

EVALUATION OF THE COMPACT PROGRAM 2021-2024

Final Report

Prepared for
MULTICULTURAL NSW
24 October 2024



URBIS STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS REPORT WERE:

Director	Poppy Wise
Associate Director	Marita O'Toole, Megan Anderson
Consultant	Matthew Boyd
Project Code	P0049181

Urbis acknowledges the important contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make in creating a strong and vibrant Australian society.

We acknowledge, in each of our offices, the Traditional Owners on whose land we stand.

Disclosure: Two Urbis team members that worked on this evaluation (Poppy Wise and Matthew Boyd) also contributed to the evaluation of a COMPACT Partnership Project (All Together Now's Agent C Project).

All information supplied to Urbis in order to conduct this research has been treated in the strictest confidence. It shall only be used in this context and shall not be made available to third parties without client authorisation. Confidential information has been stored securely and data provided by respondents, as well as their identity, has been treated in the strictest confidence and all assurance given to respondents have been and shall be fulfilled.

© Urbis Ltd
50 105 256 228

All Rights Reserved. No material may be reproduced without prior permission.

You must read the important disclaimer appearing within the body of this report.

urbis.com.au

CONTENTS

Acronyms and abbreviations.....	1
Executive Summary.....	2
1. Introduction	6
Program context.....	7
The COMPACT Program.....	8
This evaluation.....	11
2. Program design, management and implementation	13
Program design.....	14
Program management and implementation.....	21
3. Participant outcomes	30
Profile of COMPACT participants and Projects	31
Participant outcomes	35
4. Alliance outcomes	47
The COMPACT alliance	48
5. Conclusion and next steps.....	54
Disclaimer.....	57
Appendix A	Program Logic
Appendix B	COMPACT Projects 2021-2024
Appendix C	Evaluation Framework
Appendix D	Research Instruments

FIGURES

Figure 1 - COMPACT's resilience-based approach	8
Figure 2 – COMPACT Reach (to June 2023).....	31
Figure 3 – Satisfaction with overall experience of the Alliance (December 2023 meeting)	49
Figure 4 – COMPACT Alliance survey responses on the community value of the Alliance	52

TABLES

Table 1 – COMPACT Projects in scope for this report	9
Table 2 – Key evaluation questions	12
Table 3 – Partnership Project youth engagement methods and activities	22

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Term	Definition
COMPACT	The Community Partnership Action Program
COMPLAN	Community Resilience and Response Plan (NSW)
CVE	Countering Violent Extremism
MNSW	Multicultural NSW
NGO	Non-government organisation



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The COMPACT Program

The Community Partnership Action (COMPACT) Program, delivered by Multicultural NSW (MNSW) under the NSW Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Program and under the Multicultural NSW Strategic Plan, Stronger Together, funds a variety of projects delivered to NSW communities that aim to inspire and empower young people to foster social cohesion and stand united against divisive forces.

The second four-year funding cycle for COMPACT funded 24 Partnership Projects (longer-term Projects delivered by a partnership of organisations) and 19 Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants Projects (six-month Projects funded in response to the COVID-19 pandemic) between 2021 and 2024. It also supported a number of strategic partnerships and whole-of-Program activities supporting Program outcomes. In total \$12 million was allocated to this four-year funding cycle, with total Program funding since 2016 in excess of \$20 million. Project reporting suggests that COMPACT has engaged over 80,000 young people since 2016.

The COMPACT Program is supported by the COMPACT Alliance – a community of practice that shares a commitment to supporting community harmony. All funded Partnership Projects are full members and other like-minded organisations, and government organisations are also part of this community resilience network.

Program context

While support for cultural diversity in Australia is strong, social cohesion is under pressure and declining. Economic issues including cost of living pressures and economic inequalities are now identified by Australians as the greatest threats to social cohesion. However, the pressing issues of extremism, hate, racism, global conflict and foreign interference continue to present specific threats to community harmony. COMPACT supports social cohesion by adopting a resilience-building approach to responding to these diverse and evolving challenges and threats to community harmony.

This evaluation

This is the second independent evaluation of COMPACT. The first evaluation was completed by Urbis in 2018, and found COMPACT to be a first-of-its kind Program that had made significant progress towards its objectives of building social cohesion and community resilience in a relatively short period of time.

MNSW again commissioned Urbis to develop an evaluation implementation plan for the 2021-2024 COMPACT Program, including reviewing the Program Logic in consultation with COMPACT partners and assessing and supporting the evaluation capability of COMPACT partners.

MNSW subsequently commissioned Urbis to undertake an Interim and Final evaluation of the 2021-2024 COMPACT Program. The Interim Evaluation Report focused on implementation of COMPACT. Data collection for the Interim phase was undertaken between November 2023 and February 2024. The Interim Evaluation Report was delivered to MNSW in April 2024.

