

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022 - 2023

## The MYAN NSW Network

Multicultural Youth Affairs Network



**MYAN NSW**  
Multicultural Youth Affairs Network

# A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**The past 12 months have been a time of transformational growth, perseverance and change at MYAN NSW.**

In July 2022 MYAN NSW officially kicked off the delivery of two large commitments we made to the people of NSW - the first, a \$200,000 program designed to build strong and resilient networks of young people in the face of violence and extremism and the second, a \$190,000 commitment to offer emergency relief to temporary and vulnerable holders aged 12-25 years old. Thanks to this trust from Multicultural NSW, we supported 250 young asylum seekers with basic essentials and heard the stories of over 150 forcibly displaced young people seeking refuge in NSW.

In November 2022, MYAN NSW won the Outstanding Youth Participation award at the NSW Youth Work Awards produced by Youth Action and were nominated for a SIMNA award for our collaborative evaluation work with young people.

We know that newly settling young people do better with strong social networks in their local community. To support this we held our first MYAN NSW *Coffee Connect*. Coffee Connect is our newly designed youth engagement tool following requests from young people seeking relaxed options to meet new people and to overcome loneliness and isolation following two years of lockdowns and pandemic stress.

Working from home has been a unique challenge that did not stop us from holding key signature events for young people and the MYAN NSW network. We invited old and friends and new to the Little B.I.G. House in Summer Hill and to the newly launched PHIVE in Parramatta Square where we presented alongside the Hate Crimes Unit of NSW Police to strengthen our leadership to the community services and government policy and project industries of NSW.

We delivered Stories Under the Tree, an Afro-Australian intergenerational dialogue project at Blacktown Arts Centre in September and hosted over 60 community members from cultural communities from Africa to have courageous conversations about health, wellness and connectedness.

At MYAN NSW we are supporting young people in a time of global crisis and humanitarian grief. We do this work at a time where more children and young people are being forcibly displaced by conflict and climate disasters than ever.

Our work is founded upon ensuring the human rights of migrants and young refugees - where those who are forced to flee have the dignity to choose where and how to settle well while managing the trauma of separation from family, from country, and from culture.

The work we do is not simply about supporting young people to settle well. It is true that we equip young people gain employability skills, improve their English speaking skills and strengthen their social networks, however our work is more impactful than just settlement - it's work that is creating strong resilient networks in the face of relentless violence. We especially extend this work to young girls, women, non-binary folks and LGBTQIA+ young people and are committed daily to making MYAN NSW a safer space for every body.

At MYAN NSW we are conscious that we work with the privilege of citizenship on the unceded territories of First Nations people who are still actively struggling for equal access and a strong representative voice.

Our advocacy and political representations to elected ministers, parliamentarians, the legislature and the media insist that we cannot take Australia's migration system, humanitarian programs, and social harmony for granted. We will always support governments with evidence of what works best and based on this data we remain fierce advocates for a fair and just Australia that doesn't leave young people seeking asylum in limbo or detain them for the crime of seeking a better life.

I am conscious of the burden and the privilege that I lead MYAN NSW at a point in history where we are urgently called to respond to young people. At MYAN NSW we will continue to not only support good settlement for young people, not only foster a sense of belonging and strong social networks but to amplify the voices of youth leadership who champion the cause in the face of the global humanitarian crisis

I have been committed to making our workplace at MYAN NSW safer and more supportive. In the last year I have introduced both clinical and cultural supervision for our team who are ourselves diverse professionals with lived and living experience. Supporting professionals at MYAN NSW in this way means that we can embed the lived experience of our team in the space that it meets professional practice in a way that does not exploit or instrumentalise the stories of staff.

At MYAN NSW we always remember that young people are active agents of refugee resettlement. Young people are not 'emerging community leaders' alone but are revisiting refugee contexts regularly and need our support.

Thank you for trusting me to do this incredible work. It is an honour.

