



MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA
ANNUAL REPORT
2018-2019



MULTICULTURAL
AUSTRALIA
it's who we are

STRATEGIC OVERVIEW



Acknowledgement of country

Multicultural Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of all the lands on which we meet, work and live. We recognise that this land has always been Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land and always will be.

We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders—past, present and emerging—and recognise the immense cultural and linguistic strength and diversity that has existed on this land for tens of thousands of years.

Every day, we work to welcome new Australians from across the world. As we do this, we acknowledge the history and current realities of our First Nations people and understand our individual and collective responsibility towards the achievement of justice, equality and reconciliation.

Multicultural Australia and the multicultural communities we work closely with realise that understanding the past helps us shape a better future for all. We commit to learning from the knowledge, traditions, stories, spirituality and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We, who come from many places, acknowledge the welcome offered to us by the traditional custodians of this land, the world's oldest living culture. We express our desire for deeper connection with Australia's First Nations people, as we learn to live on their land.

Multicultural Australia respects and values Australia's First Nations peoples' enormous resilience, courage, determination and often unrecognised contributions to the country's social and economic development. We walk together in solidarity, in the shared pain of the past and in the shared hope for the future.



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Illustration on pages 10-11 by Rachel Apelt

Welcome

Queenslanders are a compassionate people. We saw that in 2019 with the public grief and vigils in response to the Christchurch terror attacks. Three months after that tragic event, over 38,000 Queenslanders signed up to attend the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade in a powerful statement that all of us are welcome here—all of us belong.



These examples of a community standing together in times of pain and tragedy, and in times of joy and celebration, demonstrate a fundamental humanity of grace, kindness, and friendship. These lie underneath a public narrative about multiculturalism that is so often based on fear, the unknown and political point-scoring.

We could tell you the statistics about multiculturalism—almost half of us are born overseas or have a parent born overseas—and how modern Australia was built on migration. But the real power for change lies with us owning our shared humanity and relying on our enormous capacity for empathy. We recognise that we are all driven by a deep desire to belong and contribute to communities where we can raise healthy families and create opportunities to thrive financially, socially and spiritually.

Over the last 21 years, Multicultural Australia has worked to harness this deep empathy. We have supported new Queenslanders to settle well in our communities and share the benefits of our multicultural society, so that everyone feels welcome.

This year, Multicultural Australia, led by its board and management team, has refined our strategies to deliver those objectives. We have stayed true to our commitment to human rights and an organisational culture of ethics, grit and creative problem solving. We acknowledge that our world is rapidly changing and keeping fit for the future requires forward thinking. We must remain responsive to the needs of our clients, staff, funders, partners and communities.

Developing our next strategic plan has been a key focus. We have distilled our vision, purpose and values, and defined our strategic pillars and measures of success. Our Strategic Plan 2019–2022 is presented in this annual report.

We have developed a communications strategy, supported by social research, that enables us to be a public platform of truth and evidence about the benefits of multiculturalism and the contribution of refugees and migrants to our economies and societies.

In 2019, we made a simple yet profound change to our name and brand. We let go of the word 'development' and became Multicultural Australia. Multicultural Australia is a powerful representation of our vision. It is a statement around which we can mobilise our partners, supporters and the public to take action and participate in the Welcome movement.

We are developing potent, diverse employment strategies to harness the potential of new arrivals to contribute to Australia's economies and communities. In 2019, we finalised a 2-year Work & Welcome initiative that saw us secure \$1.2 million in wages through donations and one-off corporate contributions for 75 new arrivals in short-term work placements in the private and corporate sectors.

We continue to be the contracted agency to settle every refugee in Queensland, welcoming over 3,400 refugees under the Humanitarian Settlement Program. Our direct settlement service delivery included Brisbane, south-west Queensland, Logan, Ipswich and Gold Coast, and we continued to subcontract to our settlement service agency partners in Townsville and Cairns.

In big news, Kerrin recently announced her resignation as CEO after 16 years of inspired leadership. When Kerrin joined the

organisation in 2004, we had just 17 staff. She now leads 397 of the most dedicated and talented people we know. Kerrin's authentic leadership, deep empathy for our clients, intellect and business skills have made Multicultural Australia stronger, the lives of countless people safer and happier, and Queensland a more inclusive and welcoming place.

