



# Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC)

## Annual Report

January to December 2023



Figure 1: Photo on front page, Station Pier in Port Melbourne. Between 1949 and 1966, an average of 61,000 passengers arrived here every year, reaching 110,802 at its peak in 1960.



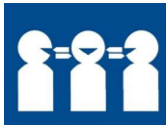
## City of Port Phillip

99a Carlisle Street  
St Kilda VIC 3182

Phone: **ASSIST** 03 9209 6777

Email: [portphillip.vic.gov.au/contact-us](mailto:portphillip.vic.gov.au/contact-us)

Website: [portphillip.vic.gov.au](http://portphillip.vic.gov.au)



### Interpreter Services

- 廣東話 (Cantonese) 03 9679 9810
- 普通话 (Mandarin) 03 9679 9858
- Ελληνικά (Greek) 03 9679 9811
- Polski (Polish) 03 9679 9812
- Русский (Russian) 03 9679 9813

For all other languages phone 03 9679 9814



### National Relay Service

If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment, you can phone us through the National Relay Service (NRS):

TTY users, dial 133677, ask for 03 9209 6777.

Voice Relay users, phone 1300 555 727, then ask for 03 9209 6777.

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# Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Port Phillip Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of this land, the people of the Kulin Nations. We pay our respect to their Elders, past and present. We acknowledge and uphold their continuing relationship to this land.



Figure 2 Welcome to City of Port Phillip postcards in different languages, a MAC initiative as part of Cultural Diversity Week 2023.

# About the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC)

The MAC was appointed by the City of Port Phillip Council in 2019 to assist Council by providing advice and feedback on all issues and opportunities that affect all multicultural communities in the City of Port Phillip.



Figure 3: Members of the City of Port Phillip's Multicultural Advisory Committee as of March 2023. Left to right: Helene (Deputy Chair), Tina, Councillor Tim Baxter (to March 2023), Tanvi, James, Georgina (Chair up to April 2023), Keir, Alba, Alex. Not pictured: Naomi, Leo, and Ali.

It also brings matters of concern within the community to the attention of the Council. This includes:

- Providing advice to Council on its policies, plans and services that impact our multicultural communities, including through communication, engagement, and consultation.
- Supporting the value of Council's membership to The Welcoming Cities Standard, the national standard for cultural diversity and inclusion policy and practice in local government to create communities where everyone can belong.
- Liaising with other organisations and networks that have a direct interest in multicultural communities including refugees and asylum seekers in City of Port Phillip.
- Providing advice to Council on key government initiatives, issues, programs, and reviews.
- Assisting Council to promote the benefits of cultural diversity, social cohesion, and inclusion of all residents within City of Port Phillip and beyond.

- Celebrating the achievements and needs of multicultural communities.
- Facilitating and encouraging opportunities for multicultural communities and community groups to work together on joint projects and initiatives.

## Message from the Chair (James Seow)

I am extremely pleased and proud to be sharing City of Port Phillip Multicultural Advisory Committee's achievements in 2023 in this report.

As tension rose in many parts of the world and exerted its impact on local communities, the Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC) continued to advise the City of Port Phillip of the complex needs, changes, and emerging challenges faced by the city's migrants, international students, refugees, and asylum seekers.

We made a conscious effort to grow a spirit of welcome and forge community connections with our Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week and Welcoming Week events. The Welcoming Cities sub-committee was formed to influence key stakeholders, build support, and lay the groundwork for Council to become an accredited Welcoming Cities member in the coming years. Such accreditation signals to all residents, businesses, and visitors in the city that the Council upholds Australia's highest standards for inclusive Local Government practice to enhance and celebrate diversity.

2023 was a year of deep learning, extensive networking and exchanging ideas and experiences with other Councils across Australia, peak bodies, tertiary institutions, and grassroots organisations. MAC members were out in the field listening to stories and picking up the latest research to amplify the voices and meet the needs of Port Phillip's eclectic



Figure 4: MAC Chairperson, James Seow (from December 2023)

multicultural communities more effectively. The Welcoming Australia workshop, Appraising Multiculturalism symposium and Joint Advisory Committee Meetings are just some of the several events MAC members attended to inform themselves and the Council of the latest opportunities and challenges in advancing multiculturalism.