With courage,



**ANNUKINA WARDA**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





## MYAN NSW

Our core vision at MYAN NSW is to work towards a society where all young people from refugee and migrant communities are connected, supported, influential and valued.

At MYAN NSW we engage, support and connect multicultural young people settling into Australia. We resource young people with new skills and broader networks of influence. We collaborate with young people across the state so that your needs are met and your voices are heard.

**At MYAN NSW Advocacy is our Purpose,  
Collaboration is our Passion.**



# SETTLEMENT, ENGAGEMENT, TRANSITION SUPPORT: YOUNG PEOPLE



## MEET OUR PEER FACILITATORS

Each year at MYAN NSW we support young people with lived experience of displacement to deliver the New Beginnings program in schools to newly arriving students.

Peer facilitators were trained, supported and paid to lead workshops for 60 students at Bankstown Senior College in south-west Sydney, NSW.



## SUMMER WRAP EVENT

In December 2022, we hosted our Summer Wrap event with our MYAN NSW network.

We shared a meal, facilitated group activities, registered young people for new programs and celebrated the year.

Young people told us they looked forward to connecting with the MYAN NSW network after lockdown.



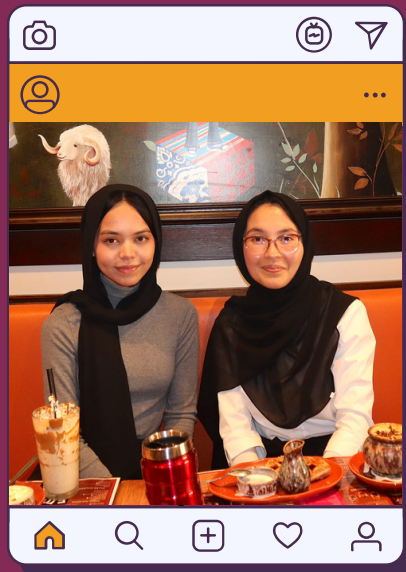
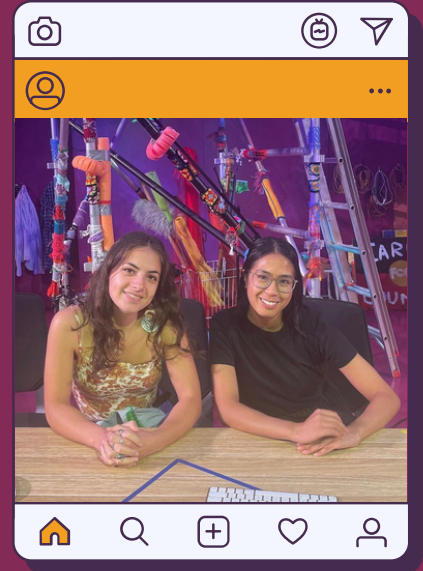
## WINTER RETREAT

In April 2023 we hosted our Winter Retreat in Parramatta.

Young people told us they wanted a place to learn self care skills.

We created space for young people to practice active rest and downtime through facilitated yoga with instructor Kavita Bedford and a vision board session hosted by Youth Engagement Support Shamiram Melody Yalda.

# Day in a life with the MYAN NSW Network



## COFFEE CONNECT:

AT MYAN NSW WE KNOW HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO STAY CONNECTED WITH EACH OTHER.

MYAN NSW HOSTS A QUARTERLY COFFEE CONNECT WHERE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE ARE INVITED TO MEET THE TEAM, NETWORK WITH OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE AND ENJOY A BEVERAGE OF THEIR CHOICE, ON US!

IN 2022-2023, MYAN NSW HOSTED 2 COFFEE CONNECT SESSIONS AND MET OVER 20 NEW YOUNG PEOPLE.

COFFEE CONNECT IS A CROWD FAVOURITE AT MYAN NSW!



# THE MYAN NSW NETWORK HIGHLIGHT

## NETWORK MEETING

In June MYAN NSW held our first face to face Network Meeting since the pandemic shut downs.

