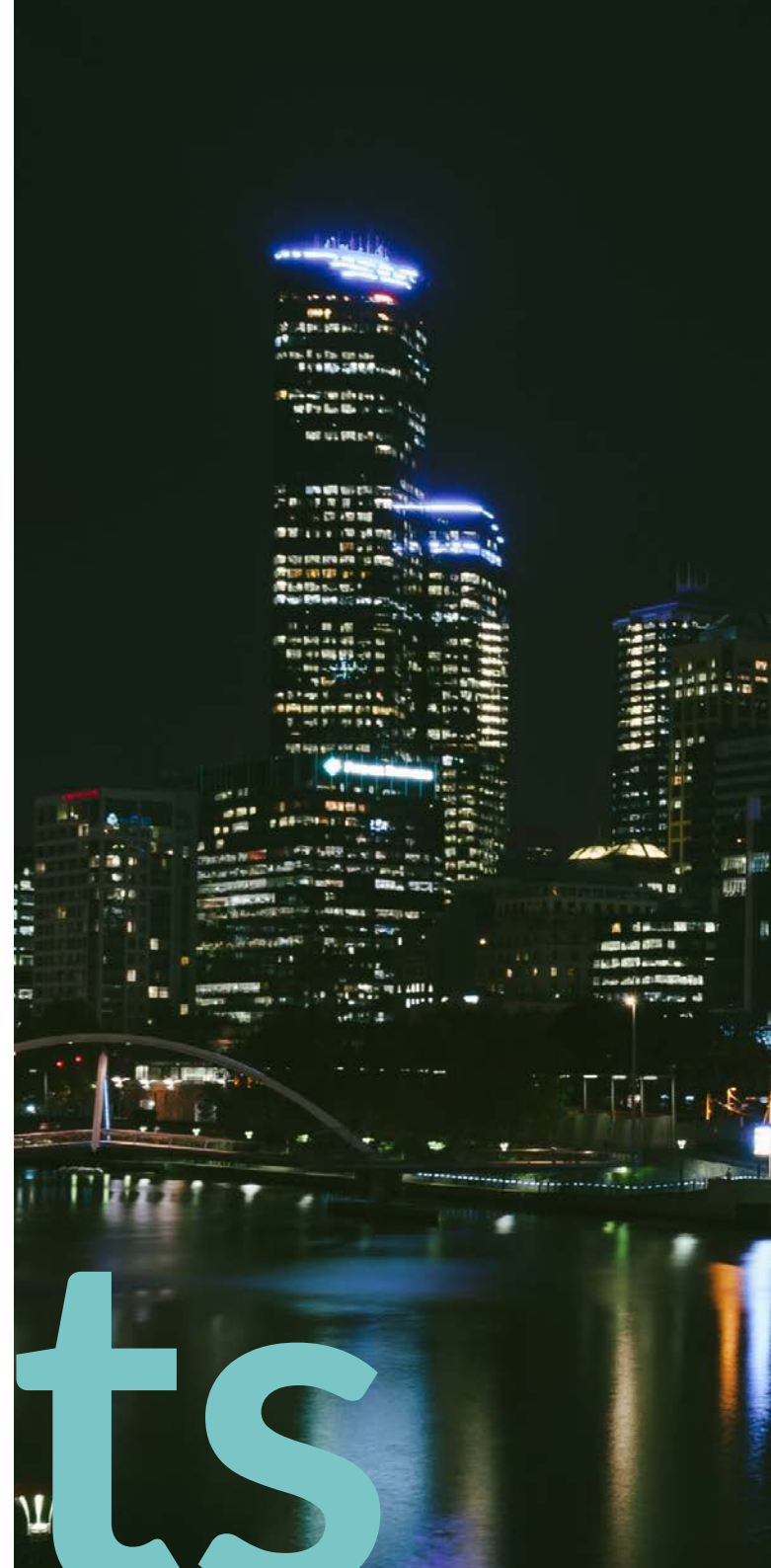




The Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities

Public Draft
version 1.0

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About Welcoming Cities

Australia is a multicultural success story. Our standards of living and levels of social cohesion rank amongst the best in the world.

