

MCCSA Community Voices

WINTER 2025



50 Years of Building Successful Communities

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FROM THE CEO

HELENA KYRIAZOPOULOS OAM



50 YEARS OF BUILDING SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITIES:

LEADING SOUTH AUSTRALIA TOWARD MULTICULTURAL EXCELLENCE

As I reflect on the efforts of our organisation to uplift and serve our many vibrant multicultural communities, I cannot help but to feel inspired by the monumental difference we make in the lives of others every day. Since 1975 the MCCSA has paved the way for new generations of multicultural leaders to excel and harness their potential for the betterment of others, to advocate for inclusive policy, and to drive meaningful change.

On the 18th of May we commemorated this legacy with our 50th Anniversary Jubilee Community Celebration held at the Torrens Parade Grounds and attended by a number of dignitaries and supporters, notably our patron the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, the Honourable Peter Malinauskas MP, Premier of South Australia and the Honourable Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs & Tourism among many other friends whose ongoing support have been greatly appreciated. This well-attended event marked a significant milestone in our history as it honoured the many individuals who have worked tirelessly to build

MCCSA into the organisation it is today. We extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude to our supporters, allies and members who contribute so much to our mission.

Generously hosted by the Honourable Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs & Tourism, MCCSA continued celebrations of our 50th Anniversary Jubilee in the Balcony Room of the Parliament House of South Australia on the 12th of June. We wish to extend our deepest gratitude and thanks to the Minister for their ongoing support.

The event was well attended by the MCCSA community, Life Members, Board Members, staff, supporters and friends as we commemorated this important milestone. We were honoured to have special guests in attendance including Mr Peter Doukas OAM, Chairperson of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia - FECCA, and our MC for the evening, Cressida O'Hanlon MP. We also acknowledge the steadfast guidance and exceptional leadership of MCCSA

Chairperson, Mrs. Miriam Cocking.

The Scottish Associations of South Australia Inc generously contributed a Scottish Highlander and bagpipe performance for the evening as a shining testament to the richness and vibrancy that long-standing multicultural communities have been making to the fabric of South Australia for generations.

We are deeply grateful for the contributions of all those who attended the event. Finally, I would like to encourage our readers to save the date for our next commemorative event, the Inaugural MCCSA Multicultural Oration on the 20th August – stay tuned as there will be more information to come.

We look forward to welcoming you to future 50th Anniversary events this year and continuing our jubilee celebrations in 2025.

Helena

MCCSA JUBILEE CELEBRATION

On the 18th of May 2025, over 300 guests gathered at Torrens Parade Ground to mark MCCSA's 50th Anniversary Jubilee - a major milestone in our organisation's history.

The event brought together community leaders, members, and supporters to reflect on five decades of advocacy and multicultural leadership. Formal proceedings included speeches from our Patron, the Hon. Hieu Van Le AC, Premier Peter Malinauskas MP, and other dignitaries, along with a heartfelt address from MCCSA Chairperson Miriam Cocking, who has served the organisation for over 40 years.

The afternoon featured a community reflection, cultural performances, and a ceremonial cake cutting, followed by networking and shared memories over refreshments.

It was a proud and joyful celebration of the communities that shape us and the shared future we continue to build together.

We invite you to view our recap video [here](#) and the full event footage [here](#).





PARLIAMENT HOUSE RECEPTION

On the 12th of June 2025, MCCSA continued the commemorations proudly marking its 50th Anniversary Jubilee in the Balcony Room of Parliament House, South Australia, generously hosted by the Honourable Zoe Bettison MP, Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Tourism. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Minister for her continued support.

The event brought together Life Members, Board Members, staff, supporters, and friends from across the MCCSA

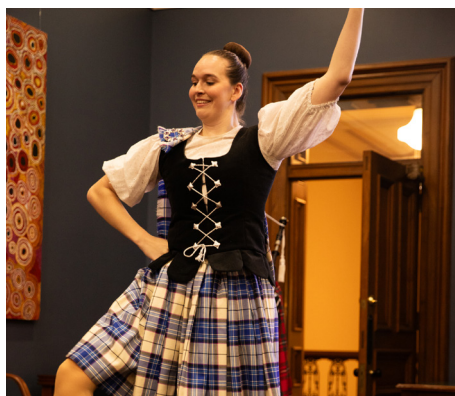
community to honour this significant milestone. We were privileged to welcome distinguished guests, including Mr Peter Doukas OAM, Chairperson of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia (FECCA), and our MC for the evening, Cressida O'Hanlon MP.

We also recognise the unwavering leadership and dedication of MCCSA Chairperson, Mrs Miriam Cocking.

A special highlight of the evening was a captivating

Scottish Highlander and bagpipe performance, generously offered by the Scottish Associations of South Australia — a vibrant and symbolic reflection of the enduring contributions that multicultural communities have made to South Australia's rich cultural landscape for generations.

We sincerely thank everyone who joined us for this memorable occasion and look forward to continuing our jubilee celebrations throughout 2025.



Visit our website for more highlights of our 50th Anniversary Celebrations: www.mccsa.org.au/50-years

A JOURNEY OF ADVOCACY AND INCLUSION:

MY EXPERIENCE AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT WITH DIFFERENT ABILITIES IN ADELAIDE

By Richard Kennedy

Arriving in Adelaide as an international student with different abilities at Flinders University was both exciting and challenging. Studying in the Disability and Community Inclusion program, I was eager to learn, grow, and contribute to the disability rights movement. However, I quickly realised that my journey would require adaptation, resilience, and advocacy to overcome the unique challenges faced by international students with different abilities.

