



MULTICULTURAL
NSW

IDEATION 2014

INSPIRING INNOVATIVE IDEAS



IDEATION 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview

Welcome speech by the Hon. Victor Dominello MP, Minister for Citizenship and Communities

Welcome speech by Hakan Harman, Chief Executive Officer of Multicultural NSW

Meet the facilitators
Song Division

Workshop: Express yourself – diversity in pop culture

Workshop: Fighting racism

Workshop: Tribes and divides – breaking down multicultural myths

Workshop: Bridging cultures

Workshop: My community

Appendix: Schools and youth organisations taking part

IDEATION 2014 – OVERVIEW

INSPIRING INNOVATIVE IDEAS

Nearly 150 students from schools and youth organisations around NSW converged at the Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre on Thursday 13 November 2014 for Multicultural NSW's annual youth leaders' day, **IDEATION 2014**. An energetic day of workshops and performances was guided by the theme **INSPIRING INNOVATIVE IDEAS**.

'Who better to ask about the future than those young people who inhabit it?' said the Minister for Citizenship and Communities, Victor Dominello. 'Young Australians, in most cases, have grown up in a multicultural society. We need to hear their ideas about how to maximise the benefits that flow from the diversity we all share.'

'IDEATION has a strong social media component. The discussion will be happening not just at the Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre. It will be buzzing online for several weeks later.' Participants came from a broad cross-section of Sydney and rural secondary schools, covering public, private, selective and religious education sectors.

Participants came from a broad cross-section of Sydney and rural secondary schools, covering public, private, selective and religious education sectors.

Students from Corrimal High School and Young High School took part in the day by teleconferencing, and attendees also posted their contributions to social media through #IDEATION NSW.

Ideas put forward will be analysed by Multicultural NSW staff and either incorporated into projects or passed on with recommendations to the Minister and the NSW Government.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ideation 2014 would not have been possible without Multicultural NSW, particularly Youth Advisory Board members Amna Karra-Hassan and Devpaal Singh, and especially Carmen Cordal Pernas and her team.

Thanks also to the energetic Song Division and to staff at Bankstown Library and Knowledge Centre.



Outcomes will be fed directly into the work we do under Harmony In Action, our strategic plan for 2014-17. Multicultural NSW's new community engagement framework will ensure that all sections of the community have the chance to engage and contribute – particularly young people through the Multicultural Youth Network (MYN) (www.crc.nsw.gov.au/myn).

The Multicultural Youth Network is an initiative of Multicultural NSW, and is a collective of young leaders committed to building a bright future for multiculturalism in Australia.



The MYN:

- Works with young people and communities in NSW to promote the positive value of cultural diversity and foster acceptance and respect.
- Provides opportunities for skills training, leadership and networking for its members.
- Explores and identifies the social and cultural issues facing young people in NSW and advocates positive outcomes.
- Advises Multicultural NSW on issues of concern to young people from diverse backgrounds for incorporation into policies.
- The two main activities coordinated by the MYN include the annual youth event Ideation (formerly Youth Leaders' Day) and the MYN Networking Evening.
- Ideation, the annual youth event, has been held since 2006. Throughout the day, presenters from culturally, religiously, and linguistically diverse communities of New South Wales work with students on new approaches to address issues.
- The MYN Youth Networking Evening is an annual event initiated in 2011. This event brings together young people from different communities and youth organizations and listen to guest speakers.
- For a list of participants, see Appendix 1.

WELCOME

THE HON. VICTOR DOMINELLO, MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITIES

First I would like to acknowledge the land that Aboriginal ancestors loved, nurtured and cared for over thousands of years.

The title of this Youth Leaders' Day, IDEATION, is about generating ideas. Multicultural NSW is at the forefront of policy development and the rest of the world looks to us for leadership in diversity. Circumstances change as technology matures, and we need to make sure our policies are ahead of the curve and responsive. We need your input and ideas to help shape our future.



There are many formulations of leadership in this world. One of my favourites is from John Quincy Adams, a diplomat and statesman who served as the sixth President of the United States in the early 19th century. He said a leader is someone who inspires others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more. If you can encourage someone to inspire, dream, learn and do, then people grow – that's what leadership is.

Some characteristics of great leaders include honesty, initiative, confidence, integrity, resilience, open-mindedness, understanding, empathy and being positive role models. When we ask people to give examples of great leaders, they often start by naming the President of the United States, the Prime Minister of Australia and the Queen of England. Then they name world leaders such as Martin Luther-King, Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela and then community leaders such as teachers and parents. And when we keep pressing them, they finally allude to themselves. Everyone has the capacity for leadership.

