

Annual Report 2021-2022



DIVERSITY | INCLUSION | RESPECT



Contents

About Us 4

Member Engagement 6

Chairperson’s Message..... 8

CEO’s Message10

Governance12

Directors and CEO13

Representation14

MCCI Supporting Communities16

SCARF Refugee Support.....18

2021/2022 Highlights..... 20

SCARF Refugee Support..... 22

MCCI Supporting Communities 24

Service Delivery & Quality - Aged Care..... 26

Service Delivery & Quality - Youth & Community 28

Community Reach & Impact 30

People & Culture 32

Acknowledgements..... 34

© Copyright 2022 Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra

You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this information provided you attribute the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra Ltd. as the owner.

While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that this document is correct at the time of printing, the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra Ltd. disclaims any and all liability to any person in respect of anything or the consequences of anything done or omitted to be done in reliance or upon the whole or any part of this document.

About Us

For 47 years, the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI) has been working in NSW and ACT towards our vision of a cohesive multicultural society that embraces, celebrates and values diversity. In October 2021 MCCI joined forces with SCARF to provide even greater support for culturally diverse communities. We do this by delivering services and programs that promote equity, harmony, social inclusion and that build community capacity.

As the regional peak body for multicultural communities in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven, representing more than 50 associations, MCCI is also a leadership voice in advocating for services to meet community needs, and representing the interests and views of multicultural communities in the development of government policy in line with our vision.

With over 300 staff and volunteers from more than 40 cultural backgrounds and speak more than 50 languages, MCCI is committed to delivering high-quality, responsive and culturally intelligent services for individuals, communities and organisations, guided by our values of

- Diversity
- Respect
- Integrity
- Empowerment
- Collaboration
- Hope



Member Engagement

MCCI has a diverse range of organisation, individual and life members who share our values and aims.

MCCI supports our members with access to resources, advice and support on a range of topics, including governance and assistance with funding applications. MCCI involves our members in events and consultations, and keeps them up to date with pertinent issues through newsletters, meetings and social media.

Life Members

Dr Sultan Aly
Fadel Benhima
George Bartolo OAM
John Papakosmas
Ken Habak OAM
Max Bisley
Roko Radocaj
Rudi Horvath
Ruth Mataitis OAM
Joe Alves



Organisation Members

AGA Club Germania Ltd	Illawarra Community FM Broadcasters Ltd (VOX FM)
Association of Illawarra Community Languages Schools Inc	Illawarra Filipino & Multicultural Womens Group Inc
Australian-Philippine Association Inc	Illawarra Indochinese Association Inc
CAPAH Multicultural Association Inc	Illawarra Iranian Association Inc
Chinese Australian Services Society Ltd	Illawarra Kerala Samajam Inc
Community Resources Ltd (Green Connect)	Illawarra Multicultural Services Inc
Croatian Catholic Church	Illawarra Muslim Aid Inc
Cyprian Community of Wollongong Inc	Illawarra Muslim Women's Association Inc
Dutch Australian Society in Illawarra Inc	Illawarra Women's Health Centre Inc
George Cross Falcons Club Inc	Interchange Illawarra Ltd
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australian Greek Welfare Centre Sub Entity	ISLHD - Multicultural Health Service
Greek Orthodox Community of Illawarra Saint Nektarios	IT. SO. WEL. - Italian Social Welfare Organisation Wollongong Ltd
Greek Orthodox Community of Illawarra St Nektarios Greek independent Daycare	Libyan Association of NSW
Illawarra Afghan Association Inc	Macedonian Orthodox Community of the City of Greater Wollongong 'Saint Dimitrija Solunski'

Macedonian Welfare Association of NSW	South Coast Portuguese Association Ltd
Maronite Catholic Parish of Our Lady of Lebanon Wollongong Inc	Spanish & Latinamerican Community Organisation
Merrigong Theatre Co (Illawarra Performing Arts Centre Ltd)	St John the Baptist Serbian Orthodox Parish and Church Community
Migration Heritage Project Inc	The Greek Orthodox Church and Society of the City of Greater Wollongong
Multicultural Aged Care Illawarra Ltd	Uthman Mosque (Wollongong Islamic Society Inc)
Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW Inc	Vietnamese Association of Wollongong Inc
Nan Tien Temple	Why Documentaries
Omar Mosque (Wollongong Islamic Society Inc)	Wollongong Chinese Group
Pakistan Community Wollongong Inc	Wollongong Chinese Seniors Association Inc
Polish Association in Wollongong Inc	Wollongong French Association Inc
Pukapuka Community of Wollongong Inc	Wollongong Hellenic Club Ltd
St Elias Antiochian Orthodox Church Parish Association Inc	Wollongong Illawarra Nepali Community (WINC) Inc
Sisters' Cancer Support Group Inc	ZONTA Club of Wollongong
South Coast Lebanese Association Inc	

Chairperson's Message

On behalf of the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI), it is my great pleasure to present our Annual Report for 2021-22. The coronavirus pandemic shaped much of our work during the year but it was also a year of achievement, change, and great results for our communities.



COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic continued to shape our lives throughout the past year. Lockdowns in NSW and the ACT impacted our work during the July to November 2021 period as the vaccination program was rolled out nation-wide, followed by significant rates of community transmission over the summer period, and then a gradual return to community life and normal service delivery.

Throughout this period, MCCI partnered successfully with a range of agencies to support communities through the pandemic. I would particularly like to acknowledge:

- COORDINARE for funding assistance to support public health messaging, vaccination support for refugee community members, and mental health awareness-raising to overcome access barriers for support,
- Multicultural NSW for funding community care packs to refugee community members and providing thousands of free rapid antigen test kits for local multicultural community associations,
- FECCA for its support to help mobilise community understanding about the vaccination program, and
- The NSW and Australian Governments for supporting MCCI with a range of COVID-related funding including in aged care service delivery and the social sector transformation program.

I would also like to acknowledge the leadership of the Hon. Mark Coure MP, Minister for Multiculturalism, and the CEO of Multicultural NSW, Joseph La Posta, for their commitment to keeping communities informed and for being open to regular and ongoing feedback about the government's pandemic response for multicultural communities.

Through these partnerships, MCCI has played a valuable role in helping to keep our communities safe, well, and connected during some very challenging times. We are also very grateful for the community's generosity during these difficult times, with over 150 laptop devices donated and repurposed to families in need as part of our digital device drive.

SCARF Merger

In June 2021 we were delighted to jointly announce the merger of SCARF Inc with MCCI. Formed in 2005, SCARF helps humanitarian refugee entrants in the Illawarra to build a sense of belonging and navigate the challenges of starting a new life in Australia.

The merger took effect from early October 2021 and I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the SCARF and MCCI teams to work through the detailed pre and post-merger integration process that has brought MCCI and SCARF together as one organisation. A new Business Plan and Practice Framework for refugee support programs has been finalised for the next two-year period, with four

main priority action areas:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Social Inclusion & Education
- Employment & Training
- Community Navigation & Support

We remain grateful for the continued financial support from community donors and fundraisers to assist in the delivery of MCCI's refugee support programs via SCARF. MCCI will continue to deliver and expand the range of community services to help meet the needs of people from refugee backgrounds. And we're excited to be working with such a dedicated volunteer and staff team to help build on SCARF's prior success as one organisation together.

Welcome to Kath McCollim and Dr Rita Chang

The MCCI board of directors met monthly throughout the year, supported by our Audit & Risk and Human Resources & Governance committees. Board directors were actively involved in a range of community and member events during the year. I would like to acknowledge and thank my fellow directors for their support to MCCI and the community.

During the year, MCCI welcomed two new directors to the Board: Kath McCollim and Dr Rita Chang. As the former President of SCARF Inc, Kath joined the MCCI Board to assist with the continuity of knowledge and expertise as part of the merger process. While Rita brings to MCCI substantial experience in dementia care and research for CALD communities. In welcoming Kath & Rita to the board in 2021, we also acknowledged the contribution of Nicolas Marin, who retired from the board in December 2021 to continue his legal career in Sydney, and we thank him for his service to our communities.

MCCI is growing

As we pursue our Strategic Plan goals for the community, MCCI continued to grow during FY21-22 with our revenue reaching \$9.2M and our staff team increasing to 130 people supported by 184 volunteers in the Illawarra and Canberra. With

around 50 community languages spoken by our dedicated team, we are extending our reach into communities who are most in need of assistance and now deliver over 57 unique services and programs.

We welcomed a number of new member organisations to the MCCI family this year, including the Zonta Club of Wollongong, Nan Tien Temple, Wollongong Illawarra Nepalese Community, and Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association. During the latter part of 2022 we have been consulting our member associations about key community issues and support needs to help inform the next phase of our strategic planning in 2023.

Thank you!

On behalf of MCCI, I would like to extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to all of our members, supporters and funding bodies for their continued support and work this year to help keep our communities safe and well. I'd also like to acknowledge the dedication of my fellow directors, MCCI's CEO, staff and volunteer team. Throughout a very difficult year they have all contributed much to our communities and each other. Can I also acknowledge and thank all of our funding partners and community supporters who have assisted MCCI during the year.

I look forward to continuing to work together towards our vision for a cohesive multicultural society that embraces, celebrates and values diversity.

Ken Habak OAM

Chairperson

CEO's Message

Growing our services for the community, supporting our team and clients through the pandemic, preparing for aged care reform, and embedding our merger with SCARF Refugee Support have been our main priorities this year.



