

## HLE NETWORK POLICY PLAN



# HLE Network Policy Plan

HERITAGE LANGUAGE EDUCATION NETWORK  
JULY 2021 - SEPTEMBER 2023



# Introduction

## *Why do we need a foundation for heritage language education?*

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### **Language diversity is an asset and a right**

Linguistic diversity is an asset to society. Citizens who speak multiple languages have more educational options and more diverse job opportunities. Multilinguals enable their country to engage in richer international collaboration. It is no surprise that the European Commission currently promotes language learning and linguistic diversity across Europe.

Developing skills in more than one language is not only useful. Having the opportunity to study one's home language is considered a universal right by UNESCO. The 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education states in Article 5 that "the members of national minorities [have the right] to carry on their own educational activities, including... the use or the teaching of their own language" provided that the students are not hindered from integrating into the local community. This means that multilingual children in the Netherlands have the right to celebrate and understand their heritage language while at the same time integrating into the Dutch society.



### **Heritage language programs provide invaluable supplemental education**

When multilingual children enter the mainstream school system, they risk the loss or diminishment of their mother tongue. Parents want their children to be able to connect with other children and extended family members who speak the same home language, to learn to read and write in the home language, and to understand the traditions of the home culture. A strong basis in the home language allows children to learn additional languages more easily and can lead to greater social and academic success overall for multilingual children. For these reasons, parents enroll their children in language programs that operate outside of the Dutch education system.

Heritage language (HL) programs – also called “mother tongue,” “weekend,” or “community-based languages” schools – are usually non-profit initiatives founded and operated by parents from a particular language community in order to maintain the language and culture of their children’s heritage. These programs crop up organically in every corner of the globe. Lessons take place after school time or on the weekend throughout the school year. HL programs play an important role in the education and development of multilingual children, providing an arguably indispensable service to the community.

### **An unmistakable mismatch**

There is a mismatch between how important HL education is and how difficult it is to establish a successful and effective HL program. Because HL programs operate independently, their structure, quality, size, and level of success vary considerably. The leadership at some of these schools are trained in school management and language development, others might not be. Some programs receive support from home governments, others do not. Common issues faced by these schools are: finding and keeping volunteers, teachers, and families; staying afloat with limited funds; finding a suitable and affordable location, creating appropriate materials, handling a special student population (with mixed levels of skills and motivation); and offering a valuable program with limited class hours and limited planning time.

Educational equity, inclusion, and internationalization are all currently hot topics in the Netherlands, and subsidies related to

these themes are widely available to mainstream schools. Unfortunately, HL programs are not eligible for public resources in the way that mainstream schools are. What we see is that multilingual children often do not have access to lessons in their heritage language – and even if lessons are available, many parents and teachers of multilingual children are uninformed about the importance of these lessons. Furthermore, mainstream school policies often do not include the promotion of HL education. Already less resilient than the mainstream school system, many HL programs had to shut down in the face of additional strain brought by pandemic measures.

In short, there is a tangible and urgent need for organized advocacy on behalf of HL education.

## *There is an urgent need for advocacy*

### **A foundation for HL education**

In locations across the world, it has been demonstrated that organizations that give voice to the common issues faced by heritage language education programs are better able to influence society than the individual language programs.\* Such organizations are able to impact children’s language development at various levels of influence: they can advocate at the highest level to educational authorities or policy makers, they can collaborate with school boards and staff, or they can create opportunities for HL teachers, parents, and students. With HLE Network, this is what we aim to do.

\*“An Ecology of Heritage Language Umbrella Organizations: Developing Collaborative Practices between Iceland and Canada” a paper by Trudie Aberdeen (IHLA in Canada) and Renata Emilsson-Peskova (Móðurmál in Iceland) from April 2020 Conference: *Crossroads of Languages and Cultures: Languages and Cultures at Homes and at School* in Rethymno, Greece

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to increase and improve opportunities for multilingual children to further develop the language(s) they speak at home through an effective educational program. This education should support them in their identity development so that they can grow up confidently and integrate into local society. We aim to promote and improve heritage language (HL) education in the Eindhoven region and beyond.



