.....	11
The Smolicz Award research project	13
MELC Supported Projects for Students	14
Their stories, Our stories choir project.....	14
Performing Commedia	14
Go Film!.....	15
My Journey	15
Ministerial Award for Leadership in Languages and Culture	16
Award winner: Farzana Rezaie	16
Award winner: Sophie Szabo.....	17
Appendix 1 MELC subcommittees 2019	18
MELC Response to the review of the Melbourne Declaration	18
Response to the SACE Board’s Response to the SACE Stage 2 Review	18
Smolicz Award Research Project Management Group.....	18
Award for Leadership in Languages and Cultures.....	18
The School of Languages Council – MELC representative	18

Introduction from the Chair



It is my pleasure to offer a reflection on the work of the Multicultural Education and Languages Committee (MELC) in 2019 on behalf of the committee. I do so recognising the need for all leaders and educators to rethink their own stance on linguistic and cultural diversity in the educational experience of all students in our state. Linguistic and cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of our people and our students in schools and universities. It has always been so, but this diversity is now more marked and more complex. This calls for not more of the same, but rather, ways of working *with* linguistic and cultural diversity that respect its greater complexity and which are informed by contemporary research in the field. Students' experiences of learning and their success in learning depends on this.

First and foremost, I wish to highlight the new committee membership, which now includes formal representation from the Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia, the SACE Board of South Australia, and Multicultural Youth SA. It has been most valuable to add these voices to the committee.

Though the support made available to the committee has been reduced and consequently also the scope of its engagement, the committee has actively contributed to providing advice to the Minister and offering responses to key educational/government developments, notably the Review of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals, the SACE Board's Response to the Stage 2 SACE Review and the state's Multicultural Legislative Review. To contribute to the rethinking that is needed, we also organised forums specifically designed to bring leaders and teachers together with lead thinkers.

In this context I highlight in particular the forum organised in relation to English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD) as an area that requires renewed attention to ensure that migrant and refugees students are offered the best opportunities and conditions to succeed in their learning. As a leading world thinker in this space, Professor Constant Leung challenged all of us to rethink language itself and the relationship between language, literacy and learning. Much more work is needed in this crucial area.

In concluding my brief remarks, I thank all our lead thinkers and the many school leaders and educators who participated in our rich discussions. I also thank all our committee members for their immense dedication, expertise and professionalism.

Associate Professor Angela Scarino
Chair, MELC



The committee

Role and purpose

The Ministerial Advisory Committee: Multicultural Education and Languages (MELC) provides advice to the South Australian Minister for Education on the interrelated areas of education: languages education¹, multicultural education and the internationalisation of education. MELC works across the 3 school sectors and encompasses the languages programs of ethnic and community schools.

MELC works collaboratively with educational and community organisations towards ensuring that:

- education for all students is enriched by engaging with linguistic and cultural diversity
- children and young people learn to operate with sophistication and ease with people across diverse languages and cultures.

That is, students learn to develop and operate with *intercultural capability*. The experience of doing so is an integral part of the learning experience of young people in a global world.

The committee is supported by the External Relations Directorate within the Strategic Policy and External Relations Division of the Department for Education.

Terms of reference

The committee is responsible for providing advice to the Minister on:

- strategies for promoting, enhancing and strengthening languages education, including EALD
- developing understandings and practices in schools to:
 - engage children and young people with linguistic and cultural diversity
 - develop intercultural capabilities of children and young people to enable them to contribute as global citizens
- supporting schools to increase the number of students successfully studying a language
- supporting the maintenance and development of languages and cultures in all South Australian schools and ethnic and community schools
- expanding the capacity for ethnic and community language schools to provide SACE languages subjects
- supporting the internationalisation of teaching and learning in South Australia.
- models for the professional development of teachers of languages
- other matters referred to it by the Minister.

¹ 'Languages education' embraces all languages including Aboriginal languages, languages described as 'foreign', 'modern', 'world' or 'community', and English as an additional language. It also includes all learners – those who are learning a language of their heritage as well as those who are learning an additional language.