Kerrin will leave an enormous legacy of service in Queensland and we wish her all the best in her future career. For Multicultural Australia, her legacy is a culture founded on ethics, respect and love. Those qualities are not often present in conversations about business. But putting our shared humanity at the front and centre of how we work and what we do underpins much of our success. It is who we are and who we will continue to be.

Peter Forday,
Multicultural Australia Chair

Kerrin Benson,
Multicultural Australia CEO

“
Putting our shared humanity at the front and centre of how we work and what we do underpins much of our success.
”







About Multicultural Australia

OUR PURPOSE

Multicultural Australia exists to create a **welcoming, inclusive and economically stronger community**. This is a shared agenda with many others. Our part is to ensure that new Queenslanders are included, skilled and thriving. We are passionate about promoting positive conversations about inclusion.

OUR VISION

A trusted Queensland not-for-profit **creating welcome and inclusion for new Queenslanders**. Exceeding stakeholder expectations by delivering exceptional services, working with others to solve big issues and driving innovative projects that make a real difference.

OUR VALUES

We are fiercely committed to human rights and demonstrating our values in our daily work.

We show up for one another, are faithful to our clients aspirations and we solve problems by finding the third way.

We are ethical and strive for impact. We pride ourselves on being an organisation with the grit needed to affect real change.

Highlights

Over 38,000 Queenslanders signed up to create welcome at the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade, almost triple the attendance in 2018.



Multicultural Australia celebrated its 20th anniversary with a series of events highlighting stories of settlement in Queensland.



Multicultural Australia CEO Kerrin Benson sat on the expert panel for the Prime Minister's review into integration, employment and settlement outcomes for refugees and humanitarian entrants.



We launched our two-year partnership with Suncorp to enhance the economic inclusion and financial literacy of new arrivals.



We became a community partner of the Brisbane Roar to enhance inclusion through sport.



Redbank Plains Community Centre celebrated one year of creating community connections, with almost 7,000 visits to the Centre by community members.



12,000 people attended the MOSAIC Multicultural Festival, celebrating the diversity of Queensland.

Multicultural Australia staff serenaded our stakeholders at our end of year event, singing 'Better be Home Soon' with the Pub Choir team.



We moved into the Toowoomba Multicultural Centre with our partners Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma.



Our ParentsNext program expanded into 14 locations across Queensland supporting 1419 parents of young children with their career aspirations.

Welcome Sports celebrated its 1st birthday at the inaugural Welcome Sports Festival as part of Multicultural Queensland Month.

We welcomed our newest Australians at a citizenship ceremony at the Gabba with the Brisbane Lions, our AFL partner.



MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

it's who we are

Our performance

Settlement

3400+

refugees welcomed to Queensland.

99% of our settlement life skills clients said our classes were useful or very useful in helping them orient to Australian life.

1,716 new arrivals supported in post-settlement transition.

87% of our SETS clients reported that they were satisfied with our services, we listened to them and we understood their needs.

528 people seeking asylum supported.

4,915 international students supported to enhance their experience in Queensland.

Youth

35 early childhood centres helped to be responsive to children from refugee backgrounds.

100+ children from 18+ cultural backgrounds in the pilot.

90% retention rate for children regularly attending kindergarten.

18 young people in our kinship care supported to thrive.



Employment

429

migrant youth supported with employment and community connections.

43%

of clients accessing employment-related support secured employment (more than double the national average of 21%).

45 paid work placements started or completed in 2019 through Work & Welcome.

68% are engaged in work or study after their placement.

Our community

Our extended community of interest continued to grow:

- 16,668 social media followers (19% increase) and 18,700+ subscribers to our news and events
- 53,000+ Queenslanders signing up to attend our events
- Community Partners include Suncorp, Brisbane Lions, AFL Queensland, Brisbane Roar and La Boite Theatre Company

Our people

- 397 employees from 60 cultural backgrounds
- 84% staff retention rate
- 359 active members of the Multicultural Australia alumni



10 traineeships or community work skills projects provided to **185** jobseekers across Queensland.

