VISION

An inclusive and cohesive society which draws on people’s cultural and linguistic diversity to enhance the social, economic, cultural and civic development of the ACT and the wellbeing of all Canberrans.
OURS IS A CITY OF OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

Ours is a truly exciting city – a living, breathing, evolving city of people and communities that celebrates its cultural diversity. Through our work, home and community life we can see the opportunity diversity creates for each and every one of us.

We share a common view that our city is stronger because of our diversity and want to ensure we are also a city of opportunity for all. Be it through employment programs, housing initiatives or community celebrations, we are focused on nurturing and enhancing our culturally diverse way of life.

The document you are reading - the ACT Multicultural Framework and Action Plan 2015-2020 - was developed through an extensive community consultation process. It draws on the ideas and initiatives of hundreds of people across the city - everyday Canberrans as well as community leaders.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the consultation process for the creativity and dedication they gave to our new framework. The work led to the identification of three broad themes which you’ll find throughout the document:

• supporting our multicultural communities
• providing the tools and resources for all Canberrans to reach their full potential
• ensuring that all can benefit from our rich and vibrant cultural diversity.

At the core of these themes is the aim, over the next five years, to increase social participation and community connection across our city.

This work will help ensure our city remains the standard to be measured against in cultural resilience, diversity and respect - something we can all aspire to and be proud of.

I look forward to seeing even more growth in our city’s diverse, harmonious and vibrant multicultural character and all the benefits this brings.

Yvette Berry MLA
ACT Minister for Multicultural Affairs
PURPOSE

The **ACT Multicultural Framework 2015 – 2020** will provide guidance to assist ACT Government agencies to:

1. effectively deliver their services to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
2. promote, through their respective programs and activities, an inclusive and harmonious community; and
3. provide genuine opportunities to assist Canberrans to reach their full potential. It will maximise the opportunity for all Canberrans to enjoy the benefits of our city’s significant cultural diversity.

MULTICULTURAL SNAPSHOT

(2011 CENSUS COMMUNITY PROFILES, CANBERRA ACT)

- In 2011, the proportion of ACT residents born overseas was 24%, representing over 86,000 usual residents born in one of around 180 different countries.

- Countries in Asia now account for more than 39% of people born overseas, up from just 4% in 1961. Further, almost 44% of all ACT residents indicated that either their mother, their father or both parents were born overseas.

- Many of the ACT’s overseas born residents are relatively recent arrivals, with 33% having arrived in Australia in the ten years prior to 2011.

- In 2011, 19% of ACT residents aged five and over indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home. The most common languages other than English were Mandarin (1.8%), Italian (1.5%), Arabic (1.4%), Cantonese and Greek (both 1.3%).

- In 2011, 7% of ACT usual residents identified with a religion other than Christianity. The most common were Buddhism (2.6%), Islam (2.1%), and Hinduism (1.7%). A further 29% of ACT residents reported that they had no religion. Along with Tasmania, this was the highest proportion of any state or territory.

- The ACT State of Public Service Report 2014 indicates that as of June 2014, employees who identified as Culturally and Linguistically Diverse totalled 3,453 individuals or 16.8% of the total ACT Public Service workforce.
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND EQUALITY PRIORITY/BETTER SERVICES

The ACT Government is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, maintaining social cohesion, building social capital and minimising social exclusion for culturally and linguistically diverse Canberrans. The ACT Government endeavours to achieve this through the Better Services model, focused on collaborative partnerships across government and community organisations. These partnerships are focused on people to deliver programs and services that are adaptive and sustainable, easy to understand access and navigate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

ACT Multicultural Framework 2015 – 2020

The ACT Multicultural Framework 2015 – 2020 is based on three themes which focus on the importance of supporting the ACT’s multicultural communities to ensure everyone has the ability to reach their full potential, and that the ACT embraces the benefits of our city’s culturally diverse community. These three themes are:

ACCESSIBLE AND RESPONSIVE SERVICES

The ACT Government is dedicated to the provision of accessible and responsive services for all Canberrans. We must continue to provide targeted initiatives for those doing it tough in our community to ensure that they are able to fully participate in the life of our city.

