

# Australia East Timor Friendship School Project



ABN 99 111 159 712

The Australian East Timor Friendship School Project (FSP) was established by Kirsty Sword Gusmão, former First Lady of Timor-Leste (now East Timor's official name), as part of Alola Foundation's programs to support the women and children of Timor-Leste.

FSP provides opportunities for students in Australia and Timor-Leste to exchange information about their culture and community, and to participate in shared learning experiences. Schools that are linked in a partnership, exchange students' albums containing drawings, photos and letters. Australian schools are encouraged to send small quantities of exercise books, pens, pencils, paper, disposable cameras and similar materials so that the children in the partner schools in Timor-Leste can respond in kind. A calendar of events each year helps Australian schools organise their participation, maintain motivation and promote FSP in their community.

*Photo: Kirsty Sword Gusmão at Balibar Primary School in Timor-Leste*



## 'Building Generations of International Friendship' A Project of the Alola Foundation

[www.alolafoundation.org](http://www.alolafoundation.org)

### The Friendship School Project: Who are we?

Established in 2003, the Australia East Timor Friendship School Project has been incorporated as a not-for-profit company. It is staffed by a part-time Co-ordinator and Administrator. All other involvement in FSP is provided on a voluntary basis.

### Board

Chair: Rae Perry (Victorian Local Governance Association)

Company Secretary: Warren Maloney

Board Member: Jan Hayes (Australian National University)

Board Member: Meredith Peace (Australian Education Union, Vic Branch)

The Board is assisted by an Advisory Committee jointly chaired by the former and current First Ladies of Timor-Leste and Victoria, Kirsty Sword Gusmão and Terry Bracks. The Committee brings together representatives from our supporters and the wider community, with members of the Board.

## How we work

### Vision

Our vision is of a sustainable network of schools and communities committed to ensuring that successive generations in Timor-Leste and Australia learn about, understand and interact with each other.

### Mission

The Friendship School Program enriches the education experience for students and their communities in Australia and Timor-Leste through engagement with each other's cultural values, languages and circumstances and by facilitating wider community involvement in school life.

*Photo: Chatham Primary School, Victoria, Australia.*



### Guiding Values

The Project is guided by fundamental values of mutual respect, community service and a practical commitment in Australia and Timor-Leste to:

- advance the knowledge and welfare of students, schools and their communities
- defend the right of communities to shape the way in which they pursue educational aspirations
- advocate the equitable access to educational opportunity for all children thus supporting the means to realise their full potential
- promote the benefits of learning about the life circumstances and cultures of others
- respect and acknowledge the contribution made by each participant according to his or her capacity
- build sustainable international community-to-community relations based on informed understanding, empathy and reciprocal learning

# Friendship School Project

## In Australia

- FSP has School Members registered throughout Australia
- Many of these are linked with schools in Timor-Leste as School Partners
- All schools receive an FSP Resource Kit containing a variety of information on Timor-Leste, held within a Timorese made Tais fabric bag
- FSP quarterly Newsletter sent to all schools and Supporters
- Opportunities to participate in yearly 'Student Forums', bringing schools together to inspire each other and share their learning and plans
- Curriculum Units enable schools to incorporate learning about Timor-Leste throughout the school community

## In Timor-Leste

- Funds raised by schools in Australia contribute to the development of resources and activities for school communities. Programs have included sports and musical equipment, literacy and learning resources for both students and teachers.

# Becoming Involved

There are three levels of membership:

- **Friendship School Supporter:**  
Stay informed about the Project through regular newsletters. Available to individuals, groups and schools.
- **Friendship School Member:**  
Participate in full range of activities, utilise Curriculum Units and receive regular newsletters and a resource kit.
- **School Partner (Available to schools only):**  
Existing School Members that would like to be linked to a school in Timor-Leste, in the aim of establishing an active and meaningful relationship through the exchange of student material, can become a School Partner. This process requires a minimum commitment of three years from Australian school communities to integrate, in an ongoing and sustainable manner, learning about Timor-Leste into the school community. There is a waiting list for School Partners in Timor-Leste, and selection criteria are applied to Australian schools.

To access Registration Forms for School Members and Supporters, or to learn more about FSP in general, please go to [www.alolafoundation.org](http://www.alolafoundation.org)

Supporting the Friendship School Project will inspire school children and their teachers in Australia and Timor-Leste, and help to continue 'Building Generations of International Friendship'

'FSP has involved the whole community. Students have received letters from their friends in Australia which they have shared with their family. Visitors from Australia have also been to our schools to teach us about their culture whilst learning about ours. We are thrilled about our friendship with Australia'

Mr Antonio Vidal Mendes,  
Hato-Udo Sub-District Education Office,  
Ainaro, Timor-Leste

## Other ways of supporting FSP:

- **Making a Donation**  
You may wish to support FSP's work through a one-off or ongoing donation. Cheques are gratefully received, made payable to 'AET FSP Ltd' and sent to the FSP Office in Australia.
- **Volunteering your time and skills**  
Become involved in the committees that direct the work of FSP  
Assist at FSP events  
Manage specific office based tasks

Please contact the FSP Office for further details of these additional ways of supporting FSP and its work.

# NEW FRIENDSHIPS CULTURAL EXCHANGE STUDENT LEADERSHIP INTERNATIONAL AWARENESS

## Contact Us

Australia East Timor Friendship  
School Project Ltd  
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## Donation



I would like to receive more information

I would like to become a volunteer

address

phone  home

work

mobile

e-mail

Please find enclosed a cheque for \$

All cheques made payable to Australia East Timor Friendship School Project Ltd

Payment by direct debit is available by arrangement. Please call the office on 03 9418 4807 for further details.

