



2021 Co.As.It. ITALIAN LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS PROGRAM

(This program receives funding support from the Victorian and Italian Governments)

GUIDELINES

Closing date: 4.00pm. Friday 20 November 2020

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General Information

The COASIT Language Assistants Program normally places young university graduates from Italy to work as language assistants in Victorian schools. For 2021 however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, equally qualified Assistants will be sourced from within Australia or locally.

Language assistants support qualified language teachers to provide authentic language and cultural experiences for students. Language assistants can use traditional and contemporary language and culture to engage students in face-to-face and online language learning. This includes, but is not limited to, team-teaching, providing small group or individual student language support, offering advice on linguistic and cultural matters and participating in school activities relating to their language and culture.

Language assistants can also be asked by COASIT to participate in resource development, student language immersion camps and teacher professional learning.

Program objectives

The COASIT Italian Language Assistants Program aims to:

- enrich Victorian school Italian programs through the provision of native-speaking language assistants;
- provide Victorian teachers and students with opportunities to increase their knowledge and understanding of Italy, its language and culture;
- promote language learning and intercultural understanding in Victorian communities; and
- foster relationships between Victoria and Italy through ongoing linguistic and cultural exchange.

Selection criteria

Applications from individual schools for the 2021 Italian Language Assistants Program will be assessed according to the following criteria:

1. The school provides an Italian language program which is delivered **by a qualified Italian language teacher(s)** for a minimum of 20 hours per week.
2. The school demonstrates a strong commitment to the teaching of the language (e.g. evidence that Italian is identified as a priority in the school's Strategic Plan; goals/targets are included in the Annual Implementation Plan; a demonstrated increase in students enrolled in the language program; **or other school initiatives to promote and improve Italian language education**).
3. The school demonstrates how the quality of its languages program would be improved through the support of a native-speaking assistant.
4. The school demonstrates a commitment to providing professional support and

development opportunities for the language assistant, including the appointment of a mentor. This could also include participation in language conferences, regional professional learning activities and network meetings.

5. The school outlines a sound strategy for supporting the wellbeing of the language assistant during the placement, including an induction to the school upon arrival.

COASIT receives more applications from schools than there are language assistants available. Therefore the information sought in this application form will assist in the determination of a priority ranking of applications for language assistants and will enable the assessment panel to make an informed decision about the allocation of language assistants for 2021.

Responsibilities of COASIT

COASIT will:

- coordinate the Program, including the school application and allocation process;
- liaise with partner organisations to identify and select the language assistants;
- provide an orientation program for the assistants upon arrival;
- liaise with the language assistants and schools to address issues as they arise;
- direct language assistants and schools to information relevant to the placement (e.g. Working with Children Check); and
- organise a review of the program with the language assistants.

Responsibilities of the School Principal

The school principal is responsible for overseeing the placement of a language assistant at the school and will:

- ensure that the language assistant does not assume the role of a teacher and does not teach unsupervised;
- nominate an appropriate staff member as the Language Assistant Liaison Teacher to provide suitable supervision, co-ordination and guidance to the language assistant, and support this member of staff to attend a one-day Program briefing;
- oversee the welfare of the language assistant during the placement and respond in a timely manner if any issues arise;
- ensure that the language assistant is provided with a school-based orientation and induction upon arrival;
- ensure that the language assistant is provided with a personal workspace in the school;

- ensure that the language assistant is supported with professional learning opportunities;
- coordinate logistics with other Principals when a language assistant is placed at more than one school (e.g. timetable, transport to another school); and provide a mid-year and final report to COASIT.

Responsibilities of the Language Assistant Liaison Teacher

A key contact in the school must be nominated as the Language Assistant Liaison Teacher.

The Language Assistant Liaison Teacher will:

- liaise between the school, the language assistant and the COASIT Education Programs Manager over matters that arise related to the Program;
- coordinate the day-to-day activities of the language assistant in consultation with the language assistant and other staff;
- monitor the welfare of the language assistant and respond in a timely manner if any issues arise;
- liaise directly with the language assistant before their departure to Victoria to provide them with information about the school and the community;
- develop a timetable outlining the classes in which they will participate;
- ensure lesson planning and preparation with the language assistant occurs on a regular basis;
- assist the language assistant to complete documents required by the school, COASIT or other authorities;
- identify professional development opportunities that may benefit the language assistant and support them to undertake such opportunities;
- ensure that there are opportunities for the language assistant to integrate into the broader school community (e.g. invitations to functions and excursions outside the scheduled language lessons) to extend the language and relationships beyond the classroom; and
- liaise with other teachers to ensure the language assistant is receiving the appropriate level of support to undertake their role.

Role of a language assistant

In support of COASIT

- may be asked to participate in initiatives or projects, organized by COASIT, that promote the language across a cluster, region or the State (e.g. language speaking contest, student immersion camp, student forum);

- assist with the delivery of language and cultural activities either face-to-face or online;
- assist with the development of resources to support the teaching of the language (e.g. recording audio content, developing digital content);
- help to facilitate language or cultural professional learning workshops for teachers;
- present at regional or professional teacher association language conferences; and
- participate in activities that promote language learning and intercultural understanding in the broader community (e.g. regional showcase events, forums).

Student and teacher support

- work with individual or small groups of students undertaking language learning activities;
- provide feedback to students on correct language usage;
- model correct language usage (e.g. pronunciation and idiom);
- team-teach or provide targeted support to small groups or individuals;
- assist the delivery of face-to-face or online cultural activities;
- contribute to professional development sessions for language teachers;
- provide native-speaker expertise to teachers on use of the language; and
- provide advice to teachers on current cultural conventions.

School curriculum support

- contribute to curriculum planning and resource development;
- contribute to the development and maintenance of digital language resources
- provide support for school-based language program initiatives (e.g. sister school, school open night, language day); and
- contribute to the development of language teaching and learning materials that require expert knowledge of the target language (e.g. multimedia recording of native-speaker voice).
- Attend staff/faculty meetings

A language assistant should never teach unsupervised or assume responsibility for the school's language program.

General Conditions Relating to Employment

- Successful applicants must have a recognised university degree.
- Language assistants are employed full-time, five days a week and attend school for 35 hours per week (i.e. a minimum of 7 hours daily for 5 days).
- Language assistants are responsible to the Principal through the Languages Co-ordinator or other designated teacher
- A Language Assistant is allocated 9 sick leave credits (pro rata) on appointment, three of these days may be taken without a medical certificate in a calendar year except for a day preceding or following a public holiday when the assistant must provide a medical certificate. Language assistants are entitled to all public holidays. Assistants must remain on duty for their contracted time. Failure to do so will result in immediate suspension of salary.
- Requests for leave for compassionate purposes must be made to the COASIT Education Programs Manager who will liaise with the school concerned.
- An agreement will be signed between COASIT and the assistant which will outline the Responsibilities of COASIT, Term of placement, the Obligations of the assistant, the Submission of reports and the Termination clauses.
- The assistant will perform duties as directed by the Education Programs Manager of COASIT during school holidays or any other school closure.

Key dates

School applications close	20 November 2020
Schools notified of placement	December 2020
Orientation program	15 - 16 February 2021
Assistants commence in schools	17 February 2021
Assistants finish	26 November 2021

Submitting your application

Please forward an electronic copy of your completed application form to ferdinando@coasit.com.au by **4.00 pm Friday 20 November 2020**.