CITIZENSHIP, PARTICIPATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

The ACT Government is committed to further enhancing participation and social cohesion in our community. We continue to strive for a connected community where everyone is respected, included and valued for their contribution to our city’s harmonious and multicultural way of life. The ACT Government recognises that a healthy civil society requires responsible and active citizens who value the system of government and work towards a shared vision of civil life regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality or age.

CAPITALISING ON THE BENEFITS OF OUR CULTURAL DIVERSITY

The ACT continues to be both enriched and strengthened by its diverse and multicultural community, and the ACT Government is committed to ensuring this continues through protective laws, enabling policies, and community connectedness.
HIGHLIGHTS 2010 - 2015

There were many achievements under the ACT Multicultural Strategy 2010–2013. Highlights include:

- The development of the Many Voices ACT Language Policy, which supports ACT Government directorates in developing effective communication between staff and clients to improve service delivery to all Canberrans. The use of interpreters and translators expresses the importance of learning English as a means for individuals to fully participate in our city's cultural, social and economic life, and recognises the value of acquiring languages in addition to English.

- The Multicultural Health Policy Towards Culturally Appropriate and Inclusive Services: A Co-ordinating Framework for ACT Health 2014 – 2018. The Framework has restructured and improved the approach to the delivery of health services. This Framework is in line with both the previous multicultural strategy, and languages policy, and is consistent with the direction of this Framework.

- An Australian first, the ACT Services Access Card was launched on 5 September 2011 and provides improved and easier access to a range of ACT Government services including concessional public transport, education, legal and healthcare services to asylum seekers residing in the ACT. As of June 2014 there were approximately 160 people holding an access card in the ACT. The ACT is the only jurisdiction that provides this card specifically for asylum seekers.

- The extension of the Tuggeranong Introductory English Centre for children from non-English speaking backgrounds to help them adjust into Australian school life. The 2013-2014 Budget allocated $1.8 million for the Introductory English Centre at Wanniassa Hills Primary. The Centre is designed to incorporate the latest teaching practices and language learning technology, including video conferencing to access other Introductory English Centres and specialist teachers conversant with the home tongue of students.

- The Community Languages and Multicultural Grants Programs continue to support groups and individuals in the ACT, funding community language classes, multicultural radio programs and contributing to projects which enhance social cohesion and harmony in our city. From 2010 to 2013, 220 community groups received funding under the three grants programs to a total of $1,126,466.

- The Work Experience and Support Program continues to support people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, specifically those with a refugee background, to gain meaningful work experience, establish networks and develop professional confidence. Since 2013, 112 individuals have graduated under this program.

- The National Multicultural Festival continues to be the highlight of the ACT’s annual cultural and social calendar, with people coming out to embrace and enjoy Canberra’s cultural diversity. In 2015 the Festival was the biggest ever with a record 270,000 people attending, with more than 380 stalls.
Extensive consultations undertaken to inform the ACT Multicultural Framework 2015 - 2020 were conducted throughout 2014 and early 2015, including:

The Capital Culture Discussion Paper was developed and circulated to all key stakeholders in the ACT community to enable a thorough, thoughtful and future focused discussion for the Framework. It outlined three key themes to guide discussion: 1) Accessible and Responsive Services, 2) Citizenship, Participation and Social Cohesion, and 3) Capitalising on the Benefits of our Cultural Diversity. It also provided the groundwork and thematic overlay for the One Canberra Symposium, which focused on the second theme, and the Multicultural Summit which focused on first and third themes.

The One Canberra Multicultural Symposium held on 30 October 2014 focused on the second theme, Citizenship, Participation and Social Cohesion, and over 110 people attended. Representatives included the Human Rights and Discrimination Commission, Community Councils, Student Congress, Australian Red Cross and many interfaith organisations. This Symposium resulted in 20 actions, the implementation of which is overseen by the One Canberra Reference Group.

