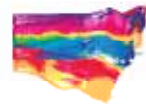




# IDEATION 2015



MULTICULTURAL  
NSW





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## Acknowledgements

IDEATION 2015 would not have been possible without Multicultural NSW, particularly Youth Advisory Board member Devpaal Singh, and Carmen Cordal Pernas and her team. Thanks also to the energetic Song Division and to staff at the Powerhouse Museum.



The dangers of labelling and stereotyping people were debated by more than 200 students from NSW schools and youth organisations at Multicultural NSW's annual **IDEATION 2015**, on Wednesday 9 September.

An energetic day of workshops and performances at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney was based on the theme I Choose to Be...

Participants were from a broad cross-section of Sydney and rural secondary schools, covering public, private, selective and religious education sectors. See Appendix 1 for a full list of those taking part.

Students from Murray and Wade High School also took part in the day via Skype, and attendees posted their contributions to social media on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook through #IDEATIONNSW.

The event helps young people to debate multicultural themes and network across schools and regions.

'Every single person here today is Australian – we have to look beyond our religious, cultural, linguistic and ancestral backgrounds as we work to build a better future,' Multicultural NSW Chief Executive Officer Hakan Harman told the forum. "The diversity of our population is one of our greatest strengths as a culturally diverse society. There should be no tolerance for racism in our society and you play a very important role in spreading the word and embracing it in your daily lives," he said.

SBS reporter and producer Naomi Selvaratnam outlined her own experiences growing up in Australia with Sri Lankan parents. 'While Sri Lankan is one of the labels I have, I'm also a proud Australian, a proud journalist, a daughter, a sister and a friend. None of those labels defines me individually, but each builds my story. I hope this gets you all thinking about how important it is to see people beyond just one label.'

Ms Tanya Davies MP, Member for Mulgoa and Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Affairs, told young people that they could make a difference. 'I encourage you all to take action because the power is within you to make a difference – and you can. You are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but also the leaders of today.'

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.multicultural.nsw.gov.au/myn](http://www.multicultural.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 are the annual youth event **IDEATION** (formerly Youth Leaders' Day) and the MYN Networking Evening.

**IDEATION** has been held annually 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.

Those who took part in **IDEATION 2015** were surveyed to identify themes for next year's event, and Multicultural NSW will follow up on outcomes. See Appendix 2 for survey results. Some workshop groups performed a play or set up a hashtag on the day, while others proposed launching multicultural days at their schools.

Thanks to our sponsors and partners for making this day happen:

- Multicultural Youth Affairs Network
- Advocate for Children and Young People
- Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences – Powerhouse Museum
- Settlement Services International
- NSW Family and Community Services – NSW Volunteering
- SBS
- NSW Health Organ and Tissue Donation Services.

# overview







# Song Division

As part of the day's activities, corporate band Song Division asked all 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 2015**.

We came today to have some fun  
We'll make a difference by the time we're done  
We've got stereotypes in our way  
Let's educate and inspire today!

Ignorance and inequality  
What kind of world are we?  
Stopping us from connecting  
Inspiring others and changing things

Can we all close our eyes?  
Take a look at what's inside  
Now you see who I really am  
See behind my colour, I know you can

Social awareness is the key  
Together we can all be  
Changing things to break free  
To stop the inequality

**Rap**  
I choose to be  
Young, wild and free  
Respect all our diversity  
I choose to be  
Real and unique  
Got individuality

**Chorus**  
Let's all agree to inspire  
Fill ourselves with desire  
No more ignorance in this place  
Time to accept every race.



# Tolerant/Accepting

Facilitators: Arpita Singh, Gunjit Kaur and Sage Nemra

Topics covered:

- Gender inequality, racial profiling in sport, schools and the workplace, stereotypes, media influence, sexual orientation and judging a book by its cover.
- Some of the words the students associated with tolerance included patience, kindness, acknowledgement, understanding, respect, uniting and aspirations.
- Acceptance generated word associations with race, love, inclusion, embracing, belonging, appreciating and no judgements.

Participants filled many pieces of butcher's paper with the results of their debates. Negative outcomes identified with being intolerant were discrimination, judging someone's sexuality, prejudice, gender inequality, media influence and fear of the unknown, along with racial vilification and arguments about the refugee crisis.

Discussion of acceptance focused on cultural differences, how people choose their identity despite ancestral background, and how to break down barriers – which often requires a great deal of courage.

