



**MULTILINGUAL  
AUSTRALIA**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2022-2023**



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# NON C D O R T N

We would like to begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands that make up Australia, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Before European colonisation, this land was home to a rich tapestry of over 400 Indigenous languages spoken for more than 65,000 years. This living language legacy is an integral part of our nation's cultural richness that we carry proudly. We pay our respects to Elders past, present, and future and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. As we discuss the state and future of multilingualism in Australia, we do so with the profound understanding that this country has a long, enduring history of linguistic diversity.

Multilingual Australia, formerly known as Bilingual Families Perth, is a dedicated not-for-profit organisation with a rich history from 2002. For over two decades, we have been steadfastly committed to supporting families from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Our core mission is to recognise and address the unique needs of children, parents, and grandparents who come from non-English speaking backgrounds, particularly in their efforts to maintain and utilise languages other than English within their homes.

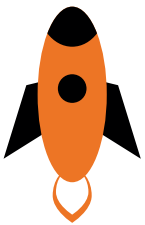
We firmly believe that multilingualism is an invaluable asset, both for individuals and for society as a whole. Thus, our primary aim is to promote and celebrate the myriad benefits that multilingualism brings to our communities.

At the heart of our organization lies the encouragement of families to embrace the confident use of languages other than English for communication within their households. We understand that various barriers, such as a lack of confidence or resources, can hinder this process. Consequently, we work diligently to equip families with the tools and support needed to overcome these obstacles.

While our origins were rooted in assisting families with very young children, we have since evolved to embrace individuals and family members of all ages. Moreover, our advocacy extends beyond the confines of our immediate community. We are passionate advocates for multilingualism in the broader Australian context, striving to raise awareness about its numerous advantages and the critical importance of preserving linguistic diversity.

# MISSION

Multilingual Australia is dedicated to helping people connect, learn, and sustain languages by providing opportunities, resources, and nurturing strong relationships with all stakeholders.



## Vision

Our vision is a language-friendly Australia, where linguistic diversity is celebrated and languages are cherished as essential components of our cultural tapestry.



## Values

- **Collaboration:** We believe in the power of working together to achieve shared goals.
- **Empowerment:** We empower individuals and families to embrace and celebrate their linguistic heritage.
- **Integrity:** We operate with transparency, honesty, and ethical conduct at all times.
- **Striving for Excellence:** We continually strive to exceed expectations and set the bar high in our endeavors.
- **Diversity:** We cherish the rich tapestry of languages and cultures that make up our society.
- **Expertise:** We bring knowledge and expertise to the forefront of our mission.
- **Learning:** We are committed to ongoing learning and growth, adapting to the evolving needs of our community.

# CHAIR'S REPORT

I am pleased to present the Annual Report for Multilingual Australia for the fiscal year 2022/23. This year has been a period of growth, change, and continued dedication to our mission of advocating for language-friendly communities and supporting language diversity in Australia. As the newly appointed Chair of Multilingual Australia, I am honoured to share our accomplishments, challenges, and plans for the future.

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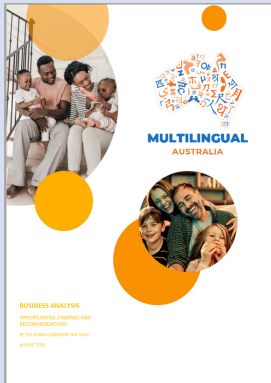
## New Leadership

In October, I took on the role of the Chair and I committed 12 months for my tenure. This transition in leadership brought fresh perspectives and ideas to the organisation, which have been instrumental in shaping our direction moving forward. We are committed to ensuring that Multilingual Australia remains at the forefront of promoting language diversity and multilingualism in our communities.



"At Multilingual Australia, we're empowering families to embrace their multilingualism. We believe in the strength of languages to unite families and enrich lives."





## Financial Sustainability Plan

Our commitment to long-term sustainability is reflected in the launch of the Financial Sustainability Plan, prepared by a team of leaders from Leadership WA's Raising Leadership Program. This plan provides a roadmap for securing the necessary resources to continue our vital work. We recognise the importance of financial stability in fulfilling our mission effectively.