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. Others are grappling with significant population and economic decline.

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.



In the next **35** years,
migration will...



Contribute \$1.6 trillion
to Australia's GDP



Lead to a 60% increase
in university-educated Australians



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.

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.

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



About the Standard

Purpose

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 across the organisation
- Identify where and how further efforts could be directed
- Assess progress over time

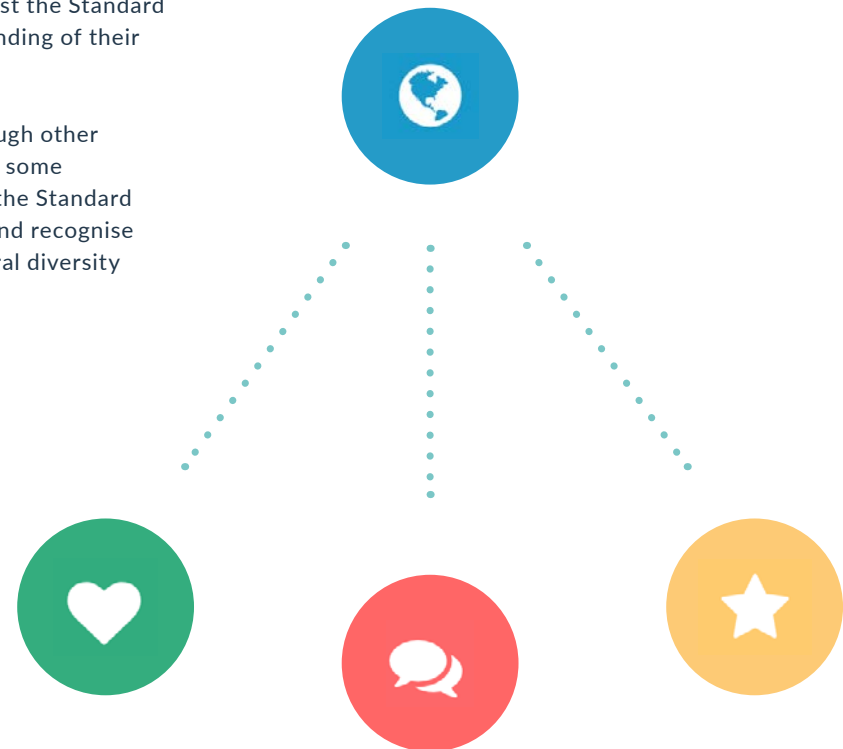
The other elements of the network support as well as enhance the purpose of the Standard.

Scope

The Standard applies to all local councils in Australia. This includes areas, cities, towns, municipalities, regions, shires and districts. 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.

The extent to which local councils consider and benchmark their activity against the Standard should be based on their understanding of their community's needs and capacity.

It is noted that local councils, through other obligations, are already addressing some guidelines. Rather than duplicate, the Standard seeks to validate existing efforts and recognise the connections to fostering cultural diversity and inclusion.



Principles

The following principles articulate the core values upon which the Standard has been developed:

- We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of this nation. 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.
- We engage receiving communities in understanding who their new neighbours are and why welcoming work is important – especially among people who may have concerns about, or are unaware of, the changing demographics of their community.
- We value the unique talents that people of all backgrounds – socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, religious, etc. – contribute in making our communities vibrant, welcoming and inclusive.
- We respect and leverage the cultural and leadership assets of new arrivals throughout the process of helping people navigate and integrate into the community.
- We encourage all community leaders to develop and celebrate partnerships that build a community's capacity for welcoming work.
- We bring together the voices and experiences of both new arrivals and the broader community in defining a welcoming agenda.
- We promote and build on the extensive and ongoing cultural diversity and inclusion work of the local government sector.
- We acknowledge Australia's migrant history, our unique approach to multiculturalism and settlement, and ongoing success in building social cohesion.

