



VICTORIA'S
MULTICULTURAL
AWARDS
FOR EXCELLENCE
2016

VICTORIAN

multicultural
commission
strengthening our community


VICTORIA
State
Government

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Performance by Highvale Secondary College Chamber Strings

Official proceedings commence

Speech by The Governor, Her Excellency the Hon Linda Dessau AM

Speech by Robin Scott MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Performance by T'Honi – Kapa Haka group

Award recipients are presented

Presentation ceremony concludes

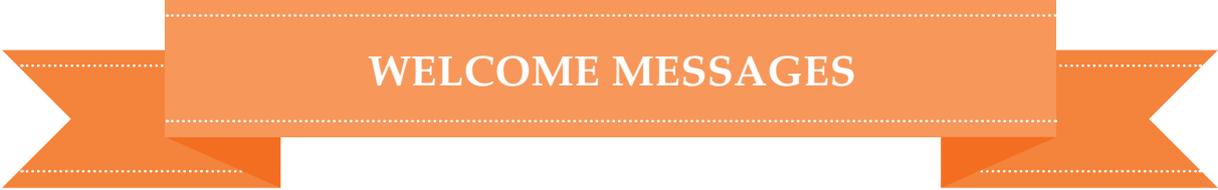
Official photographs

Canapes and drinks are served

Performance by Highvale Secondary College Chamber Strings

Reception concludes





WELCOME MESSAGES

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

Multiculturalism is central to life in Victoria, a state whose people come from 214 different countries, 260 different language groups and 135 different faiths.

The Multicultural Awards for Excellence provide the opportunity to celebrate the individuals and organisations who contribute so much to support diversity, and enhance social harmony throughout our community.

The variety of award categories enables us to recognise the breadth of their work, expertise and volunteering.

It is my pleasure to welcome recipients and nominees, as well as their family, friends and colleagues to Government House as we formally thank them for all that they do to build and sustain the “Peace and Prosperity” referred to in our state motto.

The Honourable Linda Dessau AM

Governor of Victoria

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

It is an honour to congratulate all of the recipients of the 2016 Victorian Multicultural Awards for Excellence for your contribution to our multicultural society.

The Awards were established in 2002 to acknowledge and celebrate the remarkable achievements of people and organisations who have made a significant difference.

This year I am also delighted to congratulate the recipients of two new award categories: the Youth Award and the Community Innovation Award.

Victoria is the most liveable place in the world. This does not come about by accident. It is due to the hard work of people, communities, organisations and businesses who value our diversity and are dedicated to making a difference.

On behalf of the Victorian Government, I congratulate all of this year’s recipients.

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP

Premier

WELCOME MESSAGES

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

I extend my warmest congratulations to all of this year's recipients of Multicultural Awards for Excellence.

I am continuously impressed and inspired by the enormous dedication and passion displayed by Victorians who strive to support and promote our cultural diversity.

The vast majority of Victorians agree that our cultural diversity makes our society stronger, which is why recognition programs such as Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence are so important.

These prestigious awards demonstrate why our state is leading the way in engaging and supporting culturally diverse communities. The Victorian Government is committed to our state's diversity and understands that it is a fundamental part of our identity and our success.

This year's award recipients are a truly wonderful example of what makes Victoria great and I welcome the opportunity for all of us to honour and celebrate Victoria's diversity heroes.

Robin Scott MP

Minister for Multicultural Affairs

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

It has been an amazing year for Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence with over 170 nominations across 12 categories with 21 individuals and organisations receiving awards.

I am delighted to congratulate all of this year's outstanding recipients who go above and beyond for Victoria's diverse multicultural community to truly make a difference. Each one has a story to tell and a passion that is inspirational and I urge you to join me in celebrating them at this event.

Now in their 15th year the awards recognise and reward individuals and organisations for their dedication to Victoria's multicultural community, and are a reminder to all of us about what can we achieve as individuals, but also what we can do together as a community.

This year we had two new award categories – the Youth Award and the Award for Community Innovation. The former highlights the significant contribution Victoria's young people make to multicultural Victoria, while the Award for Community Innovation recognises short-term projects which promote multiculturalism and social cohesion.

Each of this year's recipients are Victoria's #DiversityHeroes and the awards are our opportunity to celebrate them and one of our greatest advantages – our diversity.

Helen Kapalos

Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission

VICTORIAN MULTICULTURAL HONOUR ROLL

Recognising a newly arrived migrant or refugee who plays an outstanding leadership and volunteering role, demonstrates cultural diversity values and contributes towards making Victoria a harmonious multicultural community.