The operational tempo at MCCI during the past year has continued to be very high. While navigating our way through COVID-19 and doing our best to keep our teams, clients, and communities safe, we have also focused strongly on consolidating our operations through change and resourcing our teams to deliver great services to the community. Pandemic support to the community has included a range of information and education campaigns, practical vaccination support, welfare care packs for vulnerable community members, distributing free rapid antigen test kits, and a partnership with the Illawarra's First Nations community delivering hot meals to the region's Elders as part of our meals on wheels services.

As a regional peak body for multicultural communities, MCCI's wider community advocacy work this year continued our record of being a strong voice for multiculturalism and social cohesion. During the year, MCCI:

- had 40 media engagements on radio, television, and in the online & print media,
- showcased 1,200 posts across our social media platforms,
- represented the views of Illawarra multicultural communities in over 250 external networks and consultations, and
- hosted a federal election campaign forum.

We remain engaged in several ongoing and influential consultation bodies across government, including those facilitated by Dept of Communities

& Justice, Dept of Health, COORDINARE, Multicultural NSW, FECCA, Community Industry Group and others. One highlight of the year was the opportunity to engage directly with senior staff and Deputy Commissioners from the NSW Mental Health Commission who visited Wollongong to meet with our team.

At the close of the financial year, MCCI's staff team comprised 130 dedicated and professional staff working together towards our strategic goals. 50 community languages are spoken by the staff team alone, providing a core asset to MCCI's work in supporting migrant and refugee community members in the Illawarra and Canberra. Leveraging this diversity in a larger organisation presents MCCI with some wonderful opportunities. Supporting the wellbeing of our team has also been a big priority this year, along with developing the organisation systems and human resources frameworks necessary to work at a larger scale.

The merger of SCARF Refugee Support into the MCCI team saw a huge effort over the July to December 2021 period as we worked through well-over 500 pre & post-merger integration tasks. Legal support was provided by Thomson Geer lawyers to finalise the merger and administrative arrangements. I would like to acknowledge and thank all of those involved and, particularly, Ian Jarman the former SCARF CEO who assisted in a pivotal transition support and planning role. It was terrific to see the much-loved and well-attended core SCARF programs up and running again in the latter part of the year post lockdowns

and going from strength to strength. I would like to acknowledge the many funding partners, fundraisers, and donors who continue to support our refugee community programs.

Aged care reform loomed large over the community sector during the past year, with significant changes foreshadowed following the Royal Commission. It has been a very challenging year for our front-line aged care workforce, who have continued to provide great services to those who need them. New legislation is working its way through the Parliament and a range of operational and funding arrangements for the Care at Home reforms have been deferred to 1 July 2024. This has been welcome news for community aged care providers still reeling from the effects of COVID-19 and providing further opportunities for consultation. MCCI is actively engaged with those consultations at a range of levels to ensure that the new system is designed to strike the right balance for aged care providers, consumers, and the community.

Operationally our aged care programs continue to diversify and reach more people who need them, with a focus on:

- multidisciplinary Home Care support
- new Allied Health care services for seniors, including a gym at our Canberra office and one coming for Wollongong
- social support groups to help overcome isolation and promote connection
- a renewed focus on community activities and interesting outings for seniors
- supporting carers through the Weavers mentoring program
- volunteers visiting isolated seniors in residential care homes
- educating communities about the aged care system via the FECCA Encompass program

MCCI's youth programs have continued to play an important role in supporting young people to connect, to remain engaged with their learning at school, and to develop new leadership skills. We are grateful for the continued support of the

Dept of Communities & Justice, Multicultural NSW and the Dept of Social Services for resourcing core programs such as the COMPACT Alliance, Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Multicultural Youth Development Program and others. A range of project work was also implemented during the year, including the much-loved Intergenerational Cook Off, Football at the Frat, and our school holiday programs. New partnerships were developed with the Illawarra Hawks and St George Illawarra Dragons for Harmony Week, and important new mental health resources were co-designed and launched with young people from Arabic, Swahili, and Karenni speaking backgrounds.

During the year we refreshed the core organisation planning frameworks and continuous improvement action plans that guide our priorities for MCCI. Our new internal audit program reviewed a number of key organisation processes to provide an added quality assurance mechanism, while core compliance milestones were all met. As we continue to grow, these key frameworks remain under very active review to ensure that our systems and processes are fit for purpose and operate as efficiently as possible. In the coming year, we will make new investments in technology that will aim to streamline and better manage several of these functions.

Looking ahead, MCCI will continue to be guided by our values and community-based approach. We'll seek to find opportunities for new resources to help meet the underlying needs of our community and work actively to support our team through change. I'd like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our leadership team who support our people and programs each day, and who put people at the centre of their work always.

