



We recognise that we work on the unceded lands and water of First Nations people — the Gadigal and Darug people — and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Message from the CEO

The past 12 months were another display of the resilience and strength of our community sector. Faced once again with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, the vaccine rollout and endlessly changing restrictions, we rallied together to support our multicultural young people and communities.

The end of 2020 provided a slight reprieve from lockdowns and we were able to host young people at our Big Day Out and an end of year celebration. Young people's excitement at being able to connect face-to-face with their peers was palpable. Our partnership with Rad Kid Mob also gifted us tickets to see Hamilton the musical and for many young people it was their first time going to the theatre.

The team continued to focus on digital engagement, bringing ever more creativity and confidence to this space. We ran events for both young people and the sector online, using all the digital tools available to us. We launched a second fundraising campaign to help us provide technology to young people facing the digital divide, supporting them to remain connected to their education, work, peers and communities.

Our sector capacity building activities remained largely online and turnout came from across the state. Each meeting featured an array of expert speakers, youth advocates and opportunities to hone our practice. In June 2021 we held our Multicultural Youth Mental Health Forum. An incredible day of learning and connection, it was to be our final event before we were plunged into our longest lockdown to date.

A key feature of the 2020/21 year was the country's Covid-19 vaccine rollout. We worked hard to ensure young people and their families felt empowered to make informed health decisions and that young people's voices were amplified wherever decisions were being made. We advised government on gaps in young people receiving accurate health information and how to remove barriers to accessing the vaccine.

This will be my last annual report at MYAN NSW and I want to take the opportunity to thank my brilliant and dedicated team and Board. Leading through a pandemic has been my most challenging role ever. But working with such passionate, hardworking and creative professionals significantly eased the burden. Whatever 2020/21 threw at us, we faced it head on with skill and determination. I am immensely proud of the organisation we have become — expanding in size but never losing sight of our values and vision that young people from multicultural communities are connected, influential and valued.

In hope and solidarity.

Alex Long
CEO

MYAN NSW Team



Alex Long
Chief Executive Officer



Hannah Lai
Youth Programs Coordinator



Vanessa Chavez
Sector Support Manager



Abdallah Al Tibi
Multicultural Youth Worker



Izabella Antoniou
Codebreakers Project Officer
From April 2021



Henrietta Anevor
Youth Projects Assistant
Until January 2021

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Miriam Makki, Chairperson
Margaret Piper, Deputy Chairperson
Akuol Deng, Treasurer
Annie Harvey, Secretary
Jasmina Bajraktarevic (until February 2021)
Valentina Angelovska
Matina Sarris (from March 2021)
David Crisante (from March 2021)
Lina Ishu (from March 2021)

Engaging Young People

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.



A group photo of the Youth Ambassadors during the MYAN NSW End of Year Event at Granville (December 2020)

Adapting to Covid-19

The way we deliver youth work continues to be challenged by the pressures of Covid-19. We deliberately focused on online engagement and resourcing young people with technology.

We delivered intake services to 83 young people who had arrived within the last five years. In addition, we continued to engage with the existing young people in our Youth Ambassador program.

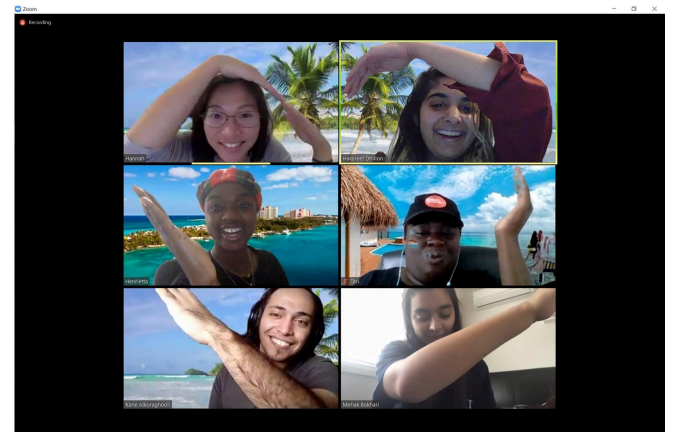
How we supported young people?

