



multicultural media exchange
annual report
2010/11

Connecting
multicultural
communities
with the
mainstream
media

“I am not hungry for food, I do not need money or a home, all I need is the truth - and to be able to tell it through my camera lens or even the print media.”

A 19-year-old man from Burundi

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“I would like to see stories that would eliminate, or correct common media assumptions toward young men from African communities. And see more two way communication.”

A 25-year-old man from South Sudan

"I want to tell stories about immigration and the Australian population debate, focusing on the impact it has on recent migrants and those on student visas and the like, trying to become Australian citizens. I think their voices are frequently drowned out by those who are more established in the country." A 21-year-old woman from Egypt

multicultural media exchange's vision

Everyone should have a voice and be heard and the media should be representative of *all* Australians.

multicultural media exchange's mission

Develop media skills in young people and communities from diverse backgrounds.

Connect multicultural Australia with professional journalists.

Encourage greater diversity of opinion in the media.



about multicultural media exchange

Three years ago, Walkley-award winning journalist **Agnes Cusack** created the Multicultural Media Exchange (then New Australia Media). The aim of this groundbreaking project was to link young people from refugee and migrant communities with journalist volunteers - to write stories that matter to them.

The young reporters worked with some of Australia's most celebrated journalists, learning the principles that underpin all good journalism - balance, fairness and analytical thinking. Their stories were published on our website, other online sites, *Leader Community Newspapers, The Age, The Age Online, The Big Issue* and other mainstream media.

The project has been a winner for both the young people and the media professionals, as well as the general community.

The young people learned how to craft a news story and journalist volunteers were provided with a rare window into the lives of people from refugee and migrant communities. Our stories have helped the wider community to understand why people come to Australia and the positive contribution they make to our culture and democracy.

"Connecting people with a love of the news business and community groups who want to tell their stories has been a powerful combination."

Agnes Cusack, Director

"I was surprised at how little 'A' had interacted with mainstream Australia (white, non-Muslim people) in my interactions with her. Our interactions were positive for both 'A' and me in that we learnt valuable things about each other, and by extension, our different communities and values. The ultimate product of this engagement has been to encourage 'A' to learn more about the values and norms of a society—a Western democratic secular society—that is often viewed with suspicion or misunderstanding by her community."

Nick McKenzie, investigative reporter with *The Age*



what we do

- Provide young people and communities from a diverse range of backgrounds with the skills to speak out
- promote cultural awareness among journalists, and thus encourage fairness and respect for new and emerging communities in the media
- increase public awareness of multicultural communities and promote cross-cultural understanding

why we do it

- To give all Australians a window into our multicultural society
- encourage diversity in the mainstream media and strengthen the multicultural media through engagement and professional development
- develop the communication and leadership skills necessary for our young people to become community champions



