



THE HON PAUL FLETCHER MP

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts

THE HON KEN WYATT AM MP

Minister for Indigenous Australians

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

5 August 2021

Closing The Gap: \$22 million to safeguard Indigenous languages

The Morrison Government will deliver \$22.8 million in new funding to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, forming part of the more than \$1 billion commitment in targeted investments through the Commonwealth's first Closing the Gap Implementation Plan.

Minister for Communications, Urban Infrastructure, Cities and the Arts, the Hon Paul Fletcher MP, said the increased investment in Indigenous languages is critical in making progress against the languages target in Closing the Gap.

"The Indigenous Languages and Arts program has a demonstrated track record of success and strong ongoing demand. This new investment will support the critical work needed to achieve language outcomes for Indigenous Australians," Minister Fletcher said.

"Australia's Indigenous languages are disappearing at a faster rate than anywhere else in the world. It is critical that these languages are recorded for use by current and future generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and this increased investment recognises the urgency and scale of the situation."

Extra funding of \$22.8 million for the ILA program includes:

- Funding to establish three new Indigenous language centres
- Additional funding to support existing ILA-funded Indigenous language centres
- Increased support for projects that protect the most at-risk Indigenous languages
- New investment in the development of place-based partnerships between Indigenous language centres and local service delivery partners in health and early childhood.

Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, said that strengthening languages is central to achieving outcomes across all Closing the Gap targets, including in health, early childhood, and employment.

"Language is fundamentally important for Indigenous Australians, including for non-speakers," Minister Wyatt said.

"Speaking language helps to keep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people connected to their country. It also provides new job opportunities and supports improved outcomes in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people – helping Indigenous communities to thrive."

This enhanced support is designed to accelerate efforts by the network of ILA-funded language centres to increase the number and strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages being spoken. It will also create new jobs and career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who speak Indigenous languages.

For more information on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, visit: www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-

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