You can lead right here, right now and have the ability to effect change.

With leadership, you don't have to be the strongest, the fastest, or the tallest. Leadership is more about strength of character. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi changed the world. His words often inspire me. He was an old man. He wasn't physically imposing – but through his strength of character, he brought about change.

Leadership is not just about talking the talk, it's about walking the walk. It's about leading by example. True leaders always think about how to improve the lives of those less fortunate. If you can think of ideas to improve our society and make the world a better place, then you're on to something.



I am particularly passionate about White Ribbon Australia, an organisation which campaigns to end violence against women. About 30 per cent of women across the world will experience violence in their lives, and that's a conservative estimate. If you want a cause to champion, then that could be one of them.

Young people are our present and our future. Go back to school tomorrow and become an advocate for the things you've heard here and connect with Multicultural NSW today, tomorrow and in the years ahead.

Thanks for having me, and we are very grateful for your input today.



WELCOME

HAKAN HARMAN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MULTICULTURAL NSW

Firstly I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of this great land of ours.

We are privileged to live in one of the most culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse states in the world, with people settling here from some 245 countries, speaking more than 200 languages, and practising more than 125 religions. We are undoubtedly one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world, which is no accident and has not developed by chance.

The NSW Government established our agency as the Ethnic Affairs Commission in 1977 to review and report on access issues faced by residents from non-English speaking backgrounds. In 2000, the Ethnic Affairs Commission was renamed as the Community Relations Commission with the introduction of new functions and responsibilities for whole-of-government responses on issues to do with cultural diversity.

In November this year, the Act was amended and updated once again **after** a wide-ranging review which consulted all our stakeholders. The new Multicultural NSW Act 2000, emphasises the need for all citizens of New South Wales, regardless of origin, linguistic or religious background, to commit to shared democratic values, laws and institutions, to work together for our common welfare and future, and have the right to take part in and contribute to the social, cultural, economic and political life of the state. As a result, the Community Relations Commission is now simply called Multicultural NSW. We exist with the main purpose of building and maintaining a cohesive and harmonious multicultural society that enriches the lives of everyone in our community.

Today we come together to reinforce the importance of maintaining social cohesion in New South Wales through youth. With some 100,000 teachers and over 1,000,000 students, your communities at school are a true reflection of the diversity of our state.

We all know that children and young people tend not to see differences such as skin colour or religious beliefs – they see only what binds us together as humans. The values of understanding, compassion and a fair go, including a strong volunteering ethos, are embedded into school curricula across our state. The ideas you put forward today will be taken seriously. They will be analysed by Multicultural NSW staff and either incorporated into our projects or passed on, with recommendations, to other relevant parts of the NSW Government.

The outcomes of today will also feed directly into the implementation of our Strategic Plan 2014-17, which is called **Harmony in Action**, which I hope is one of your reflections of the day itself. I expect that the people in this room represent our future leaders. Today is the beginning of a journey in your connection to Multicultural NSW as we work out new ways of building and maintaining our social cohesion and community harmony. Our agency, its remit and ethos is about and for all of us.

Have a fantastic day. I am eagerly waiting to hear your song and more importantly to hear you sing it with one voice.



FACILITATORS



AMNA KARRA-HASSAN, YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

Amna works for the Australian Federal Police (AFP) Community Liaison Team, where she engages and networks with various communities to develop relationships that promote positive partnerships. In 2013, she was appointed to the Advisory Board of Multicultural NSW. In 2011 she co-founded a women's AFL team known as the Auburn Giants, and is a committee member of GoActive, a health initiative focused on increasing the participation of Muslim women in sports. She is also an active ambassador for the rights of Muslim women and is a role model and mentor. Amna won the 2012 Young Women of the West Award, and in 2013 won the AFP Australia Day Award Medal. Most recently she was presented with the Women of Courage and Leadership award by the United States Consul-General.

ELIE KALLAB

Elie is an international student studying business. MTV and the Bank of Beirut selected him as the Young Achiever of Lebanon in 2014, and he is a youth representative on the Committee of United Nations Youth Australia, a member of the International Education Association, World Youth Alliance, the Global Leadership Team and the Harvard World Model United Nations in Melbourne. Elie has also worked with the Lebanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

NIKOLA KANTAROVSKI

Nikola is a student who has been an active volunteer in many diverse communities, and is constantly seeking opportunities (when time allows) to get involved and make a difference.

GURPREET KAUR

Gurpreet is the current president of the Macquarie University Sikh Students' Association, and is also a coordinator at Sikh2Give, a women's charity.

