



MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2019-2020**



MULTICULTURAL  
AUSTRALIA  
*it's who we are*





## 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 shared hope for the future.



Multicultural Australia staff at our 2019 end of year celebration.

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# Welcome from the Chair

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am delighted to present Multicultural Australia's 2019-2020 Annual Report.

In recognition of the unique impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic on our business and our clients, the Board and Executive Leadership Team have refined our strategic priorities to June 2021, identifying 'what is most important right now.' You can view these on Page 17.

In February this year, Kerrin Benson stepped down as CEO after 16 years of service to Multicultural Australia and the settlement sector. The Board and staff of Multicultural Australia thanks Kerrin for her extraordinary leadership and contribution to our organisation, Queensland's multicultural communities and the settlement sector more broadly.

We acknowledge Bill Gamack who led Multicultural Australia as CEO through the height of COVID-19. Bill was deeply committed to supporting our clients and communities through the pandemic, ensuring we were able to continue our comprehensive service delivery through peak periods of lock downs and restrictions. Bill resigned in August 2020 and the Multicultural Australia community is grateful for his continued support for building a welcoming and inclusive Queensland.

Multicultural Australia welcomed Christine Castley as CEO in November 2020. Christine is a strategic and experienced leader with a long-standing commitment to social justice and a passion for changing the conversation about the incredible social, cultural and economic contributions of refugees and migrants. Looking forward, Christine will build on our 22-year track record of success and continue to fulfil our vision of creating welcome and inclusion for new Queenslanders, delivering exceptional services and driving innovation and collaboration to make a real difference.

**Peter Forday**  
Chair

**Multicultural Australia Chair Peter Forday (at right) and Fahima Ahmadi of the Future Leaders Advisory Group.**



# Welcome from the CEO

There is no doubt that 2020 has been a significant year of change for all of us.

Communities have demonstrated their incredible resilience in the face of sudden disruption at work and in our personal lives.

In spite of this, our dedicated staff, volunteers, partner organisations and cultural communities have continued to show up and support our clients and communities in commitment to our shared vision of creating a welcoming, inclusive and economically stronger community for all Queenslanders.

Joining Multicultural Australia as Chief Executive presents a unique opportunity to lead a strong, impactful, values-based community organisation that delivers services and programs that make our world a better place.

I am very proud and excited to lead our passionate team into the future. My leadership will be informed by Multicultural Australia's values of kindness, ethics, integrity and keeping our vision and purpose at the heart of what we do.

I look forward to building on our deep relationships with our community, government and corporate partners and stakeholders to seize opportunities that make a real difference in the lives of the people and communities we serve.

**Christine Castley**  
CEO



Multicultural Australia CEO Christine Castley making lanterns for LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood with the Welcome Hub at Annerley Baptist Church.

# About this report

The Multicultural Australia Ltd Annual Report for 2020 is a summary of our operational and financial performance during the 2019/20 financial year.

It explains how we work to create a welcoming, inclusive and economically stronger community: ensuring that new Queenslanders are included, skilled and thriving and that all Queenslanders have the opportunity to be involved in positive conversations about inclusion.

## **This report is primarily targeted to the following audiences:**

- New Queenslanders who access our settlement and other support services, including refugees, people from refugee or migrant backgrounds, people seeking asylum, international students and diverse young people
- Members of Queensland's local communities, including emerging cultural communities
- Federal, state and local government partners
- Private sector partners who help us ensure new Queenslanders and Queenslanders from diverse backgrounds are included, skilled and thriving
- Partners that provide services to our clients and communities
- Multicultural Australia staff who deliver our services
- The wider community of Multicultural Australia supporters.

The 2020 Annual Report is a measure of our performance for 2019-20 against the targets in our Strategic Plan 2019-2022, helping us assess how Multicultural Australia is performing well, and where we need to improve.















# About Multicultural Australia

## 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 PURPOSE

Multicultural Australia exists to create a **welcoming, inclusive and economically stronger community** - an agenda shared 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 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.



# Who we are

For 22 years, Multicultural Australia (formerly Multicultural Development Australia) has been welcoming refugees, people seeking asylum, international students and other new arrivals to Queensland with the goal of creating a fairer, more prosperous society for all Queenslanders.

We are the contracted settlement provider for Queensland for the Commonwealth Government's Humanitarian Settlement Program.

We support more than 6,000 Queenslanders every year, including refugees, international students, people seeking asylum and migrants. We help them settle into their new lives, build connections in their communities, find work and study opportunities, learn new skills and to feel at home.

We also work with individuals, communities, business and government to contribute to building a more welcoming Queensland through advocacy, cultural training and community events. These initiatives serve to bring people together, foster understanding and recognise the valuable contribution that new arrivals and migrants make to Queensland.

Multicultural Australia is a company limited by guarantee and is a charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC). Multicultural Australia is also a Public Benevolent Institution with Deductible Gift Recipient status.





# How we got here

## Faithful to the vision of a multicultural Australia...

With almost half of Australia's population born or having a parent born overseas, our nation is and always will be multicultural.

In a suburban Brisbane backyard in 1998, a group of Queenslanders dreamed of a society where cultural diversity was welcomed and celebrated as a strength. A society where everybody had the opportunity to thrive and prosper. Upon that vision, the Multicultural Development Association (now Multicultural Australia) was founded.

Our goal in those early years was to raise public awareness of the issues faced by people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We sought to welcome newly-arrived refugees and migrants, and support them in establishing a new life in Australia.

We worked strategically to ensure governments and organisations were ready to respond to the needs of diverse Queenslanders. We worked developmentally, building the capacity of local communities and the sector through education, training and community projects.

In October 2019 we officially launched our new brand and organisation name, letting go of the 'Development' in our former name MDA (Multicultural Development Australia) to become, simply Multicultural Australia. This rebrand was a powerful representation of our purpose to create a welcoming, inclusive and prosperous community.

In 2020 we remain committed to our founding vision, but have broadened our focus. We create inclusive and prosperous communities, delivering services that welcome new Queenslanders and enhance their inclusion, prosperity and belonging.

We change the conversation through partnership, collaboration, advocacy, training, and community and media engagement to ensure that diversity is welcomed and embraced. We 'keep fit for the future', with a culture based on strong ethics and values and a commitment to quality in every aspect of our work. We respond to emerging issues while ensuring Multicultural Australia's direction remains aligned with our vision and purpose.

Over the past 22 years many things have changed, but Multicultural Australia is proud that our vision, our values and our character have remained steadfast.





# Our Performance

## Our Strategic Plan 2019–2022

Every three years we develop a strategic plan to help us achieve our mission. This document identifies the strategic objectives and critical factors for success for Multicultural Australia.

The strategic objectives for our Strategic Plan 2019-22 are:



### 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.





## 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.



## 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.



# Our Operating Environment

Globally, forced displacement has almost doubled since 2010. According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), in 2019 there were 79.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, violence and human rights violations. An estimated 40% of those people are children under 18 years.

Australia granted 13,171 visas through the 2019/20 Humanitarian Settlement Program, with Queensland welcoming 2687 refugees across Brisbane, Logan/ Gold Coast, Toowoomba, Cairns and Townsville.

## Navigating the impact of COVID-19 and Australia's border closure

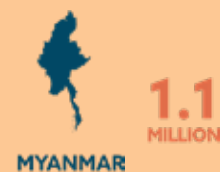
With the emergence of COVID-19 in December 2019, restrictions on global movement affected the resettlement of refugees. Australia's borders closed on 20 March 2020 and the Department of Home Affairs suspended the granting of offshore humanitarian visas on 19 March 2020. Only 70% of the annual offshore target of 18,750 places were granted by the end of 2019/20.

Settlement providers and other multicultural organisations across Australia have developed creative and innovative ways to support refugee, migrant and other diverse communities through COVID-19.

In Queensland, we have led Local Area Collaboratives (LACs) comprising local service organisations to identify and respond to local issues facing refugee, migrant and diverse communities during COVID-19, enabling stakeholder and community collaboration, information sharing and access to services within a lockdown environment.

In particular, stakeholder collaboration across education, health and employment has been very successful.

## 68% of displaced people came from just 5 countries:



In 2019, only 107,800 refugees were resettled globally.



Temporary visa holders (including people seeking asylum) have been some of the hardest hit groups during COVID-19, particularly given their ineligibility for relief packages implemented as part of the Commonwealth Government's pandemic response, such as JobKeeper. We have continued to work with the community, our partners and government on devising solutions while still providing direct support to our temporary visa clients - including facilitating access to these newly-developed solutions.

### **Guiding access to education for vulnerable communities**

Multicultural Australia is proud to work with government bodies to raise awareness, influence change and enhance services for new Queenslanders. Our Settlement Leadership Team prepared a brief on the impacts of isolation on migrant families during in-home education, collated from case managers, services and client experiences. The brief was provided to Education Queensland, serving to guide their approach in responding to and supporting schools struggling to engage migrant communities. The document also showcased learnings from schools that were positively engaging vulnerable migrant communities.

### **Supporting vulnerable communities in the face of increased racism**

Unfortunately, along with the health and economic impacts of COVID-19, we witnessed clear instances of racism towards a number of communities including Australians from diverse backgrounds, Asian Australians and Iranian Australians at the start of the pandemic; and towards the African Australian community during border closures.

By providing access to resources and consistent communication (including support with messaging for engaging or responding to their members and the media) and other support mechanisms layered with empathy and compassion, we empowered our cultural communities to navigate and respond to these disappointing incidents. At the same time, we worked alongside the Federal Race Discrimination Commissioner and Queensland's Human Rights Commissioner on coordinated responses and advocacy, establishing the 'Take a Stand against Racism' pledge site and offering anti-racism resources on our website as part of our Culture of Connection COVID-19 response.

Supporting our objective to 'Change the Conversation' and our deep commitment to ensuring all Queenslanders are welcomed and included, we were pleased to be able to facilitate access to education and resources through the COVID-safe online environment, offering our community a free 'Introduction to Antiracism' webinar with social change consultant Erfan Daliri later in 2020 as part of our REIMAGINE Virtual Events.

### **Program delivery through a challenging year**

As an organisation whose foundational service is the settlement of refugees, the closure of Australia's borders has been challenging for Multicultural Australia and the settlement sector generally. With no new refugee arrivals since March 2020, we have continued the important work of providing high-quality case management support to our existing refugee clients in the Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP), helping them achieve their settlement goals.

The HSP provides up to 18 months of tailored initial settlement support to newly-arrived refugees before they 'graduate', becoming independent in the community or accessing further support through other government programs.

Despite the impact of COVID-19 on our settlement service, 2020 has brought positive news across a number of other programs. We were successful in our tender for the Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHM) program, meaning we will continue to be the sole provider of UHM service in Queensland for the next five to eight years.

We received \$1.113 million in funding over two years from the Department of Health (Federal) to deliver a "Driving Social Inclusion through Sport and Physical Activity" grant. Continuing our collaborative approach to program leadership and innovation, we have developed a partnership model to deliver this program, working with Brisbane Lions, AFL Queensland, Netball Queensland, the University of Queensland and Return Serve Tennis to foster sports inclusion for refugees and migrants, with a particular focus on women's participation in sport and physical activity.

Our Migrant Youth Vision Project (MYVP) and Youth Hub Pilot contracts were both extended through to June 2022. Multicultural Australia was chosen as the Queensland provider to deliver the Youth Hub Pilot, which began in January 2020.

## Changes to our leadership

At Multicultural Australia we farewelled Kerrin Benson in February 2020 after 16 years as CEO. Kerrin significantly grew Multicultural Australia as a community service agency promoting a strong and multicultural future for all Queenslanders through advocacy, sector and community development and service delivery. Under her leadership, the organisation grew from an Incorporated Association turning over \$1m p.a. to an Australian company limited by guarantee turning over \$40m p.a., supporting more than 5,000 newly-arrived refugees, migrants and international students annually, and assisting established culturally and linguistically-diverse communities to build, develop and support their communities. During this time, Multicultural Australia has increasingly been recognised as a 'go to' service provider for multiculturalism and refugee settlement because of our reputation for ethical conduct and quality delivery, including being awarded the state contract for refugee settlement in Queensland in 2017.

We welcomed Bill Gamack as CEO in late January 2020. When he joined us, Bill's focus was to continue building our strong financial position and our important work in "changing the conversation" to create a more welcoming Queensland. Just two months later, Australia's borders closed and all of us were living and working, socially distanced, within rapidly-evolving government restrictions. Through the peak of COVID-19 in Queensland, Bill remained committed to ensuring our services remained accessible for our clients and that Queensland's cultural communities were deeply supported through the crisis.





CEO Bill Gamack, Dr Farvardin Daliri, Lida Daliri and Minister Stirling Hinchliffe at the launch of the Giant Kookaburra.





Christine Castley was appointed as CEO in November 2020.

### Looking forward to 2021

Bill Gamack resigned in August 2020 and Christine Castley was appointed as CEO in November 2020. Christine is a highly credentialed leader with a strong track record of delivering significant reform and innovation. Prior to joining Multicultural Australia, she was the Deputy Director-General at the Department of Premier and Cabinet (Queensland).

Christine's appointment as CEO of Multicultural Australia marks her return to an area of personal passion and commitment: to the important work of assisting migrants, refugees and people seeking asylum.

The Board is confident that Christine will build on our 22-year track record of success for our clients, and provide the leadership, vision and energy to take Multicultural Australia forward in a way that best supports new Queenslanders long into the future.

Multicultural Australia is proud that our values have remained steadfast through the impact of COVID-19 and we look forward to continuing our work into 2021.



# Strategic Priorities to 2021

We have refined our strategic priorities to June 2021, taking into account the challenges presented by COVID-19, identifying 'what is most important right now' and recognising the unique circumstances and impact of the global pandemic on our business and our clients.



