



2025

Annual Report



North Melbourne
Language & Learning



Acknowledgement of Country

NMLL acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, water and community. We pay our respects to First Nations Peoples and their elders past, present and emerging.



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Our Mission

To build the knowledge and skills of individuals and communities to assist them achieve their goals and participate successfully in the Australian community.

Our Values

Our values will be reflected in our behaviour and the way we work:



Compassion

We are sensitive, understanding and caring in our service of each other and all people



Integrity

We are honest, accountable, transparent and fair in our work and relationships



Respect

We treat each person as we expect to be treated and offer acceptance and support in the face of challenges



Creativity

We develop and co-design effective, innovative and sustainable ways to fulfil our mission



Diversity

We build social cohesion by creating opportunities to value and celebrate diversity



Celebration

We recognise and celebrate the efforts and achievements of our students and participants, their families, and our staff and volunteers

CHAIRPERSON'S *Report*

I am very pleased to present North Melbourne Language and Learning's (NMLL's) report for 2025.

2025 was a landmark year for NMLL. Because of the planned demolition of our long-term home at 33 Alfred Street, the main task of the Committee of Management was to find secure accommodation by the end of 2025 so that NMLL could continue its important work. It was not an easy task.

Numerous sites were investigated but for a number of reasons, our choices were very limited. Because NMLL had paid only a nominal rent for the many years we had been at Alfred Street, a full commercial rent was more than we could afford. Where the new premises were situated was also an important consideration. NMLL receives funding from a variety of sources and some require our courses and community activities to be delivered not only in North Melbourne but sometimes in specific parts of the suburb. And any new premises had to meet, or be easily adapted to meet, the building and safety standards for an education organisation.

With General Manager Cliff Rundle, the Committee of Management assessed a number of possibilities. Rooms under another housing tower were too close to another neighbourhood house; a school demountable building was a possibility but was too expensive; part of a building near the new Arden rail station had potential but was also too expensive and not convenient for all students. The best option was the first floor of a new building in Macaulay Road, but it needed some modifications to meet the required standards and was too expensive. However, after discussions with Homes Victoria and the Minister for Housing and Building, Harriet Shing, the Victorian government agreed to fund NMLL's rental of the Macaulay Road premises for five years, plus assist with moving and fit out costs. On behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to sincerely thank Minister Shing and her team for their invaluable support. I would also like to thank Dylan O'Donnell the managing director of real estate company LPC, Victoria who provided valuable assistance in identifying properties and negotiating the lease.

Successfully finding a new home created new challenges for NMLL's staff, and the commitment and dedication of Cliff Rundle and his team was essential to achieving a successful move with minimal disruption to our students and community activities. Our accountant, Robert Pisano, also made a major contribution in guiding the Committee through the financial implications of the new lease and funding arrangements.

Through a difficult year financially, NMLL continued to receive support from a range of sources, and I would like to thank all the organisations that provided the funding essential to NMLL's continuing operation. My sincere thanks also go to the volunteers and community members who helped NMLL expand the potential and skills of the people we worked with throughout the year. And in a challenging year, the members of the Committee of Management once again gave generously of their time and expertise, and I thank them for their continuing commitment to supporting the diverse North Melbourne community.

So, on behalf of the Committee of Management of North Melbourne Language and Learning Inc., I am pleased to share with you the Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2025.

David Lansley



TREASURER'S *Report*

Overview

NMLL began 2025 facing considerable uncertainty about securing new premises and obtaining the financial support required for relocation and a new lease, given the pressing need to leave our long term home at 33 Alfred Street due to the State government's redevelopment of the site. However, through the sustained efforts of our Chair and General Manager, and thanks to the invaluable support of Homes Victoria and the Minister for Housing and Building Harriet Shing, NMLL secured a new five-year lease for our new site at Macaulay Road, along with associated government funding support. This support also included assistance with moving and building modifications. The move commenced in the last quarter of 2025.

For the year as a whole, despite uncertainty regarding future operations and the diversion of resources to the relocation effort, NMLL maintained core service delivery and program income, while continuing to manage expenses carefully in an environment of limited resources and rising costs for many of our programs and community activities.

NMLL achieved a small surplus for the year, supported in part by grant funding associated with the relocation project. In addition, the liquid reserves at the end of the year provided a financial buffer sufficient to support ongoing operations.



