

MCCSA Community Voices

AUTUMN 2025



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FROM THE CEO

HELENA KYRIAZOPOULOS OAM

MCCSA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY: HONOURING OUR PAST, EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

As CEO of the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia (MCCSA), I am proud to celebrate our 50th anniversary—a testament to five decades of dedication to building successful communities. Our jubilee year commenced with a distinguished reception at Government House, graciously hosted by Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia. This event united community leaders, MCCSA members, and valued partners to reflect on our journey and celebrate our collective achievements. We were also honoured by the presence of the Honourable Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Tourism, whose ongoing support has been invaluable.

In line with our commitment to promoting dialogue and understanding, MCCSA,

in collaboration with Reconciliation SA, the Don Dunstan Foundation, and Equal Opportunity SA, hosted the annual Harmony Day Lecture at UniSA's Bradley Forum. This event, commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, featured Mr. Giridharan Sivaraman, Race Discrimination Commissioner from the Australian Human Rights Commission, as our keynote speaker. Mr. Sivaraman provided profound insights into Australia's ongoing journey toward racial equity, emphasising the systemic challenges we face and the collective efforts required to overcome them. The subsequent Q&A session, expertly facilitated by Commissioner for Equal Opportunity SA Jodeen Carney, further illuminated both the obstacles and opportunities within our communities.

This event, and other milestone celebrations throughout this year including our 50th Jubilee Community Event and Inaugural Multicultural Oration are being supported by a number of generous sponsors – Australian Gas Infrastructure Group, EasAbility Care Australia, SA Power Networks, and the Australia Day Council of South Australia.

As we celebrate this milestone throughout the year, we look forward to delivering an exciting program of events that honours our history, celebrates our present, and inspires the next 50 years of multicultural leadership and excellence. These upcoming celebrations are not only a testament to our past achievements but also a call to action for continued collaboration and commitment to building an inclusive and equitable society.

Helena

COMMUNITY NURSING SA: CARING FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Community Nursing SA, located in Adelaide, is renowned for its commitment to providing exceptional healthcare services that reflect the rich diversity of the community it serves. With a workforce composed of individuals from no fewer than seven distinct cultures and languages, the organization embodies a multicultural ethos that enhances the quality and accessibility of healthcare. This diverse team is not only a testament to the inclusive environment cultivated at Community Nursing SA but also a critical asset in delivering care that is culturally relevant and sensitive to the unique needs of each client. communicating effectively and empathetically, ensuring that clients feel respected and understood.

This commitment to inclusivity not only enhances patient engagement but also facilitates better health outcomes.

Sustainability is another core principle guiding the work of Community Nursing SA. The organization aims to build lasting relationships with the community, promoting health practices that are beneficial for individuals and families over the long term. Through education and empowerment, Community Nursing SA encourages clients to take an active role in their health journeys, fostering independence and resilience.

The energy and approachability of the Community Nursing SA team make healthcare less daunting, creating an inviting atmosphere, where clients feel comfortable seeking assistance. This supportive environment is especially crucial for those navigating complex health issues or unfamiliar systems. By being approachable, the team not only addresses immediate health needs, but also facilitates better health outcomes.

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In summary, Community Nursing SA stands as a beacon of diversity and inclusivity in healthcare, driven by a multicultural workforce that strives to deliver flexible, holistic, and culturally sensitive services. Their commitment to being significant, sustainable, energizing, and approachable, ensures that all community members feel valued and cared for, reflecting the true spirit of community nursing.

**Community Nursing SA, can be contacted on 0494320867
or via email at ira@communitynursingsa.com.au**



CONCESSIONS FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS, REFUGEES, AND MIGRANTS IN SA

Asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants living in South Australia (SA) may be eligible for concessions that can help with the costs of living, transport, and health care. This article explains changes made by the South Australian Government to ensure support is available to the most vulnerable asylum seekers and how residents receiving Centrelink benefits or living on a low income can also apply for assistance.

What is a Concession?

A concession is a discount or rebate provided by the South Australian Government to help lower living costs. These include reductions on energy, water, and sewerage bills, as well as financial assistance for specific needs such as funeral costs or energy for medical purposes. Other concessions are available to support vulnerable groups, such as those with low incomes or medical needs, to ease the financial burden of everyday life.

Who Can Apply for a Concession?

Asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants who live in SA may be eligible to apply for household concessions if they meet certain criteria. Most concessions are available to people who hold Centrelink cards, such as the Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Card, or Low Income Health Care Card. However, some concessions are based solely on financial assessments, meaning people who are not on Centrelink payments but have low income or assets can still apply.

From 1 January 2025 changes to eligibility and a new application process allows certain asylum seekers to apply for a range of concessions with a single form. This includes people seeking refuge from the Israel-Hamas or Ukraine conflicts who hold a tourist or visitor visa, and asylum seekers on Bridging Visa E (BVE) or those receiving support from the Australian Government's Status Resolution Support Services.

How to Apply for a Concession

All residents receiving Centrelink benefits or living on a low or fixed income should check their eligibility and apply for household concessions

- <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/care-and-support/concessions/household-concessions/household-concessions>

Asylum seekers who are eligible to apply via the new process should follow the steps on the official webpage Concessions for asylum seekers -

<https://sa.gov.au/concessions/asylumseekers>

The application can be submitted directly or through designated agencies like the Red Cross or St Vincent de Paul Society.

If help is needed with the application, individuals can call the ConcessionsSA hotline at 1800 307 758 or reach out to the Interpreting and Translating Centre at 1800 280 203 for translation services.