In this session we held space for practitioners to share how we can best support young people in both times of crisis and joy.

We were also excited to provide a sneak preview of our recent report into the affect COVID-19 messaging had on cultural communities in Western Sydney, put together in collaboration with Settlement Council of Australia.



## Networks we have connected with in 2022-2023

- MYAN Australia
- Multicultural NSW
- Youth Action
- Fairfield Youth Workers Network
- Cumberland Council
- Hills Youth Services Network
- Democracy in Colour
- Settlement Council of Australia
- NSW Police
- Department of Education
- The Regional Office for Youth
- Windsor High School
- Bankstown Senior College
- Cabramatta High School



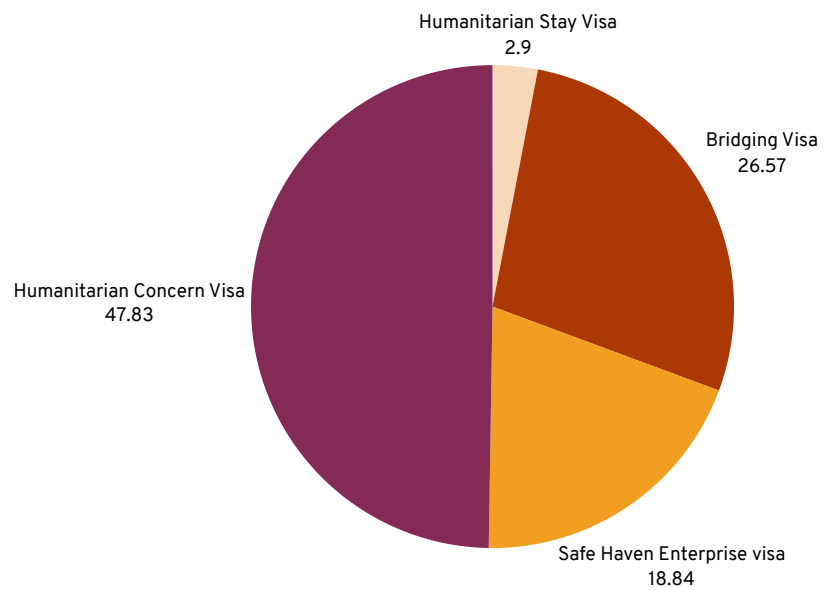
# STATE GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPORT

In 2022-2023 Multicultural NSW supported MYAN NSW to provide emergency relief funding to over 200 young people settling in NSW.

40% of requests for emergency relief funding came from young people who had been in Australia more than five (5) years.

We welcome the Australian government announcement to support humanitarian arrivals beyond the first five years of resettlement. Our evidence supports the need for that commitment.

## YOUNG PEOPLE WE SUPPORTED AT MYAN NSW:



<span style="color: #800040;">■</span> Humanitarian Concern Visa	<b>49.8%</b>	<span style="color: #A52A2A;">■</span> Bridging Visa	<b>27.8%</b>
<span style="color: #FFA500;">■</span> Safe Haven Enterprise Visa	<b>19.6%</b>	<span style="color: #F5DEB3;">■</span> Humanitarian Stay Visa	<b>2.9%</b>



Louise (not her real name) is a 19 year old young person arriving in Australia in 2006 and is currently on a bridging visa. Louise was sharing a bunk bed with 1 of her 6 siblings and is sleeping on an unsafe mattress. Louise reports poor quality of sleep and avoids home as it is negatively impacting her mental health.

After receiving emergency relief, Louise was able to purchase a a bunk bed for her and her brother to have their own space.



Savi (not her real name) is a 17 year old young person on a Safe Haven Enterprise Visa Sub visa. Savi arrived in Australia from Iran in 2014. Savi's medicare card expired and was unable to renew it due to her visa. Savi was unable to visit doctors, or purchase medicine. Savi's parents have separated recently, and her mother is financially supporting her and her 2 siblings with little income.

