Background
The Refugee Language Program was created in 2004 as the result of an initiative by Fellows of the University Senate and was set up with university funding to offer free language tuition to refugees. Classes in intermediate and advanced level English are held on campus during the week and on Saturday mornings. All the teachers are volunteers from university academic staff, students or alumni with the skills appropriate to the Teaching of English as a Second Language. We have also trained staff members and students as Mentors to meet refugees on a one to one basis to help them with their English study.

Many of our refugee students are ineligible to attend Government sponsored English classes. Many of our students suffer from economic and social deprivation or have suffered torture and trauma in their countries of origin. Our program helps, in some measure, to alleviate the dislocation and isolation that these people suffer, as well as providing language skill classes at no cost.

From 2005 to 2013 the program has been part of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, where we have an office and other facilities. The University continues to contribute to the running the program and in 2013 the Pratt Foundation made a generous grant to the university which has enabled the RLP to continue our teaching service.

Eligibility
Asylum Seekers holding Temporary Protection Visas, those on Bridging E Visas as well as Community Detention Visas are all eligible to enrol. If students are unsure about the location of the university we send maps and directions on how to get here. All forms are available on our web-page.

Timetable
On Wednesdays we run a Creative Writing class followed by a conversation and cultural information hour. On Saturdays we run an Advanced English class with an IELTS focus and an Intermediate English class. Classes start at 9.30 and finish at 12.30. We follow our Saturday classes with a light lunch and conversation with staff and volunteers. After lunch we hold a computer class from 1.30-3pm that caters for a mixed level group. There are several tutors with the class who will help students with individual learning.

The Saturday classes are held in the Education Building and the Wednesday class is held in the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, (the Mackie Building) situated in Arundel Street on the Glebe side of the university. We also have a small group of volunteers who assist refugees in their local library or café with English studies. Sessions are generally for 1 - 2 hours at a time that suits both the student and the mentor.

Donations
In 2013 we would like to raise enough money to pay for some extra running costs. Although the university does provide the facilities for the co-ordinator, we also need funds to cover our lunches for students after Saturday classes as well as fare re-imbursements for those students who would find it impossible to come to class without some financial help. We would also like to publish another small anthology of students' creative writing in 2013-14.

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