> **In Rockhampton** our employment outcomes exceed all our program KPIs.

1419 parents with young children supported with their employment aspirations.

> **64%** of our parents have found jobs or are enrolled in study or training.

Our accountability

- \$41.6m revenue
- 2.86:1 asset to liability ratio
- Human Services Quality Framework Certification (Queensland Government)
- ISO9001:21015 Quality Management Standard
- ISO31000:2018 Risk Guidelines

Welcome and inclusion

3 major events

providing welcome and celebrating multiculturalism with over **53,000** Queenslanders signing up to attend.

38,400+

people signed up to welcome new Queenslanders at the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade.

> **94%** of MOSAIC attendees agreed that cultural diversity is good for Queensland.

Our Welcome Sports hub ran **4** new programs and competitions.

\$300,000

in grants secured for Welcome Sports in its first year.

17 Welcome Hubs across Brisbane in partnership with local community centres.

> **1000** people participated in our cultural conversations.

Training

287 instances of one-on-one support given by our community funding worker.

> **\$600,000** in grants secured for Queensland community projects and events.

49 cultural training sessions delivered across Queensland.

> **1002** Queenslanders trained in cultural competency.

Community

166 volunteers gave over **7800** volunteer hours (worth over \$200,000) to help welcome new Queenslanders.

> **35%** more Queenslanders applied to volunteer with Multicultural Australia in 2019 (without advertising).

116 service providers involved with the Redbank Plains Community Centre.

> **6950** visits to the Centre by the surrounding community.

Housing

1,524 new Queensland households supported into stable, long term accommodation.

> **100%** of housing clients supported into independent leases.

124 properties under management by Welcome Residential.

> **27%** of our properties provided a home for new refugee clients.



THE GOLDEN EPOCH PROJECT

Together we are a stronger community

Together we are a stronger community

mda

I AM CREATING WELCOME FOR QUEENSLAND

mda



Strategic Plan 2019–2022

For over 21 years, we have worked to advance multicultural Australia and build communities where everyone belongs.

Developing inclusive and prosperous communities, changing the conversation and keeping fit for the future are the strategic pillars that highlight why we exist. They underpin what we do—our services, partnerships and business. Ethical leadership and deep collaboration with community is at the heart of how we work—our culture and practice.

Our vision, purpose and values guide the work of our board, executive and staff as we implement this strategic plan to 2022.

NG
NEW
ERS

#CREATEWELCOMES
www.mdaltd.org.au

is
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Our three strategic pillars

1. Inclusive and prosperous communities

We will develop communities where all feel valued, safe and where others will be drawn to live.



Settlement Success

Multicultural Australia will deliver settlement services beyond our clients' expectations, working with them to realise their aspirations and foster their ability to prosper. Our services will be centred on evidence-based practice and shaped by client and community voice.



Prosperity

We recognise that meaningful work is a critical factor in settlement success. We will develop potent employment strategies designed to enable our clients to prosper and contribute to their communities. Importantly, these strategies will also help Australia build strong economies and communities. By investing in newcomers we invest in Australia.



Collaborative Communities

Multicultural Australia will collaborate with stakeholders, partners, community groups and community service providers to build a network of welcoming and inclusive organisations and communities across Queensland where all newcomers will feel inspired to contribute and grow.

Case Study:

Regional settlement success

Multicultural Australia has worked very deliberately to harness the mutual opportunities that settlement across regional Queensland offers newcomers and local communities. Rural and regional towns and cities benefit from newcomers who provide a vital labour force for rural and regional industry and support local commerce and economies.

Rockhampton in central Queensland has had a particularly successful experience of refugee settlement; so much so that over 500 refugees have asked to relocate to Rockhampton from other parts of Australia. They are drawn to the employment opportunities on offer in the region, particularly in the meat and agricultural industries, and the supportive, welcoming local community.

Multicultural Australia has had an office in Rockhampton since 2011, delivering programs like Skilling Queenslanders for Work and ParentsNext that are supporting people into employment and supporting newcomers and the local community to reap the benefits of regional settlement.