By following these steps, asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants in South Australia can access financial support and take advantage of the discounts and rebates available to them. For more information, visit the websites above or get in touch with the team for assistance.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS:

FROM VISA REJECTION TO CITIZENSHIP AND EMPOWERING MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

The journey of immigration is full of challenges and transformations. For Débora Compri, a Brazilian who became an Australian citizen, this journey was marked by difficult moments, resilience, and above all, an unwavering determination to rewrite her story.

In 2016, Débora arrived in Australia with the dream of gaining international experience. In her first year, she secured the opportunity

to apply for a sponsorship visa. However, she soon faced a major setback when her visa application was rejected. What could have discouraged many became a turning point in her life. With determination and resilience, Débora found ways to remain in the country, adapted to new realities, and turned adversity into a driving force for success.

Today, Débora is not only an Australian citizen but also a leader in the multicultural job

market. With over 16 years of recruitment experience in Brazil and Australia, she founded WeTalent, a consultancy that helps migrants position themselves in the Australian job market. Through personalised mentoring, Débora has impacted more than 1,300 professionals, many of whom have faced similar barriers to those she overcame.

"I have a passion for helping migrants re-enter the job market. As a recruiter, I believe



talent knows no borders,” Débora shares, highlighting the purpose that drives her work.

In addition, Débora created the channel Allstralia para Todos on YouTube and Instagram, where she shares practical information about immigration, the job market, and Australian culture for Brazilians. Her goal is to empower people who, like her, dream of building a new life in Australia. By sharing her journey and providing valuable tips, Débora inspires her

audience to believe that with planning and perseverance, challenges can be transformed into achievements.

Her story is a testament to overcoming barriers and how multicultural communities enrich Australia. Débora has delivered various workshops in partnership with the Brazilian Association of South Australia (BASA), directly contributing to the integration and success of Brazilians in the country. As a LinkedIn Top Voice and career

consultant at the University of Adelaide, Débora reinforces her authority as a specialist in international careers. Her work transcends borders, promoting inclusion and opportunities for all.

For Débora, success goes beyond personal achievements: it’s about paving the way for others to thrive. Her journey is an inspiration to anyone seeking to turn dreams into reality.



AGIG LEADS THE WAY IN DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY WITH RECITE ME

At AGIG, we are committed to ensuring that all customers can easily access the information they need about their gas supply. As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance customer experience and promote inclusion, we are proud to be the first utility in Australia to adopt the Recite Me accessibility toolbar.

The Recite Me tool is a significant step forward in making our online content more accessible to all people. It ensures that essential information, including gas safety and support services, is available to everyone, regardless of language barriers, visual impairments, or other accessibility needs. This initiative reflects AGIG's dedication to diversity, inclusion, and our core value: we care.



Enhancing Accessibility for All

The Recite Me toolbar is now live on the Australian Gas Networks (AGN) and Multinet Gas Networks (MGN) websites. This tool provides a range of features that benefit various user groups, including:

- » **Non-English speakers**
– Enables translation of website content into multiple languages with text-to-speech functionality in different languages.
- » **People with visual impairments** – Offers text-to-speech, magnification, and customisable colour contrasts to improve readability.
- » **Neurodivergent users** – Includes a screen ruler, reading mask, and font adjustments for better content accessibility.
- » **People with literacy challenges** – Provides simplified reading options and text-to-speech assistance.
- » **Elderly users** – Helps those with declining vision or cognitive challenges navigate the website more easily.
- » **People with temporary impairments** – Supports users recovering from injuries affecting vision or reading ability.

A Step Forward in Customer Support

The implementation of Recite Me aligns with AGIG's broader efforts to support customers in vulnerable situations through our Priority Services Program. By removing barriers to accessing critical energy information, we are ensuring that all members of the community have equal opportunities to stay informed and safe.

We believe that small changes can make a big difference.

The adoption of Recite Me is a simple yet impactful way to improve digital accessibility, fostering greater inclusion and equity for all customers.

To experience the Recite Me accessibility toolbar, visit the AGN website and select the Languages dropdown or click the Accessibility button. We are excited about this initiative and look forward to expanding it further in the near future.

COMMUNITY VOICES:

AMPLIFYING MULTICULTURAL STORIES ON 5EBI

In South Australia, 5EBI is far from the only organisation espousing values of diversity and mobilising various ethnic groups into the fields of mass communication. Perhaps we're just the most visible (audible?); being a radio station.

Others do the same valuable work, and the Multicultural Community Council of South Australia are steady achievers of long-standing in this area. 5EBI's links with MCCSA run deep, and the strongest link between our two organisations in recent times would be the MCCSA's very own Community Voices programme on our air-waves.

Each week, for half an hour on Tuesday afternoons, the MCCSA comes onto 103.1 FM to talk enthusiastically about their own activities and services - but they also feature presenters from other community organizations: Vishva Hindu Parishad of Australia Inc. (broadcasting in Hindi); the Arta Cultural Centre (broadcasting in Persian); the Turkish Association of SA; the Russian Women's Association of SA; and the Arabic Language and Culture Association of SA.

These groups all appear in rotation, so their approaches to broadcasting, and the sorts of information they share, all make up for a very diverse programme; and one which has found a diverse audience.

As Production Coordinator at EBI, I have watched Community Voices, from its genesis, go from strength to strength; and the roster of presenters has not wavered or slowed down. Long may it continue!



HUMAN EXPLOITATION COMMUNITY OFFICERS SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY

Led by the Australian Federal Police (AFP), Human Exploitation Community Officers (HECOs) are a capability that delivers targeted outreach and education relating to human exploitation, specifically online child sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

Six sworn police members are now operating as HECOs in each State and Territory and Federal Agent Afra PRODAN is delighted to be appointed the HECO for South Australia (SA) and the Northern Territory (NT).

