Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests
Guidelines

Aboriginal Education and Communities Directorate
NSW Department of Education
The NSW Department of Education is leading the implementation of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest initiative in partnership with the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. (NSW AECG Inc.), local Reference Groups and Aboriginal Language and community groups.

The NSW Department of Education has a strong commitment to the teaching of Aboriginal Languages in NSW Public schools and provides advice, guidance and support in partnership with local Aboriginal communities to implement local Aboriginal Language and Culture programs.

The NSW AECG Inc. is an Aboriginal community based organisation which is recognised as the peak advisory body on all matters relating to Aboriginal education and training in NSW. The Department has a formal partnership agreement with the NSW AECG Inc. and together they work to ensure the recovering, re-voicing and re-practicing of Aboriginal Language and Culture programs in schools and local Aboriginal communities.

1. Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to outline roles and responsibilities of individuals and stakeholders involved with delivery of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests, and to outline governance processes to ensure smooth and effective program delivery, data capture and reporting.

2. Funding structure

The Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests have been established under OCHRE (Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility, Empowerment), the NSW government plan for Aboriginal affairs.

The Department has engaged the NSW AECG Inc. to support the five Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests and associated satellite Nests, including provision of Aboriginal Language Educators (also known as Tutors) and Project Officers for each Nest.

3. Nests in summary

A Nest is a network of communities bound together by their connection through an Aboriginal Language. OCHRE’s vision for the Nests is to revitalise and maintain Aboriginal Languages as an integral part of cultural identity.

The Language and Culture Nest initiative is overseen by a State-wide Steering Committee. Each Nest has a ‘footprint’ area, within which schools may teach the relevant Aboriginal Language under the Nest structure. Each of the five Language and Culture Nests has an Aboriginal Language Teacher (satellite Nests do not have a Teacher).

Each Nest also has a Keeping Place. A Keeping Place is a location for the Nest, providing a point of contact relating to the local Aboriginal Language, and housing Language resources and materials for use by communities and partnered organisations. A Keeping Place may be physical, virtual, or both. Keeping Places must be accessible to the community and stakeholders, and may be flexible in form.
The NSW AECG Inc. is responsible for supporting the functions and operations of Keeping Places.

At present, the scope of Nests is school-based – that is, Nests are not funded to teach Language to community members other than school children, or to run community-based activities separate from the school setting. If communities wish to teach adult Language classes or upskill adults in Languages, they are advised to discuss this with the NSW AECG Inc. and/or their Local or Regional AECG.

4. Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP)

The NSW Department of Education has agreed to respect ICIP rights by following Indigenous cultural protocols as outlined in the Australia Council for the Arts Indigenous Protocols for Working with Indigenous Artists.

Copyright for Language resources created on paid Departmental time does not reside with any single individual fulfilling a Nest role. These resources, once created, must remain available for Nest use in order to ensure that personnel changes do not impede the delivery of Language lessons to Nest students.

5. Establishing an Aboriginal Language Program

The decision to implement an Aboriginal Language and Culture program in a NSW Public School from within a Nest footprint, is to be made by the school leadership team and in conjunction with their local Aboriginal community/s. Schools are encouraged to work with their local community and Reference Group in establishing an Aboriginal Language program as part of whole school curriculum implementation.

The following is a guide for schools, highlighting the steps towards establishing an Aboriginal Language program.

5.1 A Principal within a Nest footprint area wishing to begin teaching the local Language should contact the Aboriginal Language Teacher, to discuss a program in terms of the school's needs.

5.2 In turn the Aboriginal Language Teacher will contact the Nest's Project Officer.

5.3 The Project Officer will contact and work with the school to determine Language hours needed, and then work within their own contracted budget to identify a suitable Aboriginal Language Educator (Tutor) to deliver these hours.

5.4 The Project Officer should respond to the Principal and the Aboriginal Language Teacher within 14 days – if this does not occur, please contact the NSW AECG Inc. Executive Officer.

5.5 The NSW AECG Inc. is responsible for ensuring that an Aboriginal Language Educator has undertaken all mandatory training and probity checks. The Principal or their delegate may verify this with the Project Officer, and the school should provide its own induction for the Aboriginal Language Educator.

5.6 Aboriginal Language Educators teach Language and Culture for three hours per week per school, with any additional hours to be negotiated with the NSW
AECG Inc. Schools may fund further hours using their equity loading for Aboriginal students under the Resource Allocation Model.

5.7 The Nest Teacher informs AECD of the newly established class/es.

5.8 If a school wishes to employ a specific Aboriginal Language Educator of their choice rather than working with the Project Officer, they must do so using their equity loading for Aboriginal students under the Resource Allocation Model, rather than through the Nest funding structure.
Roles and Responsibilities

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Reference Groups

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Reference Groups have been established in each of the Nests. They discuss and set direction and priorities for their Nest Footprint area.