## Leading with solutions through COVID-19, so that we emerge better prepared for the future

We will provide solutions-focused leadership for staff, clients, communities, governments and other key stakeholders through COVID-19. This leadership will be delivered in our usual spirit of kindness, abundance and the Multicultural Australia 'Way'. Our objective is to ensure health and wellbeing for our clients, communities, people and partners, as well as maximising opportunities to improve our service delivery following 'recovery' and the 'new normal'.



## Measuring our Impact

Commence implementation of Results Based Accountability (RBA) methodology in order to evidence the impact of our work, as well as other research and development opportunities.



## Settlement Success

Maintain required capacity and income (including adapting to new arrangements due to COVID-19) to deliver settlement services. We will seek new opportunities to deliver our high quality settlement service.



## Employment Business Models

Developing and implementing sustainable business models for the delivery of employment services and work to increase the percentage of work-capable refugees in employment (after 2 years) from 17% to 50%.



## ICT and Digital Technology

Deliver a reliable, flexible, and fit-for-purpose technology environment that supports innovation and execution of practice, influencing positive social change, diversification of our operations, and measuring the value of our work.



## Changing the Conversation

Continue to build a welcoming and inclusive community through initiatives that include targeted community collaboration, activity and engagement and delivery of our Communications Strategy.



## Sustainability

Position Multicultural Australia to be in a sustainable and resilient financial and capability position with a continued focus on settlement services, delivery of conversation-changing programs and events and a diversification of capability and funding sources to deliver an expanded range of supports and services to meet multicultural needs in Queensland.



## Volunteer Strategy and Framework

Identify strategic leadership in the volunteer space and work towards developing a post-COVID strategy to add value to our volunteer experience and service delivery capability.



## Data

Identify data that would set us apart in our sector and add value to our services, communities and policy makers by linking and enhancing (including collecting and protecting valued data) our Results Based Accountability framework.

# Our COVID-19 Response

## For Clients

Across all our programs, we adapted our service delivery methods to continue to support clients through progressive restrictions, moving one-on-one case management to telephone or video delivery where possible, and group activities to Zoom, social media or other digital platforms.

Our teams implemented COVID-safe policies and procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of all clients and staff, including ongoing education and support for clients to ensure adoption of health and safety measures when accessing our services and engaging with the wider community. We focused on keeping clients informed throughout state and federal government restrictions and public health directives, and facilitated access to health services in the COVID environment, such as translating information into the client's first language.

## Supporting continued access to education

With schools closed, Multicultural Australia provided support to clients with families as they navigated the home school environment. This included helping children to engage in digital classrooms by building digital literacy, and facilitating access to digital devices, sourcing mobile data, laptops and iPads to allow students to participate in online learning during lockdown.



Our career mentoring program adapted to COVID-19 restrictions with a switch to meetings over Zoom.



With the pandemic highlighting the clear digital divide within our communities, the Settlement Leadership team collated data drawn from client service experiences to inform a brief enabling our Executive to progress a digital inclusion agenda for our clients and communities. With a generous donation of 46 laptops and digital devices from our partners Suncorp, we were able to help support our refugee clients to access employment, education and other crucial support and services.

With the closure of schools and the transition to home schooling, Youth Hubs saw an increased need for support. To assist our young people, Multicultural Australia created an online study support program to help meet education needs during this challenging time. The program has seen a steady attendance since March 2020, and continues to operate online as the preferred model of engagement for young people. We have been able to grow this program by collaborating with Australian Catholic University, whereby university students fulfilled placement hours as tutors in the program. With ongoing social distancing restrictions limiting class sizes, we continue to provide support in both face-to-face and online delivery.

Our Kindy Pilot team remained engaged with kindergartens, with many shifting their focus to online communication. With guidance and access to bi-cultural support, kindergartens excelled at communicating with refugee and asylum seeker families, building new awareness around participation barriers. In some cases, increased connection between families and kindergartens through technology has led to teacher home visits (in line with staged restrictions and abiding by social distancing measures) which have had a notable impact on the quality of relationships with those families and their engagement with educators.

Services were linked to existing multilingual resources regarding COVID-19 to maintain consistent messaging and draw upon translated resources, and teachers were supported to communicate with families via audio recordings where appropriate. For example, Multicultural Australia bi-cultural workers made recordings for families describing their options regarding ongoing attendance at kindergarten, and assurances of the health and hygiene practices in place.

Many families expressed that contact with these staff members and the kindergartens were their only contact with the wider community during isolation. They expressed gratitude, noting this service greatly enhanced their sense of belonging and community. Educators reported that engaging with families through home visits and video calls provided them with greater insight into the culture and environment that children are immersed in at home, and also improved relationships.

With international students significantly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, our Brisbane Student Hub (BSH) was the first hub in Queensland to initiate online support services for these students. A significant portion of the work focused on immediate crisis support and working in collaboration with Study Queensland to ensure students were connected to support services. The team at BSH, who received additional funding during the onset of the pandemic allowing engagement of additional staff to support students, commenced an online social 'hangout segment' where students could connect virtually to obtain information and connect with other students.

## Responding to domestic and family violence in the COVID-19 context

During this time, case managers increased engagement with at-risk clients, such as those in known domestic violence situations. With heightened family stress and reduced capacity/opportunity to seek help, domestic and family violence concerns increased across all of Multicultural Australia's communities. To ensure an appropriate response and provision of support in these sensitive situations that were compounded by COVID-19, our client service staff participated in ongoing professional development.

## Empowering new Queenslanders for confident communication

Case Managers reported that, as a result of our service adaptations and response through COVID-19, our new refugee clients in particular have a higher level of independence and confidence in communicating and engaging with services over the phone rather than requiring face-to-face appointments. Additionally, there was an increase in client engagement, especially in our ongoing Settlement Engagement and Transition Support Program (SETS), from March when COVID-19 began to significantly impact communities with shutdowns of non-essential services and restrictions.

## Pursuing employment pathways for healthcare professionals

During the early stages of COVID-19, our Employment team worked with the Department of Health to add clients possessing international health qualifications to the Queensland Health Emergency database. We hope that this is another step in providing a smoother pathway for qualified professionals to apply their healthcare skills in the Queensland care community.





## Facilitating support and opportunities for temporary visa holders

Temporary visa holders were heavily impacted by COVID-19, given they were ineligible for most support services including Centrelink payments and JobKeeper. Those seeking asylum with refugee applications 'finally determined' and ineligible for Commonwealth support faced higher unemployment, reduced work hours and a corresponding risk of homelessness, destitution, and negatively-impacted mental and physical health and wellbeing. These clients were supported to negotiate their rental payments and access emergency relief such as rental support through Salvation Army and Muslim Charitable Foundation (MCF). We were also able to successfully advocate for some eligible clients to apply for the Status Resolution Support Service (SRSS). This is an incredible achievement given the restricted eligibility criteria for the initiative.

Our focus through COVID-19 was to support people seeking asylum to access employment. Six clients were supported into employment during this time through Multicultural Australia's Work and Welcome Program.

## Supporting young people through COVID-19

Across Multicultural Australia's youth programs, priority was given to providing virtual support during the peak lockdown period (March to July). This encompassed enhancing digital access and literacy for young people and facilitating access to education; in addition to ongoing settlement needs like housing, employment, family relationships, understanding health advice for COVID-19, support for families with school-aged children, and social connection.

Our SETS Youth Services played an integral role in ensuring young people and families were holistically supported during COVID-19 with in-home learning through one-on-one support, continued relationship building with schools, and systems advocacy with Education Queensland.

Our Migrant Youth Vision Program (MYVP) and Youth Hub Pilot were significantly impacted by COVID-19 with the vast majority of programs designed to harness face-to-face and group activities, such as sporting competitions as a pathway into more tailored, individual support. In response, Multicultural Australia transitioned engagement to the online environment, including harnessing social media and video conferencing, producing support materials such as educational videos for improving digital literacy and understanding video conferencing, and rolling out tutorials and technical support to engage clients on digital platforms.



# Our COVID-19 Response

## For Communities

From the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic it became apparent that collaborative work would be needed to address the unique challenges and disruptions presented to culturally diverse communities.

Multicultural Australia and the Queensland Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT) worked with community leaders to form the Community Leaders COVID-19 Working Group. Over the next three months, this working group and a number of subgroups met regularly to address issues around mental health and wellbeing, family supports, youth, communications, economic security, and domestic and family violence.

Through collaborative work with these community leaders and other stakeholders, Multicultural Australia and QPASTT were able to:

- Deliver ongoing online community information sessions to Community Leaders about COVID-19 and its impacts
- Deliver mental health and wellbeing capacity-building sessions for community leaders
- Deliver 'economic security' information sessions
- Coordinate a Youth Forum session with Services Australia and the Australian Tax Office for youth and community leaders

- Develop and translate messages of hope and support for parents dealing with the pressures of supporting children schooling at home
- Develop online Domestic and Family Violence capacity-building training for community leaders
- Advocate for accessible critical public health information for cultural communities and record and send out messages around safety in multiple languages.

We also delivered a number of sessions to build community capacity in digital literacy and using platforms like Zoom. One of the greatest learnings during COVID-19 was how quickly communities adapted to new ways of communicating and participating. Cultural community leaders worked hard to develop skills around using new forms of technology and took on responsibility for ensuring that there were clear and accessible ways to share information with their community members. The necessity of moving to online forums meant that, for the first time, more leaders and community members were able to participate in forums that previously would not have been accessible.

However, this rapid move to digital communication also highlighted the disparities around access to the technology, devices and data required for many of our communities and their members. Particularly in the realm of education, many families struggled with the move to the online environment without the required devices or data to support their learning. This caused a great deal of stress and anxiety for many families, each committed to their children's education. As with many challenges during this period, whilst they were highlighted and exacerbated by COVID-19, they are ongoing issues that existed before the pandemic, and work must continue to ensure they are addressed.

Multicultural Australia acknowledges our critical partnership and collaboration with QPASTT that enabled this work and recognises the incredible commitment, courage and insights of the community leaders who worked tirelessly in the Community Leaders COVID-19 Working Group.

[Watch Project Nourish at Redbank Plains Community Centre during COVID-19.](#)





These were not easy times and community leaders have supported their communities in so many ways during the pandemic: sharing critical information and messages of support and working creatively to ensure community members could access the support and services they needed. They have been critical partners through this entire experience in keeping communities safe, connected and supported.

Our Redbank Plains Community Centre has operated throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to deliver essential support services via phone and in person. Our key service during this time was the Project Nourish program, which in partnership with OzHarvest provided 297 food hampers to vulnerable community members between April and June 2020.

## For the Organisation

As COVID-19 emerged, Multicultural Australia stood up a *Rapid Response COVID-19 Service Delivery Group* with senior staff meeting weekly to identify emerging issues and risks, and our organisational response. This group also provided ongoing support to our Human Resources and Workplace Health and Safety staff who developed a Reimagining the Workplace framework for Multicultural Australia that incorporated public health directives and restrictions into our workplace and service delivery policies and procedures.

To keep our people safe, we prioritised working from home where possible - while ensuring our offices were appropriately staffed (with COVID-safe practices in place) to remain accessible to clients.

Our Information and Communications Technology team mobilised rapidly to enable staff to work from home, while also responding to increased security and service demands. This included deploying a Mobile Device Management System, implementing a videoconferencing training initiative, and reviewing and updating our security features to mitigate new risks. Weekly communications to staff and cultural communities enabled the sharing of the latest information from National Cabinet and other public health advice, access to services and supports and emerging data and evidence related to local and global issues as a result of COVID-19.



Queensland's Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, met with the COVID-19 Community Leaders Working Group at the Brisbane Multicultural Centre and over Zoom.

# Key Performance Data

## Inclusive and Prosperous Communities

### Settlement



We supported over **6,500** refugees, migrants, people seeking asylum, international students and parents across our major client service programs.

**2,687**

refugees supported to settle in Queensland.

**589**

people seeking asylum supported.

**1,420** refugees and migrants supported in post-settlement transition and **90%** of our surveyed SETS clients reported that they were "very satisfied" with the services they had received through the SETS Program.

**463** international students accessing direct support services and **4,297** combined attendance at group sessions.



**100%** of our refugee clients were supported into stable, long-term accommodation and then into independent leases.

### Youth

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



**54** children supported to enrol in kindy.

**22** young people in our kinship care supported to thrive.



### Employment

**435** migrant youth supported with employment and community connections.

**1,400** parents with young children supported with their employment aspirations.

**48%** of clients accessing employment related support secured employment (more than double the national average of 21%).

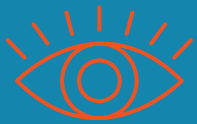




## Changing the Conversation

**An estimated 10,000+**

people attended the MOSAIC Multicultural Festival and 96% of surveyed participants said the festival successfully promoted cultural diversity and inclusion for Queensland.



Our virtual World Refugee Day Concert was viewed over **4,500 times**.

**28,000** newly arrived and local Queenslanders participated in 32 cultural connection activities

**50%** growth in social media followers.

**\$835,000** (+39%) in grants and funding secured for community projects and events.



**17** Welcome Hubs across Brisbane in partnership with local community centres, with over 3,000 people participating in cultural connection events.

**\$27,000** in sports subsidies offered to new Queenslanders to access local sporting clubs.

**\$1.113m** in federal funding for Welcome Sports to drive sports inclusion across South East Queensland.

**5,025** people including 2,411 school students saw The Neighbourhood theatre production highlighting the stories of diverse Queenslanders finding belonging and inclusion.