Afra has over 24 years policing experience with both State and Federal Police, having served

operationally in various regions around Australia as well as overseas. Afra has worked in a variety of roles throughout her policing career, however, is particularly passionate about people's rights and supporting the community.

“My father was born overseas, and I am very aware and proud that Australia is a multicultural nation. I am looking forward to establishing connections and building relationships with our diverse SA community, and in doing so raise awareness and education to prevent human exploitation from occurring”.

HECOs fulfill a community liaison role designed to address an identified gap in delivering dedicated prevention and education initiatives to community groups, schools, members of the public, and have a strong focus on outreach in regional Australia.

The HECOs :

- » Provide an opportunity for intervention and prevention of victimisation across the online child sexual exploitation and human trafficking crime types
- » Deliver targeted education and prevention initiatives with a focus on at-risk and vulnerable areas of the community



HECO engagement with STTARS – Survivors of Torture and Trauma Assistance and Rehabilitation Service.

- » Provide resources to support the community, including the recent roll out of resources for linguistically diverse Australian families within the community.

There is evidence that slavery and slavery-like practices occur in SA, taking many forms including: forced marriage, labour exploitation and forced labour, commercial and domestic servitude and sexual exploitation.

Reports of human trafficking and slavery to the AFP have reached an all-time high, following a 12 per cent increase in the 2023-24 financial year whereby the AFP received 382 reports of modern slavery and human trafficking offences.

During the 2023-24 financial year the AFP-led Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) reports an increase of 45 per cent reports of online child exploitation, recording 58,503 reports of online child abuse, an average of 160 reports per day.

AFP Commander ACCCE and Human Exploitation Helen SCHNEIDER said the spike in reports was concerning but a valuable resource in the fight against child exploitation.

“While the increase is confronting, authorities can only help those we know about so we continue to encourage parents and caregivers to engage with their children to talk about how they can remain safe online and learn how to report”.

It is important to acknowledge that these reports are more than just numbers and that they represent innocent lives in the community. With HECOs raising awareness of laws in Australia and supporting victims, we can continue to prevent these heinous crimes.

To request HECO engagement email ACCCE-HECO@afp.gov.au

If there is imminent danger or risk of harm, call ‘000’ triple zero.

If there is no immediate risk of harm, contact the AFP:

- 131 237 (131 AFP) or
- afp.gov.au/report-crime

www.afp.gov.au/what-we-do/crime-types/human-trafficking/human-trafficking-slavery-indicators



HECO engagement with MOSAIC Adelaide 2024.



CROATIAN CLUB ADELAIDE TO CELEBRATE 75TH ANNIVERSARY WITH SPECTACULAR GALA EVENT

In 2025, the Croatian Club Adelaide will mark a historic milestone – its 75th anniversary. To commemorate this remarkable achievement, the Club will host a grand Gala on April 26th, 2025, bringing together the Croatian community, supporters and friends from across South Australia and beyond.

Founded on April 25th, 1950, the Croatian Club Adelaide was established by a passionate group of Croatian migrants dedicated to preserving their cultural heritage and fostering a sense of community. Driven by the threat of cultural erasure during a period of significant political and social upheaval in their homeland, these pioneers created a welcoming space for Croatians to celebrate their traditions, assist newly arrived migrants, and to support the thriving Croatian community in South Australia.

The Club's humble beginnings saw early fundraising efforts and the eventual purchase

of the first dedicated venue. For 75 years, 'The Dom' in its various iterations has stood as a central hub for the Croatian community and its supporters, ensuring a welcoming space where people can come together to socialise, dance, sing, learn and share the beauty of Croatian food, language, history and culture. Over the years, the Club has also embraced other ethnicities and cultures, fostering an inclusive environment where all are encouraged to join in and celebrate diversity, building a stronger and more united community.

The tireless and dedicated work of Club members and volunteers in building new clubrooms has been instrumental in this progress, with their efforts forming the foundation of the Club's continued success. The Croatian Club Adelaide has also been home to numerous Croatian cultural and social associations, including

Adelaide Croatia Soccer Club (established in 1952), the Croatian Ethnic School (originally founded in 1961), Hrvatska Žena Katarina Zrinski – Croatian Women's Auxiliary (founded in 1974), Croatian Folkloric Ensemble – HFS Lenek (founded in 1951), as well as various other political and cultural groups. These organisations have played an integral role in the Club's evolution.

The club also is also grateful for the ongoing support of the City of Charles Sturt and the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

As part of the 75th anniversary celebrations, the Gala will be an unforgettable evening of Croatian music, dance, food and heritage. The event will showcase the rich history and cultural traditions that have shaped the Club and the Croatian community in Adelaide over the past seven and a half decades.



4 WAYS TO HELP AUSTRALIAN ELECTIONS REMAIN SAFE AND FAIR!

Australians will soon vote at a Federal election.

Every Australian has the right to vote for the candidate or party of their choice.

Around the world we have seen increasing interference in democratic countries' elections. Your vote is important, help us protect our elections' integrity in 4 easy steps.

1. Enrol to vote

Australian citizens over the age of 18 must enrol and vote in Federal elections.

Information about enrolling for the first time or updating your enrolment can be found on the Australian Electoral Commission Website: <https://www.aec.gov.au/>

You do not need to wait for the federal election to be called to enrol or update your enrolment details. Once the Federal election is called, there will only be limited time for you to do this.

Failure to enrol or vote in elections may result in a fine.

2. Beware of false information

During an election, there may be people or groups trying to influence the way you vote. This can include family, friends, social media content and commentators.

Your vote is your choice. No one else gets to decide it for you.

The Australian Electoral Commission's Stop and Consider campaign encourages voters to think critically about information that may be false or misleading, or that tries to undermine trust in Australian electoral processes.

