



## 2017-18 Annual Report

### Message from Executive Officer

It's with great pleasure that I present the 2017-18 Annual Report which outlines the highlights of MYAN NSW during the last financial year. This year has been another incredibly successful year for our team. Despite our small size, we achieve so much and have built a mighty reputation for being a strong advocate for young people from multicultural backgrounds.

It has been a year for new projects and new partnerships. The Young Humanitarians Project partnership with Red Cross, STARTTS and SES has greatly increased our capacity to engage young people from multicultural backgrounds and has provided us with additional funding to run new activities such as a Youth Leadership Camp. The Welcome to Australia project went off with a bang supporting newly arrived young people with information, knowledge and opportunities to settle well in NSW and we have been engaged by Bankstown Intensive English Centre to run it again in 2018-19.

Sector development and capacity building continued to be an area of consolidation, as well as growth. In addition to delivering training on the National Youth Settlement Framework, this year we secured contracts to deliver a Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Community of Practice in the next financial year, as well as the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring program evaluation in partnership with The Sax Institute. These two significant contracts attest to MYAN NSW's reputation in the sector for delivering high quality work embedded with youth development and youth participation principles.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those who make our organisation what it is today. Your unwavering dedication to our mission ensures that young people from multicultural backgrounds are supported, valued and central to decision making processes that affect their lives.

I look forward to the next 12 months as we strive to secure new funding streams and grow our reputation as a strong advocate for young people from multicultural backgrounds.

Alexandra Long  
Executive Officer

# Engaging Young People

## Multicultural Youth Ambassadors (MYA) program

The MYA program mentors and supports young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to build knowledge, skills and confidence around the change-making process, providing them with the tools and techniques to create positive social change.

MYAN NSW's networks provide a huge range of opportunities in which MYAs participate. Many encountered their first public speaking engagement; attended a conference on a topic they are passionate about; or grew their social, civic and professional networks.



*Multicultural Youth Ambassadors at a meetup*

MYAN NSW supports MYAs to take part in a range of advocacy opportunities, such as government roundtables, parliamentary inquiries, conferences, media and speaking opportunities, policy consultations – highlighting the views and issues important to young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Online, about 140 MYAs engage regularly with MYAN NSW. Every 2-3 months, MYAs gather to strengthen their peer networks, build leadership skills and participate in a range of capacity building activities. About 20 MYAs from around Sydney and some regional areas attend the meetups. A highlight this year was celebrating Iftar during Ramadan and being able to ask questions about faith and fasting to their peers.

## Young Humanitarians Project and Leadership Camp

In April, MYAN NSW held its inaugural 2-day Leadership Camp for 30 Multicultural Youth Ambassadors. Held at the Collaroy Centre, the MYAs forged strong networks, celebrated diversity, began planning for the Young Humanitarians Conference and reflected on self-care.

Learning from Aboriginal leaders from Ngaran Ngaran Cultural Awareness, MYAs participated in a smoking ceremony, Welcome to Country dance, a sunrise ceremony, Yidaki performance and an intimate workshop recounting the history of Australia, as told by First Nations people. Workshops also focused on MYA's vision for the conference, learning about storytelling from a community journalist and how to care for self, earth and others while leading their communities. Throughout the weekend, team building exercises such as rock-climbing, archery and beach swimming created a supportive and fun atmosphere.

One of the highlights of the camp was the Saturday night Diversity Celebration, where MYAs showcased their cultural pride in the form of dress, song, dance and games. MYAN NSW provided a space of welcome, belonging and inclusion to passionate and diverse young leaders. More than building skills, the camp highlighted the importance of building long-lasting support networks and friendships, and created a safe space for it to occur.



*Staff and young people at MYAN's inaugural Leadership Camp*

## Welcome to Australia project

From July to December 2017, we delivered the *Welcome to Australia* project which aims to assist newly arrived refugee students to learn about living in Australia, from peer facilitators who are also from refugee or migrant backgrounds who have established their lives in Australia. The students were engaged in the form of eight weekly one-hour workshops at the Bankstown Senior College's Intensive English Centre across one school term.

MYAN NSW used a youth development and youth participation approach by actively involving our MYAs to engage in the creation of the workshops. A youth-centred approach acknowledged that the MYAs with lived experiences of moving to Australia or coming from multicultural backgrounds would have insight into the specific needs of the newly arrived students. Through discussions and activities, MYAs distilled a



variety of topics into eight weekly sessions which covered:

- Introducing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Emergency preparedness
- Bankstown Amazing Race
- Aussie slang
- Know your rights
- Places of significance in Sydney
- Volunteering
- Multicultural food day



*Youth facilitator and participants showcase Syrian dance*

MYAN NSW recruited four peer facilitators from the MYA program to co-deliver the workshops along with the Youth Projects Officer. In the lead-up to these workshops, the peer facilitators were trained in facilitation techniques and met together to finalise the workshop content.