Winner:

Nazer Nazir

Forced to leave his home country in 2014 with his mother, wife and young family, Nazer arrived in Australia as an Afghan Hazara refugee. Settling in Dandenong, Nazer rapidly came to understand the needs of the divergent Afghan community and has quickly become a community leader. He co-founded the Afghan Australian Initiative (AAI) – a Victoria-wide venture based in Dandenong that brings together the many diverse Afghan communities, creating common ground. Nazer is the current Secretary of the AAI, and was elected as President for 2015/2016. Under his leadership, the AAI has co-ordinated and facilitated two student conferences with a particular focus on Afghan youth, which taught participants about choosing non-violence in a conflict situation and taking personal responsibility for change.

The organisation has brought together Afghan community leaders, religious scholars, business people, local associations' leaders and social activists in order to tackle radicalised behaviour and motivate prominent members of the Afghan community to play a stronger role in community building.

As a leading member of AAI, Nazer has worked alongside local and state government members to improve community engagement. He also speaks at events organised within the local Afghan diaspora as well as to other communities about issues and topics of relevance to them.

Nazer has helped to bring Afghans living in Victoria into the mainstream community, improving their sense of belonging.

Highly Commended:

Julien Leyre

Julien Leyre is a French-Australian writer, educator and social entrepreneur who has lived in Australia for the last eight years. Julien has worked on a wide range of projects drawing support from diverse communities, with a focus on linguistic aptitude, collaborative creation and cultural appreciation.

At the Marco Polo Project (MPP), Julien has created a supportive place for Chinese and English learners to hone translation skills, and deepened readers' understanding of contemporary Chinese culture by hearing directly from Chinese voices.

During Melbourne Knowledge Week, Julien hosted an event for MPP on 'Mental Linguistic Mapping', which drew a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) audience speaking over 20 languages. As the facilitator of the event, Julien helped participants to identify personal biases when communicating, listening or reading in an acquired language.

In 2015, Julien purposefully recruited 130 delegates, comprised evenly of Australian and Chinese delegates, with a gender balance, to the inaugural China Australia Millennial Project, where he ensured that the main focus, and learning outcome, was cultural appreciation.

At Marco Polo Peerlab, an experimental research and development unit, Julien has prototyped language-learning models to help develop self-awareness and cross-cultural empathy. The developed techniques have improved language and social outcomes for over 80 weekly participants, predominantly international students living in Melbourne.



PREMIER'S AWARD FOR COMMUNITY HARMONY

Recognising the outstanding achievements of a person or organisation that has developed programs, strategies or activities which furthered cross-cultural and cross-religious harmony in Victoria, and has initiated activities involving different cultural or religious groups working together on a project that demonstrates or promotes harmony and increases mutual understanding.

Winner:

John Gandel AO and Pauline Gandel

Through both Gandel Philanthropy and their own individual contributions, John and Pauline have supported numerous organisations across Australia which promote cultural, religious and social cohesion, as well as helping to deliver programs that tackle racism, anti-Semitism, xenophobia and intolerance.

One of their most important programs is the Gandel Holocaust Studies Program for Australian Educators at the Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem. Aimed at Australian secondary school teachers, the program is designed to equip them to teach about the Holocaust and human rights in the most appropriate and relevant way. So far more than 150 teachers from across Australia have completed the course, with many coming from Victorian schools.

One of their longest-standing involvements has been with the Australian and Victorian Councils of Christians and Jews (CCJ), which they have been supporting since 1997. Through the Victorian Council, John and Pauline helped fund the production and distribution to many schools of the *Intercultural Connections Through Story* book, which was produced by the CCJ.

John and Pauline have been supporting the Anti-Defamation Commission (ADC) for more than a decade, and are responsible for the rejuvenated ADC Annual Gandel Oration. This event features prominent, international speakers addressing sold-out crowds in Melbourne on topics related to human rights, racial and religious abuse and the importance of building bridges in our communities.

They also supported the ADC's 'Click Against Hate' program, educating young people about cyber bullying, especially in the context of racial or religious vilification.

Through Gandel Philanthropy, John and Pauline also initiated the 'Shout Out' program, delivered through the Centre for Multicultural Youth. The program is designed to strengthen the capacity of young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to have their voices heard, and to be their own advocates in the broader community. This program helps to break down stereotypes and barriers, fostering a better understanding of other cultures and religions.

AMBASSADOR AWARD

Recognising a person who has shown exemplary leadership by implementing a vision that promotes cultural diversity and benefits the whole community, and whose contributions are outstanding, inspirational and positively influence cultural awareness in the general community.

Winner:

Lella Cariddi

Lella Cariddi is a writer, researcher, curator, installation artist and community cultural development practitioner working for the advancement of multicultural Victoria. She is a volunteer with Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV) and a community worker who has helped to significantly enhance community relations and diversify creative developments within Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

As a volunteer at MAV, Lella drives the pioneering and inspirational project, 'What Happened at the Pier', with the express aim of giving a voice to the many unrecorded histories of migrants who arrived to Australia by ship.