3. Get the right information

The Australian Electoral Commission website has information on how to vote and even has a tool where you can practise filling in a ballot paper: https://www.aec.gov.au/Voting/How_to_Vote/

They also have resources about how to vote in a number of languages (including the Stop and Consider campaign): https://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Translated_information/#download

https://www.aec.gov.au/About_AEC/Translated_information/practise-voting/

Please contact the Home Affairs South Australian Community Liaison Officers at sa.community.engagement@homeaffairs.gov.au if you have any questions about the Federal Election.

4. Report suspicious behaviour

It is illegal to threaten, pressure or bribe someone to vote in a particular way. If you are being pressured, threatened or bribed to vote in a particular way, you should contact the National Security Hotline on 1800 1234 00 or hotline@nationalsecurity.gov.au. Reporting can be anonymous to respect your security and privacy.

How Australia ensures our elections are safe and fair:

The Australian electoral process has many features that help protect the voting process and election result. All voting in Australian elections is done by secret ballot. A secret ballot is a voting method where only you know who you voted for.

You can read more about the history of the secret ballot on the Museum of Australian Democracy website. <https://moadoph.gov.au/explore/democracy/what-is-the-secret-ballot>

EXCITING DEVELOPMENTS FROM STRENGTH FOR LIFE

Strength for Life has been one of COTA SA's flagship programs over the past 20 years and continues to deliver sessions all over South Australia in 117 different locations. Strength for Life is a tailored strength, balance and fitness program for people aged 50+ with a focus social connections and delivered with cultural responsiveness.

Some exciting changes are on the horizon! COTA SA will soon be offering new choices and new opportunities for health and wellbeing along with the Strength for Life program with the launch of two upcoming classes for older South Australians: Easy Moves and Better Balance.

BETTER BALANCE

is a group fitness class targeted as an entry level program that enables participants to improve their balance and stability so they can develop confidence and baseline skills.

EASY MOVES

offers participants a range of entry-level function-based exercise classes that are specifically designed to improve flexibility, balance, strength and joint mobility.

Easy Moves and Better Balance will complement our existing Strength for Life program leading to a selection of choices for older people and greater access to programs that suit them.

We look forward to sharing more information about these exciting programs in the months to come!

Do you have a certificate in Leisure and Health?

Easy Moves was handed over to COTA SA by Active Ageing Australia last year and as part of our planning to integrate these new programs, we're currently working with our existing SFL stakeholders and our new Easy Moves and Better Balance stakeholders.

The first step towards making these courses available to participants was updating the Easy Moves Training Platform and getting it up and running for Instructors, which we're pleased to have delivered. The Easy Moves online training is available here.

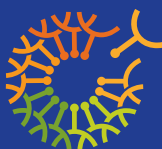
For more information
or if you have questions
please contact:

activeageing@cotasa.org.au



**Strength
for Life**

COTA
For older Australians



MCCSA STAFF MEMBER RECOGNISED FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO SUICIDE PREVENTION

Perrin Abbas, a dedicated advocate for mental health and suicide prevention, has been recognized for her unwavering commitment to this critical work. Recently, she was awarded the South Australian LiFE Award for Outstanding Contribution, a testament to her efforts in creating safe spaces for people to be heard, supported, and valued.

As a staff member of the Multicultural Communities Council of SA (MCCSA), Perrin's achievements and the recognition she has received make us incredibly proud. This award is not only a reflection of her professional dedication but also a testament to her personal journey, shaped by loss and the silent burdens many carry. Perrin remains focused on ensuring that those who feel unseen or unheard have a safe space where they can speak openly and receive the support they need.

For Perrin, suicide prevention is about more than policies and statistics—it is about people, the conversations we have, and those we continue to struggle with as a society. Her work continues to foster meaningful connections and advocates for change, helping to break down the stigma surrounding mental health. Her recognition by Suicide Prevention Australia

highlights the impact of her work and the importance of ongoing efforts to support vulnerable communities.

In addition to this prestigious award, Perrin has also been nominated for the National LiFE Awards, which will take place in Perth this May. This nomination represents not only a personal achievement but also a broader acknowledgment of the essential work being done in suicide prevention across South Australia and beyond.

Perrin expresses her deep gratitude to Suicide Prevention Australia, her fellow nominees,

and the communities working tirelessly in this space. She dedicates this award to those who continue to listen, advocate, and fight for change. Every conversation, every connection, and every moment of understanding makes a difference—and will continue to do so.

The South Australian LiFE Awards serve as a reminder of the vital importance of suicide prevention work, reinforcing that every effort to support mental health and wellbeing matters.



CONNECT ACCESS BELONG:

CREATING INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

Imagine the joy of feeling truly connected — whether it's through sharing your passion, joining a community event / group or simply finding a welcoming space where you feel included.

For people living with a disability, people experiencing mental health challenges, and their families and carers, these connections are invaluable.

This is where Connect Access Belong (CAB), a new initiative by the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia (MCCSA), is making a difference. Designed to foster inclusion and community participation, CAB helps people build relationships, access community programs and activities including arts, sports and recreation, and develop a genuine sense of belonging.

Bridging Barriers, Building Community

For many people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, settling in a new country can be overwhelming. Language barriers, unfamiliar systems, and limited networks often create obstacles to full participation. Connect Access Belong addresses these challenges by offering practical support through three key pathways:

- 1. Community Connectors** – Trained individuals with lived experience of disability or mental health challenges assist participants in finding social activities and support networks.
- 2. Intercultural & Disability Training** – Workshops provide community groups and mainstream organisations with skills in cultural intelligence, Disability access, and inclusion.
- 3. Access & Inclusion Network** – Regular gatherings with community groups and mainstream organisations who deliver Arts, Sports and Recreational activities, foster meaningful learnings and professional development to create a more accessible and inclusive community.