Regions of Welcome – the Toowoomba experience

Multicultural Australia has been settling newcomers in Toowoomba since 2011. More recently, we have settled over 1,500 Yazidis, who are thriving in Toowoomba since fleeing genocide in Iraq.

Recent research is demonstrating the success of refugee settlement in Toowoomba compared with other locations. Multicultural Australia is an industry partner in the Australian Research Council's linkage project, 'Settlement outcomes of Syrian-conflict refugee families in Australia.' The research by the University of Technology Sydney, Western Sydney University and the University of Sydney found that Toowoomba is leading the state in positive settlement experiences for newcomers—feeling safe and happy in their new communities, feeling satisfied with their experiences at schools and TAFE, and finding it easy to make friends.

Multicultural Australia's settlement model focuses strongly on a client's aspirations, enabling independence through employment, and facilitating newcomers' belonging with their new communities. We are very pleased that research is finding evidence of the effectiveness of this approach.

We continue to work closely with key Toowoomba stakeholders and businesses to continue the successful settlement experience. The Toowoomba Regional Council has led a community culture of welcome for many years, becoming a Refugee Welcome Zone in 2013. In 2019 we supported Tambo Teddies, the creators of handcrafted sheepskin teddy bears in outback Queensland, to create

a regional sewing hub where refugees are helping revitalise this iconic business, solving labour shortages that were impeding the business's growth. Tambo Teddies was awarded the 2019 Multicultural Queensland Award for Business.

A human face of this settlement success is Jankey, a Yazidi who arrived in Australia in 2017. Jankey has found work at the iconic Weis ice cream factory and in 2019 he and his family became one of the first Yazidis to purchase their own home in Toowoomba.



Case Study:

Supporting prosperity

Employment is critical to a new migrant's settlement outcomes. Work helps them integrate successfully into Australian culture, gain financial independence and meet new friends.

One of the ways that Multicultural Australia is creating prosperity for newcomers is through Work & Welcome, our short-term paid work experience initiative that provides employment and a sense of belonging for new Queenslanders from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Since 2017, the program has helped 75 participants earn a combined \$1,275,000 in wages in the private sector, with 68% securing post-placement employment.

A welcome brew

Levy, a young refugee from Burundi, was employed through Work & Welcome as a brewery assistant at the Soapbox Brewery in Brisbane's Fortitude Valley. Soapbox is a socially conscious business that enjoyed supporting a young refugee to develop his confidence and skills. Initially shy, with very little work experience in his home country and none in Australia, Levy's confidence has grown during the placement.

Levy's placement has also made a positive impact on Soapbox. The Soapbox team have learned about African beers and together they brewed a Burundian inspired banana beer. Soapbox is exploring ways to develop the placement into a traineeship and want to support more Work & Welcome placements through innovative ways, like donating 10 cents from the sale of some of their craft brews to support paid work opportunities for refugees.

Our three strategic pillars

2. Changing the conversation

We will seize opportunities to advance a multicultural Australia, creating welcome and a strong sense of belonging for newcomers.



Impact and Influence

We will strive for impact and aim to be a voice of influence to advance multiculturalism. We will use evidence and impact measures so we know we are making a positive difference.

We will leverage strategic partnerships to build our knowledge of emerging issues, best-practice in service delivery, diversity and inclusion, and significant issues facing newcomers with the ultimate goal of helping to affect humane, multicultural policies.



Community of Interest

We recognise that it is important for Multicultural Australia to build a community of interest that will influence and advance multiculturalism in Australia through our services, programs, social businesses, events and celebrations.



Valuing Partnerships

Multicultural Australia will value and grow our strategic partnerships across a wide range of sectors to promote our vision and help us deliver conversation-changing programs, events and celebrations. Our relationships will focus on building leadership to create a positive social movement for change.

Case Study:

Building the Welcome movement

Our communication with supporters and the broader community is evidence-based. We rely on practice experience and research to tell the stories of our successful, multicultural nation and share the benefits of a welcoming and inclusive society.