Racism and sexual intolerance were seen as unacceptable in today's society, with education being a key to being non-judgemental, generous and friendly.

One way to reclaiming power was to understand that young people can shape the media, with people in positions of power acting as role models.

Outcomes:

Students set up a mock TV studio on stage, where two hosts – “I'm Bazza” “and I'm Dazza” - welcomed the audience to the Racist TV station, featuring roving reporters sampling diverse cultures in today's Australia. There were skits featuring racist attitudes and stereotyping based on race and the suburbs people live in, before participants interrupted, asking how could the media treat people so unfairly. “The media cannot define us – we shape the media,” students concluded.

# workshop







# Workshop: Young

Facilitators: Dev Singh and Zachary Wone

Topics covered:

- What does it mean to be young? Students identified such characteristics as self-respect, learning from our mistakes, developing character strengths, being responsible, self-expression, finding yourself and new opportunities.
- Challenges for young people included bullying, racism, gender inequality and learning how to fit in and find your true self, as opposed to being what you are expected to be by family or school.
- Words associated with youth included confusion, free choice, born without bias, vulnerable, not thinking ahead and self-esteem. Stigma also surrounded socio-economic status, students felt, while the media was seen as a source of stereotyping rather than a force to promote positive role models. There was also pressure to keep up with social media.

Students identified many opportunities associated with youth, such as the chance to become a leader, experience diversity, keep an open mind, gain knowledge and develop confidence. However, they acknowledged that many young people faced limited choices due to a lack of knowledge and experience. Bigotry could be inherited from parents, they felt, and lack of money could limit their freedom.

Influences from the media, such as defining women's roles or highlighting issues facing transgender people, could play a big part in shaping ideas, students felt. However, having time on their side could mean making a big difference to the future, leading to better outcomes in terms of racism, bullying, equality and self-expression.

Outcomes:

Students decided to portray the results of casual bullying and racism by showing skits in which some members of the group spouted racist stereotypes such as "everyone knows Asians can't drive," or "you're probably here on an illegal visa". They also touched on the issues of bullying in schools and communities, and discussed ways of using social media to combat incidents, encouraging people to speak up for what they have learned.



# Labelled

Facilitators: Debbie Nguyen, Bobby Kumar and Kermina Kiriacos

Topics covered:

- To have an image thrust upon us is horrible. Labelling includes assumptions, and labels can be either good or bad, affecting people positively or negatively.
- Education about different cultures could help address the downside of labelling, and this could be incorporated into the educational curriculum.
- Issues such as gender neutrality could be promoted, and social media is a powerful tool that can be used to overcome labels and stereotypes.

Discussion focused on the power of words to bring about positive or negative reactions in people who are being labelled. Labels could also be applied positively, using words such as individual, sassy, smart, or feminist. Race, culture and religion formed the basis of a lot of stereotyping, the students felt. Ways to address this included understanding and respect for other cultures.

Students debated what kind of symbol could be used to address preconceptions through a social media campaign, and discussed scenarios in which everyone held up a piece of paper with a label on it and ripped them up – showing non-acceptance of the label.

They designed elements of the campaign and came up with the hashtag #losethelabel, to encourage people to accept diversity and discourage bigotry.

