

# ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

LODDON CAMPASPE



MULTICULTURAL SERVICES



LODDON CAMPASPE MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

# Acknowledgement of Country

We pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of these lands we now call home: the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung, Yorta Yorta, Wurundjeri, Woi Wurrung and Barapa Barapa Peoples.

We honour the many Elders, stories, cultures, languages and generations who have cared for Country here: past, present and emerging.

We recognise the life-giving strength and power of these lands, waters, creatures, plants and sky.

We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded by the First Nations Peoples.

We express our gratitude for the opportunity to live in these beautiful lands that provide us with safety, shelter and food.

We thank and stand in solidarity with the First Nations Peoples who have welcomed those of us who have had to flee or were compelled to leave our own homelands, and those of us who have chosen to make Australia home.

We promise to care for Country, which continues to care for us.

We hope to walk together with the Traditional Custodians, in the spirit of healing.



Smoking Ceremony, South Sudanese Camp

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Playtime at Hazara camp

# About Us

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS) is the Ethnic Community Council and peak body for multicultural communities in central Victoria.

LCMS is a welcoming not-for-profit organisation that empowers people from migrant and refugee backgrounds to participate fully in Australian society.

By focusing on people's strengths, we are able to develop stronger communities, support other service providers and influence decision makers at local, state and national levels.

LCMS' WORK SITS WITHIN FOUR PROGRAM AREAS: SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION; STRONG AND VISIBLE VOICES; PATHWAYS TO JOBS AND EDUCATION; AND CELEBRATING CULTURE.

## **SOCIAL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION**

- SETTLEMENT, ENGAGEMENT AND TRANSITION SUPPORT
- COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING
- HOUSING
- REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
- SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES AND SOCIAL COHESION

## **STRONG AND VISIBLE VOICES**

- ADVOCACY

## **PATHWAYS TO JOBS AND EDUCATION**

- ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSES
- PRE-EMPLOYMENT TRAINING PATHWAYS
- FAMILY LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS
- CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING
- JOB MENTORING
- WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIPS

## **CELEBRATING CULTURE**

- ZINDA FESTIVAL
- COMMUNITY CULTURAL FESTIVALS AND EVENTS
- SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

First Aid Training



Futsal Tournament



Harmony Day



# Chairperson's Statement



**On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am delighted to present the Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services 2021-2022 Annual Report.**

**I wish to pay my respects to the Elders, past and present and emerging, acknowledge the First Nations peoples and the country of the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung, Yorta Yorta, Wurundjeri, Woi Wurrung and Barapa Barapa Peoples on whose land we live, play and work on. As a migrant, I believe that it is especially important to acknowledge Australia's First Nations peoples, as the custodians of the land who came before us.**

During the 2021-2022 financial year, LCMS continued to grow and flourish in the not-for-profit sector under the leadership of our CEO, Sonia Di Mezza. We have often been complimented by Local Government, and other major organisations, throughout the Loddon Campaspe region for the contributions and achievements we have made through our endeavours to raise community awareness of the multicultural nature of our community and the rewards that such multiculturalism brings. Additionally, the breadth of services offered to the community has grown exponentially over the past year with an expansion in our employment program and receipt of grant funding to implement the National Redress Scheme to culturally diverse people in our region.

There are significant increased opportunities to support multicultural communities and increase our culturally diverse footprint within the region.

We have a management team and staff who among other attributes, are multilingual and as a consequence can therefore communicate successfully to a broad spectrum of our community members who contribute so much to our success. On behalf of the Board, I salute each and every one of them for their outstanding contributions to LCMS.

In my role as Chair, it has been a great honour and pleasure to work with such a team, led so well by an excellent board and an exceptional CEO.

Without further ado I would like to present a snapshot of our performance and achievements over the past year:

## **Governance, Performance Evaluation and Upskilling**

Our Board continues to focus on good governance, strategy review and direction. We implemented a new 3-year Strategic Plan which was introduced at the last AGM. In addition, the latest audit report gave us another clean bill of financial health for 2021/2022, and we thank the finance team for their excellent work.

## **Strategic Plan 2021-2024**

A new 3-year Strategic Plan was implemented this year. Sonia and the team have a broad new direction by expanding beyond the City of Greater Bendigo. Through several roadshows, events and social media engagement much of LCMS' work has reached and engaged a wider audience on a regional scale. LCMS continues to play a key role in the development of national resources and has represented the multicultural community 'voice' on various national working groups, such as at the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council (FECCA) conference and working collaboratively with ECCV, the Ethnic Communities Council for Victoria which is the peak body committed to empowering people from culturally diverse backgrounds by giving the multicultural communities in Victoria a strong voice in the political arena.

## **Stakeholders**

We continue to receive great support and funding from local, state, and federal governments. While migration to Australia has dramatically decreased, our revenues have grown through the increased activities and contributions that LCMS has been able to implement.

In the very near future there is no doubt that we will be considering further opportunities to expand our LCMS service model so as to complement our existing revenue streams.

## **Outlook**

Due to the efforts of our CEO and committed staff, LCMS is expected to grow significantly and become an even more significant contributor to the Loddon Campaspe Region's multi-cultural communities. Areas such as supporting culturally diverse communities in areas throughout our regions; working with culturally diverse people experiencing domestic violence; and focusing on youth racism initiatives are certainly well within our future scope.



Merrilyn Gaulke



Peter Watson



Bruno Spandonide



Joby Sebastian



John Murphy



Anna Dorevitch



Andriy Kurtsev



Salwa Dastgeer



Ian Patrick



Dianne Tran



Rachel Vanstone

**LCMS would like to recognise past 21-22 board members:**

Esther Ryan  
Luz Restrepo  
Oscar Torres-Gomez  
Ivan Rwakiuma

# Board of Directors 2022

## Board Members

Our Board really needs a mention for the dedication, time and expertise they readily give and which makes such a large contribution to our success.

I would particularly like to thank three members who stood down from the board over the past year: Ivan Rwakiuma, Luz Restrepo and Oscar Torres-Gomez. They each left an indelible mark on our success this year.

I would like to acknowledge and give special thanks to the past Chair Esther Ryan, for her tireless leadership and continual support that she meted out to our board and the outstanding work she achieved with our various stakeholders.

All four of the above Board members made outstanding contributions during their terms and on behalf of our entire team, Thank you so very much.

I warmly welcome six new members to the board: Andriy Kurtsev, Anna Dorevitch, Ian Patrick and Salwa Dastgeer, Rachel Vanstone and Dianne Tran. They are

all passionate about multiculturalism and the strength of our multicultural society and we look forward to all of them making a significant contribution to our future success.

## LCMS Staff and Management

Personally and on behalf of the Board, I would like to thank our CEO Sonia Di Mezza, for her outstanding leadership, the unwavering passion that she brings to the table in whatever she involves herself in and her genuine desire to see LCMS flourish for the benefit of the whole regional community.

Thank you, to the LCMS staff and volunteers who have performed and delivered services above and beyond the call of duty. And to our multicultural communities: it is a privilege and honour for LCMS to be able to walk alongside you in your journey to settlement in Australia.

*Dr Thaera O'Brien*



# A Message From the Chief Executive Officer

It is with great pleasure that I reflect on the past year of working with Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services.

The past year has been characterised by significant change and growth for our organisation. Continuing to work through the challenging times of the pandemic has required our staff to develop and strengthen their ability to adapt to constantly changing circumstances, and I believe that we have achieved this with resounding success.

Our communities have continued to receive the supports required in such challenging times, whether it be via the provision of relevant, in-language, pandemic-related information, food resources, or other community development program initiatives.

We worked to implement our new three-year strategic plan, with a renewed focus on supporting people from refugee and migrant communities, throughout the Loddon Campaspe region, as well as focused on a human rights-based approach, which lies at the foundation of every action we undertake. This entailed outreach, networking, and connection to the different councils throughout our region, ensuring that we were able to provide even more support, programs, and services to multicultural communities than ever before. Our staff numbers have grown, compelling us to seek a new home, able to properly welcome and

accommodate our staff, and community members.

During the year we won a tender for the Jobs Victoria Employment Services, increasing our work and funding in the employment sector, as well as our success with funding under the National Redress Scheme, providing support for people from culturally diverse backgrounds who have suffered institutional childhood sexual abuse.

'Seniors Day Event, collaborating with the Council of the City of Grater Bendigo', 23 March 2022.



With the relaxing of pandemic restrictions, LCMS has worked hard throughout the year in preparation to host our Zinda Multicultural Festival. This took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of October 2022 in Garden for the Future, White Hills. After a two-year hiatus, brought about by the pandemic, we aimed to present an even bigger and brighter festival, showcasing the cultural diversity of our multicultural communities, via the sharing of food, performances, arts, and craft. The future for our organisation certainly looks bright, as we continue to work to support our multicultural communities in the Loddon Campaspe region.

From a governance perspective, I have worked with the staff and board to renew our organisational policies and to strengthen and upgrade our financial systems, to account for even greater amounts of grant funding that we have received during the year.

Presenting at the Federation of Ethnic Communities Council of Australia (FECCA) conference on the topic of 'Living Well, Dying Well: Culturally Appropriate Palliative Care', 16 June 2022



None of this could have been possible without the hard work and support of various people, who have continually supported us, and celebrated and shared our achievements with us. I thank the LCMS board, for your continued support of me as the leader of our organisation. The guidance and hard work you have invested into our organisation is greatly appreciated. I furthermore wish to acknowledge and thank the LCMS staff members, who work so hard and with great passion with our culturally diverse community members, to support them in the best way possible. I also thank and recognise the numerous donors and stakeholders, who fund our work and work with us, to help us to achieve our objectives.

It is the multicultural communities with whom we collaborate to do the work we do, who are at the core of every effort we make. It is a great privilege to be able to work with them, and my sincere thanks are extended to all the people from culturally diverse backgrounds, and from refugee and migrant

communities throughout the Loddon Campaspe region, for letting us walk alongside them, as they seek to celebrate their cultural identity and contribute to the rich and vibrant multicultural Australian society, within which we live. Our lives are enhanced and enriched by your very presence.

'Inquiry into Older Victorians from Migrant and Refugee Backgrounds', 31 March 2022, Ballarat.