- 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 check in with young people.
- Providing references to potential employers.
- Referring young people to mental health, employment and education services.

- Connecting newer Youth Ambassadors to established Youth Ambassadors in their field.
- Training young people to co-facilitate workshops or online meetings

What did digital youth work look like?

- Employing young people to co-facilitate.
- Utilising the full functionality of Zoom such as the breakout rooms (in order to create smaller conversations) and the whiteboard (so that people could contribute without needing to talk).
- Connecting with people individually before inviting them to a group call.
- Asking young people how they connect online and if they have digital access needs (e.g. needing a laptop, data or device).
- Providing the option for young people to participate in the way that makes them feel comfortable. This might mean they have their video off but they can use the chat function.
- Having optional Zoom hangouts where young people can arrive and exit when they feel like it.



A Zoom screenshot of some Youth Ambassadors making a love heart with their arms (August 2020)

Building skills and confidence

Despite Covid-19 at the forefront of people's minds, 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 250 members active on our Facebook group and regular Instagram updates to keep young people engaged.

We actively train Youth Ambassadors to facilitate workshops. When we recruit young people to

co-facilitate, design or deliver a workshop, it is always a paid opportunity, giving them local work experience.

Our online sessions included:

- 2 x anti-racism workshops with Democracy in Colour co-facilitated by 3 Youth Ambassadors.
- 2 x public speaking workshops co-facilitated and prepared by 2 Youth Ambassadors
- 1 x workshop at the Youth Futures Summit by National Youth Commission delivered by 2 Youth Ambassadors to discuss experiences as people of colour.
- 2 x Shisha No Thanks consultations in partnership with South East Local Health District facilitated by 4 Youth Ambassadors as a paid opportunity. This gathered feedback to inform the future of the public health campaign.

Our face-to-face sessions (when we weren't in lockdown) included:

- 1 x workshop on financial literacy and savings facilitated by a MYAN alumni and a financial advisor from the Afghan community.
- 1 x Afro-Aussies network building event called Dinner is Ready, Come Home and held at Little Lagos.
- 1 x art workshop facilitated by 2 Youth Ambassadors.
- 1 x group blood donation at Australian Red Cross.



A group photo from the savings workshops (November 2020)

Connecting with new peers

We acknowledge that young people sometimes just want a space to connect with others. Being part of the Multicultural Youth Ambassadors program isn't limited to workshops. It also includes opportunities to make friends.



A (silly) group photo of Youth Ambassadors while we broke fast together during Ramadan in Bankstown (July 2021)

Some peer network building events this year included:

- Bringing 60 young people to see the musical Hamilton in March and then another group of 20 in June. After the musical, young people got to ask questions directly to the cast.
- Heart of Heritage photo exhibition launch at PYT Fairfield. Youth Ambassador Zeinab Mahfoud launched her first ever photo exhibition featuring her portraits of multicultural young people shot on film. This exhibition explored the joys of being part of a diaspora.
- MYAN Iftar in Bankstown, celebrating and acknowledging Ramadan because many of the Youth Ambassadors were fasting.
- Partnering with Darlinghurst Theatre Company to bring young people to see plays, including the performance 7 Methods of Killing Kylie Jenner.
- Opportunity to see Western Sydney Wanderers play at Parramatta Stadium with other Youth Ambassadors.



A group photo of Youth Ambassadors in front of the Lyric Theatre before watching Hamilton: The Musical (March 2021)

Big Day Out

We weren't able to run an overnight youth camp this year due to Covid-19. Instead, we ran a full day's worth of reconnecting, team bonding and friendship

building for almost 30 Youth Ambassadors in October 2020.

Starting in the morning, Yuin-Ngarrugu descendant Dwayne Bannon-Harrison from Ngaran Ngaran Cultural Awareness Group led a smoking ceremony, inviting the young people to connect to country. This activity gave the group a sense of peace, belonging and re-connection after many months of not seeing each other.



A Welcome to Country smoking ceremony led at the beginning of the day by Dwayne Bannon-Harrison and his group from Ngaran Ngaran Cultural Awareness (October 2020)

Kayaking was one of the activities offered and over half of the young people said it was their first time going kayaking.