The diverse lived experiences and backgrounds of MAC members are our biggest asset. They bring a valued perspective and empathy to the committee's work and aspirations. Coupled with our passion for social equity and community well-being, MAC is a strong advocate for anti-racism and intercultural understanding.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to all MAC members, Councillors, Council staff and working partners for their support and commitment. We would not be able to celebrate our achievements without their trust and outstanding contributions.

## Our multicultural community

The City of Port Phillip is home to people from over 160 different identified birthplaces, speaking more than 120 different languages and dialects. One in three of Port Phillip's 103,507 residents was born overseas, 56 per cent have at least one parent who was born overseas and 21 per cent of Port Phillip residents speak a language other than English at home.

A higher proportion of the Port Phillip population was born overseas when compared with Victorians. In 2021, 33.1 per cent of Port Phillip residents were born overseas, compared to 30 per cent for the Victorian population.

In 2018, Council endorsed the establishment of a Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC). Formally commencing in 2019, the MAC has been the peak advisory and advocacy body on issues affecting multicultural, refugee or asylum seeker communities within the Port Phillip municipality.



Come Southside and take your taste buds on a tour around the world.

Join us in celebrating Cultural Diversity Week with our online map of restaurants and cafes serving cuisine from across the globe. Visit old favourites and discover new flavours.

Support our multicultural communities and share the important role that food plays in preserving traditions.

This event is presented by City of Port Phillip's Multicultural Advisory Committee.

#### Enter to win

Snap and share a photo of your favourite food spot to Instagram using **#SouthsideFlavours** and **#CulturalDiversityWeek** from 11 March to 9 April 2023 and you'll be in with a chance to win a meal.

Scan the QR code

To open up a world of flavours on your doorstep



CULTURAL  
DIVERSITY  
WEEK 2023

Welcoming  
Cities



Figure 5: Promotional poster for "Celebrate the global flavours of Port Phillip" as part of Cultural Diversity Week.

# Policy context

We live in an ever-increasing culturally diverse community, and MAC plays an important role in ensuring equity is upheld and that Council is meeting the diverse needs of our community in its policy and practice. Additionally, the work of the Committee is in line with best practice in terms of international, National, State and Local policies.

<b>International</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001), UNESCO</li> <li>• Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), United Nations</li> </ul>
<b>National</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australian Human Rights Commission Act (1986), Parliament of Australia (<i>Makes discrimination for reason of race unlawful</i>)</li> <li>• Racial Discrimination Act (1975), Parliament of Australia (<i>Enshrines equity in law, regardless of race, national or ethnic background</i>)</li> <li>• The People of Australia – Australia’s Multicultural Policy (2013), Commonwealth of Australia (Commits the Australian government to respond to the needs of CALD communities).</li> <li>• Multicultural Access and Equity Policy (2015), Commonwealth of Australia (<i>Guides equitable access to government services</i>)</li> <li>• National Anti-Racism Partnership and Strategy (2012), Australian Human Rights Commission (<i>Aims to increase awareness and improve anti-racism practices</i>)</li> <li>• Services for All: Promoting Access and Equity in Local Government (undated), Australian Local Government Association (<i>Access and equity practice resource for local governments</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>State</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multicultural Victoria Act (2011), Parliament of Victoria (<i>A framework of cultural diversity principles</i>)</li> <li>• Victorian Charter of Rights and Responsibilities (2006), Parliament of Victoria (<i>Provides a mechanism to measure actions and decisions made by an organisation</i>)</li> <li>• Racial and Religious Tolerance Act (2001), Parliament of Victoria (<i>Makes it illegal to vilify anyone on the grounds of race or religion</i>)</li> <li>• Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010) (<i>Holistically protects people’s rights to equal opportunities</i>)</li> <li>• Victoria’s Advantage: Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship Policy (<i>A whole of government commitment to culturally diverse communities with details on objectives and commitments</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>Local</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MAV Statement of Commitment to Cultural Diversity (2012), Municipal Association Victoria (<i>Outlines the commitment and support the MAV provides to local government actions to positively influencing cultural diversity</i>)</li> <li>• Local Government Act (<i>Outlines the role and responsibilities of Local Governments in Victoria</i>)</li> </ul>
<b>City of Port Phillip</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Port Phillip Council Plan 2021-2031 (<i>Strategic Direction one, Inclusive Port Phillip</i>)</li> </ul>