In undertaking this work, the committee considers national and international best practice, and draws on the knowledge, experience and expertise of committee members and recommendations from contemporary research, policy and practices.

MELC membership

Members of MELC are appointed by the Minister for Education. Members are appointed on the basis of their knowledge and experience of multicultural education, languages education and the internationalisation of education. Associate Professor Angela Scarino has been the Chair of MELC from its inception in December 2015 and was Chair of the former MELC from 2013 to 2015.

In 2019 the Committee has benefited from designated positions for the Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia, the SACE Board of South Australia and Multicultural Youth SA.

Table 1: MELC members during 2019

Institutional nominees	
Ms Panayoula Parha	Department for Education
Ms Anna Mirasgentis	Catholic Education of South Australia (CESA)
Mrs Deb Dalwood	Association of Independent Schools of South Australia (AISSA)
Professor John West-Sooby	South Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (SAVCC)
Ms Toni Cocchiaro OAM	South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission (SAMEAC)
Mr Darryl Buchanan	The Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia (ESASA)
Ms Meridie Howley	SACE Board of South Australia
Ms Tamara Stewart-Jones	Multicultural Youth SA
Minister's nominees	
Associate Professor Angela Scarino	Chairperson, independent
Ms Lia Tedesco	Educational leader (Principal, Director)
Dr Michelle Kohler	Leading educator
Mr Mohammad Taha Shabibi	Student nominee
Ms Shamsiya Mohammadi	Student nominee
Ms Olga Kostic	Parent nominee
Position vacant	Aboriginal person
Mr Arireddy Yara	Community nominee
Ms Jessica Dubois	Early Childhood/Preschool Director



MELC secretariat

The committee’s secretariat provides research, project, administrative and organisational support. In 2019 secretarial support for MELC was 0.5 FTE. Ms Suzanne Bradshaw is the Executive Officer.

MELC meetings

Following the principle of ongoing consultation with relevant educational sectors, organisations and community groups, 4 meetings took place at the venues listed in Table 2. At each meeting representatives from the particular sector / organisation / community group are invited to present to the committee on the achievements and challenges in their particular context. This provides MELC members with the opportunity to experience firsthand the programs being run in the fields of languages education, multicultural education and the internationalisation of education. It also provides the opportunity to canvas diverse perspectives to enrich members’ own understandings and enable the committee to better inform the Minister.

Reports from members are an important part of MELC’s information-sharing processes. They provide a mechanism for keeping MELC up to date with what is happening in the sectors and organisations represented on the committee.

Table 2: MELC meetings 2019

Date	Venue and presentations
21 March	Department for Education, Education Support Hub <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Mr Andy Vinter (Manager, Languages Education) on the Department for Education’s Languages Learning Initiatives
4 July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education Development Centre • Roundtable discussion with Professor Joseph Lo Bianco, University of Melbourne and invited guests
8 August	School of Languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation by Professor Martin Westwell, Chief Executive (SACE Board of South Australia) on the Minister’s Review of Stage 2 of the SACE: ‘Implications for Languages and intercultural understanding’ • Presentation by Ms Lia Tedesco, Principal (School of Languages) on the SACE Board’s response to the SACE Stage 2 Review, from an educator’s perspective
19 September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of South Australia, Magill Campus • Discussion on ‘Primary school Languages: strategies for improved provision’

Meetings with the Minister

The Chair and Professor John West-Sooby, MELC representative, met with the Minister on 6 May 2019 and 24 October 2019 to discuss advice provided on the MELC priorities.



John Gardner MP

6 May 2019 · 🌐

Thank you to Angela Scarino and John West-Sooby from the Multicultural Education and Languages Ministerial Advisory Committee for spending some time with me today discussing the MELC Statement and the importance of language learning!