Adjusting to a new academic system was a learning experience in itself. Unlike in my home country, Australian universities have established support systems for disabled students. However, navigating these services and in particular understanding accessibility policies, university processes, and support mechanisms - took time.

Additionally, financial barriers presented another challenge. International students with different abilities incur extra costs that domestic students don't face. For example, we are not eligible for programs like the Companion Card, which provides free public transport for personal support workers. These additional costs, combined with limited employment opportunities, highlight the layered

marginalisation experienced by students with different abilities from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

Despite these obstacles, I felt welcomed and supported. However, I also recognised that disability inclusion is an ongoing journey, requiring continuous learning and commitment from universities, students, and the broader community.

Therefore, I took on leadership roles that allowed me to advocate for greater inclusion and accessibility. As President of the Flinders University Students with Disabilities Association and a Representative on the Flinders Disability and Access Committee, I worked with students, university leaders, and disability organisations to create a more equitable and accessible campus.

Beyond the university, I focused on empowering people with different abilities from CALD backgrounds, ensuring that their voices were heard in disability policy discussions. I emphasised the intersection of disability and cultural diversity, highlighting how these identities shape experiences of discrimination and exclusion.

One of the biggest barriers for international students with different abilities is finding employment opportunities. Fortunately, I had the chance to intern under the Building Employer Confidence (BEC) Project, a collaboration between the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia (MCCSA) and Bedford Group—one of Australia's largest disability employers.

This internship provided me with valuable hands-on experience, allowing me to



ADDRESSING GAPS IN HEALTH LITERACY

NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH PREVENTIVE HEALTH SA

apply my academic knowledge in a real-world setting. I worked closely with Bedford clients—people with intellectual disabilities—helping them become more actively involved in decision-making within the organisation. This experience strengthened my passion for inclusive employment and workplace accessibility.

My advocacy and leadership efforts were recognised when I was awarded the International Student of the Year 2024 by StudyAdelaide and the South Australian Government. I also received awards for Academic Excellence, Peer Support, and Community Engagement, along with the Flinders University Chancellor's Letter of Commendation for balancing academic success with community involvement.

Adelaide has become my second home—a place where I have grown as a scholar, activist, and leader. This journey has reaffirmed my commitment to disability rights, inspiring me to pursue a career as an international disability rights lawyer and researcher.

Through my experiences, I hope to continue advocating for people with different abilities, especially those from CALD backgrounds, ensuring that true inclusion becomes a reality for all.

The ability to access, understand and use information to make informed decisions about health and wellbeing is a basic human right. Despite this, many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds still face barriers to good health literacy. These include a lack of culturally appropriate health services and resources, low digital literacy, and unfamiliarity with the Australian health and social support systems.

To address these gaps in South Australia, MCCSA has been engaged by Preventive Health SA to develop and pilot targeted health literacy initiatives over the next two years. As part of this exciting collaborative effort, MCCSA recently welcomed Katie to the team in a newly established role, to lead the initiative.

Born in Australia, to Chinese-Vietnamese parents, Katie has grown up in a large family, immersed in her culture. She feels fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience traditions through regular family gatherings and community events.

This has translated into an ongoing love and curiosity for other cultures, and you will often find her travelling, trying new foods and attending festivals.



*Introducing new MCCSA Staff Member: **Katie Trinh***

Katie credits her family for imparting their values of respect, kindness, compassion, hard work and equity from a young age and believes that everyone should be provided with the best chance to thrive in Australia.

Katie brings over a decade of experience working as a health promotion practitioner in SA and across south-west Sydney. She has worked closely with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to tailor approaches to preventive health issues at the local level, through to state-wide strategies and programs.

This partnership and initiative present a fantastic opportunity for MCCSA to leverage its community networks to inform and influence the health sector for more coordinated, sustained and intentional efforts to address health literacy, which will in turn reduce the inequities experienced by multicultural communities.

PALLIATIVE CARE RESEARCH PROJECT

Talking about death, dying, loss, and grief can be difficult, even though it is a natural part of life. Conversations about what people might want or need at the end of life don't always happen, especially where there are cultural and religious norms and expectations surrounding care, death, afterlife, and bereavement. But without those conversations, people may not get the care they want as illness gets more serious and the end-of-life approaches. Researchers know that people from non-English speaking backgrounds are less likely to use services offering care at the end of life—sometimes called palliative care.

With funding from The Hospital Research Foundation Group: Palliative Care, Associate Professor Jaklin Elliott, from The University of Adelaide, is leading a team of researchers to learn about how to support and encourage such conversations, helping people say and get care they want and need. In one study, researchers have been working with MCCSA and four communities—Filipino, German, Italian, and Vietnamese—exploring what people and

communities think, feel, and know about death, dying, loss, and grief. Supported by community leaders, people completed a survey before and after 6-months of activities aimed at promoting their knowledge and awareness around palliative care.

The survey focused on four areas:

- » practical knowledge (support through talking and doing)
- » factual knowledge (having information about legal, medical, and social tasks)
- » experience-based knowledge (wisdom through previous experiences of death), and
- » community knowledge (getting help and support within my community).