Income and Expenditure

(Figures are rounded where appropriate)

In 2025, NMLL generated total income and expenditure of just over \$1.1 million and was able to finish the year with a surplus of \$5,187. This marked our tenth successive annual surplus.

However, it is important to note that, while achieving another surplus in 2025 was a significant achievement, it may not be possible to continue achieving the mix of income and cost containment that underpinned the 2025 result. The structural imbalance between income growth and cost inflation continues to be a central concern for our planning and management efforts.

Compared to the previous year, income increased by \$122,000 (12%) and expenditure by \$117,000 (12%). These increases largely reflect the impact of the relocation and new lease arrangements, including associated funding and related costs. Despite this impact, NMLL continued to deliver its programs and activities in response to growing demand, while continuing to address inflationary pressures on the cost side.

Similar to recent years, around two-thirds of NMLL's income was attributable to the Further Education program, including activity under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) (in partnership with Melbourne Polytechnic) and Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) program (funded by the Victorian government). The remainder of the year's income came from core community development activities and support services (funded by the Victorian Government and City of Melbourne), one-time project activity, and allocation of Victorian government funding relating to the relocation and new lease.

In terms of expenditure, the growth in spending reflected increased resourcing to support expanded program activity, ongoing cost inflation including mandated increases in staffing costs, and the impact of the new relocation and lease arrangement. This included one-off relocation costs, lease accounting-related depreciation and financing costs, and asset write-downs and disposals associated with the move. Underlying cost growth continued to outpace indexation in government funding, with some funding having remained relatively stagnant over several years.

Impact of relocation and new lease

An added complexity in NMLL's 2025 financial circumstances relates to the accounting impact of the new lease arrangement.

NMLL has transitioned from a peppercorn lease for its previous premises to a commercial lease for its new premises, supported by government funding to assist with relocation and ongoing occupancy costs. This funding is intended to offset the cost of the relocation and lease over its term, noting that under accounting principles the timing of expense recognition may differ from the recognition of funding income over the same period.

This change significantly affects NMLL's financial profile, increasing lease-related costs as well as creating substantial lease assets and lease liabilities under the new accounting treatment. One-off relocation and fit-out costs have also been incurred and supported by government funding. As the relocation and new lease arrangement commenced in late 2025, the financial impact in the current year reflects only a partial year, with the full effect to flow through in future years. Though NMLL's underlying net financial position remains relatively unchanged, the impact of the lease may affect comparability between periods.

Cash and net assets

(Figures are rounded where appropriate)

NMLL's cash holdings at the end of the year totalled \$533,000, up \$105,000 from \$428,000 the previous year. The increase primarily reflects funding received in advance relating to the first year of the new lease agreement. Cash levels remained healthy throughout the year and continued to support ongoing service delivery and operational stability.

Fixed asset spending during the year totalled \$81,000, mainly comprising fit-out works in progress for the new premises, which were government funded.

Net assets at the end of the year totalled \$373,000, slightly above last year's level of \$367,000. Of this, long-term physical assets accounted for \$115,000, with the balance of \$258,000 comprising cash and other net assets. NMLL maintains financial buffers to support its planning and operations.

Ongoing challenges

Securing reliable accommodation in 2025 was critical to NMLL's future and has removed an important financial challenge facing NMLL over the medium term. However, as made clear in this report, rising costs, ongoing funding constraints, and resource limitations continue to place pressure on our operational planning, financial management and broader organisational sustainability. Achieving adequate income growth while managing costs and providing quality and relevant services to our students and community remains the major task facing NMLL's management and Board.

Conclusion

Despite rising costs, funding challenges, and upcoming uncertainties, NMLL has maintained sound financial and operational management throughout 2025. We closed the year with secure accommodation, supporting continued service delivery and engagement with the local community, underpinned by the ability to generate income. However, the path ahead requires close monitoring and continued diligence, and support from our stakeholders, in navigating the financial challenges.

On behalf of the Committee of Management, I would again like to express our sincere thanks to our exceptionally dedicated and committed staff, those who support our financial and operational functions, our funding partners, and our inspiring participants. Together your energy allows NMLL to continue our mission to improve the opportunities and life outcomes for the members of our community.

Summary of results for the year ended 31 December 2025

Note: Summary figures in this report are extracted from the full annual financial accounts of NMLL for the year ended 31 December 2025. The full accounts provide more details on the financial performance and position of NMLL, including a description of the accounting policies adopted, explanatory notes, and the independent auditor's report. The financial statements should be read in full for a comprehensive understanding of NMLL's financial position and circumstances.