We commissioned research to more deeply understand the views of Queenslanders on issues relating to new migrants and refugees. Four focus groups across Brisbane and Toowoomba, with a variety of genders, ages and political leanings, showed that Queenslanders generally believe that Australia is generous, welcoming and gives new arrivals a fair go.

Key research findings

We expect new arrivals to participate and make a contribution to Australia.

Some of the concerns around immigration are tied up with issues of infrastructure, population and planning, rather than a concern about difference or diversity.



We know that we lack understanding of migration policy and impacts, and the lived experience of refugees.

We acknowledge the role of the media and politicians in shaping our views, and we think that they are largely responsible for the negative public discourse rather than individual citizens.

Our personal experience of working with, and living around, new arrivals is often very positive, and we suspect the negative stories might reflect a minority.

We are open to a more positive narrative for migration if only someone told it.

This research highlights the opportunity to tell stories of the contributions of refugees and migrants to Australia. It also affirms the view that, at an individual level, we share the values of welcome and inclusion. Multicultural Australia is responding by providing the public with more opportunities to understand refugee and migrant experiences and their contributions to Australia's economy and community.

Case Study:

Building economic inclusion with Suncorp

On Harmony Day 2019, we launched our two-year partnership with Suncorp to support financial inclusion and resilience of people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The partnership will deliver financial literacy training to newly arrived communities, helping them to thrive and prosper by better understanding Australia's financial systems and institutions, and making informed financial decisions.

Multicultural Australia's job readiness programs explore the skills and career aspirations of newly arrived Queenslanders and prepare them for the recruitment process, while Suncorp staff are providing one-on-one career mentoring to recently arrived refugees and migrants. Suncorp is also helping new arrivals with direct employment pathways, employing nine Multicultural Australia clients in 2019.

Multicultural Australia's cultural capability training is helping Suncorp staff understand the norms and biases of different cultures to improve services, better assist customers and support new staff from culturally diverse backgrounds. Suncorp staff are participating in cultural immersion experiences and volunteering at events like the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade and MOSAIC Multicultural Festival.



This year Suncorp was recognised for outstanding engagement in the Multicultural Queensland Ambassador Program, receiving the 2019 Minister's Choice Award at the Multicultural Queensland Awards. Multicultural Australia is a cultural advisor to the program.

Partnership outcomes to date

- 30 Suncorp staff received cultural capability training
- 212 hours volunteered by Suncorp staff at Multicultural Australia events
- 232 clients received job readiness training
- 22 clients enjoyed mentoring arrangements with Suncorp staff
- 9 newly arrived Queenslanders employed by Suncorp

Our three strategic pillars

3. Keeping fit for the future

We will invest in the right skills, knowledge and technology to achieve our vision and will invest in social business opportunities that help us shape a better future for all.



A Shared Future

Across Multicultural Australia we share a vibrant vision of our future and the futures of the clients and communities we serve. We will develop clear pathways for sustainable growth opportunities while remaining agile and responsive to emerging needs.



Inspired Leadership

Multicultural Australia leads with character and love. We will invest in developing a new generation of leaders who act with conviction, compassion and curiosity. Finding the Third Way is embedded across our organisation enabling us to respond to challenges with creative solutions, innovations and outcomes.



Building Capability

Multicultural Australia invests in our people. We will recruit and retain value-aligned skilled individuals. We are committed to them reaching their full potential. We will retain leading professionals. We will embrace our staff using their experience at Multicultural Australia to continue our shared agenda and we will stay connected to them through our alumni program.



Resourced for Success

We will use our resources responsibly and collaboratively, and we will invest wisely in secure, fit-for-purpose technologies to efficiently achieve our vision. We take very seriously the stewardship of public funds and our responsibility to remain fit to lead this work into the future.

Case Study:

Welcome Sports – a not-for-profit sporting hub

In 2018, Multicultural Australia and El Salvador Soccer Club launched a new social business, Welcome Sports, to provide a sports club that offers inclusion and belonging to newcomers and the local community.

This year, the inaugural Welcome Sports Festival proved the value of sports to our communities and sport's transformative potential to create welcoming and inclusive communities.