A Guide to Reading the Standard

The Standard is organised under the following seven (7) categories:



Leadership and Communications



Equitable Access



Economic Development and Education



Civic Engagement



Safe and Connected Communities



Conflict Resolution and Mediation



Physical Spaces and Infrastructure Planning

Each category contains a number of guidelines that can be implemented by a local council or community stakeholder through policy, program or special initiatives.

For some guidelines, a set of indicators is also provided. Indicators further describe how a local council can demonstrate the specific guideline. In cases where no indicators are defined, the guideline is considered self-explanatory and no additional level of detail is required.

The Standard also notes where guidelines could be implemented either by the local council, in partnership with community stakeholders, or solely by community stakeholders. This is noted through the following keys:



Local council

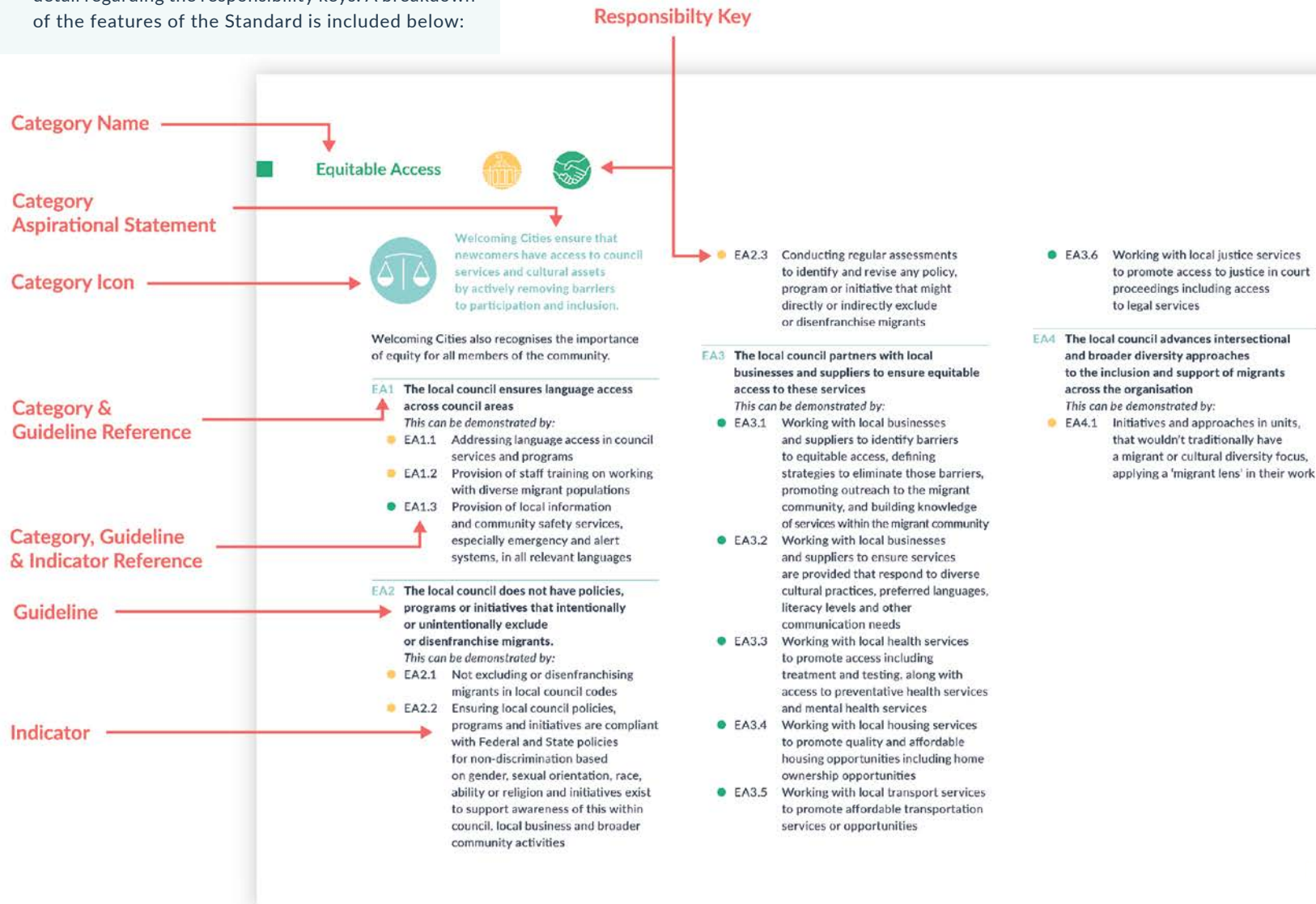


Local council in partnership with community stakeholder



Community stakeholder (such as businesses, community or other government agencies and faith organisations)

The Glossary of Terms (on page 23) goes into additional detail regarding the responsibility keys. A breakdown of the features of the Standard is included below:



Assessment

The table below illustrates how a local council can move through the different stages of Welcoming. Local councils will be re-evaluated every 3 years. Councils can also request an interim evaluation.

Councils will be able to consult with experts in the Standard to help them implement the policies and programs required to improve their standing as a Welcoming City

Stage	Guidelines Implementation	Evidence	Validation	Assessment type
Establishing	Some guidelines and indicators met	Welcoming Plan (or similar) in place to meet further guidelines and indicators	Signed by Mayor and CEO	Self-Assessment
Advancing	Guidelines and indicators of the following categories are met: 1. Leadership and Communications 2. Equitable Access 3. Economic Development and Education 4. Safe and Connected Communities	Documented policies, programs or initiatives to meet guidelines and indicators Welcoming Plan (or similar) in place to sustain existing guidelines as well as meet further guidelines and indicators	Signed by Mayor and CEO and countersigned by the CEO of an agreed and matched Mentoring council	Peer Assessment