Reference Groups are community groups which have the right to self-determination as to their functions and processes. As a community group, membership of the Reference Group must be open to relevant community members and relevant community organisations.

The functions of the Reference Groups are supported by the NSW AECG Inc. and adhere to the vision, aims and objectives of the NSW AECG Inc. However, Reference Groups are independent community bodies separate from the NSW AECG Inc., and should not be run as AECG meetings. Aboriginal Language Teachers report to Reference Groups once per term.

**Reference Groups are responsible for:**

- Supporting local engagement with and input into Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests.
- Ascertaining local priorities for the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests.
- Providing direction and guidance around Aboriginal Language activities.
- Supporting Aboriginal Language Teachers and Project Officers to identify training needs of Educators, in consultation with the relevant community/ies.
- Facilitating further research into Aboriginal Language revitalisation.
- Encouraging community Elders, local community groups, Aboriginal organisations, Aboriginal youth and students to participate and engage in proactive support of the local Aboriginal Language.

Aboriginal Language Teacher

Aboriginal Language Teachers are employed by the NSW Department of Education. The Aboriginal Language Teacher works collaboratively with Aboriginal Education and Communities Directorate (AECD), schools, NSW AECG Inc. Project Officers, Aboriginal Language Educators and local Aboriginal Language speakers across their respective Nest to develop quality Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs for Aboriginal students and all students.

Non classroom based Professional Learning for Aboriginal Language Educators run by Aboriginal Language Teachers should be held outside of normal school hours (for example, on staff development days or during afternoons) in order to ensure that all Aboriginal Language Educators are able to deliver their lessons during school hours.

Performing work related to non-school-based community events is not part of Aboriginal Language Teachers' Departmental function and must be undertaken
outside paid time. Where Aboriginal Language Teachers use a departmental vehicle, log books must be reported to the Base School Principal weekly.

**Aboriginal Language Teachers are responsible for:**

- Planning and developing Aboriginal Language and Culture programs in collaboration with the Project Officers linked to the NESA-endorsed K-10 Aboriginal Languages Scope and Sequence.
- Working with the Nest Base School, Base School Principal and schools within the Nest footprint to facilitate the delivery of Language classes in schools.
- Providing a report to the Nest Reference Group and AECD once a term using the template at Appendix 3.
- Providing professional development for Aboriginal Language Educators in a classroom context.
- Collecting, collating and analysing data and reporting to AECD on a weekly basis using the SharePoint system (this may also be done by a School Administration Manager, if the school agrees).
- Engaging in the Performance Development Framework process with their Base School Principal (with support from AECD).
- Participating in Skype meetings (weeks 4 and 9 termly) hosted by AECD (accompanied by Base School Principals).
- Participating in biannual Professional Learning Workshops held by AECD.
- Providing timely and accurate information for briefings and correspondence to AECD as required.
- Ensuring they have made appropriate arrangements to maintain accreditation.

**Aboriginal Language Educator**

Aboriginal Language Educators (also known as Tutors) are local Aboriginal Language speakers. Aboriginal Language Educators must hold a TAFE Certificate I, II or III, recognised prior learning, or be recognised as Elders and/or Language speakers within their community.

The NSW AECG Inc. Nest Project Officer is the Aboriginal Language Educator's line manager and employs Aboriginal Language Educators. Any performance issues or concerns around the employment of the Aboriginal Language Educators are to be directed to the NSW AECG Inc. Executive Officer.

Aboriginal Language Educators teach Language and Culture for three hours per week per school, with any additional hours to be negotiated with the NSW AECG Inc. Schools may fund further hours using their equity loading for Aboriginal students under the Resource Allocation Model.

Classroom teachers must actively participate and are responsible for classroom management whilst Aboriginal Language Educators are teaching Language and Culture.
If Aboriginal Language Educators wish to undertake Language teaching outside of the classroom or school grounds (‘On Country’ teaching) this must be negotiated with the school Principal.

Aboriginal Language Educators are not Aboriginal Education Officers (AEO) or School Learning Support Officers (SLSO) and are not to be treated as such. Some individuals may work in both roles, but in these cases their functions must be kept separate and endorsed by the NSW AECG Inc. and the school. In this instance, the individual will be paid by the school, which will then be required to invoice the NSW AECG Inc. for the agreed hours and rate of pay (without casual loading). This should occur on a fortnightly basis.

If individuals holding other school-based roles (for example, classroom teacher or Aboriginal Education Officer) wish to also work as Aboriginal Language Educators, they will need to discuss contractual arrangements for this (including tax implications) with their Base School Principal, school administration and the relevant Project Officer.