## Celebrating Grandparent Contribution to Multilingualism

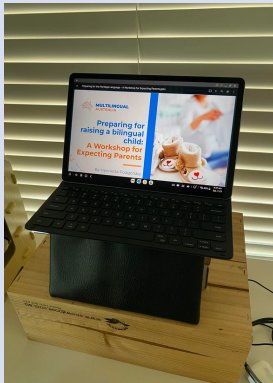
During Seniors Week, we hosted the "Celebrating Grandparent Contribution to Multilingualism" event in November. This heartwarming gathering allowed us to honour and celebrate grandparents' invaluable role in passing down heritage languages to the younger generations. It was a testament to the enduring power of language in preserving our cultural heritage.



## Rebranding as Multilingual Australia

March marked a significant milestone as we officially rebranded from "Bilingual Families Perth" to "Multilingual Australia." This name change reflects our broader mission and commitment to promoting language diversity. Our launch event on International Multilingual Day was a resounding success, with a presentation from the committee highlighting the importance of language diversity and our role in achieving this goal.





## Workshop: Raising Children in More than One Language

In January 2023, we successfully relaunched our workshop, "Raising Children in More than One Language." This workshop continues to be a valuable resource for parents seeking guidance on raising bilingual and multilingual children. Our commitment to providing practical support for families remains unwavering.

## Harmony Week Webinar: Celebrating Families and Sharing Stories Together

In March 2023, during Harmony Week, we collaborated with Meerilinga Parenting Service and the State Library of Western Australia to host a webinar titled "Celebrating Families and Sharing Stories Together." This webinar aimed to educate parents on the benefits of bilingualism and provided guidance on supporting children in learning and growing in more than one language.

### CELEBRATING FAMILIES AND SHARING STORIES TOGETHER

#### HARMONY WEEK WEBINAR

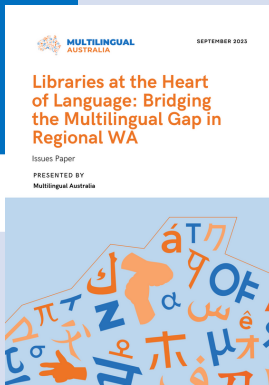
Friday, 24th March  
1 pm-2pm  
Online via Zoom

[REGISTER TODAY!](#)



## Roundtable Discussions: Navigating Multiple Languages in Australia

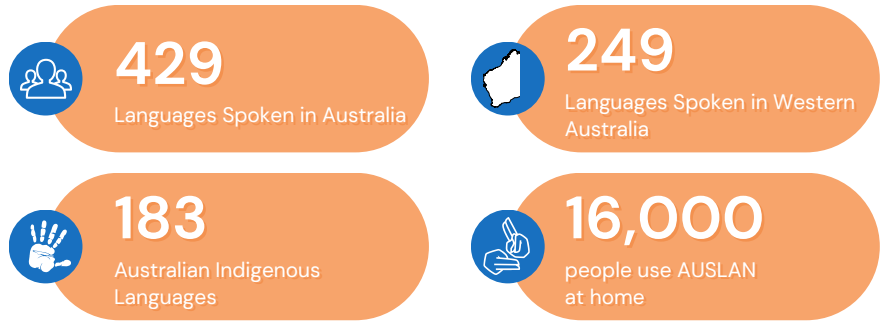
We facilitated a series of roundtable discussions on navigating multiple languages in Australia. The inaugural roundtable in February allowed individuals to share their experiences with heritage language preservation. In June, we extended our reach by hosting a roundtable focused on rural and regional communities, shedding light on their unique challenges. The insights gathered from these discussions have been distilled into a report and issue paper, which will guide our policy and advocacy efforts in supporting language diversity across Australia.





**What do we know about languages?**

Australia's linguistic landscape is a vibrant tapestry, a testament to its multicultural heritage. The coexistence of numerous languages, including Indigenous and immigrant languages, underscores the importance of supporting language diversity as a means to promote inclusivity and cultural understanding. Despite this diversity, programs and projects related to language maintenance in family homes still need to be expanded or nonexistent.



**The Wrong Questions Asked - Census Data**

While celebrating this linguistic richness, it's important to acknowledge that census data sometimes asks the wrong questions, resulting in incomplete insights. For example:

- While 2 out of 10 Australians speak a language other than English at home, the number of bilingual/multilingual individuals has increased by nearly 800,000 (792,062) from 2016 to over 5.5 million, constituting 22.3% of the total population. However, this is likely an underestimate.
- Census data doesn't capture languages learned as a hobby, during work-related travel, or for community engagement.
- Literacy levels in each language are not assessed, which can impact interpreting and translation services. Many individuals can speak a language but may not be literate in it, creating a need for translation services.
- 850,000 (852,706) people in this group reported that they do not speak English well or at all, marking an increase of around 4% from the 2016 census.