**7,647** visits to our Redbank Plains Community Centre (+10%)



## Keeping Fit for the Future

**\$48.3m** in revenue (+16%)



**2.78:1** asset to liability ratio.

HSQF Certified - Human Services Quality Framework Certification (Queensland Government)

ISO9001:21015 Quality Management Standard

**202** FTE staff from 65 cultural backgrounds, speaking 83 languages.



**89%** staff retention rate.

# Highlights



We launched 4 Youth Hubs in Inala, Redbank Plains and Toowoomba to support the social and economic inclusion of young refugees and migrants.

We established our LGBTIQ+ Working Group to support clients, communities and colleagues on issues affecting people who identify as LGBTIQ+.



We transformed our major events into Virtual Events, reaching over 238,000 people online with 95,000+ video views across social media.

We successfully tendered to deliver our Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minor program for another 5-8 years and expand our service into Central and Southern Queensland.



We successfully adapted our service delivery through COVID-19, supporting our clients and communities through this crisis.



We partnered with Hutton & Hutton Inner East to receive direct donations for community benefit from the commission each referred sale or property management.







We kept our communities connected through COVID-19 with the Culture of Connection digital campaign, featuring 37 stories of hope and resilience. Campaign videos were viewed 287,835 times.



We welcomed 45 new Australians in a Citizenship Ceremony as part of the AFL Multicultural Round.



Our social media following grew by over 50%.

Our Tucker Time program delivered with Skilling Queenslanders for Work funding was a regional winner of the Community Training Initiative at in the Queensland Training Awards.

We piloted a successful Career Mentoring Pilot - Shape your Future with the Queensland Government, Suncorp, Randstad, Deloitte and Australian Red Cross to connect refugee and migrant jobseekers with professionals in their chosen field of work.



We secured \$1.113 million to drive sports inclusion across South East Queensland with Welcome Sports.



**Strategic Pillar**

# Inclusive and prosperous communities

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



## Settlement Success



## Prosperity



## Collaborative Communities



# 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 voices.

## Humanitarian Settlement Program

The Humanitarian Settlement Program (HSP) provides connection and support to humanitarian entrants to foster the skills and knowledge they require to become independent and contributing members of the Queensland community.

Multicultural Australia has a key focus on foundational life skill development in the areas of employment, education and training, housing, physical and mental health and well-being, managing money, community participation and networking, family functioning and social support, justice, and the English language to support clients through a successful settlement journey. Multicultural Australia acknowledges that independent and individual application of these foundational life skills significantly contributes to positive settlement outcomes as clients are able to engage with services and the broader Queensland community.

Through collaboration with clients and other stakeholders, HSP Case Managers develop an individualised, holistic case management plan that delivers a package of tailored services to clients from their date of entry in Australia, up to 18 months post-arrival.

These services can include:

- an orientation program that works to build knowledge of Australian values, culture and way of life
- assistance to source long-term stable accommodation and build tenancy knowledge
- support to access mainstream services, including health and family support services
- specialised services that cater to the needs of vulnerable clients, such as domestic violence and legal matters
- connections to local community groups and activities
- support to register with the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) and educational and training institutions

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Multicultural Australia was identified as the lead service provider across all HSP service providers in the Jan-June 2019-2020 DHA report, achieving all our KPI targets:

**96%** of clients aged 15 years and older achieved key outcomes of the 'application' level of orientation **within 12 months of arrival.**

**79%** of clients aged 15 years and older achieved key outcomes of the 'knowledge' level of orientation **within seven months of arrival.**

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- assistance to access aged care, health and disability services (NDIA and NDIS providers)
- support to access mental health services to address trauma needs
- advocacy support to address systemic barriers in accessing services
- assistance to engage with employment services, implement employment strategies and access support services for establishing a business
- in school support via a place-based case management service.

The annual client satisfaction survey found 95% of respondents were satisfied with the service they received from Multicultural Australia, 97% of respondents were better able to deal with settlement issues that they had sought help with and 96% felt that Multicultural Australia had listened and understood their issues.

The Humanitarian Settlement Program is funded by the Department of Home Affairs.

We work with the Department of Social Services, Department of Home Affairs (DHA), TAFE, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT), Refugee and Asylum Seeker Immigration Legal Service (RAILS), World Wellness Group, Queensland Health, St Vincent De Paul, DHAs Specialised and Intensive Services and Education Queensland to support the delivery of the Humanitarian Settlement Program.

We subcontract to the Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG) and Centacare (Cairns) to settle newly arrived refugees in Townsville and Cairns.

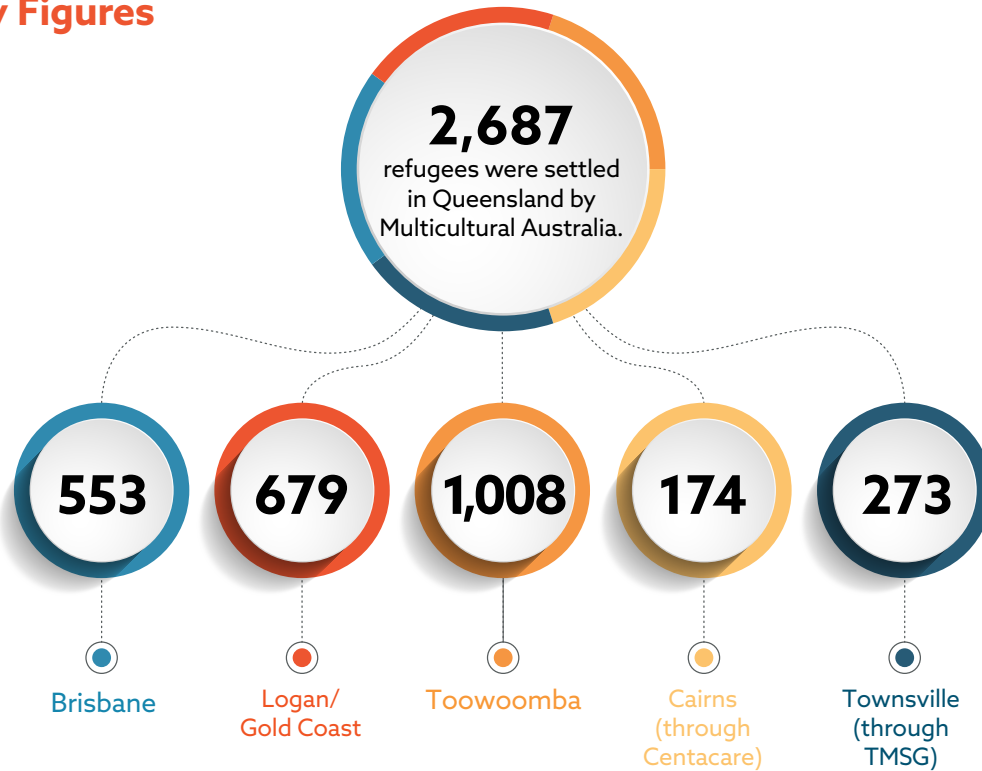


## Aimee achieving her dreams...

Aimee Mukarugira arrived to Brisbane from Rwanda with her mother on 29th July 2019. Aimee's dream was to become a nurse and help the community. Her Case Manager Misheel and Employment Team supported Aimee to enrol and complete certificate courses in pathology and individual support, and to create links with potential employers and partners. With ongoing support and Aimee's determination, she is now enrolled in Diploma of Nursing at South Bank TAFE. She is very excited and about being on the path to her dream career.



## HSP Key Figures



contact hours provided with clients by Multicultural Australia.

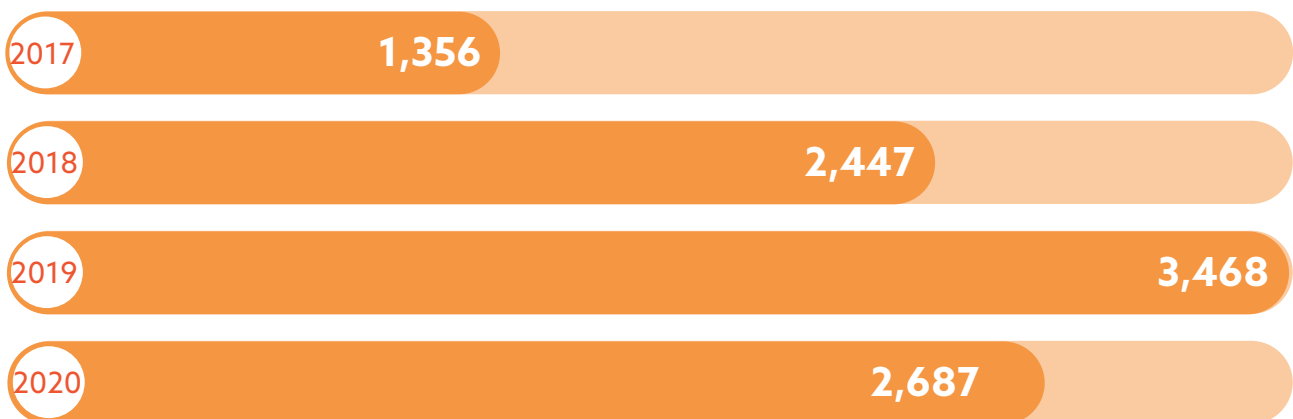


of clients assisted into long-term accommodation.



of clients supported in independent leases following Multicultural Australia support.

## Refugees welcomed into Queensland from 2017-2020



# Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors Program

Since 2014, Multicultural Australia has been funded by the Department of Home Affairs to deliver services to Unaccompanied Humanitarian Minors (UHMs) residing in Queensland's Greater Brisbane and Gold Coast regions.

In 2020, Multicultural Australia successfully tendered to continue providing these services in Queensland for the next five to eight years, and for the ability to expand services upon referral to Central and Southern Queensland. Multicultural Australia received their first referrals for the Toowoomba contract region in late February.

Multicultural Australia's UHM Program exists to promote wellbeing, independence, belonging and quality of life for unaccompanied humanitarian minors. We deliver culturally-appropriate support to children and young people in a manner that nurtures aspirations, promotes independent living skills, inspires active citizenship and supports connection with family, peers and communities.

An unaccompanied minor is a refugee child or young person under the age of eighteen who enters Australia without a parent or legal guardian. If the unaccompanied minor arrives alone or in the care of an unrelated adult, the Minister becomes their legal guardian. Young people eligible for services under the UHM program are referred to Multicultural Australia by the Department of Home Affairs.

Young people in the UHM Program are supported in either a residential care setting or with a community-based custodian or carer approved by the Department. Multicultural Australia is an accredited out-of-home care provider for the UHM Program and is delegated custodial responsibility of young people in the residential care model.

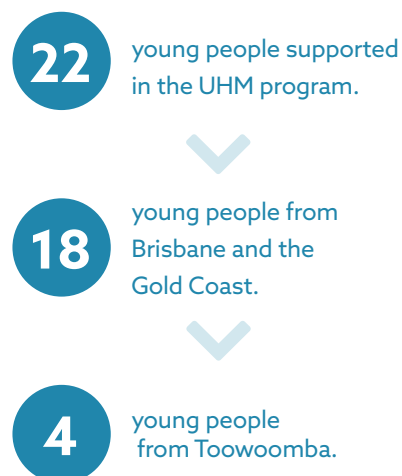
In addition to providing basic care needs, we support our UHM clients to build and maintain positive relationships with each other and staff, to develop important life skills, to access education and training opportunities. And, equally importantly, to have fun.

In 2020 our young people attended the Jellurgal Aboriginal Cultural Centre based at Burleigh Head National Park on the Gold Coast.

They participated in a guided walk around the "Dreaming Mountain" Jellurgal, and learnt about culturally significant sites that have played an important role in the lives of Aboriginal people. Learning about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures allows young people to develop respect for diversity and understanding of cultural differences, and also provides the UHM young people with a rich and well-rounded knowledge of Australia's First Nation's history.

The best interests of UHM young people remain paramount in all aspects of our service delivery. Multicultural Australia isn't satisfied to simply meet the care and welfare needs of UHM young people; we exist to create opportunities for people to thrive.

## In 2020





In 2020, Multicultural Australia successfully tendered to continue providing UHM services in Queensland for the next 5-8 years.

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Enabling the healing and potential of young people

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Sam\* exited the UHM program in January 2019. She had arrived in Australia with no prior education and was illiterate in the three languages she spoke. Leading up to her transition from the UHM program she experienced significant grief and loss and was referred to Multicultural Australia's HSP Tier 3 program and the Migrant Youth Vision Project. During Sam's engagement with these services, she accepted referrals to external services, including Brisbane Youth Service, Volunteer Refugee Tutoring & Community Support (VoRTCS), youth employment and in-home parenting support. These services provided opportunities for Sam to develop self-confidence, improve her parenting practices and increase her social networks.

Through the Migrant Youth Vision Project, Sam was trained at Multicultural Australia's Welcome Café, gaining valuable experience and skills in customer service, barista training and job readiness. She developed her self-esteem and experience, going on to obtain a paid job placement at the Villa Nova College where she continues to learn and develop valuable skills in the library, tuck shop and café.

Through ongoing support and access to these services, Sam's mental wellbeing improved significantly. Her success story illustrates the value of the holistic 'wrap-around' support services provided by Multicultural Australia in meeting clients' needs as they progress through their settlement journey.



# Settlement Engagement and Transition Support Program

Multicultural Australia's Settlement Engagement and Transition Support program (SETS) aims to support the lifelong settlement of recently arrived Queenslanders from refugee and migrant backgrounds, with a focus on building independence, economic stability and creating community connections.

We offer an intake service, ongoing case management support and group sessions, and deliver school outreach services through our SETS Youth program. We have a collaborative approach, with a focus on community consultation work to build strong links with stakeholders and fellow SETS providers.

The SETS program is funded by the Department of Home Affairs.

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"I didn't know where to go to find an answer to my problem. My case manager helped me to find the right service to help me."