<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/.../melc-statement-reimaginin...>



Professor John West-Sooby, MELC member and Associate Professor Angela Scarino, Chair of MELC meet with The Hon John Gardner, Minister for Education



Provision of policy, strategy and advice

MELC provides high-level, research-informed advice and shares expertise in contemporary research, policy and practice relating to languages education, multicultural education and the internationalisation of education. In 2019 MELC provided responses to several educational initiatives.

Review of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians

In 2019 the Education Council Ministers commenced a review of the statement of national educational goals for young Australians, which sets out the national purposes and the role of learning in delivering a high-quality education for every student. The review aimed to gather a wide range of evidence and insights to help ensure that the revised declaration reflected the economic, social and technological changes that will shape the future of education in Australia over the next decade.

MELC welcomed the opportunity to contribute to the review through participation in the state consultation meetings.

MELC's response focused on the linguistic and cultural diversity of learners, while respecting all of the diversities that they bring to their learning. The fundamental principle presented relates to the notion that knowledge is culturally formed and applied, and as language is a central mediating resource for learning, linguistic and cultural diversity are seen as fundamental to all learning and not simply as a trait in the background of learners. MELC considered it crucial that these aspects be prominent in the refreshed goals.

MELC's response was informed by the MELC Statement, 'Reimagining learning as intercultural engagement', which describes a shift in the goals and orientation of teaching and learning that positions students as participants engaging in diversity rather than merely observing it. It outlines the intercultural capabilities and dispositions that all children and young people need to develop to enable them to navigate this diversity and to learn to live in a globalised community and world.

The MELC Statement was recommended to the developers as a resource to inform the redevelopment of the declaration. It can be found on the MELC website at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/minister-education/multicultural-education-and-languages-committee-melc/melc-statement>.

MELC was pleased to share its response with a wide group of educators and key stakeholders. These were the Department for Education; Catholic Education of South Australia, the Association of Independent Schools of South Australia; the SACE Board of South Australia; the South Australia Secondary Principal's Association, the South Australian Primary Principals Association; the Preschool Directors Association of SA, Early Childhood Organisation of SA; professional associations Educators SA, Modern Languages Teachers Association of South Australia, South Australian association for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (SA TESOL); the Youth Affairs Council of SA; and the Ethnic Schools Association of South Australia.

MELC's response can be found at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/department/about-department/minister-education/melc/melc-research>.

Provision of advice to the SACE Board's Response to the SACE Stage 2

The Minister asked MELC to provide advice on the SACE Board's response to the SACE Stage 2 Review. In particular, he sought advice on the potential opportunities and impact of the move of the Research Project to Stage 1, and reasons for the decline in languages enrolments at SACE level and recommendations to increase enrolments.



In formulating MELC's advice to the Minister, at its meeting on 8 August 2019, MELC invited Professor Martin Westwell, Chief Executive, SACE Board of South Australia and Ms Lia Tedesco, Principal, School of Languages and member of MELC to offer presentations on the SACE Board's Response to the SACE Review and then participate in discussion with MELC members.

Key issues discussed included: enrolment numbers and number of school programs; structural considerations; incentives; literacy; philosophy of the SACE; interconnectedness of issues; curriculum review and renewal.

An advice paper was prepared and provided to the

Minister for Education. Major points included:

- Building student demand for languages requires a strategy that addresses issues that are fundamentally structural and philosophical
- The drastic reduction in senior secondary programs has meant that languages learning is diminishing to a point where it can no longer sustain itself
- The choice to study or not to study a language at years 11 and 12 is inextricably linked to the structure of senior secondary certification.
- Certification structures are needed that both expand and incentivise opportunities for students to enrol in languages.
- Consideration should be given to adopting a broader definition and understanding of literacy to include the study of languages and the value of bi/multilingualism.
- Expanding opportunities for learning Languages (and indeed the Humanities) and offering incentives for students to take more subjects than the minimum required should also become a part of the philosophy and strategy of the SACE Board.

Primary school Languages: strategies for improved provision

The Office of the Minister for Education requested that MELC provide advice on the uptake and learning of languages in primary schools, specifically models of provision, to enhance uptake and quality.