With grant assistance from Multicultural Affairs, we delivered the Welcome Sports Festival as part of Multicultural Queensland Month. The festival showcased the role sport plays in making long-lasting community connections, building friendships, improving wellbeing and creating a sense of belonging—particularly for newly-arrived Queenslanders.

The festival included a keynote address by Brisbane Roar goalkeeper Jamie Young and a settlement graduation ceremony for 50 of our newest Queenslanders, celebrating their resilience and successful orientation and integration into the Australian community.



Twelve organisations signed up to support the Welcome Sports Festival, including eight major state sporting codes. It enabled an estimated 700 children and family members to try different sports and sign up to clubs. Fifty families registered for \$12,000 worth of Play Fair vouchers, offering eligible players subsidised participation in six of the sports at the festival. 92% of festival-goers surveyed said that sport was important for them to connect and make friends, and over 95% said they had a fantastic time at the festival and would return next year.

Our Welcome Sports Festival partners included Netball Queensland, Cricket Australia, AFL Queensland, Brisbane Lions, Brisbane Roar, Tennis Australia, Touch Rugby League Brisbane, Queensland Cricket, Hastings Deering, Goodlife Health Clubs, the University of Queensland and Queensland Sport and Recreation. Future programs with these partners, including the annual Welcome Sports Festival, will promote inclusion through sport and engagement of Brisbane's diverse communities.

Case Study:

Supporting inspiring leaders to change the conversation in real life...

Multicultural Australia's vision of an inclusive, welcoming community where everyone belongs is one we share with many others. We partner with, and support, individuals and organisations who are passionate about leading a positive social movement of welcome and inclusion. One of these inspiring leaders is Brisbane Roar goalkeeper and Multicultural Australia ambassador Jamie Young.

Jamie was playing a game against the Western Sydney Wanderers when one of their supporters heckled him, calling him a 'monkey'. 'What you don't know,' says Jamie, 'is that I've been tolerating that kind of abuse for 13 years while playing in England. I even signed for a team where the club secretary said that I looked like a terrorist.'

For Jamie, a resilient nature and a strong sense of personal identity mean he doesn't let comments like this get in the way of a determined and purposeful life, which includes studying for a PhD, charity work in Australia and Nepal, and maintaining his A-League form.

In fact, he defines this experience as a watershed moment, 'I could have condemned the man for his drunken behaviour and for how unacceptable it was that families with children had to experience that. But the truth is this type of behaviour

happens every day in our neighbourhoods. And whether it is caused by racism, or ignorance, I don't think it's helpful to condemn people for their mistakes. I wish I could have had a conversation with him and maybe been a part of changing his views and behaviour.'

'I'm sharing this story because I want people to feel inspired to have those conversations with each other about our diversity. I want people of all cultures to have their voices heard. I want us all to be a part of this country's evolution so that we are all accepted and included, and no one is vilified for their culture or the colour of their skin.'

As ambassador for Multicultural Australia and Welcome Sports, Jamie's message is 'get informed, be reflective, be constructive'. Sometimes conversations about diversity and inclusion can be challenging because they ask us to explore our beliefs about identity. But by having these conversations, you might just be a participant in someone else's watershed moment.



Our Leadership

Our Executive



Kerrin Benson
Chief Executive Officer

Kerrin Benson has been the CEO of Multicultural Australia since 2004. Under her leadership, Multicultural Australia has grown to become one of Australia's most respected providers of settlement and support services for refugees, migrants and international students.

Since graduating with a bachelor of social work in 1984, Kerrin has worked extensively in the government and non-government sectors, in community development, child protection and multiculturalism. She has extensive advisory experience at all levels of government, including the Brisbane City Council's Inclusive Brisbane Board, Multicultural Queensland Advisory Council and the Minister's Council on Asylum Seekers in Detention.

Kerrin's management philosophy is to focus on making an impact, while inspiring a culture grounded in ethics and values. She believes that anything can be delivered with a good idea, hard work and goodwill.