Following the Symposium, the ACT Multicultural Summit was held on 29 November 2014 and focused on themes one and three, Accessible and Responsive Services and Capitalising on the Benefits of Cultural Diversity. Over 100 people from local organisations participated, including from the Migrant and Refugee Resettlement Services, Legal Aid, Canberra Islamic Centre, Canberra Refugee Support, Canberra Interfaith forum and the Australian National University.

REPORTING AND EVALUATION – TOWARDS 2020

Each ACT Government Directorate will contribute to an annual Ministerial Statement that will be tabled in the Assembly by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. The statement will detail activities and efforts undertaken on practical efforts and outcomes in relation to the Framework. Progress on the first Multicultural Action Plan (2015-18) will be reviewed and a second ACT Multicultural Action Plan (2018-20) will be developed. The second Multicultural Action Plan (2018-20) will take into account government priorities and community expectations at the time.
ACT MULTICULTURAL FRAMEWORK FIRST ACTION PLAN 2015 - 2018

Objective One:

Accessible and Responsive Services.

The ACT Government is dedicated to the provision of accessible and responsive services for all Canberrans. We must continue to provide targeted initiatives for those doing it tough in our community to ensure that they are able to fully participate in the life of our city.

**2015-2016 - ACTION**

- Allocate funding for specific projects that: respond to, and raise awareness in multicultural communities of, domestic violence; support partnerships that build resilience to counter violent extremism; and best support front line ACT Government service staff to respond.
- Develop and implement an on-line register of interest of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to serve on ACT boards and committees.

**2015-2016 - OUTCOME**

- ACT Government directorates will promote and support domestic violence awareness projects. Development of the register by 31 December 2015.
- Development of the register by 31 December 2015.
- Demonstration of active promotion undertaken to ensure people registered have the knowledge and skills to represent cultural diversity on ACT boards and committees.
### 2016-2017 - ACTION
- Encourage culturally and linguistically diverse communities to utilise existing community facilities and other suitable government infrastructure across the ACT for cultural events through an online community coordinated venue booking system.
- Support the translation of information about essential services to improve access for culturally and linguistically diverse Canberrans.
- Promote Access Canberra as a one stop shop to members of culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Increase awareness and promote accessibility of services available for women, youth, people with a disability and people experiencing mental illness from multicultural community groups.

### 2016-2017 - OUTCOME
- Online booking system fully operational by 1 July 2016.
- Feedback about better access to information about services and programs by Canberrans from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Feedback about the level of increased participation gained from organisers who are engaged through relevant grants programs that support these community sports activities.
- In respect to their functions, ACT Government directorates develop and implement detailed plans which address the unique needs of people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Increased level of participation by members of multicultural community groups in general community activities.

### 2017-2018 - ACTION
- Identify and support suitable people who are willing to undertake accreditation as formal interpreters to build a large pool of local interpreters.
- Encourage the use of accredited interpreters, where needed, at service delivery points across all ACT Government and community organisations.
- Support ACT Government staff in public contact positions to receive training relating to the appropriate delivery of services and programs to a culturally diverse client group.
- Promote the Work Experience and Support Program to the community and private sectors.

### 2017-2018 - OUTCOME
- Readily available on-site interpreters in the ACT particularly in those languages for new and emerging multicultural community groups.
- Canberrans who speak little or no English are able to access information about services and programs and fully participate in the community life of our city.
- ACT Government staff are responsive to the unique needs of their clients and clients have a more efficient and pleasant interaction at service delivery points across the ACT government.
- ACT Government directorates and the ACT private sector to champion the Work Experience and Support Program.
Objective Two:
Citizenship, Participation and Cohesion.

The ACT Government is committed to further enhancing participation and social cohesion in our community. We continue to strive for a connected community where everyone is respected, included and valued for their contribution to our city’s harmonious, multicultural way of life.

2015-2016 - ACTION

- Invest in social cohesion initiatives as outlined in the One Canberra Reference Group Report.
- Seek to promote Government and non-government services working together to support ‘at-risk’ communities and individuals.
- Declare the ACT as a Refugee Welcome Zone.
- Support ongoing funding to programs that assist refugees to settle in Canberra.
- Promote services to asylum seekers that they are entitled to.