In the preparation of this advice, MELC sought strategic input through a primary school languages experts forum, which successfully brought together principals, leaders, advisory staff and primary school teachers of languages from the 3 educational sectors. Further analyses of policies and practices, both national and international, were also undertaken.



The advice paper to the Minister included the following strategies for improvement:

- breaking the Languages–NIT nexus, timetabling (time-on-task), frequency and continuity
- diverse models of provision
- orientation to teaching and learning
- a whole-school collaborative approach
- professional learning
- workforce planning strategies
- recognition and incentives.

International Baccalaureate Diploma Languages programs

In 2019 the Minister requested MELC’s advice and perspectives on the value of the Languages programs at the International Baccalaureate (IB) schools selected as part of the Department’s Languages in Schools Initiative, a program to enhance languages learning in government schools.

During 2019, MELC conducted interviews with the Languages team, Department for Education; Glenunga International High School; the principals of the 4 selected schools (Aberfoyle Park High School, Norwood Morialta High School, Roma Mitchell Secondary School and Unley High School); and personnel within the International Baccalaureate Organization.

A report will be developed and presented to the Minister early in 2020.

Multicultural Legislative Review 2019

In 2019 the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, through Multicultural Affairs, undertook a review of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission Act 1980, the key piece of legislation specific to our state’s multiculturalism. The review provided an opportunity to modernise the Act in light of South Australia’s increasingly complex linguistic and cultural diversity and to develop a new multicultural policy that reflects the state’s cultural, linguistic and religious diversity.

Members of MELC were invited to attend a generative stakeholder forum on the review on 14 May 2019.

Discussion forums

MELC establishes and maintains relationships with a wide range of educational and community organisations, building partnerships with them to strengthen contemporary understandings and practices in relation to linguistic and cultural diversity.

Inviting high-level speakers to discussion forums with the key stakeholders is a mechanism through which MELC seeks to advance educational discussion and debate and formulate advice to the Minister in the focal areas of education. To this end, MELC invited lead thinkers to contribute to the committee’s discussions and to educational forums with key stakeholders.

Professor Joseph Lo Bianco (AM)

In July 2019, MELC hosted a discussion forum on the ecology of languages provision in South Australia, which considered the interconnections between different kinds of provision for languages education and between mainstream and complementary providers. The discussion was led by Professor Joseph Lo Bianco, Professor of Language and Literacy Education at the Melbourne Graduate School of Education.

Professor Lo Bianco wrote Australia's National Policy on Languages in 1987, the first multilingual national language policy in an English-speaking country, and was Chief Executive of the National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia until 2002. The National Policy on Languages was adopted by the Australian Government as a comprehensive national plan to cover all of Australia's language needs and interests (English and English literacy, and English as a second and foreign language) and languages other than English (including Indigenous language rights and immigrant and foreign languages) as well as language services (research, translating and interpreting, public media).

Professor Lo Bianco provided an introductory 30-minute presentation to stimulate discussion. The forum brought together leading educators from both the schooling and tertiary sectors.

Discussion points included: languages provision in early childhood programs; a national languages policy and what that could look like; the need for partnerships between mainstream and complementary providers in languages education; the role of technology in languages education; and multilingualism in 21st century literacy.



Ms Lia Tedesco, Professor Joe Lo Bianco, Associate Professor Angela Scarino and Ms Olga Kostic at the MELC Roundtable forum 'The ecology of language provision in South Australia'



In addition to the roundtable discussion, MELC arranged a full program of activities that allowed key educators and leaders and the 3 sectors to discuss further the issues of interest around the provision of languages education. Activities included:

- a presentation from Professor Lo Bianco and a discussion with him about languages, intercultural learning and an international focus in schools, to which were invited personnel from leading schools in international education that had helped shape the department's International Education Strategy.
- a lunchtime session with Professor Lo Bianco, providing the opportunity for the Languages team within the Learning Improvement Division in the Department for Education to discuss with him the department's language learning initiatives.