After receiving emergency relief, Savi was able to pay for an upcoming medical bill and lessen the financial burden on her family.





# NSW COMPACT ALLIANCE: KAIROS

MYAN NSW celebrates, supports and affirms young people identifying from cultural and LGBTQIA+ communities.

In 2022 MYAN NSW launched KAIROS - an 18-month program co-designed by young people aiming to address and support young women and gender diverse young people from cultural communities. KAIROS explores how to establish connections with local queer groups, and rediscover long standing community practices used to bring people together in times of crisis and joy and creating a resilient and cohesive society.

MYAN NSW has engaged 35 young women and non binary people from cultural communities and those who identify as queer. We are proud to call ourselves a safer space for LGBTQIA+ young people.

## MYAN NSW X ABC

MYAN NSW created a partnership with ABC News. Young people have told us they want to better understand how stories are made, framed and shape our understanding of our own communities.

We held workshops with women working as journalists at the ABC and those from cultural communities on how the media works.

We kindly thank Housnia Shams, Naeun Kim, Rhiannon Hobbins and Maryanne Taouk for joining us!

The Kairos program is proudly supported by Multicultural NSW and the NSW COMPACT Alliance.

## MYAN NSW X YOUTH LED SERVICES

MYAN NSW hosts intercultural conversations in partnership with First Nations colleagues at Youth Led Services.

Young people at MYAN NSW are keen for opportunities to grow relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

One participant expressed “I learned that my culture has a lot in common with Aboriginal culture and we made a connection with each other by sharing our stories”.

We yarn and connect with each other on Darug land.





# ADVOCACY AND POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

## Andrew Giles, Minister for Immigration

MYAN NSW has made multiple representations to Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs the Hon. Andrew Giles.

MYAN NSW urges Minister Giles to create youth specific strategies to support better settlement outcomes for young people in NSW.

We congratulate the Australian government on the announcement of \$5.9 million for providers of the Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program to better support sector wages and the Pacific Engagement Visa program.

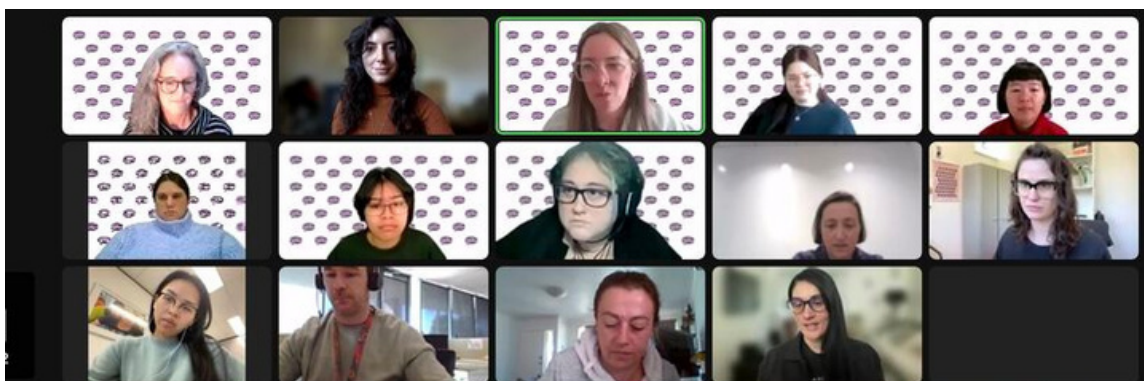
At MYAN NSW we understand the need for immediate solutions to support young people on temporary and vulnerable visas such as extending SETS program eligibility to all humanitarian entrants regardless of visa status.



## Greg Warren, NSW Government

It was great to join Youth Action NSW for the Western Sydney Youth Sector Network Meeting to chat with Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier, Greg Warren MP about the need for more public spaces for young people that are gender and LGBTQIA+ safe in Western Sydney.

Newly arrived young people and settled communities deserve safe and consistent access to facilitated indoor and outdoor spaces.



# MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS

## NSW State Election Campaign

MYAN NSW proudly co-hosted the NSW State Election Forum alongside leading organisations Youth Action NSW Yfoundations and the Australian Theatre for Young People. We explored what matters to young people in the NSW state election.

At MYAN NSW we advocate for young people seeking refuge and asylum. Young people deserve basic support services at a minimum, and we will continue to advocate for this until it is fulfilled.



Youth Engagement Specialist Domina Augustine joined a panel of organisation representatives to deliver MYAN NSW key asks.

### ABC article 'Young NSW voters concerns ahead of election'

In February 2023 Youth Engagement Specialist at MYAN NSW Aisha Mahdi was featured on an ABC article 'Young NSW voters want concerns about cost of living, climate change heard ahead of election'

Aisha said housing would be a key consideration in her vote as some young people in her community either could not find a place to live, or were struggling to afford it.

*"I think young people need to be more involved in the process of political matters."*



Youth Engagement Specialist Aisha Mahdi poses for ABC news article.



Youth Engagement Specialist Aisha Mahdi joined a panel of young people to discuss their key concerns for the upcoming election.

### SBS article 'NSW to ban mobile phones in highschooos'

In April 2023 Executive Director of MYAN NSW, Annukina Warda commented on the NSW government announcement to ban student mobile phones in high schools.

Annukina noted the role of many young people as primary contacts for their families is often overlooked:

*"Young people who've had a migration and resettlement experience are often a primary contact," she said.*

*"Young people are often mistakenly not acknowledged for the role that they play as caretaker within the family unit.*

*"For young people in these complex and nuanced situations, being easily contactable, primarily through access to a phone, is a lifeline."*

*As a specialised youth organisation MYAN NSW advocates for any youth focussed policy to account for the lived reality of young people's daily lives.*

# MYAN NSW

## BOARD MEMBERS



**Annie Harvey**

Chair

**Lina Ishu**

Deputy Chair

**Valentina Angelovska**

Treasurer

**Matina Sarris**

Board Member

**Position Vacant**

Board Member

**Position Vacant**

Board Member

**Position Vacant**

Board Member



## AWARD NOMINATIONS

In 2022 we were nominated for three NSW Youth Work Awards including



OUTSTANDING PARTNERSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF NSW FOR THE TRAINING PRODUCT SETTLING IN @UNI

EMERGING YOUTH WORKER AWARD FOR OUR NEWEST TEAM MEMBER AND PREVIOUS YOUTH AMBASSADOR DOMINA AUGUSTINE

OUTSTANDING YOUTH PARTICIPATION FOR OUR WORK EVALUATING OUR YOUTH APPROACH WITH SOCIAL IMPACT ORGANISATION, FOR PURPOSE EVALUATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE



# MYAN NSW TEAM



## ANNUKINA WARDA

Annukina joined MYAN NSW in April 2022. In her first year, Annukina doubled the revenue MYAN NSW receives attracting \$390,000 in NSW government support for refugee young people.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## AISHA MAHDI

MYAN NSW welcomed Aisha in 2022 and is currently working as a Youth Engagement Specialist, leading the Peer2Peer and New Beginnings program.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST



## SHAMIRAM MELODY YALDA

MYAN NSW welcomed Melody in 2023 and is currently working as a Youth Engagement Support, supporting the Youth Advisor Hub program.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT



## IZABELLA ANTONIOU

MYAN NSW welcomed Izabella in 2020 and farwelled her in 2023. Izabella was the Policy and Communications Specialist. Izabella led MYAN NSW policy and advocacy work.

POLICY/ COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST



## DOMINA AUGUSTINE

MYAN NSW welcomed Domina in 2022 and farwelled her in 2023. Domina was leading the Emergency Relief Support program. She is now completing her placement to become a social worker. Good Luck Domina!

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT SPECIALIST





CONTACT US



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<https://myannsw.org.au/>



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