

Introduction to the Network of Australian Teachers of German (NATG)

The NATG was founded in July 2002 to facilitate a national network to support the teaching of German in schools across Australia. The NATG acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the land on which German is taught and spoken, and supports the maintenance, reclamation and revitalisation of Indigenous Australian Languages and the access these Languages provide to their complex and diverse cultures.

The NATG consists of representatives from each state and territory drawn from the Association of German Teachers of Victoria Inc. (AGTV), South Australian German Teachers Association Inc. (SAGTA), the Teachers' Association German Western Australia (TAGWA) through Languages Teachers Western Australia, the German Teachers Branch of Languages Teachers Queensland, and networks in Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and the Language Teachers' Association of the Northern Territory (LTANT).

Whilst there is a National Curriculum for Languages in Australia, each state and territory retains responsibility for education in schools in their respective jurisdictions. However, teachers of German share common goals and challenges. The NATG enables the exchange of ideas, strategies and development of personal relationships and professional partnerships.

The NATG is endorsed by the Goethe-Institut in Australia, who have generously facilitated an annual networking meeting of representatives from each state and territory since 2002. Annual meetings have been in Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney. A representative from the state or territory in which the next NATG meeting will be held coordinates the agenda and is chairperson for that meeting.

NATG Statement of Purposes

The Network of Australian Teachers of German aims to-

- promote the teaching and learning of German in Australia;
- promote networking between teachers of German within and across states and territories;
- represent and support teachers of German on matters of common interest and concern;
- cooperate with state, national and international organisations supporting German and Languages education (e.g. Goethe-Institut, IDV, GSAA, AFMLTA) as appropriate.

The NATG supports an official website AusDaF - Deutsch als Fremdsprache in Australien - which provides a virtual network to act as a portal to each state and territory, and to collate some key websites and information for visitors. The first website was established with funding from the Goethe-Institut. The development of the current website was coordinated and funded by the AGTV with support from the Goethe-Institut Australia in collaboration with the NATG.

The NATG determines who manages digital communication channels.

The teachers' journal SZENE published by the AGTV Inc. was endorsed as a national publication in 2003 and is now published in cooperation with the NATG. SZENE provides an opportunity to share reports, ideas and resources between teachers across Australia. The Goethe-Institut has supported SZENE since the first issue was published in 1981. The AGTV and SAGTA include a subscription to SZENE in their membership. Australian subscriptions for individuals and libraries are available.

The NATG is an important point of reference for teachers of German in Australia.

Please direct correspondence to the NATG via email: natg@ausdaf.edu.au

NATG website: www.ausdaf.edu.au