Professor Rachel Nordlinger FAHA

To mark the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages, MELC hosted a discussion forum on 'Aboriginal languages: challenges and opportunities for education in South Australia'.

The discussion at this roundtable was led by Professor Rachel Nordlinger, Director, Research Unit for Indigenous Languages, University of Melbourne.



Rachel Nordlinger is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Melbourne, Director of the Research Unit for Indigenous Language, and a Chief Investigator in the ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language. Her research centres around the description and documentation of Australia's Indigenous languages, and their implications for theories of language structure.

She has worked with the Bilarra, Wambaya, Gudanji, Murrinhpatha and Marri Ngarr communities to record, document and preserve their traditional languages, and also works with Indigenous communities across Australia to support their efforts in maintaining and preserving their linguistic and cultural heritage.

Associate Professor Angela Scarino, Professor Rachel Nordlinger and Dr Mary-Anne Gale

The forum brought together community members, academics, consultants/advisers from the 3 education sectors, and representatives from Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and professional associations.

Professor Nordlinger's opening presentation described Indigenous Australia as a land of enormous linguistic diversity, and yet, by contrast, mainstream Australia is strongly monolingual. Consequently, Aboriginal languages, while an important part of our nation's linguistic heritage, are under rapid and increasing threat from English. She discussed Aboriginal languages, their interesting and unique characteristics, and the ways in which they reflect the culture and world views of their communities. Professor Nordlinger reminded participants of the power and value of languages, not only using languages, but learning about languages as

they embed knowledge, insights and understandings of the world. She highlighted the importance of languages education in raising the profile and awareness of these languages for the benefit of all Australians.

Professor Nordlinger's presentation was followed by further presentations from the schooling and tertiary sectors and discussion.

Associate Professor Rob Amery, University of Adelaide, discussed the important work that has been done in reawakening Kurna, the work of the Kurna Warra Pintyanthi project, the development of resources and the need to continue to support these processes. He reminded participants of the important role of Kurna language teachers and the need to support these teachers and to develop career pathways.

Sector representatives Guy Tunstill, Department for Education, Matthew Jolly, CESA and Monica Williams, AISSA outlined various important initiatives that are occurring in their particular sectors in relation to Aboriginal languages.

The discussion forum provided an opportunity for participants to reflect upon Aboriginal languages in education in our state, and consider how we, as a community, can continue this discussion and share initiatives and ideas in more proactive ways, so as to make a clear impact.

Professor Constant Leung

The Minister requested that MELC provide advice on how to promote, enhance and strengthen EALD in schools. In particular, he requested advice in relation to the synergies between Language, Languages, Literacy and EALD.

To assist with formulating advice, in November 2019 MELC hosted a visit by Professor Constant Leung, Professor of Educational Linguistics, School of Education, Communication & Society, King's College London.

Professor Leung is a world-renowned expert in this field and has undertaken extensive research in schools.

Before taking up teaching positions in higher education he taught in schools and worked as advisory teacher and manager in local government. He was the founding Chair of the National Association for Language Development in the Curriculum. His research interests include education in ethnically and linguistically diverse societies, additional/second language curriculum and assessment, language policy and teacher professional development.

He serves as Joint Editor of *Language Assessment Quarterly*, Editor of Research Issues of *TESOL Quarterly*, and as a member of the Editorial Boards of *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, *Language and Education*, and *Modern Language Journal*. He is a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences (UK). His research in developing the English as an Additional Language Assessment Framework for Schools (funded by the Bell Foundation) won the 2018 British Council ELTons international award for innovation (<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/professor-constant-leung>).

As part of Professor Leung's visit, MELC hosted an EALD forum, which explored the changing nature of EALD in schools. The forum, which was opened by the Hon John Gardner, Minister for Education, brought together teachers, principals, academics, consultants/advisers from the 3 education sectors, and representatives from professional associations.