*Being from a culturally diverse background is something that is integral to who I am as a person, part of my personality that I live and bring to my work, each and every day.*

*I am hopeful that, as a society we are finally coming to view multiculturalism not as a problem 'to be fixed', but as an asset and a strength that defines who we are as a community.*

*Sonia Di Mezza*



Healthy Families camp for the South Sudanese community

# Our Team



## **Sonia Di Mezza - Chief Executive Officer**

Sonia was born in Australia, to parents who migrated to Australia from Italy. Sonia has worked as the CEO of a domestic violence NGO, and Deputy CEO of a disability advocacy NGO, in Canberra. She has set up human rights projects in Sudan and Pakistan, for Afghan widowed women and their children, worked as a Resettlement Officer for UNHCR in Lebanon, for a child rights NGO in India, and as a refugee lawyer. Sonia is a solicitor, holds a Master of International Law, majoring in human rights law, and speaks five languages.



## **Robyn Matthews - Team Leader Education**

Robyn has over 25 years' experience teaching English as an Additional Language in a variety of settings in Japan, China, and Taiwan. She has a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) focusing on linguistics, a TESOL qualification as well as qualifications in massage and yoga. Robyn is also fluent in Japanese.



## **Sylvia Phan - Employment Program Manager**

Sylvia Phan has a Bachelor of Arts (Economics/Industrial Relations/Psychology) and a Masters of Commerce (Human Resources) from the University of New South Wales. Sylvia has worked in South East Asia and China and started her career as a Human Resource Manager. Born in Malaysia, she moved to Australia in 2014, the same year she started with LCMS. She believes that "anything worth doing, is worth doing well".



## **Vanessa Feeney - EAL Teacher**

Vanessa is working part-time at LCMS as an English teacher. She is a qualified primary school teacher and is also working part-time at a local primary school. Vanessa is currently studying a post graduate diploma in TESOL and has been teaching for three years.



## **Bu Gay Pah Thei - Jobs Victoria Employment Services (JVES) Coordinator (Maternity Leave January-June)**

Bu Gay is a trusted Karen community connector, speaks Karen and has worked hard for LCMS. Prior to that Bu Gay volunteered for over five years to support her community to settle in Bendigo and studied a diploma of Nursing. Bu Gay is secretary for the Karen Organisation of Bendigo.



## **Elisangela Couto - Team Leader Community and Capacity Building**

Elisangela Couto has a Bachelor of Tourism Planning and a Masters in Community Planning and Development from La Trobe University. Elisangela has worked all over Mozambique and South America and started as a Course Coordinator in a Polytechnic Institute in Mozambique. Born in Mozambique, she moved to Australia in 2015.



## **Alison Chapman - Business Manager**

Alison commenced with LCMS in January 2020 and has over 20 years experience working in Senior Administration positions at Tintern Grammar, The Royal Children's Hospital, The University of Melbourne, and La Trobe University. Alison holds qualifications in Community Services, IT, Kinesiology, Holistic Counselling and Natural Therapies.

### **Jason Newton - Team Leader Cultural Diversity**

Jason is a qualified chef with over 20 years' experience. He has worked as head chef in both daily service and catering. Jason specialises in locally sourced produce and cooking with the seasons. Jase has been with LCMS since 2018.



### **Maha Sein - Communications Co-ordinator**

Maha joined LCMS as a casual bilingual support worker in July 2020. He undertook a Certificate IV in Business Administration Traineeship and completed this at the end of 2021. After completing his traineeship he then moved onto the communication role. Maha is from a Karen ethnic group, born in Burma and moved to Australia in 2009. Maha enjoys portrait and landscape photography, cooking and supporting others in need. Maha speaks fluent Poo Karen, Sgaw Karen and Burmese.



### **Laila Hashimi - Community Development Worker/JVES Specialist Mentor**

Laila started working at LCMS in 2020 to help provide bilingual support in response to the pandemic. She provides settlement support and is part of the employment team as a JVES Specialist Mentor. Laila is Hazara from Afghanistan and her work directly assists local Hazara and Afghan communities. Laila has engaged in mental health and domestic violence training, to enhance her knowledge about local services that are available to communities.



### **Deanna Neville - Operations Manager**

Deanna's background is in local grassroots community development and government department projects. Her work has included a range of projects including youth, seniors, drought affected farmers, communities impacted by fires and floods, public housing and Indigenous community arts. She has travelled several times to Timor-Leste in a volunteer support role. Deanna has also engaged in health and fitness roles as well as in the visual arts. She holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Community Planning and Development and has trained in fine art photography and human movement.



### **Say Nay Htoo Moo - Settlement Worker**

Say Nay started working at LCMS at the end of 2021. He worked as an interpreter for several interpreting service providers for a few years. He worked with BCHS as a Bi-Cultural Worker for a one-off project. Say Nay was born in Karen State, Burma and settled in Australia in 2009 as a Karen refugee. He enjoys cooking at home and loves camping, fishing and travelling. Say Nay also works with Karen community in Bendigo and voluntarily helped community members during the COVID-19 lockdown.



### **Yoko Vigor - Community Services Trainee**

Yoko has a Bachelor of Arts Degree and Associate Degree in Information and Technology from university in Japan and is a qualified Japanese teacher in Japan, with over 15 years' experience. Yoko moved to Australia in 2019 with her family and started working at Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS) as a community service trainee in April 2022. She assists with the coordination of the Multicultural playgroup and LCMS food share.



### **Winne Htoo - Administration Trainee**

Winne joined LCMS in March 2022 as the Business Administration Trainee. Winne hopes to gain experience in an administration role to help her community as they are in a process of building their community church. Before joining LCMS, Winne previously worked as a dental assistant. One of Winne's hobbies is playing volleyball with her community and the youth. Winne is from the Paku Karen ethnic group, was born in a Karenni refugee camp and came to Australia in 2010.





### **Mitchell Dean - Team Leader JVES Specialist**

Mitchell joined LCMS in May 2022, previously working with Central Victoria Group Training (CVGT) in various employment programs, supporting disengaged youth, people with disabilities and ex-offenders into employment over the last three and a half years. Mitchell has also worked with headspace as a Community Engagement Officer educating the community on the importance of looking after your mental health. Mitchell has a Bachelor Degree in Psychological Science.



### **Amanda Sam - JVES Specialist Mentor**

Amanda joined LCMS at the start of 2021 as a Job Mentor in the Employment Team. Amanda has a background in Project Management and Administration within the Health and Family Violence Sectors. Amanda has volunteered as a recreation support for multicultural and diverse communities in Melbourne whilst studying her Certificate in Project Management and Diploma in Recreation- Sports Administration. Amanda has travelled through parts of East, South and West Africa, UK and Europe and has lived and worked in the UK and Ghana. Amanda has a passion for supporting people from multicultural and diverse backgrounds to feel part of the community.



### **Melissa Moo - JVES Specialist Mentor**

Melissa Moo joined LCMS in 2022 as Jobs Victoria Employment Service - Job Mentor. She graduated from The Australian Catholic University in 2021 with a dual Bachelor of Applied Public Health and Global Studies. Melissa speaks Karen, Thai, English and a little bit of Laos. Having been born in a Thailand Refugee Camp, her family migrated to Australia 14 years ago. Melissa loves being able to advocate for people of migrant and refugee backgrounds and helps them have a culturally safe settlement, where every part of their journey is assisted according to their needs.



### **Silvia Moo - JVES Coordinator**

Silvia has a Bachelor of Business Administration and Commerce (Accounting) from the Australian Catholic University. Silvia is trilingual in Karen, Thai and English and was born in a Thailand Refugee Camp. Silvia moved to Australia in 2011 and commenced with LCMS in April 2022. Prior to that Silvia volunteered with LCMS in 2018, providing bilingual support to help her community, as well as supporting LCMS in a voluntary administration position. Silvia gained over 3 years' experience in employment services before returning to LCMS as JVES Employment Coordinator.



### **Eunmi Cho - JVES Specialist Mentor**

Eunmi joined LCMS as an employment mentor at the end of May 2022. She is from South Korea and came to Bendigo in 2006 where she completed her bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management. Eunmi has worked with the Chinese migrant community and supported international students at La Trobe University. Her passion is in helping people find their full potential, and that's why she loves working at LCMS. Eunmi enjoys playing piano and making music.

A special thank you goes to our casual staff members:

PanMarLar Pah Thei

Akuek Deng

Lar Kar Paw Moo Pe

LCMS acknowledges the contribution that outgoing staff have made to the organisation.

Sharon Prasad (Settlement Worker)

Ahmed Kheradyar (Community Development Worker)

# Thank You To Our Volunteers





Smoking Ceremony, Hazara Camp

# Our Values

**RESPECT**

**INCLUSIVITY**

**INTEGRITY**

**COLLABORATION**

**AUTHENTICITY**

**RELIABILITY**

# Our Vision

A vibrant Loddon Campaspe region where people from multicultural communities are able to thrive, have a sense of belonging, contribute to society and are welcomed, celebrated and embraced.

# Our Purpose

To support people from multicultural communities to participate and belong in our community, and exercise their human rights across the breadth of social, cultural, economic and civic life.



Greater Bendigo  
refugee welcome

أهلا بك

Chào mừng አንኳን

خوش آمدید

welcome

Womin

Wilujeung Sumpin

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ဆင်းဟုင်းလင်ဖဝ်.ဆဝ်



OF GREATER  
BENDIGO

BAAI performing at the Senior's lunch

# Our Work

## EDUCATION PROGRAM

“Education is one of the blessings of life – and one of its necessities”

Malala Yousafzai

### The team

The Education team have had a busy, fun and fulfilling year. Even though we are a small team of only two teachers, we are extremely dedicated and have been able to achieve a lot.

We pride ourselves on being able to think on our feet, and always looking for ways to create or adapt our classes to suit the ever changing needs of the community. This past year we have welcomed more than 100 community members from 11 countries into our classes.

### Awards

Teachers definitely do not teach for the accolades, but it’s always wonderful when your work is recognized.

At the 2021 Learn Local awards, in the words of Sonia, LCMS “cleaned up”, collecting four out of the five categories for which we were eligible.

Our Starting Work in Australia – Karen Engineering studies course won “Pre-accredited Program Award (small providers)”, the “Innovation Award” and the “Partnership Award.” An amazing outcome for an amazing course, of which we are all so proud.

Our Education Team Leader, Robyn won the “Pre-accredited Trainer of the Year”, and is still in shock!

We are also extremely proud of two of our community members, Hussnia Hussain Ali and Than Tun Win, who were both successful at being chosen as finalists in their award categories, which is a true testament to the wonderful work they do within their communities.