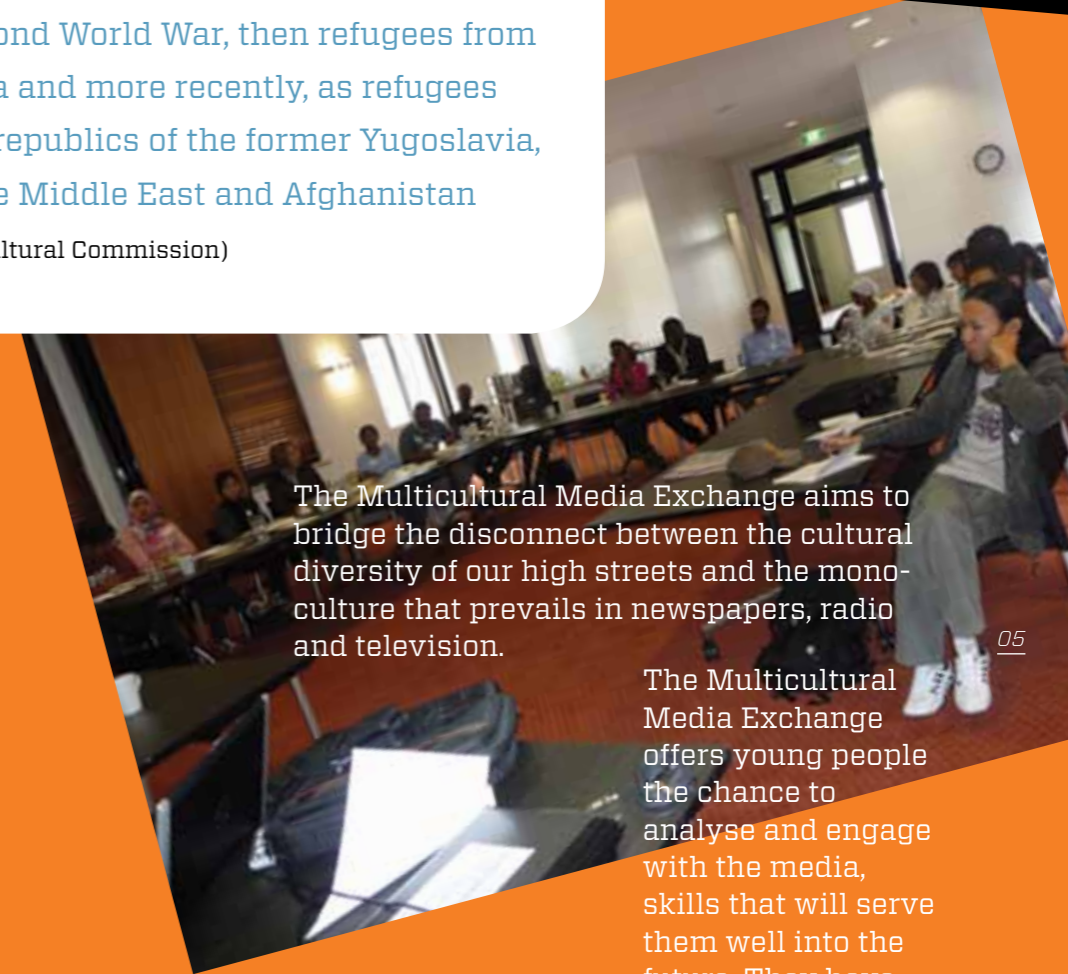
"I am a young Muslim female from an African background so I get a lot of racial and religious discrimination and would like to do some work addressing these issues."

A 25 year old woman, Braybrook

- 43.69% of Victorians were either born overseas, or have a parent who was born overseas
- Victorians come from more than 200 countries, speak more than 230 languages and dialects and follow more than 120 religious faiths
- Many came as refugees - the first were Europeans displaced by the Second World War, then refugees from the war in Indo-China and more recently, as refugees from conflicts in the republics of the former Yugoslavia, the Horn of Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan

(Source: The Victorian Multicultural Commission)

read all about it: victoria's multicultural landscape



The Multicultural Media Exchange aims to bridge the disconnect between the cultural diversity of our high streets and the monoculture that prevails in newspapers, radio and television.

The Multicultural Media Exchange offers young people the chance to analyse and engage with the media, skills that will serve them well into the future. They have the chance - and the responsibility - to create something of value for themselves and their communities.

Our goal is to help multicultural Australia to develop a better understanding of what the media is delivering, how the media is changing and how it can shape who we are as a nation.

putting multicultural young people in the picture

case study #1

Wesa Chau was named **Young Victorian of the Year in 2010** and has thanked the Multicultural Media Exchange for helping her to achieve this honour.

Last year, Wesa, then honorary president of Australian Federation of International Students, came to the Multicultural Media Exchange for help with a media campaign on student rights.

Hugo Kelly, journalist and former prime ministerial advisor, volunteered to work with Wesa. For 18 months to June 2011, Hugo implemented a successful media strategy that resulted in sustained coverage for the Federation in Australia. Wesa appeared on all major radio and television news and current affairs programs, submitted OpEd articles to daily newspapers and wrote stories for the suburban press.

"Hugo Kelly...has provided me with contacts, methods in which I can gain access to the media about international student issues," Wesa said.

As well as speaking out on violence against international students and changes to visa arrangements, Wesa also wrote a story on **Garang Dut**, a Sudanese refugee who was accepted to do his medical doctorate at the University of Melbourne.

Says Wesa, "Success stories like this need to be told and, hopefully this can inspire other young refugees to achieve their dreams."



"Before working with the Multicultural Media Exchange, media was a mystery. It felt like a secret institution that I couldn't get access to."

