Expression of Interest sought: Project manager

Major project – *Digital archive for the Ngalakgan language*

The Ngukurr Language Centre Aboriginal Corporation is embarking on a new project: to develop a user-friendly digital archive for the Ngalakgan language, one of the endangered languages of our area. We are seeking an individual or organisation to manage and successfully deliver this project. This project does not require relocation and may involve minimal travel but this is optional. It is a great opportunity to contribute to the resourcing and revitalisation of a unique and endangered language and to develop the capacity of our young organisation.

About Ngalakgan

The Ngalakgan language is very important to the community of Ngukurr because the community lies on Ngalakgan land. Ngalakgan people were strongly affected by processes of colonisation and their language has struggled to survive. Today, there are only a few people who know some of the language, however there is a desire to have the language taught in local schools in Ngukurr and Urapunga and community members often express interest in revitalising the language. The last fully fluent speakers of Ngalakgan passed away in the 2000s.

The language has been documented well, mostly by two linguists: Francesca Merlan in the 1970s and Brett Baker in the 1980s and 90s. This project will consolidate all available Ngalakgan materials in a curated, accessible, digital archive. This archive will provide a foundation for further language revitalisation programs for the Ngalakgan language.

About Ngukurr and the Ngukurr Language Centre

Ngukurr is a large Aboriginal community (pop: 1000+) in southern Arnhem Land, situated on Ngalakgan land. Formerly a mission, the community population covers 8-10 heritage languages that are all now endangered. The main language spoken in Ngukurr today is Kriol but within the community, traditional languages are held in high esteem.

The goal of the Ngukurr Language Centre is to revitalise, document, teach and promote the traditional languages of the community via a range of community-based language programs. The foundations of these programs are our language resources. The project described in this document will increase and improve the quantity, quality, accessibility and longevity of resources for Ngalakgan and provide a precedent that other local languages can build upon.

The Ngukurr Language Centre was established in 1999 as a branch of the Katherine Regional Aboriginal Language Centre (KRALC). Following the closure of KRALC, the Ngukurr Language Centre became an independent, locally-governed organisation in 2011 and soon after secured operational funding. The Ngukurr Language Centre re-opened in 2012 and has been fully operational since then.

Organisation structure

The Ngukurr Language Centre is a small, independent, non-profit organisation with an annual turnover of approximately $200,000. The organisation is overseen by an Indigenous board of directors, elected from a membership base of local language workers, language speakers and educators. The Ngukurr Language Centre employs a full-time coordinator to oversee the day-to-day operations of the organisation and a team of language workers and consultants. The project manager of this digitisation project will report directly to the coordinator and will also be required to provide reports that will be provided to our funding body and to the board of directors.

More information

See the attached project description for more information. For further enquiries, contact the Ngukurr Language Centre on 8977 4225 or ngukurrlanguagecentre@gmail.com

For some more info on Ngalakgan, see:
- Wikipedia entry: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ngalakgan_language
- AUSTLANG database entry: http://austlang.aiatsis.gov.au/main.php?code=N77

You can also find general information on our activites via social media:
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Ngukurr-Language-Centre/170332173098441
- YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/user/NgukurrLC

Contact and expression of interest

To register your interest in managing this project, please make an initial contact (email or phone) with us by 5:30pm (CST) Monday April 28, 2014.

Interested parties should then provide us with an expression of interest including a current CV with three referees. Please also include a proposed timeline and project delivery plan (two pages). If you are an organisation, please also identify personnel who will be contributing to the project. This documentation is to be received by 5:30pm (CST) Friday May 2.

*Note: we realise this is a short timeframe. If you have difficulties meeting these deadlines please discuss this with us.

Major Project - *Digital archive for the Ngalakgan language*

We are seeking a suitable individual or organisation to manage the delivery of a major project, digital archive for the Ngalakgan language. The project details are as follows:

Project Outcome

Develop a comprehensive and accessible online digital archive for the Ngalakgan language

Project Manager - tasks and responsibilities

1. Search and retrieve: carry out 'search and retrieval' of written, audio and video language resources available Australia-wide for the Ngalakgan language
2. Digitisation: ensure all resources are digitised to an appropriate standard
3. Online archive development: curate an accessible database/website with a high level of community accessibility
4. Community appropriate: ensure that the archive is developed so that it is appropriate for Ngalakgan people and the needs of the Ngukurr Language Centre
5. Transferability: develop project and provide instructions, manual or training to allow the Ngukurr Language Centre to replicate the project for additional languages
6. Reporting: provide the Ngukurr Language Centre with regular progress reports and a final report as specified by the project guidelines.
7. Completion of project within specified budget and timeframe

Guidelines for Project Manager

Budget

The budget for this stage is $40,000 (excl. GST). This will cover all aspects of the project, including the following:
- Remuneration for project manager and any subcontractors
- Fees for digitisation and/or transport of materials
- Travel costs associated with search and retrieval of materials and/or community consultation
- Associated IT and administrative costs

Payments will be staged across four stages of $10,000 each. Funding for each stage will be released upon evidence of satisfactory progress and provision of appropriate reports.

