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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Indigenous language training to empower and inspire

The Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity (RNLD) has welcomed 10 Indigenous participants from around Australia for a two-week workshop in linguistics and language teaching, to build their capacity to strengthen — and in some cases revive — their languages.

RNLD works in partnership with Indigenous language centres and community and family groups around the country to provide flexible, grassroots training in Documenting and Revitalising Indigenous Languages (DRIL). The workshop participants are members of the DRIL Leadership Professional Development group supported by RNLD with ongoing training and mentorship.

With almost all Aboriginal languages considered either silent or critically endangered, and the overwhelming majority of Australian linguists being non-Aboriginal, RNLD celebrated NAIDOC week by providing more support and training to the courageous Aboriginal people working tirelessly to save and revitalise their own languages.

Ebony Joachim is a Yorta Yorta woman from Shepparton who has been teaching her language in a local primary school. In May, Ebony joined the staff of RNLD in the role of Trainee DRIL Trainer. Ebony says: "After two and a half years of learning and teaching my own language, I have been given this great opportunity to work with RNLD, to build on my linguistics and training skills and empower other people in their language work around the country."

Jason Kirby is a Wadi Wadi man from Swan Hill with a passion for his language and culture. He started learning his language just over a year ago, with training from RNLD. Jason says: "I have recently started to teach my language to the children in my street. My class at the moment is around 10 participants, and we do these classes in the comfort of my own kitchen."

For updates, follow RNLDorg on Twitter and search #RNLDPD. The workshop wraps up on Thursday 16 July.

Editor's note: RNLD supports the long-term maintenance of Australian Aboriginal languages. This workshop is funded by the Australian Government's Indigenous Languages and Arts (ILA) grant scheme (administered by the Ministry for the Arts, Attorney-General's Department).

Workshop participants available for interview. Photos available on request.

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