'What Happened at the Pier' celebrates and reflects on the collective migration stories at Princes Pier, the significant entry point where almost half of the 180,000 post World War II refugees to Australia arrived. It celebrates the pivotal role the Port Melbourne piers precinct played from 1915 to 1969 in Victoria's growth and as a gateway to the diversity of cultures that enrich our community today.

The project encompassed extensive research and community consultations and included a range of activities which facilitated significant inter-generational and cross-cultural connections, benefiting the whole Victorian community. Lella's community vision has inspired wide participation across migrant, established and refugee communities.

Highly Commended:

Asian Australian Alliance

The Asian Australian Alliance (AAA) advocates for change to help create greater diversity in leadership and representation of Asian Australians in mainstream Australian society. One of their key initiatives is to link Asian community organisations with various domestic violence support networks to create easier access for affected Asian Australian women.

The AAA is also responsible for a range of initiatives including the AAA Women's Forum which hosted education seminars to help Asian Australian community members understand how to respond to domestic violence victims within their community. While the AAA Young Leaders trains Asian Australian youth leaders in Victoria, holding information sessions for international students about their working rights, addressing issues such as student exploitation. The Asian Australian Rainbow Alliance represents the Asian Australian LGBTIQ community and is actively engaging with other Victorian LGBTIQ organisations to create working groups which explore common themes such as cultural homophobia and sexual racism.



MEDIA AWARD

Recognising excellence in the reporting of multicultural affairs and acknowledging the outstanding efforts of a person or organisation that highlighted issues of social importance and contributed to community awareness.

Winner:

Luke Waters

Luke Waters is a journalist based in the SBS Melbourne bureau who has helped to break down barriers between the South Sudanese community and the media, providing younger members of this Victorian community with a much needed voice.

Luke has been willing to work and support migrant communities in general, and South Sudanese communities in particular, and has also shown a passion for helping and supporting the socially isolated and disfranchised members within our communities.

In an attempt to redress the balance of negative media coverage of Victoria's South Sudanese youths, Luke met with local community leaders and organised an open forum in a local park. Unsure of success, in the end over 50 members of the community attended the event and agreed to speak on camera, which has led to the establishment of a sound relationship between the South Sudanese community and Luke.

As well as providing a voice to the South Sudanese youth, Luke has shown a genuine sensitivity to their concerns surrounding their issues and has benefited the public by bringing balance to what has in the past been a one-sided story. His work has initiated a real change demonstrated by the communities' willingness to now participate in media stories offering a more developed picture of the issues surrounding the South Sudanese community in Victoria.

Luke has also made himself available to mentor young South Sudanese hopefuls who are keen to pursue a career in journalism and is working with community groups to promote community cohesion, social harmony and multiculturalism.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD

Recognising a municipal council who made major improvements or developed initiatives that provide enhanced and culturally relevant services to culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities, promote inclusive participation and engagement of those communities in civic life and enable greater access and communication between community and council.

Winner:

City of Greater Dandenong

Greater Dandenong is the most culturally diverse municipality in Victoria and the second most diverse in Australia. It has residents from over 150 birthplaces and the highest number of refugee and asylum seekers in Victoria.

As a Refugee Welcome Zone since 2002, Greater Dandenong has a strong history of welcoming and supporting refugees and asylum seekers. The City of Greater Dandenong is committed to initiating programs, projects and services that support its refugee communities, grow opportunities for participation and engagement and build stronger communication between community members.

The City of Greater Dandenong collaborates with partners to improve and enhance coordination of the many services and initiatives designed to help support asylum seekers and refugees. These include the development of an Asylum Seeker and Refugee Communities Advisory Committee and an Asylum Seeker and Refugee Communities Advisory Committee Action Plan (2014-17).

The Council have also spearheaded collaboration between 21 Councils which resulted in a joint statement calling on the Commonwealth Government for increased resources to support asylum seekers based in the community.

The City of Greater Dandenong has supported its asylum seeker and refugee communities through a variety of initiatives including the promotion of social inclusion and equity in council services, the provision of opportunities and inclusive participation for refugee and asylum seekers, increased awareness and knowledge about asylum seekers and refugees, celebrations highlighting the cultures and stories of refugees and asylum seeker communities and professional networking pathways.

The City of Greater Dandenong have also facilitated a series of dialogues with Afghan communities as part of a social cohesion program and have initiated and led a forum celebrating the success of multiculturalism in Greater Dandenong. It also runs a Community Arts Programs which includes a Home and Art Refugee and Asylum Seeker Art Prize and Exhibition, a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Artist Residency and a Mentor Program.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AWARD

Highly Commended:

Manningham City Council

Manningham City Council identified that there is an overarching need for people from all cultural and faith groups to feel actively welcome in Manningham and to be welcoming of others, so they embarked on a journey to address this need by strengthening diversity and enhancing community wellbeing.