We envision a world where multilingual children have the opportunity to develop the language(s) that they speak at home through an effective education program. We will achieve our objective by:

- 1 Ensuring that accurate information about available HL programs is **visible** and easy to find
- 2 Creating a sense of **community** between HL programs, where achievements can be celebrated, appreciation can be shown for their work, and challenges can be discussed.
- 3 Organizing professional development activities or research projects with the aim of maintaining/improving the **quality**, success, and sustainability of HL programs
- 4 Informing and **reaching out to the public** about the importance of understanding, recognizing, valuing, and supporting HL education
- 5 Forming meaningful **partnerships** with other organizations





### Languages that appeared on the Expat Center's website as of June 2021

Arabic, Bulgarian,  
Chinese (Mandarin  
& Taiwanese),  
Finnish, French,  
German, Hungarian,  
Indian (Hindi,  
Tamil, Telugu,  
Kannada, Bengali,  
Marathi, &  
Malayalam), Italian,  
Korean, Persian,  
Polish, Romanian,  
Russian, Spanish,  
Turkish, &  
Ukrainian

## Our achievements so far

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The initiative that led to HLE Network started in 2018 as Heritage Language Schools Eindhoven (HLSE). From August 2018 to June 2021, much was achieved:

- Information about 24 HL programs was compiled and listed on the Holland Expat Center South website,
- Almost all of these programs convened for the first time in June 2019 for a symposium.
- Each September and February a social Meetup was organized for the HL programs.
- A monthly newsletter went out to 120 subscribers.
- Two outreach events were organized: a free webinar for Dutch teachers in October 2020 and a fundraising webinar for parents and caregivers in June 2021.
- A partnership with Eindhoven Library was established and two heritage language children's book collections were added to the new International Children's Book Collection. The addition of four more languages is planned for 2021.
- Valuable partnerships were built with SALTO schools, Holland Expat Center South, and Brainport Development in Eindhoven, as well as with several like-minded organizations abroad
- The initiative was in the press and in podcasts numerous times in relation to the library project and other events.
- Information about HL education and how to find the HL programs in the region now appears in Eindhoven's *Expat Guide*, the *Living In Guide*, and regularly in *How Do* publications.
- Representatives of the network have participated in two Brainport events (one presentation and one digital booth) and at the 2020 Heritage Language Education Conference online.
- The website has news from active HL programs, numerous unique interviews to inspire the community, an events list, and resources for parents, mainstream teachers, and HL managers/teachers.

# Strategic Plan

The following goals have been set with ambition to achieve them by September 2023. This policy plan applies thus to the school years 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 and is valid until the annual meeting of HLE Network's board in September 2023.

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## VISIBILITY

- Appear in 10 publications (press, podcasts, magazines, expat guides)
- Ensure that the webpage and brochures are available in Dutch

## COMMUNITY

- Include 15 HL programs as Affiliates in the HLE Network Directory
- Reach 250 newsletter subscribers
- Organize 4 social events for HL teachers/managers (twice annual Meetups)
- Post 4 new, unique interviews with inspirational examples of successful HL education approaches, coalitions, etc.

## QUALITY

- Run 4 professional development workshops for HL teachers/managers
- Launch and present to the public a document (in progress with international partners) about professionalism in HL education
- Support/mentor any new language groups who want to start a HL education program

## OUTREACH

- Organize 2 public outreach events (for example, for teachers at mainstream schools or parents of multilingual children)
- Give 6 presentations to raise money for the administration of the foundation

## PARTNERSHIPS

- Facilitate the addition of a total of 10 languages in the International Children's Book Collection at Eindhoven Library
- Organize 2 annual conferences in November for HL leaders and teachers in conjunction with our European partners (the Forum for Heritage Language Coalitions in Europe, "FOHLC Europe")
- Partner with a university to supervise at least one student for a MA internship/thesis
- Apply for an Erasmus+ small partnership project



## Means of Fundraising

- fees for giving presentations (to schools or businesses)
- fees for access to some events
- subsidies
- donations

## Donors

HLE Network appreciates the support from donors in 2021 (as of July)

- Hogeschool de Kempel
- Eindhoven Library
- Attendees of the webinar Understanding Bilingual Children

## Financial Management

In Q1 and Q2 of 2021 a few donations were received, prior to the formation of the foundation. Administrative costs were incurred at the start of Q3, such as the fees from the notary, KvK, and bank.

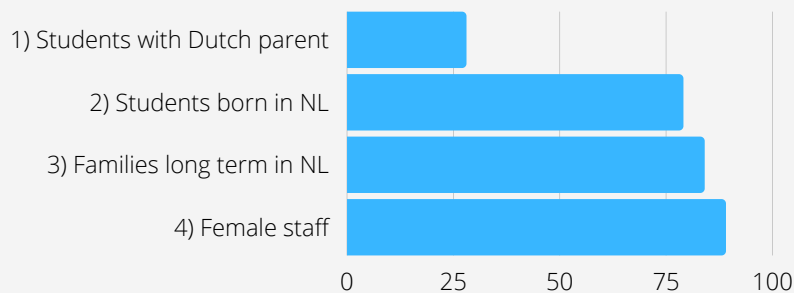
In its first two years (August 2021 - September 2023), it is expected that the HLE Network will primarily use assets for administrative costs, such as insurance, banking, website, and domain costs. The organization will also run webinars, which means a webinar platform service subscription could be necessary and guest speakers could require compensation. Finally, because the organization is in its starting phase, money could also go towards the support services subsidized by the city of Eindhoven available for foundations, such as advice about financial management and policy creation.