	2025	2024
Income	1,139,326	1,017,641
Expenditure	(1,134,139)	(1,016,775)
Net surplus for year	5187	866
Cash held at end of year	533,490	427,849
Other short-term assets	179,526	76,966
Long-term fixed assets	982,575	78,661
Total liabilities	(1,322,955)	(216,027)
Net assets at year end	372,636	367,449

Christopher Harding

GENERAL MANAGER'S

Report

2025 was the most challenging of my tenure at NMLL.

The challenges were not new - rising costs, ongoing funding constraints, and limited resources and the consequent need to grow the overall income.

Compounding these issues was the uncertainty surrounding our required relocation in late 2025, due to the upcoming redevelopment of the Alfred Street towers.

The implications of the redevelopment for NMLL were first articulated in December 2023 and the matter was not resolved until November 2025 when a lease was finally signed for new local premises, just weeks before the deadline to vacate. NMLL is grateful to the Minister for Housing, Harriet Shing, for funding the five-year lease. NMLL relocated over the Christmas and new year break.

These factors placed considerable pressure on NMLL's operational planning, financial management and broader organisational sustainability. They also reinforce the ongoing balancing act between generating income, managing costs, and maintaining the reach and quality of our services.

Despite the challenges, NMLL grew enrolments, successfully managed to balance its budget for the year, met increased demand for its services, relocate and retained appropriate financial buffers to support its planning and ongoing operations.

As reported elsewhere the financial performance is particularly pleasing being the tenth successive annual surplus, when a substantial loss was projected and when many similar organisations finished with a deficit or closed. The following skims the surface of what was a busy year.

Significant progress was made implementing the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan. Highlights include:

- the further development of the adult learning model and the extensive incursion and incursion program
- the consolidation of the second EAL1/2 class the positive effect of the student retention and attendance strategies the growth of the ACFE program
- the continued work to address the digital divide and NMLL's involvement in ACCAN's recent consultations and reports.
- further development on NMLL's practise of employing local people, including ex- students in projects and in short term administrative roles
- the work of both Pathway Support Program (PSP) and the individual support programs to assist students and members of the local communities stay engaged in learning and resolve difficult problems not otherwise being addressed.

As a place-based organisation NMLL sees the on-ground effects of funding and social policy decisions and believes it is important these be communicated to decision makers. To that end NMLL participates in local, regional, state and national debates and developments affecting the Adult Community Education (ACE) sector. In 2025 NMLL remained a Board member of the ACEVic, (the Victorian peak body for community-based registered training organisations (RTOs) and Lean Local Organisations (LLO)), a member to the ACFE Board's Sector Advisory Group and an active member of various local and regional forums. Through these channels NMLL is engaged in debates about funding, the reform of ACFE delivery, housing, the public housing relocation program and local food provision systems amongst other issues.

An important ongoing issue is the longer-term viability of the Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector. With costs escalating faster than income it is increasingly difficult for small community based RTO/LLO/NHs to remain financially viable. The continued closures of ACE organisations around Victoria and the consequent loss of employment, services, opportunities and potential underline the concern. In the current climate these closures occur exactly when the employment, services and support are most needed. Directly addressing these issues as well as building financially sustainable businesses is a challenge NMLL and the ACE sector must continue to grapple with. Advocacy on these matters will continue as an important part of NMLL's work.

Staff changes

Despite the difficult circumstances staff were steadfast until the end of the year when there were significant changes. Ferdousi Anis, NMLL's longest serving teacher decided it was time for a change: the very popular Alexandros Binos decided to take a break from EAL teaching; Sarah Ward finished to travel and supervise a renovation: Monica Stedile sought work closer to her home and Hoang Nguyen commenced a year of maternity leave.

Thankyous

The 2024 Annual Report noted that NMLL is a place people value and want to be involved with. That observation was well and truly proven in 2025 by the huge contribution by NMLL staff and others who assisted advocate for NMLL.

My thanks to all the following who all contributed to a significant year.

NMLL Staff: Alex, Apeksha, Carmen, Emily, Febrina, Furdus, Kidan, Hoang, Kymberlee, Jim, Monica, Mui Lee, Nabiha, Nyaguich, Rosemary, Sam, Sarah, Robert, Rosie, Tien, Yutao and Youmei.