- Health and Well-being Plan
- Child Safe Standards (*Standard 5: Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice*)

## MAC membership 2023

The Committee membership aims to reflect the diversity of the City of Port Phillip, including representatives from established communities, newly emerging communities, people seeking asylum, former refugees, and older and young people. To be eligible, Committee members must work in, or be a resident of, the City of Port Phillip and need to be able to demonstrate:

- Community networks and linkages within local multicultural, refugee or asylum seeker communities.
- A good knowledge and understanding of the local issues that are of relevance to our multicultural communities and a commitment to multiculturalism, and the strengthening of a diverse community that encourages the participation and inclusion of all residents.
- An ability to represent a broad range of views that reflect the diversity of the community.
- An ability to facilitate, negotiate and influence outcomes and resolve conflict.

In 2023, Councillor Tim Baxter was appointed to represent Council until April 2023, followed by Councillor Rhonda Clark for the remainder of 2023. Georgina Tsolidis served as Chair until April



Figure 6: Members of the City of Port Phillip's Multicultural Advisory Committee as of September 2023. Left to right: Keir, Helene (Deputy Chair), Alex, Tanvi (Chair from April to November 2023), Vasileios, James, Tina. Not pictured: Councillor Clark, Alba, Ali.

2023, and Tanvi Mor stepped up as Chair from April to November 2023. James Seow was elected Chair in December 2023 with H el ene Kammoun as Deputy Chair throughout 2023.

In 2023, the following community members sat on the MAC:

Current Members	Position
Alba Chliakhtine	Committee member and Chair of Welcoming Cities subcommittee
Alex Kats	Committee member
Tina Khabbazian Zanjani	Committee member
Altaf Ali Mohammed	Committee member
Vasileios Tsialtas	Committee member and Chair of the Events subcommittee
James Seow	Committee member
Keir Semenov	Committee member and Chair of the Arts and Education subcommittee
Naomi Sherborne	Committee member (on leave from August to December 2023)
Masi Perozi	Committee member until October 2023, and retiring member
Leonardo Pereira	Committee member (pool member) <sup>1</sup>
Joshua Goodman	Member of the Welcoming Cities subcommittee (pool member that has been co-opted by the Committee through special projects)
Office Bearers	Position
Georgina Tsolidis	Chair until April 2023, and retiring member
Tanvi Mor	Chair from April to November 2023, and retiring member
James Seow	Chair from December 2023
H�el�ene Kammoun	Deputy Chair (on leave from October 2023 to May 2024)
Council Representative	Ward
Cr Tim Baxter	Canal Ward (until April 2023)
Cr Rhonda Clark	Canal Ward (from May 2023)

<sup>1</sup> A pool of interested members was established in 2022 to help facilitate the work of the Committee through special projects and may also replace outgoing members. Pool members were formally endorsed by Council on 16 November 2022.

# MAC Action Plan

Each year the MAC develops an Action Plan in response to the objectives in its Terms of Reference and aligned to key outcomes outlined in the Council Plan 2021-2031 and the Welcoming Cities Standard.

MAC met in January 2023 to determine its priorities for 2023, which included the following:

- Provide advice on key Council policy and frameworks.
- Advocate key multicultural policies including Welcoming Cities Standard and Multicultural Statement of Commitment
- Input to Council's social and economic recovery response in relation to emerging needs and issues for multicultural communities.
- Promote intercultural exchange and social connection.
- Voice to Parliament referendum
- Anti-racism campaign "All One Together"
- Arts and education
- Children's cultural and language support
- Support for new migrants
- Visible multicultural signage

These priorities align with the Council Plan Directions of:

- **Inclusive:** A City that is a place for all members of our community, where people feel supported and comfortable being themselves and expressing their identities.
- **Vibrant:** A City that has a flourishing economy, where our community and local businesses thrive, and we maintain and enhance our reputation as one of Melbourne's cultural and creative hubs.
- **Well-Governed:** A City that is a leading local government authority, where our community and our organisation are in a better place because of our collective efforts.

