

# NEWS IN BRIEF



**AFMLTA:** the national voice for teachers of languages  
Providing vision, leadership, representation, advocacy and support for quality teaching and learning of language

**August 2023**

## **From the AFMLTA President**

### **National Assembly**

The AFMLTA National Assembly was held on 6–7 July in Perth. At this meeting, AFMLTA Executive Officers met with the Presidents/Liaisons of the state/territory language teachers' associations. Together, we voted to make some significant changes to the AFMLTA's Constitution and Working Rules. One of these was to increase the term of the President from two to three years. As this change was accepted, we voted on an additional motion to retain Nathan Harvey in his role as Immediate Past President for a further year and to extend my role as President, also for a further year. Proposals to update role-descriptions and other sections of the Working Rules to reflect more recent practice were also accepted at Assembly. You can read updated versions of the Constitution and Working rules on the [About page](#) of the AFMLTA website.

Another role of the National Assembly was to elect officers to fill vacant positions on the AFMLTA executive. I am happy to announce that the following 2-year appointments were made: Anne-Marie Morgan (Vice President), Kylie Farmer (Secretary) and Miyako Matsui (Promotions officer). I look forward to working with these officers and with Andrew Scrimgeour (Babel Editor), Sherryl Saunders (Treasurer) and Amanda Pentti (Information Officer) over the coming year.

I thank our state and territory partners for their ongoing commitment and collaborative spirit as we work together and continue to provide vision, leadership, advocacy, and support for quality teaching and learning of languages.



Image: 2023 AFMLTA Assembly with Conference keynote speaker, Joanna McPake from the University of Strathclyde, Scotland

## **24th AFMLTA International Languages Conference, 2023**

Our 24th AFMLTA International Languages Conference, hosted by and held at the School of Education, Edith Cowan University Mt Lawley Campus in Perth, was a wonderful event attended by approximately 220 delegates from all Australian states/territories, as well as international speakers and attendees from Scotland, New Zealand, Japan and the Philippines. At this, our first face-to-face conference since 2019 in Hobart, delegates enjoyed a packed academic program of inspiring presentations as well as the opportunity to reconnect with language educator colleagues during breaks and at various social events. Many presenters have kindly shared their presentations and these are now available on the [conference page](#).

Thanks to those delegates who responded to the evaluation survey for your positive feedback and for your suggestions for improvements. We will consider these carefully as we begin preparations for the 25th AFMLTA International Languages Conference in Adelaide in 2025 when we will also celebrate the 60th anniversary of the AFMLTA.

We again thank our partners and exhibitors for their valued support of this event.



[Visit our website for more information!](#)

## Awards

### **AFMLTA Medal for Outstanding Service to Language Teaching**

An important event at the 24<sup>th</sup> AFMLTA International Languages Conference was the presentation of the AFMLTA Medal for Outstanding Service to Language Teaching to **Andrew Scrimgeour**, who is currently the Editor of *Babel*. The AFMLTA Medal is awarded in recognition of exceptional and outstanding contributions to language teaching in Australia over an extended period.

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.



You can read Andrew's full citation on the [Awards page](#) of our website.



### **The Patji Dawes Language Teaching Award**

In 2023 the AFMLTA and the Language and Cultures Network for Australian Universities (LCNAU) proudly assumed responsibility for the Patji Dawes Award which was an initiative of the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language (CoEDL). The purpose of the Patji Dawes Language Teaching Award is to honour outstanding achievements in teaching languages by an accomplished practitioner or team of practitioners in Australia.

This year's recipient of the Award is **Matt Absalom** Lecturer in Italian Studies, School of Languages and Linguistics, Faculty of Arts, the University of Melbourne. Matt was nominated by his student, Margaret Oravec, who commented: "Matt's classes catapulted me into a new world of language learning. He engendered trust in his unique approach with his enthusiasm, energy and engaging

manner.” She also said, in relation to his approach: “Through storytelling, reading and reflection, I embarked on the most transformative language experience of my life.”

Presidents Gillian Cordy (AFMLTA) and John Hajek (LCNAU) were pleased to present Matt with his award at the 24th AFMLTA International Languages Conference in Perth in July.



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AFMLTA acknowledges the traditional custodians of Country throughout Australia and recognises their continued connection to languages and culture,

land and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.

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**AFMLTA**



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