Following an internal review of their systems, Manningham are making big improvements to their communication protocols, interpreting services and service accessibility.

In June 2015, during Refugee Week, they publically declared Manningham a Migrant and Refugee Welcome Zone and ran a suite of celebratory and educational events.

The Council partnered with community groups and stakeholders to create the hugely successful 'Welcome Tree' initiative which has had many positive outcomes for the community.

Four 'Migrant and Refugee Welcome Trees' were constructed – by adult migrant English students at Swinburne University – and the community was invited to write messages on to 'welcome leaves' placing them on the trees, while also taking the time to read and appreciate other people's messages.

These 'Welcome Trees' have travelled around the municipality, visiting local schools, libraries, citizenship ceremonies, the Doncaster Police Station, festivals, Manningham Business Association events, faith centres, Cultural Diversity Week events, all Swinburne campuses, the Manningham Interfaith Network, AMES Box Hill and local neighbourhoods. To date 10,000 'welcome leaves' have been created and shared.

In June 2016, Manningham City Council hosted a 'Forest of Welcomes' event to celebrate having been a Refugee Welcome Zone for 12 months. They planted a live 'Welcome Tree' outside their front entrance and are installing a welcome bench. They have also commissioned a song whose lyrics are based on the messages written on the 'welcome leaves' and the song is already a part of the 'line up/bell music' at many of the local, culturally diverse schools.

Commended:

Yarra City Council

Yarra City Council has a welcoming, innovative approach to accessible communications and engagement for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, and strives to embed CALD practices and services into every part of the organisation.

The council has a multifaceted approach to addressing issues affecting CALD communities, and have developed an accessible communications framework to help guide staff on how they can increase the participation rates of CALD communities, and people living with a disability, in council decision-making.

They have also introduced information kits aimed at providing CALD community members, and people with literacy challenges, with easy-to-understand information about core council services in a variety of languages.

All Yarra City Council's corporate publications have a dedicated CALD Language Panel with a unique reference number and language-relevant telephone numbers. The unique reference number, when quoted, helps interpreters and customer service staff to quickly identify what issue or publication the CALD resident is referring to.

In partnership with Brotherhood of St Laurence, Yarra City Council has also designed a program to help refugees, asylum seekers and other marginalised jobseekers into work as well as supporting employers to grow and diversify their workforce. Twenty-four trainees have participated in the program so far with nine going on to have permanent employment.

EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD AWARD

Recognising outstanding practices in education and early childhood services that raise awareness and support the implementation of civics, citizenship and multicultural education.

Winner:

Dandenong West Primary School

Dandenong West Primary School is a diverse school with a high proportion of students with a language background other than English, including a large cohort of English as Additional Language (EAL) learners from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds. The school is proud of its multicultural makeup and has taken active steps to embrace its diversity, ensuring that all of its students have a deep sense of belonging and connectedness to the school.

The school has developed more than 30 working partnerships and provides a range of educational programs for students and adults, as well as services for families and other community members.

With the support of the Scanlon Foundation, the school has created a Community Hub on its grounds, which brings together a multitude of partners to facilitate access to a range of support services and opportunities for children and families. The partners include individuals, businesses, community based organisations, further and higher education organisations and religious groups. The school connects with programs at libraries, civic centres and other facilities, utilising resources that are geared towards recreation, learning and support.

The school also operates playgroups and a Men's Shed; both of which aim to build skills and reduce social isolation. Additionally there are English conversation classes, beginner computer classes and cooking and craft groups for adults. The school serves as a best practice example of community engagement in learning.

VICTORIA POLICE MULTICULTURAL AWARDS

POLICE ANNUAL MULTICULTURAL AWARD

Recognises a Police Member who has established relationships with multicultural communities by developing innovative strategies.

Winner:

Sergeant Taner Yavuzcan

Based at Keilor Downs Police Station, Sergeant Taner Yavuzcan is passionate about fostering positive relationships between multicultural communities and local police. Sergeant Yavuzcan was instrumental in developing a 10 week program called the 'Huddle Program' which has helped a number of youth from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to be inspired to reach their potential via education about the Victorian justice system and goal setting.

Highly Commended:

Sergeant Ben McWilliam

Sergeant Ben McWilliam of the Morwell Police is actively involved in community engagement with CALD communities in the Latrobe Valley District of Victoria. As well as being the Secretary of the newly formed Latrobe Valley Police Multifaith Council, Sergeant McWilliam has played a big part in providing community reassurance to local CALD community groups.

Commended:

Sergeant William Holmes

Described by local City of Melton CALD service providers as being an outstanding ambassador for Victoria Police, Sergeant William Holmes has gone out of his way to assist local diverse community groups gain a greater appreciation of police services and emergency procedures. Well established as a valued mentor to local CALD community groups, Sergeant Holmes has fostered many meaningful relationships with local police and the diverse communities that they serve and protect.