This report is the Final Evaluation Report, which presents the findings related to the outcomes COMPACT has achieved between 2021 and 2024. Data collection for the Final phase primarily took place between April 2024 and July 2024. Relevant findings from the Interim Evaluation Report have also been integrated into this report.

KEY FINDINGS

Program design

- The COMPACT Program model continues to be proven robust and is adaptable to changing contexts, including in response to adverse events. The model has been stress-tested against a backdrop of diverse challenges and threats to community harmony and has proven resilient in its second four-year funding cycle. Inclusion in the Program is highly sought after and the model has been validated at a national and international level.
- The second four-year funding cycle of COMPACT has built upon the successes of previous rounds and applied the learnings from previous evaluations to nuance and refine Program design and delivery.
- The Program's focus on engaging and empowering young people has supported Partnership Projects to adopt a co-design approach. The requirement for youth engagement methods has led a large number of Projects to adopt a participatory or co-design approach to develop Project objectives or activities with high levels of success.
- COMPACT's partnership focus is a critical component of the Program. The Program model emphasises partnerships and collaboration from an agency level through to Project delivery and has strongly supported Program outcomes.
- Planning and implementation of the second four-year funding cycle of COMPACT Partnership Project grants was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Funding was delivered by a split structure and government movement restrictions during the pandemic affected Project delivery timelines and modes.
- In this phase of COMPACT, MNSW has recognised that divisive forces often seek to create schisms along racial or religious lines, and increasingly along lines of gender and sexuality as well. As threats to community harmony evolve, MNSW should continue to position COMPACT as a response to all threats to community harmony and social cohesion.

- MNSW has invested in strategic partnerships alongside grant funding to support responses to emerging threats to community harmony, improve support for Alliance stakeholders, and seek to expand the reach of the Program.
- Project selection is rigorous and has supported a diverse mix of organisations to be involved in COMPACT. A careful selection process is undertaken by an Assessment Panel with additional consideration given to thematic and regional/metropolitan diversity.

Program management and implementation

- MNSW's partnership approach supports flexible, responsive and adaptive management for supporting grant recipients and addressing challenges as they arise. The high level of trust and collaboration between grant recipients and MNSW has supported Project delivery including changes of Project scope.
- COMPACT Projects have adopted a broad range of activities to support the Program's broader objectives. The Projects selected in this round of COMPACT are closely aligned with Program objectives and offered a breadth of initiatives to promote social cohesion.
- Projects have adapted Project delivery to meet changes in the organisational and external context, including responding to participant needs. Despite major challenges such as COVID-19, natural disasters and resourcing issues, most Projects were implemented as intended or with modifications approved by MNSW.
- Strong partnerships and organisational reputation were key enablers in supporting delivery. The existence of strong links to community and existing relationships with influential community stakeholders enhanced Project delivery enabling more efficiencies in Project roll out.

Participant outcomes

- COMPACT is estimated to have reached more than 23,000 young people across NSW between 2021 and 2024.
- Due to the wide variety of Project engagement methods and differences in the depth and length of engagement with young people, COMPACT reach data should be interpreted with caution as there is currently no consistent approach to its collection.
- The flexibility afforded to Projects to deliver against a variety of Program outcomes supported innovative ideas, and community-centred and youth-led solutions to building resilience to threats to community harmony.
- COMPACT participants have learned about and celebrated diversity within their communities. The majority of participants (80%) reported that as a result of their participation in a COMPACT Project they had learnt about different ways of life and different perspectives.
- Participants reported that having learnt more about different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, their empathy and respect for others has consequently increased.
- Participants also strongly reported increases in confidence via participation in COMPACT Projects. Confidence has manifested across developing new connections as well as in the pursuit of new pathways and opportunities.
- By extension, there have been observable improvements in participant leadership capacity and perceptions of agency amongst young people. Participants reported a higher likelihood of engaging in leadership and advocacy opportunities as a result of their participation in COMPACT as well as an increased confidence to speak up about issues that matter to them.
- On the whole, COMPACT Projects have provided an outlet for young people to explore and develop new skills and interests including creative, media and events and project management skills.

- COMPACT Projects have facilitated awareness of educational and career opportunities for young people, opening new horizons and changing perspectives.
- While not an explicit Program aim, there is some evidence that participation in COMPACT Projects has encouraged and boosted school attendance and engagement.
- COMPACT has strengthened young people's connections to and within their community, with participants reporting as a result of participating in their Project they felt they could contribute to their community (79%) and now felt increased pride in their community (76%).
- Among the strongest outcomes observed for this evaluation was the forming of new social connections for young people, in particular new connections across different cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds.