“I learned how to canoe, made some new connections, learned about First Nations peoples & culture” – participant feedback.



Youth Ambassadors playing a team building game (October 2020)

Listening to Country

Listening to Country, Talking to Each Other was an inter-cultural conversation held in Western Sydney. This was a project in collaboration with Elemental Training & Ancestors Singing.

Listening to Country



Talking to Each Other

Logo designed by Carly Mercer of Inala Designs (November 2020)

Over the process of 3 workshops, young people discussed cultural safety and identity.

Workshop #1 Witness the Journey

- First Nations young people met with Jackie Stewart from Ancestors Singing to lead a conversation on what cultural safety looks like.

Workshop #2 You are a Living Ancestor

- Young people from different cultures met with Elemental Training & MYAN NSW to explore how to tell cultural journey stories respectfully on Aboriginal Land.

Workshop #3 Tribe of Life

- All young people came together to explore their own story using interactive art led by Ancestors Singing.



A Youth Ambassador at the Tribe of Life art workshop run by Jackie Stewart (November 2020)

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 ran the Welcome to Australia project from February to March 2021 at Bankstown Senior College continuing the partnership we established in 2017. The project was run across the English for Further Studies (EFS) classes which had over 60 students from migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds.

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 6 Peer Facilitators from the established Youth Ambassador program who were employed to co-facilitate the workshops along with the MYAN's Multicultural Youth Worker, Abdallah Al Tibi.



The Bankstown Senior College students and the MYAN Peer Facilitators after a class, holding up posters and smiling (March 2021)

The eight sessions included:

- Introduction to peer facilitators and students
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture & history
- Aussie slang
- Youth health
- Career pathways & job readiness
- Youth services & navigating through the system
- Places to visit in Sydney
- End of term art workshop facilitated by Raneen Shamon, a young artist and a Youth Ambassador.

This year Welcome to Australia was delivered to three different sets of classes resulting in over 60 students participating. The final art workshop was a great way to finish off the term.

Codebreakers Project

The [Codebreakers](#) project platforms young people's stories of belonging, identity in a digital space.

In May 2021, we recruited Izabella Antoniou to be our Codebreakers Project Officer.

Through a series of supported workshops and events Codebreakers aims to:

- proactively build and support committed, collaborative, responsive community networks.
- break the cycle of hate, nurturing champions cultural diversity and community harmony.
- inspire community networks and relationships to stand up united in the face of threats to community harmony.
- equip community networks and relationships to restore social cohesion in the wake of an incident or crisis.

Codebreakers is funded by Multicultural NSW's COMPACT program.

The project is a partnership between Western Sydney Community Forum (WSCF) and Blacktown Youth Services Association (BYSA).

Codebreakers officially launched on the MYAN NSW Instagram account on June 7 and by the end of the financial year had 31 participants.



Banner and branding for Codebreakers

Sector Development & Capacity Building

MYAN Network Meetings

We continued to connect and collaborate with the sector working to support multicultural young people through our quarterly network meetings. We hosted four online meetings during 2020-2021 covering the following topics:

September 2020 – Building an anti-racist workplace
Guest presenters from Democracy in Colour and Headspace. MYAN Youth Ambassadors co-facilitated a short workshop during this session.



One of our online Network meetings in 2020

December 2020 – Access to higher education for CALD, migrant and refugee young people
Guest speakers included UNSW Diversity and Inclusion unit, YEmpower and a youth panel on higher education experiences.

March 2021 – Creating a mentally healthy workplace
Presentations from WayAhead Workplaces, PWC and SSI Culture, Inclusion and Wellbeing.

June 2021 – Supporting multicultural young people in their online engagement
Presentations from the eSafety Commissioner and interview with journalist, writer and host of *The thing is though* podcast Soaliha Iqbal.

Forum 2021: Mental health and Multicultural young people

On 17 June 2021 MYAN NSW brought together multicultural young people and youth and mental health services to provide workers an opportunity to connect and share research, practice and insights when supporting multicultural young people with their mental health.