Excelling	Guidelines and indicators of all categories are met	External assessor has viewed all documented policies, programs or initiatives and spoken to all policy, program or initiative 'owners' Welcoming Plan (or similar)	Recommendation from approved WC assessor	Formal External Assessment
Mentoring	Sustaining the guidelines and indicators of all categories with evidence of innovative and positive impact	External assessor has viewed all documented policies, programs or initiatives and spoken to all policy, program or initiative 'owners' Welcoming Plan (or similar) Tangible evidence is provided of innovative and positive impact e.g. community surveys	Recommendation from approved WC assessor	Formal External Assessment

Development and Accreditation

The International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling (ISEAL) Alliance defines a Standard as a “document that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods with which compliance is not mandatory”.

ISEAL views a Standard as a powerful market-based approach for creating positive social, environmental, and economic change, and driving transformation in how entities deliver goods and/or services.

A Standard defines what is expected and sustainable for a particular sector, drives and maintains change with a verification process, and has additional tools and activities in place for tracing certified goods and/or services. Through all of this, a Standard brings together all actors in the ecosystem and builds the capacity of entities to move from baseline to higher performance standards over time.

The development of The Australian Standard for Welcoming Cities (the Standard) has been guided by ISEAL’s Codes of Good Practice and Credibility Principles. Welcoming Cities will apply for full membership of the ISEAL Alliance to validate the Standard’s compliance in 2017.

The Standard has also considered the work of Intercultural Cities, Integrating Cities and Cities of Migration.

Note on Terms Used

For the purposes of the Standard, the term “migrant” refers to overseas born individuals, including children. Unless otherwise specified, the term “migrant” is also used to specify overseas born individuals of any immigration status, including refugees and people seeking asylum, as well as foreign-born individuals residing in the country on any visa type. Similarly, references to the “migrant community” and “newcomers” refer to all migrants, as defined above.

Please also refer to the full Glossary of Terms on page 23.



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.