## Subcommittees and Working Groups

The following MAC working groups/subcommittees were established:

- Welcoming Cities Subcommittee
- Events Subcommittee
- Arts and Education Subcommittee<sup>2</sup>

Below is a summary of Welcoming Cities subcommittee members in 2023:

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<sup>2</sup> The Arts and Education subcommittee met only once in 2023. Due to other priorities, the work of the subcommittee was put on hold. Keir Semenov was the appointed Chair alongside the following members: Georgina Tsolidis, Naomi Sherborne, and Vasileo Tsialtas. The focus of this subcommittee was program development, planning and partnerships.

Current Members	Position
Alba Chliakhtine	Chair of Welcoming Cities subcommittee
Vasileios Tsialtas	Subcommittee member
James Seow	Subcommittee member
Joshua Goodman	Subcommittee member
Georgina Tsolidis	Subcommittee member (retiring member as of April 2023)
Tanvi Mor	Subcommittee member (retiring member as of November 2023)
Hélène Kammoun	Subcommittee member (on leave from October 2023 to May 2024)

Below is a summary of Events subcommittee members in 2023:

Current Members	Position
Vasileios Tsialtas	Chair of Events subcommittee
Alex Kats	Subcommittee member
Tina Khabbazian Zanjani	Subcommittee member
Keir Semenov	Subcommittee member
Naomi Sherborne	Subcommittee member (on leave from August to December 2023)
Georgina Tsolidis	Subcommittee member (retiring member as of April 2023)
Tanvi Mor	Subcommittee member (retiring member as of November 2023)
James Seow	Subcommittee member

## Welcoming Cities Standards

Council became a “committed” member of the Welcoming Cities network in 2022. In 2023, MAC explored the Welcoming Cities Standards and how they could support Council strengthening its capacity to work alongside the many cultural groups living within this community. MAC aimed to support a more cohesive approach to migration, settlement and belonging.

A “committed” local council publicly states their intent to champion the principles of welcoming and inclusion.

Committed local councils join a network of like-minded peers and gain the benefit of support and experience to chart their progress and identify the next steps towards becoming a Welcoming City.

The Standard establishes the framework for local councils to:

- Benchmark their cultural diversity, inclusion policies and practices across the organisation.
- Identify where and how further efforts could be directed.

- Evaluate progress over time.

The Standard allows Council to assess its current activity against six categories: Leadership, Social and Cultural Inclusion, Economic Development, Learning and Skills Development, Civic Development, and Places and Spaces. MAC incorporated these six categories into its Action Plan alongside the Council Plan Directions.

## Consultation specific to Council business

Council recognises the value of community committees as noted in the Council Plan: *“We will partner with our Older Persons Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee, Multicultural Advisory Committee, Multi-Faith Network, LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee and establish other committees, where relevant, to ensure the diversity of our community’s experience is represented in decision-making.”*

The Committee provided input into the following Council documents:

- Draft LGBTIQ+ Action Plan
- Draft Accessibility Action Plan
- Housing Strategy Phase 2
- Consultation on Council Plan and Budget
- Sustainability and Climate Change Community Survey
- Aged Care Reforms

Below are general themes and issues raised by the committee:

- It is important that any specialised service provider in the aged care space is culturally sensitive, and diversity and equity are incorporated as part of its mission.
- Multicultural communities, especially newly emerging ones, may not be aware that services are available. Raising awareness in a culturally appropriate manner is important. There is a need to better connect with grassroots ethno-specific organisations.
- The needs of diverse communities need to be considered in any model of care; one size does not fit all.
- Bilingual General Practitioners, faith groups and clubs are a key link for many members from multicultural backgrounds. It is important that Council works to create awareness among these networks.
- Often there is stigma associated among multicultural communities with accessing aged care services. A solution would be to work with community leaders to build their capacity to understand the aged care system and address some of the community stigma.
- Multicultural communities access libraries, culturally appropriate shops, and cafes. Council can promote its services via these grassroots meeting places.

- MAC noted the intersectionality issues amongst migrants and refugees who left their home countries because of LGBTIQ+ oppression.
- MAC advocates for the needs of multicultural communities around communication and access to information.