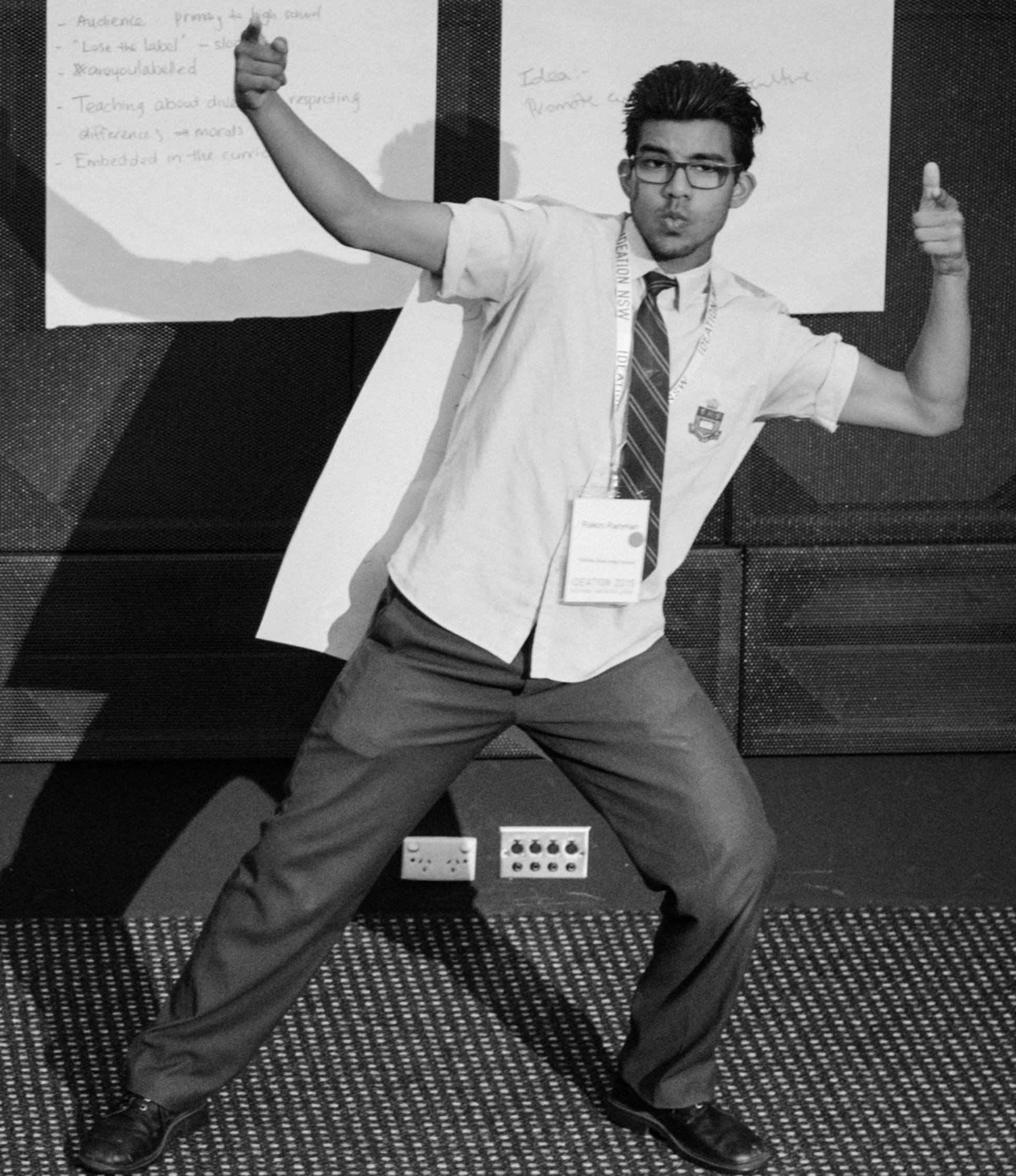
Outcomes:

Members of the group performed on stage, holding up labels reading such words as hormonal teenager, nerd, and try-hard. “To be Asian can mean being targeted as a nerd and you’re meant to be good at maths – I suck at that,” said one. Books, videos and teaching materials that discouraged labelling and encouraged integration and diversity should be part of the mainstream curriculum in primary and high schools, embedded within lessons, they felt, showing posters reading #losethelabel.

# workshop







# Workshop: A citizen

Facilitators: Teegan Samuels, Aditya Kamdi and Sabine Elkodir

Topics covered:

- The rights of citizens were discussed, such as establishing trust with people such as buyers or sellers, investment and the right to earn money.
- Gay rights, racism, marriage equality, discrimination and migration were at the forefront of debate, with students feeling that visas were too expensive for many people.
- Australians should truly believe that our diversity makes a difference to our society and is not just about tokenism, the group felt.

The cost of visas and citizenship was of concern to some students, which they proposed to address with the help of government funding, loans similar to the HECS structure, and more importantly, lowering the cost of visa fees.

They also discussed the lack of opportunities for Aboriginal people and the lack of media attention on Aboriginal issues. Child abuse featured in the debate, with students pointing out that many calls to a child abuse hotline were abandoned because of funding issues.

A citizen's rights included to participate in public life, to get married, to work, to feel safe, to seek refuge, to have freedom of speech, to receive Medicare benefits, to feel welcome, to be happy, to be unique, and to be who you are.

Outcomes:

The group performed a play focusing on asylum seekers and migration, featuring players telling others to "go back to where you came from". They identified the main barriers to citizenship as financial constraints, highlighting the fact that many residents find it difficult to pay the visa fees required. The courts and not the government should have the powers to strip citizenship, they felt. And they proposed a loan system should be made available to help asylum seekers pay for the cost of their documentation.