LC1 The local council recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of this Nation

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC1.1 Actively seeking reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities
- LC1.2 Formally acknowledging Traditional Owners and Indigenous elders as the original custodians of the land in policies, initiatives and at events
- LC1.3 Engaging the Traditional Owners and Indigenous elders in Welcoming planning and activities

LC2 The local council designates a role or roles of which the focus includes migrant inclusion work

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC2.1 Formalising the role(s)
- LC2.2 Developing a reference group for the role(s) that includes multi-sector representation, and representatives that reflect the diversity of the migrant community and receiving communities

LC3 The local council provides information and support to migrants on accessing community services and resources

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC3.1 Provision of information on available council resources such as local council services
- LC3.2 Provision of information on visas and citizenship
- LC3.3 Provision of information on English language learning opportunities and translation services
- LC3.4 Provision of information on professional licensing and business start ups

LC4 The local council promotes and strengthens the collaborative work of Community Based Organisations doing migrant inclusion work

LC5 The local council promotes employing a local council workforce that is inclusive and culturally diverse

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC5.1 Identifying and addressing barriers in processes or systems that may limit inclusion
- LC5.2 Supporting access to information about relevant local council job openings in an inclusive manner
- LC5.3 Increasing the inter-cultural competency skills of the existing workforce

LC6 The local council advances local and minority-owned business sourcing and contracting (including for migrant-owned businesses)

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC6.1 Addressing the barriers for migrant-owned businesses to access council contracting opportunities

LC7 The local council manages a community wide and cross-council plan for migrant inclusion that sets strategies in each area of this Standard

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC7.1 Regularly assessing the needs and priorities of the local migrant community and using that feedback to strengthen the Welcoming Plan (or similar)
- LC7.2 Engaging cross-sector and diverse stakeholders, including stakeholders from both migrant and receiving communities
- LC7.3 Regularly assessing migrant inclusion efforts for effectiveness including building social cohesion, inclusivity and equitability
- LC7.4 Assessing learnings to drive a process of continuous improvement

Leadership and Communications (continued)

LC8 The local council partners with relevant stakeholders to promote a welcoming culture through advocacy and communication activities across diverse platforms

This can be demonstrated by:

- LC8.1 A public proclamation or resolution declaring the local council to be a welcoming community. The local council provides information and explanation to the broader community of what this means.
- LC8.2 Advocating for the opportunity and benefit of migrant inclusion to the community and reframing the public debate about migration, where necessary
- LC8.3 Not making public statements discouraging migration or migrant inclusion or directly attacking any community on the basis of their religion, ethnicity, race, gender, orientation, or ability
- LC8.4 Prioritising messaging with partners that communicates the community-wide benefit of migrant inclusion and a welcoming culture for all residents
- LC8.5 Presenting consistent and compelling counter narratives that present positive migrant stories and contributions

- LC8.6 Supporting and promoting community events and activities for multicultural and faith-based communities
- LC8.7 Linking local issues or events to those occurring nationally or internationally, including celebration of religious festivals and national traditions

LC9 The local council establishes and monitors municipal benchmarks against key inclusion and cultural diversity indicators such as employment, housing, health and wellbeing, diversity in leadership, education, and access and equity.







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

Welcoming Cities also recognises the importance of equity for all members of the community.

EA1 The local council ensures language access across council areas

This can be demonstrated by:

- EA1.1 Addressing language access in council services and programs
- EA1.2 Provision of staff training on working with diverse migrant populations
- EA1.3 Provision of local information and community safety services, especially emergency and alert systems, in all relevant languages

EA2 The local council does not have policies, programs or initiatives that intentionally or unintentionally exclude or disenfranchise migrants.