## Advocacy

### Dispose of your Food and Garden Organics (FOGO)

In January 2023, Council began to deliver kerbside FOGO bins to eligible houses and townhouses. MAC advised that the FOGO rollout include information in six community languages commonly spoken in City of Port Phillip. This was noted and implemented by Council. See figure 7.

This message is about your new food and garden organics recycling service. To find out more in your language please call TIS on 13 14 50 and ask for the City of Port Phillip on 03 9209 6777.

Este mensaje le informa sobre el nuevo servicio de reciclaje de restos de alimentos y residuos orgánicos de jardín. Para obtener más información en su idioma, llame a TIS al 13 14 50 y pida que le comuniquen con la Municipalidad de Port Phillip (City of Port Phillip en inglés) en el 03 9209 6777.

本信息是关于您新的厨余和园艺有机垃圾回收服务。如需更多中文信息，请拨打 13 14 50 联系 TIS，要求与 City of Port Phillip 通话，电话：03 9209 6777。

Pesanan ini adalah tentang makanan perkhidmatan kitaran semula makanan dan bahan-bahan organik taman anda. Untuk menamatkan maklumat lanjut dalam bahasa anda sila hubungi TIS di 13 14 50 dan minta untuk disambungkan ke City of Port Phillip di 03 9209 6777.

Это информация о новых услугах по переработке пищевых и садовых органических отходов. Чтобы получить более подробную информацию на своем родном языке, позвоните в службу переводчиков TIS по тел. 13 14 50 и попросите соединить вас с муниципалитетом Port Phillip по тел. 03 9209 6777.

Αυτό το μήνυμα αφορά τη νέα σας υπηρεσία ανακύκλωσης τροφίμων και οργανικών απορριμμάτων του κήπου. Για περισσότερες πληροφορίες στη γλώσσα σας, καλέστε το TIS στο 13 14 50 και ζητήστε να σας συνδέσουν με το Δήμο Port Phillip στο 03 9209 6777.

זו הודעה על שירות מיחזור המזון ופסולת גינה החדש שכם. לפרטים נוספים בשפה העברית אנא התקשרו לשירות התרגומים (טיס) בטלפון 131450 ובקשו את העיר פורט פיליפ בטלפון 03 9209 6777

Figure 7: Translated FOGO information in six languages.

### Community engagement with multicultural communities

MAC encouraged the use of in-language materials when engaging with multicultural communities, especially when targeting older persons. 44 per cent of residents aged 60 years and older in City of Port Phillip were born overseas.

As a result of MAC's feedback, the draft Positive Ageing Policy survey was translated into Greek, Russian and Polish. These in-language materials ensured greater uptake by multicultural groups during the consultation period.

In 2023, Council introduced a website widget for the Council's website that allows translations into Chinese (simplified), French, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Russian and Spanish. MAC advocated for more languages to be added to the widget based on census data. These included Hebrew, Portuguese,

Japanese, German, Arabic, Indonesian, Polish and Malaysian. Additional languages were added in September 2023 following MAC’s request.

In addition, MAC facilitated the following to ensure that Council is inclusive when engaging with multicultural communities:

- Council collects data on the “language spoken” and “country of birth” to better understand the city’s demographics. This allowed Council to determine gaps in community engagement and more effectively plan for in-language materials.
- A statement in selected languages was included on the website and on surveys to explain why Council is consulting the community as some residents come from backgrounds where governments do not seek feedback.

**International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of anti-Semitism**

Council sought feedback from the Committee about which definition of anti-Semitism it ought to adopt. MAC supported Council adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of anti-Semitism:

*"Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."*

**All One Together anti-racism campaign**

Council became a member of the All One Together anti-racism campaign in March 2022. All One Together is an anti-racism project which aims to support employers improving their diversity and inclusion approaches at work.

MAC provided feedback to the new CEO about reconfirming Council’s commitment to the campaign.

**Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum**

On 20 June 2018, Council passed a resolution to call on the Federal Government to reverse cuts to the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program, highlighting the social impact of these cuts on local communities.

Following the endorsement, Council became a general member of the Local Government Mayoral Taskforce Supporting People Seeking Asylum.