Professor Leung provided an opening presentation in which he offered his views on some of the different conceptualisations of EALD as a curriculum entity that have emerged over the past 40 years, nationally and internationally. He supported the discussion using examples of actual teaching approaches and materials. In the second part of his presentation he explored the issues and challenges engendered by the shifting views of 'language' as it relates specifically to language assessment.

He invited participants to think about diverse views of language, about multilingualism and the linguistic repertoires that students bring to their learning, and how we assess multilingual capabilities.



*Hon John Gardner,
Professor Constant Leung and
Associate Professor Angela Scarino
at the EALD forum*

Sector representatives Ken Lountain, Department for Education, Magdalena Moise, CESA and Melissa Symonds, AISSA spoke about the various important initiatives that are occurring in their particular sectors, the support available, the new resources, the professional learning opportunities and revised funding models.

Associate Professor Sue Nichols, University of South Australia, provided insights into the Smolicz Award research project, which is looking at the experiences of multilingual refugee students. She described the use of language portraits to gather evidence and raised the notion of 'languages living' as well as 'languages learning'.

The discussion forum provided an opportunity for participants to reflect on EALD education in our state, and to think deeply about a multilingual orientation in education and how we work with the linguistic and cultural repertoires that students bring to their learning and which influence it in marked ways.

As part of Professor Leung's visit, he met with the Chair of MELC and the Minister for Education, and dedicated sessions with AISSA and the Department to discussing EALD matters in their individual sectors.

The Smolicz Award research project

The Smolicz Award was established in 2009 to honour the legacy of Professor Jerzy (George) Smolicz AM (1935–2006) in the areas of languages and multicultural education.

Professor Smolicz was Professor in the Department of Education and Director of the Centre for Intercultural Studies and Multicultural Education at the University of Adelaide, and was Chair of the former Multicultural Education Committee (MEC) 1985–2005. He contributed towards government policies through his membership of several committees, including one that produced the report *Education for a Cultural Democracy* (1984). This report became the blueprint for successive South Australian governments in the area of multicultural policy.

During 2018 MELC worked in conjunction with Dr Margaret Secombe on behalf of the Smolicz family, the Adelaide Secondary School of English (ASSOE) and the School of Languages to develop a small-scale research project: *Student Experiences and Perceptions about their Literacy Development and Language(s) Practices*.

Focusing on students of Syrian and Nepali backgrounds, the research project is designed to provide a foundation for considering how schools and educators can work with students from these backgrounds to strengthen their literacy development and intercultural capabilities in order to successfully engage with their learning and their school communities.

In 2019 the School of Education, University of South Australia was awarded the Smolicz Award Research Project. The project is led by Associate Professor Sue Nichols, Associate Head of School: Research.

The project was conducted in 2019 with current ASSOE students as well as with former ASSOE students who had transitioned to mainstream government and non-government secondary schools in metropolitan Adelaide within the previous 12 months. The schools involved were Salisbury High School, Playford International College and Woodville High School.

The research team developed an approach to focus group discussions that was intended to be engaging for students, considerate of students' English language capabilities and able to be delivered consistently by all researchers.

The outcomes of this project will provide some insights into the experiences and perceptions of these students in their literacy development, language(s) practices and learning needs.

A report will be published in Term 1, 2020. It will be uploaded onto the MELC webpage and distributed electronically to the schools involved in the project and key stakeholders, through relevant networks.



MELC Supported Projects for Students

The MELC projects are designed to support contemporary and innovative initiatives that engender experimentation and renewal in languages education, multicultural education and the internationalisation of education. MELC Supported Projects for Students are based on 6 principles:

- **Learning in diversity** through experiences that promote learning about themselves/others and their learning and knowing in the context of diversity
- **Identity formation** through reflecting on individual perspectives, identities and belonging, and developing self-awareness of educational and life experiences
- **Experience and participation** that is personal and direct rather than indirect
- **Imagination** through experiences that foster imagination and creativity
- **Opportunities** for all students, including marginalised young people
- **Reflection** through opportunities for evaluating and reflecting on personal experience.