Contractors: Robert Pisano, NMLL's long term and wonderful accountant and Carlo Carabella our IT wizz.

To the members of the Committee of Management: Andrew, Ashwini, Benny, Christopher, David, Elizabeth, Loretta, Meghali and Vin.

Volunteers: Christine, Dominique, Greg, Emily, Helen and Helen, Jenna, Kate, Liz, Maureen, Maryna, Mia, Nyaguich, Shirley and Yutao

Dylan O'Donnell: our friendly real estate agent who sorted the lease
Keir Patterson from NHVic
Nina Bekker, ACEVic
Jennifer Macaffer, ALA
Robert and Grace from HomesVic
Tersa De Fazio from the ACFE Board
The Community Neighbourhood Team at the City of Melbourne
Ellen Sandell and staff
The AMEP team at Melbourne Polytechnic; Paul, Zeenat, Keenan and Katharine

Also, many thanks to the funding organisations including; DHA, DFFH, DJSIR, Melbourne Polytechnic, City of Melbourne and ANCHA.

Looking forward

NMLL needs to continue to grow and diversify its income streams, its connections and ability to respond to the local communities. For the first time in its history NMLL has the infrastructure to that will assist pursue these priorities.

After 36 years of operation, NMLL's services are a vital part of the local communities. The challenges of 2026 are significant but through adaptation and innovation NMLL can continue to serve North Melbourne and beyond.

The following reports from the Education, Community Development and Administration coordinators provide more detail.

Cliff Rundle



ADMINISTRATION COORDINATOR'S

Report

Reflection and Acknowledgement

Late June 2025, I stepped into the Acting Administration Coordinator role to support continuity. My own pathway with NMLL has been shaped by strong commitment to community participation and growth. Beginning as a volunteer, I later moved into a casual role and was given the opportunity to step into this position. I remain grateful for the trust and support provided along the way.

This year has only been possible through the collective efforts of many. I would like to sincerely thank the Committee of Management, management team, teachers, staff, volunteers, and students for their ongoing support, collaboration, and patience throughout a period of transition. My special thanks to the Administration team members for their flexibility, resilience, and commitment to maintaining a welcoming and efficient environment for all. Without their supports, nothing can be possible.

Volunteering and Staff Development

The Administration team continues to be strengthened by its cultural and linguistic diversity. Staff members collectively speak multiple languages, including Arabic, Oromo, Nuer, Indonesian, and Vietnamese, which enhances communication with students and supports inclusive service delivery. This diversity is particularly valuable during enrolments, individual support, and community engagement, helping to build trust and improve accessibility.

The organisation remains committed to staff development and wellbeing. Pathways from student to volunteer and into employment continue to be evident. One example is an Administration Assistant who progressed from student to staff member and is now undertaking further study at TAFE.

Throughout the year, the Administration team managed several key projects while maintaining core services. This work took place during a period of workforce transition, with many new team members and, at times, limited capacity. The expansion of services to a second site at Djerring Hub added further complexity. Despite these challenges, the team demonstrated flexibility, resilience, and a strong commitment to supporting both students and the broader community.

Student Cohort Overview

Despite both external and internal challenges, enrolments regained momentum in 2025. Total enrolments increased to 849, compared to 745 in 2024, reflecting renewed engagement and demand for programs.

The organisation continues to be a proudly multicultural community, with students representing 27 countries of birth. The largest cohorts came from Ethiopia (21%), Somalia (15%), China (12%), Afghanistan (11%), and Vietnam (10%), alongside smaller but important groups from Eritrea, Sudan, South Sudan, Iran, Rwanda, and others.