Thank you sincerely to all of our wonderful staff, volunteers and clients. And to our board directors who generously offer their expertise, guidance and support to our work for the community.

Chris Lacey
Chief Executive Officer and Company Secretary

Governance

MCCI is a non-profit company limited by guarantee, registered charity and public benevolent institution. Details about MCCI's charitable status can be obtained at the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profit Commission website www.acnc.gov.au

MCCI's vision is for a cohesive multicultural society that embraces, celebrates and values diversity. The company's short and long-term objectives are outlined in the company constitution. They are:

(a) To promote the principles of multiculturalism in the Australian community, including promoting and protecting human rights, raising public awareness about the benefits of our multicultural community, and educating the public regarding the importance of ending racial discrimination in all its forms;

(b) To develop a spirit of unity and cooperation among CALD communities and to promote public debate, services and education programs that foster mutual respect, social inclusion, diversity and harmony within the Australian community;

(c) To preserve and advocate for the rights of people from CALD backgrounds including their effective participation in policy-making decisions which affect the community;

(d) To advance social and public welfare by establishing and providing community services and assistance to people in necessitous circumstances;

(e) To establish, maintain and develop community services and educational programs for people from CALD and other backgrounds to promote their health, well-being, life skills, community participation, individual and collective capacity, employment prospects, and general welfare in the Australian community;

(f) To ameliorate the difficulties and problems encountered by people from CALD backgrounds in Australia;

(g) To maintain an advocacy role on behalf of people from CALD backgrounds with local, state and federal government representatives and instrumentalities; and

(h) To promote access and equity for persons of CALD backgrounds.

MCCI's financial statements are published annually at the ACNC website, along with the Director's Annual Report as a requirement of the Corporations Act.

The board of directors for FY 21-22 are:

- Ken Habak OAM, Chairperson
- Tom Begic, Deputy Chairperson
- Leissa West
- Angela Ljubic
- Dr Rita Chang
- Kath McCollim
- Dr Husayn Aly
- Lyn Cuell JP
- Duncan Brown
- Nicolas Marin (retired December 2021)

Directors held 11 board meetings during the year, supported by two committees which met on a further 10 occasions combined, focused on Human Resources & Governance and Audit, Risk & Compliance.

Directors & CEO



Ken Habak OAM
Chairperson



Tom Begic
Deputy Chairperson



Kath McCollim



Dr Rita Chang



Leissa West



Angela Ljubic



Duncan Brown



Dr Husayn Aly



Lyn Cuell JP



Chris Lacey
CEO &
Company Secretary

Representation

MCCI is a proactive voice for regional communities representing the interests of over 50 local associations. We seek to advance multiculturalism in Australia through constructive and respectful engagement with all levels of government and the community. We make regular policy contributions and submissions, and participate in research projects, committees and networks to influence policy. We also provide information, advice, resources and training to our members to support them to achieve their goals and carry out extensive community engagement activities to ensure all communities have access to relevant information for their needs.

Snapshot

- 85 members
- 248 community engagements
- 51 networks / forums attended
- 9,551 followers on social media
- 40 media engagements
- 19 short-films - 10 languages

MCCI in Action

MCCI & SCARF merger

In October 2021 SCARF Refugee Support and MCCI joined forces to continue valued programs and provide even greater support for culturally diverse and refugee communities in the Illawarra. SCARF was established in 2005 and has supported more than 2,000 refugees in the region. The two organisations have worked closely over the years through programs that enable people from refugee backgrounds to build a new life in Australia.



Scholarships to young people

12 young people from multicultural backgrounds received MCCI Youth scholarships of \$1,000 each as part of a year one-on-one mentoring program. After a challenging two and a half years of lockdowns, limited social interaction and disrupted education, the scholarships have been designed to assist young people to overcome some of the drawbacks and set themselves up for success in reaching their goals and aspirations.



Federal election forum

New members from Indigenous and CALD backgrounds elected at the federal elections have been a boost to political diversity at the highest level. Community leaders and members of federal and state parliament explored the meaning of cultural diversity when they met at various occasions throughout the year. MCCI's multicultural candidate forum in May was also an opportunity to discuss FECCA's national multicultural policy platform.



MCCI Supporting Communities



Friendships across borders

New friendships were developed when MCCI seniors from the ACT visited the Italian and Serbian communities in Wollongong. Serbian groups came together at the church in Dapto and Italians from Canberra visited the Italian Social Welfare Organisation Wollongong (ITSOWEL) to celebrate the Feast of the Italian Republic. The visits were filled with music, dancing, poetry, singing and of course, traditional food.