# My culture

Facilitators: Vyvienne Abla, Nikola Kantarovski and Alex Long

Topics covered:

- Culture is a complex issue and there is pressure to conform to a culture – we want to make our parents proud but we also don't want to be held down by that. Culture is what we choose, not just what is forced on us.
- Many people don't know how to relate to other cultures or understand them, and predominately white schools can be isolating for people of different cultures.
- Stereotyping was seen as a big issue which can affect us even at the subconscious level. Participants were uncomfortable with being judged and felt confronted by stereotypes.

The students discussed ways to overcome stereotypes such as educational campaigns that stress how everyone is unique in their own way, using social media to break down and challenge stereotypes, and the importance of treating people equally.

The entertainment industry could help break down misconceptions, they felt, while a campaign that involved cultural exchanges, media, entertainment and sports personalities, families and schools could do much to address segregations in society.

Some of the key issues with stereotyping included pre-judgements, overcoming first impressions, and overcoming fears of being labelled. The spectre of racism was also brought up – some students were worried about identifying someone by their ancestral group in case they were labelled as racist.

Human behaviour was another factor in overcoming stereotypes about culture, especially when ethnic groups sit together at school or students attend a predominately white school.

Outcomes:

The group brought various racist scenarios to life on stage – such as identifying an Indian student by calling him a taxi driver and calling out an Asian student on her maths and driving ability. "Speak out and listen up" was the message held up on stage as one way to overcome stereotypes, while students stressed that culture can attract bias and preconceptions. The group then performed a rap song with lyrics asking others not to judge.

# workshop







# Workshop: Murray High School

Topics covered:

- Events such as Harmony Day, Wear It Purple Day, NAIDOC Week and Refugee Week demonstrated how students at Murray High School were accepting of different cultures.
- Room for improvement included smiling, encouraging staff and students to improve their skills, looking for the positive, being empathetic and focusing on the future.

Outcomes:

Students presented their conclusions via Skype, proposing to stencil the school steps with words designed to promote and encourage the school community to be accepting – such as love, tolerance, positive, optimistic, belonging, acceptance and encouragement. This would also complement the Safe School Coalition and mental health initiatives within the high school.



# Wade High School

Topics covered:

- Young people face several issues but adolescence is a time to juggle expectations, responsibilities, maturity levels and their need to socialise.
- Technology opens up a big wide world to teenagers, where news can often be confronting.
- Young people need support within their families, communities and school to help them deal with problems.

Outcomes:

Students discussed issues facing young people, saying that there were grey areas between acting like a child and acting like an adult. Some situations made young people unsure how to react, and they felt that some parents didn't seem to understand their difficulties.

# workshop





# Teachers' workshop: NSW Volunteering

Topics covered:

- Volunteering can help people pursue their personal development, get involved in local communities and to remain healthy. The NSW Government has launched a public engagement strategy to draw out the experience of volunteers, to recognise student volunteers and to use social media strategies to promote volunteering.
- Under the State Government's first Volunteering Strategy, it invested \$4.5 million and delivered support to the state's 2.1 million volunteers.
- Corporate volunteering can be good not just for the bottom line, but also offer best practice examples of businesses supporting local communities. Volunteering opportunities are available across many sectors of society, helping volunteers learn more as well as gain experience working with different communities.

# Teachers' workshop: SBS Outreach

Topics covered:

- The SBS Outreach Program works in partnership with organisations to deliver successful programs such as One Day in Cabramatta, Go Back to Where You Came From, and The Harmony Game. It has partnered with organisations such as Amnesty International, Australian Red Cross and the Refugee Council to reach wider audiences. Some of these campaigns deliver free teaching materials to secondary schools.
- SBS Outreach facilitators sought teachers' opinions on a new web portal called the Learning Hub. There was general discussion on how these campaigns could be linked to different subjects such as history, geography, English and maths.
- Teachers suggested that data on NSW communities could be provided with the SBS Outreach school packs. Multicultural NSW will investigate the possibility of linking its Community Profiles site to the SBS websites.