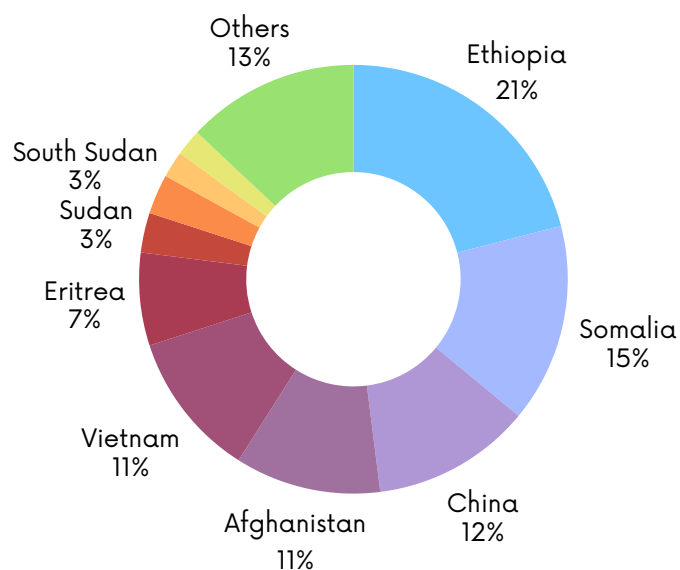
This diversity remains a defining strength of the organisation, enriching the learning environment and reinforcing its role as an inclusive community hub.

Programs and Activities

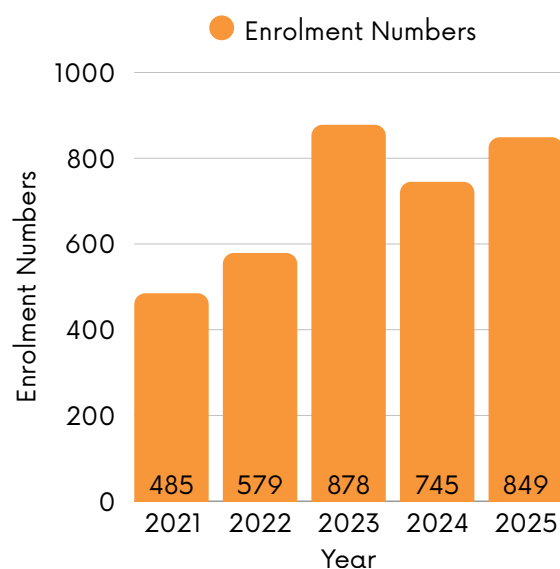
A broad range of **accredited English as an Additional Language (EAL)** courses continued to be delivered, from initial to vocational levels. These programs were funded through **Skills First and the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)**, supported by the Department of Home Affairs, and were offered across two locations: 33 Alfred Street and the Djerring Flemington Hub.

Pre-accredited programs funded through ACFE, including General English and Digital Literacy, were also delivered at both the main centre and the River Nile Learning Centre. Short courses focusing on specific language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—remained available to support student progression.

Enrolments by Country of Birth 2025



Enrolment Numbers 2021 - 2025



The **Pathway Support Program (PSP)** continued to provide valuable assistance to current and former students, as well as a limited number of local community members. Through tailored advice, information sessions and referrals, the program supported education, employment and settlement pathways.

NMLL also provided ongoing **individual support to community members**, assisting with phone calls, appointment bookings, and access to printing and copying and emailing services. Many individuals returned regularly, identifying the office as a welcoming and reliable place for assistance.

Due to the office relocation, the annual Cherry Picking excursion was unable to take place this year. While this was a disappointment for many, it reflects the broader operational changes experienced during the year.

Operational Projects and Improvements

Several significant operational projects were undertaken during the year.

The transition to Microsoft 365 marked a major upgrade to administrative systems, including the introduction of cloud-based tools, development of a SharePoint site, and migration from local servers. This has improved accessibility, strengthened data security, and enabled better collaboration across teams.

In addition, the organisation successfully supported an office relocation, coordinating packing, unpacking, and re-establishing operations while ensuring minimal disruption to services.

After-Hours Use and Community Services

The organisation continued to serve as a trusted community hub beyond standard hours, hosting a range of programs and partnerships.

The **Power Saving Bonus (PSB)** initiative supported local concession card holders in accessing financial assistance for energy costs. NMLL helped 63 householders claim the PSB.

A weekly visit from **Drummond Street Services** provided EAL students with support in areas such as housing, family services and pathways.

The **Homework Club** continued to operate every Wednesday after school hours until the end of the year, supporting primary school students.

NMLL also provided supports to community groups such as the **North Melbourne Public Housing Residents Association** and the **Young Australia People**. Short-term use of the space also supported external organisations, including Uniting, who provided an employment service.

In all 2025 was a busy and successful year of transitions.

Tien Doan



EDUCATION COORDINATOR'S ACCREDITED *Report*

In 2025, our commitment to delivering quality teaching and learning experiences in a safe and supportive learning environment remained at the core of our activities, continuing to produce positive outcomes for our students.