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"I feel like I am less alone in the community now and have made some friends."

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## In 2020

Multicultural Australia's SETS program supported 1420 recently arrived refugees and migrants in Queensland across 20 different visa streams, from 44 different cultures speaking 55 different languages.

8

schools provided outreach for their students.

776

SETS Client Satisfaction Surveys

24

group work activities facilitated.

90%

of those surveyed reporting that they were "very satisfied" with the services they had received

4658

referrals connecting clients to support services.

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# Community Support Program

The Community Support Program (CSP) is a program by the Department of Home Affairs that provides an opportunity for community members to sponsor humanitarian applicants to settle in Australia.

The CSP most often sees relatives or friends of applicants willing to meet the financial, settlement and practical requirements of the program and provide assurance of support for the first 12 months of an applicant's settlement.

As an Approved Proposing Organisation (APO) since March 2018, Multicultural Australia assists individuals to ensure they are able to meet all the requirements to sponsor humanitarian applicants under the CSP. This is a significant commitment and takes several months to process.

This includes:

- initial assessment of eligibility
- referrals to migration agents
- supporting sponsors to gather required evidence, documents and employment offers for applicants
- form filling support
- communication and assessment with applicants overseas
- final checks and preparations for travel upon Visa Grant
- settlement support on arrival.

Multicultural Australia also sub-contracts to Refugee & Immigration Legal Service (RAILS) and Hardy Lawyers to provide specialised migration advice regarding applicants' humanitarian claims, and to prepare and lodge visa applications.

Visa Grants have been temporarily suspended due to the impact of COVID-19 and travel restrictions. CSP continues to work with Australian supporters/sponsors to prepare and lodge visa applications, however those cases will not progress to the interview stage until COVID-19 restrictions are lifted - not only in Australia, but also at the applicants' current location overseas and the respective Australian Embassies processing those visa applications.

## In 2020

Multicultural Australia welcomed the first 5 CSP entrants in Queensland.

174

community enquiries responded to.

50+

formal EOI's.

7

new visa applications were lodged.

15

CSP applicants were interviewed.

1

adult applicant was granted a visa in February 2020.



# Status Resolution Support Services

Our Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) team provides crucial support to people seeking asylum while their refugee status is being resolved. Multicultural Australia helps people build independence, and supports them to feel welcomed in their communities.

We connect needs-based services to individuals and families, increasing their capacity to independently access medical services, employment, education and meaningful engagement activities. Our focus is ensuring that clients understand their rights and responsibilities and are able to not only have their basic needs met, but to live well and explore their aspirations whilst they resolve their visa status.

Many people in the SRSS program seeking asylum have experienced past trauma and also encountered protracted periods of having their protection claims assessed.

The SRSS team has a strong cultural framework and service model that focuses on the individual and family's particular support needs and in assisting them towards meeting their goals. We aim to serve people seeking asylum to live well in their communities, increasing access to economic and social participation.

To be eligible to receive SRSS services there are significant criteria to be met and steps to be taken in the application process - which highlights the outstanding result whereby 55 new clients were supported through the application process and into the program for crucial supports.

Multicultural Australia also actively supports many clients seeking asylum to link to employment opportunities, which are particularly critical given limited access to alternative income support measures. One example was an SRSS client that obtained a Work & Welcome placement with St Laurence's College. From this placement he was offered further work at the school, eventually exiting the program into independence.

The SRSS program is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Home Affairs.



# Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program

The Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program (ASRA) is delivered in collaboration with other key organisations providing specialised support services, including emergency relief, employment support, case management, health services, legal support and counselling, to vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers.

The ASRA consortium is led by Communitify and includes Australian Red Cross, Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma (QPASTT), Refugee and Asylum Seeker Legal Service (RAILS), World Wellness Group and Mercy Family Services.

Multicultural Australia's ASRA team provides case coordination to vulnerable people seeking asylum who are holders of Temporary Protection Visas (TPV) and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV). Multicultural Australia facilitates referrals to appropriate services and builds capacity to independently access supports and increase social participation.

We work collaboratively with ASRA consortium partners to holistically meet client needs and assist them in developing independence. This is delivered through accessing emergency relief, developing capacity to secure meaningful employment, creating opportunities to engage in education and training, increasing engagement in meaningful activities and accessing physical and mental health supports.

Holders of Temporary Protection Visas and Safe Haven Enterprise Visas often experience barriers to successful settlement including disability, complex health needs, low levels of English literacy and/or a history of trauma. While this group have been granted temporary visas there is still uncertainty about the future of their residency status – and as a result of their visa status, their eligibility to services is limited. The ASRA team aims to create a sense of belonging and wellbeing through increasing social and economic participation delivered through a cultural framework. Through the program, we have supported clients experiencing homelessness to find accommodation, supported clients with complex health needs to access health services, and we have supported clients to access paid employment and explore small business opportunities. This support has resulted in increased mental health and decreased financial stress for ASRA clients.

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## In 2020

211

clients were supported through the ASRA program.

The Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance Program is funded by Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs.

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## Post-SRSS

The 'Post-SRSS' Program supports people seeking asylum that are exited from the SRSS program and are 'Finally Determined' in their visa status, linking them towards viable support pathways in the community.

The Post-SRSS program functions along with the network of other service organisations in the community that are providing support for people seeking asylum on a negative visa pathway.

The Post-SRSS program is supported by the ASRA program and consortium partners, Multicultural Australia's volunteers, OzHarvest food donations, Hillsong Church, Kingston Neighbourhood Centre, YFS Logan and other charity organisations. Service delivery in this extremely challenging environment involves committed stakeholder collaboration, strong advocacy and creative skills.

This service does not receive any funding and is provided by Multicultural Australia to meet an identified gap for the essential support of our ex-SRSS clients.

Given people allocated to this program face destitution, including the inability to meet basic needs and source income and are frequently at risk of homelessness, this support is essential to the dignity, safety and wellbeing of these clients.



# International Students

To support international students in Brisbane, Multicultural Australia operate the Brisbane Student Hub, with staff also delivering student and career support services at the Gold Coast Student Hub.

The Brisbane Student Hub (BSH) offers free and independent information and support services. Students access confidential case management services, skill-building workshops, mentoring, events, volunteering and employment support. The BSH services are offered onsite at the Brisbane Multicultural Centre, with mobile services also conducted at the Brisbane Square Library.

BSH has consistently exceeded KPIs provided by funding bodies. While employment outcomes are not a part of BSH's KPIs, we identified this as a client need and were instrumental in enabling students to be employment ready, conducting 343 appointments focused on employment support. BSH also delivered 15+ employment-related workshops, with event attendance averaging at 40 students, providing avenues for participants to feel welcome and participate in workshops that focus on developing their language, personal and professional skills.

BSH team also initiated a Women's Circle Workshop this year, providing information and advice to female international students in a safe, welcoming and confidential forum. BSH staff were also invited to present on "Staying 'mentally' healthy and building your resilience" at Study Queensland's International Student Leaders Forum, which was attended by international students from all over Queensland.

Due to the quality of service and demand for our services at the Gold Coast Student Hub, service delivery increased from one day per week to three days per week. With the onset of the pandemic, the International Students Program was funded to provide support services five days per week from April 2020 onwards.

The Brisbane Student Hub is a partnership between Multicultural Australia, Study Queensland and Study Brisbane.



## In 2020

463

students supported in 1-to-1 appointments at the Brisbane and Gold Coast Student Hubs.

1,719

students attended our workshops and events. Top reasons students accessed support include employment support, resume writing, wellbeing support and navigating systems

23

events attended to promote our services to students.

92

students were connected with opportunities to volunteer at events and community organisations.

36

mobile hub support services provided through the Brisbane Square Library.

65

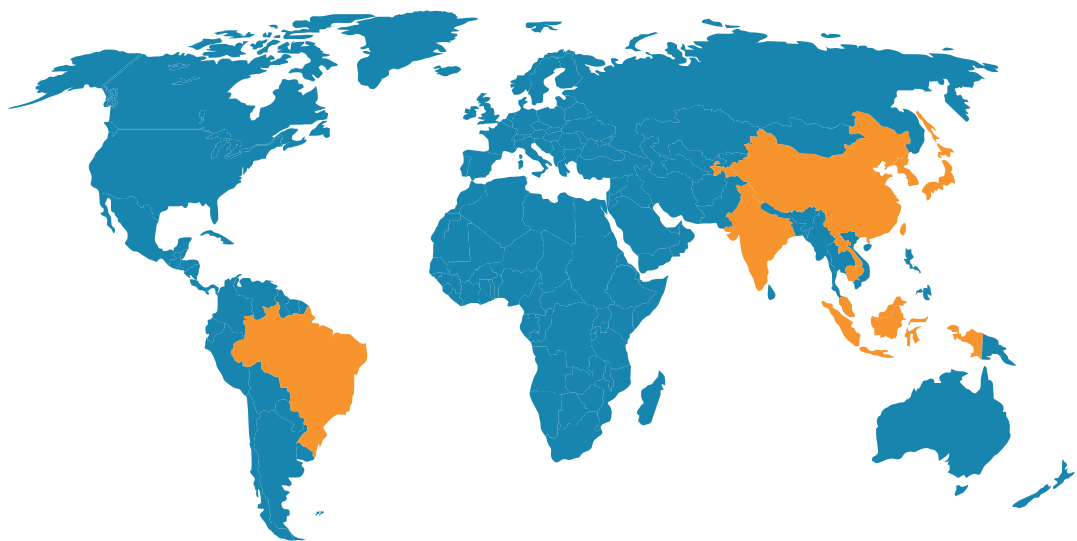
workshops run on topics including Australian Culture and Orientation, Rights and Responsibilities, English Conversation Classes and Study Needs.

95+

nationalities recorded in students that BSH engaged with through appointments, workshops and events.

## Top 10:

Colombia  
China  
Korea  
Brazil  
Japan  
India  
Taiwan  
Indonesia  
Malaysia  
Nepal





# Prosperity

We recognise that meaningful work is a critical factor in settlement success. Multicultural Australia will develop potent employment strategies that 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.

## Employment Services

Multicultural Australia's Employment Services provide job readiness support and employment outcomes for our diverse clients. We also work with Employer Partners to help them recognise and realise the many benefits gained by engaging a diverse multicultural workforce.

Our delivery model is a person-centred approach. We spend time understanding candidate needs, then support their progress towards gaining the skills required to secure employment, as well as identifying specific opportunities and supporting clients as they apply and commence employment.

We support every one of our clients with preparation for employment, training and upskilling and understanding the job market. Many attend multiple sessions with the team. Our clients have gained skills and knowledge from a wide range of formal and informal upskilling programs run by both Multicultural Australia and our partner organisations. Our clients have a better understanding of the job market, how to access these opportunities and present themselves optimally.

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## In 2020

**331** clients were referred to Employment Services.

**160** were supported into employment outcomes.

These outcomes occurred through a number of channels, including:

- Work & Welcome Schools
- Work & Welcome Corporate
- Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW), in partnership with the Department for Employment Small Business and Training
- Corporate Employer Partners

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We placed 28 clients in paid work experience through our Work & Welcome program, across 22 host organisations.

**66** employment outcomes through our Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.

**130** clients graduated Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.

**182** clients were in job readiness training.

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Multicultural Australia's Employment Services team works with our partners to ensure our clients are well prepared to find and secure employment. Our partners include TAFE Queensland, Red Cross, Communitify, Charlton Brown, Core Industries, and the Caboolture Historical Village.

In 2019 we formed a partnership with Refugee Talent to support development and implementation of a candidate management and opportunity-matching technology

platform. The system allows clients to enter their demographic data, aspirations and employment history, enabling the Employment team to match candidates with opportunities and identify emerging support needs through data analysis. In the future, job opportunities will be entered into the platform, enabling clients to directly apply. Our first clients commenced using Refugee Talent in May 2020.

We also continued to embed Results Based Accountability in our employment program to define our employment service and the optimal way to measure our impact, both at a macro (Queensland) and micro (client engagement and outcomes) level. Leveraging the Paret Principle, we have defined our 'vital few' measures and will roll these out in the second half of 2020. This will help us ensure all aspects of our service delivery are aligned with our client-focused purpose.

## Rockhampton's Tucker Time program earns regional training gong.

Our Tucker Time program delivered with Skilling Queenslanders for Work funding was a regional winner of the Community Training Initiative in the Queensland Training Awards.

The program, which has been in operation for several years, saw 13 trainees in the latest intake, each working toward a Certificate I in Hospitality while gaining paid work experience and training.

Multicultural Australia teamed up with the Second Bite organisation which helped Tucker Time to collect leftover food from such retailers as Coles, Aldi and Nandos.

The trainees accessed the kitchens at Salvation Army to transform ingredients into wholesome and well-presented meals, which were donated to people in need.

Multicultural Australia also worked with the Rockhampton Regional Council to provide workshops to the public on reducing food wastage.



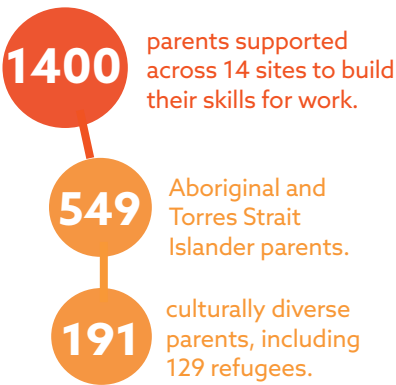
Queensland  
**Training  
AWARDS  
2020**

Regional  
**Winner**

# ParentsNext

The ParentsNext initiative assists families receiving a parenting payment with children between the ages of 6 months and 6 years to prepare for future employment.