Ayma, a skilled professional from Venezuela, shares how becoming a CAB Connector has transformed her experience:

“Helping others in my community understand the local area gives me a sense of purpose and helps me establish myself professionally.”

GET INVOLVED

If you're a person with a disability, experiencing mental health challenges, or a family member or carer from a CALD background, we're here to support you.

To learn more or to register your interest as a participant, contact MCCSA at cab@mccsa.org.au or call 8345 5266. Information is also available on the MCCSA website www.mccsa.org.au/project/cab/

Together, we can build a more connected, inclusive community.

THE DISABILITY GATEWAY:

CONNECTING YOU TO INFORMATION AND SERVICES

The Disability Gateway is a free, Australian government national service connecting people with disability, their families, and carers to trusted information and services. Disability Gateway is a central point of entry for providing information and referrals to disability supports and services in your local area.

Disability Gateway assists with information and referrals in employment, income and finance, transport, housing, education, rights and legal, health and wellbeing and more.

The Disability Gateway phone-line team provides one-on-one personalised support and research over the phone. They take the necessary steps to ensure that all the information they provide is accurate so that you receive validated information and referrals to the services and programs you need. The Disability Gateway can also connect you with in-language support and services where available, and there is an easy-read function available on the website.

If you need support in a language other than English, the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) can help. Call the Disability Gateway on 1800 643 787 and ask for an interpreter, or you can call the TIS National on 131 450 and ask them to connect you to the Disability Gateway.

Call Disability Gateway on 1800 643 787 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 8pm AEDT), or visit disabilitygateway.gov.au for more information.



“Not everyone is comfortable with advocating for themselves. That's why having all that information in one place is really empowering.”

**Grace
- Disability Gateway User**

NAVIGATING THE PATH TO SAFETY:

FREE LEGAL SUPPORT FOR PROTECTION VISA APPLICANTS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Building a new life in a foreign land can be challenging, but for migrants seeking asylum in South Australia, the process can feel overwhelming. Legal Services understands the complexities of seeking a Protection Visa and offers free legal support to guide you every step of the way.

Expert Guidance Every Step of the Way

Seeking asylum is a serious and complex matter. Having access to professional legal advice is essential to protect your rights and improve your chances of success. Legal Services offers free consultations to ensure you're fully informed about your options.

With the government currently receiving 2,000 Protection Visa applications each month, over 90% of these are refused due to various eligibility issues. Our migration specialists will work closely with you to assess your circumstances, helping you decide if a Protection Visa is the right choice and explore other visa options that might be suitable.

If your Protection Visa application has already been refused—whether or not you initially sought assistance from Legal Services—we can offer free legal advice to evaluate whether there are grounds to challenge the decision. If an appeal is viable, we may be able to provide legal representation before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, Federal Court, or High Court (subject to a means test).

Supporting You in Every Language

Clear communication is crucial, and we provide free interpreter services to ensure seamless conversations between you, your lawyer, and relevant authorities. Free face-to-face appointments with both a lawyer and interpreter are available to assist you in understanding your rights and options.

Empowering Migrant Communities

Beyond individual support, Legal Services is committed to empowering migrant communities through our Community Legal Education program. These free workshops, tailored for newcomers, provide essential information on navigating the Australian legal system and addressing key legal topics. Interpreter services are available to ensure full access for everyone.

Contact us today for a free consultation:

Free Legal Helpline:

1300 366 424

Website: www.lsc.sa.gov.au

Don't face this journey alone.
Reach out today for the support you deserve.



Do you need legal help regarding a Protection Visa?

Legal Services can provide you with free legal advice and representation regarding Protection Visas.

We can assist you to find out if you are eligible for a Protection Visa or another more suitable visa, to understand the application process and the implications of a Protection Visa refusal and to complete and lodge a Protection Visa application.

We may also be able to provide representation to appeal Protection Visa refusals.

If you speak a language other than English and require an interpreter you can contact us through the Translating and Interpreting Service.

Phone **131450** then ask for **1300 366 424**

Legal Help for all South Australians

lsc.sa.gov.au

WELCOME TO OUR WEEKLY ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASS

Every Wednesday morning at MCCSA, we host an English language class tailored for adults. These classes are not academic in nature; they focus not on passing exams or completing assignments, but rather on personal development and enhancing communication skills. Our goal is to equip students with the ability to connect with others and feel confident in their English proficiency.

The class began several years ago when community members expressed interest in improving their English. What started as a small initiative has since evolved, reaching out to members across the MCCSA communities, offering a space for learning, growth, and connection.

"I teach because I love teaching," says Sylvia Barnes, one of our dedicated volunteer teachers. "My goal is to help students develop language skills that enable them to communicate effectively with one another, to support each other as friends, to learn from each other's diverse cultures, and to have fun along the way. It's about celebrating who we are as a community."

While English is the main focus, it's not uncommon to hear a blend of other languages in the background, especially during interactive games and group activities. "It's all part of

the experience," Sylvia adds with a smile. "Language is not just about words; it's about connecting with people and sharing stories."

Another teacher, Bill Barnes, who helped start the English class years ago, shares the same passion for teaching. "I love seeing a student experience that 'aha' moment," he says, reminiscing about the moments when students light up, often pointing to the ceiling and exclaiming, 'I understand!' It's these moments of clarity and connection that make teaching so rewarding."

Students also have the opportunity to learn about Australia's rich culture. "We love to share Australian culture with our students," says Bill. From local excursions to the Art Gallery, the Royal Show, and even casual lunches at the end of each term, these experiences help strengthen the sense of community and allow students to immerse themselves in Australian life.

