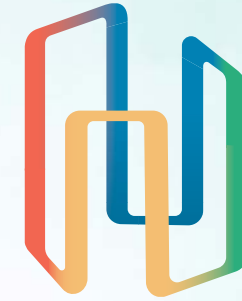


Welcoming Cities – An Overview



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Australia is
a multicultural
success story.



Our standards of living and levels of social cohesion rank amongst the best in the world.¹



We also live in a nation of stark contrast. Australia's population is one of the most culturally and linguistically diverse, while our First Peoples represent the oldest continuous culture in the world. Many Australian communities are experiencing rapid growth.² Others are grappling with significant population and economic decline.³

Local councils and leaders are best placed to understand the complexity and diversity of their communities. But, they often engage in this work with limited resources and support. Welcoming Cities supports local councils and community leaders through a network built around:



Knowledge Sharing

Supporting local governments and communities to learn from each other and access resources, research, policies, and case studies.



Partnership Development

Brokering meaningful multi-sector partnerships that foster a sense of belonging and participation for all members of the community.



Standard + Accreditation

Developing and accrediting The Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities to benchmark policy and practice in cultural diversity and inclusion.



Celebrating Success

Showcasing leading practice. A National Award focused on responses by local government to welcoming efforts.

Central to social, economic and civic success are the principles of welcoming and inclusion. **We support local councils and community leaders to leverage the ideas and innovation that come from being welcoming and inclusive.**

Welcoming Cities supports local councils and community leaders to leverage the ideas and innovation that come from being welcoming and inclusive.

Welcoming is about inclusion at all levels.

It is a process by which all people can develop a sense of belonging. When people feel welcome, they will participate in the communities that they live in. Welcoming is the means by which local councils, businesses and communities can embrace and integrate newcomers for greater social cohesion and economic success.





Economic Benefits

Over the next 35 years, migration will drive economic and skills growth in Australia.⁴

Migrants will contribute \$1,625 billion (1.6 trillion dollars) to Australia's GDP, and 10 per cent more to the economy than existing residents. Migration will also lead to a 60 per cent increase in people with a university education.

Social Benefits

100 Australian towns and regional centres are facing significant population and economic decline.⁵ Migration and settlement are helping to:

- increase local populations and add to the cultural vibrancy
- revitalise local businesses and services
- attract increased funding and investment

¹ OECD Better Life Index

² Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2015.

^{3, 5} Regional Australian Institute. 2016.

⁴ Migration Council Australia. 2015.

The Standard

The Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities is a central element of the Welcoming Cities network. The Standard aims to enable local councils to:

- benchmark their cultural diversity and inclusion policies and practices
- identify where and how further efforts could be directed
- assess progress over time

The Standard applies to all local councils in Australia. Councils can access, and progress through, the Standard at different stages in line with their resources, capacity and desired mode of assessment. We describe these stages (from lowest to highest) as Establishing, Advancing, Excelling, and Mentoring.

Organised under the following seven (7) categories, are guidelines that can be implemented by a local council or community stakeholder through policy, program or special initiatives.

Leadership and Communications



Welcoming Cities spearhead efforts to build Welcoming Plans (or similar) that advance migrant-friendly communications, policies, programs and initiatives, and institutionalise these efforts.

Welcoming Cities formally acknowledge Traditional Owners and Indigenous elders as the original custodians of the land and respect local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as leaders in welcoming activities.

Equitable Access



Welcoming Cities ensure that newcomers have access to council services and cultural assets by actively removing barriers to participation and inclusion.

Welcoming Cities also recognise the importance of equity for all members of the communities.

Economic Development and Education



Welcoming Cities place emphasis on helping newcomers to access and develop the skills, assets, and opportunities required to succeed in community life.

Civic Engagement



Welcoming Cities ensure that newcomers can fully participate in civic life, including increasing access to leadership and democratic opportunities.

Safe and Connected Communities



Welcoming Cities foster trust and build relationships between new arrivals, the local community and Australian-born residents.

Conflict Resolution and Mediation



Welcoming Cities actively identify sources of tension over values, behaviour or resources, and address them through mediation and other resources.

Physical Spaces and Infrastructure Planning



Welcoming Cities engage the community in making decisions regarding urban planning and built form that influences the successful integration of migrants.

Get Involved

Join a growing international network of cities, regions and communities committed to welcoming and inclusion.

Local councils can participate as members of the Welcoming Cities network, while community organisations, businesses and other agencies can get involved as supporters. Both members and supporters can access the key elements of the network through knowledge sharing, partnership development, standard and accreditation, and celebrating success.



Welcoming Cities is an initiative of the Scanlon Foundation and Welcome to Australia in partnership with Welcoming America.



Contact us to find out more and get involved.

info@welcomingcities.org.au

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