VICTORIA POLICE MULTICULTURAL AWARDS

POLICE MEDIA MULTICULTURAL AWARDS

Recognises a Police employee who communicates police/multicultural issues via ethnic and/or mainstream media outlets.

Winner:

Combined ND3 Family Violence, Family Violence Command & Media Unit Proactive team

Appreciating the vast importance of radio as a popular information medium for many diverse communities, the North West Metro Police District Family Violence Coordinator, Senior Sergeant Nicole Warner enlisted the support of Community Stereo Radio to broadcast a series of family violence related radio messages across a number of diverse communities.

Assisted by the Victoria Police Media Unit, Senior Sergeant Warner reports that this radio campaign was extremely well received with a number of local service providers reporting a marked increase in women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds seeking assistance and advice.

Highly Commended:

Victoria Police Cricket Club

Established in 1977, the Victoria Police Cricket Club has for many years used the internationally popular sport of cricket as a means of fostering positive relationships between diverse communities and Victoria Police.

Seeking to promote harmony and community reassurance, the Victoria Police Cricket Club has engaged with local Islamic communities via cricket competitions such as the 'Harmony in Cricket Cup' to highlight Victoria Police's respect and regard for diversity. A major part of the success of these matches has been the wide media coverage given to them which has underlined the positive and harmonious messages that such initiatives engender to a wider audience.

Commended:

Acting Sergeant Ricardo Anderson & Stephanie Garak – Victoria Police/Holmesglen TAFE Project CEANT

In an effort to improve the safety and security of international students, Acting Sergeant Ricardo Anderson from the Moorabbin Police and Stephanie Garak, Holmesglen TAFE, together developed Project CEANT, an educational project which primarily aims at reducing the incidences of theft from motor cars. The importance of the messaging contained in Project CEANT has been publicised by both the police media and local media, further educating the wider community.



VICTORIA POLICE MULTICULTURAL AWARDS

PROTECTIVE SERVICE OFFICER MULTICULTURAL AWARD

Recognises a Protective Services Officer (PSO) who has established relationships with multicultural communities by developing innovative strategies.

Winner:

Protective Services Officer Kur Theik

Of proud Sudanese heritage, PSO Kur Theik is a tireless advocate for enhancing positive relationships between Victoria Police and culturally and linguistically (CALD) communities. Apart from attending numerous multicultural and refugee forums PSO Theik has done much to educate his fellow police employees about diversity and culture.

Highly Commended:

Protective Services Officer Humayun Wafajo

Originally from Afghanistan, PSO Humayun Wafajo has taken it upon himself to educate both police and diverse communities about each other. The positive effects of his educational efforts have been immense, with many from both Victoria Police and local communities citing him as a major catalyst for their enhanced appreciation of both cultures and the law.

Commended:

Protective Services Officer, Supervisor Paul Fassoulis

A member of the Shrine Guard, PSO Supervisor Paul Fassoulis has developed community engagement strategies designed to increase the involvement of those multicultural communities representing nations who were allied to Australia during wartime wishing to hold commemoration ceremonies at the Shrine of Remembrance.

The opportunity for these communities to commemorate those dates important to their war experience in a respectful and inclusive environment is a tribute to PSO Supervisor Fassoulis' understanding and dedication. His commitment to community engagement ensures that the sacrifices of various multicultural communities, and their wartime service, are not forgotten and that multiculturalism is included in the wider narrative of Australia's wartime commemoration.

PSO Supervisor Fassoulis also ensures that the Shrine Guard is deployed in a ceremonial and protective capacity at every possible multicultural event.



VICTORIA POLICE MULTICULTURAL AWARDS

POLICE COMMUNITY EXEMPLARY AWARD

This award is open to Victoria Police, a community group/provider or a community person/s.
This award recognises the development of innovative strategies and initiatives that promote positive relations between the police and multicultural communities.

Winner:

El Sedeaq Mosque – West Heidelberg

Nominated by the Heidelberg Police Station, the El Sedeaq Mosque in West Heidelberg is an exemplar of community harmony. By organising Mosque open days, Iftar dinners and Eid festivals, the efforts and hard work of the El Sedeaq Mosque have been instrumental in shifting perceptions and fostering better understanding between the local Islamic community, local police and the wider Heidelberg community.

Highly Commended:

Lisa Sinha

According to Latrobe Valley Police, Lisa Sinha the Director of Gippsland Multicultural Services, has demonstrated a true commitment to civic responsibility and leadership in the Gippsland area. Lisa has, and continues to work, tirelessly with local police and multicultural communities to help strengthen relationships and build a stronger, safer and more cohesive community.

