



AFMLTA Medal for Outstanding Service to Language Teaching: 2023 Andrew Scrimgeour

The AFMLTA Medal is awarded in recognition of exceptional and outstanding contributions to language teaching in Australia over an extended period. An exceptional and outstanding contribution is to be regarded as one that has significantly influenced the pattern and/or quality of language teaching and learning in Australia in some beneficial way.

Medal for Outstanding Service to Language Teaching Recipients

1992 Manuel Gelman	1994 David Ingram
1999 Denis Cunningham	2005 Angela Scarino
2008 David Vale	2011 Joseph Lo Bianco
2011 Lia Tedesco	2013 Michael Clyne (posthumously)
2017 Jane Orton	2018 John Hajek
2023 Andrew Scrimgeour	

Citation

Andrew Scrimgeour has a long, distinguished career as a languages scholar, educator and advocate. With outstanding contributions to the field across a career of more than four decades, he has significantly influenced teachers of languages and languages education scholars in Australia, and internationally. His engagement with the profession has profoundly and positively impacted the work of the AFMLTA.

Andrew studied Chinese at The University of Adelaide, and has achieved a level of facility with and knowledge of Chinese language and culture rare in Australia for those of non-Chinese background. He travelled to China from the 1970s, developing deep knowledge which has profoundly influenced his research, teaching and scholarship. His generosity in sharing this knowledge has ensured many others have also benefited from his extraordinary accomplishments and insights.

Andrew taught Chinese and Indonesian, and has had a distinguished career as a researcher of languages education, principally at the University of South Australia, working on more than 20 national languages education research and professional learning projects, and in preparing languages teachers. He has also worked extensively with in-service teachers of all languages, tertiary languages educators, governments, inter-governmental bodies, education jurisdictions, boards of studies, curriculum authorities, community languages organisations and languages teacher professional associations, to advocate for, conduct and disseminate data-driven research, and contribute to improving the quality and outcomes of languages education. He was Chief Examiner of Chinese for the Senior Secondary Board of South Australia for 16 years, and recently coordinated the Master of Teaching Languages Education specialisation at UniSA, as well as teaching into languages, linguistics and cultural studies. Central to his philosophy of teaching is his focus on the learner, recognising the individuality of every student and their own histories, and learning needs. He advocates the importance of teachers as active and reflexive practitioners, and the benefits of professional association membership. Much of his work has been conducted with the AFMLTA, and he has been a long-standing member of MLTASA, including as President; with the AFMLTA, as

Vice President and *Babel* Editor; and has worked with LTAs in every state and territory of Australia.

Andrew's research has been highly influential in shaping practice in languages education. In the context of a nation reimagining itself in Asia, and globally, Andrew has made significant contributions. He was lead writer of the original curriculum for Chinese for the Australian Curriculum, instrumental in ensuring the distinctiveness of Chinese as a language for learners from all backgrounds, and for teachers who also have diverse histories. He remains the pre-eminent Australian scholar in this field, and his work with curriculum authorities has influenced studies of Asia and Asian languages in Australian schools and universities. This impact can also be seen in international contexts, with invited presentations around the world, and many significant publications including his book with Jane Orton on Teaching Chinese as a Second Language, subtitled 'The way of the learner'. He has a keen interest in the design of learning materials, and his wider research interests include orthographies and scripts, history, architecture, and art. A prolific traveller and photographer, he demonstrates the interconnectedness of people, places, languages, and cultures in unique representations from around the world. His national reports illustrate his profound and eclectic knowledge and insights only possible from one with such deep knowledge of languages, cultures, people, places and learning. Recent work has included being Lead Researcher for the Australian Government commissioned project to develop a national plan and strategy for languages education in Australian schools. He prepared the first comprehensive review since 2005 of program provision and student participation in languages learning, as well as surveying teachers of languages on their participation, aspirations and needs in the profession. The comprehensive data base he developed will serve the nation well in its future endeavours to support and increase languages learning.

In summary, Andrew Scrimgeour has made exceptional contributions to the languages education profession, meeting the criteria for the highest honour of the AFMLTA, the AFMLTA medal. These contributions span school and university levels, and involve work with teacher education students, teachers, schools, jurisdictions and governments. He is a highly deserving recipient of this award.