

# Preparing for the Voice resources

**The Edmund Rice Centre (ERC) for Justice and Community Education has produced resources to help teachers and students understand the Voice to Parliament referendum and the Uluru Statement from the Heart.**

ERC believes people can change the world through education, and is dedicated to raising awareness, leading to advocacy and social action.

ERC has a long history of working for reconciliation, even sending a group to Ireland in the 1990s to learn about its reconciliation process.

A group of dedicated staff and volunteers, including some former teachers, meet fortnightly in a Yarning Circle to discuss activism around the Voice and reconciliation in general.

Supporting the vote 'yes' campaign was just another step in the journey for the

group, which has a focus on social justice, Indigenous rights and eco-justice.

In Australia there are 55 EREA schools, (Christian Brothers) and many IEU members are employed in these schools.

All the resources produced by ERC are produced in collaboration with Dr Darryl Cronin, their Indigenous Research Officer based in Darwin.

They even commissioned an artwork ER4 Uluru by David Riley, symbolising the ERC supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support the invitation arising out of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. One of the staff members is from a Bangladeshi community, and he is trying to spread understanding about the referendum within that group, although he said so far knowledge levels are low.

ERC runs the Justice Through the Arts Program, where teachers and students

can learn about social justice issues and express their ideas and research through arts activities. The theme that is promoted in this program is hope.

ERC is also facilitating Kitchen Table Conversations, a process designed to allow small groups to respectfully discuss the Voice; and a national online youth forum, being hosted by Marcellin College in Melbourne, to try and get Year 12 students to understand that they can change history by voting in the referendum.

The resources ERC produces are not just for EREA schools. Any educational institution, including public schools, can access them.

"It's about spreading the message," Education Officer Marisa Brattoni said.

The ERC is currently working with and partnering with many other social justice groups, local community groups

particularly and unions, because of their strong support for the 'yes' campaign.

Marisa said the take-up of the Uluru Statement from the Heart Resource Kit for Teachers has been well received, with teachers using it to raise awareness about the Uluru Statement from the Heart in their school communities.

The group hopes that they can continue working with other groups, as well as promoting the resources and material that are available and emphasising that the 'yes' vote is a simple non-political message, putting hope in favour of fear.

To access teacher resources from ERC, see [www.erc.org.au/resources\\_for\\_schools](http://www.erc.org.au/resources_for_schools)

**Sue Osborne** Journalist



## Campaign conversations for 'yes'

**A small group of IEU members was provided with information and strategies to become effective advocates for this historic vote at a two-hour workshop in July.**

The workshop, at the IEU's main office in Ultimo, focused on the key campaign messages and having the most effective conversations to persuade workmates, friends, neighbours and fellow community members to vote 'yes'.

The workshop outlined the positioning of the Unions for YES! Campaign and included a basic overview of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Participants also learnt about connecting with the campaign and building conversation skills, explore the key campaign messaging and develop strategies to contextualise the campaign messaging for friends and colleagues.