Refugee Week Event

This year, we celebrated Refugee Week at the Town Hall with over 150 community members. The morning tea was a way for community members with similar experiences to come together and continue the process of healing by sharing food, stories, song and dance. The event was held in collaboration with Wollongong City Council and Red Cross.



Learning to float and swim

Thanks to a generous grant from the Illawarra Hawks and Pepper Money, our important #swim4safety work could continue with an eight-week swimming program for newly arrived refugees and migrants. Lu who is Karenni and grew up in a refugee camp in Thailand was one of 10 young people who learned swimming skills for life at Beaton Park.



Carers supporting carers

Anna from Italy and Lucia from Portugal are of different ages and from different countries, but share similar experiences of caring for family members and are part of MCCI's carers community. In Australia one in five people will be a carer at one point in their lives and it can be challenging. MCCI runs Weavers which is a strengths-based, peer-to-peer model developed by The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) for carers to manage the challenges of caring, reduce stress and increase wellbeing. Weavers is supported by funding from COORDINARE - South Eastern NSW PHN.

Community Support & Navigation

SCARF assists community members on pathways to self-reliance and empowerment through connecting them with local supports that advance their needs and goals. Through one-on-one support, either face to face, or online, SCARF provides practical assistance such as form filling and connecting people with services. SCARF also proactively produces and shares relevant community information to a large network of local community members on important issues through community mobilisers and social media.

Community members supported - origin of birth



SCARF in Action

Preparing for emergencies

Collaborating with the NSW State Emergency Service (Illawarra Multicultural Unit) and Australian Red Cross, a series of in-language workshops were held to build emerging community resilience to natural disasters. The sessions covered how to prepare for emergency weather-related disasters such as floods, storms, bushfires and heatwaves.



Employment & Training

SCARF assists community members seeking employment through individualised support and mentoring, taking a strengths-based approach that fosters social and economic inclusion for participants and their families. SCARF builds partnerships with local businesses and training providers to ensure successful outcomes for community members and businesses, and supports businesses to become “Champions of Welcome” through diversity and inclusion training programs.

Snapshot

- 40 people gained employment
- 12 people running small businesses
- 700 mentoring sessions
- 165 people supported into training

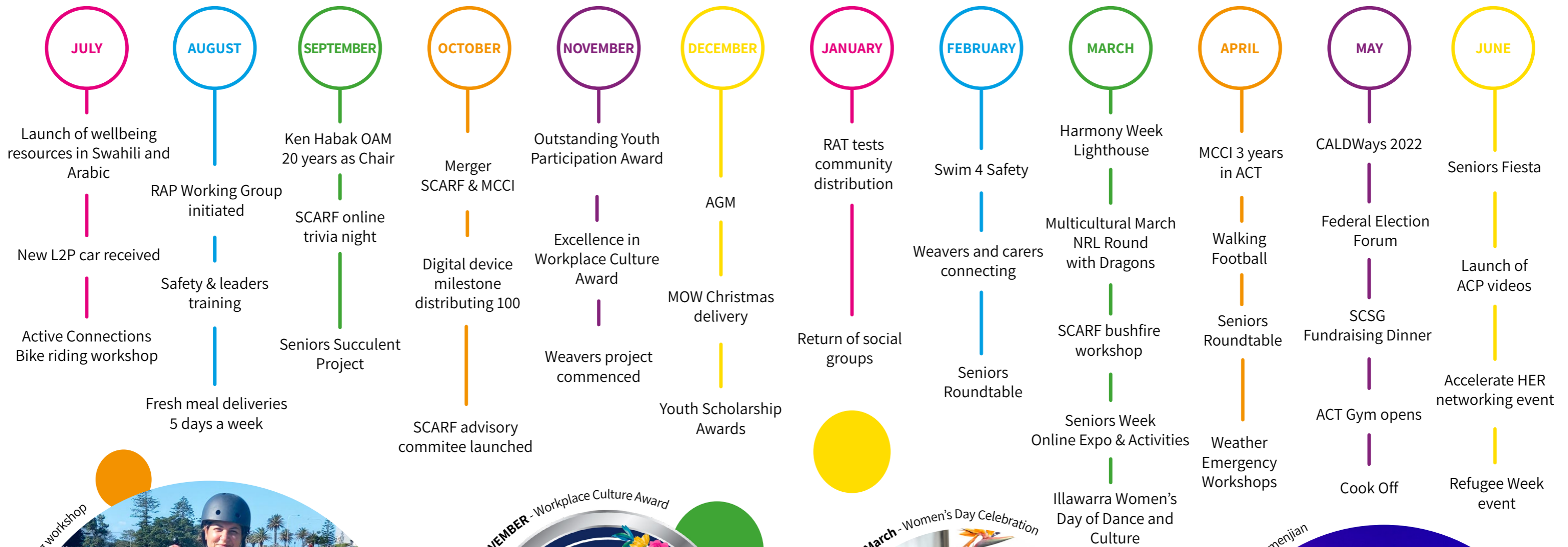
SCARF in Action

Preparing for careers in aged care

This year a group of community members have been completing their Certificate 3 in Individual Support. With additional language support, hands-on learning and work experience, as well as introductions to local aged care providers many members have already gained employment in the industry.