Council sought advice from MAC about its membership tier in September 2023. MAC recommended Council taking up the General membership provided capacity and resources were available for the Taskforce. Otherwise, the current Supporter level would be sufficient. Council renewed its membership as per MAC’s advice.

**Voice of Parliament referendum**

MAC co-signed a letter to the Council with the LGBTIQ+ Advisory Committee to support the Yes vote.

# Welcoming Cities Subcommittee

The Welcoming Cities subcommittee supports the Council’s progress towards the Welcoming Cities Standard, the national standard for cultural diversity and inclusion policy and practice in local government to create communities where everyone can belong.

The subcommittee’s objectives:

- Support a review of Council’s current work aligned to the Welcoming Cities Standard.
- Meet with the Coordinator from Welcoming Cities.
- Meet with other accredited councils.
- Advocate for support of the Welcoming Cities Standard with other Council advisory committees.
- Develop a position for accreditation that will be presented to MAC for review and approval.

Figure 8 indicates the categories to be addressed at each level of accreditation. Council is a “committed” member. The subcommittee has been investigating opportunities for future advice to Council in working towards become an “established” member.

Committed	Established	Advanced	Excelling	Mentoring
Council signed on to be a member of the Welcoming Cities Network	1. Leadership	1. Leadership	1. Leadership	Excelling, plus approval by Advisory Committee
		2. Social & Cultural Inclusion	2. Social & Cultural Inclusion	
		3. Economic Development	3. Economic Development	
			4. Learning & Skills Development	
			5. Civic Development	
			6. Places & Spaces	

Figure 8: Welcoming Cities Categories

The benefits of accreditation are:

- Increasing the impact of council initiatives to the whole community
- Providing a mechanism to plan for improvement and change.
- A positive and welcoming reputation.
- Opportunities for shared learning.

In 2023, the subcommittee met seven times. Below is a summary of the subcommittee’s achievements.

Meeting with Welcoming Cities	The National Manager of Welcoming Cities presented to MAC on 4 July 2023 the different levels of accreditation.
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<p>Learning from other councils</p>	<p>Welcoming Australia Symposium 2023</p> <p>On 9 May 2023, Alba Chliakhtine and James Seow from the subcommittee hosted a pre-symposium workshop at St Kilda Town Hall to discuss the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bringing diverse groups together</li> <li>• Creating and maintaining influence through a Multicultural Advisory Committee</li> </ul> <p>Mayor Heather Cunsolo welcomed ten other local government representatives from Australia and overseas to City of Port Phillip on the day. The workshop showcased on a national level City of Port Phillip’s vision and aspiration to deepen and celebrate multiculturalism.</p> <p>City of Bendigo</p> <p>City of Bendigo presented their Welcoming Cities accreditation experience to the subcommittee on 14 November 2023. City of Greater Bendigo was the first local government in Australia to achieve accreditation as a ‘Welcoming City’.</p> <p>Darebin City Council</p> <p>The subcommittee consulted Darebin City Council about their accreditation process on 28 November 2023. Darebin City Council became a “committed” member in 2017. It is currently working towards accreditation.</p>
<p>Influencing and advocating</p>	<p>Alba Chliakhtine and Tanvi Mor introduced Welcoming Cities Standards to Council’s other advisory committees on 10 August 2023.</p> <p>Additionally, Alba presented to the Prosperous Cities Business Advisory Committee on 19 September the economic benefits of Council becoming an accredited member.</p>
<p>Self-audit on Welcoming Cities Standards</p>	<p>A self-audit on the Welcoming Cities Standards was completed in October 2023. The process was overseen by the subcommittee and the results were presented to MAC on 3 October 2023.</p> <p>The self-audit determined that Council could meet the requirements for 60 per cent of the standards. Key gaps were identified for the following standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic development</li> <li>• Learning and skills development</li> <li>• People and Places</li> </ul>

## Welcoming Cities accreditation and moving forward.

The subcommittee will investigate opportunities in 2024 for Council’s consideration of accreditation in subsequent years. A high-level project plan will be developed to illustrate how Welcoming Cities can intersect with existing Council initiatives. The subcommittee will review the self-assessment against the Welcoming Cities Standards and enhance engagement with other advisory committees and provide this advice to Council.