This can be demonstrated by:

- EA2.1 Not excluding or disenfranchising migrants in local council codes
- EA2.2 Ensuring local council policies, programs and initiatives are compliant with Federal and State policies for non-discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, race, ability or religion and initiatives exist to support awareness of this within council, local business and broader community activities

- EA2.3 Conducting regular assessments to identify and revise any policy, program or initiative that might directly or indirectly exclude or disenfranchise migrants

EA3 The local council partners with local businesses and suppliers to ensure equitable access to these services

This can be demonstrated by:

- EA3.1 Working with local businesses and suppliers to identify barriers to equitable access, defining strategies to eliminate those barriers, promoting outreach to the migrant community, and building knowledge of services within the migrant community
- EA3.2 Working with local businesses and suppliers to ensure services are provided that respond to diverse cultural practices, preferred languages, literacy levels and other communication needs
- EA3.3 Working with local health services to promote access including treatment and testing, along with access to preventative health services and mental health services
- EA3.4 Working with local housing services to promote quality and affordable housing opportunities including home ownership opportunities
- EA3.5 Working with local transport services to promote affordable transportation services or opportunities

- EA3.6 Working with local justice services to promote access to justice in court proceedings including access to legal services

EA4 The local council advances intersectional and broader diversity approaches to the inclusion and support of migrants across the organisation

This can be demonstrated by:

- EA4.1 Initiatives and approaches in units, that wouldn't traditionally have a migrant or cultural diversity focus, applying a 'migrant lens' in their work



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

EE1 The local council integrates migrant inclusion in its formal economic development approach

EE2 The local council advocates whole of community opportunity and benefit of migrant inclusion

EE3 The local council supports jobseekers as well as businesses looking to attract diverse talent

This can be demonstrated by:

- EE3.1 Provision of professional networking and mentorship opportunities
- EE3.2 Provision of information and employment counselling to jobseekers such as information on job search resources
- EE3.3 Connecting migrants to work experience opportunities such as internships or apprenticeships
- EE3.4 Supporting workplace language learning opportunities in alliance with businesses
- EE3.5 Supporting recognition of international work experience
- EE3.6 Addressing discriminatory practices in hiring and employment of council's workforce and setting a positive example for local businesses
- EE3.7 Working with employers to improve workplace conditions and culture

- EE3.8 Engaging employers, chambers of commerce, financial institutions, organisations in the workforce system, and other relevant community based organisations to identify economic development needs and opportunities for migrants
- EE3.9 Working to prepare and place migrants in jobs that earn a living wage and provide the potential for upward mobility
- EE3.10 Connecting all members of the community to employment to address unemployment or underemployment

EE4 The local council advances migrants in starting, building and growing businesses

This can be demonstrated by:

- EE4.1 Provision of information on enterprise development services
- EE4.2 Improving access to contracting, financing, networking and technical assistance opportunities to migrant entrepreneurs and migrant-owned businesses

EE5 The local council advances financial inclusion and builds the financial capacities of migrants

EE6 The local council provides education on workers' rights and workplace safety, improves access to legal advice on employment and workplace issues

EE7 The local council works with primary and secondary school systems to attain more equitable educational outcomes for migrant students

This can be demonstrated by:

- EE7.1 Advancing migrant parent engagement with the school systems including providing support to parents in:
 - a) enrolling students
 - b) navigating the school system
 - c) accessing information on local school options
 - d) accessing information on resources and support available to students
 - e) understanding rules and disciplinary procedures
 - f) participating in parent stakeholder bodies
- EE7.2 Facilitating migrant student access to extracurricular or enrichment activities
- EE7.3 Engaging and leveraging the community leadership role of school principals to develop co-ordinated approaches to extracurricular or enrichment activities
- EE7.4 Provision of information on services such as counselling and financial assistance that increase migrant student access to higher education
- EE7.5 Provision of career readiness support for migrant students