Comparing what people knew before and after the community-based activities, researchers found some differences between communities, but one thing in common. After the activities, people felt they had a better understanding of what was in their community that might provide help and support for those dealing with the end of life. They were also more

confident that they could find people and things in their community that would help them. Researchers believe that this might reflect the strength and resilience within these communities and a willingness to both give and accept help. Looking at the differences across communities indicated what might be most helpful for each community, as well as how to better work with communities through research in these sensitive areas. For example, community leaders realised that the language used by researchers, healthcare professionals, and lawyers was just too complicated, even though the survey was translated for each language group. Community leaders and researchers worked together to create a 'plain-speak' version of the survey, which has been useful in working with other communities who might not use palliative care.

These researchers are also hoping to speak with people who have a diagnosed life-limiting illness or those who care for them (usually family) for another study, called My Story, Our Journey. Visit the website for more information (<https://health.adelaide.edu.au/public-health-and-palliative-care/>), or email pcrc@adelaide.edu.au if you want to know more.

Dr Georgia Rowley

Associate Professor Jaklin Elliott
Palliative Care Research
Collaboration, School of Public
Health, University of Adelaide



University and community researchers at a focus group for the DLI study.

MCCSA SKILLED MIGRANT STORIES:

Marina Kretova

ORIGINALLY FROM: RUSSIA
CAREER: JOURNALIST, WRITER

A new chapter of my life began when I came to join with my husband, who had lived in South Australia for over 25 years. I arrived from Moscow, Russia, in 2017. Back home I was a well-known journalist and writer – the recipient of several literary awards, and author of multiple books. I was also recognised for writing lyrics to popular songs performed by leading pop stars. After adjusting to the climate and new surroundings, I began learning English at TAFE, which my visa permitted. As a journalist – a profession based on curiosity and communication – I was eager to engage with Australian life and culture.

In December 2021, I went to the “Russian Musical Kaleidoscope” concert, which marked the fifth anniversary of the Russian-speaking Women’s Association of South Australia “Fire-Bird.” I wrote an article about the event for the Russian-language Sydney newspaper Unification. Following its publication, the Association President, Lily Michailov thanked me for the article and invited me to visit MCCSA to connect more deeply with the community. That moment marked the beginning of a vibrant new phase of my life, reminisced of the active professional years I had in Moscow.

Since May 2023, I’ve been a regular host on Adelaide’s community radio 5EBI 103.1 FM, where, thanks to MCCSA, we now have a permanent Russian-language program, where Russian-speaking women of South Australia share their stories of adaptation and career development. The program has been warmly received and proudly showcases the achievements of talented women with Russian roots.

Another milestone came on August 9th 2024, with the official launch of the “E-Book Club – Reading Together”, where I also serve as a regular host.

Through this innovative project by “Fire-Bird”, supported by the South Australian Government and MCCSA, members received

tablets and headphones, enabling them to read, listen, and explore translations. Using modern technology to promote social inclusion, the club fosters connection and lifelong learning.

We read books about Australia’s history, early explorers, and the wisdom of Indigenous cultures, while embracing the values of a multicultural society. Our members eagerly anticipate every club meeting, radio show, and community event supported by MCCSA.

Our experience proves that it is never too late to start anew – that even those who arrive here later in life can adapt grow and live fully in a welcoming and supportive environment.



MOSAIC ADELAIDE'S COMMUNITY IMPACT

What comes to mind when you think of a mosaic? Many pieces of different colours, shapes, sizes and patterns coming together to create something even more beautiful. MOSAIC Adelaide Inc. believes in exactly this, that we are better together.

Ubuntu - [oô'boôntoô] is an ancient Southern African philosophy meaning 'humanity to others'. It is often described as reminding us that 'I am what I am because of who we all are'. At its core, this principle reflects the idea that identity is shaped through connection and community. MOSAIC Adelaide Inc. has this philosophy at its heart, holding the belief that the organisation is what it is because of the strength, diversity, and support of the community it serves.

With humble roots from the passions of university students

in 2017 and with the invaluable support of the Multicultural Communities Council of South Australia, MOSAIC Adelaide Inc. has quickly grown and gained recognition for its inclusive, youth-led approach to community development by creating intercultural experiences and safe spaces where international students and people of all backgrounds feel seen, heard and valued.

"Perhaps the most powerful part of my journey with MOSAIC was the chance to give back – to proudly share my own heritage and traditions with others, and see them appreciated and celebrated. It's empowering, humbling, and inspiring all at once."

- Enala Nkwazi,
University of Adelaide
African Students Association

MOSAIC Adelaide also extends its heartfelt congratulations to the MCCA for its 50th Anniversary of which it is a proud Associate Member organisation. MCCA has been a cornerstone in the journey of MOSAIC Adelaide – sponsoring its early intercultural events, partnering through vital projects, and offering guidance through their community development programs. Their training, mentorship, and support were foundational to its growth. From leadership nights and cooking classes to community trips and collaborative initiatives, MCCA has helped turn ideas into impact.

"MCCA brings together a vast network of organisations that share a vision for a fairer, more connected and inclusive South Australia," says Lenard Sciancalepore, Founder and CEO of MOSAIC Adelaide. "By



adding our voice to that chorus, we're not only amplifying the stories of our community - we're also helping shape systemic change and showing what unity through culture and our collective South Australian identity can look like."

