



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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US expansion spreads word on bilingualism benefits

More people in the US are to be encouraged and supported to speak more than one language thanks to the expansion of an Edinburgh initiative.

Bilingualism Matters – a research and information centre for bilingualism and language learning – is launching in Chicago and Columbia, South Carolina.

The new hub will share research and resources on bilingualism with schools, parents and the wider community,

Bilingualism Matters was established in 2008 at the University of Edinburgh to provide information to researchers and families on the benefits multilingualism and language learning and overcoming its challenges.

The project has bases across Europe – in Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and Spain – as well as three other branches in the US.

Several of the branches were set up with the support of the European Commission funded project, Advancing the European Multilingual Experience.

The Chicago branch involves a consortium of the Universities of Illinois, Northwestern, Loyola and DePaul.

More than 150 languages are spoken in the Chicago area with 2.5 million residents speaking a language other than English at home, according to the US Census Bureau.

Professor Viorica Marian, of the Northwestern University's School of Communication, said: "Bilingualism Matters Chicago represents the first consortium of multiple universities in North America dedicated to the advocacy, education and support for issues surrounding bilingualism, multilingualism and linguistic diversity."

Professor Antonella Sorace, the founding director of Bilingualism Matters, of the University of Edinburgh's School of Philosophy, Psychology and Language Sciences: "We are delighted to be able to work with partners across Europe and the US to make information accessible about early language exposure and learning and the underpinning research."

Ranked among the top universities in the world

Bilingualism Matters launches in Chicago on Tuesday, 19 March and Columbia, South Carolina on Friday, 29 March.

Further information on Bilingualism Matters: <http://www.bilingualism-matters.ppls.ed.ac.uk>

For further information, please contact:
Joanne Morrison, Press and PR Office
tel +44 131 651 4266, email joanne.morrison@ed.ac.uk

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