Rotary District 9685 Vocational Excellence Awards 2019

Professor Geoffrey Hull

Academic Linguist

Professor Geoffrey Hull is a highly qualified Linguistics academic and has lectured at many universities here and overseas He is an acknowledged expert, having authored scores of academic publications, reports to Government and the first standard dictionary of the Timor-Leste native Tetum language.

Professor Hull has made contributions to the study of Romance, Celtic, Slavonic, Semitic, Austronesian and Papuan languages, and to the relationship between language and culture. He is also well known for his writings on religious questions, most notably the historical causes and socio-cultural impact of church reforms of the 1960s on the Latin Catholic and Eastern Catholic tradition.

In addition to purely academic achievements, Prof Hull has made significant contributions to the establishment of Timor-Leste via the standardisation of the Tetum language and the creation of a range of linguistic and literary resources for Tetum and other languages of Timor-Leste.

Prof. Hull’s contribution to Timor-Leste’s pre and post Independence era has been remarkable. He viewed the Timorese struggle for freedom from different perspectives – freedom from oppression physically, mentally, linguistically and culturally. After Independence, he knew that the Timorese struggle for linguistic and cultural identity would be a long one and challenging. With his academic background and expertise, he worked with Timorese both abroad and at home to establish Timor-Leste language policy and develop its vernaculars. His ability to speak various Timorese languages with which he has worked has distinguished him greatly from other linguists. He has since been an invaluable language expert for local and international academics.

Language and culture are fundamental to understandings between peoples at all levels and especially in bringing peoples together and in gaining international understanding. Through his vocation Prof. Hull has contributed to the highest possible level.

Rotary District 9685 is honoured to recognise Professor Geoffrey Hull with the 2019 District Vocational Excellence Award.