2021 / 2022 HIGHLIGHTS



Snapshot

- 53 students received tutoring
- 70 hours conversational English
- 150 devices rehomed
- 67 hours driving support

Education & Inclusion

SCARF's programs aim to build a sense of belonging through social inclusion, providing community, friendship and practical assistance including all ages educational support to help build a secure, vibrant life. With programs significantly affected by COVID during 2021 and either moving online or having to pause, we were pleased to be able to restart in person programs in early 2022, culminating in a collaborative Refugee Week celebration at the end of June with over 150 community members celebrating together.

Health & Wellbeing

SCARF provides health-related communication, connection and engagement opportunities for community members who are at risk of isolation and its related health and mental health issues. Through programs such as Active Connections and Lunchbox for Learning, community members forge connections and learn new skills such as swimming or healthy eating practices. SCARF also delivers mental health service navigation and advocacy to ensure community members can access local support services that are available.

Snapshot

- 190 people attended mental health literacy workshops
- 49 people supported into services
- 52 exercise sessions for women
- 188 care packs distributed

SCARF in Action

150 devices rehomed

Over 150 digital devices have been rehomed during 2021/22 thanks to SCARF's Digital Device Drive. The device drive, where donated devices were refurbished and provided to local families, was vital in keeping individuals and families connected at a time when connectivity could not be more important.



SCARF in Action

Mental Health & Wellbeing

SCARF's Mental Health and Wellbeing Pathways project removes barriers that can stand in the way of refugee community members accessing the support they need. By improving mental health literacy, encouraging help-seeking behaviours and providing one-on-one support, over 110 community members have already benefited.

MCCI Supporting Communities



Succulent project

As social groups were put on hold during lockdown, seniors in the ACT replanted and cared for succulent plants at home. Succulents absorb and retain water like few other plants and survive in harsh conditions. They symbolise persistence and determination and are a reminder that we should not give up, thus being a perfect project during challenging times.

'Go the Dragons' in language, of course

In March 2022 we teamed up with the St George Illawarra Dragons for the NRL Multicultural Round as the 50-50 Charity raffle partner for their match against the Sharks at WIN Stadium. It was a wet and windy evening with great football and plenty of multicultural entertainment. The Dragons players learned how to say 'welcome - go the Dragons' in multiple languages, we raised \$2000 for our work and Dragons NRLW players Renee Targett and Elsie Albert shared stories about their cultures in a new U & Me short-film by Why Documentaries and MCCI.



Knitting and crocheting for multiculturalism

The pandemic fuelled an interest in knitting and crocheting. Patches made were sewn and stitched together for a multicultural banner displayed at Wollongong Library.

"I decided to knit squares representing Cyprus, my country, and Turkey. It's multicultural, that's it, we are all in this country together. One for all, and all for one," said Selma who attends the Turkish social group and is a volunteer at MCCI's multicultural kitchen in Cringila.



Community videos in language

How well do you know your family and friends and would you know how to care for them if they were unable to tell you? 'Have the conversation' is the message in advance care planning videos in Turkish, Vietnamese and Arabic. The videos used local community members like Quan (photo) in the hope that more people will start the conversation, plan ahead and fill in an advance care directive. The videos were a collaboration between Beyond Empathy, COORDINARE, Advance Care Planning Australia and MCCI.

Service Delivery & Quality Aged Care

MCCI's growing care services team in the Illawarra and ACT/ Queanbeyan regions delivers a full suite of services designed to support seniors to continue to live independently at home. By partnering with consumers our aim is to support clients to achieve their goals, and receive services that are culturally intelligent, safe and responsive. While part of the year remained significantly impacted by COVID-19, we were very pleased during the latter part of the financial year to welcome back group activities, and reinvigorate community connections.

Snapshot

- 28,646 hours of support at home
- 13,335 meals provided
- 3,904 transport trips
- 29,000 hours group support
- 422 hours of volunteer visiting
- 97 carers supported

MCCI in Action

3 years in the ACT and a new gym

When MCCI launched aged care services in the ACT in 2019 it was based on consultations with organisations and communities in the region who saw the need for specialist multicultural services. Three years on, hundreds of seniors are connected to MCCI's social groups, allied health and in-home care services in the ACT and Queanbeyan. The new multicultural gym in Fyshwick has become an important meeting place for active seniors.