SU YOUNG LEE

Su Young is a Manly Youth Council member, managing projects and events for children and young people. He actively encourages youngsters to volunteer in local activities.

DEBBIE NGUYEN

Debbie works for the NSW Cancer Council, educating the community about hepatitis B and liver cancer. Her youth projects have inspired her to work in stop-motion animation and film, and she is studying for a Master's degree in communications and media.

LYNESS CHOKAZINGA

Lyness, a graduate in international studies, has worked with the United Nations, helping her to forge relationships with groups across Sydney. A member of the Multicultural Youth Network, Lyness works with international students.

THOMPSON CH'NG

Thomson Ch'ng is the national president of the Council of International Students Australia. In 2013 he won the NSW Premier's International Student of the Year award. He is undertaking a Master's degree in Science at Curtin University in Sydney.



DEVPAAL SINGH, YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

Devpaal is at Sydney University studying engineering and law. He is the founder and president of the Sydney University Sikh Society, and has a background in research and sales, having formerly been national communications and marketing director of Sikh Youth Australia. Devpaal also teaches the traditional north Indian dance style known as bhangra, and works as an HSC tutor.

SARAH YAHA

Sarah came to Australia as a refugee from Iraq in 2007. Since then, she has won a Rotary Youth Leadership Award, the 2013 High Order of Australia for Community Service and the Defence Force of Australia Leadership Award in 2013. Sarah is a student at the University of Technology Sydney and is studying journalism and international studies.

SONG DIVISION

As part of the day's activities, corporate band Song Division visited each of the workshops and asked participants to help write lyrics for a new song to be performed on the day. This is the song written and performed by participants at IDEATION 2014.



Leave stereotyping in the past
Been here too long, don't make it last
Leave ignorance to yesterday
Because we are the youth of today

It is time we find our common ground
It's starting here – right in Bankstown
Right here, right now with education
Beginning with Ideation

Be the voice, educate your peers
Break the cycle for years and years
Labels can be mean and harsh
But be yourself and let it pass

Engage, enrich, enable
Bridging cultures at our table
Fighting for a better nation
Express yourself through Ideation

CHORUS

I have a voice, I'm gonna use it
This is my culture, don't abuse it
This is who I am, this is me
Take it or leave it, my identity.



WORKSHOPS

1. EXPRESS YOURSELF - DIVERSITY IN POP CULTURE
2. FIGHTING RACISM
3. TRIBES AND DIVIDES - BREAKING DOWN MULTICULTURAL MYTHS
4. BRIDGING CULTURES
5. MY COMMUNITY



WORKSHOP 1.

EXPRESS YOURSELF - DIVERSITY IN POP CULTURE

TOPICS COVERED:

- Where do participants find cultural diversity in cinema, radio, music or social media?
- Mainstream and non-mainstream representations of Australian cultural diversity
- What alternatives are there to express yourself?

Students discussed the different ways to express themselves, such as through brands, clothing, music, posters, social media, cultural links, cartoon characters and movies.

Social media was viewed as one of the ways that young people could challenge social norms, petition and build support. Posting on social media also allowed people to become a voice in their community by reflecting on their own lives, encouraging others to speak up and not feel judged. Strategies to harness social media include enlisting the power of the wider school community, and starting a hashtag on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube or Instagram.

Other strategies included using song, dance, YouTube videos, comedy and volunteering to help young people become a voice in their community. Issues faced by young people were articulated as battling social expectations, fear of failure, peer or family pressure, holding different views, not following mainstream values, and battling prejudice and judgements.

OUTCOMES

The group decided to begin a social media group to help people recognise their own worth and values, #PeopleofNSW, where people could be interviewed on their passions such as sports and videogames, music and fashion choices.

FACILITATORS: Sarah Yaha and Vidhushan Paheerathan



WORKSHOP 2.

FIGHTING RACISM

TOPICS COVERED:

- Is racism an issue?
- How do young people approach racism?
- Counteracting racism with positive messages

Ways to eradicate racism were the focus of discussions in this group, as students grappled with media portrayals that can perpetuate stereotypes. Students discussed ways to combat racism, especially the use of positive messages in counteracting stereotypes within the wider Australian society.

They also talked about the use of scare tactics in marketing and about the challenges of overcoming fear to speak up. Some solutions offered included portraying positive attitudes and comments on social media, targeting individuals and viewpoints, and encouraging people to speak out more.

OUTCOMES

After a thorough discussion of strategies, students in this group decided to establish a new hashtag, #HumansofNSW, and post pictures and messages of themselves in a bid to kickstart the discussion around wider themes of multiculturalism.