Grants were awarded to 4 projects, which were undertaken in 2019: Their Stories, Our Stories; Performing Commedia; My Journey; and Go Film!

Owing to the revised terms of reference of MELC and changed funding arrangements, the MELC Supported Projects for Students will not continue to be offered in 2020. MELC managed the current projects to completion in December 2019.

Their stories, Our stories choir project

The Their Stories Our Stories project was a unique song-writing and communal singing project that invited secondary students to actively participate in and reflect upon linguistic and cultural diversity through writing songs and singing together. Dr Fewster, of the University of South Australia, and Ms Anderson, of the Young Adelaide Voices choir, worked with year 11 students from Immanuel College and year 9 students from Brighton Secondary School to write and perform songs based on their life experiences and social and cultural identity. Workshops were held in reflective writing and translating prose into song lyrics, communal singing and performance skills.

At the completion of the project, the choirs from the 2 participating schools came together for a public performance at Immanuel College.

Performing Commedia

Performing Commedia was a 10-week project in which year 9 Aberfoyle Park High School drama students and their teacher worked with Dr Corinna Di Niro, the University of South Australia, to learn the history and practice of commedia dell'arte, a 16th century Italian improvisation theatre form. Commedia dell'arte was traditionally performed outdoors in markets and squares and developed an exaggerated, physical acting style. Each character has their own walk, posture and mask, as well as typical jokes and gags, called *lazzi*. Traditional commedia plays follow the quest of the lovers to be together, despite all the obstacles thrown in their path.

Students learned a wide range of commedia skills, including character, posture, mask, gesture, slapstick, stage fighting, improvisation, relationship dynamics and audience interaction. Students worked in small groups to devise their own commedia plays, developing characters and improvising scenes. They performed these plays to school student audiences and held a public evening performance for friends and family.

Through learning about commedia, students were able to reflect on their own cultural and linguistic identity, build their understanding of culturally and linguistically diverse theatre practices and reflect on the diversity in peoples' lives. The project provided Aberfoyle Park High School and teaching staff with the skills and resources required to teach similar projects in the future.

Go Film!

The Go Film! project enabled students to explore their own and their peers' cultural identities, learn how to create and communicate stories, and document events using film production.

The project provider, Felicity Arts, used storyboarding to enable the students think about their own histories, cultures, experiences and values. The focus for the films became the student's childhood memories and what was of greatest importance to them, as they discussed individual values and social and cultural practices. The 4 films that were made, *Nostalgic memories*; *Carrying hope*, *Coming together* and *Runaway boys* drew upon the ideas from storyboards the students created and are a compilation of each student's memories and/or values from a cultural perspective. Two of the films incorporated different languages, French and Ngarrindjeri.

The films were showcased at a school event and there was a special viewing of *Runaway boys* for the school's Aboriginal community.

My Journey



Owing to the success of the My Journey Project in 2018, this project was offered once again in 2019. Students from St Gabriel's Primary School worked with award-winning visual artist and poet, Mr Elyas Alavi.

The My Journey project is designed for students to actively participate in and reflect upon linguistic and cultural diversity through a series of visual art and poetry workshops.

Students explored art making techniques across a range of cultures; participated in storytelling, and shared their own languages, cultures and stories with one another; and expressed themselves creatively through visual art, poetry writing and performance.



The project provided a connection point for the school with community groups from linguistic and culturally diverse backgrounds.

The project concluded with a showcase of the children's work as part of the school's South Australian Living Artists art exhibition on 28 August.



Ministerial Award for Leadership in Languages and Culture

The Ministerial Award for Leadership in Languages and Cultures is provided by MELC on behalf of the Minister and administered by the Australia Day Council of South Australia (ADCSA).

The award is aimed at people under 24 years of age who are Australian citizens or permanent residents, and who demonstrate:

- a commitment to advocacy for a multicultural Australia
- a sound capability in more than one language and culture
- outstanding qualities, including community leadership
- the ability to operate across languages and cultures.

