



2019-20 Annual Report

Message from the CEO

It's hard to describe the 2019-20 year without sounding overly dramatic, but the last 12 months have been challenging in all sorts of unusual ways. From the tragic bushfires and the thick smoke which engulfed the state over the 2019 summer to the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, this has not quite been the year we all expected.

When coronavirus broke out in March 2020, our growing team rallied together and we all made the move to #WFH. Being a largely young team with a bunch of digital natives, we transitioned successfully and managed to get all our systems to work without too many hilarious tech fails. We quickly mastered Zoom, Google Hangouts, webinars, digital breakout rooms and Instagram, Facebook and YouTube Live. This has allowed us to stay connected to young people and the sector despite the physical distancing that a global pandemic required.

Coronavirus meant many activities had to be postponed, like our youth camp, but it also meant we tried new ways of doing things. The necessity of Zoom meant our sector teleconferences connected practitioners all over the state — many people reporting it was the first time they'd been able to attend. At our first two *Responding to COVID* teleconferences we had over 110 participants!

This year was also a year of public recognition for MYAN NSW, taking home the Outstanding Work with Diverse Young People Award. Our Youth Ambassadors also received many accolades, including Fairfield Youth Leader of the Year, several Celebrate African-Australian Awards and NSW Young Volunteer of the Year.

I want to thank my incredible team for the way they held everything together this year. It is a privilege to work with such skilled and motivated people. Despite the numerous challenges of this year, we have emerged stronger, more resilient and more compassionate as a team and as an organisation. I could not be prouder of everything we have achieved.

Alex Long
CEO



MYAN NSW Team



Alex Long
Chief Executive Officer



Hannah Lai
Youth Programs Coordinator



Henrietta Amevor
Operations Assistant



Vanessa Chavez
Sector Development & Policy Manager



Abdallah Al Tibi
Multicultural Youth Worker
From April 2020



Holla David
W2A Project Officer
September – December 2019

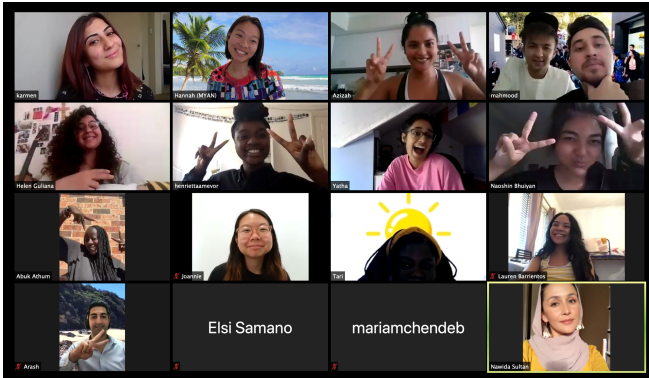
MYAN NSW Board Members

Miriam Makki, Chairperson
Margaret Piper, Deputy Chairperson
Akuol Deng, Treasurer
Annie Harvey, Secretary
Jasmina Bajraktarevic
Valentina Angelovska

Engaging Young People

Adapting to COVID-19

Originally, we had a 3-day camp planned for April 2020. COVID-19 came and swept all our plans away. We had to adapt quickly. Between March and June 2020, we focused our attention on providing individual support and group sessions online.



Youth Ambassadors at our first "Lunch Online"

Individual support looked like:

- Providing second-hand laptops so that young people could connect to their friends, family and classes
- Referring young people to emergency relief
- Phone calls or video calls to see how people were going

Online sessions included:

- *Online Lunches* — general check-ins where young people could drop in and out of Zoom calls when they wanted and chat about anything and everything.
- Q&A with legal centres on the laws around restrictions, fines and consequences of breaking restrictions. We collaborated with SydWest Multicultural Services, Community Migrant Resource Centre and Marrickville Legal Centre.
- Trivia through Instagram Live hosted by Henrietta.
- *Hear Me Out* on Instagram Live where two young people go live on topics such as mental health and coping through COVID-19.
- Online yoga or 30-minute fitness workouts with Creating Chances.

This year has not only introduced COVID-19 but we have also witnessed historic moments such as the Black Lives Matter movement entering mainstream media and the attack of a hospital in Kabul, Afghanistan by the Taliban. It is so important that young people have spaces to debrief, vent and be listened to rather than judged. Young people in our

programs were affected deeply by these events and in response young people led their own discussions nights via zoom.

Examples of this include 11 young Hazara people attending an online discussion about how the attacks affected them. In June, MYAN NSW & SydWest Multicultural Services supported young Afro-Aussies to hold space for each other and unpack what the BLM movement meant for them in Australia and how to move forward.