Timeline and Completion Date

We envisage that this project can be completed in around four months if undertaken on a full-time basis. However, we also encourage proposals that suggest completion on a part-time basis with an extended timeline.

An example full-time timeline might be:

- Mid-May: First funding release, initiate 'search and retrieve', commence database/website development (e.g. using mukurtu.org software),
- Mid-June: Successful progress report, second funding release, complete search and retrieve, continue website/database development, establish community feedback processes
- Mid-July: Successful progress report, finalise search and retrieve, commence digitisation of resources (where necessary), third funding release. Finalise structure of database/website, adding data to database/website development and gather community feedback
- Mid-August: Finalise database/website, all materials digitisated and uploaded. Final funding release provided upon receipt of final reports, finalised project and other documentation.

A part-time timeline would extend this further (up to a period of twelve months).

It is necessary for contractual agreements and the first (and ideally second) stages/funding releases to be finalised before June 30 in ensure the project's funding obligations are met. Details on key sections of the project are provided below:

Search and retrieval

A proportion of time in this project will be spent sourcing and obtaining copies of all available Ngalakgan resources – written, video and audio. Some may already be in an appropriate digital format, some may not be.

Key places and people that may hold Ngalakgan resources include:
- AIATSIS (Canberra)
- Mimi Ngurrdalingi (Katherine), formerly the Katherine Language Centre
- Ngukurr Language Centre
- Francesca Merlan (ANU, Canberra)
- Brett Baker (University of Melbourne)

The project manager may want to undertake travel to some locations (e.g. AIATSIS in Canberra) to complete this part of the project, but again this is not a requirement of the project.

Digitisation

Any materials that are not already digitised appropriately will require digitisation. The project manager can either undertake this themselves (if they have the skillbase) or engage a subcontractor or other business to carry out digitisation.
- Media may need to be transported to the project manager or a digitising contractor. As some resources may be in a fragile condition, it is important relevant care is taken.
- It is also important to ensure that relevant permissions or conditions of use of materials are adhered to. This may require liaising with the Ngukurr Language Centre and/or Ngalakgan people.

For more information on digitising:
- PARADISEC (www.paradisec.org.au) is a good place to contact regarding current international standards for digitising at archive quality. It should not be assumed that any subcontractors engaged to digitise materials will be familiar with current international archiving standards
- A recommended company (based in Canberra): http://www.damsmart.com.au

Database/website development

- The Ngukurr Language Centre has identified www.mukurtu.org as a high-quality open-source program that may be appropriate for this project. Mukurtu is a "free, mobile and open source platform built with indigenous communities to manage and share digital cultural heritage". Murkurtu recommends using their hosting service (also free) which has the capability of hosting large archives. Ngukurr Language Centre supports this.
- An alternative option is to utilise the established Endangered Languages Archive (ELAR) site http://www.elar-archive.org/ to create an accessible database.
- The Project Manager is responsible for building the Ngukurr Language Centre database, based upon a platform such as Mukurtu. The database should be flexible to allow for the possibility of expansion or replication so that similar archive databases can be created for additional languages at a later date.
- It may also be important to ensure that Ngalakgan people and others in the Ngukurr area have the ability to set access conditions for the archive. Mukurtu and ELAR have this facility.
- The database should also account for the needs of the language owners and stakeholders who may have differing learning styles, experiences with IT and database design preferences.

The project manager may be required to liaise and consult with language stakeholders and community members to ensure the database is designed appropriately. This may include some travel to Ngukurr, although this not a requirement of the project.

The project manager may also be required to use the services of an IT consultant. We can recommend consultants with experience with language-related IT projects.

Project Implementation

It is the Project Manager's role to ensure that all steps with this project run according to the timeline in the project plan.

Reporting

The Project Manager will be required to undertake three forms of reporting:
1. Monthly reports to Ngukurr Language Centre coordinator who will report to the Ngukurr Language Centre's Board of Directors on the project's progress. These reports can be in the form of a short written report submitted via email. It is expected that monthly reports will address progress relating to each of the key tasks the project manager is required to undertake.

2. Funding body report: descriptive report and financial report to be submitted to the Coordinator in a specified format according to the reporting requirements of the funding body (Office for the Arts). These reports are due by end of August 2014.
3. A final report submitted to the Coordinator upon completion of the project.

Finally, it is important that the Ngukurr Language Centre can expand or replicate this project to cover other languages in the region. The project manager should provide instructions or a training manual(s):
1. A user's guide on how to use the database
2. An instruction manual on how to expand or replicate the database to incorporate additional languages.

Successful applicant

The successful applicant must have the following attributes and experience:
- Project management capabilities
- Ability to work independently and carry out independent research
- Excellent IT skills
- Awareness and interest in Australian Aboriginal Languages
- Awareness and interest in supporting the not-for-profit sector, particularly in Indigenous contexts
- Experience in working with analogue and digital recordings
- Strong communication skills and ability to provide written reports and procedural documents

Desirable attributes and experience:
- Experience in training or education (to improve the pedagogical potential of the archive)
- Qualifications or experience in working on Aboriginal languages (linguistics research or community-based projects)
- Ability to travel