Wesa Chau

case study #2

The story, *'Werribee Youths' mission to Burma'* was the result of a partnership between **Sherina Shew**, a young woman from Burma, and **Graham Reilly** who writes on Burma for *The Age* newspaper.

Sheri's story about the trauma she and others experienced in Burma and how they came to be living in the western suburbs of Melbourne was published in the *Wyndham Leader*, a suburban newspaper read by 45,000 people in the western suburbs.

When she was seven, she and her family, including her father, a Karen military commander, were forced to run for their lives when their home was attacked by the Burmese military.

"We had to leave everything and walk through the jungle for a few days until we arrived at a temporary refugee camp," she said.

"That was burned down by the Burmese military so we lived in another refugee camp for two years before coming to Australia."

Sheri's story was the result of a training course run for young people involved in the Homelands project with the Centre for Multicultural Youth.

Our stories are published in Leader Community Newspapers throughout Melbourne.



"We had to leave everything and walk through the jungle for a few days until we arrived at a temporary refugee camp" Sherina Shaw

director's message



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"The Multicultural Media Exchange is proud of its role in helping communities to skill up, speak up and be heard."

Good communication is fundamental to a healthy society. It helps communities to work together, to respect each other and to participate in the democratic process.

The Multicultural Media Exchange exists to support the voices of migrant and refugee communities in Australia, who are all too often missing or misrepresented in the media. The project also gives journalist volunteers a rare window into multicultural Australia, they come to know people who are normally invisible to the mainstream media.

In what is thought to be a first for both journalism and multiculturalism in Australia, we link young citizen-journalists with media professionals, resulting in some wonderful outcomes, such as the story on young Burmese people highlighted earlier in this report.

The Multicultural Media Exchange teaches the fundamentals of good journalism - fairness, the importance of listening to both sides of the story and the need to get it right - to improve the quality of information available to new and emerging communities, and to all Australians.

Our high standards are maintained through our team of experienced and talented volunteer journalists, including a number of Walkley Award winners. It is these highly skilled volunteers that mark us out from others working in the multicultural sector, with results that are impressively diverse and ambitious.

These are challenging times, journalism and the media industry are changing and so must we. While continuing to work with individuals, we are expanding our services to meet requests from community groups who wish to improve their communication skills.

Building a project from scratch takes time. Thank you to those who have supported the Multicultural Media Exchange, we have learned a lot in a few short years.

We look forward to 2012, a year of fascinating ideas and planning for a bright future that will allow us to continue to help those with a passion for journalism and the media to tell their stories.

Agnes Cusack
Director

chief editor's message

As someone who has spent most of his 50-odd years in journalism working overseas, it has been a pleasure to discover on my return to Australia how much the country has changed with the influx of immigrants from Asia, Africa and Europe.

Personally, I have been delighted to continue involvement with young, would-be journalists helping them tell their stories, and those of their communities, of life in their new homeland.

The advances in communications technology has had a vast impact on media in all parts of the world but especially so in the west, in comparison to the media of the developing world - formerly home to the young people receiving media training through the Multicultural Media Exchange.

Many of those countries still lack a truly free press, radio and TV, and the challenge for Multicultural Media Exchange volunteers is to inspire the basic tenets of a democratic media - accurate and balanced writing of news features and, when writing analytical and opinion pieces, to give both sides of the story.

Some students have had to learn that stories must be sourced, that statements made must be supported by facts and that stories should contain "the five W's and an H" - that is, who, what, where, when, why and how.

Results have been heartening with youngsters producing excellent features on a wide variety of subjects covering multicultural life in and around Melbourne.

Mike Keats
Chief Editor



"Results have been heartening with youngsters producing excellent features on a wide variety of subjects covering multicultural life in and around Melbourne."

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the year in review

- Since the Multicultural Media Exchange began three years ago (it was then called New Australia Media), we have provided training for more than 120 young people. This year we trained 50 young people to create stories – in print and multimedia – and to work on personal projects, including media campaigns with journalist volunteers.

For example, **Wesa Chau, named Young Victorian of the Year in 2010**, and honorary president of Australian Federation of International Students, came to the Multicultural Media Exchange for help to create a successful media campaign on student rights.