2015-2016 - OUTCOME

- Evidence of education campaigns for the media and community which enhance cultural and faith acceptance, engage the community and articulate the benefits of cultural diversity.
- This would effectively provide the linkage to the newly established ACT Countering Violent Extremism Steering Committee and Commonwealth ‘Living Safe Together’ strategies.
- Declared on 18 June 2015
- Programs targeted at resettling refugees will provide a welcoming and supportive environment.
- Drawing on feedback from community partners, asylum seekers can readily access services that they are entitled to.

2016-2017 - ACTION

- Promote community sports engagement programs targeting newly arrived communities with an emphasis on programs for women and youth.
- Develop detailed plans developed by ACT Government Directorates which address the unique needs of people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Encourage multicultural community leaders to disseminate information about general programs, services and community events to their respective members.

2016-2017 - OUTCOME

- Number of participants engaged through grants provided to culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Number of multicultural plans developed and implemented by 30 June 2018.
- In respect to their functions, ACT Government directorates develop and implement detailed plans which address the unique needs of people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Increased level of participation by members of multicultural community groups in general community activities.
Objective Three:

Capitalising on the benefits of Cultural Diversity.

The ACT continues to be both enriched and strengthened by its diverse and multicultural community, and the ACT Government is committed to ensuring this can continue through protective laws, enabling policies, and community connectedness.

2015-2016 - ACTION

- Review the ACT Languages Policy with a view to restate obligations regarding the use of interpreters, multilingual staff and translated materials.
- Create an online multicultural calendar and directory that incorporates the promotion of the Participation (Multicultural) Grants
- Expand and promote the ACT Multicultural Awards to include young (15-30 years) people who have made a significant contribution to multicultural affairs in the ACT.

2015-2016 - OUTCOME

- Canberrans with little or no English language skills have ready access to interpreters to assist them to access their entitled services and programs.
- Easier access to information about cultural activities throughout the year and available resources.
- The creation of new award categories to recognise exceptional effort and contribution to the local multicultural community.

2017-2018 - ACTION

- Ensure members of Canberra’s culturally and linguistically diverse communities are informed of, and included in, government policy development through effective and appropriate engagement.
- Provide opportunities for members of Canberra’s culturally diverse communities to be job ready so they can gain meaningful employment.
- Support and promote ongoing interfaith and multicultural forums.

2017-2018 - OUTCOME

- ACT Government policy takes into account the needs and aspirations of Canberra’s multicultural community.
- Canberrans from culturally diverse backgrounds have the capacity to benefit from economic opportunities present in our city.
- Regular opportunities are presented throughout the year for community members to participate in, and learn about, each others’ faiths and cultures leading to an accepting and harmonious community. Number of forums supported.
2016-2017 - ACTION

- Promote cultural diversity by working with community organisations to support the celebration and acknowledgement of a wide range of cultural, religious and linguistic events such as Refugee Week, Diwali, Harmony Day, Ramadan, and the National Multicultural Festival.
- Boost economic opportunity and advantage by enhancing the skills of existing and new migrants through job ready, training and English language classes.
- Develop and promote programs to assist Canberrans from culturally diverse backgrounds with basic workplace training, CV drafting and interview coaching.

2016-2017 - OUTCOME

- Regular opportunities through the year for community members to participate in, and learn about, each others’ cultures and traditions.
- New and existing migrants are better equipped to compete in the labour market. The ACT workforce benefits from the contributions and different perspectives of migrants.
- Members of Canberra’s multicultural community groups have ready access to programs about workplace training, CV drafting and interview coaching delivered by relevant community service providers.

2017-2018 - ACTION

- Develop, implement and promote an ‘Honorary Ambassador’ Program for leaders from Canberra’s multicultural community groups who travel regularly overseas and are willing to promote our city and the benefits of our city’s cultural diversity.
- Encourage retirement villages and nursing homes to implement culturally responsive services and environments for older people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

2017-2018 - OUTCOME

- Increased number of ‘Honorary Ambassadors.’ appointed from local multicultural groups resulting in an increased exposure of our city abroad
- Older people from culturally diverse backgrounds enjoy a more comfortable life in culturally sensitive environments in their latter years.