## EDUCATION



Robyn Matthews  
Team Leader



Vanessa Feeney  
EAL Teacher



Learn Local Awards

### Highlight of the year: Vanessa

My highlight of the year was planning and implementing the ‘Starting Work in Childcare’ course. Having studied and worked in this field, I was initially so excited to incorporate my understandings and experiences into the course content. Meeting and getting to know the

participants was even better and it was such a lovely experience working through the course with them. All of the participants were so dedicated and curious about the childcare industry and I felt privileged to witness their exploration and journey through both the course and beyond into further study and employment.

## Our courses

During the year I have taught many of our classes. Here is a little bit about each course.

**Beginner's English (LTR)** - Our weekly "Beginner's English" class, formally known as "Learn to Read", focuses on emerging and beginner literacy skills. This class is great for students to develop and consolidate early reading skills too, as well as providing room to explore vocabulary. We average between five and seven students a week, all from the three main cultural groups in Bendigo – Hazara, South Sudanese and Karen. Although small, this class is very social and time is also spent with the participants conversing, sharing and showing cultural crafts and teas.

**Women's English (Mums and Bubs)** - Our weekly "Women's English" class, also known as 'Mums and Bubs', is one of our most successful classes, with around 25 women enrolled with 10 to 15 of their children each week. We cover a range of different literacy concepts in this class, as well as community news and any information that is relevant to this cohort of learners. We also have frequent incursions where community organisations come and meet the ladies and share information, such as a visit from the Shine Bright Bush Kinder program, where the mums were told about the program and how to join if interested. This class is a great conduit for engagement with the wider community.

**English Online (Men's English)** - Our "English Online" class, formally known as 'Men's English' is a weekly differentiated English class that caters for all levels of learners and covers a vast range of literacy concepts. The 'Men's English' class was running out of the library in an after-hours time slot, with one student travelling over an hour to attend class. After discussions with students, it was decided that we should move classes to an online platform to be convenient for students as well as boost their digital literacy skills. After teaching online for a term, we then decided to open this class up to the wider community in the hope of catering for community members who prefer online learning, as well as those who have limited transportation options.



Maree Edwards MP visited the LCMS office to discuss our training courses.

**Starting Work in Food Processing** - Our "Starting Work in Food Processing" course ran over 10 weeks in semester two of 2021, with weekly four-hour classes. This course was an introductory course for employment in food processing, as well as starting work in Australia. We had an enrolment of nine students, all from the Karen community.

**Australian Citizenship** - In semester 1 of 2022, we ran two "Australian Citizenship" courses. The course comprised of seven 1.5-hour classes running weekly. The first course was aimed at the South Sudanese community, with Dinka language support provided. We had seven

community members enrolled and all participants maintained a great attendance throughout. Out of the seven, three participants went onto book their Australian Citizenship tests. The second course was aimed at the Karen community, with Karen language support provided. We had 21 community members enroll and from these enrolments four participants successfully passed their test and at least five booked to sit their tests.

### Student quote:

*"I have learned so much things about this course. Developing policies, creating learning plans, learning frameworks and safety." Starting work in Childcare course participant.*

**Starting Work in Childcare** - Our "Starting Work in Childcare" course is a taster program created in collaboration with Bendigo TAFE. It was a 20-week course, running once a week for four hours. The course explored the role, duties, responsibilities and opportunities for the position of an early childhood educator, as well as the pathways into further study and employment. The course involved work experience components including a visit to a local childcare center to observe, identify and implement theoretical concepts that had been explored in class. We also had incursions from local childcare/childhood education providers to explain different employment opportunities in the childcare industry and possible pathways our participants could take. We had an enrolment of eight participants, one of whom went on to study Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care at Bendigo TAFE, and two gained employment in unrelated fields. The rest of the participants are due to graduate at the end of 2022 and we are hopeful they will find work within the childcare industry.

### Highlight of the year: Robyn

My highlight of the year was undoubtedly the Learn Local Awards night in 2021.



Learn Local Awards

I LOVE training and working with the community to help them to identify and then reach their goals, but to win Trainer of the Year was absolutely not expected and it completely blew my mind. However, that our Starting Work in Australia – Karen Engineering course won THREE awards at the same event was the real highlight. I am so proud of the program that we created with the support of all of our stakeholders, and even more proud of everything the participants

have since gone on to achieve.

This past year, as I have progressed into the Team Leader role, I have unfortunately had to step back from a lot of the face to face teaching, which I have left in Vanessa's capable hands. As such, I really cherish the opportunities that I get to teach or train. Here is a recap of the courses I have taught this year.

**Intermediate English** – This after hours weekly class is always a lot of fun. Whilst enrolments aren't as high as we would like, the students who do attend are very committed and one student has even said that it is the highlight of their week. Being an intermediate level class we usually have a focus topic for each term and the class is structured around that topic to further develop reading comprehension and specialised terminology. We have even dabbled in a bit of debating.

**Starting work in Cleaning – Spotless** - As part of our partnership with Grow Bendigo and Spotless, and with Just in Time funding from the Department of Education, we created this employment pathways course to provide community members with the core knowledge and vocabulary they would need to undertake work as Spotless cleaners at Bendigo Health.

This course has really shown what can be achieved with industry collaboration, and a true willingness from organisations to look internally at how they can provide a culturally safe workplace and reduce barriers to employment.

To date more than 60 community members have joined the course with an extensive waitlist for future courses. More than 75 percent of participants have found employment after completion of the course.

Community members that have completed the Spotless course



**Family Learning Partnership/RESP** – Our Family Learning Partnership program has continued with additional funding from RESP (Refugee Education Support Program) to run the course at two additional primary schools. We will complete this program with the course set to run at the final school later in 2022.

**Student quote:**

*"I am so happy to do this course and get a good job at the hospital with good hours so I can take my daughter to school, go to work, then get my daughter from school." Starting work in Cleaning – Spotless participant.*

# EMPLOYMENT

## EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

### M@Work

Multicultural communities and mentors work together to assist, promote, respond and advocate for welcoming safe workspaces for all. These principles have guided and will continue to guide the work we do.

It is often articulated that working in the space of employment is not what you do but the people you work with, that will determine the success of your programs. If someone were to ask me to describe the employment services as a show or a movie, I could only describe that the LCMS employment team are the backstage hands and the supporting cast of the show whilst the employers and the job seekers are the leads of the show, without whom there would be no story. Needless to say, the leads, supporting cast and the backstage hands have been outstanding!

2021-2022 can only be described as a stellar year for LCMS's employment program. We transitioned from Jobs Victoria Employment Network (JVEN) to the Jobs Victoria Employment Services (JVES) program in March 2022.

Up to now, LCMS' employment program has been Bendigo-centric with some ripple effects to closer regions like Castlemaine. Our current JVES funding has allowed us to dream and plan big by providing similar services to the broader Loddon Campaspe Region and to increase our staffing profile to one full and seven part time staff in our team.

Employment teams visit to Sonora Foods.



The M@Work team demographics mirror the community we serve and we now have a bilingual talent pool of Karen (different dialects), Thai, Hazara, Burmese, Mandarin, Korean, Turkish, Malay and other Chinese Dialects.

Excitingly we have:

- Over 100 participants in our JVES program
- Provided getting ready to work programs which are designed to incorporate recognised workplace modules
- Placed 60 percent of participants into on-going employment
- Recognised that 50 percent of participants are in ongoing-sustainable employment



Sylvia Phan  
Program Manager



Mitchell Dean  
Team Leader



Amanda Sam  
Specialist Mentor



Eunmi Cho  
Specialist Mentor

- A healthy mix of skilled and unskilled participants as well as those completing tertiary education
- Increased our participant profile to include Southeast Asians and participants from the Indian Sub-continent
- Explored internship opportunities
- Expanded employer networks into other industry areas
- Expanded employment opportunities outside the Greater Bendigo region, going into the six LGA's of the Loddon Campaspe Region
- Expanded Cultural Competency Training to employers and community organisations
- Expanded our services reach through close collaboration with Community Employment Connectors and the Jobs Advocate.

LCMS continues to build on existing networks, accessing stronger connections through warm referrals by current employers and stakeholders. This mutually beneficial relationship is based on trust, strong foundations, recommendations and our track record of providing support and to value add to individuals and organisations

### Showcasing Partnerships/Collaborations@Work

We wrote in our Annual Report 2020-2021 that it was a year of collaborations. Following on from this theme 2021-2022 has been a year of Collaborations@Work and the successes and benefits it brings to communities. We highlight two in this Annual Report.

#### 1. "A trade behind them will open so many doors in the future"

It has been a privilege and an honour to be recognised in the 2021 Learn Local Awards and to bring home four awards of which two relevant to this theme are highlighted below:

- Victorian Learn Local Innovation Award
- Victorian Learn Local Partnership Award

Winning these awards, which have particular reference to LCMS's Starting Work in Australia-Engineering program, has enabled LCMS to

- Highlight the importance of providing bilingual support for multicultural communities to succeed in their chosen field of study
- Provide data that highlights the value of addressing the skills gaps of a willing community with language support is absolutely possible, achievable and needed
- Ensure that this model can be replicated across all trades and skills areas
- Advocate and build momentum for further development of courses of this kind and to upskill multicultural communities whilst addressing skills shortages

LCMS is now supporting four of the graduates of the program with bilingual support during their Cert III studies in pre-fabrication. These participants are valued members of their host workplace organisation and, due to their work ethics, willingness to take on new tasks and learn, are seen as role models.

The hosting organisation has become a welcoming place for people from diverse backgrounds.

Since April 2022, another four people from the Karen community have joined new workplaces and are now undertaking their Cert III in pre-fabrication and are provided with bilingual support from LCMS.



Silvia Moo  
JVES Coordinator



Bu Gay Pah Thei  
JVES Coordinator



Laila Hashimi  
Specialist Mentor



Melissa Moo  
Specialist Mentor



*Nay Thar, Yeah Min Soe, Day Day Poe, Pway Doh and Hare Khu have been a great asset to our business. Welding isn't considered a very glamorous trade and it is hard to find young people that want to take up the trade. These gentlemen have embraced the opportunities they have been given and are willing to learn and are very thankful to have employment. It has been a great experience for our employees to hear their stories and hopefully it makes them appreciate their life and job in Australia more. We love that we have a diverse and inclusive workplace. Everyone here is given a chance no matter what their background is. In return we have been rewarded by people appreciating their jobs and willing to work hard. The gentlemen have worked hard which in turn has made our other apprentices step up which has been great. A trade behind them will open so many doors in the future.*

*Ben Harris- CV Welding*

## **2. LCMS/Spotless/GROW Bendigo Partnership in Action**

This program was created to bridge gaps between employers and jobseekers who are facing barriers to finding work in Australia. A collaboration with Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services and with Spotless has resulted in jobs for 27 members of Bendigo's culturally and linguistically diverse community. GROW Bendigo is the conduit that brought Spotless and LCMS together. The success of this partnership has seen many community members wanting to join the workforce at Spotless.

