

Invitation from Harold Furber (Chair, Desert People's Centre), Julie Walker (Chair, WANALA), and Robert Somerville (CEO, Batchelor Institute)

We would like to invite you to a meeting of Australia's First Nations language centres, organisations and associations in Alice Springs on 2 June 2016.

The meeting will be held on the land of the Antulya Arrernte people at the Desert Peoples' Centre in Alice Springs. The Centre is a joint venture between Batchelor Institute for Indigenous Tertiary Education and the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT). The Centre for Appropriate Technology is Australia's national Indigenous science and technology organisation operating since 1980. Batchelor Institute is Australia's largest Indigenous tertiary institution providing training and education to Indigenous people for over 30 years.

We hope this meeting will be an opportunity to share our collective experiences across Australia. Our own Western Australian and Northern Aboriginal Languages Alliance (WANALA) is nearing the end of its second year of operation, advocating and providing services to an area which is home to more than 150 Indigenous languages. We would be pleased to update you on our experiences in helping professionalise our language maintenance and revitalisation work and leading professional development in language documentation and teaching. Our centres, like yours, are faced with tight resourcing and it would be useful to share information on streamlining of centres, new technologies and volunteer and intern programs. We would like to organise this meeting around key questions facing our Indigenous language centres and organisations:

- How can we best learn from each other and share knowledge across Australia?
- What are best-practice approaches to maximising the value of our scarce funding and staffing to help sustain our centres?
- What models might we use in considering an Australia-wide coalition of First Nations language centres and organisations? What would such a coalition be responsible for and what is best left at the language centre level?
- Is it time for all centres involved in the maintenance and revival of Indigenous languages to come together in a coalition? And will this assist us in our national partnerships, including with the Commonwealth Government?

We would appreciate your advice on any other questions or matters you think should be included. Please send any thoughts by email to david.nathan@batchelor.edu.au or via the web page at <http://wanala.org/coalition>, preferably by mid May.

As part of this meeting, Harold Furber will provide an update on the proposed National Indigenous Art & Culture Centre. He will have just returned from presenting in New Zealand and will report on the growing national and international support.

We consider this gathering a timely one. While we are not financially able to help with travel costs, we would value a representative or representatives from your area attending or sending your views.

Please email david.nathan@batchelor.edu.au if you are able to attend, or see <http://wanala.org/coalition>.

Harold Furber
Chair, DPC

Julie Walker
Chair, WANALA

Robert Somerville
CEO, Batchelor Institute

26 April 2016