# workshop







# Appendix 1

## Schools and organisations taking part

Al-Faisal College Auburn  
Arthur Phillip High School  
Asquith Girls' High School  
Australian Islamic College of Sydney  
Belmore Boys' High School  
Birrong Boys' High School  
Blaxland High School  
Blacktown Boys' High School  
Blakehurst High School  
Bonnyrigg High School  
Burwood Girls' High School  
Cambridge Park High School  
Cammeraygal High School  
Canterbury Boys' High School  
Canterbury Girls' High School  
Chatswood High School  
Concord High School  
East Hills Girls' Technology High School  
Emanuel School  
Engadine High School  
Erskine Park High School  
Girl Guides NSW & ACT (Toongabbie)  
Girraween High School  
Glenmore Park High School  
Glenwood High School  
Gosford High School  
Granville Boys' High School  
Granville South Creative and Performing Arts High School  
Holroyd High School  
Homebush Boys' High School  
Hunters Hill High School  
Kingsgrove North High School  
Kingswood High School  
Loreto Kirribilli  
Loreto Normanhurst  
Maronite College of the Holy Family  
Marrickville High School  
Monte Sant' Angelo Mercy College  
Moorebank High School

Murray High School  
Newtown High School of the Performing Arts  
Oak Flats High School  
Our Lady of Mercy Parramatta  
Parramatta High School  
Penrith Selective High School  
Pittwater High School  
Ryde Youth Council  
Santa Sabina College Strathfield  
Seven Hills High School  
Sikh Youth Australia  
St Gregory's College Campbelltown  
St Maroun's College Dulwich Hill  
Sydney Boys' High School  
Wade High School  
Willoughby Girls' High School  
Woollooware High School



# Welcome speech by Hakan Harman, CEO of Multicultural NSW

Good morning.

Firstly I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we are gathered today and pay my respects to their elders, past and present, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation.

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, it's my absolute pleasure to welcome you here today to the Multicultural NSW annual Youth Leaders' Day, **IDEATION 2015**.

My name is Hakan Harman and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Multicultural NSW. I believe I have one of the best positions in the New South Wales Government as dealing with diversity every day is inspirational. We indeed are very privileged to have the opportunity to engage and consult with different people across the state and regions.

On any measure it has been a very exciting year for our agency. What we do is both very simple and very hard – we have legislation that outlines our purpose, which is to build and maintain a cohesive and harmonious multicultural society that enriches the lives of the people of New South Wales.

You can imagine that is a pretty tall order. But we have a framework in place that requires every government agency to provide appropriate services for our culturally and linguistically diverse residents and another for how we do community engagement to keep us focussed and on track. It's very important for us to connect with the next generation of leaders... You!

Social cohesion and community harmony are at the forefront of everything that we do. Sadly there are too many people around the world that are impacted by humanitarian crises, war, conflict and environmental changes. Today there are some 12 million displaced persons as a result of the conflicts in Syria and Iraq alone.

These global issues often have a direct impact on our communities in NSW. It is hard for communities not be impacted by the human tragedy unfolding in many parts of the world. It is very important for us all not to be caught up in racism, bigotry, and things that divide us during these trying times.

We want to always build on our unity as the single biggest asset that we have. The diversity of our population is one of our greatest strengths. There should be no tolerance for racism in society and you play a very important role in spreading the word and embracing inclusion and respect in your daily lives.

We meet here today as Australian's and as Australian's we all have a responsibility to look beyond our religious, cultural, linguistic and ancestral differences as we continue to build and maintain the high levels social cohesion and community harmony which are a hallmark of our successful multicultural state.

Australia has become a much more diverse society in the past 25 years. The statistics speak for themselves. Since 2001, Australia's population has increased from 19.4 million to an estimated 23.8 million today.

That figure is based on the estimated resident population at the end of 2014 and assumes growth since then of:

- one birth every 1 minute and 45 seconds
- one death every 3 minutes and 25 seconds
- a net gain of one international migrant every 2 minutes and 12 seconds.

That leads to an overall total population increase of one person every 1 minute and 22 seconds.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the proportion of Australians that were born overseas has just hit its highest point in 120 years - a peak not seen since the gold rushes of the late 1800's.

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Overseas migration has been the main driver of population growth in the past decade, contributing more than half of Australia's population growth since 2005. We come from about 245 different ancestries, speak about 215 different languages and practise about 125 religions. In New South Wales, about 45 per cent of us were either born overseas or have at least one parent born overseas.

Here in multicultural Australia, young people live and grow up peacefully alongside different tribal and cultural groups. This experience can show people a new perspective on old historic conflicts, and in this way Australian multicultural policy can set an example for the rest of the world.

My agency is driven by three key principles. They are to:

- **Engage** with all sections of society and break down barriers to participation
- **Enable** equitable access to services and programs
- **Enrich** social and economic capacity by capitalising on cultural diversity as an asset of our state.