With the support of the MCCSA, MOSAIC Adelaide's initiatives have gained significant popularity bringing our community together to improve social cohesion, reduce social isolation, nurture community wellbeing and encourage active volunteering. These initiatives include the MOSAIC Ensemble, monthly MOSAIC Community Nights, MOSAIC Cooking Classes, MOSAIC Welcome Dinners and its flagship intercultural festival, MOSAIC Adelaide 2025 coming up on the 13th of September this year: <https://events.humanitix.com/mosaic-adelaide-2025> - all contributing to the vibrant fabric of multicultural South Australia.

This is us.

By coming together and embracing the idea of a multicultural family, communities have the opportunity to learn from one another and achieve meaningful impact through collaboration and shared purpose.

AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2026

Nominations for the prestigious Australian of the Year Awards 2026 are now officially open!

This annual awards program is a wonderful opportunity to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions that individuals in our community make. Whether it's through their achievements, commitment to a cause, or tireless work to improve the lives of others, these everyday heroes deserve our recognition and gratitude.

To nominate someone from your community, please visit our website: Australian of the Year Awards 2026 <https://australianoftheyear.org.au/nominate>.

The process is simple, and the impact can be profound. Remember, anyone can make a nomination, and anyone can be nominated.

Let's come together to honour those who inspire us, challenge us, and make our nation a better place.

Please reach out to the Australia Day Council of South Australia (ADCSA) if you require any further information or assistance. ADCSA contact details are:

Suzanne Malbut, Awards and Alumni Coordinator

t: 08 8212 3999 e: suzanne.malbut@adcsa.com.au

*Thank you for your support
in the Australian of the Year
Awards 2026*

**Australian
of the Year
Awards**

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

**See Them.
Hear Them.
Nominate Them.**
australianoftheyear.org.au



VANESSA BRETTILL AND HANNAH COSTELLO
2025 AUSTRALIA'S LOCAL HERO

FILIPINOS ICONNECT SA INC. AND ADELAIDE FILIPINO ETHNIC SCHOOL: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CULTURE AND EDUCATION

In South Australia, two remarkable organisations are making a significant impact on the Filipino-Australian and other migrants from the CALD community. Founded by Norfe McCaskill, both Filipinos iConnect SA Inc. and the Adelaide Filipino Ethnic School (ADFES) are 100% volunteer-run and have expanded their reach across the state.

Filipinos iConnect SA Inc: A Hub for Community Support

Started in July 2018 but became an incorporated body on November 17, 2021, Filipinos iConnect SA Inc. is a registered charity based in Queenstown, South Australia. Operating from 201 Port Road, the organisation serves as a vital support network for Filipino migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Its main mission is to promote awareness about Family Domestic Violence and Mental Health Issues. Also to foster community connection, provide assistance to those in need, and celebrate Filipino heritage through various initiatives. Partnering with Foodbank, SecondBite, ThreadTogether, Share the Dignity and other organisations to support people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse background and assist them with food, groceries and free dinner every week.

Adelaide Filipino Ethnic School: Nurturing Language and Culture

The Adelaide Filipino Ethnic School, operating under the umbrella of Community Language Schools SA, offers Filipino language classes to students from Reception to Year 9. Classes are held every Saturday from 2:30pm to 4:30pm at TAFE SA, Regency Park campus. This school plays a pivotal role in preserving the Filipino language and cultural traditions among the younger generation in Adelaide. By providing quality education in a supportive environment, ADFES ensures that Filipino-Australian children remain connected to their roots while thriving in a multicultural society.

In addition to the Regency Park campus, ADFES has expanded its reach by establishing two

more campuses in Gawler and Morphett Vale. This expansion allows the school to serve a broader community, ensuring that more Filipino-Australian children have access to quality language and cultural education.

A Collaborative Effort for a Stronger Community

The synergy between Filipinos iConnect SA Inc. and ADFES exemplifies the power of community collaboration. Through joint initiatives and mutual support, these organisations amplify their impact, ensuring that the Filipino community in South Australia continues to flourish. Whether it's through educational programs, cultural events, or community support services, both entities are steadfast in their mission to uplift and empower their community.



For more information or to get involved, visit the [Filipinos iConnect SA Inc. Facebook group](#) or contact ADFES at norfe@filipinosiconnectsa.com.au

ABOUT TWINVIEW HEALTH:

PERSONALISED AND INCLUSIVE CARE IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA



TwinView Health is a South Australian business that's passionate about providing personalised healthcare services to people across the state. Whether they need short-term or long-term care, TwinView's skilled team is here to help.

TwinView Health believes in treating everyone with respect and dignity. That's why they take the time to understand the unique needs of individuals and develop a care plan that's just right for them.

TwinView Health is committed to making a positive impact on our community. We're proud to be innovators in the healthcare industry and strive to deliver the highest quality of care.

TwinView Health is committed to providing culturally inclusive, ethnically diverse, and linguistically accessible care. We understand that our clients come from a variety of backgrounds, and we strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

Client Choice and Linguistic Diversity at TwinView Health

At TwinView Health, the fundamental principles of choice and control are central to both their NDIS and Aged Care services. This is evident in how clients select and receive their necessary supports. A common request TwinView

Health receives is for support workers who are native English speakers or have English as their first language.