- Our volunteers attended a cross-cultural awareness workshop, providing tips on working with young people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

- The Multicultural Media Exchange is run by an impressive mix of experienced journalists, educators and community professionals. We now have 70 outstanding volunteer journalists and communications experts offering their valuable time to the project on a pro bono basis. Every one of these professionals is concerned about the narrow news agenda of the mainstream media and supports the Multicultural Media Exchange's aim of including a greater range of voices in the Australian media.

- We aim to be actively engaged with multi-ethnic Australia. Our director Agnes Cusack spoke at the Radioactive Multicultural & Indigenous Youth Media Conference in Canberra and in the MyLanguage, Your Language in the Digital Age Conference of State Libraries in Sydney.

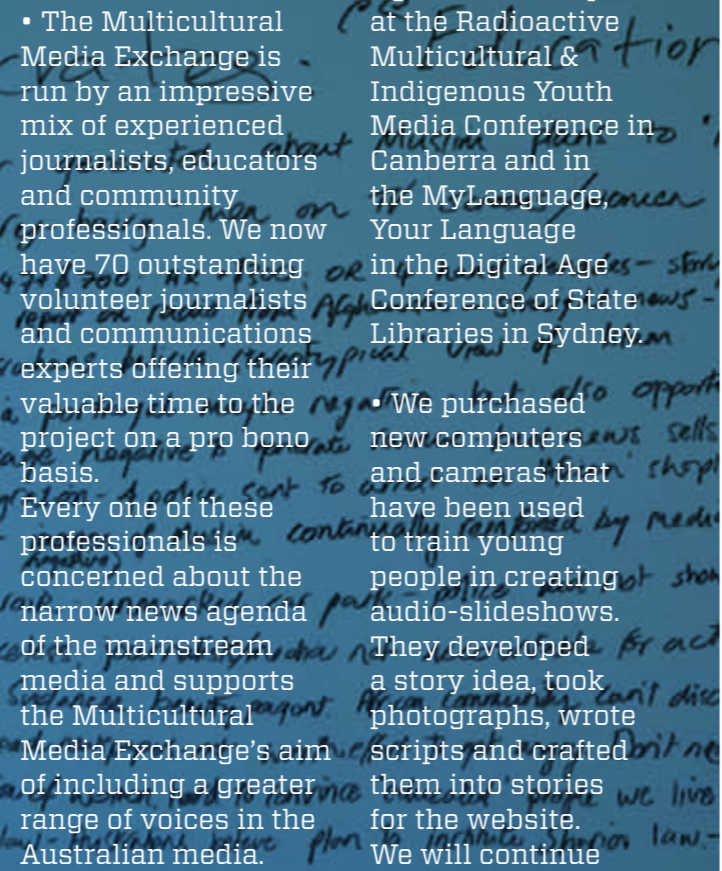
- We purchased new computers and cameras that have been used to train young people in creating audio-slideshows. They developed a story idea, took photographs, wrote scripts and crafted them into stories for the website. We will continue to incorporate multimedia into future training courses

- We completed four intensive news-training workshops during the year, and five more workshops are confirmed for Footscray, Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Ballarat and Shepparton.

- We are now happily settled in Ross House, Level 4, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

"In my 33 years in the media in Australia, working both locally and overseas, I have seldom encountered anything so practical and positive. Multicultural Media Exchange is assisting new Australians to have their voices heard. It is providing young people with the skills they will need to make a go of it in a new country. It is linking talented writers, broadcasters and photographers with professionals happy to share their expertise..."

Alan Attwood, Editor, *The Big Issue*



"Multicultural Media Exchange provides an important service to people from all backgrounds to help them engage with a world (the media) that can at times seem so distant from them. It often feels that the media talks 'about' multicultural communities without talking 'with' them. The training Multicultural Media Exchange provides helps to bridge those gaps."

Mohammed El-leissy Youth Engagement Officer, Islamic Council of Victoria

organisational structure



"It's important for journalists to think about the impact of their work – it's not just the story – how you go about it also matters. Good journalists should have a respect for ethics in practice, which emphasise fairness and balance, treating people properly, getting it right, and acknowledging if you've got it wrong."