Since May 2021, candidates from both Karen and Souh Sudanese backgrounds have undertaken a brand-new three-week pre-employment program, The program was designed to engage with candidates within a culturally suitable framework to effectively on board and place them in long term positions. This incorporated a training and education program for applicants long before applying, which is a fresh approach to traditional interview and recruitment processes.

*"The LCMS/Spotless partnership is prime example of exactly what GROW Bendigo aims to achieve and it has been thrilling to see how bringing these two organisations together has delivered mutually beneficial results from both a social and business perspective."*

*Petra McLoughlin, GROW Project Manager.*

*"Participating in GROW had been an extraordinary experience for Spotless and it is great to see so many given such a fabulous opportunity. Watching the confidence of all the candidates grow through each stage of the program and ultimately being able to welcome so many new team members, has been a great project to be a part of."* Ben Dillon, Spotless Operations and Environmental Services Manager

Celebrating lunch with candidates from the Spotless training program and Spotless leadership staff.



### Per Si's Story

Per Si is currently working with Spotless, her first official job with ongoing employment. She started working with Spotless in December 2021, and is enjoying the work so far. Prior to having a job with Spotless, Per Si was underemployed and found herself in precarious employment. Due to having a refugee background, with English as her second language and low understanding of digital literacy, Per Si experienced difficulties finding work. She didn't know where to search out jobs nor how to apply. Likewise, due to some chronic health conditions, it was challenging for Per Si to find a job that suited her needs. During the time when she was unemployed or underworked, she felt incompetent because while her friends were out there making money, Per Si suffered from unemployment in isolation. Likewise, this significantly reduced her self-esteem. Moreover, being unemployed meant she and her family suffered financial difficulties.

Per Si revealed that after gaining employment with Spotless, she was overjoyed. She felt a boost in her self-confidence as she knows now that she is as competent as others. She has also pointed out that she gets to practice more English through having her job as she gets to interact with other people within the hospital. Likewise, she shared that she is proud of herself for being able to support her family financially. She also shared that she is appreciative of LCMS for helping her find a job that is suitable for her, taking into consideration that she has a chronic medical condition.

*"It is important to seek help. Get out there and connect with people because help is available ... if you choose to suffer in silence, you will be in the same spot indefinitely."*

Per Si

Per Si hopes her story can help others realise their potential.

LCMS hopes for wrap-around settlement support to be provided in the not too distant future.



Blay Blaw Say starting work at Bendigo Health with Spotless

# CULTURAL DIVERSITY

## Support during challenging times

Social connection, safety and security were high on the agenda for LCMS and the communities, with Covid still present creating uncertainties amongst us all. Thus, LCMS and Food Safari linked in and assisted wherever possible.

Through our existing food relief program came greater focus on providing culturally appropriate food to specific community groups.

Strengthening links with Bendigo Food Share and with successful grant applications we were able to purchase specific foods to build on community food security.

Shelf stable products such as grains and legumes, spices and noodles, precooked meals, freshly cooked Hazara breads and baklava are just some of the examples that contributed to the weekly food collection.

Food Safari provided:

- 1,191 precooked meals for the Cafes for Covid program with Bendigo Food Share
- 713 precooked meals for LCMS food Relief

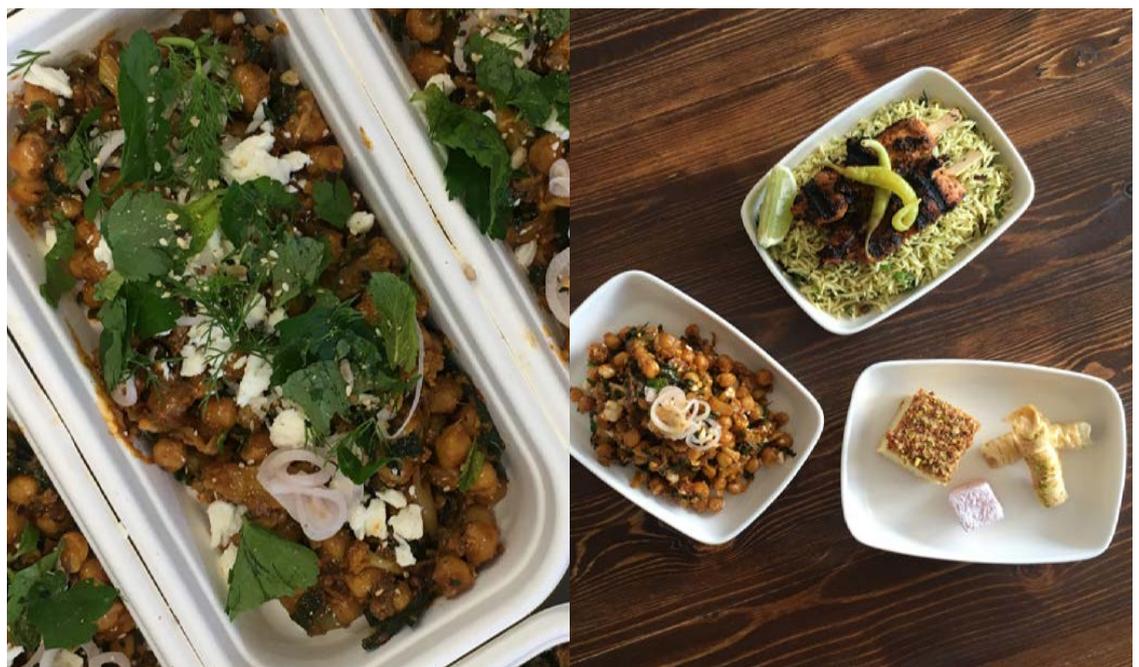
Supported community businesses in providing culturally appropriate food:

- 240 Afghan flat breads
- 200 Baklava
- 1,305 precooked culturally appropriate meals

Through this assistance other valuable opportunities emerged, and we have since commenced cooking with community members to build capacity and assist in food business aspirations.

For example, with one-on-one business mentoring and assistance, Paw Kee from the Karen community, was able to gain registration for a fixed premise kitchen registration, turning her cooking hobby into a more sustainable catering business.

Culturally appropriate food cooked using community recipes



# CULTURAL DIVERSITY



Jason Newton  
Team Leader

## Seniors Lunch meals

There is also vision to assist more keen cooks in this capacity to strengthen their understanding of requirements, costings, predictions, and goals in attaining recognition as food business owners and caterers.

## Food Safari cultural delights

Throughout the year, Food Safari catered for some fantastic events and collaborated with some very special food businesses to create mouthwatering and heartfelt dining experiences.

A few highlights included:

- A three course food package for an online networking lunch
- An Indigenous inspired menu for a networking lunch during Naidoc Week
- Independence Day celebrations
- International Women's Day Lunch
- Seniors Lunch
- Thank you hampers for LCMS volunteers
- The LCMS AGM banquet



And what a great privilege for Food Safari to work in collaboration with Karen Lady Catering, Hazaragi Breads, Bangladeshi Shaad and Jas's Indian Kitchen to cater for the 24th Symposium of Australian Gastronomy Dinner in Bendigo - what a fantastic event!



Karen Lady Catering



Jas's Indian Kitchen

We also started a series of at home cooking demonstrations, which were filmed and shared to support diverse cultures to share their food growing and cooking knowledge and expertise. With just 3 videos, a total of 4604 (and still counting) watches on social media alone were reached, helping educate culture, promote healthy eating, and get you into the kitchen learning new ingredients and recipes! Watch this space for more great dishes to be shared.

## Sharing and partnerships

In collaboration with Bendigo Food Share, Food Safari was involved in three sessions of cooking classes with teenagers located in and around Kangaroo Flat.

The project, 'Café for a Day' was the initiative of Bendigo Food Share and looked to tackle issues such as healthy eating, how to use fresh seasonal produce, food education, employment pathways, potential opportunities and exposure to cultural diversity.

Paw Kee from Karen Lady Catering was involved with all three sessions, sharing traditional recipes, techniques, and her vast cooking knowledge. Some of the ingredients used in the recipes really challenged the kids' senses, with different smells, taste and textures, compared to those they had cooked with before. This really opened up the conversations, discussing what 'normal' or 'common' ingredients were and how that changed from country and culture. What seems 'weird' to one person is a staple ingredient for another.

These discussions were a great platform to elaborate on and hopefully reduce or remove the use of 'normal' or 'common' in this context. There is no normal; just unfamiliar. Not everyone has to like a certain flavour, but knowing what is out there and understanding it is not all bread and butter was a huge success.

We look forward to ongoing involvement with this and similar projects in the future.



Students and mentors participating in 'Cafe for a Day'

# Internationals Women's Day Lunch



Community members and performers at International Women's Day Celebration

# COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Community development and capacity building comprises a range of services and programs designed to inform and equip community groups and individuals with tools and skills that would allow them to fully live and embraced a life that they choose.

To help provide these opportunities, in the past financial year the Community Development and Capacity Building team delivered services in Covid19 response, care and food exchange, social inclusion and youth activities.

## Care and food exchange and Covid19 response

The second half of the year was marked by the Covid19 outbreak in the Bendigo region. In response we provided Covid19 support to information provision and food relief support. In summary, we provided:

- 440 Food hampers delivered to people requiring support due to Covid19 restrictions, including mandated isolation.
- Weekly food boxes of culturally appropriate food products were provided to 1,536 families across the year, averaging 32 families each week. Of these, 386 recipients were elderly people and family violence survivors.
- A range of personal protective equipment items were distributed across the year, including more than 2500 RATs, 1,500 mask and numerous supplies of personal hand sanitizers.



## Supporting access to information and services

We supported close to 22 ethnic clinics for Covid-19 vaccinations, 2nd boosters and children vaccination clinic support. All up, we supported more than 300 people across the program. To provide appropriate communications our team created numerous information resources:

19 in language videos were produced and posted through social media for Covid19 restrictions updates.

Seven in language videos were produced and posted through social media to explain how to download Covid19 vaccination certificates.