One of the many advantages of living in a multicultural society is that it connects us to the rest of the world. It provides us with a global, cosmopolitan outlook which also gives us a great social and economic advantage.

However, conflicts across the world have repercussions among communities here in Australia and we have challenges ahead. We must strengthen our resilience to the impacts of overseas issues in a globally connected age. And the starting point for any solution must build on the strengths of our diversity. This includes a focus on initiatives to combat racism, to empower women and girls, and to support other groups of diverse backgrounds.

Adolescence is a time to figure out what sort of person you are, what beliefs you stand up for, how you choose to dress and how you present yourself to the world. Those choices may lead to you confronting prejudice, having to overcome preconceptions and having to justify your choices.

Today's theme of **IDEATION 2015** is I Choose to Be..... and you will be splitting up into workshops to explore different strands of what that might mean. Central to today's workshops are our facilitators and Youth Members of our Advisory Board – Amna Karra-Hassan and Devpaal Singh.

They'll shortly explain the outline of today's program and what you can do to make this a memorable experience. And there will be a social media competition, with the winner announced at the end of the day, for the person who can generate the most buzz around today's event.

Multicultural NSW will continue to promote mutual respect and understanding of our state's cultural diversity. We will continue to combat racism through our engagement strategy and grants program, as outlined in our Harmony in Action strategic plan.

In conclusion, I'd like to thank our supporters and partners in making today a reality. The Multicultural Youth Affairs Network, the Advocate for Children and Young People, the Powerhouse Museum, Settlement Services International, NSW Volunteering, SBS and NSW Health Organ and Tissue Donation Services have all given generously so **IDEATION 2015** can become a reality. And most importantly thank you all for participating in **IDEATION 2015**. I wish you a successful day ahead and look forward to hearing the song you compose and reviewing the recommendations that come out of your deliberations.



# Keynote speech by Naomi Selvaratnam, SBS reporter and producer

I would like to start by respectfully acknowledging that we are meeting on the traditional land of the Gadigal Clan of the Eora Nation, and pay my respects to their elders past and present. I would also like to acknowledge the CEO of Multi-cultural NSW, Hakan Harman. SBS is thrilled to support Multicultural NSW at today's **IDEATION 2015**, and I'm particularly honoured to be able to speak with all of you today.

I very proud to be part of SBS, which is where I work as a journalist. SBS has a unique focus on bringing a multicultural perspective to national and international issues, exploring them in a way no other broadcaster does. We look at the big issues, and how they affect diverse communities in Australia. But we also give context to what's happening in Australia by framing the debate with comparisons to the global setting.

- This year marks the 40-year anniversary of SBS. SBS has been pivotal in supporting and empowering multicultural and multilingual communities in Australia, supporting new migrants to become participative members of the Australian community, and contributing to social cohesion.
- SBS is driven by a charter that requires us to "provide multilingual and multicultural radio and television services that inform, educate and entertain all Australians and, in doing so, reflect Australia's multicultural society". That charter, for me, is brilliant. It means that every day, I get the chance to speak to people and hear stories that aren't often heard on other networks.

SBS is also reaching a younger audience – particularly second- and third-generation migrants – through its digital radio music stations, PopAsia, PopAraby, PopDesi and SBS Chill. These stations appeal to the multicultural youth who may not necessarily have ties to their parents' homeland but still feel strongly connected and embrace their cultural heritage I also wanted to tell you about my heritage. My parents migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka during the civil war in the 1980s. During that time, Sri Lanka was a dangerous place to live, and they wanted their children to have a safer, happier life here in Australia. So they moved to Melbourne and I was born about two years later. I consider myself so lucky to be Australian, and so fortunate to have my Sri Lankan heritage. Both have given me a really interesting perspective on the world.

But that wasn't always the case.

When I was growing up, I was one of a handful of brown kids at school. I used to feel quite embarrassed by the colour of my skin - I once covered myself in powder to try to be white. As you can see, it didn't work. And I'm so glad it didn't. I was lucky, I wasn't bullied in the way that so many of my friends from other countries have been, but my race was always something that made me different. I remember in high school a friend said to me, "you know, you're cool, you're not like other Sri Lankans." And at the time, I felt so grateful to be considered separate to my community, because being Sri Lankan was something I thought separated me from everyone else at school. This is why I feel like tolerance of our differences is a bad thing. I think embracing our differences is what we should all aim for.