TwinView Health always endeavors to meet this preference when feasible, showcasing their dedication to responsive and high-quality service. However, when it's not possible, TwinView Health highlights its unique advantage: linguistic diversity.

Australia is a rich multicultural nation, and many committed care professionals have English as a second language. TwinView Health considers this diversity a significant asset.

Beyond Spoken Words: Embracing Comprehensive Communication

TwinView Health recognises the reasoning behind requests for first-language English speakers, particularly for clients who might find unfamiliar accents challenging or have hearing difficulties. Nevertheless, TwinView Health encourages its clients to embrace communication in all its forms, looking beyond the sole focus on spoken words. They align with Albert Mehrabian's communication model, which posits that only 7% of communication derives from the actual words spoken, with 38% from tone and a substantial 55% from body language. TwinView

Health believes clients often overemphasise that 7%.

The team at TwinView Health is committed to communicating and providing services in a manner that conveys safety, empathy, love, and responsiveness to client needs. This extends far beyond just the words used. In a multicultural society like Australia, linguistic diversity has become a cornerstone, prompting adaptation, tolerance, and the building of relationships based on shared values. Studies even suggest that exposure to diverse accents can be cognitively beneficial, improving comprehension and reducing the effort required for understanding.

To further enhance communication, TwinView Health integrates technology into their operations, ensuring their staff clearly comprehends their tasks, schedules, and client needs. This comprehensive communication approach enables them to provide exceptional care, irrespective of a worker's first language.

ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH:

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES?

*Dr Sara Javanparast, Senior Research Fellow | Professor Jennifer Tieman, Director
Research Centre for Palliative Care, Death and Dying (RePaDD), Flinders University*

Australia is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse countries in the world. 2021 census data shows us that 28% of the Australian population (over 7 million people) were born overseas, with 5.8 million people reporting they speak a language other than English at home. Multicultural families and communities are a significant portion of the Australian population.

Australia is also an ageing population with increasing numbers of people living into their seventies, eighties and beyond. As our population ages, aged care, end-of-life care, and grief or loss become more important to all of us, including multicultural communities. We need to explore how multicultural communities recognise and acknowledge these issues, how they cope with and manage these life realities, and the extent to which Australia's health, aged, and social care systems address their needs.

Research helps by expanding cultural knowledge, highlighting the complex issues that multicultural communities face, and developing solutions. To do this, meaningful engagement with multicultural communities — such as community leaders and those with lived experience — as well as advocacy

organisations, such as MCCSA, is crucial. Engagement in research allows multicultural voices to be heard and can inform more inclusive services that recognise differences and meet the needs of multicultural communities.

Multicultural communities need to be represented in research as they possess the most significant insight into cultural needs, service gaps, and what works for them. However, while they make up more than one-quarter of the Australian population, they remain significantly underrepresented in research. Researchers need to develop their skills and awareness on how to conduct culturally safe research.

We need to encourage participation of researchers from different cultures and backgrounds and develop research that is flexible and suitable for multicultural communities. Above all, establishing respectful relationships and trust, taking the time to learn from communities, and acknowledging people's contributions to research are essential.

There is more emphasis on community engagement in research, offering opportunities for communities to participate in research.



Participation can occur through involvement in consumer advisory groups, providing feedback, engaging in research studies, or assisting with research promotion and dissemination. Contacting community organisations or research groups, or registering your interest on an online registry, means your voice can be heard.

The Research Centre for Palliative Care, Death and Dying (RePaDD) is a leading institute in research related to aged care, caregiving, palliative and end-of-life care. Our team had the opportunity to discuss community engagement in a research roundtable held in April 2025, where Helena Kyriazopoulos OAM, CEO of MCCA, reminded us of the importance of recognising diversity and engaging meaningfully with multicultural communities and organisations in research.

[Click here to learn more about the RePaDD team and its research.](#)



MY JOURNEY OF CONNECTION AND BELONGING

by Aymambi Acosta De León

Today, I work as a Community Connector in the CAB Project - Connect, Access, Belong. This job is more than just work. It gives me the chance to support people and help them feel part of the community. It's inspiring.

The CAB Project supports people from different cultures and languages (CALD), who live with disability or mental health experiences. We also support their families and carers. CAB helps them join activities in the community.

Our message is simple:

CAB passengers decide destinations. CAB connectors facilitate safe journeys. This means, you choose what you want to do. We are here to support you along the way.

In marketing, I learned how to be a good listener, how to share ideas, and how to talk with care to influence in a positive way. Currently, I'm using those skills to support people who may feel shy, unsure, or who haven't joined activities in a long time.

Now I know how to create a bridge between strategy and empathy and support people in a proper way. I'm completely sure that I have been working not just with people, I have been working with their hearts and dreams. It's part of my personal experience through MCCA and this project.

CAB is not just about swimming, or art or cooking. It is about making friends, trying new things, and feeling safe and proud. Many people feel nervous at first. They may not speak much English. But with support, they grow. I have seen people sing, dance, read, exercise, and smile again.

As a Community Connector, I walk with people on their journey. I celebrate their wins. When people feel they can, everything changes. They connect. They grow. They belong.

Do you know someone who could join us?

We are happy to help!