The class has welcomed students from diverse backgrounds, including Bosnia, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Mexico, Russia, Vietnam, and many more. Each student brings their unique perspective, contributing to a lively, multicultural environment where everyone learns from one another.

At MCCSA, we believe in the power of language to unite people. Whether our students are staying in Australia or planning to return to their home countries, the skills they gain here enable them to connect, share, and feel a part of something greater than themselves.

As we continue to grow and evolve, we remain committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive space where language learning goes beyond textbooks—it becomes a pathway to building lasting friendships, understanding, and global community.



MAKING A COMPLAINT ABOUT HEALTHCARE – TIPS TO HELP YOU

Sometimes healthcare doesn't go the way you expect, and you might wonder what you can do about it. Maybe the health practitioner didn't explain the procedure to you before they did it, or didn't tell you about all the options available for your care. You have the right to safe and high-quality healthcare, and if you don't get it, you have the right to make a complaint.

Making a complaint can help improve healthcare by helping health practitioners and health services learn, and it can mean that someone else doesn't have the same experience as you.

Here are some tips to help you make a complaint.

Get support

Make sure you're looking after yourself because making a complaint can be an emotional experience. You might like to let a family member or friend know what you're going through, or to speak with someone from a community organisation or advocacy group. There are services available for you, including cultural support or a translator or interpreter.

Find out how to make a complaint

Speak with someone at the health service you're making the complaint about or look on their website to find out about their process. You might be able to make your complaint on the phone, in person, online or by using a form.

Keep notes

When you're making the complaint, keep notes about what you do because it can help you keep track of things. Keep any documents sent to you and write things down, like who you speak to and when.

Ask questions

If you're not sure about something, you can ask questions. You might like to know things like, what happens next? Or, will my complaint be kept private?

What to do if you're not happy with the response

If you're not happy with the response you get about your complaint you can take it further. You can find out where to go next on this website www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Further-information/Health-complaints-organisations

More information

If you'd like more information about what you can make a complaint about and where to make it, visit www.ahpra.gov.au/Notifications/Concerned-about-a-health-practitioner



PROTECTING AUSTRALIA FROM FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

Foreign interference threat to our community

Foreign interference threatens the things that we value most about Australia: our social cohesion, our trusted democracy, our human rights and universal freedoms. Left unchecked, foreign interference can have a damaging effect on our national security.

Members of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse communities are at greater risk of interference from foreign powers seeking to exert authority and control over them.

Foreign interference in our community can include community members being:

- » co-opted or coerced to advance the economic or political interests of a foreign country at Australia's expense;
- » pressured by foreign powers to transfer wealth back to foreign countries;
- » coerced to return to their country of origin in response to threats and intimidation, including to their family members; and
- » silenced for their dissenting views by foreign powers through monitoring, harassment or intimidation.

For more information go to: <https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/about-us/our-portfolios/national-security/countering-foreign-interference>

Australian Government response

The Australian Government wants people to feel safe and be free to express who they are, including their faith and heritage. It is taking action to protect all people in Australia from acts of foreign interference.

Australia has a Counter Foreign Interference Taskforce that assesses, investigates, disrupts and, where possible, prosecutes acts of foreign interference.

The Counter Foreign Interference Coordination Centre (CFICC) works with all levels of government, industry, academia and communities to strengthen resilience to foreign interference.

Representatives from CFICC can meet with you and members of your community to talk about foreign interference and the steps you can take to stop it happening. Contact CFICC in South Australia at CFICC.SA@homeaffairs.gov.au.

Reporting foreign interference

The best defence against foreign interference is to ensure all Australians have information on how to recognise and report it.

If you think you are a victim of foreign interference, or you see it happening to someone else, you can report this to the National Security Hotline (NSH). The NSH operates 24/7 and every call is taken seriously. You can report without sharing your name or your details.

If you need an interpreter, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 and ask them to call the NSH.

Community language resources

The Australian government has information on foreign interference available in a range of community languages. Go to: <https://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/what-can-i-do/report-suspicious-behaviour/information-in-languages>
<https://www.afp.gov.au/crimes/espionage-and-foreign-interference#factsheet>





Australia Day

AUSTRALIA DAY COUNCIL RECOGNISES GIUSEPPE GERACITANO FOR LIFELONG COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

The Australia Day Council proudly announces that Giuseppe Geracitano has received the South Australia's Award for Active Citizenship Commendation 2025, honouring his lifelong dedication to South Australia's Italian and multicultural communities.

With a career spanning over five decades, Giuseppe has been a champion of Italian language and cultural education. As a co-founder of SAATI and a key figure in the Italian Education Movement, he has advanced bilingual education and enriched academic discourse at the University of Adelaide.

His legacy includes revitalising the Italian Festival in 1980, leading to the creation of the Italian Carnevale Festival, and serving as President of the Coordinating Italian Committee (CIC), where he spearheaded welfare initiatives, earthquake relief efforts, and community resources such as an Italian lending library and a community newspaper.

As the founder of the Italian History Society of South Australia, Giuseppe has preserved the stories of Italian immigrants for future generations.



His work with the Dante Alighieri Society further highlights his commitment to cultural preservation and community cohesion.

Giuseppe received his Active Citizenship Commendation on 27 February 2025, at a ceremony at Government House Adelaide, celebrating his impact on South Australia's multicultural landscape. This follows his recognition as Senior Citizen of the Year on 24 January 2025, by the City of Charles Sturt at Woodville Town Hall.

"This recognition is not just for me, but for all who work to preserve our heritage, support our communities, and promote multiculturalism. Our stories, languages, and traditions make us stronger together, and I am proud to ensure they are remembered and celebrated."