Through our English language and digital literacy programs, our team of dedicated and professional teachers continued to advance our mission to empower adult learners from migrant and refugee backgrounds living in the North Melbourne community and surrounding suburbs. Throughout the year NMLL continued to innovate to improve students' attendance, students' learning and progress toward their goals. Many activities contribute to this goal and include the diverse range of incursions and excursions, the Pathway Support Program (PSP), NMLL's network of visiting organisations, the integration of education and community engagement activities and the flow of ideas from staff.

An Overview of Educational Activities throughout 2025

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

The Commonwealth Government-funded Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) remains the largest student cohort at NMLL. In 2024, we saw continued growth in our AMEP enrolments and the consolidation of the classes at the Djerring Flemington Hub. NMLL is proud to be part of the Melbourne Polytechnic AMEP network, consisting of 15 TAFE providers and Learn Locals. Looking ahead to 2026, NMLL will provide support to Melbourne Polytechnic as it prepares a submission for the new AMEP contract. The new contract is likely to bring significant changes, which NMLL will need to navigate, highlighting the ever-evolving nature of the community adult education sector and the need for providers to remain adaptable and innovative in order to survive.

NMLL also delivers the **EAL courses** with Skills First funding provided by the Victorian Government. Though smaller than the AMEP component, Skills First is an important source of funding for those ineligible for the AMEP.

The integrated delivery model launched in 2023, providing small, intensive, and targeted literacy and oracy support to learners, continued to evolve and consolidate providing valuable additional support. The model remains focussed on developing literacy skills as well as speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and practise.

Pathway Support Program

The **ACFE-funded PSP** continued to thrive in 2025, with a focus on course completion, career planning, better alignment with the AMEP's Individual Pathway Guidance (IPG), and building stronger networks with relevant services. This valuable program is available to all NMLL students. It is designed to assist students in completing their current courses while also providing them with information related to education, vocational training, employment, settlement, and community involvement. The PSP is complemented by a free social work service provided by Drummond Street. The service is available to students referred from PSP. This service has been invaluable in assisting students with complex issues including homelessness, domestic violence, financial matters, food insecurity all of which are beyond the scope of PSP.

Student Incursion and Excursion Program

NMLL's student incursion and excursion program expanded in 2025, to the delight of most students. These excursions, led by our enthusiastic and committed teaching team, provide students with the opportunity to practice their language skills outside the classroom, fostering a greater sense of community engagement. The excursions included visits to Port Melbourne Beach, where they participated in beach safety training with Surf Life Saving Australia. Additionally, students participated in various educational events, including Expos at the Djerring Community Hub and the North Melbourne Community Centre, separate men's and women's health programs, with the latter addressing breast screening programs and reproductive health.

The collaborative relationship with teacher training tertiary institutions continued in 2025, with NMLL welcoming student teacher practicum placements. The placements are of value to the student teachers, to tertiary institutions and to us, and we are very proud of this involvement. Once completing their teacher training course, some graduates join the NMLL teaching team, and some stay for the long term.

The focus on professional development of staff was also maintained in 2025. Teachers have undertaken a host of activities to keep up to date with developments in TESOL to address the needs of diverse student cohorts. This way, we can continue to deliver the quality that is appropriate and expected.

The Education section of the 2025 Annual Report highlights our continued dedication to providing high-quality, engaging, and inclusive educational programs. We remain committed to fostering a supportive learning environment that empowers our students to thrive in both their personal and professional lives. As we look ahead to 2025 and beyond, we remain focused on driving positive educational outcomes and creating lasting impacts in the communities we serve.

Sam Navarra

EDUCATION COORDINATOR'S PRE-ACCREDITED

Report

Pre-accredited classes play a key role in our mission to educate the individuals and communities of North Melbourne. Funded by the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board, pre-accredited classes support learners with English language, literacy and numeracy education, as well as lifting their digital and employability skills.

General English / Literacy / Numeracy

An important function of pre-accredited classes at NMLL has been supporting learners in their accredited courses. Students needing extra instruction in one or more of the key English language macro-skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are supported by our pre-accredited teachers so that they can overcome their specific learning challenges and maintain their progress toward their qualifications. As well as these skills-focused courses, pre-accredited classes in general English and numeracy significantly contribute to NMLL's mission to build students' knowledge and skills and to support them in the pursuit of their individual goals and community engagement. Many thanks to our pre-accredited teachers Alex Binos, Peter Bonnell, Emily Dale and Rose Presti for their dedication and hard work with our students.