Board members are not compensated for their service on the board. Management may be compensated for carrying out executive functions (conforming with the Good Governance Code for Charities (Commissie Wijffels) if there are sufficient funds. The treasurer has more than 10 years' experience managing the finances of non-profit organizations.

# HLE Network Affiliates

A HL program that officially participates in the network (i.e., that becomes a “HLE Network Affiliate”) will benefit from increased visibility. All Network Affiliates are listed in the online HLE Network Directory with a profile, as of July 2021. Having information about the available HL programs in one place makes it easy to find by the public.

## STUDENT/STAFF CHARACTERISTICS\*



AVERAGE PERCENTAGE REPORTED

\*from Spring 2021 Survey of HL programs in Eindhoven

### How does a network help improve HL education?

HL programs can differ a lot (in their size, experience, methods, etc.), but they all have in common the purpose of giving multilingual children the chance to develop their heritage language. HLE Network provides the different HL programs with opportunities to network with each other, share best practices, and receive training and resources geared toward success and sustainability. Periodic surveys of HL programs within a network helps HLE Network stay

up-to-date about the challenges being faced. Survey results (such as those above) can help guide fundraising efforts. A network also gives a positive impression to the public by showing that the HL programs can collaborate professionally. Common challenges can more effectively be tackled when working together versus when individual HL programs approach institutions alone. Importantly, HL programs who connect with each other are able to acknowledge each other's hard work and to celebrate each other's achievements!



# Partners

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Organizations with whom we can create partnerships include governmental organizations, public libraries, educational authorities, school boards, mainstream school directors and teachers, parents, umbrella organizations for heritage language programs abroad, universities and research centers in the Netherlands and abroad, as well as non-profit organizations with similar goals and activities both in the Netherlands and abroad.

We have established partnerships with:

- Holland Expat Center South
- Living In Project
- SALTO Schools
- Eindhoven Library
- Brainport Development
- Meerhoven Internationals Platform
- Rutu Foundation
- Meertalig.nl
- 3M Meer Kansen Met Meertaligheid Project at NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences
- Taal naar Keuze
- Kletsheads Podcast
- Móðurmál - the Association on Bilingualism, Iceland
- Coalition for Community-based Heritage Languages, United States
- International and Heritage Languages Association, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

# Board members



## **DIANA ANGELOVA** CHAIR

Diana is originally from Bulgaria, where her interest in business management started already in high school. She earned a BA in Social Activities (2004), an MA in International Management (2015), and a verified certificate of achievement from MITx in "Business and Impact Planning for Social Enterprises" (2020). Her work experience includes project development and operations management. Diana moved with her family to Eindhoven in 2015, where she has been involved in numerous social initiatives having to do with integration, social cohesion, and support for multilingualism. Her role as chair of the board includes overseeing activities as well as managing the International Children's Book Collection project in partnership with Eindhoven Library.



## **GEERT SIMONS** VICE-CHAIR

Geert has a BA in Education from KHLim (Belgium) and a MA in International Management from the University of Liverpool. He has work experience as an expert consultant on local integration policy and as both, teacher and manager, in international education and in heritage language programs (in Nigeria and in the Middle East). Recently he was the founding head of SALTO International School in Eindhoven (NL) and he is currently the Director-CEO of the Proominent Foundation, a group of 11 schools in Ede (NL).



## **PHILIPPE SOULARD** TREASURER

Philippe has been active for more than ten years in the non-profit sector. He uses his technical knowledge to assist with accounting, and he also helps with organizing events and trainings, and securing funding and grants. He is a member of the board of several associations all having a close relationship either with the French language or multilingualism, namely, Francofilous (French HL program for French-speaking primary school students), l'Entente des Associations Francophones aux Pays-Bas, and Be-Rise.