**Aboriginal Language Educators are responsible for:**

- Providing Language and Culture lessons linked to the NESA-endorsed K-10 Aboriginal Languages Scope and Sequence.
- Providing support to students to learn an Aboriginal Language that has been approved by the local community and Reference Group.
- Working closely with the Aboriginal Language Teacher, to ensure that teaching is relevant to students’ learning needs and stage level.
- Attending Aboriginal Language professional learning activities to develop effective strategies in providing tuition in an Aboriginal Language, provided by the Project Officer and/or Aboriginal Language Teacher.
- Ensuring the classroom teacher has completed their data sheet and providing it to their Project Officer.
- Notifying the school and the Project Officer if unable to attend due to sickness etc.

**Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Project Officer**

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Project Officers are employed by the NSW AECG Inc. and support local Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Reference Groups and communities in the ongoing work to revitalise and reclaim Aboriginal Languages and Cultures in Nest communities.

Once a school has confirmed with the Project Officer that they wish to implement a Language and Culture program, the Project Officer will respond within 14 days. If any issue arises at this stage, the school should contact the NSW AECG Inc. Executive Officer.

**Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest Project Officers are responsible for:**

- Supporting Language teaching and learning, resource development and sharing opportunities.
- Managing Aboriginal Language Educator employment including liaising with Aboriginal Language Teachers and school principals as necessary.
- Finding replacement Aboriginal Language Educators in the case of illness/absence.
- Supporting the Language and Culture Nest through organising and arranging regular Reference Group meetings to discuss progressing the Language and Culture Nest (i.e. drafting and distributing agendas, coordinating diaries for meetings, taking and distributing meeting minutes within seven days).
- Undertaking regular communication (such as through newsletters, community forums and other forms of communication) to update and engage the Reference Group and community with Language and Culture Nest activities.
- Communicating regularly with the NSW AECG Inc. and Local AECGs and reporting on activities undertaken.
- Performing other related duties as required by the NSW AECG Inc.

**Base School Principal**

The Principal of the Nest Base School provides leadership support in the delivery of Aboriginal Language and Culture programs across schools in the Nest.

The Base School Principal is the Aboriginal Language Teacher's immediate line manager, and is responsible for the Aboriginal Language Teacher's Performance Development Framework.

The Base School Principal also manages and approves spending of administrative funding for Nest expenses, working with the Aboriginal Language Teacher.

**Nest Base School Principals are responsible for:**

- Financial and administrative support for the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest initiative including support and advice for schools within the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests (e.g. administration, recurring costs, Aboriginal Language Teacher travel expenses, purchase of resources and asset register).
- Supervision of performance and ongoing professional development for the Aboriginal Language Teacher.
- Ensuring reporting by the Aboriginal Language Teacher occurs in a timely and accurate manner by quality assuring data gathering and reporting processes (including participation by the School Administration Manager with Principals' agreement).
- All further duties related to Language and Culture teaching within their school as outlined in Nest School Principals' roles and responsibilities.
- Participating in Skype meetings (weeks 4 and 9 termly) with AECD (accompanied by Aboriginal Language Teachers).
Nest School Principal

Nest School Principals provide support, leadership and the implementation of Aboriginal Languages and Culture programs within their school.

A Principal within a Nest footprint area wishing to begin teaching the local Language should refer to section 5, Establishing an Aboriginal Language Program.

If an Aboriginal Language Educator, employed by the NSW AECG Inc., is sick or absent, the Principal should inform the relevant Project Officer.

All Nest school principals (including Nest Base School principals) are responsible for:

- Providing an induction to the school for Aboriginal Language Educators and ensuring mandatory training is undertaken.
- Ensuring all staff participate in professional learning to build their cultural competency and appreciation of Aboriginal Languages and Culture.
- Actively maintaining relationships between the school and its local Aboriginal community to ensure co-decision making in relation to Aboriginal Language and Culture teaching and learning.
- Monitoring the delivery of the Aboriginal Language and Culture program in the school.
- Ensuring a classroom teacher provides appropriate support and supervision for Language and Culture classes.
- Reviewing the work and impact of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest in partnership with the Aboriginal Language Teacher, the Local AECG and school community.

Classroom Teacher

Classroom teachers are responsible for:

- Classroom management and must remain in the classroom at all times whilst Aboriginal Language Educators are teaching Language and Culture lessons.
- Actively participating in Aboriginal Language and Culture lessons delivered by Aboriginal Language Tutors.
- Assisting where appropriate with the delivery of lessons.
- Completing Aboriginal Language Educator data sheets.
- Embedding Language and Culture perspectives within their teaching and learning program across all key learning areas to integrate authentic Aboriginal cultural perspectives.

NSW AECG Inc.