**The 10 Largest Languages Cover Less Than 1/3 of Multilingual Australia**

Remarkably, the ten largest languages do not encompass even one-third of all bilingual and multilingual Australians. Organisations must consider this when selecting languages for communication, as they may miss out on reaching over two-thirds of their potential audience. More data points and information are needed to make informed communication choices.

# AUSTRALIA IS A GRAVEYARD OF LANGUAGES

Australia stands as a captivating mosaic of languages, a testament to its multicultural ethos. However, this linguistic richness is accompanied by a sobering reality—Australia is, in some ways, a graveyard of languages. While we celebrate the vibrant linguistic tapestry that newcomers bring, we also need to address the challenges of language loss, especially among long-established communities.

## Emerging Communities and First-Generation Migrants

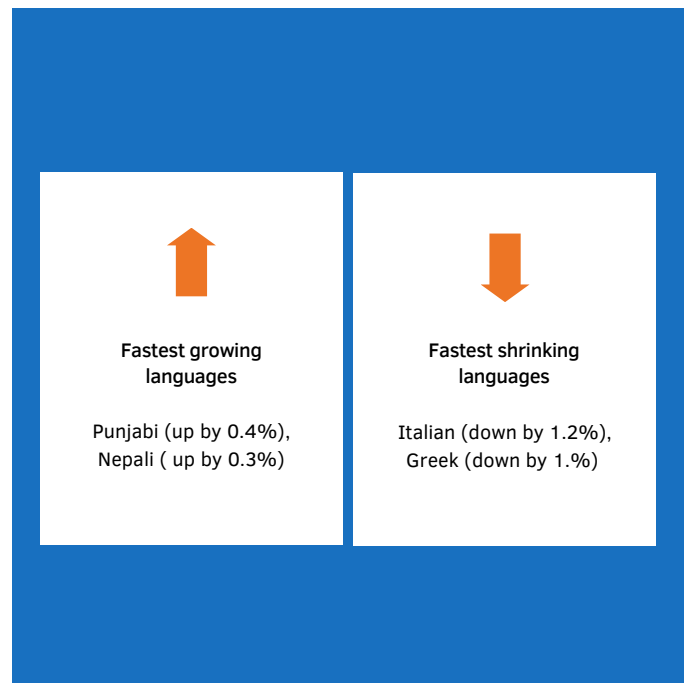
One significant aspect of Australia's linguistic landscape is the emergence of new and diverse communities. These communities are often characterised by first-generation migrants who bring with them their languages and cultural practices. Consequently, their languages are not just surviving but thriving. This stands in stark contrast to some established communities, such as the Italian or Greek communities, who have been in Australia for several generations. In these cases, language connection has often weakened over time, with third and fourth generations losing proficiency and connection to their ancestral tongues.

## The Intergenerational Language Transmission Gap

The phenomenon of intergenerational language transmission, where languages are passed down through generations within families, is not occurring as robustly in Australia as it should be. This is a cause for concern across all communities. Language is a bridge to cultural heritage and identity, and when it's lost, a vital link to one's roots is severed.

## A Wake-Up Call for All Communities

This situation should serve as a wake-up call for all communities, both established and emerging. It highlights the urgency of preserving languages and ensuring their transmission from one generation to the next. The risk of language extinction is real, and once a language is lost, it takes with it centuries of cultural wisdom, stories, and traditions.



# TERMINOLOGIES

In the realm of language advocacy, the importance of precise and accurate terminology cannot be overstated. It is crucial to recognise that the lack of proper use of terminologies can lead to unfavourable outcomes for language advocacy efforts.

## Multilingualism

Refers to the presence of more than one 'variety of language' in a geographical area, regardless of whether these are formally recognised as languages. Multilingualism can coexist with individuals who are monolingual or plurilingual.

## Bilingual/Multilingual

Individuals with more than one language competence, even to a limited degree.

## Heritage Language

A language passed down from one generation to another within a family or community.

## Mother Tongue

A language spoken in the home from birth.

## Dominant Language

A child's dominant language is the one they are most comfortable and proficient in.

## Minority Language

A language spoken by a minority of the population of a territory

## Language Attrition

The process of losing proficiency in a language due to lack of use, which is a common challenge for immigrant families.

## Plurilingualism

Encompasses the repertoire of language varieties that individuals use. It includes 'mother tongue' or 'first language' and any other languages or varieties spoken.

