



# ELLA

## Program information

**Early Learning Languages  
Australia (ELLA) program**

ELLA is an Australian Government initiative.

[www.ella.edu.au](http://www.ella.edu.au)



## What is ELLA?

Across Australia, more than 4000 preschools are discovering a language early with the Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA) program!

ELLA is a fun, digital, play-based language learning program for children in preschool. It is delivered through applications ('apps') on tablet devices. ELLA apps have been specifically designed for preschool children and align with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Children can learn one of thirteen languages – Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Turkish or Vietnamese. The language is the choice of your preschool.

As a participant in the ELLA program, you will have access to a number of resources including a dedicated ELLA helpdesk, website, webinars, information on the chosen language and culture, and regular newsletters.

## Is it free?

Yes, it is free to join the program and access the ELLA apps; however, preschools must provide a WiFi connection and at least one compatible tablet device.

## What are the benefits?

### For children

*'It was really interesting to watch the three of them [participant with 6- and 8-year-old sisters] bending their heads together, and problem solving together, and sort of saying what do you think this means, and what do you think that means, oh but remember we saw that word, we heard that word earlier...'*

– Parent

ELLA creates fun learning experiences that allow children to explore and learn at their own pace.

Children who participate in ELLA:

- are introduced to words, sentences and songs in a language other than English
- have opportunities to recognise sounds and concepts of the language
- enjoy play-based language learning experiences through apps on tablet devices
- have opportunities to engage with the cultures of people who speak the language
- gain digital technology skills through using the tablet devices
- have opportunities to develop foundation skills, for example in colours, counting and greetings.

ELLA also encourages the development of cognitive and social skills such as self-regulation, turn-taking, sharing, collaborative learning and caring for property.

### For educators

*'Learning the language together is great for teacher/child relationships – It's wonderful for the children to see the adults learning and fosters true collaboration. It empowers the children. We both respect each other's knowledge.'*

– Educator

Educators involved in ELLA have reported benefits, including:

- increased confidence in incorporating language learning and digital technology into their programs
- increased focus on multiculturalism in their programs
- opportunities to learn language alongside children in a collaborative way
- entry points for family and community members to share their cultures at the preschool.



## How does ELLA work?

You don't need to know the language, or be a trained language teacher, to participate in ELLA. You can learn alongside the children.

### What do you get?

- Access to seven apps in your preschool's choice of language
- A Liaison Officer who is available to support your preschool in implementing ELLA, and a responsive helpdesk available 9am – 4pm (AEST) weekdays
- Educational reporting and 'I can' statements that can be used to share children's learnings with families
- Background language and cultural information on the language your preschool has chosen
- Regular newsletters to keep you informed and provide tips on how to make the most of ELLA
- Online professional learning webinars

### How is it funded and run?

ELLA is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment and is part of the Australian Government's commitment to encouraging ongoing language learning in Australia.

Education Services Australia manages the delivery of ELLA on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education.

## Evidence of ELLA's effectiveness

Independent analyses by Deloitte Access Economics and Swinburne University of Technology Babylab demonstrate that ELLA is effective in introducing new languages to preschool children.

The analyses found that:

- ELLA raises children's awareness of other cultures, and engages their interest in learning different languages
- children engage socially with other children at the preschool while playing with the apps
- children show more interest in, and understanding of, other cultures
- children learn and gain interest in learning a language
- the ELLA apps have widespread benefits for all children, including those with language delay and hearing impairment and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

[Read the reports to find out more about ELLA's evidence base.](#)



## Is your preschool eligible to join?

To be eligible to participate in the ELLA program, your service needs to be a preschool, kindergarten or childcare centre approved to operate by the relevant regulatory authority. Your preschool must also meet the following requirements:

- offer a preschool/kindergarten program that is provided primarily to children in the year before full-time school; only children enrolled in a preschool/kindergarten program are eligible to use the apps provided under the ELLA program
- be delivered by a degree-qualified early childhood teacher (as per [ACECQA](#))
- the preschool must have an active internet and WiFi connection for the duration of participation in the ELLA program. The preschool must meet all costs associated with the internet and WiFi connection.

## Compatible devices

ELLA works on a bring your own device basis. The following devices are compatible with ELLA.