12 in language videos were produced and posted through social media to promote the first, second, third and children's vaccinations.

Four face to face education sessions were provided to assist information provision of the vaccination processes.

More than 2,700 in language hard copy information documents were circulated. These related to Covid19 health and safety rules, wellbeing services, Covid19 vaccination doses as well as

# COMMUNITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING



Elisangela Couto  
Team Leader



Say Nay Htoo Moo  
Settlement Worker

information concerning the vaccinations for children aged 5 to 11 years.



Nine in language videos and six sessions on how to fill the 2021 census forms.

14 sessions promoting tax return support for multicultural community members.

Ten Trauma informed yoga sessions were provided for elderly women.

Two sessions about self care were delivered to community members from the Hazara, Dinka and Karen communities.

Eight sessions relating to prevention of domestic violence against women and children were delivered over the last year.

## Social inclusion and regional outreach activities

LCMS has delivered two Swimming Programs during the 2021/2022 Swimming Season:

- **Swimming Aware Program:** This program was developed and implemented in partnership with Golden Square Pool in Bendigo. The role of LCMS in the partnership was to recruit community members and to provide bilingual support. The program provided a safe and engaging space for men and women to access swimming and safety skills development from professionally trained swim instructor volunteers. A total of 15 community members from the Hazara, Karen, Chinese and Nepalese communities attended these programs.
- **Women Only Social Swimming:** This program took place at Bendigo East pool where we were able to book a weekly after-hours session time for women only swimming sessions. These sessions were held for an hour each session for eight weeks. During the 2021/2022 season the program 28 women participated from the Karen, Hazara, Dinka, Ghanian, Bengali, Nepalese and Chinese community.
- In addition to the two swimming program, LCMS collaborated with Life Saving Victoria and Golden Square Pool to facilitate a water safety session for 15 community members from the Karen, Chinese and Hazara



Laila Hashimi  
Community  
Development Worker



Yoko Vigor  
Community  
Services Trainee

# COMMUNITY AND CAPACITY BUILDING

communities. The session delivered information, demonstrations, and execution of water safety drills.

- We have facilitated two Dja Dja Wurrung smoking ceremonies and cultural awareness sessions that were held during LCMS program activities.
- LCMS has organized and delivered two family camps for the South Sudanese and the Hazara family communities residing in Bendigo and Castlemaine. These activities engaged a total of 65 families and 124 individuals from both cultural groups.
- Four regional site visits were coordinated to engage with stakeholders, neighbourhood and community houses in Castlemaine in Mount Alexander Shire, as well as Inglewood, Wedderburn and Boort, located in Loddon Shire.
- We have reintroduced Multicultural Play group to provide a culturally safe space for mums and their toddlers from migrant and refugee background.

Smoking ceremony, Hazara Camp



Smoking ceremony, South Sudanese Camp



## Capacity Building

We have provided support for event planning and organizing to five communities groups between February and June:

We provided support to the South Sudanese community to celebrate South Sudanese Independence Day in 2021.

The Hazara community was supported to celebrate the Nowruz Festival, which was a community lead activity with participation of 300 attendees including other cultural groups in celebration of their New Year with traditional food and music from the Hazara culture.

LCMS supported women from the Indonesian, Chinese and Malaysian community to organize and celebrate International Women's Day. The event was attended by 52 women

from the Indonesian, Karen, Dinka, Hazara, Chinese and mainstream communities and was joined by City of Greater Bendigo Mayor, Andrea Metcalf, all of whom came together to share food, dancing and music.

Support was provided for event planning of the Nepalese community to celebrate The Great Stupa anniversary.

Support was provided to three community groups to apply for Victoria Multicultural Arts grants in 2021 and two in 2022, including Nepalese, Malayalam, Didi Bahani Samaj Victoria, Sith Indian community, and Filipino Association in Pyramid Hill.

## Multicultural Youth Activities

LCMS Multicultural Youth Network (MYN) work is involved in continuing to build the capacity of young people from refugee and migrant background with confidence and leadership skills to support theirs and their communities' future.

We partnered with our Food Safari Cultural Diversity program to organize a Christmas cookie making session to support the food bank services.

We have organized and delivered many social engagement activities, including:

- A multicultural futsal tournament, with the participation of 16 teams, 128 players and 200 people in the audience.

Futsal Tournament teams



- One movie night for the South Sudanese youth in Castlemaine.
- One bowling night for multicultural youth, including international students.
- One session of 'Come and try' Australian Rules Football delivered to a group of young people from the South Sudanese community.
- Archery and rock climbing for a group of young people from the Hazara community.



'Come and try' Australian Rules Football

# Learn Local At Work With Industry

## The Loddon Campaspe Experience

### Tackling the barriers

Cleaning a hospital is a bit like painting the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It's a never-ending job. And it's critical to the function and integrity of the structure.

Spotless is responsible for keeping Bendigo Hospital clean as a whistle, inside and out. That means all areas of the hospital – including 11 operating theatres; clinical and diagnostic areas; the emergency department and waiting rooms; wards and patient spaces; as well as the external building and grounds.

There is plenty of work available for the local community. But when English is your second language, the recruitment and training process can be very challenging.

Spotless wanted to stem the high turnover of their cleaning staff. They could see their multicultural staff were doing an amazing job, but they were not reaching many potential new staff because the recruitment process was prohibitive. **A tailored recruitment and training solution.**

That's where Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS) and Learn Local came in with tailor-made pre-accredited training to address the challenges.

Online advertisements were the first barrier to attracting workers from a migrant background. And the training was difficult for non-native English speakers to understand. Both recruitment and training needed to be simplified and incorporate bicultural support to convey the responsibilities of working in a hospital.

Petra McLoughlin from GROW Bendigo got Spotless and the LCMS together to create a solution. Peta says, "we really challenged the corporate model of recruitment and we've now got a sustainable model that has become the exemplar."

Leeanne Elvey from Spotless says the support from LCMS to new recruits has been wonderful.

"They support them in every way," she says. "When (the new recruits) turn up for their first day, they're in their uniform and off they go. They don't have to sit at a computer for three or four hours because they've already done the training.

"They're not just thrown into this great big place and handed a mop and bucket. They're a lot more comfortable and have more confidence through the onboarding process," says Leeanne.

"We also have a supervisor onsite 24/7 – so at any time of the day or night...if something goes wrong or they're not comfortable, there's always someone they can call on."

Robyn Matthews is the team leader of the LCMS Learn Local program.

"I think Learn Local is just amazing. It's unique to Victoria and it gives us the flexibility to tailor education to community members. Whether that's with an educational pathway, an employment pathway, or just helping people who want to improve their English," she says.

"Many in the refugee community have spent their life getting through one day at a time and just surviving," says Robyn. "And now they're here in Bendigo and we say, 'what do you want to do?' – and that's often the first time they've ever been asked that question."

"I went to the hospital and met with Petra and Spotless representatives, and they told me what they'd come up with and what their plans were and asked me if I could help them to create a course that would have those educational pathways bringing community members into the hospital as cleaners."

To best prepare the class members for work at the hospital, other modules have been introduced to give students more of the skills they need. The new modules include learnings in taxation, superannuation, and work place rights and responsibilities.

### What do you want to do?

Than Gay is from Burma and had never been asked that question. Not once in the eight years she and her sister spent in a refugee camp in Thailand.

"I always felt sad and not happy," says Than. "We cry and we cannot speak English, it was very difficult."

But Than is feeling positive now. She is one of 60 culturally and linguistically diverse community members in Bendigo who have completed the Learn Local program. She now has her first job, working for Spotless as a cleaner at the hospital.

"I'm very happy with this job," says Than. "It changed my life. It's very good."

Than is very grateful for the support she received from Robyn on her pathway to employment.

"My favourite teacher, her name is Robyn," she says. "Every day, if I need her, I go to her. She helped me with everything. She said I can go to English class every Thursday. I like to find a job, and she said 'okay, Spotless' and I follow her."

### Delighted with the program

Petra says that Spotless is delighted with the results of Learn Local. "Spotless were losing staff from their entry level positions. And now they've got loyal, local employees."

Spotless rosters three shifts of cleaners every day for the hospital. The terms of employment are permanent part-time, and the range of start and finish times gives staff the flexibility that suits their circumstances.

Robyn explains that Spotless have been very accommodating, willing to identify and acknowledge barriers to employment and then taking action. Creating shifts that allow mothers to work during school hours was a game changer.

The first 'Start Working in Cleaning' pilot program was run in 2021. There have been four rounds to date, and almost every participant is working either with Spotless or another employer. The next program already has eight eager participants on the waitlist.

Spotless is happy to have a workforce of people who want to work and who come to work on time and ready to go. The hospital is delighted to have its round-the-clock need for capable cleaning staff fulfilled. And the new recruits have employment and opportunity, where they'd previously only known disadvantage.

With the LCMS - Spotless program resulting in such positive outcomes, plans are now underway to tap into Petra's contacts in the food processing organisations around Bendigo and for LCMS to develop an appropriate Learn Local course to get more of the community into safe and stable work in this industry area.

Everyone involved in the Learn Local program agrees it's another brilliant example of a community designed solution to a local employment and training dilemma.

# Our Year In Pictures







Chinese Association Lion Dance at Harmony Day

# Financial Summary

Financial reports for the year ended 30 June 2022

## Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.

ABN 73 504 356 907

### Financial Report - 30 June 2022

#### Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc. Committees' report 30 June 2022

Your committee members present their report, together with the financial statements, on the incorporated association for the year ended 30 June 2022.

#### Committee members

The names of each person who has been a committee member during the year and to the date of this report are:

	Position	Appointed	Resigned
Thaera O'Brien	Chair	-	-
Merrilyn Gaulke	Vice Chair	-	-
Peter Watson	Treasurer	-	-
Rachel Vanstone	Secretary	May 2022	-
John Murphy	-	-	-
Joby Sebastien	-	-	-
Bruno Spandonide	-	-	-
Ginny Tan	-	November 2021	-
Ian Patrick	-	May 2022	-
Anna Dorevitch	-	May 2022	-
Salwa Dastgeer	-	May 2022	-
Andriy Kurtsev	-	May 2022	-
Dianne Tran	-	May 2022	-
Luz Restrepo	-	-	August 2021
Ivan Rwakijuma	-	-	November 2021
Esther Ryan	-	-	December 2021
Oscar Torres-Gomez	-	October 2021	January 2022

Committee members have been in office since the start of the financial year to the date of this report unless otherwise stated.