### Other highlights

- Partnered with Andrew Cummings to deliver a 1-day Youth Participation Strategy consultation for Multicultural NSW.
- Screened 'The Staging Post' documentary and hosted a Q&A session with film maker Muzafar Ali in partnership with Powerhouse Youth Theatre Fairfield.
- Delivered 'Building Facilitation Skills' training for MYAs.
- Ran Youth Employment consultations in partnership with MYAN Australia and Western Sydney University.
- Ran focus groups for The Line campaign around perceptions of healthy and respectful relationships.
- Partner in MY Australia National Youth Census research project.



*Alex Long facilitates the MNSW Youth Participation Strategy workshop with young people*

## Sector Development & Capacity Building

### Multicultural Youth Affairs Network Meetings

Our Network Meetings continued to engage, connect and build the capacity of the youth and multicultural sectors to effectively meet the needs of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. In 2017-18, we held four network meetings, hosted by:

- Multicultural NSW (Parramatta) – 58 attendees
- Fairfield City Council (Fairfield) – 41 attendees
- Advocate for Children and Young People (Central) – 29 attendees
- Western Sydney University (Parramatta) – 44 attendees

Each meeting focused on different themes and we heard from a range of speakers, including:

- Youth Advocacy: Apajok Biar - MYAN Youth Ambassador, Dr Pip Collin – Youth Participation specialist, Atem Atem – Refugee Communities Advocacy Network (RCAN)
- Youth Health Study, Dr Melissa Kang
- Trauma informed practice working with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, Shaun Nemorin
- Co-design with young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, Dr Pip Collin and Dr Teresa Swist

### National Youth Settlement Framework

MYAN NSW continued to deliver training and professional development on the National Youth Settlement Framework, including:

- 2-day training in October 2017 which included 4 young people being supported to co-facilitate.
- 1-day training in May 2018 at which the MYAN short film series was launched.
- NYSF presentations at a variety of interagencies including Canterbury-Bankstown Youth Workers Network, Department of Human Services Multicultural Advisory Forum and NSW Department of Education Transition Support Teacher Training.



Participants at the May NYSF training at UNE Parramatta

### Other highlights

- Facilitator and partnership with Cumberland Council to deliver 1-day 'Building Cultural Capacities' workshop in partnership with CMRC, Asian Women at Work and Auburn Diversity Services.
- Member of organising committee and workshop facilitator at MYAN's National Multicultural Youth Work Conference.
- Released 2016-17 NSW Youth Settlement Snapshot.

## Promoting the issues facing young people from multicultural backgrounds

MYAN NSW engaged in a number of opportunities to promote the needs of young people from multicultural backgrounds.

- Member of Joint Partnership Working Group on Refugee Resettlement (JPWG) chaired by Peter Shergold).
- Chair of JPWG youth sub-working group.
- Filmed an interview on mental health issues and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds as part of new Mental Health First Aid training resources.
- Speaker at Maurice Blackburn Diversity Dinner.
- Speaker at SSI's Cultural Shift conference.

- Emcee at MNSW COMPACT Summit.
- Panellist for ACYP NSW Youth Advisory Group selection day.
- Speaker at From Surviving to Thriving: Refugee Journeys symposium.
- Keynote speaker at Cumberland Council capacity building day on the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring Participatory Design project.

MYAN NSW made three submissions in 2017/18:

- Australian Citizenship Legislation Amendment Bill 2018.
- DSS Settlement Grants Program review and consultation.
- Encouraging Self-sufficiency for Newly Arrived Migrants Bill 2018 and sector consultation.

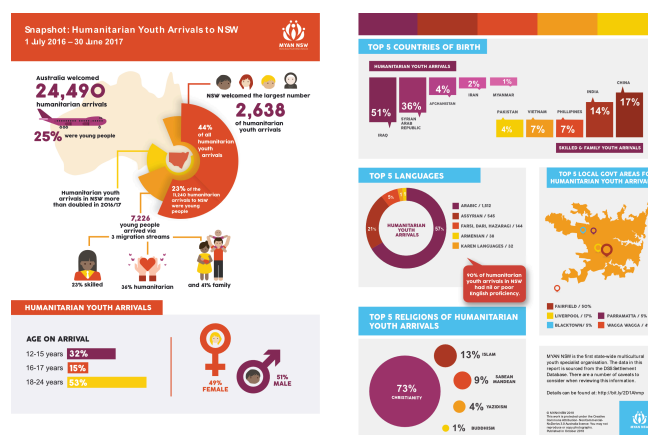


Figure 1 The NSW Youth Settlement Snapshot

## MYAN NSW Staff

Alex Long, Executive Officer  
Hannah Lai, Youth Projects Officer  
Charlotte Bell, Research Assistant (Nov 17 – Jan 18)



The MYAN NSW team at the Premier's Harmony Dinner