Multicultural Youth Ambassadors (MYA) program

The MYA program mentors and supports young people from multicultural backgrounds to build knowledge, skills, and confidence to create positive social change.

Our Youth Ambassadors work within NSW to serve as advocates and amplify the voices of young people to decision makers. The program provides them with the tools and techniques to participate effectively in a range of local, state and national opportunities.



Youth Ambassadors at a camp planning workshop in March 2020

Despite COVID-19 changing all our events to online from March 2020 onwards, many Youth Ambassadors still had the opportunity to attend conferences, public speaking events and consultations. Their activities through MYAN NSW helped increase their civic, social and professional networks, while at the same time make long-term friendships. Online we have over 140 members active on our Facebook group and regular Instagram updates to keep other young people engaged.

Highlights for MYAs this year include:

- Self-care workshop with Elemental Training
- Overnight hikes with First Hike Project
- Consultation on “Concepts of Australian Nationhood and Citizenship” for a Senate Inquiry
- Cooking meetup with Youth Co-Lab in Fairfield
- Volunteering at Diversity and Sport Inclusion Forum
- Attending the STARTTS Refugee Ball and Refugee Alternatives Conference
- Partnering with SydWest Multicultural Services to deliver workshops to Afro-Aussie community
- Running workshops at What’s Up West Conference and James Ruse High School
- Partnering with Fairfield Council for Bring It On! Legacy Workshops



Uncle Chris Tobin leading a Welcome to Country ceremony on Darug Country during an overnight hike with First Hike Project.

Welcome to Australia project

Welcome to Australia is a series of peer-led workshops to develop skills and share knowledge with newly arrived students to assist them in their transition to Australia.

This year we were lucky to employ Holla David, a Youth Ambassador, to coordinate the Welcome to Australia project. From September to December 2019, we partnered with Bankstown Senior College’s Intensive English Centre, to continue the partnership established in 2017. We also received a grant from Cumberland Council to expand the Welcome to Australia project to Holroyd High School Intensive English Centre.

A youth-centred approach acknowledged that the young people with lived experiences of moving to Australia or coming from multicultural backgrounds would have insight into the specific needs of the newly arrived students. We recruited 8 Peer Facilitators from the established MYA program who were employed to

co-facilitate the workshops along with the Youth Projects Officer, Holla David.

The eight weekly sessions included:

- Introduction to peer facilitators and students
- Introduction to WEAVE Youth Advocates & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
- Aussie slang
- Bankstown Amazing Race
- Knowing your rights
- Knowing yourself and belonging
- Places to visit in Sydney
- End of term multicultural food day



Youth Ambassadors celebrating Outstanding Work with Diverse Young People Award.

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 2019-20, we held four network meetings, three face-to-face and one meeting via Zoom after COVID-19 hit. Throughout this year we engaged 14 different organisations as guest speakers on various topics including:

September — Service delivery models resulting in good settlement outcomes for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds

Hosted by Northern Settlement Services, Newcastle
25 Participants

December – Mental health and wellbeing of young people from multicultural backgrounds — exploring strengths-based approaches

Hosted by Canterbury-Bankstown Council
36 participants

March – Ethical Storytelling

Hosted by Auburn Youth Centre
47 Participants

June (via zoom) – Adapting services during COVID-19: meeting the needs of refugee and migrant young people

Hosted by Navitas English, Bankstown
41 participants

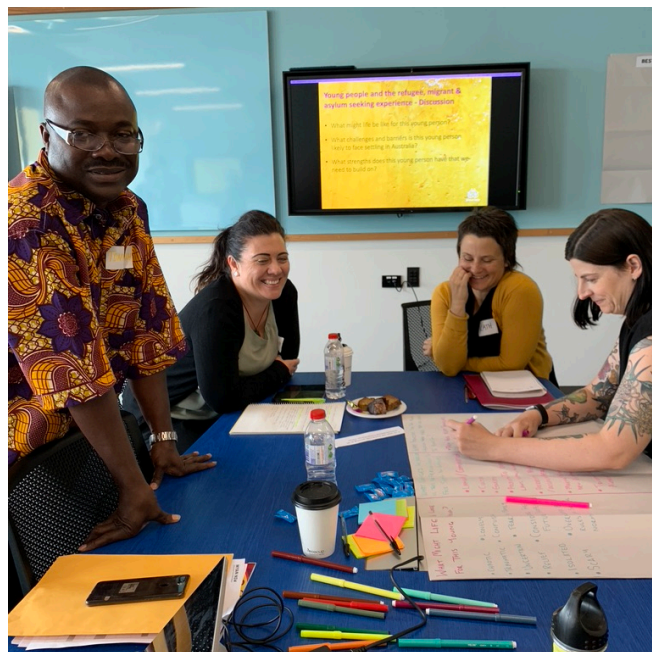


Vanessa with speakers from CuriousWorks

National Youth Settlement Framework

MYAN facilitated 5 NYSF training sessions during 2019-2020. A total of 75 people were trained in the use of the National Youth Settlement Framework.