#### Principal activities

The principal activities of the association during the course of the financial year were the provision of settlement services, education programs, case management and referrals, cultural awareness and celebration of our cultural diversity.

#### Significant changes

No significant changes in the association's state of affairs occurred during the financial year.

#### Operating Result

Operations have continued to perform in line with expectations. The surplus of the association for the financial year was:

2022	2021
\$	\$
3,810	4,953

The committee's report is signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the committee.

  
Mrs Thaera O'Brien  
Chair

17 October 2022

  
Mrs Merrilyn Gaulke  
Vice Chair

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2022**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Revenue	3	1,381,958	920,790
Other income	4	55,652	144,820
		<u>1,437,610</u>	<u>1,065,610</u>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee benefits expense		(1,098,398)	(859,073)
Program expenses		(207,827)	(118,371)
Occupancy expenses		(21,965)	(21,132)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(4,524)	(6,953)
Finance expenses		(19,629)	(18,362)
Repairs and maintenance costs		-	(973)
Administration expenses		(75,635)	(25,763)
Other expenses		(5,822)	(10,030)
		<u>3,810</u>	<u>4,953</u>
<b>Surplus before income tax expense</b>		<b>3,810</b>	<b>4,953</b>
Income tax expense	1	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Surplus after income tax expense for the year attributable to the members of Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.</b>		<b>3,810</b>	<b>4,953</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year attributable to the members of Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.</b>		<b><u>3,810</u></b>	<b><u>4,953</u></b>

*The above statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Statement of financial position**  
**As at 30 June 2022**

	Note	2022 \$	2021 \$
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	610,258	486,288
Trade and other receivables	6	22,100	101,749
Prepaid expenses	7	10,110	-
Total current assets		<u>642,468</u>	<u>588,037</u>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	8	<u>4,595</u>	<u>9,118</u>
Total non-current assets		<u>4,595</u>	<u>9,118</u>
<b>Total assets</b>		<u>647,063</u>	<u>597,155</u>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	9	155,857	64,203
Grants in advance	10	223,501	296,238
Employee benefits	11	65,873	36,620
Total current liabilities		<u>445,231</u>	<u>397,061</u>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Employee benefits	11	<u>1,085</u>	<u>3,157</u>
Total non-current liabilities		<u>1,085</u>	<u>3,157</u>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<u>446,316</u>	<u>400,218</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u>200,747</u>	<u>196,937</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Retained surpluses		<u>200,747</u>	<u>196,937</u>
<b>Total equity</b>		<u>200,747</u>	<u>196,937</u>

*The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Statement of changes in equity**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2022**

	<b>Retained Surpluses \$</b>	<b>Total equity \$</b>
Balance at 1 July 2020	191,984	191,984
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	4,953	4,953
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	<u>4,953</u>	<u>4,953</u>
Balance at 30 June 2021	<u>196,937</u>	<u>196,937</u>
	<b>Retained Surpluses \$</b>	<b>Total equity \$</b>
Balance at 1 July 2021	196,937	196,937
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	3,810	3,810
Other comprehensive income for the year, net of tax	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	<u>3,810</u>	<u>3,810</u>
Balance at 30 June 2022	<u>200,747</u>	<u>200,747</u>

*The above statement of changes in equity should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Statement of cash flows**  
**For the year ended 30 June 2022**

	<b>Note</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
		<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Receipts from grants, donors and customers		1,546,509	1,181,780
Payments to suppliers and employees		(1,422,815)	(1,091,761)
Interest received		276	863
		<u>123,970</u>	<u>90,882</u>
Net cash from operating activities	12		
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Payments for property, plant and equipment		-	(6,942)
		<u>-</u>	<u>(6,942)</u>
Net cash used in investing activities			
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash from financing activities			
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		123,970	83,940
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year		486,288	402,348
		<u>486,288</u>	<u>486,288</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	5	<u>610,258</u>	<u>486,288</u>

*The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes*

## **Note 1. Significant accounting policies**

### **Financial reporting framework**

The financial statements are special purpose financial statements prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. The committee has determined that the Association is not a reporting entity.

### **Statement of compliance**

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the mandatory Australian Accounting Standards applicable to entities reporting under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, the basis of accounting specified by all Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations, and the disclosure requirements of Accounting Standards AASB 101: *Presentation of Financial Statements*, AASB 107: *Cash Flow Statements*, AASB 108: *Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors*, AASB 1031: *Materiality* and AASB 1054: *Australian Additional Disclosures* with the exception of the following accounting standards applicable for reporting periods starting on or after 1 January 2019:

- AASB 15: *Revenue from Contracts with Customers*
- AASB 16: *Leases*
- AASB 1058: *Income of Not-for-profit Entities*

### **Basis of preparation**

The financial statements, except for the cash flow information, have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs unless otherwise stated in the notes. Material accounting policies adopted in the preparation of these financial statements are presented below and have been consistently applied unless stated otherwise. The amounts presented in the financial statements have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

### **Income tax**

As the incorporated association is a charitable institution in terms of subsection 50-5 of the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1997*, as amended, it is exempt from paying income tax.

### **Current and non-current classification**

Assets and liabilities are presented in the statement of financial position based on current and non-current classification.

An asset is classified as current when: it is either expected to be realised or intended to be sold or consumed in the incorporated association's normal operating cycle; it is held primarily for the purpose of trading; it is expected to be realised within 12 months after the reporting period; or the asset is cash or cash equivalent unless restricted from being exchanged or used to settle a liability for at least 12 months after the reporting period. All other assets are classified as non-current.

A liability is classified as current when: it is either expected to be settled in the incorporated association's normal operating cycle; it is held primarily for the purpose of trading; it is due to be settled within 12 months after the reporting period; or there is no unconditional right to defer the settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting period. All other liabilities are classified as non-current.

Deferred tax assets and liabilities are always classified as non-current.

### **Financial instruments**

#### **Initial recognition and measurement**

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the association becomes a party to the contractual provisions to the instrument. For financial assets, this is the date that the association commits itself to either the purchase or sale of the asset (i.e. trade date accounting is adopted).

Financial instruments (except for trade receivables) are initially measured at fair value plus transaction costs. Trade receivables are initially measured at the transaction price if the trade receivables do not contain a significant financing component.

#### **Classification and subsequent measurement**

##### *Financial liabilities*

**Note 1. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

Financial liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a debt instrument and of allocating interest expense in profit or loss over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the internal rate of return of the financial asset or liability. That is, it is the rate that exactly discounts the estimated future cash flows through the expected life of the instrument to the net carrying amount at initial recognition.

A financial liability cannot be reclassified.

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc. recognise trade and other payables in this category.

*Financial assets*

Financial assets are measured at amortised costs if both of the following criteria are met:

- the financial asset is managed solely to collect contractual cash flows, and
- the contractual terms within the financial asset give rise to cash flows that are solely payments of principal and interest on the principal amount outstanding on specified dates.

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc. recognise cash and cash equivalents and trade and other receivables in this category.

**Derecognition**

Derecognition refers to the removal of a previously recognised financial asset or financial liability from the Statement of Financial Position.

*Financial liabilities*

A liability is derecognised when it is extinguished (i.e. when the obligation in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires). An exchange of an existing financial liability for a new one with substantially modified terms, or a substantial modification to the terms of a financial liability, is treated as an extinguishment of the existing liability and recognition of a new financial liability.

The difference between the carrying amount of the financial liability derecognised and the consideration paid and payable, including any non-cash assets transferred or liabilities assumed, is recognised in profit or loss.

*Financial assets*

All the following criteria need to be satisfied for the derecognition of a financial asset:

- the right to receive cash flows from the asset has expired or been transferred
- all risk and rewards of ownership of the asset have been substantially transferred and
- the association no longer controls the asset (i.e. has no practical ability to make unilateral decision to sell the asset to a third party).

On derecognition of a financial asset measured at amortised cost, the difference between the asset's carrying amount and the sum of the consideration received and receivable is recognised in profit or loss.

**Recognition of expected credit losses in financial statements**

Expected credit losses are the probability-weighted estimate of credit losses over the expected life of a financial instrument. A credit loss is the difference between all contractual cash flows that are due and all cash flows expected to be received, all discounted at the original effective interest rate of the financial instrument.

The association uses the simplified approach, as applicable under AASB 9, where material. The expected credit losses were not considered material and therefore were not brought to account.

**Note 1. Significant accounting policies (continued)**

**Impairment of assets**

At the end of each reporting period, the association reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have been impaired. If such an indication exists, the recoverable amount of the assets, being the higher of the asset's fair value less costs of disposal and value in use, is compared to the asset's carrying amount. Any excess of the asset's carrying amount over its recoverable amount is recognised in profit or loss.

Where the assets are not held primarily for their ability to generate net cash inflows - that is, they are specialised assets held for continuing use of their service capacity - the recoverable amounts are expected to be materially the same as fair value.

Where it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, the association estimates the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to which the asset belongs.

**Goods and Services Tax (GST)**

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of associated GST, unless the GST incurred is not recoverable from the tax authority. In this case it is recognised as part of the cost of the acquisition of the asset or as part of the expense.

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the tax authority is included in other receivables or other payables in the statement of financial position.

Cash flows are presented on a gross basis. The GST components of cash flows arising from investing or financing activities which are recoverable from, or payable to the tax authority, are presented as operating cash flows.

**Provisions**

Provisions are recognised when the association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions are measured using the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

**Comparative figures**

Comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation for the current financial year where required by accounting standards or as a result of changes in accounting policy.

**Economic dependence**

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc. is economically reliant upon revenue from grants from government departments, such as Department of Premier and Cabinet, Department of Social Services and Department of Education and Training, for funding a significant proportion of its operations. At the date of this report the committee members believe the Department will continue to support Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.

**Note 2. Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

The committee members evaluate estimates and judgements incorporated into the financial statements based on historical knowledge and best available current information. Estimates assume a reasonable expectation of future events and are based on current trends and economic data, obtained both externally and within the association.

*Annual leave*

For the purpose of measurement, AASB 119: *Employee Benefits* defines obligations for short-term employee benefits as obligations expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. The association expects most employees will take their annual leave entitlements within 24 months of the reporting period in which they were earned, but this will not have a material impact on the amounts recognised in respect of obligations for employees' leave entitlements.

*Impairment*

The association assesses impairment at each reporting period by evaluating the conditions and events specific to the association that may be indicative of impairment triggers. Recoverable amount of the relevant assets are reassessed using the value-in-use calculation which incorporates various key assumptions.

