STEPS

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2026



South American clients gathered to celebrate Harmony Day

Spanish-language clients share learning journey through film and dance

STEPS Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) clients from South America, primarily Venezuela and Colombia, recently took part in a ten-week collaborative film and performance project.

This initiative was designed to combine language learning with cultural expression, helping clients improve their English speaking and listening skills with a cohort of fellow Spanish-language clients.

STEPS Casuarina Business Manager Chris Garth shared his enthusiasm: “The South American film project gave the clients a sense of purpose and belonging, not only to STEPS but to the wider Darwin community,” he said.

“The clients were able to share a part of themselves, while also improving their English skills through a fun and interactive experience.”

For the first three weeks, everyone shared their cultural backgrounds and told stories about their identities. After these introductions, the clients began writing the script together and filming basic scenes, building everyone’s confidence around the camera.

There were some challenges to overcome, including different levels of English proficiency and learning how to film and edit. With the guidance and encouragement of the AMEP teachers, the clients worked together to complete the project, keeping the script simple so everyone could participate and feel included.

Alongside the film production, the group also choreographed and rehearsed a dance for a group performance, which will feature in the film as a pivotal scene.

The AMEP clients prepared a South American food display with authentic cuisine On Harmony Day, followed by the filming of their dance routine: a traditional Venezuelan Joropo dance (pictured).

This project was a great way to combine cultural storytelling and connections with practical English language development, and we are so proud of every single client for making the most of the opportunity.

AMEP
Adult Migrant English Program
An Australian Government Initiative



Palmerston clients taking part in traditional dancing and sharing stories



Palmerston celebrates International Women's Day

Our AMEP clients attended the City of Palmerston's International Women's Day celebration, along with over 200 other community members. The clients proudly shared their cultural backgrounds through stories from their countries of origin, with many wearing traditional clothing. There was also plenty of dancing, from customary Thai, Cambodian, Latin, Chinese, and Congo presentations to an Australian classic: the Nutbush.

STEPS AMEP clients and teachers planned and contributed an incredible multicultural spread of food for attendees to enjoy, sparking conversations about traditional meals and memories of home. It was a meaningful way for the AMEP clients to connect with other women, celebrating shared cultural backgrounds while learning from each other's unique experiences as first-generation migrants. The clients also used the gathering as an opportunity to continue practising their English, sharing what they've learnt with confidence.

Thank you to the City of Palmerston for organising this event. Darwin is home to many cultures from across the globe, and we love celebrating inclusivity and helping everyone feel welcome in the community.



Alice Springs AMEP clients

Alice Springs clients make connections in class

Our AMEP classes help migrants develop their English language skills and prepare for life in Australia – and the best way to do that is practise and connect with one another.

These new clients (pictured) in Alice Springs are from different backgrounds and have become fast friends through their AMEP lessons.

They recently spent the day learning about each other's country of origin and comparing their pasts to their present lives in the Northern Territory.

Discussions included the differences in weather and schooling, their newfound freedom, and the laid-back nature of people living in Alice Springs.

The clients also looked at a world map and placed pins in their home countries, visualising their journeys and just how far they've all travelled to arrive in the same class. It was a meaningful way to connect and practise their conversational skills.

Our Alice Springs site is growing and looking for more clients. If you or someone you know in the region could benefit from free English classes, please call 1300 131 965 or visit our stepsgroup.com.au/AMEP.



Client profile

What was your main motivation for joining AMEP?

I wanted to improve my English language skills, better integrate into the local community and find stable employment in Australia.

What are your favourite parts of AMEP?

The supportive learning environment and the opportunity to meet people from diverse backgrounds.

What are some valuable lessons or skills you have learnt with STEPS AMEP?

Beyond significantly improving my language skills, I have gained confidence in navigating local services and understanding Australian workplace culture.

What are your professional goals?

To secure a full-time role in administrative services where I can utilise my multilingual skills.

What are your personal goals?

To become fully fluent in English and to actively participate in my community's volunteer programs.

What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about joining AMEP?

Don't hesitate to join. The teachers are incredibly patient, and STEPS AMEP provides you with the initial tools to build a new life here.

Joseph's journey from the Congo to Casuarina

Casuarina AMEP client Joseph Lobanga recently shared his migrant journey from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Darwin as part of a class activity. His story began when he fled his home country due to ongoing war and lived as a refugee in Malawi for nine years.

"Life in Malawi was not easy – even though there was peace, sometimes hunger and lack of opportunities became part of everyday life, "Joseph said. "Congo is not a bad country; in fact, I am proud to be Congolese. However, the war made life very difficult for my life and others."

As a young artist living in a refugee camp, Joseph spent five years developing his skills, including a year of practical study, although he found it difficult to find and afford art materials.

His parents supported him, but Joseph knew they were already struggling to provide food, education and other basic needs for the family.

"I wanted to support myself without worrying them, so I secretly worked different jobs, including making bricks and other hard labour, in order to buy materials and keep practising my art."

After years of honing his craft, Joseph was able to find a pathway to Australia to pursue his dream of working as an artist and inspiring others to create their own art.

Since arriving in Darwin, Joseph has felt welcomed and supported by his new community. To help make his dream a reality, he joined STEPS AMEP and began developing his English language skills.

"Australia already feels like home to me," Joseph said.

"I thank all of the members of STEPS for their kindness and support throughout my journey. My story is not only about struggle but also about hope, resilience, faith and the power of art to change lives."



Joseph with his artwork

STEPS

STEP into a world of opportunity



Learn English for free with STEPS AMEP

Are you new to Australia and want to improve your English language skills?

The Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) at STEPS offers free English lessons to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants.

You'll learn how to use English in everyday situations, like going to the doctor, using public transport, or applying for jobs. You'll also learn about Australian culture, values and systems while connecting with your community and gaining confidence.

Topics include:

- Life skills, culture, family and friends
- Health and safety
- Managing money and banking
- Public transport and driving
- The childcare and education system
- Medical services
- Australian laws

With flexible class times and access to additional supports like free childcare and one-on-one home tutoring, STEPS AMEP is designed to fit your life and your goals.

Get started today! Contact us to check your eligibility and take the first step toward your future.

STEPS AMEP LOCATIONS

Alice Springs

16 Hartley Street

08 8950 7600

Casuarina

13-18 Scaturchio Street

08 8925 5600

Palmerston

14 Palmerston Circuit

08 7922 7500

Contact us

1300 131 965

customercare@stepsgroup.com.au

stepsgroup.com.au/AMEP

Scan for more information and to apply

AMEP
Adult Migrant English Program
An Australian Government Initiative

Nationally Recognised Training

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