

HLE Network Affiliate Policy

What is the HLE Network?

HLE Network stands for Heritage Language Education Network. It is a non-profit organization founded in July 2021 to promote and improve heritage language (HL) education. The goal of HLE Network is to ensure that multilingual children have the opportunity to develop the language(s) that they speak at home through an effective education program. One of the ways HLE aims to achieve this goal is to form a professional network of HL educational programs.

How does forming a network of HL programs 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. Such 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!*

What is a "HLE Network Affiliate"?

A "HLE Network Affiliate" is a HL program that officially participates in the HLE Network.

What is the HLE Network Directory?

The HLE Network Directory lists the HLE Network Affiliates. The directory is found on the website of the HLE Network.

What are the benefits of being a HLE Network Affiliate?

1) Increased visibility

HLE Network Affiliates will benefit from increased visibility. All Affiliates are listed in the HLE Network Directory with a profile. Having information about the available HL programs in one place makes it easy to find by the public. Thanks to HLE Network's partnership with Holland Expat Center South, families who are new to Brabant are informed about HL education and the HLE Network Directory upon arrival. A participating program would also benefit from publicity efforts of the HLE Network as a whole, including entries in publications for expats and any coverage of the HLE Network's activities in the press.

2) Privileged access to events

HLE Network Affiliates will benefit from being given priority for HLE events. When it is possible for HLE to offer it, Affiliates will receive reduced fees or free access to events, earlier announcements about events, and invitations to events exclusively for Affiliates. Examples of events would be: professional development activities, information sessions with local partners such as Stichting Supportpunt Eindhoven, and an annual conference each November that is organized in conjunction with European partners.

3) Benefits from partnerships built by HLE Network

HLE Network Affiliates will benefit from the partnerships that HLE Network continues to build and its advocacy work. 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. An example of an individual HL program benefiting from HLE Network's partnerships would be if the HL program is having difficulty finding an affordable lesson location and HLE Network helps find a solution using its network.

4) Use of logo

HLE Network Affiliates will be able to use the HLE Network logo. By putting the logo on their website and documents, an HL program can demonstrate to the public that they are in a meaningful, professional collaboration.

Who is eligible to become a HLE Network Affiliate?

HLE Network wants as many HL programs as possible to participate in the network! This means that no fee is charged for non-profit organizations to become an Affiliate. It is also not required for a HL program to be located in the Eindhoven/Brainport region. Both non-profit and for-profit HL programs are welcome to participate.

In order to be eligible to become a HLE Network Affiliate, there are a few basic requirements. (By asking to become an Affiliate, the HL program is indicating to the HLE Network that the HL program meets these requirements):

- The HL program provides education to children (age range 0 – 18) in one of the languages that the child speaks at home, but does not study as the main language of instruction in the mainstream primary and secondary schools.
- The HL program's primary focus and goal is to develop children's language skills and cultural knowledge. The HL program does not have the primary focus to teach religious or political doctrine.
- The HL program managers/teachers conduct themselves in a way that reflects positively on the HLE Network. HLE Network encourages that HL program managers/teachers follow the International Guidelines to Professional Practices in Community-Based Heritage Language Schools (working title of document in progress).
- The HL program shares information truthfully with HLE Network.

What is expected of HLE Network Affiliates?

The HLE Network asks that Affiliates actively participate in the network. Examples of active participation would be: providing updates for their profile in the network directory at least once per year, sharing news about accomplishments, participating in surveys and research projects initiated/supported by HLE Network, and participating in events organized by HLE Network. (See next question.)

Does it cost a lot of time to participate in the network?

It is paramount to HLE Network that participation in the network will help HL programs be more effective and successful. Participation should not be a burden to the HL programs. The team at HLE Network is aware of the challenges faced by HL programs (limited time) and care is taken not to make unnecessary requests or to have unrealistic expectations (100% participation is not realistic).

Is it possible for individuals to become a HLE Network Affiliate?

No, individual teachers from a HL program or students' parents are not able to be considered official participants in the network because the network is meant for HL programs. Individuals can sign up for the HLE Network's newsletter and attend certain events, but they cannot be considered "HLE Network Affiliates" and they cannot be listed in the Network Directory.

Is it possible for a self-employed teacher who gives HL lessons to become a HLE Network Affiliate?

Yes, self-employed teachers who run a (one-person) business can participate as a for-profit HL program.

Is there a fee for becoming a HLE Network Affiliate?

There is no fee required for non-profit HL programs to become a HLE Network Affiliate. An annual fee is required for for-profit HL programs, namely 100 Euro per year for BV's and 50 Euro per year for self-employed teachers. The fees are subject to change each August.

Do the HLE Network Affiliates vote on who is on the board of the HLE Network?

No. In Dutch law, there is a distinction between a foundation (*stichting*) with a self-appointed board and an association (*vereniging*) with a board voted in by members at an annual general assembly meeting. The HLE Network is a *stichting*, so the board is self-appointed and the *stichting* does not have members. Under this set-up, it is not necessary for the Affiliates to meet once per year for a general assembly.

Can HLE Network remove an HL program from the network?

The aim of the HLE Network is to build and maintain a network that includes as many HL programs as possible! The HLE Network does not aim to police or monitor HL programs, nor does it have the resources or authority to do so.

That being said, in the case of a blatant failure to meet the basic eligibility requirements, a HL program can be removed from the network by vote of the board of HLE Network. An example of a blatant failure to meet the basic eligibility requirements would be if a HL program consistently conducts itself unprofessionally. The HLE Network can also vote to remove a HL program from the network if the program is blatantly inactive (the HL program is unresponsive to messages from HLE Network for more than 12 months) or if a for-profit HL program fails to pay the annual fee.

What is the procedure for becoming a HLE Network Affiliate?

Transition from HLSE to HLE Network

Heritage Language Schools Eindhoven created a list of HL programs in 2019 for the website of the Holland Expat Center South. In August 2021, this list will be removed from the website of the Holland Expat Center South. For HL programs that were already active in HLSE (2018 - 2020) and listed on the Expat Center list, HLE Network will inform the program via a series of newsletter mailings in July 2021 that the HL program will automatically become a HLE Network Affiliate. If a HL program objects, they must inform the HLE Network and their program's information will be removed from the HLE Network Directory.

New HL programs

If the HL program was not already active in HLSE, they must first have an intake meeting with the Managing Director (or board member). The Managing Director shares a summary of the meeting with the board of the HLE Network, who approves (or rejects) the request to become a HLE Network Affiliate.

This policy was approved during the HLE Network board meeting on 2021-07-06.