## Language-Friendly

A term used to describe environments or policies that support and encourage the use of diverse languages. It promotes inclusive practices that enable people to use their languages freely and confidently, especially in public services and education. In advocacy, it involves efforts to create a community where all languages are valued and linguistic diversity is actively fostered.

## Language Revitalization

Efforts to revive a language that has few speakers or is at risk of falling out of use, including the development of new speakers.

## Language Acquisition

The process by which individuals learn a language, which can be a first, second, or additional language. Understanding this process can help in creating supportive environments for multilingual development.

## Language Maintenance

The effort to continue using a language that is at risk of being lost, often within families and communities where a more dominant language is in widespread use.

As we look ahead to the fiscal year 2023/24, Multilingual Australia is excited to embark on a new chapter filled with ambitious plans and initiatives. Our commitment to promoting language diversity and supporting multilingual families remains unwavering, and here are some of our key future endeavours:

**1. Restructure:**

One of the foremost initiatives in the coming year is the restructuring of our organisation. By streamlining our leadership structure, we can enhance our efficiency, decision-making processes, and overall effectiveness in advocating for language-friendly communities. This will involve the creation of a smaller, focused advisory board consisting of key positions - a chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary. Simultaneously, we will appoint an operations officer to oversee day-to-day activities, ensuring that our strategic and operational realms coexist harmoniously.

**2. Language Week Initiative:**

Language is a cornerstone of culture, and in the year ahead, we are committed to celebrating linguistic diversity through a Language Week Initiative. This initiative will provide a platform for communities to showcase their languages, share their cultural heritage, and foster a greater appreciation for the languages spoken by our fellow Australians. Through events, workshops, and activities, we aim to highlight the beauty and significance of languages in our society.

**3. Free Workshops for Families in 2024:**

Our dedication to supporting families in their journey towards maintaining and using languages other than English at home remains a top priority. In 2024, we plan to offer a series of free workshops specifically designed to empower families with the knowledge and resources needed to nurture multilingualism within their households. These workshops will cover various topics, from language maintenance strategies to effective communication techniques.

**4. Fundraising for Sustainability:**

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of Multilingual Australia is essential to continue our mission effectively. In the coming year, we will launch fundraising initiatives to secure the necessary resources to support our vital work. These efforts will involve collaborating with partners, engaging our community of supporters, and exploring innovative fundraising strategies to bolster our financial stability.

**5. Advocating for Policy Changes:**

Multilingual Australia is committed to advocating for changes in policies that impact language diversity in Australia. We will continue to engage with policymakers and advocate for recognising bilingualism and multilingualism as distinct and valuable aspects of our society. Our goal is to influence policy development that supports language-friendly communities and the preservation of linguistic heritage.



# FINANCIALS

## Profit and Loss

Multilingual Australia Inc.  
For the year ended 30 June 2023

	2023
<b>Trading Income</b>	
Interest Income	3.38
Memberships	30.00
Workshops	280.00
<b>Total Trading Income</b>	<b>313.38</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	
<b>313.38</b>	
<b>Other Income</b>	
Grant Australian Government	910.00
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>910.00</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	
Advertising	428.90
Entertainment	250.00
General Expenses	(0.72)
Insurance	711.52
Office Expenses	2,167.16
Printing & Stationery	38.15
Subscriptions	590.79
Website expenses	287.09
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>4,472.89</b>
<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>(3,249.51)</b>

# FINANCIALS

## Balance Sheet

Multilingual Australia Inc.  
As at 30 June 2023

30 JUN 2023

### Assets

#### Bank

Bilingual Families Perth	2,225.35
Grants	4.41
<b>Total Bank</b>	<b>2,229.76</b>

#### Fixed Assets

Office Equipment	1,895.77
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>1,895.77</b>

**Total Assets** 4,125.53

### Liabilities

#### Current Liabilities

GST	(996.72)
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>(996.72)</b>

**Total Liabilities** (996.72)

**Net Assets** 5,122.25

### Equity

Current Year Earnings	(3,249.51)
Retained Earnings	8,371.76
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>5,122.25</b>





**MULTILINGUAL  
AUSTRALIA**



THANK YOU

**SHOP FOR CAUSE**

Bilingual Families Perth / Multilingual Australia



VISIT OUR NEW

## ONLINE STORE

100% of proceeds from our sales will be used towards supporting bilingual and multilingual Australians to maintain their languages at home.

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***We thank you for your continued support for Multilingual Australia.***

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## CONTACT

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<https://www.linkedin.com/company/multilingualaustria>