Nominations are received in the period from August to November each year. Candidates must be nominated by another person or a group, such as a community organisation or school. The selection panel comprises representatives from MELC and ADCSA. An independent person may also be coopted to the panel at the discretion of MELC and ADCSA. The award is announced and presented at a ceremony held at Government House in January each year.

The award winner adopts an ambassadorial role for MELC, with award recipients being invited to MELC meetings and MELC events. The joint recipients of the 2019 award were Farzana Rezaie and Sophie Szabo.

Award winner: Farzana Rezaie

As a Naracoorte High School student, Farzana used her fluency in Hazaragi, Dari, Persian and English to assist teachers to educate fellow Hazara students who arrived with poor or non-existent English skills. While still at school, she also worked as an interpreter with the Adelaide-based Interpreting and Translating Centre to assist non-English-speaking clients with drivers licence tests, health information sessions with Naracoorte Community

Health, and Centrelink issues. As a volunteer with the newly established Naracoorte Migrant Resource Centre, Farzana worked with youth in various settlement activities such as sport and cultural integration sessions.

Farzana's tireless efforts across the education sector in Naracoorte and as a mentor has transcended the cultural barriers for women across the whole community. In 2013, Farzana was selected as the People of Australia Ambassador, an award instituted by Prime Minister Julia Gillard for local champions of social inclusion and people who have helped strengthen community relations. She continues to link her work of uniting her community with services and supports. She has assisted migrant/refugee children from various ethnic backgrounds including Chinese, Hazara, Japanese, Burmese, Thai, Filipino, Bangladeshi, Lao and Cambodian.

Award winner: Sophie Szabo

Sophie studied Chinese and French at Pedare Anglican and Uniting Church School and at the School of Languages, and has dedicated herself to accessing opportunities that enable her to grow and to learn about different cultures. She has visited France twice, undertaking intensive language and cultural instruction, and has been recognised across multiple platforms for her ambassadorial qualities, outstanding scholarship, and exceptional application and effort.

Sophie has represented South Australia twice at the national finals of the Hanyu Qiao (Chinese Bridge Competition), winning the cultural performance award in 2016 and coming second in 2017. In 2017 she represented Australia at the international finals of Hanyu Qiao (with her partner from Western Australia) and finished 4th in the world, winning the Oceania Continental Prize. She has also participated in official visits to Chinese schools, universities, cultural monuments and government departments, developing both linguistic and cultural capabilities, and influencing international perceptions and understanding of Australia and our culture.

Sophie's exposure to both Chinese and French cultures has been a rich and rewarding experience, and has motivated her to educate others on the advantages of developing intercultural perspectives. She is a strong advocate for bilingual education in schools and has been dedicated to promoting the benefits through her own experiences.



Joint award winner Ms Farzana Rezaie and Associate Professor Angela Scarino, Chair of MELC



Appendix 1 MELC subcommittees 2019

MELC Response to the review of the Melbourne Declaration

- Associate Professor Angela Scarino – Chair
- Ms Anna Mirasgentis
- Dr Michelle Kohler
- Mrs Deb Dalwood
- Ms Jessica Dubois
- Ms Suzanne Bradshaw, Executive Officer, MELC

Response to the SACE Board's Response to the SACE Stage 2 Review

- Associate Professor Angela Scarino – Chair
- Professor John West-Sooby
- Ms Shamsiya Mohammadi
- Dr Michelle Kohler
- Ms Suzanne Bradshaw, Executive Officer, MELC

Smolicz Award Research Project Management Group

- Associate Professor Angela Scarino – Chair
- Ms Anti Macri, Principal ASSOE
- Ms Lia Tedesco
- Ms Meridie Howley
- Professor John West-Sooby
- Associate Professor Susan Nichols, lead researcher
- Suzanne Bradshaw, Executive Officer, MELC

Award for Leadership in Languages and Cultures

- Ms Lia Tedesco
- Ms Meridie Howley
- Suzanne Bradshaw, Executive Officer, MELC – Chair

The School of Languages Council – MELC representative

- Mr Airedy Yara