Prue Innes, trainer

our team

Director, Agnes Cusack is the founder of the Multicultural Media Exchange, following a 30-year career as a journalist. She was posted as a foreign correspondent with the ABC to London and Washington and presented the Media Report on Radio National.

Agnes has worked as a journalist trainer at the South African Broadcasting Corporation, and in external relations with the World Bank in Indonesia and the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands. She has worked as a program manager at SBS, and lectured in journalism at Monash University. Agnes won a Walkley Award for coverage of the Balkan War and won a Knight Fellowship for Professional Journalists at Stanford University in 2001/2002.

Project Manager, Carmela Ferraro has been a freelance features writer for the past two decades. She has contributed to various Fairfax publications such as *The Age*, *Sunday Life* and *Insight*, as well as overseas press including *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian Weekly* and *The Yorkshire Post*.

Carmela also has extensive experience in suburban and community media and NGO communications.

Committee of management

The committee helps the Multicultural Media Exchange to instill the ideals of fairness and balance and respect for others in its work with individual communities and all Australians.

Margaret Burdeu is Manager, Policy and Advocacy for the Mental Illness Fellowship of Victoria. Margaret has over 20 years experience in innovative public policy roles in government and the not-for-profit sector. She brings a wealth of experience having held Board positions in the health and mental health sectors and with extensive experience in policy, government and consumer forums at the international, national and state levels.

Bill Birnbauer
William (Bill) Birnbauer is one of Australia's most respected journalists, with more than 30 years experience at *The Age*, *The Sunday Age* and *The Herald*. He joined Monash University journalism in December 2008. Bill has made two hour-long TV documentaries, has written two books, co-edited an anthology of short stories, and has

written several chapters in edited publications. In 1996, Bill led a team that won a Walkley award for best application of journalism to the print medium, for a narrative feature on the Port Arthur massacre. He has been a Walkley finalist four times. He won a Melbourne Press Club Quill award (he has been highly commended four times in the Quills), and has won the Victoria Law Foundation award (5 times), the Human Rights Award, the UN Association's Media Peace Award and a Dart Award.

Chau Duncan (our former treasurer) has a bachelor of Business and worked in the banking and finance sector before joining Austrade where she was responsible for strategic partnerships. Chau recently moved to Malaysia as Trade Commissioner, Clean Energy & Environment ASEAN Australian Trade Commission.



Agnes



Carmela



Margaret



Bill



Chau



Leslie



Elizabeth



Sani



Alex



Nick

Elizabeth Hart, a former secondary school teacher and regional press journalist, now teaches journalism at Monash University. She is currently completing a PhD on not-for-profit community newspapers in Victoria.

Leslie Falkiner-Rose is an author and journalist with more than 30 years experience in print, radio and television news, current affairs and documentaries. She is also a philanthropy strategist with a Masters in Philanthropy and Social Investment.

Sani Kajtazi (treasurer) was born in Kosovo and came to Australia via London. He graduated with a Masters Degree in Faculty of Arts (Communications) at Victoria University, has a diploma in Telecommunications and Informatics and is currently undertaking PhD studies with The University of Melbourne. Sani has produced award-winning video documentaries on the plight of refugees in Australia that have been screened in Europe and the United States and won an AUSTCARE award for the Best Radio News in 1999.

Alex Wake has been a journalist for 25 years and is now a lecturer in journalism at RMIT. Initially trained in print, she has adapted to other technologies and now boasts a career spanning radio, television and on-line. Alex has worked in Ireland, South Africa, the United Arab Emirates, as well as Australia. Alex has trained working journalists at the South African Broadcasting Corporation and was a journalism educator at Dubai Women's College in the United Arab Emirates. Alex also worked as a senior media advisor for a Queensland government minister. She still works as a freelance editor and news reader.

Nick Richardson has been a journalist for more than 25 years. He has worked for *The Herald*, *The Australian* and *The Bulletin* magazine and was an associate editor and weekly columnist at *The Herald-Sun*. He has been a fellow of the Australian Prime Ministers Centre and a Margaret George Fellow at the National Archives of Australia. He has written or co-written three non-fiction books and has a doctorate in history from the University of Melbourne. He most recently was group news editor at Leader Community Newspapers in Melbourne and is now editorial training manager for News Ltd's publications in Victoria.