Email: cab@mcca.org.au | Phone: **8345 5266**

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP: A WIN FOR EVERYONE

With over 20 years dedicated to championing inclusion and the advancement of women leaders, Women & Leadership Australia (WLA) has a foundational belief that inclusion is essential for a fairer, more productive, innovative, and successful society.

Given this extensive experience, they explain why inclusion truly matters and how to cultivate it.

Why Inclusion Matters

Research shows that teams operating in an inclusive culture are more innovative, more effective, and experience lower rates of discrimination.¹ Inclusion boosts mental health and wellbeing, thereby creating a cycle of engagement, happiness, and productivity. When people — particularly women and underrepresented groups — feel valued and safe, they're more likely to thrive.

Leaders and Inclusion

At its heart, inclusive leadership cultivates psychological safety — the freedom to speak up, share ideas, and admit mistakes without fear of judgement. This is vital where cultural nuances, gender biases, or power imbalances might silence voices. When leaders model inclusivity, they dismantle systemic barriers and build trust, continuous improvement, and innovation. Teams led this way are empowered to collaborate, adapt, explore new ideas, and solve problems with greater agility.



Vicky Arachi; Manager, Multicultural Community Connections Program, Multicultural Communities Council of SA at the Australian Women's Leadership Symposium Adelaide

Empowering Confident, Inclusive Leaders with WLA

Karen Surmon, General Manager of WLA, highlights that through applied teaching and support, WLA programs help "unlock individuals' capabilities more fully, increasing their confidence and their capacity to influence and advocate for themselves." Graduates of the WLA Executive Ready Program rated higher confidence in their leadership capabilities post-program, reporting an average score of 8 out of 10 for leading with equality and inclusion.

WLA's leadership symposiums and flagship women's-only programs — for aspiring leaders through to senior executive women — deliver practical skills, build confidence, and foster invaluable networking opportunities.

WLA also provides tailored corporate training and coaching for leaders of all genders. These high-impact programs offer comprehensive leadership development by embedding inclusive practices

at every level, helping groups build trust, communicate effectively, and align with business strategy.

One such opportunity is their Inclusive Leadership In Action Program. David from the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) shared his team's experience: "As a leadership group we developed a shared language and understanding, and it was a real bonding experience for us. The facilitator created a safe environment for us to have open discussions."

Through their programs, Women & Leadership Australia champions women's advancement and contributes to building inclusive workplaces and communities.

Take the Next Step

Inspired by a more equitable future with diverse voices at the forefront? Explore how WLA's programs can benefit you or your business or community group.

Contact us at info@wla.edu.au or 1300 138 037

WHY EVERY COMMUNITY GROUP NEEDS A GOOD FILING SYSTEM (AND CLEAN DATA)

Every community organisation keeps stories, photos, reports, and records of the work they do. But if that information is scattered across emails, paper files, USBs, or different people's computers, it becomes hard to find when you need it most.

As part of our Community Boards and Governance Program (a three-year initiative supported by the SA Department of Premier and Cabinet, Multicultural Affairs), we recently ran a session on using **AI for grant writing** with community organisations, and one key message stood out: good data matters. Having a central, organised, and up-to-date system to store information is essential for good governance of the organisation. It helps when applying for grants, writing reports, or planning future activities. It also makes it easier to show what your organisation has achieved over time.

And if you're ever thinking of using AI tools—for example, to help write a funding application or generate a report—then having clean, well-organised data is even more important.

Here's why it matters:

Better Grant Applications

Funders often ask for evidence—how many people you supported, what activities you delivered, what outcomes you achieved. If you've kept good records, you can respond quickly and confidently.

Easier Reporting

Whether you're reporting to government, donors, or your own members, having your information ready and clear saves time and avoids stress.

Future Planning

Keeping track of your past work helps you make good decisions about what to do next—and shows others the value of your work.

To get started, here are five simple steps:

- 1. Set up a central place to store everything**
This could be a Google Drive, Dropbox, or another shared system that everyone in your team can access. Make sure it's backed up and secure.
- 2. Organise your folders**
Create folders for things like grant applications, reports, meeting notes, policies, and photos. Use clear names and dates so things are easy to find later.
- 3. Keep your data clean**
This means removing old or duplicated files, fixing spelling mistakes, and making sure the numbers and names in your records are accurate.
- 4. Make it part of your routine**
Get into the habit of saving important documents straight away, and encourage your team to do the same.
- 5. Choose someone to look after it**
Having a go-to person responsible for managing the system helps keep things on track.

Community organisations do incredible work. By taking care of your data and records, you make sure that work can be seen, shared, and supported—now and in the future.



George Gouzounis, Aged Care Sector Support Coordinator and Chair of the National AI Adoption in Aged Care Workgroup presenting the session on data and AI, organised by Somi Lindsay, Community Boards and Governance Program Coordinator.



ADELAIDE BRASFOOT CLUB: A CELEBRATION OF CULTURE THROUGH FOOTBALL

A growing Brazilian community in Adelaide has found a new home on the pitch. The Adelaide Brasfoot Club is quickly becoming a symbol of unity and cultural pride for the Brazilian community in South Australia.

Fuelled by the strength and growing presence of the Brazilian community in South Australia, the Adelaide Brasfoot Club emerged as a natural evolution of years of cultural and sporting engagement. From vibrant community events to large social football gatherings across Adelaide, Brazilians have long used the game as a way to stay connected to their roots and each other.