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**30 June 2022**

**Note 2. Critical accounting estimates and judgements (continued)**

*Useful lives of property, plant and equipment*

The association reviews the estimated useful lives of property, plant and equipment at the end of each annual reporting period.

**Note 3. Revenue**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Grant income	1,315,277	859,474
Income from services	65,553	38,895
Donations	1,128	22,421
	<u>1,381,958</u>	<u>920,790</u>

**Accounting policy for revenue recognition**

Non-reciprocal grant revenue is recognised in profit or loss when the association obtains control of the grant and it is probable that the economic benefits gained from the grant will flow to the association and the amount of the grant can be measured reliably.

If conditions are attached to the grant which must be satisfied before it is eligible to receive the contribution, the recognition of the grant as revenue will be deferred until those conditions are satisfied.

When grant revenue is received whereby the association incurs an obligation to deliver economic value directly back to the contributor, this is considered a reciprocal transaction and the grant revenue is recognised in the Statement of Financial Position as a liability until the service has been delivered to the contributor, otherwise the grant is recognised as income on receipt.

Donations are recognised as revenue when received.

Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised upon delivery of the service to the customers.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

**Note 4. Other income**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Memberships	487	123
Other income	54,889	109,400
ATO cashflow boost	-	34,434
Interest income	276	863
	<u>55,652</u>	<u>144,820</u>

**Accounting policy for other income**

Interest revenue is recognised using the effective interest method, which for floating rate financial assets is the rate inherent in the instrument.

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**30 June 2022**

**Note 5. Cash and cash equivalents**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<i>Current assets</i>		
Cash on hand	93	5
Cash at bank	501,938	378,164
Short term deposits	108,227	108,119
	<u>610,258</u>	<u>486,288</u>

**Accounting policy for cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

**Note 6. Trade and other receivables**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<i>Current assets</i>		
Trade receivables	<u>22,100</u>	<u>101,749</u>

**Accounting policy for trade and other receivables**

Trade and other receivables includes amounts due from customers for services performed in the ordinary course of business. Receivables expected to be collected within 12 months of the end of the reporting period are classified as current assets. All other receivables are classified as non-current assets.

Trade and other receivables are initially recognised at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less any provision for impairment.

**Note 7. Prepaid expenses**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<i>Current assets</i>		
Prepayments	<u>10,110</u>	<u>-</u>

**Accounting policy for prepaid expenses**

Prepaid expenses include expense items paid for in advance for which the company will receive a benefit in the following reporting period. The carrying amount of prepaid expenses approximate their fair values at balance date.

**Note 8. Property, plant and equipment**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<i>Non-current assets</i>		
Computer equipment - at cost	16,786	16,786
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(14,660)</u>	<u>(10,752)</u>
	<u>2,126</u>	<u>6,034</u>
Office equipment - at cost	4,617	4,617
Less accumulated depreciation	<u>(2,148)</u>	<u>(1,533)</u>
	<u>2,469</u>	<u>3,084</u>
	<u>4,595</u>	<u>9,118</u>

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**30 June 2022**

**Note 8. Property, plant and equipment (continued)**

**Accounting policy for property, plant and equipment**

Each class of property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

*Plant and equipment*

Plant and equipment are measured on the cost basis and are therefore carried at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. In the event the carrying amount of plant and equipment is greater than its estimated recoverable amount, the carrying amount is written down immediately to its estimated recoverable amount and impairment losses are recognised either in profit or loss.

Plant and equipment that have been contributed at no cost, or for nominal cost, are valued and recognised at the fair value of the asset at the date it is acquired.

*Depreciation*

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a straight line basis over the asset's useful life to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The depreciation rates are consistent with the prior year. The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable assets are:

Office equipment	10-20%
Computer equipment	33%

The residual values, useful lives and depreciation methods are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at each reporting date.

Gains and losses on disposals are determined by comparing proceeds with the carrying amount. These gains or losses are included in profit or loss.

**Note 9. Trade and other payables**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	\$	\$
<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Creditors	43,700	1,496
Accrued expenses	42,836	27,407
Superannuation payable	-	5,355
Other payables	16,376	8,804
Net GST payable	52,945	21,141
	<u>155,857</u>	<u>64,203</u>

**Accounting policy for trade and other payables**

Trade and other payables represent the liabilities for goods and services received by the association that remain unpaid at the end of the reporting period. The balance is recognised as a current liability with the amounts normally paid within 30 days of recognition of the liability.

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**30 June 2022**

**Note 10. Grants in advance**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Grants in advance	<u>223,501</u>	<u>296,238</u>

**Accounting policy for grants in advance**

Grants in advance represent the company's obligation to transfer goods or services to a customer and are recognised when a customer pays consideration, or when the company recognises a receivable to reflect its unconditional right to consideration (whichever is earlier) before the company has transferred the goods or services to the customer.

**Note 11. Employee benefits**

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
<i>Current liabilities</i>		
Provision for annual leave	61,712	36,620
Long service leave	<u>4,161</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>65,873</u>	<u>36,620</u>
<i>Non-current liabilities</i>		
Provision for long service leave	<u>1,085</u>	<u>3,157</u>
	<u><u>66,958</u></u>	<u><u>39,777</u></u>

**Accounting policy for employee benefits**

Short term employee benefits include the total amount accrued for annual leave entitlements and the amounts accrued for long service leave entitlements that have vested due to employees having completed the required period of service. Based on past experience, the association does not expect the full amount of annual leave or long service leave balances classified as current liabilities to be settled within the next 12 months. However, these amounts must be classified as current liabilities since the association does not have an unconditional right to defer the settlement of these amounts in the event employees wish to use their leave entitlement.

*Long-term employee benefits*

The association classifies employees' long service leave as long-term employee benefits as they are not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. Provision is made for the association's obligation for other long-term employee benefits, which are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, durations of service and employee departures, and are discounted at rates determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on high quality government bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the terms of the obligations. Any remeasurements for changes in assumptions of obligations for other long-term employee benefits are recognised in profit or loss in the periods in which the changes occur.

The association's obligations for long-term employee benefits are presented as non-current liabilities in its Statement of Financial Position, except where the association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period, in which case the obligations are presented as current liabilities.

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.**  
**Notes to the financial statements**  
**30 June 2022**

**Note 11. Employee benefits (continued)**

*Long service leave portability*

From 1 July 2019, the association registered its employees under Victoria's new Portable Long Service Leave Scheme, which makes it fairer and easier for the association's employees working in the community services sector to access long service leave benefits. Since registration, the association has submitted a quarterly return to the Portable Long Service Leave Authority, which is based on each employees ordinary pay multiplied by 1.65% (being the levy applicable to the community services sector). The levy is equal to the minimum long service leave entitlement to which the association's employees are eligible for under their relevant award.

In measuring the provision for long service leave, the provision has been crystallised at 30 June 2019 as long service leave benefits accrued by eligible employees since 1 July 2019 have been contributed to the authority (or recorded as a payable at balance date) by quarterly returns. The provision for long service leave therefore reflects leave entitlements accrued by eligible employees prior to registration, which is revised annually based on anticipated future wage and salary levels and changes in full time equivalent hours worked by employees at balance date.

**Note 12. Cash flow information**

Reconciliation of surplus to net cash provided from operating activities:

	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
	\$	\$
Surplus after income tax expense for the year	3,810	4,953
Non cash items:		
Depreciation	4,524	6,953
Change in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables	79,641	(76,605)
(increase)/decrease in prepaid expenses	(10,110)	-
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other payables	91,661	155,017
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	27,181	564
increase/(decrease) in grants in advance	(72,737)	-
	<u>123,970</u>	<u>90,882</u>
Net cash from operating activities	<u>123,970</u>	<u>90,882</u>

**Note 13. Capital commitments**

No capital expenditure commitments existed at year end.

**Note 14. Contingent assets and liabilities**

The committee are not aware of any contingent liabilities or assets as at the date of signing this financial report.

**Note 15. Events after the reporting period**

No matter or circumstance has arisen since 30 June 2022 that has significantly affected, or may significantly affect the incorporated association's operations, the results of those operations, or the incorporated association's state of affairs in future financial years.

**Note 16. Committee member and related party disclosures**

Transactions between related parties are on normal commercial terms and conditions no more favourable than those available to other parties unless otherwise stated.

No committee members have entered into any material contract with the association since the end of the previous financial year and there were no material contracts involving committee members interests subsisting at year end. There were no loans to committee members.

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.  
Notes to the financial statements  
30 June 2022**

**Note 17. Registered office and principal place of business**

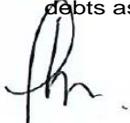
**The registered office and principal place of business of the association is:**

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.  
120 McCrae St  
Bendigo Victoria 3550

**Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.  
Committees' declaration  
30 June 2022**

In accordance with a resolution of the committee Members of Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc, the committee Members declare that:

- The financial statements and notes, as set out on pages 3 to 15, are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not for Profits Commission Act 2012* and:
  - a. comply with accounting policies disclosed at Note 1 to the financial statements
  - b. give true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its performance for the year ended on that date.
- In the committee members' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the association will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.



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Mrs Thaera O'Brien  
Chair



---

Mrs Merrilyn Gaulke  
Vice Chair

17 October 2022



Andrew Frewein Stewart  
61 Bull Street Bendigo VIC 3550

afs@afsbendigo.com.au  
03 5443 0344

# Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc.

## Report on the audit of the financial statements

### Our opinion

In our opinion the accompanying financial report of Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services Inc., being a special purpose financial report, is in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, including:

- i. giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2022 and of its performance for the year ended on that date, and
- ii. complying with the accounting policies described in Note 1 of the financial report.

### What we have audited

The association's financial report comprises the:

- statement of financial position as at 30 June 2022
- statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year then ended
- statement of changes in equity for the year then ended
- statement of cash flows for the year then ended
- notes comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory notes, and
- the certification by members of the committee that the annual statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of the association.

### Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

### Basis of accounting and restriction on distribution

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 to the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose.





Andrew Frewin Stewart  
61 Bull Street Bendigo VIC 3550

afs@afsbendigo.com.au  
03 5443 0344

## Other information

The association may prepare an annual report that may include the financial statements, committee's report and declaration and our audit report (the financial report). The annual report may also include "other information" on the entity's operations and financial results and financial position as set out in the financial report, typically in a Chairperson's report and reports covering governance and other matters.