Seniors Fiesta

More than 200 seniors from all corners of the world were thrilled to celebrate the Multicultural Seniors Fiesta at the Fraternity Club. The popular event is a great way to promote inclusion and provide seniors with high-quality interactive entertainment while they enjoy a bite to eat, catch up with old friends and make some new ones. A bus load from Canberra also made their way to the Illawarra to join the celebrations.



Back together again

It was a difficult year for many seniors as social interactions were limited or moved online during lockdowns. It was therefore wonderful to see the return of social groups and welcome seniors back in COVIDSafe ways. Zora (92) in the ACT was one of them. Being deaf, she wrote to the group on a white board: "I feel really good. I'm happy to be back. In our Monday group is good friendship among us. It's perfect."



Service Delivery & Quality Youth & Community

MCCI's youth & community programs empower young people to plan their futures and ensure they have the knowledge and skills to make informed choices and support their communities. We work in close collaboration with schools and tertiary education providers, businesses and other partner organisations to further our reach and impact. As we battled with the COVID pandemic over the last 2 years, returning to face-to-face delivery was warmly welcomed by young people and our staff team.

Snapshot

- Worked with 1,380 young people
- 4,239 attendances
- 51 programs
- 287 sessions

MCCI in Action

Awarded for mental health project

MCCI and headspace Wollongong were the joint winners of the Outstanding Youth Participation Award at the NSW Youth Work Awards 2021 for the translation project '7 tips for a healthy headspace' in Swahili and Arabic. Behind the 16 co-designed fact sheets were young people of African and Middle Eastern backgrounds from Wollongong who translated and made the information culturally appropriate and easily accessible for their communities.



Sharing passion for cooking

The annual Cook Off program aims to grow relationships between young people and MCCI volunteers by sharing stories and passion for cooking. The cookbook Helen was given when she started high school in Belgium 72 years ago came in handy when she shared her old waffle recipe with Year 9 students. Two Cook Offs took place at Corrimal and Lake Illawarra High Schools this year. The recipe books are available from MCCI's website.



Women exploring career paths

Young women met experienced mentors at Accelerate-HER's networking event at Wollongong Youth Centre. The young women were told never to give up, and the mentors were inspired by the enthusiasm and experiences of young women as they discussed their challenges together. The event was part of Lead The Way, a collaborative youth leadership initiative which supports the next generation of young female community leaders as part of the Multicultural NSW COMPACT Alliance.



Community Reach & Impact

MCCI extends our community reach and impact by leveraging our strengths and working with those who share our vision and values. We conduct extensive community and sector engagement, through one to one referral and support, community education, organisational education, and the development and distribution of high quality tailored resources. This work has been vital through the uncertainty of the pandemic, and natural disasters.

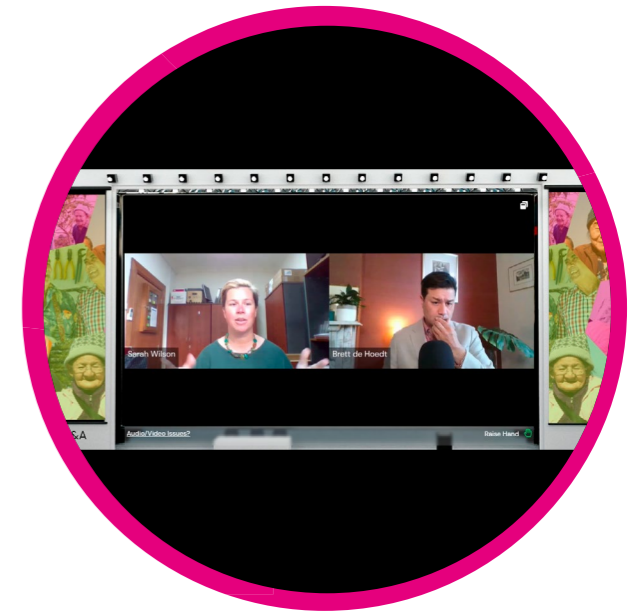
Snapshot

- 1,900 cultural training participants
- 6,663 resources distributed
- 1,326 attended aged care info sessions
- 289 people supported one-on-one to navigate aged care services
- 338 registered for CALDWays Conference

MCCI in Action

Reconnecting at CALDWays

Another successful CALDWays conference about multiculturalism and aged care was delivered online with more than 300 people registered to learn from experts. Keynote speaker Dr Norman Swan spoke about the new normal after COVID-19, Troy Speirs presented on the upcoming Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) reforms and MCCI's Sarah Wilson gave some tips on how to build an inclusive workplace.