Commended:

Bendigo Police

The Bendigo Police have initiated numerous community reassurance measures designed to demonstrate to the local Islamic, and wider community, that Bendigo is an inclusive city with a proud history of multiculturalism and acceptance. Via sporting and cultural activities, participation in festivals and a strong, constant, visible presence at protests, the Bendigo Police have demonstrated, and continue to demonstrate, the highest ideals of community policing.

AWARD FOR COMMUNITY INNOVATION

Recognising short-term projects which promote multiculturalism and make a significant contribution to social cohesion.

Winner:

Wyndham City Council

Wyndham City Council's vision statement is 'Diverse People, One Community, Our Future' - an acknowledgement of the rapidly growing diversity of the local area, and the opportunities for the future that this presents. The council made a specific commitment to support pathways to greater economic participation by members of Wyndham's diverse communities.

In 2015 the council established the Multicultural Entrepreneur Initiative aimed at engaging members of refugee and newly arrived communities offering resources and support to help build the capacity of current and potential entrepreneurs, whilst recognising the contributions of existing multicultural entrepreneurs in the local economy.

The initiative had two main phases known as the 'Start Up' Business Program and the Multicultural Entrepreneur Awards.

The 'Start Up' business training was implemented by identifying the skills and training needs of refugees and newly arrived migrants who had or wished to start a business. Participants were offered a structured education program to help strengthen their business skills, networks and confidence, through four intensive training sessions with extra support coming from community members who were enlisted as mentors.

The Multicultural Entrepreneur Awards were developed as the second phase of the initiative. These awards celebrate the contribution that business people from refugee and migrant backgrounds make to the Wyndham economy and community acknowledging their creativity, innovation and resilience. In particular, the awards recognise the unique barriers that refugees and migrants are sometimes required to overcome in order to participate in community and business life.

Highly Commended:

Dianella Health

Dianella Health's Population Health Team (DPH) has developed an innovative model of promoting diversity and creating social connection through community capacity building. DPH initially piloted a Community Health Champions model (2013-2015), engaging people from different cultural backgrounds to attend community leadership workshops using an 'Assets Based Community Development' approach for planning and community action.

Once trained, program champions developed projects to help foster multiculturalism in the community, inviting faith leaders and members of the community to engage in the planning and delivery of programs.

DPH developed a 'Train the Trainer' package aimed at preventing social discrimination and promoting cultural diversity. Since 2015, DPH has trained 258 community champions to advocate for cultural diversity, undertaken bystander action against social discrimination, and fostered cross-cultural community connections.

The organisation has created a Multicultural Women's Group and has set up ethno-specific cultural groups such as the Afghan Women's Group, Muslim Women's Group, Nepalese Women's Group, Punjabi Cultural Group and Pakistani Cultural Group.

They have also been involved in delivering a festival to promote cultural harmony, a women's festival called 'Tej to Teeyan' bringing women from different cultural backgrounds together to celebrate, and a Harmony Day event which provided an opportunity for multicultural communities to share their stories and showcase cultural performances.

YOUTH AWARD

Recognising the contributions young people
make to multicultural Victoria.

Winner:

Monica Forson

Monica Forson is a dedicated, highly motivated and aspirational young Victorian. Over the past five years, she has continuously demonstrated an exemplary and unwavering commitment to advocacy and community development initiatives for youth of African Australian descent.

Monica is the co-founder of the Afro-Australian Student Organisation (AASO), which provides students and young people of African Australian descent with not only tailored socio-cultural relevant services, but also a network forum to help nurture meaningful social relationships.

Monica has extensive voluntary and community leadership experience, including her membership of the Multifaith Multicultural Youth Network, which advises the Victorian Government on matters affecting young Victorians from culturally, religiously and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Furthermore, she has acted in the capacity of Community Engagement Director of the African Music and Cultural Festival, Youth Advisor to the Ghanaian Association of Victoria, Secretary of the Rotaract Club of Diamond Valley, steering committee member of the African Review Panel and as a volunteer at the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. Monica has also acted as a mentor in the Sarah Myer Leadership Program which supports young, culturally diverse leaders

Monica has opened the doors for young African people to pursue leadership roles and demonstrates that passionate young people be change makers in the community.



VICTORIAN MULTICULTURAL CORPORATE INNOVATION AWARD

Recognising a business that implements effective practices to increase the number of people with diverse backgrounds in their workplace and whose innovative internal practices promote cultural diversity.

Winner:

St Vincent's Hospital

Since 2009 the St Vincent's Cultural Diversity Program, with its strong focus on training, has proven to be a powerful tool for enhancing the healthcare experience of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) patients. The program has also increased the cultural competence and confidence of staff, and acted as a springboard for new initiatives to enhance working conditions and services for people from a CALD background.