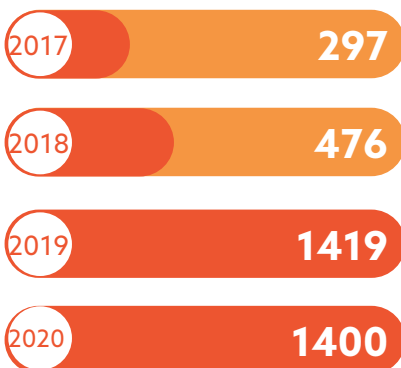
## In 2020



## We purchased \$550,903

in services for our participants

## ParentsNext Client Numbers since 2017



ParentsNext helps parents set positive goals for their future, build confidence and life skills, learn to drive, engage in education and training, and develop employability skills.

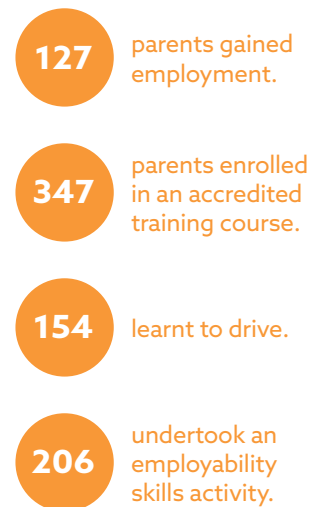
Parents in the program meet with us regularly to make plans for their future and decide on activities to move towards their goals. We are able to fund their educational developmental activities and support them with referrals to build resilience and life skills.

We deliver ParentsNext at 14 sites across Fitzroy, Townsville and the Darling Downs. In 2019/2020, all three regions exceeded the national average for parents who increased their work readiness scores within the program.

Due to COVID-19, in April 2020 all face-to-face contact with our parents was suspended by our funder, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment, and was replaced by phone support. Because of this we were no longer able to run our job readiness workshops and training had to be moved to an online platform. While engagement in the program was not compulsory, we telephoned our participants monthly and have launched an online training portal where parents can access our workbooks, custom training, and a curated collection of industry-relevant training from a wide range of providers.

ParentsNext is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

Though immediate employment is not the goal of the program,





# Migrant Youth Vision Project

The purpose of the Migrant Youth Vision Project (MYVP) is to support migrant and refugee youth aged 15 - 24 that have been in Australia five years or less into meaningful employment, training, education and sport outcomes, by way of group work, individual support and group activities designed to build social and peer networks.

We deliver this program in a partnership model with support from the Australian Catholic University, Milpera State High School, Welcome Sports, Randstad, Deloitte, Suncorp, the State Library of Queensland and Inala PCYC.

We provide one-on-one support, group activities, sporting competitions, industry information sessions and regular drop-in sessions across our offices, as well as online engagement through Facebook Live, videos and Zoom.

Our work experience program with Milpera State High School has provided students with employment and training pathways. Across an eight-week program, students attend our Welcome Café where they learn basic hospitality, barista and customer service skills while also getting an understanding of Australian workplace culture.

As a positive outcome of COVID-19, we have upskilled a large number of clients in how to use social media and Zoom, and how to engage with stakeholders online. As a result, this has also helped our case managers to service clients across the entire greater Brisbane area.

Through online engagement we have been able to service and support clients that previously may not have been able to access our services due to geographic barriers.

Despite the impact of COVID-19 on the community and various employment sectors, the MYVP was still able to meet and exceed all employment targets, successfully helping place over 100 young people into paid employment during a challenging time.

48% of our clients have been surveyed, with 87% of respondents agreeing that our service has listened and understood their issues, 85% that they are satisfied with the services they have received and 80% agreeing that they are better able to deal with the issues they sought help with.

The Migrant Youth Vision Project is funded by the Department of Home Affairs.

## In 2020

435

clients were supported at one-to-one and group activities, from

36

different countries, and speaking

42

different languages

107

clients obtained paid employment outcomes.

217

clients participated in job readiness training.

303

clients were supported into educational opportunities.

191

clients were supported into vocational opportunities.

66

obtained work experience.

211

attended sports and peer engagement activities.

# Youth Hubs

Our Youth Hubs are a pilot program that commenced in January 2020 to support refugees and migrants aged 12-21 years in areas of high social disadvantage, high migrant population or both, to prepare for employment, education and training - and to support their social integration and participation.

Since the program began in January 2020, we have engaged **466** young people across both one-to-one and group support.

**150** young people accessed job readiness training.

**150** young people were supported into educational or vocational opportunities.

The delivery of the program has been through a collaborative approach with our community and educational stakeholders through four locations:

- Inala PCYC with outreach to Glenala State High School
- Redbank Plains Community Centre with outreach to Redbank State High School
- Toowoomba Multicultural Australia Youth Hub
- Toowoomba State High School

The Youth Hub Pilot has enabled Multicultural Australia to further its reach to support young migrants and refugees who have been in Australia for five years or more. Prior to this, our youth-specific programs have been limited to offering support to young people who have been in Australia five years or less.

The establishment of the Toowoomba Youth Hubs have been vital in providing a service (and safe space) for young refugee people in the community. Prior to the Pilot, Multicultural Australia did not have any specific programs running in the region to support the needs of young people. In June 2020 we offered a social connections program that saw young people from the Yazidi community paired with non-refugee individuals from the greater Toowoomba community to build their peer networks and employability skills through volunteering. The program provides shifts for the pairs to assist with the day-to-day operations of our hubs and events, and has allowed participants to actively connect, share and learn from each other. Participants have reported feeling more confident in their job search efforts and network building skills as the program has provided them with the necessary opportunities to build these skillsets.



The social connections program has had a positive impact in our Toowoomba Hubs. We have seen an increase in engagement from young people, and volunteering opportunities have supported them to expand their work experience and skills to obtain paid employment.

The Redbank and Inala Youth Hubs operate between 18-20 hours per week and our Toowoomba Hubs operate for a total of 44 hours per week across both locations. All hubs deliver support through drop-in and structured activities and events.

Group work has been delivered across the hubs for:

- School holiday activities
- Study support via Zoom
- Job readiness training
- English conversation classes
- Education and training information sessions
- Mental health and wellbeing sessions
- Career mentoring

Sports and recreational activities 62% of our clients have been surveyed, with 91% of respondents agreeing that our service has listened and understood their issues and 90% that they are satisfied with the services they have received.

The Youth Hubs are funded by the Department of Home Affairs and with in-kind support from Queensland Program of Assistance to Survivors of Torture and Trauma, Multicultural Australia volunteers, Redbank Plains State High School, Glenala State High School, and Toowoomba State High School.





# Collaborative Communities

We 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.

## In 2020

We worked with 31 kindergartens and long day care kindergarten services

We delivered 6 professional development sessions to educators across Brisbane and Toowoomba

46

Community of Practice participants (educators) supported.

54

children supported to enrol in kindy in 2020.

## Early Childhood Refugee and Asylum Seeker Pilot

The Refugee and Asylum Seeker Early Childhood Pilot supports families and kindergarten services in targeted locations across South East Queensland to address barriers that children from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds may face in accessing and participating in kindergarten.

In 2020, Multicultural Australia delivered this as a Community of Practice model called "Welcome and Safe @ Kindy" - a learning journey to build educators' capacities to engage with and support families from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds.

This place-based initiative is designed to foster relationships and connections that provide cross-sector capacity building, and ongoing education beyond the scope of the pilot. Learning from the expertise of a variety of local partners, educators who are informed, compassionate, well-resourced and connected can ensure that kindy is a place of safety and even healing for families that have experienced the trauma of forced migration and resettlement.

Initially designed to be delivered locally and face-to-face, the COVID-19 pandemic required a complete pivot for the program to adopt predominantly online delivery. The revised offering is a hybrid model consisting of:

- A selection of hard copy resources sent via post (based on participant's preference)
- Online materials including videos, podcast, readings, graphics, a book of short stories and a 97-page Educator Handbook. These materials are used to share content with participants in a 'learn at your own pace' model
- Online live workshops using Zoom. These workshops unpack and extend on resources provided earlier, and are structured to provide participants with opportunities to engage directly with partners, community advisors and each other.
- A private Facebook group to facilitate access to and discussion regarding resources, articles and other provocations. Some "micro sessions" are offered as optional extras for educators who would like to unpack a particular topic or resource
- Phone calls and one-on-one discussion with individual educators. This is an essential strategy for counteracting the difficulty and distance of engaging in online mediums. In building trusting relationships with the facilitator, educators begin to feel safe within the online space and are able to become a group.

Despite the many challenges of creating safe space and building a well-functioning group in the online environment, there are many benefits to this model. Not only does it provide the capacity to engage more deeply and for longer with our resources and materials than would be possible in face-to-face sessions alone, it allows the flexibility to cater to different learning styles and preferences regarding dialogue.

The adaption to a hybrid of physical and online learning modalities aligns with necessary engagement of digital pedagogies. Initial benefits allow for a more focused, time-efficient and convenient model, which provides scope to extend future iterations of the program to a larger number of educators in a wider catchment.

Ongoing monitoring, evaluation and reflection is undertaken as each Community of Practice is delivered, to capture learnings and areas of improvement to further build cohesive online groups and enriching learning experiences.

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### Feedback from workshops:

“I have found that this has changed the thinking and teaching processes of educators. This has led to our teaching team providing more enriching and authentic practices with the children; and the children, as a result, are provided care by educators who understand the uniqueness of the rights and needs of the child whilst also understanding that it takes time to settle children from refugee backgrounds”

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## Outcomes have included:

- Improved capacity and capability of the workforce
- Bringing together the early childhood and refugee support sectors helped develop a greater understanding of each other's work
- Educators now have contacts in refugee support sectors and have networked with schools and members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Educators have had the opportunity to learn from each other's work and we see examples of this changing their practice
- Access to a formalised peer support network
- Opportunity to highlight and learn from best practice
- Provides an opportunity for sharing resources and problem solving shared issues.

These attributes have resulted in increased enrolment of refugee and asylum seeker children in early childhood centres, along with increased sector capacity to support this cohort of Queenslanders.

Feedback about the adjustment to the service delivery model to predominantly online have included positive responses to the flexibility and time efficiency of the Community of Practice sessions, along with opportunities to connect other stakeholders and support services.

Examples include:

- Facilitated connection with two high-quality, trauma-informed Occupational Therapists who are now working with C&K Childcare and Kindergarten to build capacity within their services and their practice leadership. This also led to the 'Sensory Smart Classrooms' project and development of new learning resources for C&K services.
- Ability to engage in research opportunities focused specifically on the Early Childhood Refugee and Asylum Seeker Pilot with Western Sydney University and Griffith Qld University. These research opportunities will enrich the sector with the current focus on evidence-based research to highlight the achievements of this pilot.

We have seen a number of outcomes that show the program is creating a positive impact for both educators and refugee and migrant families accessing kindy. In one instance, a teacher asked the group for feedback to build on learnings from the first session. The educators received quite explicit advice, which was put into practice and led to the educator completely reviewing and reprioritising their relationship with the refugee family. The child and family went from experiencing extreme separation difficulties to building trusting rapport with the educator.

The family is now teaching the educator some words in their language, and express a sense of belonging and connectedness through the shared challenge of learning new words. The outcome has resulted in an increased sense of safety, the child's separation is no longer an issue and he is happily engaged in the program. This highlights the improved capacity and capability of the service provider within the sector and growth of cross-sector relationship and knowledge building.

In another example, after learning about the various programs and supports available to families, one teacher contacted Multicultural Australia to refer a family for Specialised and Intensive Support. It is very encouraging to see teachers now appreciate not only the services available but the role they can play in families' resettlement journeys. This demonstrates a growing understanding of the framework of cultural humility and the importance of accessing relevant support services for refugee and asylum seeker families, ultimately increasing the likely uptake of children's participation and engagement in early childhood education.





# Redbank Plains Community Centre

The Redbank Plains Community Centre offers a range of programs and activities that are run through our staff, volunteers and partners.

In addition, we have a range of service providers doing outreach to the community to deliver key services (e.g. West Moreton Health, UnitingCare Financial Counselling, PCYC Braking the Cycle, NDIS providers, Youth Justice conferences).

With Ipswich City Council, we have been conducting a longitudinal Social Impact Assessment on the Centre. Notable findings from the 12-month report include:

- For those people engaging with the Community Centre, there have been improvements in sentiment around social cohesion, sense of welcome, and cross-cultural connections.

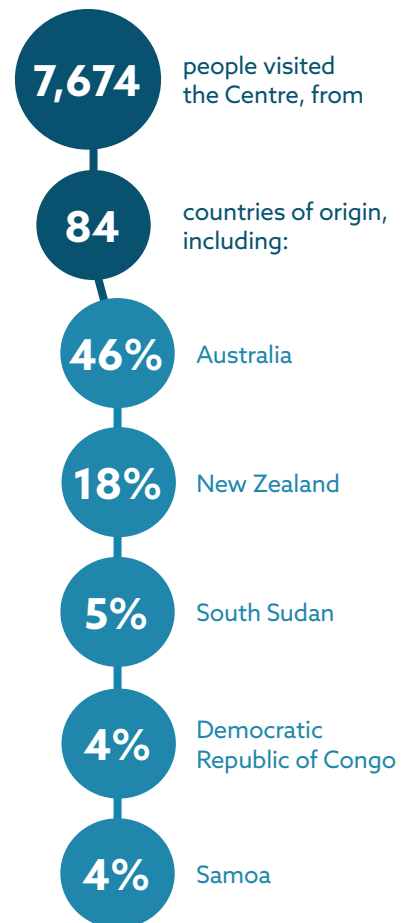
- Rapid development is impacting the community in diverse ways, with many people noting the strengths of increasing diversity, and others feeling that infrastructure is not keeping pace.
- There are persistent issues in Redbank Plains around access to public transport, feelings of safety, mental health, and economic challenges around employment and food security.