"I've always been inspired by the words of Barney Mthomhothi Editor in Chief of SABC Radio News who wrote 'Access to information (is) critical to the survival and nurturing of a democratic culture. All institutions of society have to be accountable to the general populace. But accountability requires access to credible and uncontaminated information.' He was talking about radio because it goes beyond the bounds of electricity, money and literacy. All my training work is aimed at ensuring all people, have access to information."
Alexandra Wake

"Quality journalism in the United States has been reinvigorated by non-profit investigative reporting centres such as ProPublica and The Centre for Public Integrity both of which are funded by wealthy foundations and 'mum and dad' supporters. I'd like to think that Australians would support similar models here."
Bill Birnbauer

"The courses aim to give voice to those who are seldom heard. Participants learn to hone their messages and develop the skills and confidence to effectively contribute to public discussions through engagement with the media."
Leslie Falkiner-Rose

committee reflections

"Small communities like mine need to know what's going on. By that I mean they need information that is fair and accurate and helps people to understand and contribute to Australian society. The quality of information helps communities to do well and when a community is doing well as a whole, members of that group are better off too."
Sani Kajtazi

Elizabeth Hart was a founding member of the MME which led to a stint as editor of a newspaper for African communities, called *The Ambassador*.
"I was pleased to be associated with that publication for a short time, particularly because of the ways it linked with my research interest: the power of the community press. That work has helped me to see great scope for particular groups to own a part of the media and to give a voice to their own communities."

balance sheet

June 2011

ASSETS

Bank Accounts & cash		
General Account 135383966		\$9,777.96
Attorney General 142825116		\$26,426.25
Total Bank Accounts & cash		\$36,204.21
Fixed Assets		
Office Equipment		\$4,000.00
Office Equipment Depreciation		-\$493.00
Total Fixed Assets		\$3,507.00
Total Assets		\$39,711.21

LIABILITIES

GST Liabilities		
GST Collected		\$5,838.99
GST Paid		-\$456.00
Total GST Liabilities		\$5,382.99
Total Liabilities		\$5,382.99

NET ASSETS \$10,328.22

EQUITY

Current Earnings		\$26,652.33
Historical Balancing Account		\$7,675.89
Total Equity		\$34,328.22

profit & loss

July 2010 to June 2011

INCOME

Earned Income	
Training Services	\$17,009.09
Speaking fees	\$500.00
Total Earned Income	\$17,509.09
Grants	
Attorney-General's Department	\$38,780.80
Victorian Health	\$30,000.00
Vic Multicultural Commission	\$11,000.00
City of Melbourne	\$10,000.00
Lord Mayor's Foundation	\$10,000.00
DPCD Enterprise Grant	\$12,000.00
Women in Leadership	\$14,400.00
Total Grants	\$126,180.80
Sponsorship & Donations	
Donations	\$10,500.00
Total Sponsorship & Donations	\$10,500.00
Other Income	
Bank Interest	\$357.02
Insurance payout	\$313.34
Total Other Income	\$670.36
Total Income	\$154,860.25

EXPENSES

Program Expenses	
Training	\$40.00
Consultants - general	\$18,380.00
Total Program Expenses	\$18,420.00
Administration	
Bank fees & charges	\$40.60
Depreciation	\$493.00
Insurance	\$519.82
Legal Fees	\$77.70
Memberships & Subscriptions	\$94.01
Office Supplies & Printing	\$264.48
Rent	\$3,086.62
Sundries	\$2,425.45
Telephone & Internet	\$2,371.82
Travel	\$1,718.97
Wages, Salaries & Fees	
Administration fees	\$34,038.45
Management fees	\$64,500.00
Workcover (Workers Comp'tion)	\$157.00
Total Wages, Salaries & Fees	\$98,695.45
Total Administration	\$109,787.22
Total Expenses	\$128,207.92
Net Profit/(Loss)	\$26,652.33

the way ahead



a change in focus

The Multicultural Media Exchange aims to be a one-stop-shop, offering specialist communications support and advice for people and communities. The organisation is run by professional journalists, our trainers are experienced industry professionals, including university lecturers.

We are proud to offer services that uphold the journalist code of ethics.