Cultural diversity training is a core component of the program, providing participants with the opportunity to unpack cultural and linguistic differences and learn how to leverage these to best effect. Attendance at the cultural diversity training has been phenomenal and since 2009 the number of participants has grown a staggering 600%.

In 2015, following a low satisfaction rating with patient meals, St Vincent's introduced a new menu of culturally-appropriate meal options, and patient feedback has shown much improved satisfaction with meals.

Another significant initiative is a partnership between St Vincent's and the Asylum Seekers Resource Centre (ASRC) who jointly signed a memorandum of understanding with the key provision of free medical imaging and pathology services to ASRC clients who are not eligible for Medicare.

Highly Commended:

Gateway Health

Gateway Health (GH) is a large community health agency with a broad geographical footprint across the Hume region of Victoria. With a primary mission of improving health outcomes for those at greatest risk, GH specialises in developing targeted programs for a range of marginalised and disadvantaged cohorts. The GH Multicultural Clinic provides support and services for the local multicultural community as well as providing holistic health care.

In parallel to these health services, GH also has a social inclusion program that brings diverse communities together to share their stories over traditional foods cooked by the participants.

The organisation has also developed and implemented the 'Work Ready' program which is designed to help break down barriers and assist multicultural communities seeking meaningful employment in the Victorian border region.

AWARD FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Recognising the achievements of a person or organisation who has demonstrated outstanding voluntary commitment to the service of Victoria's multicultural community, promoted cultural diversity and improved community relations and programs for at least 10 years.

VOLUNTEER:

Winner:

Barbara Brown

Barbara Brown has had involvement with migrant, refugee and mainstream communities in the Goulburn Valley for more than 10 years. She has also worked with the Iraqi community in Cobram and advocated for additional services and programs to lessen the group's isolation.

In Shepparton, Barbara worked with the Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District and other partners to provide a range of programs, including leadership programs for women from local refugee communities.

Barbara has consistently encouraged relationships between mainstream women and immigrant women and has advocated and sought funding to support diverse communities.

With a strong understanding of the issues and needs faced by settling communities Barbara is addressing matters such as access and equity to government services, English language skills, recognition of overseas skills, education, mental health issues, employment and housing.

Highly Commended:

Deepa Rai

Deepa Rai has been active in Nepalese community organisations for more than 15 years and has built a bridge between the Nepalese community and the mainstream Victorian community. A voice and advocate for Nepalese women, Deepa was the first woman forum leader of the Nepalese Association of Victoria and also held the post of Vice President.

Active in the community, Deepa has played a leading role in facilitating events and initiatives that encourage social cohesion and foster community harmony. Examples of her work include organising charity dinners for organisations that provide help to disadvantaged communities in Australia and overseas, and her involvement in Sunrise Homes, an organisation that helps orphans.

Deepa has become a leading voice against family violence in the Nepalese community where she is known as a reassuring source of information and support to the victims of family violence. Deepa is currently working on forming a support group of men and women who are passionate about working on this sensitive issue.

AWARD FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Commended:

Dr Sylwia Greda-Bogusz

Dr Greda-Bogusz arrived in Australia as a humanitarian entrant in 1982, and since then has been passionately involved in helping other new arrivals to settle in their new country, encouraging them to learn English and gain formal qualifications.

In 2008, Sylwia was invited to join the newly established Australian Multicultural Advisory Council (AMAC) and over the next three years she worked on preparing AMAC's statement on cultural diversity and recommendations to the government. This statement was fully adopted by the government of Australia and led to the new Australian multicultural policy – The People of Australia. A landmark policy, it addresses the importance and the benefits of diversity, as well as the need to balance the rights and obligations of all who live in this country, including responding to the challenges of an increasingly globalised world. Since the development of the Australian multicultural policy, Sylwia has focused on the issues around access and equity specifically in the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population.

With the Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Sylwia has advocated for health and wellbeing education for refugees and immigrant women, and has raised awareness about the practice of female genital mutilation, seeking its elimination.

Over the years Sylwia has helped countless people of all ages, from various ethnic backgrounds in recognising their overseas skills and knowledge in pursuit of Australian qualifications, gain entry into further education or assisted them in gaining employment.

PAID WORK:

Winner:

Jenny Semple

Jenny Semple has been the CEO of the Southern Migrant & Refugee Centre (SMRC) for almost 20 years. During this time she has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to improving the lives of CALD communities.

Some examples of her innovative projects include driver education for refugees, homework support to assist young CALD secondary school students, and the creation of a diverse seniors care program that provides qualified bi-lingual workers in over 60 languages who provide support for Victoria's ageing CALD population.

She has also overseen the development of a program that brought together a group of young people from various cultures and ethnicities considered at risk of offending and often in conflict with each other, by challenging them to restore a motor vehicle. As well as learning new skills, the group developed a shared sense of identity that broke down previously held animosities.