## MAC activities and engagement

<p><b>Launch of Scanlon Foundation’s Australian Cohesion Index 2023</b></p> <p>James Seow, Alba Chliakhtine, Alex Kats and Vasileios Tsialtas attended the launch of Australian Cohesion Index 2023 on 20 September 2023. The index provides a barometer of social wellbeing, measuring belonging, worth, participation, acceptance and rejection, social inclusion, and justice.</p> <p>The report was presented at a MAC meeting on 3 October 2023. Insights from the report guided MAC in deliberating recommendations to strengthen and celebrate multiculturalism to Council.</p>
<p><b>Appraising Multiculturalism: Politics, Policy and Practice</b></p> <p>James Seow attended the symposium, Appraising Multiculturalism: Politics, Policy, and Practice, on 26 October 2023. This event presented research evidence to help advance multicultural policies and practices in Australia. Learnings from the symposium helped MAC to better understand the challenges and emerging issues in multicultural communities accessing mainstream and ethno-specific services and recommend more effective measures to Council.</p>
<p><b>Premier’s Multicultural Gala Dinner</b></p> <p>Georgina Tsolidis, Alex Kats and Cr Baxter attended the Premier’s Multicultural Gala Dinner on 18 March 2023 to commemorate Cultural Diversity Week. The event provided an opportunity for MAC to network with multicultural leaders and advocates across Victoria.</p>
<p><b>Joint Advisory Committee Meeting and Advisory Committee End-of-Year Celebration</b></p> <p>Georgina Tsolidis and Helene Kammoun attended the first Joint Advisory Committee Meeting on 21 March 2023. Tanvi Mor and Alba Chliakhtine attended the second meeting on 10 August 2023. At the August meeting, Tanvi Mor and Alba Chliakhtine presented collaboration opportunities for other advisory committees in the planned Welcoming Cities accreditation.</p>



Figure 9: Tanvi Mor presenting at the Multicultural Peace Day on 11 March 2023



Figure 10: James Seow with Appraising Multiculturalism presenters, Glenda Ballantyne, Anthony Moran and Karen Farquharson, 26 October 2023

The end-of-year celebration for all advisory committees on 29 November 2023 acknowledged the dedicated service of members and celebrated their collective achievements. Tanvi Mor, Alex Kats and James Seow attended the event and found great community insights by networking with other advisory committee members and volunteers.

## MAC programming and events

An Events subcommittee was created in February 2023 to advise and support the programming for Cultural Diversity Week, Refugee Week and Welcoming Week. In 2023, MAC provided creative ideas and helpful feedback to enhance the following events.

### Cultural Diversity Week (18-24 March 2023)

MAC supported a program inspired by the Victorian Multicultural Commission's theme for Cultural Diversity Week 2023.

Below is a summary of Cultural Diversity week programming for 2023:

- Global Flavours of the Southside** - Global Flavours of the Southside (11 March to 9 April) is an online map featuring 55 local cafes and restaurants serving cuisine from around the world. This campaign supported City of Port Phillip's multicultural traders and recognised the important role food plays in maintaining traditions and showcasing the diversity of migrant



Figure 11: Mayor Heather Cunsolo (far left) and Georgina Tsolidis (far right) with leaders of multicultural seniors groups at Awards of Recognition, 15 March 2023.

communities. Over 6,000 hits were registered on the map. The campaign invited people to snap and share a photo of their favourite food spots on Instagram using #SouthsideFlavours and #CulturalDiversityWeek as tags to be in the running to win a dining experience.

- **Multicultural Peace Day** - On 11 March 2023, MAC supported the Multicultural Peace Day coordinated by the International Women's Peace Group. Tanvi Mor spoke at the event on behalf of MAC.
- **Awards of Recognition- Multicultural Seniors Groups** – On 15 March 2023, Mayor Heather Cunsolo presented awards to 21 multicultural seniors' groups to acknowledge their considerable contribution in enabling and supporting a dynamic diverse community. Georgina Tsolidis spoke at the event and presented the awards with the Mayor.
- **Jewish Immersion Program**- On 16 March 2023, a tour to St Kilda Synagogue was organised for Council staff to learn more about the history, culture, traditions, and food of the local Jewish community.
- **Library Services** hosted a wide variety of events featuring Nayran Tabiei (migrant and owner of café, Flavours of Syria) and various music and cultural activities during Cultural Diversity Week.