Rod Wilson
Chief Financial Officer and Executive Manager People & Systems

Rod is Multicultural Australia's CFO and Executive Manager for People and Systems. He has extensive experience as a senior executive working across both state and commonwealth government and across a range of sectors including education, law enforcement, emergency services, tourism, employment and training. He holds a Graduate Certificate in Executive Leadership from the University of Queensland and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. He has a Bachelor of Business from Queensland University of Technology and is a member of the Institute of Public Accountants. Rod is passionate about working collaboratively to achieve quality community outcomes.



Vanessa Fabre
Executive Manager Corporate Communications, New Business and Partnerships

Vanessa oversees corporate communication, major events, cultural training, social business and strategic partnerships for Multicultural Australia. She has over 20 years' experience in community and government sectors, joining Multicultural Australia in 2015. Vanessa holds a Master of Health Science, Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Health) and Graduate Diploma in Health Promotion. Through her career, Vanessa has lead the development and implementation of significant social policy and change in areas of human services, community safety, community development and disaster management. Vanessa's vision is a community that connects and collaborates to make Queensland a welcoming and inclusive place to live, work and play.

Leah Percival

Executive Manager Client Services

Leah leads Multicultural Australia's direct services to clients and their communities, overseeing casework, housing, orientation and settlement leadership. Leah joined Multicultural Australia in 2011, establishing Multicultural Australia's presence in Toowoomba, which has continued to be a prosperous and inclusive region of welcome. Leah has also delivered international development projects in Nauru, providing high level social policy advice to the Nauruan and Australian governments. Leah holds a Bachelor of Occupational Therapy from James Cook University. Her vision is to inspire and engage our communities to provide authentic, warm welcomes to newly arrived Queenslanders.



Tim Draper

Executive Manager Social and Economic Inclusion

Tim oversees Multicultural Australia's social and economic inclusion programs. He joined Multicultural Australia in 2013 with senior management experience across the community, education, youth justice and mental health sectors, including as Chief Operations Officer at Healthy Options Australia. During his tenure with Multicultural Australia, Tim has been the senior manager overseeing our Brisbane-based service delivery to refugees and people seeking asylum. Tim is passionate about making a difference through leading and mentoring high performing teams.



Christina Skoien

Company Secretary

Christina oversees Multicultural Australia's corporate governance and manages compliance, quality and risk. She joined Multicultural Australia in 2015 with extensive state government experience in the areas of women's policy, seniors programs and homelessness. Christina has completed a Graduate Diploma in Corporate Governance from the Governance Institute of Australia. She is a passionate advocate for gender equality, particularly for refugee and migrant women and girls.



Our Leadership



Our Board



Peter Forday, Chair

Peter Forday joined the board in 2011 and has held the position of Chair since 2016. Peter holds extensive ambassadorial roles within the community including chair of the Police Ethnic Advisory Group, director of Mercy Community Services South East Queensland and adjunct senior research fellow with Griffith University. He also owns and operates a management consultancy specialising in organisational change, stakeholder engagement and leadership.



Anh Bui, Deputy Chair

Anh joined the board in June 2015 and was appointed Deputy Chair in 2019. She holds a Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Business Administration and Graduate Diploma of Applied Corporate Governance. Anh is admitted as a Solicitor in the Supreme Court of Queensland, is an associate member of CPA Australia and is a Fellow of the Governance Institute of Australia. She has over 10 years' experience in the financial services sector and is a risk, governance and compliance specialist.

Fahim Khondaker, Director

Fahim joined the board in 2015. He is a partner at BDO Australia, a global professional services firm, and is a chartered accountant. Fahim has extensive experience working with charities and community organisations that promote social cohesion and understanding.



Giri Sivaraman, Director

Giri joined the board in 2018. He is a principal and head of Maurice Blackburn's Queensland employment law department. He regularly advises trade unions and non-government organisations on governance, has acted for refugees in pro bono matters, and ran the firm's pro bono scheme for underpaid 7-Eleven workers. Giri is a member of the Queensland Multicultural Advisory Council.



Jade Demnar, Director

Jade joined the Board in 2018. She is a management consultant in global professional services firm, Accenture, leading change management and innovation initiatives in government clients. She is a member of the Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation Board and is Head of Curation at TEDx Brisbane.





**MULTICULTURAL
AUSTRALIA**

it's who we are

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