

HLE Network Policy Plan

Heritage Language Education Network
September 2026 – September 2030



**HERITAGE
LANGUAGE
EDUCATION
NETWORK**

*Algemeen Nut
Beogende Instelling*

ANBI

About our network



HLE Network exists because community-based heritage language education plays an important role in supporting multilingual children, yet the organizations providing this education remain under-supported and largely absent from educational policy. Our role is to strengthen these organizations while increasing recognition of their contribution to society.

How we got started

It is simple: many heritage language (HL) programs were established and running in Eindhoven, but they were not in touch with each other.

These supplementary education programs are set up to support multilingual children, with benefits for both children and broader society. Information was collected from them in the 2018-2019 school year and shared at a symposium in June 2019. At that gathering, nearly all of the HL programs operating in Eindhoven came together for the first time, where they discovered that they deal with similar challenges — and that there would be clear value in forming a network. After establishing an online directory of programs and having several informal meetups, HLE Network was formally established as a charitable foundation in July 2021.

The societal problem

In our first policy plan (2021-2023), we identified the mismatch between the long list of benefits of HL education and the long list of common challenges that are faced when trying to sustain it. In the subsequent policy plan (2023-2026), we added what we called a “blind spot”: although attention for multilingualism has rapidly become more mainstream, there is no apparent acknowledgement of the role of community-based education. This education sector has been consistently left out of discussions, publications, and policies aimed at supporting multilingual children. Our work is shaped by these two issues.

Our approach

Our activities focus on two fronts: the HL programs themselves and how they are valued by the public. Strengthening the network of language programs is done by facilitating cross-language collaboration and

by finding/creating opportunities for professionalization. Reaching out to the public is a crucial activity because HL programs cannot fully succeed without recognition and appreciation by the broader society.

Where we stand today

We now bring together more than fifteen HL programs in the Eindhoven region and are able to provide them with some extra support and visibility thanks to partnerships we have formed locally and (inter-)nationally. We organize an annual networking event with professional development sessions, and we have launched an annual magazine.

Our core projects are supported by the municipality of Eindhoven via their “Inclusief Samenleven” program, and we are members of the Drongo and Linguapax networks. We have also helped form a European platform and a global think tank dedicated to the topic of HL education. We developed a comprehensive infographic and workshop that debunks common misconceptions education (2022). We helped develop international guidelines for professional practices (2021) and launched a global call to action (2024) on behalf of HL educators worldwide.

Thus, we have succeeded in connecting language groups, making them much more visible, and establishing several key partnerships. This was the groundwork necessary to achieve more substantial improvements for HL educators moving forward.

The next four years

With this four-year policy plan (2026-2030), we establish our priorities for the next phase and explain how progress will be evaluated.

Mission

We envision a world where multilingual children have access to effective HL education that is valued and supported by all of society.

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.



Activities

NETWORK SUPPORT

Maintaining the sense of community between HL programs through ongoing **networking and relationship-building**, where achievements can be celebrated, appreciation can be shown for their work, challenges can be discussed, and knowledge can be shared; includes an annual networking event each September.

Identifying support needs within the network and connecting HL programs with relevant organizations, expertise, resources, and **learning opportunities**.

Promoting professional practices by organizing **professional development** activities and (research) projects with the aim of maintaining/improving the quality, success, credibility, and sustainability of HL programs.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

Reaching out to the public through **media, publications, promotional materials, booths, events, presentations, and workshops** with information about the importance of understanding, recognizing, valuing, and supporting HL education; includes in an annual magazine showcasing stories from the sector.

Ensuring that accurate information about available HL programs and their achievements is visible and easy to find and follow via a **website, newsletter and social media**.

PARTNERSHIPS

Forming meaningful partnerships with other organizations in order to make these activities possible and effective.



Compared to years past, we have merged "visibility" and "outreach" activities to now fall jointly under "public outreach" and merged all "community" and "quality" activities to fall under "network support."

Context

Supporting multilingual children by supporting their HL educators:
What are the risks and what approaches work?

Main risk factors

- **Limited public awareness:** Misconceptions about HL education reduce the willingness of schools, policymakers, and other stakeholders to provide support.
- **Limited resources:** HL programs often face challenges related to teaching materials, sufficient student enrollment, funding, and finding stable lesson locations.
- **Volunteer capacity:** HL programs depend heavily on volunteers, which can make it difficult to ensure long-term sustainability.
- **Variation in quality:** As a form of informal education, HL programs operate without a formal quality assurance system, resulting in varying levels of experience and capacity for professionalism.
- **Limited capacity for (extensive) network initiatives:** Because HL managers and teachers often already volunteer significant time alongside work and family commitments, participation in network activities must remain realistic and worthwhile.