– GIUSEPPE GERACITANO –

MULTICULTURAL MEN'S MENTAL HEALTH: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROJECT

The Multicultural Men's Mental Health Community Connections Project is a pioneering two-year initiative led by the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia (MCCSA) and proudly supported by the Fay Fuller Foundation. This project brought together four diverse multicultural men's groups—the Association of the Burundian Community of SA, Australians for Syria SA, Latin American Society of South Australia, and Kabudu Men's Group—to address and enhance men's mental health and well-being within their respective community contexts.

At its core, the initiative aimed to create safe, non-judgmental spaces where men could engage in open discussions about mental health, fostering peer support and reducing stigma. Each participating community identified "connectors" who were trained by MCCSA to facilitate the project. These connectors played a crucial role in linking community members with mental health services and promoting awareness. Regular gatherings, including activities like games, workshops, barbecues, and walks, were organised to encourage camaraderie and open dialogue.

"The best people that know community are actual community themselves. They can look to what's actually really happening in community that's leading to poorer mental health and wellbeing outcomes and actually can determine responses that work towards those root causes in a preventative sense."

NIALL FAY
CEO | FAY FULLER FOUNDATION

A significant component of the project was the collaboration with Breakthrough Mental Health Research Foundation to deliver Mental Health First Aid Training. This training empowered participants with the skills to recognise early signs of mental illness and confidently engage in meaningful mental health conversations within their communities.

The project also facilitated partnerships between communities and local councils, improving access to community spaces and normalising mental health discussions. This approach not only built community resilience but also

influenced the mental health sector to better understand the unique challenges faced by culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities.

"We started having conversations, that was the first step. Just to talk about it, to be man enough to talk about it. [...] now we see a lot of people now coming out and saying things that they would have never talked about"

- AMOS DAVIES
CONNECTOR | KABUDU MEN'S GROUP

The success of this initiative underscores the value of community-led mental health prevention and early intervention. By tailoring approaches to the specific cultural contexts of each group, the project has made significant strides in promoting mental well-being and reducing stigma among multicultural men in South Australia.

For a visual overview of the project's impact and testimonials from participants, you can watch the following video: <https://youtu.be/EgZ-J8iHdqU>

The graphic features a large blue circle on a yellow background with the text "MULTICULTURAL MEN MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS PROJECT". To the right, the text "Communities Leading The Way" is displayed above logos for MCCSA, Fay Fuller Foundation, LASSA, and KABUDU. The MCCSA logo includes the text "Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia".

BUILDING BRIDGES, BREAKING BARRIERS: REFLECTIONS ON THE HARMONY DAY LECTURE 2025

The 2025 Harmony Day Lecture at the University of South Australia's Bradley Forum brought together key voices in racial equity, providing a platform for critical discussions on inclusivity and systemic change. Hosted on 18 March, the event featured Mr Giridharan Sivaraman, Race Discrimination Commissioner from the Australian Human Rights Commission, as the keynote speaker.

Mr Sivaraman's address focused on Australia's progress in advancing racial equity, highlighting the crucial role of organisational accountability in diversity initiatives. He explored how policy frameworks can drive tangible improvements in equity and shared practical strategies for fostering inclusivity across different sectors. His speech resonated deeply with attendees, sparking meaningful conversations about the role individuals and organisations play in shaping a more just society.

Following the keynote, Commissioner for Equal Opportunity SA Jodeen Carney led a thought-provoking Q&A session. The discussion touched on both the ongoing challenges and emerging solutions in tackling racial discrimination within communities. Participants engaged in a robust dialogue, reflecting on lived experiences

and identifying actionable steps towards a more inclusive future.

The event was made possible through the collaboration of Reconciliation South Australia, the Don Dunstan Foundation, and Equal Opportunity SA. A special acknowledgement was given to Uncle Tamaru from Deadly Mob, who conducted an engaging Welcome to Country, reminding attendees of the deep cultural heritage and continuing sovereignty of the Kaurna people. His words served as a powerful reminder of the ongoing work needed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including truth-telling, treaty discussions, and ensuring genuine representation in decision-making spaces. The conversation on racial equity must include and prioritise justice for First Nations peoples, whose voices and

leadership remain vital in shaping a more inclusive future.

Held in the lead-up to the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March, the lecture underscored the ongoing commitment needed to combat racism in all its forms. While the event itself has concluded, the conversation on racial equity must continue beyond the forum walls.

As Australia works towards greater inclusivity, individuals and organisations alike are encouraged to reflect on their role in dismantling racial barriers. What steps can we take in our daily lives to foster a society where diversity is not only recognised but truly valued?

We have the power to bridge divides, challenge inequalities, and create a more just and inclusive future.





2025 MULTICULTURAL GLOBAL FEST IN PORT LINCOLN A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

The 2025 Multicultural Global Fest held in Port Lincoln, Sunday March 9th, has been hailed as an outstanding success.

Combined with the Giant Kite Spectacular on the following Monday, the event attracted well over 1000 people from all walks of life to celebrate the rich cultural diversity that defines the local community.

The events, which took place in March, at the picturesque Flinders Park and Centenary Oval, offered a vibrant showcase of colourful flags, gigantic kites, international food, music, dance, and art, bringing together locals and visitors to enjoy a truly global experience.

Organised by the Port Lincoln Multicultural Council and supported by local businesses and community groups, the festival featured an array of activities, including live performances, international cuisine stalls, cultural exhibits, and family-friendly entertainment. Festival goers were able to immerse themselves in the traditions and stories of cultures from across the world, with highlights including traditional Bhutanese, Filipino and Indonesian dances, Japanese drumming

performances, Latin American music, and a diverse range of food stalls offering delicious dishes from across the Globe.

