

Agency Information Guide

This guide describes the structure and functions of Multicultural NSW and the kind of information that will be made publicly available:

Structure and functions

Multicultural NSW was established by the *Multicultural NSW Act 2000* and commenced operation on 27 November 2014.

The *Multicultural NSW Act 2000* provides for the appointment by the Minister of up to fifteen Advisory Board members. One member is appointed as the Chairperson and two youth members aged between 18 and 24 are appointed to represent young people in NSW.

Multicultural NSW is governed by a full-time Chief Executive Officer who has responsibility for the agency's operations, staff and functions who meets regularly with the Advisory Board.

Multicultural NSW promotes community harmony and social cohesion. It is the lead agency for implementing the policy and legislative framework to support multiculturalism in NSW.

NSW was the first state in Australia and the second in the world to introduce a deliberate policy that welcomes cultural and linguistic diversity as a social and economic advantage.

Our mandate is derived from the Principles of Multiculturalism embedded into the *Multicultural NSW Act 2000* within the context of an Australian legal and institutional framework, where English is the common language. The principles are based on citizenship, where the expression 'citizenship' is not limited to formal Australian citizenship, but refer to the rights and responsibilities of all people within our multicultural society.

The *Multicultural NSW Act 2000* sets out six principles that guide our work and the multicultural policy of NSW. These principles commit us to:

1. accepting that we are diverse and that people from diverse communities are free to maintain their own linguistic, religious, racial and ethnic heritage
2. sharing democratic values, governed by the rule of law
3. creating opportunities for all people to participate in all aspects of public life
4. respecting and providing for different cultures, languages and religions, with English recognised as the common language
5. providing the greatest possible access to Government programs and services
6. promoting and maximising the value of our diverse cultural and linguistic heritage to develop NSW.

In order to carry out its prescribed functions, Multicultural NSW operates as an administrative office under the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*. Its structure includes the following divisions:

- Government Policy and Research
- Community Engagement
- Corporate Services
- Language Services

Services and activities

Multicultural NSW offers a range of programs and services that include:

- Awards and festivals
- Community Consultation
- Multicultural NSW Grants Program
- Community profiles
- Community relations symposia
- Multicultural Policies and Services Program
- Regional Advisory Councils
- Regional outreach programs
- Translation and interpreting services

Effect of functions on members of the public

Multicultural NSW's functions affect the public in the following ways:

- The provision of interpreter and translation services have immediate benefits for non-English speaking clients, both in personal matters and in their dealings with government agencies
- Multicultural NSW's community engagement program through its consultative work and the Regional Advisory Councils identifies the needs of community groups and brings them to the attention of the government
- Multicultural NSW Grants Program provides funding for projects and events that benefit the people of NSW and promote the Principles of Multiculturalism
- Actively consults with communities across NSW to identify specific matters of concern. This information is used to inform policy development
- Reactions by the community to policy decisions are closely monitored by Multicultural NSW and feedback is provided to the NSW State Government

Public participation in policy formulation

Multicultural NSW welcomes comments from the public on issues relating to community relations and service delivery. This is achieved through the activities of its seminars and

forums, the distribution of documents for public discussion, Regional Advisory Councils and consultation with communities on specific areas of concern.

Documents held by Multicultural NSW

Multicultural NSW holds documents which are stored in traditional paper files or as computer records. Access to some documents may require an application under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*.

Multicultural NSW makes available free of charge a range of information that includes the following documents:

- Annual Reports
- Community Relations Reports
- Documents tabled in parliament
- Ministerial Media Releases
- Policy documents
- Publications

Access to Government information

Informal request

If you require information not found on this website or have questions relating to the informal release of information, please contact:

Right to Information Officer
PO Box 618
Parramatta NSW 2124

Level 8, 56 Station Street East,
Parramatta NSW 2150

Monday to Friday 9.30 am to 4.30 pm
www.multicultural.nsw.gov.au

Formal request

You may make a formal request under the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* for access to documents held by Multicultural NSW that are not publicly available. Formal access applications may be subject to fees and charges.

You may also obtain general information about the right to information system in NSW from the Office of the Information Commissioner at www.ipc.nsw.gov.au or by telephoning 1800 472 679.