- Apple iPad 8th generation
- Apple iPad 7th generation
- Apple iPad 6th generation
- Samsung Galaxy Tab A 10.1"

## Meet the Polyglots

The apps have a cast of colourful characters – the Polyglots – who introduce children to a new language through digital play. Experiences match young children's interests, like cooking, art, building, roleplay and music. This means that the apps are as engaging as they are educational.



## What do educators and families say?

### Educators who use ELLA say:

'Amazing experience, so glad to have been a part of it.'

'Children have been totally engaged in the app since day 1. Lots of excitement when a new app comes out.'

'The children are showing more interest in other cultures and are bringing in information from home about their culture and heritage.'

'One child replied to an educator out of the blue did you know that rouge is red in French whilst painting. Another whilst in our doctor's dramatic play area used the French name for leg.'

'One of the children was at the park and he saw a Japanese boy similar to his age and said "Konnichiwa"(Hello) and they started to play together.'

'Parents with [a Chinese] background were impressed with pronunciation from educators and children.'

'The children are mimicking Indonesian words very quickly and picking it up easily. Words, sentences, phrases or sounds, it doesn't matter. They're happy to say it all and LOVE IT! They use it during mealtime quite often: if one child starts, the rest will join in and then all of a sudden we have an Indonesian class. They switch between two languages as they play.'

'They love saying hello and goodbye in the language. We have heard most children using it.'

'We regularly hear children singing songs from the apps such as the heads-shoulders song, colours, the greetings – they say the fruit names and when using the apps you can hear them repeating the names. Parents say they hear them at home using the language.'

### Families of children using ELLA say:

'We travelled overseas and my child was doing cannon-balls into the swimming pool counting in Japanese to 10 before jumping in the pool. The Japanese tourists were highly excited that he could do that at 4 years of age.'

'I took him to a Lebanese restaurant, and he ordered his drink in Arabic (like the character does in the app, I think), and he used thank you and bye. And the waiter said his pronunciation was very good. Amazing.'

'[My child] comes home keen to apply new words that he has learnt at school in the home context. He is even teaching his 2-year-old sister to count in French. He often describes things in French.'

'She loved to tell people about the apps ... we'd be at the shops and she'd be telling random strangers she's using the iPad to learn Indonesian.'

'My son tells us the words he has learned – greetings, colours and numbers.'

'It has given her a good understanding of different cultures in general, she regularly discusses where her friends come from and different countries and how people speak and dress differently. She likes to find the countries on her globe.'



## Terms and conditions

To make sure the children at your preschool receive the best possible outcomes from ELLA, your preschool needs to:

1. agree to Education Services Australia (ESA) monitoring your use of the ELLA apps through data analytics;
2. agree to your preschool's name and location appearing on a list of participating ELLA preschools on the ELLA website;
3. cover costs associated with your participation in ELLA, including purchase of tablet device(s), device accessories, modem, router, and maintenance of an internet connection and WiFi network throughout the year;
4. use only tablet devices that meet the technical specifications stated by ESA; ESA's list of recommended devices may be viewed at: <https://www.ella.edu.au/how-ella-works>;
5. resolve any internal IT issues with your own IT department or internet provider;
6. download the ELLA apps and begin recording data within four weeks of being accepted into ELLA;
7. connect your tablet devices to WiFi at least once a month to upload your usage data;
8. download and print the *Information brochure for parents/guardians* and distribute it to the family of each eligible child at your preschool; and give them an opportunity to opt out of ELLA;
9. make sure that the ELLA apps are not used by a child whose parent/guardian has opted out of ELLA;
10. ensure only children enrolled in a preschool/ kindergarten program in the year before full-time school access the ELLA apps;
11. monitor and regulate the children's usage of the ELLA apps; children should not use the apps for more than a maximum of 40 minutes per week (over a number of sessions rather than in a single session); and
12. comply with all privacy obligations of your preschool and ELLA.

ESA will:

1. provide your preschool with access to seven ELLA apps in one chosen language free of charge;
2. collect data on usage of the ELLA apps on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment;
3. ensure data collected through the ELLA apps remains secure and private;
4. use collected data to determine requirements for any future ELLA app enhancements, to assist with targeting support for preschools, and to monitor acceptable usage levels of participating preschools;
5. provide an ELLA helpdesk to assist with any ELLA app-related and implementation queries;
6. offer support to your preschool if you have not commenced the program within four weeks of joining the ELLA program; and
7. provide online professional learning opportunities for educators to begin implementing the program.



Australian Government  
Department of Education,  
Skills and Employment