## Refugee Week (18-24 June 2023)

Refugee Week is an annual celebration of the many positive contributions by refugees to Australian society. The theme for Refugee Week 2023, Finding Freedom, aimed to help the broader community to understand the refugees' lived experience.

Port Phillip celebrated Refugee Week on 24 June 2023 with an afternoon of interactive activities at St Kilda Library. These included a choir performance by Lotus Choir, a henna workshop with Space 2b, and an African drumming workshop. Tina Khabbazian Zanjani led an interactive storytelling session involving songs about the refugee experience.

## Welcoming Week (8-17 September 2023)

Welcoming Week is an annual celebration of unity, diversity, and inclusivity. In 2023, Council organised four "Power of Port Phillip" events to celebrate Welcoming Week's 2023 theme, "Power of Place".

*"I absolutely loved Welcoming Week. I went into it not knowing what to expect but I came out enriched with so much creativity, new knowledge, and some delicious food. I loved attending the multicultural festival as a person of colour who has lived in the Council for the past few years. It really made me feel valued and represented as a person of colour living here."* Feedback by local resident who attended *Sharing Voices*.

Below is a summary of events held as part of Welcoming Week:

- **Jewish Immersion Experience** - On 6 September 2023, the Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV) delivered a cultural immersion for Council staff and provided powerful insights to Port Phillip's Jewish community. The session included a visit to a local synagogue and attracted 21 staff. 85 per cent of the attendees agreed that the program

greatly improved their understanding and appreciation of the Jewish community in City of Port Phillip.

- **Sharing Voices: Belonging, Harmony and Spirituality** - On 10 September 2023, the Port Phillip Multifaith Network hosted “Sharing Voices: Belonging, Harmony and Spirituality” at St Kilda Town Hall. James Seow emceed this community event celebrating Welcoming Week, the International Day of Peace, and the Season of Creation. Sharing Voices brought together 80 community members who participated in an interactive choir, First Nations music performance, ceramic painting, engaging conversations on the migrant experience, and African textile appreciation. Mayor Cunsolo opened the event, and Aunty Janet Galpin gave a heartfelt Welcome to Country.
- **Undeclared: Exploring the Migrant Experience in Australia** - On 14 September 2023, St Kilda Library hosted three authors of the autobiographical book “Undeclared” for a panel discussion. Mayor Cunsolo introduced the event by sharing her own migration journey. The session was moderated by Tanvi Mor and attracted an audience of 30 people.
- **Welcoming Week Walk** - On 17 September 2023, the rich multicultural heritage of Port Phillip was celebrated with a guided walk along the Immigration Trail. Led by urban historian Janet Bolitho, the walk commenced at Station Pier, and led 25 participants through key locations steeped in immigration history. Keir Semenov represented MAC in the walk.



Figure 12: Tanvi Mor (far right) with authors of “Undeclared” at St Kilda Library on 14 September as part of Welcoming Week events.

# Acknowledgement

This report was prepared and endorsed by the Multicultural Advisory Committee on 15 May 2024.

James Seow

Chairperson

Multicultural Advisory Committee



*Figure 13: Alex, Mayor Cunsolo, Tanvi, Maria and James at the Advisory Committee End-of-Year Celebration, 29 November 2023.*

## MAC photo gallery 2023



Figure 14: Alba Chliakhtine and James Seow with participants at Welcoming Australia Symposium workshop, 9 May 2023



Figure 15: James Seow with migrant experience speakers, David Wang and Carla Fuentes, at Sharing Voices in St Kilda Town Hall, 10 September 2023



Figure 16: Tina Khabbazian Zanjani at Refugee Week 2023

## Attachment 1 – Retiring members

In 2023, the following MAC members retired from the committee:

Georgina Tsolidis

Masi Perozi

Tanvi Mor

Council and MAC thank the retiring members for their commitment and the wealth of knowledge and experience they brought to the committee. The retiring members have been exceptional advocates for the needs and aspirations of City of Port Phillip’s multicultural communities.



Figure 17: Tanvi's last day as MAC Chair, 14 November 2023.