The Redbank Plains Community Centre is filling essential service gaps in the community, and providing a space of welcome for many.

Redbank Plains Community Centre is a partnership with Ipswich City Council. We have a shared vision of a Centre that is welcoming, safe and inclusive for all; and a space that engages and responds to the region to positively impact diverse local communities.

## In 2020

We had a team of 29 volunteers from 14 different countries of origin, aged 19 to 98 years.



## Redbank Plains Community Centre Annual Visitors since we opened in May 2018



29 volunteers from 14 countries of origin, aged 19 to 98 supported the Centre's work.

42% of our visitors are under the 25 years of age.

## FutureFIT - Fostering Independence Together

The Redbank Plains Community Centre identified several barriers for local residents to obtain employment including, but not limited to; access to computers, computer literacy, resume and cover letter writing skills and proficiency with the English language. Through the Department of Home Affairs' Fostering Integration Grant the Centre was able to build capacity in a team of local volunteers to deliver our FutureFIT program.

Over 12 months, 375 people directly participated in the program, which included workplace English, information sessions, job readiness training and an employment and training expo, and our FutureFIT drop-in space to assist in job search, resume and cover letter writing and computer literacy.





# Toowoomba - a region of welcome

Multicultural Australia has been settling newcomers in Toowoomba since 2011. More recently, over 1,500 Yazidi people have settled in Toowoomba after fleeing genocide in Iraq.

## Yazidi Genocide Commemoration

Toowoomba residents joined the local Yazidi community on 3 August 2019 to honour and support the victims of the 2014 Yazidi genocide, which claimed the lives of thousands and resulted in approximately 500,000 refugees.

Around 1500 people attended the Toowoomba commemoration, giving a powerful message of solidarity and support for the new and emerging Yazidi community.

Multicultural Australia supported the event to give Queenslanders an opportunity to acknowledge this traumatic history, to stand in solidarity with their Yazidi neighbours and to foster further understanding and inclusion for the Yazidi community.

## Culturally-appropriate healthcare

In partnership with the Primary Health Network (PHN), Multicultural Australia has set out to improve engagement and collaboration with General Medical Practices in relation to the provision of primary health care for refugees.

Through this funding, Multicultural Australia has successfully facilitated the development of culturally appropriate resources in language for navigation of local health services. This encompassed supporting capacity-building of primary health care providers throughout Toowoomba to engage effectively with refugees; and to support refugees in developing a better understanding of health services in the region.

As a result, Toowoomba has seen an increase in the number of medical and allied health practices supporting refugees.



## Toowoomba Languages and Cultural Festival

Multicultural Australia continued to support the annual Toowoomba Languages and Cultural Festival, an initiative of the Toowoomba International Multicultural Society with support from the Toowoomba Regional Council, Multicultural Affairs Queensland and the University of Southern Queensland.

The iconic festival appropriately themed 'One World Many Faces', enabled the Toowoomba community to enjoy the vibrant diversity of the region, learning about the cultural groups, languages, traditions, food, art and culture from the many cultural communities that call Toowoomba home.

Multicultural Australia supported the Afghan community in selling their traditional baked goods, curries and finger foods; and the Ethiopian community in showcasing a traditional Ethiopian coffee ceremony.

Multicultural Australia also hosted two Bell Tents, where every hour festival goers experienced a 'know your neighbour' event to learn about the many cultures living in the community whilst enjoying the various, foods, drinks and music customary to that culture.



**Multicultural Australia supports community microenterprise at the Toowoomba Languages and Cultural Festival.**

# Community Development

The Community Development team works with Queensland's local communities, including our culturally diverse communities, to welcome new Queenslanders.

We do this through collaborating on events and activities that bring people together across cultures in their local community to learn new skills, new perspectives and to create new connections.

Working collectively with cultural communities and community leaders, we identify shared challenges and aspirations, and find collaborative solutions and opportunities. We identify, enhance and learn from their existing capacities and strengths, and provide support through the Community Funding Access program to plan for and access the potential funding resources they need to achieve their aspirations.

We run a cultural conversations program with our partner network of neighbourhood Welcome Hubs. Over the past year we have worked collaboratively with 17 Welcome Hubs and local communities to deliver 25 activities that promote connection and understanding between community members of diverse cultures. Across these events, over 3000 people from more than 45 cultures have participated.

In the first half of the 2019/20 financial year, Community Development approaches were about bringing people together in face-to-face forums to build engagement and relationships.

This was done through face-to-face 'cultural conversations' across a range of cultures, and included opportunities for new Queenslanders to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and communities, achieved through the preparation and sharing of community meals, local community celebrations and skills and employment expos, among other initiatives

Since COVID-19, we have delivered seven cultural conversations via social media, which were viewed by more than 25,000 people. We worked collaboratively with QPASTT and the Community Leaders COVID-19 Working Group to deliver community forums and training programs in response to COVID-19, attended by more than 250 community leaders and community members.

## In 2020

28,000

newly arrived and local Queenslanders engaged in cultural connection activities (online and face to face).

We supported communities to access over **\$835,000** in grants and funding for community events, activities and projects





We ran digital technology and Zoom training sessions with more than 35 community leaders, and ran 15 workshops for 419 people for accessing financial and capital support during COVID for individuals, families, communities and small businesses. As a result, we have supported communities in accessing over \$835,000 in grants and funding to support their community events, activities and projects.

Our Community Funding Program is funded by the Community Action for a Multicultural Society (CAMS) initiative by the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs (DLGRMA).

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### **Community Feedback**

I was new in Brisbane and you helped me connect with my community during COVID-19.

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I was so isolated and my connection to my community helped me a lot with my mental health.

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Thank you so much we were feeling so lonely and on our own - I can't believe how happy we feel.

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**Community members make lanterns for LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood.**

## Strategic Pillar

# Changing the Conversation

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



**Impact and Influence**



**Community of Interest**



**Valuing Partnerships**

# Impact and Influence

Multicultural Australia will strive for impact and aim to be a voice of influence to advance multiculturalism. Our work will use the best evidence and our impact will be measurable, 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. Our goal is to help effect humane multicultural policies.

## Statewide Stakeholder Collaboration

Our Settlement Leadership Team leads our service delivery stakeholder engagement across the state, operating place-based Local Area Collaboratives to support the Humanitarian Settlement Program. These collaborative forums are held on a tri-monthly basis in Cairns, Townsville, Toowoomba, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Ipswich and Logan, and work towards local and systemic support and advocacy for migrant and refugee communities.

Our Results Based Accountability methodology is employed to encourage evidence-based and outcomes-focused practice and collaboration.

Outcomes from these collaboratives inform briefings to the Queensland Government about settlement and sector issues in Queensland. Historically, these briefings have been a useful advocacy tool for national impact surrounding employment for migrants and refugees. The next briefing will cover issues that have emerged through COVID-19, including highlighting state-wide inequalities surrounding digital literacy, access and enablement for vulnerable migrant and refugee communities.

## Supporting Research

Multicultural Australia's Settlement Leadership Team supported a number of research projects including an ARC Linkage Research Grant 'Settlement experiences of recently arrived refugees from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan in Queensland' where Multicultural Australia is an industry partner, and 'Knowledge translation to support early learning of refugee children and families' where Multicultural Australia is a partner in the project funded by the Ian Potter Foundation and Western Sydney University.

## In 2020



## Feedback from the LAC

"That was the best LAC I have ever been to. It was so positive, collaborative and supportive. It really shone a light on the wonderful work being done in Cairns"



## Practice Leadership

This year, our focus was on adapting our practice to respond to COVID-19, both organisationally and in meeting the needs of our communities and clients.

Our Settlement Leadership team liaised with key stakeholders across the state and provided briefs on current and emerging issues to the Executive team and staff. Through this work, we were able to support and advocate for vulnerable refugee communities during COVID-19, particularly in the areas of health and education. Some outcomes from our advocacy and sector collaboration have resulted in schools adapting to support refugee and migrant communities as well as health services liaising closely with community to ensure vulnerable migrant communities are supported. An ultimate outcome of this collaboration is that, to date, no individual supported by Multicultural Australia has contracted COVID-19.

Approximately 90% of staff either agreed or strongly agreed that the training promoted/provided by our settlement leadership team was a valuable use of their time.

## Growing our inclusive practice with the LGBTIQ+ Working Group

In 2020 a group of staff established the Multicultural Australia LGBTIQ+ Working Group to support clients, communities and colleagues on issues affecting people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

The Working Group offers conversation, education and support for practitioners to ensure that we can support clients appropriately at a service level, as well as advocate for equal rights and fair treatment at a systemic level.

The Working Group is working towards the Rainbow Tick, which recognizes organisations that are committed to safe and inclusive practice and service delivery for lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex and transgender people.

[Watch the LGBTIQ+ Working Group Launch Video.](#)

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“Diversity is where all the good stuff happens. It’s where we can learn from others and enrich our experiences and learn to be better”

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## Results Based Accountability

This year, Multicultural Australia has taken the first step in a three-year roll-out of an outcomes measurement framework called Results Based Accountability (RBA™).

RBA will help Multicultural Australia measure the real, tangible impact of our work, across all our programs and collectively.

We know we are a dynamic, fearless organisation committed to creating welcome for new Queenslanders and changing the conversation about refugees and migrants. But we were less certain that the work we do was having the intended impact. That's where RBA comes in.

Since March, we have been refining our vision for the future for all Queenslanders by defining a population outcome statement: 'All Queenslanders are connected, skilled and thriving'. We've identified how we are going to measure progress toward this over time, and started to clarify exactly how each of our teams contribute to this big picture goal.

Our Employment Team was the first to implement RBA. They've crystallised the key outcomes they hope to achieve through their work, like meaningful and sustainable employment, and are now collecting data to track their progress.

Our Migrant Youth Vision Project (MYVP), Youth Hubs, ParentsNext, and No Interest Loan Scheme program are currently in the process of co-design. Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) and International Students will be commencing soon.

Multicultural Australia has partnered with New Zealand-based RBA experts Shea Pita who will work with us over the three-year period to fully embed RBA into our daily practice. We've also created a new Project Lead position to work across all of our teams and programs as they skill up in RBA and co-design their respective outcome measures. Our staff are being trained to use RBA as part of their daily practice according to an RBA Workforce Development and Leadership Plan.

We are in the process of recruiting a Client Voice Reference Group who will act as advisors to all of our teams as they co-design their outcome measures to ensure the goals we work towards are in line with our clients' priorities.

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on Multicultural Australia operations and revenue. Results Based Accountability is about working across all of our programs and so some adjustments have had to be made to the initial project plan to accommodate changes to team availability, staffing and budget.

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## In 2020

32

staff trained in RBA co-design.

51

staff engaged.

5

teams have begun their client outcome framework design.

1

team has completed its client outcome framework design.

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Multicultural Australia staff helping develop our RBA framework.



# Community of Interest

We recognise the importance of a community of interest to influence and advance multiculturalism in Australia, built through our services, programs, social businesses, events and celebrations.

## Building the Multicultural Australia Community

With 25,072 followers across our social media platforms (a 50% increase from the previous financial year) and 17,402 email subscribers, our community of interest continues to grow. We offer opportunities for support, advancing an inclusive, welcoming, multicultural Australia through our social and traditional media, news, celebrations and events – both virtually and in the real world.

## Creating opportunity for connection through COVID-19

As COVID-19 impacted Queensland from early 2020, many of our clients and communities began to express concerns about social isolation and community connectedness as government restrictions and lockdowns progressed.

In response, our Communications Team developed the Culture of Connection campaign, enabling individuals, communities and organisations to submit their stories and messages through COVID-19 as a way to connect with others and share experiences and messages of hope and resilience.

The Culture of Connection campaign ran from 26 March to 31 May, through the peak of the COVID-19 lockdown in Queensland. We shared 37 pieces of video content through the campaign, with 27 (73%) telling community stories. The videos were viewed a total of 287,835 times and the campaign had 1,590,725 impressions on Facebook.

With support from our Community Development team, members of Queensland's cultural communities were supported to submit content including cooking demonstrations, personal stories and music.

We were thrilled to receive campaign content from partner organisations including AMES Australia, Uniting Church in Queensland, Save the Children Australia and the Multicultural Families Organisation. We were invited to present the campaign at the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA) sector innovation webinar in April and a case study was published through SCOA's networks.

[Watch our Culture of Connection Playlist.](#)

## In 2020

93,242+ website visits.

17,402 email subscribers.

25,072 total social media followers (+50%).

34% growth on Facebook.



## Supporting Conversation-Changing Initiatives: The In My Country Podcast

Multicultural Australia staff member Pia Perversi-Burchall and Multicultural Australia alumnus Adam Wood are the hosts and producers of the podcast, "In My Country" which launched on World Refugee Day, 20 June 2020.

In My Country tells the stories of people who came to Australia as refugees, and people seeking asylum, in their own words.

Multicultural Australia was pleased to be able to sponsor In My Country after it launched and feature some of the In My Country storytellers in a panel discussion at our REIMAGINE Virtual Events.

Adam and Pia say that the podcast is part of their contribution to changing the public narrative about refugees and people seeking asylum. Sharing the stories of refugees and people seeking asylum is very complex with ongoing protection considerations, and a huge amount of work went into the production over several years, including due diligence like Freedom of Information requests on people's refugee applications and ongoing legal advice to protect those coming forward with their stories. [You can read a more about their process here.](#)

In My Country took out the Best Interview category at the 2020 Australian Podcast Awards.

They were up against established podcasts and interviewers including the ABC's Conversations with Richard Fidler. This achievement demonstrates the talent, passion and hard work of our staff and alumni. We know that we share the agenda to 'change the conversation' about refugees and people seeking asylum with many others and we are proud to support and amplify the work of the broader Multicultural Australia community.