Evidence-based approach

Since the beginning, our approach has been informed by both academic research and conversations with similar organizations in other countries (for example, Iceland, England, Sweden, Australia, Canada, the U.S., Austria and Germany). We have published these conversations on our website so everyone can benefit from the insights gained. In addition, we have helped establish both a European forum (FOHLC Europe) and the Heritage Language Global Think Tank. These relationships give us direct access to what works elsewhere.

What we consistently see is that in the face of the risk factors – and regardless of whether HL education has a government mandate – umbrella organizations and networks invest in professional development for HL educators. For this reason, strengthening the quality and professionalism of community-based programs has always been one of our priorities. We also see that umbrella organizations do *not* generally organize cultural activities and festivals themselves (music, food, performances). Instead, the most common activities are public outreach, networking, advocacy, lobbying, and helping to build sustainability for vulnerable community groups. Therefore, this is also the approach we follow.

What we've learned

Insights from 2023–2026

- Support from the municipality of Eindhoven has been invaluable in helping us establish ourselves as a trusted partner.
- The sense of community among the HL programs has grown, but staying up-to-date about both their achievements and their needs requires a greater investment.
- Organizing effective professional development is challenging because of diverse needs and constraints of the target group.
- The HL programs have provided feedback that more collaboration with and understanding from mainstream education institutions are needed.
- Our initial efforts to secure structural corporate sponsorship have not been successful, as these types of relationships and partnerships require more time.
- In 2025, we tied together insights from our own lessons learned together with research and best practices from abroad to formulate a long-term "collective vision" for HL education that is intentionally ambitious and extends beyond the scope of the current policy period.

Strategic plan

Priorities for 2026–2030

NETWORK SUPPORT

STRATEGY

- Communicate regularly with each participating HL program
- Identify areas where HL programs need support and can realistically be strengthened
- Advocate for improved structural conditions for HL programs through collaboration with municipal and educational partners – where feasible, including better access to suitable teaching facilities, training, and guidance.
- Improve access to professional learning and other support opportunities for HL educators by making relevant connections and through flexible delivery formats where feasible
- Maintain awareness of international developments and best practices in HL education

HOW TO MONITOR

- Are we maintaining regular contact with HL programs?
- Are we identifying the support needs of HL programs?
- Are we making the necessary connections to relevant support, expertise, resources, or opportunities?
- Are planned networking and professionalization activities progressing as scheduled?
- Are we pursuing opportunities for collaboration with municipalities and educational partners?
- Are we incorporating feedback from HL programs into future activities?

INDICATORS (PER SCHOOL YEAR)

- Number of affiliated HL programs participating: in annual networking event, in annual consultation/site visit(s)
- Number of connections leading to advice, training, resources, or collaboration
- Number of concrete improvements in structural support achieved through collaboration (for instance cooperation agreements)
- Number of professional learning opportunities delivered
- Average participant satisfaction with professional learning
- Percentage of participating HL programs reporting that HLE Network strengthened their work
- Percentage of participants reporting they applied knowledge or ideas gained
- Number of international knowledge-sharing activities

TARGETS (PER SCHOOL YEAR)

- ≥90%
- at least 5
- 1–3 structural improvements
- 2 – 4
- ≥3.75/5
- ≥80%
- ≥70%
- at least 5

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Increase public awareness and understanding of HL education through multiple channels of public outreach (digital, print, events, workshops, media appearances)
- Collaborate with mainstream schools, teacher training colleges, and other partners to increase opportunities to reach mainstream educators

- Are we proactively initiating outreach activities with a focus on mainstream education professionals?
- Are our outreach activities reaching the intended audiences?
- Are we incorporating participant feedback and evaluation into future activities?

- Estimated number of educators and policymakers reached
- Number of print magazine distributions
- Percentage of workshop participants reporting increased understanding of HL education

- 5000+ (all channels combined)
- 4000
- ≥80%

ORGANIZATION

- Ensure the stability, transparency, and sustainability of HLE Network as a charitable foundation supporting HL education
- Strengthen capacity to deliver activities sustainably

- Are governance responsibilities being fulfilled throughout the year?
- Are we maintaining a diverse and sustainable funding base?
- Are board vacancies or capacity issues emerging?

- ANBI status maintained
- Annual report and financial report published on time
- Percentage of planned annual activities completed
- Number of active funding sources
- Completion of an annual governance and management review

- yes
- yes
- ≥90%
- at least 3
- yes

Financial Management

Annual budgets and annual financial statements will be prepared, reviewed, and approved by the Board in accordance with the strategic priorities of this policy plan. The annual financial statements of HLE Network are published on our website.

HLE Network is committed to responsible financial management and to complying with the requirements applicable to Dutch charitable organizations (ANBI). Board members receive no remuneration for their service on the Board. The day-to-day organizational management of HLE Network is carried out on a volunteer basis by the Management Team.