It wasn't until I joined SBS, where people are encouraged to be proud of their language, to celebrate their differences, that I felt like my culture, my story was welcomed. Now, I go to work every day, and I get to tell other people's stories as a journalist. It is the best thing to be able to celebrate and embrace diversity.

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I came to SBS as a work experience student while I was studying at university. At the time, I still hadn't fully come to understand my own culture, but I remember how refreshing it was to meet new people in the office, and have them ask me, "so where do you come from?" I'm sure a lot of you have been asked where you come from before. That was a question that used to really bother me before I joined SBS, because I felt like when someone asked me that, they were trying to label me - and when they found out I was Sri Lankan, I would just be "that Sri Lankan girl".

But I found that when people asked me that question at SBS – even now – it's not because they're trying to label me, they're keen to understand my story, my culture. And while Sri Lankan is one of the labels I have, I'm also a proud Australian, a proud journalist, a daughter, a sister and a friend. None of those labels defines me individually, but each builds my story. I hope that this event gets you all thinking about how important it is to see people beyond just one label.

I think everyone, regardless of your background, has a role in being a good citizen- and I hope that my work as a journalist can change the way we're talking about issues around race. This is one of the things I enjoy most about being a journalist. I get paid to go and talk to people every day about their lives. I get to ask questions that we can't ask in everyday conversation, and I get a chance to learn about the world from different people's perspectives. I hope that today you get the chance to think about how you can help to make a difference in your own communities as a citizen.

I'm still very early on in my career. I'm young, and I'm still trying to figure out how to help make a difference in our society. But it's my hope that in my work as a journalist, I'm able to help shape the conversations that we have around multiculturalism, race and social cohesion. That's why this event is so fantastic - you all have the chance to influence how our government works with diverse communities. So I really encourage you to think about what kinds of changes you would like to see happen, and use today, and the work you do beyond today, to make that difference.

Finally, I just want to say how much my culture has shaped my life. Not just as a Sri Lankan, but as an Australian. I'm proud of my identity. I hope that you're all proud of who you are, and proud to be a part of such a great country where we are taking steps towards embracing all cultures.

This pride in myself and my culture is a part of my creative lens that adds to the myriad of experiences that contribute to the relevance and diversity of SBS.

There's still a long way to go, but events like today give us all a chance to make those changes happen.

Thank you.



# Speech by Tanya Davies MP, Member for Mulgoa and Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Affairs

It's an absolute pleasure to be here today, seeing the extraordinary outcomes and hearing the unique song that everyone helped to write today. As Parliamentary Secretary for Youth Affairs, I am delighted to be here today on behalf of the Minister for Multiculturalism, the Honourable John Ajaka MLC, who sends his apologies.

I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and pay my respects to their elders, past and present.

I hope some of the lessons from today can be incorporated into the curriculum by teachers. The New South Wales Government is very keen to hear from young people, although you probably see us politicians as all grey-haired. It's very important to hear from you, to know your stories and challenges and to hear about the opportunities that await you. Each of you can take responsibility for your community and you can make a difference.

Let me share a bit about the reason why I became an MP – something I could never have imagined when I was your age. You may see politicians as just boring men in suits. I totally get it. I come from a migrant background, with a little bit of Polish, Ukrainian and English heritage. My parents came to Australia from Europe after World War II. They had a very interesting experience with authority figures. As I was growing up, I began to identify my key development drivers and motivation for what I do. I have an almost compulsive desire that drives me to help other people – it's as simple as that. I used to go and clean houses with my mum during school holidays, to help clean the houses of richer people, because I felt guilty about enjoying the summer holidays while my mum was out scrubbing floors.

I became a physiotherapist, a personal assistant and an executive manager – all to help my boss. My inner motivation is to help people. Five years ago there was an issue in my local electorate of Mulgoa that had gone untackled for 20 years – shopkeepers, the local council, and many in my community did not want to be there.

What was going to make it better? No one else was raising their hand. I did because I wanted to help my community become better. The issue that I wanted to change inspired me to become an MP so I could help the community to fix the issue that had caused 20 years of suffering. After three years in office, I managed to turn things around and help the community and end that suffering.

I encourage you all to discover that the power is within you to make a difference – and you can. But do it now and don't wait until your mid-30s, like I did. Australia, New South Wales and the Federal Government are looking for people like you. You are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but you are the leaders of today. I hope you leave today with fantastic new perspectives and broaden your horizons.