As the first face-to-face event of 2021, the forum was well attended by sector workers, young people, and volunteers. There were presentations by Batyr, STARTTS, Transcultural Mental Health Centre, Centre for Multicultural Youth, The Young and Resilient Research Centre and Headspace. The forum was sponsored by Blacktown City Council.

The event served as a timely reminder of the need to employ a targeted and inclusive approach where young people have a say on service development and delivery, particularly as we continue to deal with the impact the global pandemic is having on the mental health of multicultural young people.

You can watch a video capturing the day's events [here](#).



Forum volunteers (June 2021)



Participants at forum (June 2021)

National Youth Settlement Framework

MYAN facilitated NYSF training with UNSW staff and student volunteers in the Aspire program. 26 participants were trained.

As a result of this collaboration with UNSW, MYAN produced a report on barriers to accessing higher education for CALD, migrant and refugee students. In addition, we developed higher education focused resources to be used as part of the NYSF training modules with universities and other further education providers.



UNSW students at NYSF training (November 2020)

NYSF training for community sector workers was facilitated during April 2021. The session was co-facilitated by Youth Ambassadors and attended by 12 workers representing settlement, education and youth sectors.



Sector NYSF training (April 2021)

Sector anti-racism training

In collaboration with Democracy in Colour we hosted an anti-racism and allyship sector workshop in July 2020. The workshop was co-facilitated by four MYAN Youth Ambassadors.



Youth Ambassadors and Democracy in Colour (July 2020)

Capacity Building for MYAN Staff

There were fewer opportunities for networking and capacity building events due to Covid-19 this year. We focused instead on building new skills in digital youth work and using online training tools such as Zoom, Padlet, Mentimeter, Slido and more. We also received mentoring on topics such as Fundraising, Financial Management and Digital Engagement. All new staff attended Sydney Alliance Foundations training in community organising.

Amplifying Young People's Voices

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

- Continued our membership of Sydney Alliance. Our focus this year was on supporting international students in the creation of the Oz International Students Hub.
- Continued our involvement with Wester.ly — a collaborative of community organisations working in Western Sydney on issues of digital inclusion with a focus on education.
- Member of Joint Partnership Working Group on Refugee Resettlement (JPWG) chaired by Peter Shergold.
- Interviewed for Western Sydney Community Forum (WSCF)'s Build Beyond Bricks podcast. Listen [here](#).
- Panellist on WSCF Communities of Change conference on intersectionality in the community sector.
- Alex Long was appointed to the NSW Police Multicultural Advisory Committee.
- Member of Department of Home Affairs Multicultural Women's Reference Group (MWRG)
- 2022 Humanitarian program consultation with Minister Hawke.
- Pre-budget roundtable with Alison Larkins.

- Endless input to a variety of Covid-19 and vaccination related roundtables, working groups and advisory committees.
- Nominating multiple young people for ZEST Awards.

MYAN NSW made one submission in 2020/21:

- Social Cohesion Statement submission to the Department of Home Affairs.



Hannah and the Sydney Alliance Oz International Students Hub working group

Young People Advocating for Change

Young people participated in a range of advocacy opportunities, amplifying what’s important to them.

Some of the events they participated in as MYAN Youth Ambassadors included:

- Speaking on opioid and pain medication use to FECCA and their peers.
- Sharing lived experience on young renter’s roundtable by Youth Action.
- Speaking to Bankstown high school students on experiences of forced migration.
- Attending the Virtual Progress conference by Australian Progress.
- Attending Asset Based Community Development training.
- [SBS Connect with Respect teacher resources](#). Five Youth Ambassadors were interviewed to stimulate classroom discussion about respectful relationships, navigating their social lives and being a supportive friend.



A Youth Ambassador in front of camera at SBS Studios (June 2021)



Two Youth Ambassadors in front of camera at SBS Studios (June 2021)

Other Highlights

Our Multicultural Youth Worker Abdallah Al Tibi was awarded the Youth Award at the 2021 NSW Humanitarian Awards. He was presented his award by NSW Governor Margaret Beazley at Government House.



Abdallah and other award winners at Government House (June 2021)