Where external funding is obtained for specific projects or temporary activities, compensation may be provided for project management, project coordination, and project implementation, provided that such compensation is directly related to the funded activities, falls within the approved project budget, and complies with applicable laws and principles of good governance.

Means of fundraising

- Subsidies
- Sponsorships
- Donations
- Fees for presentations and workshops
- Fees for participation in the HLE Network Directory by for-profit organizations

General spending categories

- Organization of networking and outreach activities
- Volunteer reimbursements, compensation for externally funded project work (where applicable), and speaker fees
- Communication, publications, and the annual magazine
- Website, software, and digital infrastructure
- Administrative and banking costs
- Insurance
- Organizational development and training

Future direction

We aim to secure a diverse and sustainable funding base that enables HLE Network to continue carrying out the activities described in this policy plan in order to strengthen our long-term capacity. In addition to the core activities, HLE Network may develop complementary projects where external funding allows, provided that they contribute to the mission and strategic priorities of this policy plan.





Partners

Organizations with whom we connect include HL programs, mainstream schools and school boards, teacher training colleges, agencies that support social organizations, language rights and advocacy groups, umbrella organizations for HL programs abroad, as well as non-profit organizations with similar goals and activities both in the Netherlands and abroad.

We have relationships with:

- ALCE de Países Baixos
- Aulas de Português Eindhoven
- Bulgarian School "St. Kliment Ohridski", Eindhoven
- Carrousel – Heritage Language Education in Spanish
- Coalition for Community-Based Heritage Languages, U.S.
- Coordenação de Ensino Português Benelux - Camões I.P.
- Cordaad Veldhoven
- De Carrousel (Centro Latinoamericano de Orientación)
- Deutsche Schule Eindhoven
- Eindhoven Chinese School Han Tang
- Eindhoven Doet
- Eindhoven French school "Francofilous"
- Eindhoven Persian School
- Gemeente Eindhoven, Coalition "Inclusief Samenleven"
- Holland Expat Center South
- Home Heritage & Community Languages Advisory Group, England
- Hungarian School in Eindhoven
- International Languages Educators' Association of Ontario, Canada
- International and Heritage Languages Association, Canada
- Japanese kleuterklas run by Nihongo Eindhoven
- Kleine Sprachwelt, Groningen
- Korean School Eindhoven
- Living In Project, Eindhoven
- Móðurmál - the Association on Bilingualism, Iceland
- Multiculturele Gemeenschappelijke Stichting "Buratino"
- Peer 3
- Platform Brainport voor Onderwijs
- POLH Semente (Portuguese)
- RADAR Antidiscriminatiebureau
- Rode Kruis, Oost Brabant
- SALTO school group
- Samen voor onze Regio
- SILFO school group
- SKPO school group
- SprachCafé Polnisch, Berlin, Germany
- STE Languages
- Stedelijk College
- Stichting Nederlands Onderwijs in het Buitenland
- Stichting Poolse School Eindhoven
- Stichting Romanian School in Eindhoven
- Stichting Supportpunt Eindhoven
- Swedish School in the Netherlands
- Sydney Institute for Community Languages Education (SICLE), University of Sydney, Australia
- Taal naar Keuze
- The Czech and Slovak School Okénko in London
- Trion Opleidingsschool
- VrijwilligerswerkNL

See also www.hlenet.org/thinktank



Our team

The following individuals serve on HLE Network's Board, Management Team, and Advisory Council as of September 2026. For bios and the most up-to-date information, visit www.hlenet.org/organization.

Board



**DIANA
ANGELOVA**
CHAIR



**KRISTEL
DORELEIJERS**
VICE-CHAIR



**PHILIPPE
SOULARD**
TREASURER

Management



**GISI
CANNIZZARO**
MANAGING
DIRECTOR



**GEMMA
HODGSON**
PROJECT
SUPPORT



**ALCIRA
BOJÓRQUEZ
SEGURA**
PROJECT
SUPPORT



**CHIKAKO
NISHIYAMA**
PROJECT
SUPPORT

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**



**ELLEN-ROSE
KAMBEL**



**KEN
CRUICKSHANK**



**HILBERT DE
VRIES**



**GEERT
SIMONS**



**SABINE
LITTLE**



**FREDERIKE
GROOTHOFF**

Organization

This policy plan was approved by the Board on 2026-09-07.



Name of foundation

Heritage Language Education (HLE) Network

Statutory name

Stichting Heritage Language Education

Board

- Diana Angelova, Chair
- Kristel Doreleijers, Vice-Chair
- Philippe Soulard, Treasurer

Management

- Gisi Cannizzaro, Managing Director
- Gemma Hodgson, Project Support
- Alcira Bojórquez Segura, Project Support
- Chikako Nishiyama, Project Support

Details

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- KvK number: 83309586
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- ANBI status since: 2021-07-05
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