"The success of this year's Multicultural Global Fest speaks to the spirit of inclusivity and celebration that defines Port Lincoln," said Festival Organiser and Port Lincoln Multicultural Council President, Diana Smith. "It was truly heartwarming to see such a large turnout of people, all coming together to celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures that make up our community. This event is a testament to the power of diversity and the shared joy of experiencing different cultures." "Unfortunately, the winds weren't quite strong enough to see all the enormous kites take to the air, however, enough were able to rise to delight the crowds."

One of the key features of this year's festival was the participation of local performers, artists, and food vendors, who brought their unique talents and specialties to the event. Visitors had the chance to not only enjoy food and performances but also interact with cultural ambassadors who shared the stories and significance behind their traditions.

Local businesses were also thrilled by the event's success, with many reporting selling out of goods by the end of the day.

"We are incredibly proud to see people from all cultural backgrounds come together and share stories whilst also recognising the important contributions they bring to our communities. Hopefully we will see the Multicultural Global Fest return, perhaps be held every second year," said Mrs Smith. "Port Lincoln is a diverse, welcoming, and vibrant community, and events like this help foster unity and understanding among our residents. We look forward to seeing this festival become an even bigger part of our city's calendar in the years to come. We are incredibly thankful for the support from organisations like the Port Lincoln Bendigo Community Bank, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Port Lincoln City Council, local business sponsors and performers, volunteers and a hard-working committee who make events such as this an outstanding success."

The event highlighted Port Lincoln's potential as a cultural hub on the Eyre Peninsula and underscored the importance of supporting multiculturalism in the region.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

MCCSA's diverse programs for a vibrant community



Transport Services

MCCSA's affordable and reliable transport solution for community organisations and individuals in South Australia. MCCSA has four buses in its fleet, including one wheelchair accessible bus, and can accommodate up to 12 people. MCCSA also offers volunteer drivers and is seeking expressions of interest for 'Going Places' guided tours.

For more information, please contact Geoffrey Brown via geoffrey.brown@mccsa.org.au or call 0481 948 728.



Community Facilities

MCCSA offers a variety of community spaces for meetings, forums, workshops, and functions. These facilities include a 50-seat hall that is *free of charge* for registered MCCSA community groups, with a donation appreciated for rubbish removal and electricity. The hall is also available for commercial hire.

To hire an MCCSA community space, call us on 8345 5266 or email mccsa@mccsa.org.au



Community Development

Community Development is focused on providing individual support to vulnerable and emerging culturally diverse communities and their members. The program offers a range of activities, including workshops, leadership and networking events, and capacity-building activities.

For further information, please email Somi Lindsay at somi.lindsay@mccsa.org.au



Aged Care Volunteer Visitor Scheme

CVS has expanded and has been renamed to ACVVS. This program facilitates one-on-one friendships between older people and visitors speaking their language. They visit to build relationships and add warmth to the lives of senior citizens, reducing their loneliness and isolation.

If you would like to volunteer, please email Maggie Asaad via maggie.asaad@mccsa.org.au or call 8213 4604.



Men's Group

MCCSA's Multicultural Men's Group aims to improve mental health outcomes for men from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The group provides a safe and supportive space for men to connect, share experiences, and learn about mental health and wellbeing. Through a range of activities, including guest speakers and social outings, the Men's Group encourages men to break down cultural barriers and if necessary, seek help when needed.

For further information, contact Ukash Ali Ahmed via ukash.ahmed@mccsa.org.au



Building Employer Confidence

Building Employer Confidence in Disability and Inclusion is a program that aims to create inclusive and diverse workplaces by providing training and support to employers, and supporting skilled CALD workers with disabilities to find suitable workplaces. This program offers a range of resources and services, including training workshops, internships, employer and diversity audits.

Want to know more? Contact Perrin Abbas on 8213 4603 or perrin.abbas@mccsa.org.au





Multicultural Playgroup

MCCSA's Multicultural Playgroup provides a safe and inclusive space for parents and children from diverse cultural backgrounds to connect and socialize. It aims to support children's development and help families overcome isolation through a range of social activities.

To get involved, contact Abby Liu via abby.liu@mccsa.org.au



Cultural Intelligence Training

Unlock the power of cultural intelligence with culturalQ! The service is designed for organisations that want to develop and implement diversity and inclusion strategies, and ensure that their services and products are provided inclusively, equitably, and effectively.

To book your session, email culturalq@mccsa.org.au



Consultancy

MCCSA prides itself on its connection with the multicultural communities of South Australia, understanding their needs and advocating for them. MCCSA and experienced staff are available to provide consultancy services on a range of topics that impact the CALD communities of South Australia. This provides a direct link for stakeholders and service providers to access and understand the needs of their communities more clearly.

Contact MCCSA via email mccsa@mccsa.org.au or call 8345 5266.



Cultural Connections in Disability

Cultural Connections in Disability is a project that develops and delivers culturally sensitive activities and resources for CALD people with disability. This aims to enhance their understanding of available support and services, build their capacity

to overcome social isolation, and explain their right to lead a good life. MCCSA produced a Disability Inclusion Video Series in collaboration with various communities and stakeholders across South Australia.

For more information, contact Katherine Greer at katherine.greer@mccsa.org.au



Interested in Volunteering?

MCCSA offers many exciting volunteer opportunities for those seeking a meaningful way to give back to their community. From Playgroup volunteers to tour guides and bus drivers, community visitors, and guest speakers, there's something for everyone. By volunteering with us, you'll be making a positive impact on the lives of CALD individuals and families, while also gaining valuable skills and experience.

Join our team today and make a difference! Email your CV and cover letter to mccsa@mccsa.org.au

Building Successful Communities



Your Voice Matters.

Share your story by emailing communications@mccsa.org.au