They posted pictures and a short biography and their efforts can be seen in full at www.facebook.com/multiculturalyouthnetwork

FACILITATORS: Nikola Kantarovski and Thomson Ch'ng



WORKSHOP 3.

TRIBES AND DIVIDES -BREAKING DOWN MULTICULTURAL MYTHS

TOPICS COVERED:

- Breaking down multicultural myths
- United States influence on Australia
- Lack of education about cultural diversity

Students discussed negative stereotypes in the media, when, for example, negative images were given of people from ethnic backgrounds, while media reports hardly ever mentioned crime in the context of Caucasian perpetrators. Exposure to such views is likely to perpetuate racial prejudice, and the group felt the media is reactive rather than proactive in relation to community and global conflicts.

Australian society was highly influenced by stereotypes in American films, they felt, and there should be more exposure to the benefits of multiculturalism within the school curriculum.

The values of diversity could be built into every part of the curriculum, the group felt, and this could be backed up with online blogs and posters promoting achievements and positive stories about diversity.

OUTCOMES

The group planned to devise a 'Say Hi Day' to bring about awareness of stereotypes in their own schools, supporting the initiative with posters, wristbands and the use of social media.

The idea is to encourage school students to sit with someone new at lunch, take more selfies with people they don't know, and break down communication barriers by taking pride in knowing many people from different backgrounds.

FACILITATORS: Debbie Nguyen and Yarrrie Bangura



WORKSHOP 4.

BRIDGING CULTURES

TOPICS COVERED:

- Intergenerational experiences
- Cosmopolitan youth identities – is culture an issue?

Uniting cultures and bringing down barriers was the focus of discussion in this group, where students talked about common stereotypes such as 'You're Asian, why aren't you good at maths?' and 'Doesn't wearing the hijab make you feel oppressed?'

To unite people from different backgrounds, the group discussed the effectiveness of staging a 'multi-fest' event where people from different cultures could get together and showcase their music, food, art and dance, including indigenous cultures.

The event could raise funds, bring people together, and celebrate unity and friendship, as well as broaden horizons.

A festival such as this would encourage people to have more empathy for each other, the students felt, and would show people that it doesn't matter what colour your skin is, what clothes you wear or what religion you are.

OUTCOMES

The group proposed a 'multi-fest' event that would bring cultures together and show the rest of the world that young people can step up and own the future while becoming the leaders of tomorrow.

Just because the rest of the world is suffering doesn't mean that we need to bring those issues here – we need to respect each other, the students felt.

FACILITATORS: Lyness Chokazinga and Elie Kallab



13

WORKSHOP 4.

MY COMMUNITY

TOPICS COVERED:

- What is my community?
- Changing dimensions of communities in Sydney

Looking at media narratives and preconceptions of community based on difference of appearance, students workshopped ideas around individuality, acceptance and identity.

Students discussed ideas about having to capture their lives by drawing just one circle, playing with the ideas of labels in defining communities and individuals.

They then devised a short play exploring the notion of someone joining a new community and exploring all the different roles they could try out

OUTCOMES

Students wrote and performed a play representing George's first day at a new school, where he struggled to join a new community and be accepted for who he is. Various groups danced, whistled, tapped away at their mobiles while George tried to approach each one.

Finally, the school captain took pity on him and advised him that he didn't need to fit into just one community – he could join anything he was interested in, or start a group of his own.

The students also proposed a community day called 'Bring Your Differences', to engender acceptance through acknowledgement of our differences rather than stressing our similarities.

FACILITATORS: Su Young Lee and Gurpreet Kaur

14



PARTICIPANTS

Al Amanah College
Al Zahra College
Asquith Girls High
Auburn Girls High School
Australian Careers Business College
Australian Islamic College of Sydney
Bankstown Girls High School
Bankstown Youth Development Services
Belmore Boys High School
Bonnyrigg High School
Campbelltown Performing Arts High School
Canterbury Girls HS
Casula High School
Concord High School
Corrimal High School
Council of International Students Australia
Curtin University Sydney Campus
Eagle Vale High School
East Hills Boys High School
East Hills Girls Technology High School
Engadine High School
Fort Street High School
Holroyd High School
Homebush Boys High School
James Ruse High School
Kingswood High School
Liverpool Girls' High School
Merrylands High School
Moorebank High School
Moorefield Girls High School
Multicultural Youth NSW
Multicultural Youth Advisory Network (MYAN)
Multicultural Youth Network (MYN)
Normanhurst Boys High School
NSW Youth Advisory Council
Pennant Hills High School
Penrith High School
St Andrews Cathedral School
Young High School