The committee members are responsible for the other information. An annual report has not been made available to us as of the date of this auditor's report.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and accordingly we will not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

Our responsibility is to read the other information identified above when it becomes available and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If we identify that a material inconsistency appears to exist when we read the annual report (or become aware that the other information appears to be materially misstated), we will discuss the matter with the committee members and where we believe that a material misstatement of the other information exists, we will request management to correct the other information.

## Independence

We are independent of the association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

## Committee's responsibility for the financial report

The committee of the association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 of the financial report and the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and for such controls as the committee determines is necessary to enable preparation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the committee is responsible for assessing the association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intend to liquidate the association or cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.





Andrew Frewin Stewart  
61 Bull Street Bendigo VIC 3550

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03 5443 0344

## Auditor's responsibility for the audit of the financial report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatement can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial report is located at the Auditing and Assurance Standards Board website at: <http://www.auasb.gov.au/home.aspx>. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Frewin Stewart'.

**Andrew Frewin Stewart**  
61 Bull Street, Bendigo, 3550  
Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of October 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bradley Ead'.

**Bradley Ead**  
**Lead Auditor**





  
**EVERYONE IS WELCOME HERE**  
**#BENDIGOTOGETHER**

 **CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO**

 **bendigo Community Health services**

**LODDON CAMPASPE**  
  
**MULTICULTURAL SERVICES**

**BELIEVE IN BENDIGO**

# Governance

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services is an incorporated association governed by a voluntary Board of Directors, which is formed of ordinary members and office bearers. Our locale Directors come from an array of culturally diverse backgrounds and lived experiences and bring a wide variety of expertise and skills, in area including community engagement and development, business management, finance, risk, legal, HR and people management, education, communications and governance.

The Board is driven to ensure strategy is carried out to align with the organisation's purpose whilst overseeing a framework for how the organisation works with and empowers the multicultural community in the region.

Together they are deeply committed to improving the lives of migrants and refugees settling in the Loddon Campaspe Region.

## BOARD MEETINGS AND SUBCOMMITTEES

Name	Office bearer position and sub-committee participation	# Meetings attended	Appointed	Resigned
Thaera O'Brien	Chair	12	-	-
Merrilyn Gaulke	Deputy Chair / People & Culture	11	-	-
John Murphy	Risk & Compliance	10	-	-
Joby Sebastien	People and Culture	9	-	-
Bruno Spandonide	Community Reference Group	10	-	-
Peter Watson	Finance	10	-	-
Ginny Tan	Secretary / Risk & Compliance	8	NOV 2021	-
Salwa Dastgeer	Community Reference Group	2	MAY 2022	-
Dianne Tran	Risk & Compliance	2	MAY 2022	-
Ian Patrick	Risk & Compliance	2	MAY 2022	-
Anna Dorevitch	People and Culture	2	MAY 2022	-
Andiryu Kurtsev	Finance	2	MAY 2022	-
Rachel Vanstone	Secretary	2	MAY 2022	-
Luz Restrepo	-	2	-	AUG 2021
Ivan Rwakijuma	-	3	-	NOV 2021
Esther Ryan	-	6	-	DEC 2021
Oscar Torres-Gomez	-	2	OCT 2021	JAN 2022

# Maha Sein's Story

## Maha Htoo Sein, 24



My name is Maha Htoo Sein. I was born in Myanmar. I speak Poe Karen, Sgwa Karen, Burmese and English.

Unlike other Karen community members in Bendigo, my story and journey to Australia is a little different. I have never been to a refugee camp on the Thai/Burmese border. Instead, my family and I came from Malaysia under a Humanitarian Visa, granted by UNHCR in 2009 where we moved to Nobel Park in Victoria, for our settlement.

I came here with my parents and my middle brother. Unfortunately, my older brother was sent to America by himself, because he had reached 18 years old. According to the interpreter on duty, he could not join us when our family was going through UNHCR interviews. As a ten-year-old kid, I still remember the intense process of going through very long interviews every three months and the constant mixed feelings on my parents face, to be able to receive the Humanitarian Visa but not being able to bring one of their children with them.

With a connection of my dad's, he smuggled us into Malaysia, risking his safety and the chances of seeing us again, to have a better and brighter future for his family. When my dad went to Malaysia, I was five years old and we didn't see or hear back from him again, until he told us to go to Malaysia. My brothers went over to Malaysia a year before my mum and I. Thinking back to that time and hearing from my family, it must have been a terrifying experience for them all, I was too young to remember but I can't imagine what would have happened if we had been caught.

I believe we got our Humanitarian Visa granted because of my parents' experience and the trauma in their youth. During my dad's teenage period, the Burmese military soldiers took him away from his family for slavery to carry heavy items and equipment. Due to his young age and lack of food and water, he wasn't fit and strong enough for the heavy-duty work and got beaten by the soldiers. They broke his ribs and left him there and luckily a nearby villager found him and treated him with traditional herbs and medicine. In contrast, my mum's story wasn't as severe as my dad's. She also has experienced lots of similar events where soldiers took away some of her friends and the villagers for slavery. As both villages were constantly targeted and threatened, they moved to the capital (Yangon), away from the civil war zone. They tried to blend in with other ethnic groups and eventually they met each other.

Life in Malaysia was very isolating as most of our day-to-day activities were spent staying in an apartment, which my dad's employer provided. When we chose to go outside, we had constant fear of being caught by the police as we didn't have any ID documentation other than the UNHCR card. This wasn't ideal because the local policeman weren't aware of it. While living in Malaysia, I learned basic English from the alphabet to numbers and then sentences. I also got the chance to learn how to use a computer for the first time, which was very exciting because it was my first time using such advanced technology. However, for half of my childhood, I didn't get to go to school, and the highest level of school I completed was year 2. This is due to us constantly moving and because of financial hardship.

In September 2009, we arrived in Australia, and I was amazed by all the lights when I looked down from the aeroplane window. When we got out of the airport, my first impression was that it wasn't as hot and humid as I had expected because when dad was being interviewed and asked where our family would like to go, he always answered, somewhere not cold and has similar weather as Myanmar.

Growing up in Australia, I struggled to find my identity and belonging. I found it hard to fit into society because of the cross-cultural differences. Whenever I tend to do something or say something, I constantly compare things from what my parents taught me. Such as our culture, tradition, manners and religion. Whether it's appropriate or polite to do and say, even though I'm dying inside, to do it and get my words out. Sometimes I wanted to forget about those differences and move on with life. Still, I realised that these differences made me who I am today and will always be in my head.

There have been many challenges in my life, the toughest time would have to be in 2017, near my year 12, VCE exam period, when my dad had a car accident. At that time, my mum and brother were in Nhill due to work commitments and my dad and I were living in Bendigo. My dad's car accident occurred on 29th August 2017, when he was returning to Bendigo from Nhill. That afternoon around 3pm, police officers visited my mum to inform her

that dad had been taken to the hospital. When she saw the police officers, she was terrified due to her memory of being fearful of the police back in Malaysia. In addition, she couldn't communicate with the officers because of the language barriers. She told them to wait and called me to interpret. That was the moment I found out dad had a car accident. As I was the first person to know about the shocking news, I froze on the spot. Once I returned to realisation, I passed the information on to my mum then dropped everything, and headed off to Melbourne on the train, to be with my dad. Because mum couldn't drive and my brother was still at work, she asked her friend to take her to my brother's workplace so they could head off to Melbourne. When I arrived at The Royal Melbourne Hospital, dad was in a terrible condition, rambling about his near-death experience, and I thought we would lose him. He got better over time thanks to the advanced medical treatment but I can't imagine how this would have ended if this happened to us when we were in Myanmar.

For many months, I lived alone in Bendigo and travelled back and forth to Melbourne to care for my dad as both my mum and my brother had to work. As a young adult, I struggled with all the responsibilities put on my shoulders, from house sitting, managing bills, trying to focus on my education and providing care to dad. I had a mental breakdown from time to time, but no one knew about it, and I kept it all to myself. Due to being a primary carer, I missed out on studying, didn't do well in my year 12 exams and didn't get the ATAR I wanted. I felt lost and I didn't know what I should do or which pathway to take, so I started taking up part-time jobs at restaurants and cafes. As the months passed, I enrolled in Certificate III in Health Services Assistance and completed the course. After completing the course, I was offered a Personal Care Assistance job at one of the aged care facilities where I did my work placement. I worked there for a year and decided to leave because I wasn't enjoying my work.

In mid-2020, I started working with LCMS as one of the casual bilingual support staff for the Starting Work in Engineering course. At the start, it didn't feel right to me as I wasn't fluent enough in Sgaw Karen compared to Poe Karen. But with the support and encouragement from my friends and work colleagues, I could provide the bilingual support that the students needed. The students also played a massive role in this, as they were very understanding and even helped me improve my Sgaw Karen. After the course ended, I was lucky enough to be offered a full-time position as Business Administration Trainee which I completed in a year. Now I'm employed as Project Coordinator – Communication which I feel I am very fortunate to get offered, as I felt I lacked the skills and knowledge in the field. LCMS believes in me and is giving me the opportunity to learn and I'm enjoying my work and most of all, they make me feel safe and comfortable being who I am.

One of my greatest moments was telling my parents that I had been added to the Victorian Multicultural Honours Roll for my work during the Covid 19 pandemic, assisting the multicultural communities in Bendigo. They are very proud of me.



# Acknowledgements

## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

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Department of Health and Human Services  
Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions  
Department of Premier and Cabinet  
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Council of the City of Greater Bendigo  
Mount Alexander Shire Council

## COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Access Australia Group  
Australian Centre of Further Education  
Annie North  
Axis Employment  
Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council  
Believe in Bendigo  
Bendigo Art Gallery  
Bendigo Chinese Association  
Bendigo Community Health Services  
Bendigo Filipino Foundation  
Bendigo Friends and Mentors  
Bendigo Interfaith Council  
Bendigo Islamic Association  
Bendigo Islamic Community Centre  
Bendigo Malayalee Association  
Bendigo Senior Secondary College  
Bendigo Regional Food Alliance  
Bendigo South East College  
Bendigo Kangan Institute  
CatholicCare Sandhurst  
Castlemaine Community House  
Central Goldfields Library  
Centre Against Sexual Assault  
Crusoe College  
Corporation Dutch - Australian Friends  
Country Women's Association  
Diversitat  
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East Bendigo Pool  
Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria  
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Skills and Job Centre  
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The Neighbourhood Collective  
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White Hills Primary School  
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