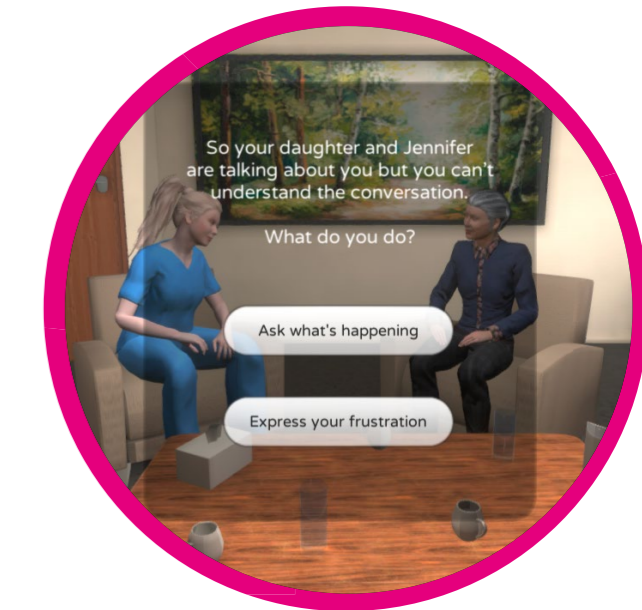
2,500 RAT tests distributed

In the new year, MCCI distributed more than 2,500 rapid antigen test kits to over 30 local multicultural associations in the Illawarra to enable continued community support against the pandemic. The Wollongong Pelangi Indonesia School was one of the organisations who took the opportunity to make tests available for their teachers and students and limit the spread. The NSW Government and Multicultural NSW supplied the tests.



Empathy through virtual reality

Two new virtual reality apps, developed by MCCI and the Ageing Revolution, enable people to enter the aged care world and see it from somebody else's perspective. The virtual reality setting makes people feel the frustration of being patronised and ridiculed for coming from a different culture, not speaking the language or being of older age. The apps are used to create empathy and better understanding of ageism and other forms of discrimination.



People & Culture

Our diverse and growing workforce of staff, volunteers and contractors reflects the communities we work with. The sustained impact of COVID on where and how we work is now our new normal, with increased use of technology and remote working. A focus on recognition, wellbeing and skills development of the team over the last year has paid dividends through a period of high growth. The merger with SCARF was part of this growth story as MCCI welcomed 13 staff and 100 volunteers.

Snapshot

- 131 staff
- 184 volunteers
- 6,880 volunteer hours
- 49 languages spoken
- 84% staff satisfaction

MCCI in Action

Volunteers Lunch

Volunteers are essential to the work we do. With the SCARF merger, our team of volunteers has grown to 184 committed people who bring with them invaluable skills, experiences and connections. During National Volunteer Week, under the theme #BetterTogether, volunteers came for lunch and entertainment at Villa D'Oro where they took to the dance floor as Helen from MCCI's finance team entertained us with old classics.

20 years as MCCI Chairperson

Chairperson and Life Member Ken Habak OAM has been vital to MCCI's success over the years and still has much to give. On behalf of the entire staff team and Board, CEO Chris Lacey thanked him for his incredible contribution to MCCI and multicultural communities in the Illawarra and the wider Australia as he celebrated 20 years as Chairperson. Mr Lacey also thanked Mr Habak's wife Salma, and the whole family for lending him to MCCI for over two decades.

Excellence in Workplace Culture

MCCI was honoured with the Excellence in Workplace Culture Award at the 2021 Illawarra Business Awards. It was a proud CEO Chris Lacey who praised the culturally diverse workforce for their passion for inclusion, respect and teamwork at the black-tie gala event at the WIN Entertainment Centre in Wollongong. MCCI was a finalist for three business awards and won the Excellence in Workplace Culture jointly with Warrigal.



Acknowledgements

MCCI would like to thank our many supporters and partners without whom our work would not be possible. We would like to acknowledge the valuable and ongoing funding support provided by the following state and federal agencies and funding partners:


- Multicultural NSW
- Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Australian Government Department of Home Affairs
- Australian Government Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources
- ClubGRANTS NSW
- COORDINARE South Eastern NSW PHN
- Dementia Australia
- Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Australia
- Good Things Foundation Australia
- James N. Kirby Foundation
- Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)
- Scanlon Foundation
- Westpac Foundation
- Bennelong Foundation
- NAB Foundation
- IMB Bank Community Foundation
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- NSW Department of Planning & Environment
- NSW Office of Sport
- NSW Ageing and Disability Commission

We would also like to thank the MCCI members, local organisations, stakeholders, partners, elected representatives at local, state and federal levels, along with the many individuals and volunteers who have donated their time, resources and energy in working together towards our vision of an inclusive and respectful society.


We look forward to continuing our work together to support communities and to promote social inclusion and community harmony in 2023.






 MCCI Offices in the Illawarra and ACT

 admin@mcci.org.au

 02 4229 7566 / 02 6169 3986

 www.mcci.org.au

 Find us on social media