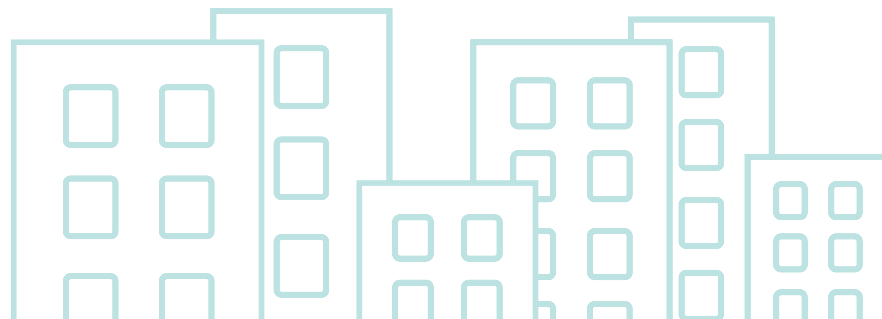
Economic Development and Education (continued)

- EE7.6 Addressing early learning and primary school readiness for migrant children
- EE7.7 Supporting training for educators and staff on teaching and supporting diverse student populations

EE8 The local council advances educational and career opportunities for migrant adults

This can be demonstrated by:

- EE8.1 Facilitating access to professional development opportunities
- EE8.2 Developing migrant capacities to increase access to higher education, technical degrees, certification programs and professional licensing through access to information, services and resources
- EE8.3 Facilitating the credentialing for migrants including previous learning, qualification and skills







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

CE1 The local council develops migrant knowledge of local council workings and advances migrant civic engagement

This can be demonstrated by:

- CE1.1 Provision of information on civic engagement opportunities along with general information on the responsibilities of councils
- CE1.2 Migrant participation in public council meetings
- CE1.3 Migrant participation on council committees and advisory / reference groups and advancement of migrant civic leadership

CE2 The local council supports citizenship attainment

This can be demonstrated by:

- CE2.1 Provision of information on process and eligibility, legal assistance, and testing and application support

CE3 The local council supports eligible migrants in voting

This can be demonstrated by:

- CE3.1 Working with relevant local council and state government to eliminate barriers to voting for eligible migrants

● CE4 The local council engages migrants in community service activities





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

SC1 The local council ensures that safety services are provided in a culturally competent manner

This can be demonstrated by:

- SC1.1 Inclusion of victim services
- SC1.1 Inclusion of code enforcement

SC2 The local council trains public safety staff in working with diverse migrant populations

This can be demonstrated by:

- SC2.1 Inclusion of staff operating emergency response systems such as 000

SC3 The local council nurtures connections between the migrant community and receiving community

This can be demonstrated by:

- SC3.1 Building relationships between the receiving community and the migrant community, and supporting migrants in building diverse personal networks
- SC3.2 Bringing the migrant community and receiving community together to work on issues of common interest
- SC3.3 Promoting regular communication and interaction between leaders in the migrant community and leaders in the receiving community

- SC3.4 Planning activities targeted at connecting young people from migrant and receiving communities

SC4 The local council allows all people of the community to practice their faith

This can be demonstrated by:

- SC4.1 Cultural competency training for council parking, traffic, events and emergency management staff and ensuring relevant policies and processes are culturally appropriate
- SC4.2 Encouraging businesses as well as local council spaces and facilities to accommodate the practice of different faiths
- SC4.3 Accommodation of cultural practices around birth, marriage, death and burial (within the bounds of Australian law)

SC5 The local council nurtures connections between the migrant communities and the local police force

This can be demonstrated by:

- SC5.1 Facilitation of information sessions by the local police force on local law and legal processes to help migrant communities understand and appreciate the rights and obligations to instil confidence and a sense of a safe and connected community
- SC5.2 Training and information for police officers to understand the cultures that make up the community

- SC5.3 Presence and participation of the local police force in community settings and events
- SC5.4 Recruitment of migrants for positions within the police force and/or as community liaisons



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

CM1 The local council identifies possible sources of tension

This can be demonstrated by:

- CM1.1 Developing a network of people and organisations through which appropriate and ongoing community engagement processes can identify possible sources of tension

CM2 The local council provides professional mediation and other resources to deal with identified conflicts

This can be demonstrated by:

- CM2.1 Access to trusted and skilled mediation resources that deal with intercultural and interreligious issues and allow migrants to safely report conflicts and discrimination

-
- CM3 The local council provides advice and supports people who have faced discrimination

CM4 The local council actively diffuses tension or conflicts before they reach a large scale

This can be demonstrated by:

- CM4.1 Running anti-discrimination campaigns or raising awareness in other ways
- CM4.2 Encouraging intercultural contact in order to gain a better understanding of other cultures as a strategy to prevent tensions and conflicts



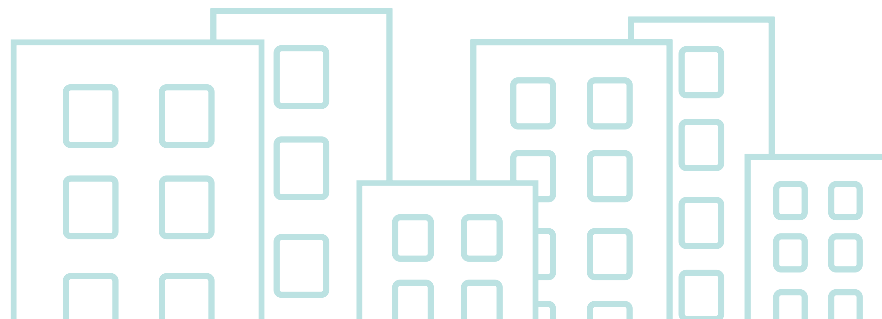


Welcoming Cities engage the community in making decisions regarding urban planning and built form that influences the successful integration of migrants.

- **PI1** The local council encourages intercultural mixing in local council spaces including public libraries and parks

- **PI2** Intercultural mixing is promoted in non-council spaces

- PI3** The local council consults about new projects for physical spaces and infrastructure with a wide cross section of community
This can be demonstrated by:
 - **PI3.1** New physical spaces and infrastructure that consider and account for specific cultural needs



Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Local Council/s	Refers to the local government body being assessed against the Standard. Local councils include areas, cities, towns, municipalities, regions, shires and districts.
Migrant Inclusion Work	“Migrant inclusion work” refers to the policies, programs, and partnership programs outlined in the Standard as a whole. In other words, efforts led by either a local council or advanced by partnerships to institutionalise migrant friendly policies, programs and initiatives in the areas of leadership and communications; equitable access; economic development and education; civic engagement; safe and connected communities; conflict resolution and mediation and; physical spaces and infrastructure planning.
Migrants, Migrant Community, Newcomer	For the purposes of the Standard, the term “migrant” refers to overseas born individuals, including children. Unless otherwise specified, the term “migrant” is also used to specify overseas born individuals of any immigration status including refugees and people seeking asylum, as well as foreign-born individuals residing in the country on any visa type. Similarly, references to the “migrant community” and “newcomers” refer to all migrants, as defined above.
Receiving Community	Within this document, “receiving community” refers to all residents of a council area not covered under the definition of “migrant”. This includes Indigenous communities and previous generations of migrants.
Responsibility ‘Local Council’ Responsibility	The local council should be the primary driver and facilitator of the guideline implementation.
Responsibility ‘Local Council in Partnership’ Responsibility	A varied leadership in guideline implementation possibly with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Local council is the primary driver of the guideline implementation, but relies heavily on content or materials developed by other partners and/or relies on funding from other sources to carry out implementation; b) Formal multi-sector collaborations where a local council is one of the institutions at the table. Examples of other institutions that should be involved include community-based organisations, faith-based organisations, chambers of commerce, businesses, federal and state governments, and schools. While the local council must play a role in the partnership, a local council does not need to be the driver or primary partner.
Responsibility ‘Community Stakeholder’ Responsibility	The local council is not the driver or a primary partner in the implementation. The local council may be a stakeholder, be informed or consulted by the community stakeholder.
Welcoming City	A local council that has committed, communicated, planned, built and/or sustained a welcoming community, and is assessed as such.