Digital Essentials

Digital technology is essential not only for study and work but for individuals' full participation in contemporary financial, social and cultural life. Bill paying, banking and accessing government services are in some cases impossible without digital literacy, and the barriers to digital inclusion for recently arrived refugees and other migrants can be especially high. Our Digital Essentials teachers, Kate Davis, Emily Dale and Yutao (Cris) Fan, work closely with students to determine what digital knowledge would make the most impact in their everyday lives. Developing and delivering lessons on basic typing and keyboard skills, privacy settings and cybersecurity/scam protection, the Digital Literacy team help students learn to save files, manage contacts, and locate reliable information. Real world application for these skills is put into practice through lessons on using specific apps for banking, shopping and travel plans. The quality-of-life improvements made possible by these lessons are significant, and heartfelt appreciation goes out to the teachers for their support in fostering students' digital inclusion.

Pathway Support Program

Helping students achieve their educational goals is the purpose of the ACFE-funded Pathway Support Program (PSP). Developed in 2023, the PSP continued in 2025 to work with individual students to support their successful completion of their courses at NMLL by assisting them with personal issues including food relief, housing security, citizenship, and health and family issues. The PSP also focuses on specific employment needs and on supporting students on their journey to employment. Key to this process is helping individual students develop a career plan, learn job search and application strategies, and master employment application language and job interview techniques.

Many thanks to Sam Navarra for his unflagging commitment to helping students improve their educational outcomes and prepare for future employment.

Looking Ahead

For 2026, we will continue to build on our track record of quality pre-accredited course delivery at Macaulay Road and Djerring Hub. We will also look to partner with local employers and organisations to increase enrolment in our ACFE-funded courses.

Our commitment to excellence in pre-accredited education and its core values of flexibility and focus on learner needs will continue to help students reach their goals and participate fully in Australian community life.

Jim McCormack



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR'S *Report*

In 2025, Community Development at North Melbourne Language and Learning (NMLL) continued to strengthen local connections, respond to emerging needs, and support community-led initiatives across the North Melbourne Public Housing Estate.

Yarn Over

The Yarn Over knitting and crochet program remained a strong point of engagement, with participants producing over 60 handmade items. These were donated to local charities, including KOGO and Open Door, reflecting both the generosity and skill within the group. The program provided a welcoming space for people to connect, share knowledge, and build confidence.

Neighbourhood Networking

Our weekly Neighbourhood Networking gathering evolved over the year, narrowing its focus to a Mahjong and social conversation group. This shift was driven by community interest and resulted in a more consistent and meaningful form of engagement, where participants could build relationships in a relaxed and culturally familiar environment.

Community Gardening Program

The community gardening program continued to thrive, producing kilograms of fresh fruit and vegetables that were shared among participants. A key achievement was the successful relocation of the garden to St Albans Anglican Church on Melrose Street, led by head gardener Shirley. This ensured continuity of the program and ongoing access to green space for community members.

Material Aid

Material aid remained an important part of our work. We distributed hundreds of donated nappies and menstrual products, received through partnerships with The Nappy Collective and Share the Dignity, to community members experiencing financial hardship.



One-to-One Support

NMML also delivered extensive one-on-one support, providing hundreds of hours of assistance to individuals facing financial, housing, and food insecurity, among other challenges. This direct support model enabled timely, practical help, often resolving issues more quickly than external referral pathways.

Free Food Program

Our free food program concluded at the end of its funding period and in preparation for relocation. While the program has ended, NMML remains committed to advocating for food security and contributing to local, systems-level responses to food insecurity.

Social Work Placement

Finally, NMML hosted two Social Work student placements. These students made valuable contributions to program delivery and individual support, while also beginning the development of a community needs analysis in community languages. This work lays the groundwork for more inclusive and responsive service planning into the future.

Kymberlee Simpson





THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A sincere thank you to all our supporters from the North Melbourne community and beyond. Your contribution makes an immeasurable difference to the lives of many.





www.nmll.org.au
P: 03 9326 7447
enquiries@nmll.org.au

North Melbourne Language & Learning
Ground Floor, 33 Alfred Street, North Melbourne
Victoria, 3051



www.facebook.com/northmelblanguagelearning



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