

## **An investment in the language, literacy and numeracy workforce**

As part of the \$28.2 million Building the Basics package the Australian Government is investing in the development of the language, literacy and numeracy workforce to ensure highly skilled and qualified practitioners/trainers are available to deliver adult literacy training.

The \$3.7 million language, literacy and numeracy workforce development initiative commits to up-skilling and expanding the language, literacy and numeracy training workforce and enhancing the quality and supply of language, literacy and numeracy training. The initiative will provide learning opportunities for more people to become practitioners/trainers, and to increase both community awareness of language, literacy and numeracy issues and participation in language, literacy and numeracy training.

Funding under this initiative will see the development of a comprehensive framework of language, literacy and numeracy qualifications for professionals and para-professionals at all levels within the language, literacy and numeracy field. Incentives will be offered to encourage take-up; and research will be commissioned to strengthen the language, literacy and numeracy evidence base, enhance teaching practice and better target training effort.

### **How do workforce development initiatives help Australians in the current economic environment?**

A strong Language, literacy and numeracy workforce will ultimately increase opportunities for working age Australians to develop the skills and qualifications they need to gain employment, keep a job or advance within existing employment. This investment recognises that foundation skills such as language, literacy and numeracy are not only important in building a skilled labour market but critical in developing a socially inclusive society.

### **Who will benefit from the workforce development strategies?**

The Australian Government is committing to developing a highly skilled and qualified language, literacy and numeracy workforce. A quality workforce will contribute to the success of language, literacy and numeracy training with positive flow on effects for industry.

All Australians with language, literacy and numeracy needs will benefit from having a dependable supply of well qualified and competent trainers/practitioners. Raised community awareness of language, literacy and numeracy issues will lead to better referral of people with poor language, literacy and numeracy skills. Indigenous Australians, particularly those living in rural and remote areas will have greater access to language, literacy and numeracy practitioners where there is currently limited workforce capacity.

### **Why is the provision of language, literacy and numeracy qualifications and the development of a professional career path necessary?**

Currently there is a significant undersupply of specialist practitioners with appropriate language, literacy and numeracy training and qualifications. Providing pathways for language, literacy and numeracy professionals through nationally endorsed qualifications, supported by high quality learning resources will go a long

way to filling this gap. Adult language, literacy and numeracy skills in Australia can only be improved if supported by a sufficient supply of skilled adult language, literacy and numeracy professionals.

### **How will the new qualifications be developed, and when will the new qualification framework be available?**

A reference group drawn from the existing language, literacy and numeracy professional community will advise on aspects of the initiative. Extensive stakeholder consultation will inform the development of the endorsed qualifications and support materials.

Work on mapping existing qualifications and the current profile of the language, literacy and numeracy workforce has already commenced. This will guide the development of new qualifications and competencies at all levels, which will commence immediately

### **Who is eligible for the workforce incentives?**

Scholarships will target novices or existing language, literacy and numeracy trainers undertaking the new Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma qualifications. There may also be provision for scholarships to support:

- ex- teachers taking up the option of a tailored language, literacy and numeracy course to refresh their skills and enter the language, literacy and numeracy field; and
- Indigenous trainers, or other trainers working primarily in Indigenous communities, who opt to upgrade their language, literacy and numeracy qualifications or move into the language, literacy and numeracy field.

### **How can people find out more about the scholarship and workforce incentives available?**

Incentives such as scholarships to encourage new adult language, literacy and numeracy practitioners and support existing language, literacy and numeracy practitioners will be offered from January 2010 – June 2011. Further information including details of how to apply will be available at [www.deewr.gov.au](http://www.deewr.gov.au)