In My Country is available on most major podcast platforms, or through the [In My Country website](#). Watch the [In My Country Panel discussion](#) as part of the REIMAGINE Virtual Events [here](#).



Pia interviews Alyas Taqawi. In My Country's interview with Alyas went on to win Best Interview at the 2020 Australian Podcast Awards. Photo credit - Rhiannon Whitaker Photography



# Events

In 2020 we continued to deliver our iconic major annual events that create opportunities for the broader community to participate in and celebrate our welcoming, inclusive, prosperous and resilient society.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions preventing large public gatherings, we delivered virtual versions of our World Refugee Day Concert and LUMINOUS Lantern Parade.

## MOSAIC Multicultural Festival

The MOSAIC Multicultural Festival was held in October 2019 in Roma Street Parkland, drawing an audience of over 10,000 people.

The Festival spanned two major stages as well as four smaller venues, including The Gallery Art Exhibition, Cultural Kitchen Cooking Demonstrations, the Youth Space and the Children's and Family Area.

The 2019 MOSAIC program included local headline artists The Sunny Coast Rude Boys, Sasta Irish Band, The Verandah Chix and The Mad Mariachi, as well as featuring over 60 performances and presentations by 343 artists, performers and stall holders from more than 49 countries.

Five community cooks from Iraq, Rwanda, Lebanon, Burma (Myanmar) and Persia (Iran) gave cooking demonstrations, hosted by Multicultural Australia staff together with support from Suncorp volunteers. This was an extremely popular venue and was recorded by JMC Academy, with community cooks providing stories and insights into their cultural journeys.

We were able to survey just over 200 participants at MOSAIC.

Of those surveyed:

- 96% of respondents agreed that cultural diversity is good for Queensland
- 94% of respondents agreed that migrants and refugees make a valuable economic, cultural, and social contribution to Queensland
- 95% of respondents agreed that MOSAIC have a positive impact on promoting cultural diversity and inclusion in Queensland
- 99% of respondents were satisfied with MOSAIC and would come again
- 99% of respondents would recommend MOSAIC to their friends and families.

## In 2020

19

pieces of online festival content was presented, which was viewed

103,672

times on social media











## Our Story World Refugee Day Concert

'Our Story', Multicultural Australia's World Refugee Day Concert 2020, celebrated the unique stories and contributions of people who have found protection here in Australia following challenging circumstances caused by socio-political upheaval in their country of origin.

World Refugee Day is an annual opportunity to mark this day that celebrates the rich cultural contribution of our diverse communities. Refugees and other migrants welcomed by Australia enrich our communities with their incredible resilience, unique experiences and extensive skills and talents. Despite COVID-19, we were delighted to be able to share some of this talent with Brisbane audiences through an original live streamed lunch time concert, celebrating the many cultures and stories that make us who we are.

The Live Stream Concert was opened by a special video message from Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner and featured established and emerging artists representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Iranian, Ugandan, Taiwanese, Tibetan, Syrian, Rwandan, Ethiopian and Ghanaian cultural backgrounds.

This was our first attempt at a virtual live streamed event. The lunchtime concert had a peak live audience of 120 people with total video views of over 4,500.

Our World Refugee Day Concerts are backed by Brisbane City Council who have committed to supporting this important event for a further two years.

## REIMAGINE Virtual Events

Our iconic LUMINOUS Lantern Parade usually takes place in June to coincide with Queensland Day. Unfortunately, June 2020 was the peak of COVID-19 restrictions and we were unable to gather large numbers of people in Brisbane's Southbank as we usually do (in 2019 the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade was attended by over 20,000 people).

Instead, we decided to reimagine our major events in 2020 and delivered a virtual and neighbourhood event program for LUMINOUS and MOSAIC under the banner REIMAGINE Virtual Events. We built a bespoke online cultural festival on our website and streamed original festival content across our website and social media channels over a two-week period from 1 to 14 November.

REIMAGINE featured two original World Concerts, five cultural cooking demonstrations and a range of short films and live workshops and events to celebrate the LUMINOUS Lantern Parade and the MOSAIC Multicultural Festival. Our network of Welcome Hubs ran over 19 lantern making workshops and three of our neighbourhood Welcome Hubs put on LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood events in Mt Gravatt, Inala and Acacia Ridge to celebrate our welcoming communities.

These events were topped off by a visit from Dr Farvardin Daliri's Giant Kookaburra and Giant Koala sculptures which toured Brisbane to the delight of driver's and passers by. Members of the public were encouraged to make their own lanterns and share their messages of welcome on the LUMINOUS Photo Wall.

The REIMAGINE Virtual Events program featured 31 performances by 121 artists, performers and presenters from more than 21 cultural backgrounds, creating paid opportunities for artists, performers and presenters at a time when COVID-19 has significantly impacted small business and the performing arts sector. We developed a Virtual Marketplace that showcased our sponsors as well as 18 community stalls, small businesses and social enterprises.

REIMAGINE also included two Light Up Brisbane events, with iconic landmarks across Brisbane, including the Story Bridge, Victoria Bridge and Reddcliff Place, light up for REIMAGINE and for LUMINOUS in the Neighbourhood in celebration of our cultural diversity and welcoming society.

[Watch the Our Story World Refugee Day Concert.](#)

[Watch the REIMAGINE Virtual Event Playlist.](#)







# Developing Cultural Competency through Cultural Training

Despite COVID-19, Multicultural Australia continued to deliver our public courses and tailored training packages to build the cultural competency of the broader community and organisations.

Due to COVID-19 our cultural diversity training pivoted to provide online courses and tailored training programs for our government, community and corporate stakeholders including Queensland Rail, Matchworks, University of Queensland, QUT, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Police Service, Redbank Plains Community Centre, Smith Family, Suncorp, Eating Disorders Queensland, Department of Education and the State Library of Queensland.





# Volunteers

This year, the Volunteer Program had the opportunity to reinvent itself, with a review of our strategy harnessing the voices of our volunteers, staff and clients to inform our future.

The Volunteer team partnered with the Commonwealth Bank to participate in a human-centred design process to discover how our clients, volunteers and staff experience the Volunteer Program, what they imagine it could look like in the future, and how we could get there. The Volunteer Team engaged staff, clients and volunteers to develop solutions by involving each unique user perspective in all steps of the problem-solving and brainstorming process.

Volunteers who have worked across various programs had the opportunity to provide feedback about the Multicultural Australia Volunteering Experience.

The Volunteer Program has continued to support various programs at Multicultural Australia, including Redbank Plains Community Centre, Volunteer Match Program, OzHarvest, Homework Clubs and the Computer Donations and Delivery Program.

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Volunteering gives me a “good feeling inside” - I came away feeling lighter because (I’ve) done something benefiting community, benefiting others and you feel good about it.

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...regardless of our differences there is an underlining characteristic, similarity, oneness or sameness of humanity regardless of where we come from. It is just expressed in different ways.

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# 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 that creates a positive social movement for change.

Multicultural Australia is investing in building strategic and deliberate partnerships with the corporate, sports and arts sectors to achieve greater impact in creating a more welcoming and inclusive Queensland.

## Suncorp

We continued our multi-year partnership with Suncorp to increase the financial inclusion of people from culturally-diverse backgrounds.

Together with Suncorp and Wesley Mission, we piloted a financial literacy program with 39 clients in Toowoomba and Brisbane, which was adapted for their needs and designed to help them navigate financial services in Australia.

We welcomed nine members of the Suncorp Executive team who took part in a cultural immersion and volunteering experience with Multicultural Australia. The group took part in cultural diversity training about working with people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, with a focus on issues of workforce participation people from diverse backgrounds. The Executive team had the opportunity throughout the day to hear the personal stories of refugees and migrants and understand the unique challenges they face arriving in Australia, particularly challenges finding meaningful employment. The Executive team worked with refugee and migrant job seekers in a career mentoring session to talk about employability, job readiness and career coaching, giving our clients the opportunity to work on their job interview skills and get direct industry knowledge and feedback.





## La Boite Theatre Company

Multicultural Australia partnered with La Boite Theatre Company to produce a thought-provoking and conversation changing show – The Neighbourhood that opened the theatre season of 2020.

The Neighbourhood took audiences on a journey of seven storytellers and performance artists who had lived experiences of racism, discrimination and exclusion but who had overcome these challenges to become inspirational leaders and artists in Queensland.

The Neighbourhood was the only live production to be showcased by La Boite, with the onset of COVID-19 significantly impacting the Arts industries.

The Neighbourhood was attended by 5,025 people, including 2,411 students from 74 schools.

Over 50% of surveyed attendees said The Neighbourhood prompted them to have conversations with their networks and communities about welcoming newly arrived people. Around 80% of attendees strongly agreed that migrants and refugees make valuable contributions to Queensland.

The Neighbourhood showcase in Toowoomba was postponed to 2021 due to the impact of COVID-19. Instead, a social media and online showcase was delivered to share the key messages about the show and engage audiences virtually.



## Brisbane Lions and AFL Queensland

We continued to grow and deepen our partnerships with the Brisbane Lions and AFL Queensland this year. Although there had been significant impacts on community sport due to COVID-19, we continued to create pathways into sport and physical activity for refugees and migrants through the Footy For Newly Arrived Families (FFNAF), which was funded by the Australian Government.

Our clients got to develop skills in Australian Rules Football, while building connections and friendships through participating in four AFL clubs including Yeronga Devils, Wilston Grange Gorillas, Sandgate Hawks and Calamvale Leopards

The success of the FFNAF program led to Multicultural Australia receiving a significant Australian Government grant for the Connecting Through Sport program, expanding into multi-sports including AFL, Football, Netball and Tennis and engaging over 20 sports clubs across South-east Queensland.

The Connecting Through Sport program will deliver a suite of sports inclusion programs for refugees, migrants and international student over the next two years to increase their sense of belonging as well as work with sports clubs to champion diversity and inclusion.

We will continue to investigate partnership opportunities with Brisbane Lions as they develop their new 10,000 capacity community sports arena at Springfield. The arena will be the home of women's AFL in Queensland and a training facility for the men's team, along with providing a range of accessible and inclusive community facilities.



## Citizenship Ceremony with Brisbane Lions and AFL Queensland

In August 2019, together with Brisbane Lions, AFL Queensland, Queensland Government and the Queensland Human Rights Commission we organised a Citizenship Ceremony as part of the AFL Multicultural Round. Forty-five candidates and four dependents received their Australian Citizenship from Lord Mayor of Brisbane Adrian Schrinner during Queensland's Multicultural Month.

The Ceremony took place at Jurgens Street Park, Woolloongabba followed by a VIP Function at the Chairman's Circle at The Gabba, Brisbane's iconic sports stadium. The Citizenship Ceremony was hosted prior to the AFL match between Brisbane Lions and Western Bulldogs, giving the new citizens a true taste of Australian sports culture.

After the Citizenship Ceremony, the new citizens were invited to the on-field 'Guard of Honour' for the Brisbane Lions players as they ran out at The Gabba stadium prior to the game; and then watched the game together with event spectators.





# Shape Your Future Career Mentoring Program

Together with the Queensland Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs, Suncorp, Randstad, Deloitte and Australian Red Cross, we implemented a career mentoring and job readiness pilot for people from migrant and refugee backgrounds. A 2018 report by Deloitte for Multicultural Affairs estimated that the Queensland economy would be \$250 million larger in ten years if the skills of migrants were better utilised. The report also named particular barriers to employment for migrants, including local networks and experiences.

The Career Mentoring Pilot aims to specifically address this barrier by connecting refugee and migrant jobseekers with professionals in the field they want to work in. Over a 6-week period, the mentees were able to connect with their mentors and discuss and progress their career aspirations.

After a successful pilot, the partners will be working together to expand the program to other corporate and government partners in 2021.

## In 2020

16

volunteer mentors.

16

job seekers from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

4

employment outcomes were achieved before the mentees graduated the program.

85%

of mentees are likely to recommend the program to a friend.

88%

of mentors are likely to recommend participating in the program to a colleague.

## Mentor Feedback

This is a fabulous programme and I am blessed to work for an organisation who supports this. I would like to see this become a norm in all facets of business.

## Mentee Feedback

It was really great, I really appreciated it. It has given me a whole lot of understanding of key areas in Australian work culture and life in general. It has also helped build my confidence in applying for work and preparing for interviews.



## Strategic Pillar

# Keeping Fit for the Future

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



**A Shared Future**



**Inspired Leadership**



**Building Capability**



**Resourced for Success**

# A Shared Future

Across Multicultural Australia we share a vibrant vision for 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.

## Partnership with Hutton & Hutton Inner East

Multicultural Australia successfully repositioned our real estate social business Welcome Residential and formed a partnership with Hutton & Hutton Inner East. This partnership is delivering financial benefits to Multicultural Australia through the generous donation of 20% of gross sales commission for properties referred for sale by Multicultural Australia and 10 % gross sales commission on any subsequent listings from a sale. This year, a number of priorities were sold through referrals from Multicultural Australia.

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Doing real estate differently for community benefit.

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## Building connection and inclusion with through sport

Welcome Sports is a unique sporting hub formed from a partnership between Multicultural Australia and the El Salvador Soccer Club. It was founded in 2018 in recognition that sport is a powerful medium in which to grow welcoming and diverse communities. Despite the impact of COVID-19 on all grassroots sporting clubs, including the suspension of sports programs during the lockdown and restrictions, Welcome Sports has continued to operate and achieve major successes.