Jenny has consistently utilised the SMRC premises as a hub for other multicultural agencies to stage their offices. Here they can use the resources of the SMRC and collaborate and draw on each other's skills to further the objectives of the various communities they advocate for and support.

Jenny has also been an active board member of a number of peak bodies, organisations and committees that work towards successful multiculturalism. These include her current roles as a board member of the Refugee Council of Australia and the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria. She was also a founding member of the Settlement Council of Australia and has acted both as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

AWARD FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

ORGANISATION:

Winner:

Casey Multi-faith Network

Casey Multi-Faith Network (CMFN) was formed in 2006 with the objective of promoting peace, tolerance and understanding between members of the broader community. Over the years it has achieved this objective by holding tours of places of worship, lectures and other events that bring people together from all walks of life.

CMFN is comprised of volunteers from diverse religious and faith backgrounds who share a common vision of practicing their faith with integrity, whilst living in harmony with one another and the broader community, promoting social cohesion in the City of Casey. One of the main initiatives it is involved in is organising tours to places of worship to help inspire participants to learn about other faith traditions, dispelling any previously held misconceptions.

They have also undertaken other activities, such as reading the Multifaith Statement at council meetings and broadcasting a weekly radio program called 'Voices of Faith Radio'. Each year they run a number of multifaith events including a domestic violence forum, a multifaith concert and a multifaith art-exhibition.

Highly Commended:

Hindu Society of Victoria

The Hindu Society of Victoria (HSV) has established a place of worship to advance the culture and foster the religious needs of the Hindu community in Victoria.

Although the Society built the Cultural & Heritage Centre (CHC), the venue is not restricted to HSV members but is available to be used by all multicultural and mainstream Victorian communities.

The CHC was inaugurated in May 2012 by various communities, and is equipped with a unique function hall which is available for celebrating indoor events and special functions.

The venue has been used for cultural, music, arts and dance performances and also includes a canteen which provides healthy vegetarian food for devotees and visitors with seating capacity for 300 people.

Its museum has an extensive collection of images which are also available for use by any community or individual, while the education facilities are also available for serving the needs of the broader Victorian community.

With faith, and adherence to the principles of the multicultural traditions of Victoria, the HSV strives to encourage participation of all communities to use the resources at CHC.

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT RECIPIENTS

Victorian Multicultural Honour Roll

- Tenzin Khangsar

Premier's Award for Community Harmony

- Louie Josef
- Naureen Choudhry
- River Nile Learning Centre

Ambassador Award

- Hassan Mirza
- Kot Michael Monoah
- Peter Jabbour OAM
- Rashidi Sumaili
- Sam Atukorala

Media Award

- Dhanya Samuel
- Niru Tripathi

Award for Community Innovation

- Australasian Centre for Human Rights and Health
- Behind the Label
- Beyond Story
- English for Asylum Seekers Network
- Geelong Ethnic Communities Council
- Greater Shepparton City Council
- Pasifika Collective
- Southern Migrant and Refugee Centre
- VCA Vic Dual Identity Leadership Program
- Women of Wyndham
- Women's Friendship Group

Youth Award

- Amani Nyikang
- Lena Mirzae
- Nawal Hersi
- Salat Youhana
- Ziyang Zhang

Award for Meritorious Service to the Community – Volunteer

- Afshan Mian
- Bharansher Rai
- Bozena Iwanowski
- Dilnaz Billimoria
- Dr Boujemaa Moubaraki
- Dr Dinesh Parekh
- Evangeline Sacco
- Hai Hoang Nguyen
- Hanny Douglas
- Hari Gurung
- Huyen Phat Tieu
- Jim Claven
- Krishna Vemula
- Kulendrasingam Sivasuthan
- Mary Charlecraft
- Mei Foon Lam
- Mei Yuk Anne Lam
- Meng Kong
- Mustafa Abu Yusuf
- My Phong Tain
- Nawal Moudgil
- Neeraja Vemula
- Peter Byrne OAM
- Porfirios Tomazos
- Rocco Cuzzilla
- Rosanna Bains
- Rufina Chan
- Sabaratnam Sundaramoorthy
- Sankara Subramanian
- Shiva Dehghan
- Tony Van Der Hoeven
- Venerable Ol Sam
- Vijaya Tangirala
- Vincenzo Della Chiesa
- Walid Hanna
- Walter Villagonzalo
- Yusuf Sheikh Omar
- Zining (Christy) Guo

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT RECIPIENTS

Award for Meritorious Service to the Community – Paid work

- Rodney Boyd JP
- Suzana Stapar
- Vladimir Prpich

Award for Meritorious Service to the Community – Organisation

- Australian Chaldean Federation of Victoria
- Australian Slovak's Association in Victoria
- Eastern Districts Polish Association (Melbourne)
- Springvale Mandarin Network



