



**Natalie Ward**

Minister for Sport, Multiculturalism, Seniors and Veterans

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Wednesday, 17 November 2021

### **\$13.4 MILLION YOUTH PROGRAM TO COUNTER HATE**

The future of an essential youth initiative has been secured after the NSW Government committed \$13.4 million to continue the Community Partnership Action (COMPACT) program until at least mid-2024.

Minister for Multiculturalism Natalie Ward said the funding would ensure further projects could be supported, in addition to the existing 15 COMPACT initiatives promoting social cohesion and community resilience, such as sporting programs addressing racism and bullying.

“These projects connect our young people with mentors, community leaders and youth work specialists through networks, forums and events,” Mrs Ward said.

“The initiatives support young people to stand up to social injustices, become active volunteers, take charge of issues in their community and improve social cohesion.”

The funding will further develop the COMPACT program, which has already reached tens of thousands of young people across NSW, including through schools.

As part of the funding, applications for a new \$1 million round of COMPACT grants open today.

“These programs will connect with young people through volunteering, creative communications and cross-cultural and interfaith network building,” Mrs Ward said.

The package also includes \$800,000 over four years to expand and strengthen the online communications initiative, Remove Hate from the Debate.

“Keeping our young people safe is more important than ever as we continue to see concerning levels of hateful and harmful materials online,” Mrs Ward said.

“It’s vital we empower them with the tools and resources to speak out against online hate and utilise their voices to promote positive messages of community harmony.”

Grants of up to \$50,000 per project are now available through the COMPACT program. Applications close on Wednesday, 1 December. For more information see: <https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/compact/>.

**MEDIA: Nina Stevens | 0412 438 647**