# Management



## **GISI CANNIZZARO** **MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Gisi is from New Orleans, Louisiana, in the U.S. and speaks English as her mother tongue. She holds a Bachelor's degree in German Studies from Loyola University (2004, New Orleans), an Erasmus Mundus European Master's degree in Theoretical Clinical Linguistics (2007, Groningen, Joensuu, and Potsdam), and a PhD degree in Child Language Acquisition (2012, Groningen). She worked for six years in Eindhoven as an educational consultant helping multilingual, internationally mobile families with children. In 2018 she initiated two projects: one to organize Italian lessons for Italian-speaking children and one to organize a network of heritage language programs in Eindhoven. As a part of these projects, she has helped add 500 Italian children's books to the Eindhoven Library. Together with her Italian husband, Gisi is raising trilingual children (English, Italian, and Dutch).



# Advisory Council

An Advisory Council is an external sounding board that gives non-binding advice to the Board and Managing Director of HLE Network. The Advisory Council is composed of internationally recognized experts in the fields of heritage language education, multilingualism, and non-profit governance.

*Members of the Advisory Council have no financial interest in the success of HLE Network and are not compensated by HLE Network.*



## JOY KREEFT PEYTON

Joy Kreeft Peyton, PhD, is a Senior Fellow at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and President of the Coalition of Community-Based Heritage Language Schools. She has over 35 years of experience working in the field of languages, linguistics, and culture in education. She has been working on issues of heritage language and mother tongue education for many years. She was a founding member of the Alliance for the Advancement of Heritage Languages, hosted at CAL. She is co-editor of *Heritage Languages in America: Preserving a National Resource and Handbook of Heritage, Community, and Native American Languages in the United States: Research, Educational Practice, and Policy*. She has worked in Ethiopia, Nepal, and The Gambia (on projects funded by USAID and the World Bank) to develop educational materials, including leveled readers, in children's mother tongues, for individual and group reading. She is a Senior Advisor for the EU-SPEAK project (Newcastle University), whose mission is to enhance the knowledge and skills of teachers of adult immigrants who have limited education and literacy in their native language (LESLLA adults).



## ELLEN-ROSE KAMBEL

Dr. Ellen-Rose Kambel is founder and director of the Rutu Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Amsterdam that promotes intercultural multilingual education. The Language Friendly School is a school label and global network founded by the Rutu Foundation that unites schools who welcome and value all the languages spoken by their students. Dr. Kambel is a human rights lawyer and an experienced trainer, public speaker and author of several articles and books on human rights, education and multilingualism. Her latest book, co-edited with Prof. Orhan Agirdag, *Multilingualism and Education: Dutch Plus* was voted second best educational book of the Netherlands in 2018. Dr. Kambel most recently joined the Supervisory Board of the National Museum of World Cultures in the Netherlands.

# Advisory Council



## **KEN CRUICKSHANK**

Ken Cruickshank is Professor of Education and Languages at Sydney University Australia. He was a teacher for many years and then was a teacher educator, training teachers of English. He has worked with community languages schools (i.e., heritage language schools) for over 30 years. As a member of the Community Languages schools Board he lobbied for recognition and funding for the schools. In 2017 he established the Sydney Institute for Community Languages Education (SICLE) which conducts research and provides professional learning and resources for community languages schools.



## **FREDERIKE GROOTHOFF**

Frederike Groothoff, PhD, is an expert on multilingualism. After years of teaching newly arrived migrant children she changed her activities to teaching teachers and advising pedagogical and educational organizations on the subject of multilingualism. After teacher college Frederike was a primary school teacher in Aruba and upon her return she studied language and culture studies in Utrecht and did a research master Language and Communication in Nijmegen. From 2014 until 2020 she carried out a PhD project about the Dutch language development of newly arrived migrant kindergarteners. Nowadays besides working for Utrecht University, she gives talks throughout the Netherlands with her own company LangWhich in which she encourages educational professionals to incorporate home languages into daily school practice. She also encourages teachers to advise parents to keep talking in their home languages and to stimulate children to attend heritage language programs.

Frederike supports HLE Network since she sees it as a great opportunity for HL teachers to gather and share knowledge with each other. Her wish for HLE Network is that their organization will be used not only by HL teachers and parents, but that they will also reach and inspire mainstream school teachers to cherish heritage languages as well.

# Organization

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*This policy plan was prepared by the Managing Director and was approved by the Board on 2021-07-06.*

## **Name of foundation**

Heritage Language Education Network  
(Stichting Heritage Language Education)

## **Board**

- Diana Angelova, Chair
- Geert Simons, Vice-Chair
- Philippe Soulard, Treasurer

## **Management**

- Gisi Cannizzaro, Managing Director

## **Details**

- E-mail: [hlenet.org@gmail.com](mailto:hlenet.org@gmail.com)
- URL: [www.hlenet.org](http://www.hlenet.org)
- KvK number: 83309586
- RSIN: 862823699
- ANBI status since: 2021-07-05
- Bank account: NL67 RABO 0370523814