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# Appendix 5

## The facilitators

### Devpaal Singh

Devpaal is an engineering and law student at Sydney University with a penchant for cool shoes. Devpaal is an Advisory Board Member of Multicultural NSW and co-chair of the Multicultural Youth Network. He currently serves as the National Marketing & Communications Director at Sikh Youth Australia where he creates and manages nationwide marketing strategies for over 30 events annually. Devpaal founded the Sydney University Sikh Society who won numerous awards under his presidency. Devpaal's passions lie in music and intercommunity dialogue. He is an ambassador for the India Australia Business Council Awards 2015 and a delegate to the National Students' Leadership Forum 2015.

### Debbie Nguyen

Debbie works in health promotion and has a passion for community development and youth work. Debbie believes in arts and storytelling as a method for community engagement and social inclusion.

### Dev Singh

Dev is a certified executive coach and master practitioner in neuro-linguistic programming. Dev empowers other entrepreneurs and professionals to transform their businesses and lives in profound and sustainable ways through coaching, consulting, speaking and training. Dev is also Founder and Director of Strategy at Sketchpad Ideas, a full-service global branding and marketing agency.

### Teegan Samuels

Teegan is a new member of the Multicultural Youth Network. Teegan has a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in English Literature and Politics and a Master of Education. She is the Cultural Liaison Officer for Life Without Barriers National Immigration Support Service. Teegan considers it a great honour to work with a diverse range of multicultural individuals who each have a unique story to tell. She is also a Youth Council member for Camden Council.

### Zachary Wone

Zachary is a member of Sydney Alliance, the Events Director of the Australia Indonesia Youth Association NSW, and is involved with the Australian South Sea Islander NSW State Representative Body Working group. After completing a Bachelor of Legal and Justice Studies at Southern Cross University, Zachary assisted with organising a youth summit in Vanuatu as part of Voice Australia's Indigenous Youth Leadership Program. Zachary has worked with AusAID, including a posting in Papua New Guinea, and served as the Chair of AusAID's Indigenous Employees Network.

### Vyvienne Abla

Vyvienne is the founder of Vyva Entertainment and works closely with artists to assist in their professional development, from music creation to release strategies, business management and everything in between. In 2015, Vyva Entertainment launched the 4Elements project, a community-based hip hop program, resulting in two music festivals and a series of youth workshops. Vyvienne seeks to design spaces, festivals and programs by utilising the diversity of hip hop and music culture and has applied this concept to national campaigns such as White Ribbon Day (violence against women), Refugee Week, Child Protection Week, Youth Week, Harmony Day (International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) as well as many others.



#### Nikola Kantarovski

Nikola is a student at Macquarie University studying a Bachelor of Social Science in order to learn more about what makes our society tick - as he wants to become a politician in the future. Nikola is a member of the Multicultural Youth Network and is always happy to see how many young people are interested in being a part of our great state.

#### Arpita Singh

Arpita is representing Yuva Australia, which aims to work with the Indo-Australian youth (aged between 14-35) to recognise and promote their talent and provide social services to Indian international students. The organisation came together with other Indian community organisations to put together a reception for Narendra Modi's visit to Australia which saw the attendance of close to 20,000 people from the Indian diaspora. Arpita arrived in Australia from India in 2010 to pursue her bachelor's in IT as an international student. She fell in love with the country and decided to stay after graduating. Arpita is now a Software Engineer with Learnosity.

#### Aditya Kamdi

Aditya is a software developer from India and recently completed his Master's in IT in Sydney. Aditya has been in Sydney for a couple of years and his experience has been great. He is also the Treasurer of Yuva Australia. Aditya is always on the lookout for new experiences to broaden his horizons. He is a foodie and has just recently started following footy.

#### Gunjit Kaur

Gunjit is an Architecture and Civil Engineering student, whose vision is to create a harmonious synergy of aesthetic and structural design. Her focus is to direct her skills and knowledge in creating environmentally, economically and socially sustainable design solutions. Through the projects she works on today, she wishes to make a statement for the following generations.

#### Bobby Kumar

Bobby was born and raised in Australia with a strong affinity to his culture and religion. It is through his passion and pride for his unique cultural identity that he has partaken in a number of multicultural activities. These include being part of Multicultural Youth Network, Marketing Coordinator for the Sydney University Ekansh Cultural Society, Marketing Coordinator for the Fire to Earth (a university theatre production about Rama and Sita) and the National Youth Coordinator for the Hindu Council of Australia.

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