Multicultural Australia secured \$1.113 million in funding over two years from the Australian Government for the Connecting through Sport program. The program aims to increase diversity and build leadership in sports inclusion across four sporting codes - AFL, football, netball and tennis - and up to 27 clubs across South East Queensland for women, refugees, migrants and international students. The program will also build the capacity of sports clubs to be more welcoming and inclusive. The Connecting through Sports program is being delivered in partnership with Football Queensland, Netball Queensland, Rise Sport (Tennis), AFL Queensland, the University of Queensland and Welcoming Australia, and we are managing the program in partnership with Brisbane Lions.

Our success securing this funding can be attributed to our track record delivering the Footy for Newly Arrived Families Program (FFNAF) at four AFL clubs in South East Queensland during 2020. Through FFNAF, up to 80 refugee clients participate in a 4-week football skills program. The AFL clubs were provided with cultural diversity training to build their capability around welcoming newly arrived Queenslanders to their club. The FFNAF Program in the Sandgate AFL Club was evaluated by the University of Queensland with indications the program has helped to improve client confidence and competence. It was not only the newly-arrived Queenslanders that that experienced benefit from this program - local coaches, club members, and other program personnel reported enhanced feelings of acceptance, purpose, and greater sense of community. AFL Queensland continues to support the transition of program attendees into ongoing club participation.

In 2020, our sporting partnerships supported around 160 newly-arrived refugees and migrants to access \$27,000 of Fair Play vouchers at our Welcome Sports Festival and Redbank Plains Community Centre sign up event. The vouchers provide a \$150 subsidy into sporting clubs.

This was a first for Sports and Recreation Queensland, collaborating directly with a sports service to provide these subsidies to community groups with the greatest need.

In August 2019, we hosted the inaugural Welcome Sports Festival to provide new and local Queenslanders the opportunity to trial a range of sporting codes including soccer, cricket, netball, tennis, touch football and AFL. The festival included a graduation ceremony for over 50 refugee clients who had achieved their initial settlement outcomes and were able to graduate from our Humanitarian Settlement program.

Over 700 people attended the festival, and 12 sports organisations provided sport activations throughout the day including Netball Queensland, Cricket Australia, AFL Queensland, Brisbane Lions, Brisbane Roar, Tennis Australia, Touch Rugby League, Queensland Cricket, Hastings Deering, Goodlife Health Clubs, University of Queensland and Sport & Recreation Queensland.

[Watch the coverage of Welcome Sports by Channel 10 National News from April 2020](#)



 netball  
QUEENSLAND





# 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 and enables us to respond to challenges with creative solutions and innovation.

## Board of Directors

Multicultural Australia is governed by a diverse and skilled Board of Directors dedicated to ensuring we achieve our strategic vision, deliver for our clients and exceed stakeholder expectations.

All Directors are volunteers and receive no payment for their work as Board and Committee Members. Directors are reimbursed expenses that are incurred in the course of their duties as Board members in accordance with company policy, and reasonable opportunities are provided from time-to-time to ensure the continued professional development of the Board.

All current Directors are also the members of the Company.

The Board meets monthly and is also advised by an Audit and Risk Committee, a People and Culture Committee, and a full-time Company Secretary.



### Peter Forday, Chair

Peter Forday joined the board in 2011 and has held the position of chair since 2016. He owns and operates a management consultancy specialising in organisational change, stakeholder engagement and leadership. Peter holds a number of other community leadership roles including being Chair of Welcome Sports, the Police Ethnic Advisory Group, and the Cohesive Communities Coalition. He is also a Director of Mercy Community Services South East Queensland and Mercy Aged Care Central Queensland.



### Giri Sivaraman, Deputy Chair

Giri joined the board in 2018 and was appointed deputy chair in 2019. 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.





### **Anh Bui, Director**

Anh joined the board in June 2015. 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 more than 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.



### **Jade Demnar, Director**

Jade joined the Board in 2018. She is now a senior executive in federal government, serving as the Assistant Director-General Technology Engagement at the Australian Signals Directorate. She previously spent many years as a management consultant in global professional services firm, Accenture. She is a member of the Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation Board and is Head of Curation at TEDx Brisbane.

## Executive Leadership Team

Operationally, Multicultural Australia is led by a passionate and experienced Executive Management Team that is committed to leading the client-facing and corporate areas of the organisation creatively, efficiently and authentically.

All of our Executive Managers hold relevant qualifications in their fields of expertise and engage in regular professional development activities.

Kerrin Benson retired as CEO in February 2020 after 16 years leading Multicultural Australia. In January 2020 we welcomed Bill Gamack as CEO, who led Multicultural Australia for the remainder of the 2020 financial year.



### Bill Gamack

CEO (January 2020 to August 2020)

Bill Gamack joined Multicultural Australia as CEO in January 2020. Bill's career has taken him from working for one of the 'Big 4' professional services firms (Ernst & Young) in Australia and the UK, to senior leadership positions in a range of industries - transitioning from financial and operational roles to General Manager and ultimately CEO. During his career he has travelled extensively and lived in the UK and Middle East for almost 10 years. This gave him a lifelong interest in other cultures and peoples, their stories and journeys. For the past 9 years he has been working in the NFP sector assisting people with disabilities and changing their lives through employment. Bill's personal philosophy is grounded in the principle of 'different, not less; different, not bad'. It's about celebrating difference and looking behind this difference - seeing the human being, their hopes, skills and talents, helping them build their aspirations, achieve their potential, connect and contribute.



### Kerrin Benson

CEO (retired as CEO in February 2020)

Kerrin Benson was the CEO of Multicultural Australia from 2004 and retired in February 2020 after 16 years in the role. 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 and 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.



### **Christina Skoien**

#### **Company Secretary**

Christina oversees Multicultural Australia's corporate governance and manages compliance, quality and risk management. 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.



### **Vanessa Fabre**

#### **Executive Manager Partnerships and Events**

Vanessa oversees major events, strategic partnerships, cultural training and social businesses for Multicultural Australia. She has over 20 years' experience in community and government sectors, joining Multicultural Australia in 2015. She holds a Master of Health Science, Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Health) and Graduate Diploma in Health Promotion. Through her career, Vanessa has led 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 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 the organisation'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 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.



### **Marcus Coleman**

#### **Executive Manager Business Innovation and Sustainability**

Marcus is responsible for ensuring Multicultural Australia services support our communities and clients long into the future. This is best achieved by including many stakeholders in the multicultural conversation. He has a commercial and project management background across many industries, moving to the 'for purpose' sector in recent years. Marcus understands the need to balance mission and margin when building organisations to deliver with efficiency and transparency. His most recent role was Operations Director at Lives Lived Well. Marcus holds a Bachelor of Commerce from Melbourne University and is passionate about building supportive and active communities, believing that by interacting openly together, we live better lives.

# Building Capability

We invest in our people. Multicultural Australia will recruit and retain skilled individuals, including leading professional who share our core values; helping them reach their full potential. We will embrace staff using their experience to advance our shared agenda and we will stay connected through our alumni program.

## Our People

In 2020, we have developed the Multicultural Australia People Strategy that outlines priorities for our workforce planning, guided by three themes:

- Availability: access to the right workforce
- Capability: skill set of the workforce
- Engagement: level of commitment of the workforce.

Our People Strategy aims to highlight our belief that a diverse and value aligned workforce is Multicultural Australia's greatest strength. It drives our commitment to finding a balance between skills, experience and a culturally diverse workforce. Our People Strategy also aims to give us the tools to recruit and value talented staff and commit to fostering high levels of leadership and problem-solving skills whilst working with complexity and contributing to an environment which nurtures staff to their fullest potential.



Our staff have continued to demonstrate their passion and commitment to their clients and colleagues, especially through the disruption of COVID-19. Our commitment to providing a safe work space for all staff is always a priority, however COVID-19 presented new challenges in March 2020. In addition to our existing workplace health and safety procedures, new working from home procedures were implemented within days of the pandemic arriving in Australia.

These procedures allowed all staff to work from home safely whilst a COVID-safe plan was developed. The plan then allowed for a rostered return to the workplace, adopting safe ways to conduct face-to-face client, community and stakeholder interaction.

Multicultural Australia's 2019 Staff Engagement Survey highlighted the strengths of our culture with over 80% of staff indicating that they are proud of the work they do and their commitment to show up for their clients, communities and colleagues.

They have a collective enthusiasm and understanding that their jobs contribute to a positive multicultural sector throughout Queensland.

## In 2020



Our staff celebrate the 'Lots of Socks' campaign to raise awareness on World Down Syndrome Day.



# Resourced for Success

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

## Governance, Quality and Risk

Multicultural Australia is committed to the highest standards of corporate governance, quality and risk management that enables us to deliver exceptional client services, to ensure that our charity is ethically and effectively run, and to inspire stakeholder confidence in our work.

This framework is supported by a suite of modern and flexible governance policies and procedures designed to facilitate effective meetings and decision-making, as well as managing our people, finance, and legal and regulatory compliance.

The Board and Executive Team meet quarterly to discuss emerging strategic issues and trends, and to review Multicultural Australia's performance against our 2019-2020 Strategic Plan. The meetings aim to ensure that our organisation is aware of opportunities and risks and can plan and respond with agility.

In response to organisational challenges related to COVID-19, Multicultural Australia also engaged an external strategic consulting firm with industry expertise to help craft a new organisational shape to deliver our FY21 vision and strategy. This new strategy focusses on innovative initiatives and activities to support vulnerable people in the multicultural and humanitarian sector while our borders remain closed.

Supporting the Board and Executive, our experienced Governance, Quality and Risk (GQR) team work across the organisation to build an understanding that good governance and quality practices lead directly to better outcomes for our clients.

The team ensures that our risk management processes are reviewed regularly to align with best practice and ISO31000:2018 Risk Guidelines. Full organisational risk reviews are conducted at least quarterly with executive and senior level risk owners to ensure existing and emerging risks are identified, treated and monitored, and mitigations tested for effectiveness.

The GQR team is also deeply committed to quality and continuous improvement. In the 2019/2020 financial year, we maintained accreditations under the ISO9001:21015 Quality Management Standard and the Queensland Government's Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF).

Multicultural Australia has held ISO accreditation since 2014 and HSQF since 2015. We are proud of our reputation for strong corporate governance, quality and risk management, and our focus on collaboration, communication and continuous improvement.

The protection of the privacy of our client and stakeholder information is of utmost importance to us, and starts with training of our staff during the on-boarding process, annual Privacy Awareness Week education campaigns, and regular updates and training from our GQR and IT teams. Our robust data protection framework aligns with privacy legislation and principals and OAIC-compliant data breach processes, and is regularly reviewed for effectiveness.

Multicultural Australia also employs an independent, external whistle blower service to encourage transparency and ethical behaviour, and includes strict provisions for protection of whistle blowers.



The Multicultural Australia staff ukulele orchestra.

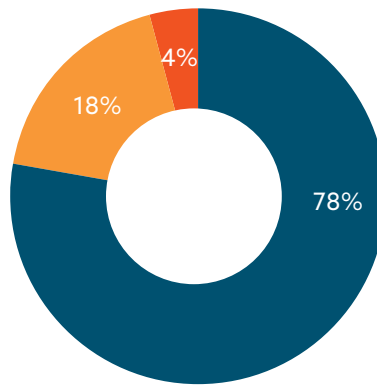
# Financial Performance

Multicultural Australia maintains a robust balance sheet with a strong cash position and an asset to liability ratio of 2.78:1 as at year end. There is continued uncertainty relating to the COVID-19 pandemic on Multicultural Australia and the wider economy. In addition, economic stimulus packages, such as JobKeeper wage subsidy payments, continue to evolve and develop. The organisation will continually review its operations to ensure we remain fit for the future and can continue to deliver on our objectives.

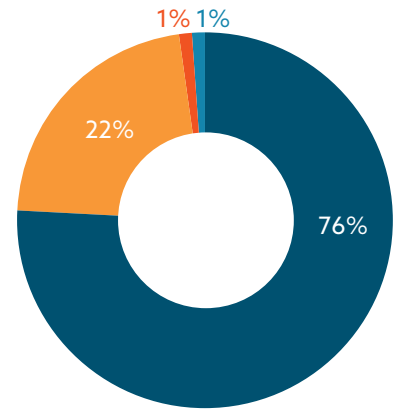
## Financial Performance and trends:



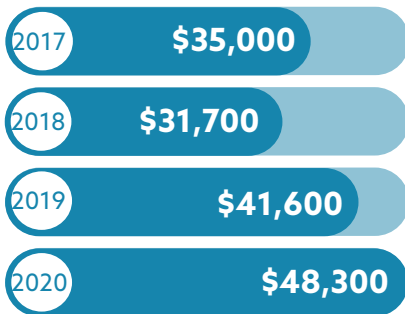
**FY20 Expense Breakdown**



**FY20 Revenue Breakdown**



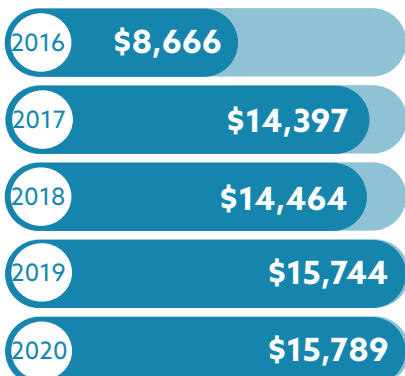
**Revenue Trend (\$'000)**



- Inclusive and prosperous communities
- Keeping fit for the future
- Changing the conversation

- Funded programs
- Other income
- Donations and sponsorship
- Funded programs

**Cashflow Trend (\$'000)**



**Revenue breakdown by funded program**

	2020 (\$'000)
Department of Local Government	\$895
Department of Home Affairs	\$31,957
Department of Employment	\$3,121
Other	\$521
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$36,495</b>





# MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

*it's who we are*

[www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au](http://www.multiculturalaustralia.org.au)

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