The idea for the club began to take shape in April 2023, driven by individuals with deep ties to the local football scene and prior experience in cities like Melbourne, Brisbane, and Sydney. Recognising both the passion of the community and a gap in the local football landscape, they set out to build an organisation that would formally represent Brazilian culture through the game.

On the 26th of September 2023, that vision became a reality with the official registration of the Adelaide Brasfoot Club. In just a short time, the club has established itself as a vibrant cultural and sporting presence—promoting inclusion, celebrating heritage, and creating meaningful opportunities for Brazilians and

other multicultural communities to connect through football.

The club's name, Brasfoot, is a fusion of Brasil and Football, reflecting its cultural roots and sporting purpose. It also pays homage to a popular football management video game from the early 2000s that was widely played in Brazil, evoking a sense of nostalgia and identity for many in the community.

The club's first event was made possible thanks to the Brazilian Association of South Australia (BASA), the recipient of the MCCSA Community Connections Grant in 2023. This funding enabled Brasfoot to host its inaugural community football tournament. Since then, the club has delivered two



large-scale community football days, both met with strong engagement and enthusiasm.

In a country where ethnic clubs have long contributed to the social fabric of the football landscape, Brasfoot adds a new, dynamic chapter. The club serves not only as a platform for sport, but as a cultural vessel—bringing together people from diverse backgrounds to share and celebrate the Brazilian spirit.

Brasfoot's competitive achievements came swiftly. In its debut year, the men's teams won both Seniors and Reserves Division 4 of the South Australian Amateur Soccer League (SAASL), while the women's futsal side finished as runners-up in the Futsal SA Summer Competition.

In 2025, the club expanded its on-field presence from two to four teams, including Seniors A and B, Over 35s, and Women's, with over 70 players involved. The men's teams are involved with SAASL leagues, while the women's team now competes in the Women's Community League under Football SA, further broadening opportunities for Brazilian and Latin American women to play the game.

Brasfoot's efforts have been formally recognised. In 2024, the club earned a one-star rating in Football Australia's Club Changer program, and in March 2025, was named South Australia's Club Changer of the Month for its contributions to women's participation in football.

Looking ahead, the Adelaide Brasfoot Club plans to strengthen its senior teams while laying the foundation for the development of junior squads for both boys and girls. The goal is to deliver programs that bring the essence of Brazilian football—creative, joyful, and community-driven—to the next generation in Australia.

Beyond the pitch, the club also aims to continue serving the broader community through cultural events and initiatives that go beyond sport. Whether through celebrations of Brazilian heritage or workshops and seminars focused on community development, Brasfoot is committed to offering meaningful opportunities that support and uplift its members, both on and off the field.

BEYOND AWARENESS:

THE STRATEGIC SHIFT SMART ORGANISATIONS ARE MAKING RIGHT NOW

As part of its commitment to strengthening inclusive leadership across South Australia, MCCSA delivered a series of high-impact culturalQ Masterclasses in February and March 2025 for participants in the Multicultural Ambassador Program, an initiative of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet ([more about the program here](#)).

Facilitated through MCCSA's intercultural training and consultancy service, culturalQ, the Masterclasses focused on advancing organisational Cultural Competence through a Cultural Intelligence (CQ) lens, an increasingly essential capability for forward-looking organisations.

In a state shaped by cultural diversity, the ability to lead, govern, and deliver services inclusively is no longer optional. It is both a moral responsibility and a strategic necessity. These sessions went beyond traditional 'awareness' training to explore how cultural values, power dynamics, and embedded systems shape trust, access, and long-term impact.

Participants were challenged to consider how their organisations' structures - policies, recruitment processes, communication practices, and leadership behaviours - can either reinforce exclusion or actively support inclusion and equity.

"Cultural competence is about transforming the whole organisation, not just individual attitudes. It requires leaders to critically examine how their own systems and practices might unintentionally exclude, and to take deliberate steps to create equitable environments," said culturalQ facilitator, Hanaa' Grave.

Through practical frameworks and real-world scenarios, participants reflected on the role they play in shaping culturally capable institutions. The goal: embedding Cultural Competence into the very fabric of organisational practice.

The training was delivered to representatives from: Adelaide Airport Limited, APS Industrial, Flinders University, GHD, National Pharmacies, Rural City of Murray Bridge, SA Mushrooms, Santos, and Torrens Transit.

These organisations are part of a growing movement recognising that meaningful inclusion is not just about doing the right thing, it's about doing the smart thing.

If you'd like to learn more about the principles that guide inclusive governance in South Australia, explore the [South Australian Multicultural Charter](#).



FREE BREAST CANCER SCREENING FOR MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES

BREAST CANCER SCREENING SAVES LIVES

BreastScreen SA supports women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities to access free breast screens for the early detection of breast cancer.

A breast screen can detect breast cancer at an early stage – even as small as a single grain of rice – allowing women access to earlier treatment options and improved health outcomes.

If you are a woman aged 40 or over, you are eligible to have a free breast screen every two years. An appointment takes just 15 minutes and specialist radiographers make your experience as comfortable as possible.

[Book online](#) or call 13 20 50.
A free interpreter service is available for appointments.

Support for your community

BreastScreen SA can host information sessions for community groups, write newsletter articles and organise displays at cultural events.

Information sessions are designed in consultation with you to make them culturally sensitive and relevant to your community.