The Department works in formal partnership with the NSW AECG Inc.

The NSW AECG Inc. is responsible for:
- Supporting the functions and operations of a Keeping Place within each of the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests.
- Providing Aboriginal Language and Culture Project Officer/s for each Aboriginal Language and Culture Nest.
- Working through Project Officers to provide Aboriginal Language Educators for students in schools.
- Overseeing and/or supporting the development and publishing of materials that support the teaching of Aboriginal languages.
- Providing a website for the storage, access and dissemination of Aboriginal languages resources.
Appendix 1: Data Collection Flow Chart

Please note that, where schools agree, data may be collected and inputted to the SharePoint system by the School Administration Manager.
# Appendix 2: Data Collection Template

**Student numbers in class reporting sheet**

Classroom teacher to fill in all fields in class and deliver completed form for processing to local School Principal or delegate at the end of each week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Classroom name</th>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Aboriginal count</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal count</th>
<th>Hours/ Mins</th>
<th>Classroom teacher Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>04/ Jun/ 2019 Eg. 4/5 G</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tutor’s name: [ ] Tutor’s signature: [ ]

Principal / Delegate’s Name: [ ] Principal / Delegate’s Signature: [ ]

Tutor and classroom teacher must complete this form each week per school. Please use new sheet for different school. The ‘week ending date’ is the Friday at the end of this reporting week. The Date column is the day when class was run.

Information Management – Data collection template. For support please contact Joseph De Araujo or Vatsal Makadia. If this template needs additional fields for your school or nest, please feel free to contact us to organise updates.
Appendix 3: Aboriginal Language Teacher Term Report Template

Aboriginal Language & Culture Nest - Term Report
Nest Teachers to complete and return to Aboriginal Education and Community Engagement.

**Due:** Term X Week X, 20XX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reporting Period:</th>
<th>Language &amp; Culture Nest:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Choose an item.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Nest Teacher’s Name: | Choose an item. |

## Nest Data

Please provide the number of tutors, teachers, students and schools below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutors of Aboriginal languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers of Aboriginal Languages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal students learning an Aboriginal language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Aboriginal students learning an Aboriginal language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools teaching an Aboriginal language in the Nest (e.g. resources of supported by Nest funds and/or staff)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Nest Teacher’s activities to progress the Language and Culture Nest

Schools Visited - Include purpose of visit and outcomes.

Presentations - Delivered and/or attended to progress Language Nest activities. Include purpose, audience and outcomes.
| Professional Learning | delivered with and for Aboriginal Language tutors/teachers. Include tutor's/teacher's participation in department mandatory training and language related professional learning (e.g. title of professional learning, numbers attending, learning intention and summary of evaluation feedback). |

| Nest Reference Group meetings | attended to progress Language Nest activities. Include name, purpose, and outcomes/recommendations. |

| AECG Meetings | attended to progress Language Nest activities. Include name, purpose, and outcomes/recommendations. |

| Community Meetings | attended to progress Language Nest activities. Include name, purpose, |
and outcomes/recommendations.

Significant Achievements

Challenges and possible solutions.

Please add a Good new Story or something you are doing to promote the Nest, such as, promotional materials, publications, fact sheets, case studies, research, proposals.
Appendix 4: Useful Links

OCHRE Plan – Aboriginal Affairs NSW

NSW Department of Education - Aboriginal Education Policy

NSW Department of Education – Aboriginal Education and Communities Directorate

NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc.

Partnership Agreement 2010-2020, NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group Inc. and NSW Department of Education

Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests – NSW AECG Inc. Q&A Factsheet

NESA Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus

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  Gumbaynggirr
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- Paakantji
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  North West Wiradjuri
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- Dunghutti Satellite Nest:
  Robert Smith (Elder contact), phone: 0484 738 539 | email: robert.smith@det.nsw.edu.au

**Nest Footprint Areas**

- Bundjalung:
  Kyogle, Tweed Heads, Ballina, Evans Head, Woodenbong, Grafton, Tabulam, Coraki, Casino and Bonalbo.

- Gamilaraay/Yuwaalaraay/Yuwaalayaay:
  Collarenebri, Walgett, Lightning Ridge and Goodooga.

- Gumbaynggirr:
  South Grafton, Bellingen, Urunga, Dorrigo, Northern Beaches, Sawtell, Toormina, Nambucca Valley and Orara.

- Paakantji:
  Broken Hill, Wilcannia, Menindee, Bourke, Mildura and Coomealla.

- North West Wiradjuri:
  Dubbo, Narromine, Peak Hill, Trangie, Gilgandra, Wellington and Mudgee.

- Dunghuti Satellite Nest:
  Kempsey and surrounds.

- Gamilaraay Satellite Nest:
  Tamworth and surrounds