- July 2019: Community Sector workers & volunteers — 26 participants from 12 different organisations
- September 2019: Reach Out — 14 participants
- October 2019: Fairfield Youth Workers Network — 13 participants from 6 different community service organisations and government agencies including NSW Police.
- November 2019: Newcastle — 13 participants from 7 different organisations.
- November 2019: NYSF follow-up workshop — 9 participants for ½ day intensive workshop further developing skills in understanding and implementing the NYSF.



Tonkoh Kamara co-facilitated at the Newcastle NYSF training

Other highlights

MYAN NSW facilitated and participated in many other initiatives to strengthen our sector.

- Participated in a pilot Ethical Storytelling workshop facilitated by Our Race. 15 participants representing 4 community organisations.
- Presented at Western Sydney Youth Workers Network on youth participation with Holla David, Youth Ambassador and Welcome to Australia project officer.
- Facilitated two sector teleconferences bringing together practitioners to discuss how COVID-19 had impacted young people and how the sector was responding. Each teleconference brought together about 110 participants, including regional services.
- Finalised the evaluation of the Refugee Youth Peer Mentoring project with lead partner, The Sax Institute.
- Presented at Active Citizenship conference with a Youth Ambassador about the Welcome to Australia project.

Capacity Building for MYAN Staff

This year the MYAN team participated in lots of professional development activities including:

- LGBTIQ+ Inclusivity training facilitated by Twenty10.
- Sydney Alliance Foundations training.
- 2019 FECCA Conference in Hobart.



Alex and Abdallah with colleagues at FECCA 2019.

Amplifying Young People's Voices

MYAN NSW engaged in many opportunities to promote the needs and interests of young people from multicultural backgrounds.

- Joined Wester.ly — a collaborative of community organisations working in Western Sydney on issues of digital inclusion with a focus on education. The group formed when COVID-19 hit and highlighted the huge inequity of access to digital platforms for people in Western Sydney, particularly those from refugee and migrant backgrounds.
- Member of Joint Partnership Working Group on Refugee Resettlement (JPWG) chaired by Peter Shergold.
- Member of JPWG youth sub-working group focusing on the Refugee Youth Policy Initiative.
- Released a consultation report summarising focus groups held with sector and young people on developing a best practice framework for mental health services.
- Guest speaker at Women's Action and Information Group on *Racism and Allyship*.
- Guest speaker at Newington College's International Women's Day event.

MYAN NSW made three submissions in 2019/20:

- Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee Inquiry into Nationhood, National Identity and Democracy.
- Labor's Multicultural Engagement Taskforce: The role of the Commonwealth government in securing a more inclusive society and economy.
- Gave evidence at the National Youth Commission Inquiry into Youth Employment and Transitions with two young people.

Young People Advocating for Change

Young people participated in a range of advocacy opportunities, amplifying what's important to them and their peers. Some of the events they participated in as MYAN Youth Ambassadors include:

- International University Scholars Leadership Symposium in Kuala Lumpur — 1 participant.
- NSW Youth Work Conference on how youth workers support young people of colour — 2 panellists.
- Department of Communities and Justice *Belonging* Conference for carers and support workers — 3 keynote speakers.
- Youth Futures Summit — 6 panellists.
- National Geographic Kids magazine feature for Refugee Week — 3 young people interviewed.
- Women's Action and Information Group — 1 keynote speaker.
- Multicultural NSW's migrant and refugee women roundtable — 5 participants.
- *Start to Talk* campaign by Australian Human Rights Commission on how to prevent sexual violence to young people in sporting clubs — 1 participant.
- Youth Action consultation on AYDI (Australian Youth Development Index) — 6 participants.
- UN High Commissioner of Human Rights — 2 attendees.
- Department of Home Affairs consultation on Harmony Day — 3 participants.
- National Youth Commission Inquiry into Youth Employment and Transitions — 2 young people gave evidence.
- Youth Reference Group for UTS Fostering Global Digital Citizenship project — 2 members.



Yatha Jain at the University Scholars Leadership Symposium