There are many companies offering media services, however, we teach the fundamentals of journalism and create training programs in consultation with the communities we serve.

As well as working with individuals, we are increasingly being asked for help from organisations wanting to improve their communication skills.

In response, the Multicultural Media Exchange will offer a wide range of cost-effective short courses to help individuals and organizations develop ideas and get their messages across to the media.

building our website

Our website is currently being upgraded to reflect changes in the operations of the Multicultural Media Exchange and we are moving to the latest version of Drupal. Vicnet kindly continues to develop and host our site without charge.

thank you

Our heart-felt thanks to the people and organisations who have supported us through out the year – our work would not be possible without your invaluable contribution.

Volunteers

Jackie Allender
Robyn Anns
Alan Attwood
Anita Barraud
David Belton
Michael Birt
Sophie Black
Kathy Bowlen
Chris Canty
Betty Caplan
Elizabeth Cashen
Barry Clarke
Mwamba Clovis
Robin Culph
Carla Danaher
Jayne D'Arcy
Rebecca David
Christopher Deere
Suzanne Donisthrope
Martin Flanagan
John Francis
Caz Garvey
Leon Gettler
Harbant Gill
Sally Gibson
Sue Green
Orietta Guerrera
Kate Hannon
Sarah Hardy
Elizabeth Hart
Lachlan Hastings
Judith Heywood
Gabby Hills
Jillian Hocking
Chris Hornsey
Judy Hughes
Barbara Inglis
Prue Innes
Ralph Johnstone
Adrienne Jones
Mulki Kamil
Hugo Kelly
Kathy Kizilos
Kimina Lyall
Nick McKenzie
Mary McNamara
Karen Meehan
Maher Mughrabi
Shane O'Neill
Kerry O'Shea
Ruby Partland
Miki Perkins
Josh Presser
Shirley Randles
Ainsleigh Sheridan
Carmel Shute
Bridie Smith
Chris Smith
Deborah Stone
Polly Sutton
Andrew Tate
Robyn Thompson
David Vincent
Catherine Woods

Trainers

Brian Abbott
Jane Carfarella
Leslie Falkiner-Rose
Peter Gregory
Jillian Hocking
Prue Innes
Simone Mazengarb
Trent McCarthy
Alex Wake
Charles Wrigh

Individuals

Hala Abdelnour
Maysa Abouzied
Nasya Bahfen
Renee Barnes
Judi Carr
Denise Cauchi
Louise Connor
Marion Crooke
Christine Elliott
Jama Farah
Scott Grinter
Sash Herceg
Nosrat Hosseini
Peter Jeppersen
James Kirby
Joan Kirner
Ajak Kwai
Nicky Lobianco
Frank McGuire
Christa Momot
Kassahun Negewo
Diana Nguyen
Nyadol Nyuon
Guy Palmer
Van Rudd
Saeed Saeed
Cath Scarth
Margaret Simons
Jane Sloane
Michael Sutherland
Amal Swairjo
Fran Westmore

Organisations

Australian Business
Arts Foundation
Adult Migrant
Education Service
African Think Tank
Centre for
Multicultural Youth
City of Melbourne
Department of
Planning and
Community
Development
Donkey Wheel
Federal Attorney-
General's
Department
Leader Community
Newspapers
Lord Mayor's
Charitable
Foundation
MacAdvice
Media,
Entertainment
& Arts Alliance
Melbourne Press
Club
National Ethnic
Multicultural
Broadcasting
Council
Springvale
Community Aid &
Advice Bureau
VicHealth
Vicnet
Victorian
Multicultural
Commission



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“The fact that we had seasoned and experienced facilitators went a long way, for me, in understanding and appreciating the media landscape in Australia.”

“The hands-on approach was really effective. The interviewing was a great experience and a great confidence booster. I really enjoyed the program and I learned a lot.”

Feedback From Young
Muslim women at a training
workshop

**The Multicultural
Media Exchange
works to:**

**Develop media
skills in young
people and
communities
from diverse
backgrounds**

**Connect
multicultural
Australia
with media
professionals**

**Encourage greater
diversity of
opinion in the
media**

“It certainly helped a lot, and I won't be scared about being involved with the media after the course. I wish it could last longer.”