BreastScreen SA can also arrange group bookings, where women screen individually but attend as a group. Group bookings are positive, supportive and encouraging, especially for women who are having their first breast screen.

To book an information session, group booking, or to find out more, phone 8274 7169 or email marita.aldridge@sa.gov.au.

Information in your language

Translated information about BreastScreen SA's free breast screening services is available in more than 20 languages. Visit breastscreen.sa.gov.au/languages for information in your language.

For more information

Marita Aldridge, CALD Project Officer, BreastScreen SA

Phone:
(08) 8274 7169

Email:
marita.aldridge@sa.gov.au

Connect:
facebook.com/breastscreen.sa

Visit:
www.breastscreen.sa.gov.au



Government of South Australia
SA Health



Help us spread the word!

Free breast cancer screening saves lives

FAITH LEADERS AND COMMUNITIES UNITE TO STOP FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Multicultural Communities Council of SA (MCCSA) recently brought together faith leaders from different religious backgrounds with South Australia's Commissioner for Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence, Natasha Stott Despoja AO, to discuss how to better support families experiencing domestic and family violence.

This important meeting continued work that began in 2018. Faith leaders are trusted voices in many communities. As one participant observed, "When faith leaders speak, people listen."

The Commissioner spoke about the need to treat people fairly, support those who have been harmed, and prevent violence before it starts. She also acknowledged the importance of working closely with

communities to find solutions that are meaningful and effective for them.

Many faith leaders explained that people in their communities often don't understand how the Australian system works or what support is available.

Some also noted that services can feel culturally inappropriate or insensitive to their community's needs. Because of this, many people are too afraid to ask for help, worried about being judged, losing their children, or facing visa problems.

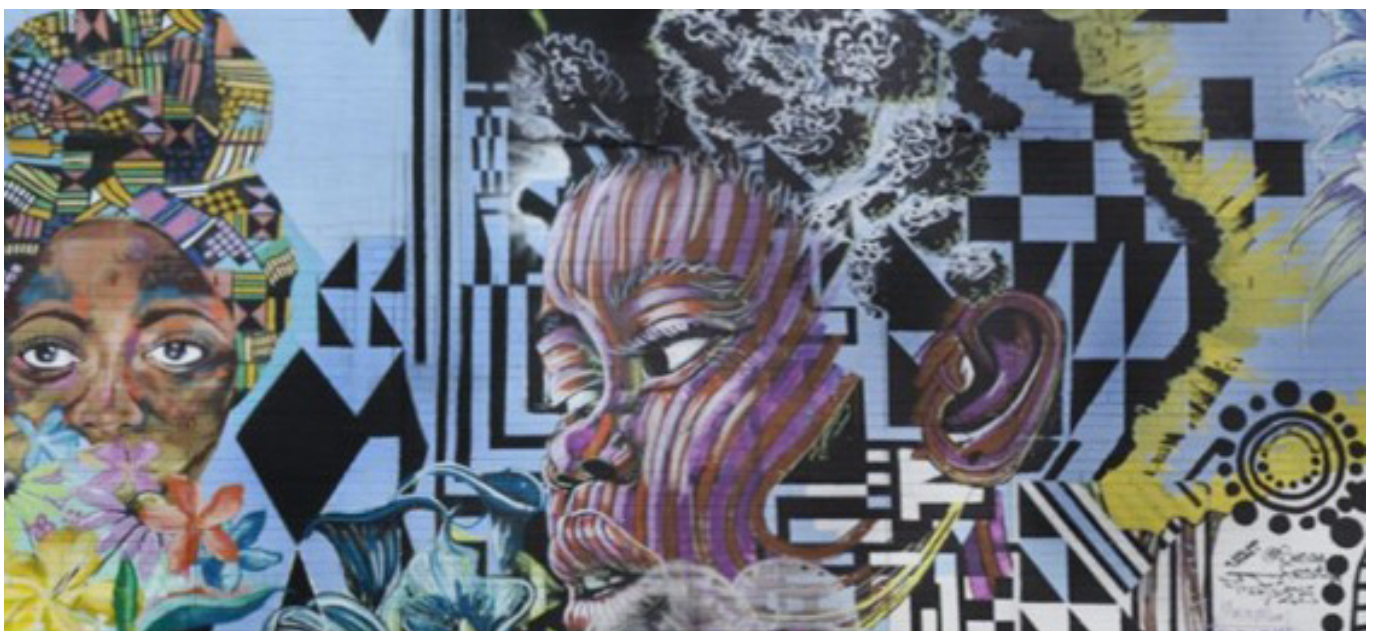
Some faith groups have already developed their own training programs and are running awareness initiatives, while others are only just beginning the conversation.

The meeting gave participants hope and demonstrated genuine interest in expanding these efforts.

It also provided faith leaders with an opportunity to share ideas, learn from each other, and find ways to collaborate.

The Commissioner stated that "real change happens when community leaders speak out." This helps people feel safer to ask for help and clearly demonstrates that violence is never acceptable.

MCCSA's message is simple: stopping family violence is not just the responsibility of government—it's something we all must work on together. When faith leaders take action, when communities speak up, and when families feel safe to ask for help, we move closer to building a safer South Australia.





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 transportadmin@mccsa.org.au or call 8345 5266.



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 Council

MCCSA's Multicultural Men's Council 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 MCCSA Men's Council 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 socialise. 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