COMPACT Alliance outcomes

- There has been significant investment from MNSW to build the Alliance. The management of the Alliance and convening of meetings is carefully considered to optimise Program objectives and Alliance members report meeting content to be highly beneficial and relevant to their work.
- COMPACT Alliance members value their engagement with the Alliance, particularly opportunities for networking and professional learning. The investment made in the Alliance is highly appreciated by Projects and is adding personal, Project and Program value.
- Partnerships formed through the COMPACT Alliance have benefitted members at the organisational level and in Project implementation. The Alliance provides opportunities for collaboration and networking among Projects and new relationships and partnerships have formed for those willing to muster the effort.
- The Alliance is a positive force for community harmony and is supporting the NSW Government to respond to emerging threats. Members of the Alliance attest to its function as a positive force for community harmony, and its members have supported the testing and dissemination of key information and resources in times of crises.
- COMPACT and the Alliance provides a valued forum for community sentiment and a platform for diverse voices. The network of diverse organisations with multi-ethnic and multicultural reach however has further untapped potential as a resilience network.
- There is optimism about the sustainability of the Alliance for organisations outside of COMPACT grants funding, but ongoing involvement outside of grant funding may be tenuous. The overall member satisfaction of the Alliance and opportunity to engage with like-minded individuals and organisations appears to support the longevity of the Alliance beyond grant funding.

Conclusion and next steps

Overall, COMPACT is a successful Program with sound evidence it is achieving its intended outcomes and contributing to a more tolerant, confident and connected generation of young people in NSW. The NSW Government should continue to invest in the COMPACT Program, ideally in 4-year funding periods in acknowledgement of the time taken to establish partnerships between community organisations, engage young people and to employ co-design principles. Funding certainty also enables staff certainty and continuity which supports Program outcomes and will continue to attract high calibre and motivated Projects.

As new threats to community harmony emerge, the COMPACT Program should remain agile and open to investing in and supporting community-led responses. For example, future rounds could include Projects that address a range of threats to community harmony, including extremism, hate, racism, polarisation, disinformation, malign foreign influences, overseas conflicts and tensions, or natural or human-generated disasters that impact local community harmony.

In continuing to measure the impact of COMPACT on the NSW community, MNSW should develop and employ a consistent approach to measuring Project participation. Standardised definitions and approaches that account for differences in length and depth of engagement would support a clearer understanding of the Program reach. Future rounds should continue to engage rural and regional areas, and standardised reach approaches would encourage accountability on this front.

01

INTRODUCTION



PROGRAM CONTEXT

The COMPACT Program supports social cohesion through a resilience building approach

The Community Partnership Action (COMPACT) Program is delivered through Multicultural NSW (MNSW) and funded under the NSW Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Program. COMPACT funds a variety of projects delivered to metropolitan and regional NSW communities that aim to foster social cohesion through the engagement of young people. The COMPACT Program is supported by a resilience network and community of practice – the COMPACT Alliance – comprised of over 80 grassroots community organisations, peak charities, non-government organisations (NGOs), private sector partners, schools, universities, government agencies and police.¹

COMPACT takes a whole-of-society approach to community resilience through the preparedness, prevention, response and recovery framework (as indicated in Figure 1 below). Through this framework, COMPACT builds on strengthening community networks and relationships, uniting diverse groups and leveraging collective knowledge to further community harmony.

Threats to social cohesion are complex and evolving

Social cohesion can be described as the positive social relationships which bind people together.² A socially cohesive society reduces exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, and promotes trust.³

While support for cultural diversity in Australia is strong, social cohesion is under pressure and declining.⁴ The pressing issues of extremism, hate, racism, global conflict and foreign interference continue to present specific threats to community harmony.⁵ The 2023 Scanlon Mapping Social Cohesion Report identified economic issues, specifically cost of living pressures and economic inequalities, as the greatest threat to social cohesion.⁶

MNSW established the COMPACT Program in 2015, inspired by the response of the NSW community after the Martin Place siege in 2014.⁷ Since its establishment, COMPACT has evolved to respond to the impacts of new social pressures such as COVID-19, increasing online hate, and overseas conflicts in Ukraine and Gaza.⁸ The Program aim of strengthening social cohesion is in recognition that communities are more resilient in the face of these changes when they are well connected.⁹

¹ Multicultural NSW (2023). *Request for Quotation. COMPACT Program Strategic Partnership: Evaluation of the COMPACT Program 2021-2024*.

² Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government. (2015). *Building social cohesion in our communities*, Australian Human Rights Commission, p.2. Retrieved from https://humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/WEB_Building_social_cohesion_A4_brochure.pdf.

³ OECD (2011), "Social Cohesion and Development", in *Perspectives on Global Development 2012: Social Cohesion in a Shifting World*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/persp_glob_dev-2012-6-en.

⁴ O'Donnel J. (2023). *Mapping Social Cohesion 2023*, Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, p.9. Retrieved from <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2023>.

⁵ Burgess, M. (2023). *Director-General's Annual Threat Assessment*. Australian Security and Intelligence Organisation, 21 February 2023. Retrieved from <https://www.asio.gov.au/director-generals-annual-threat-assessment-2023>.

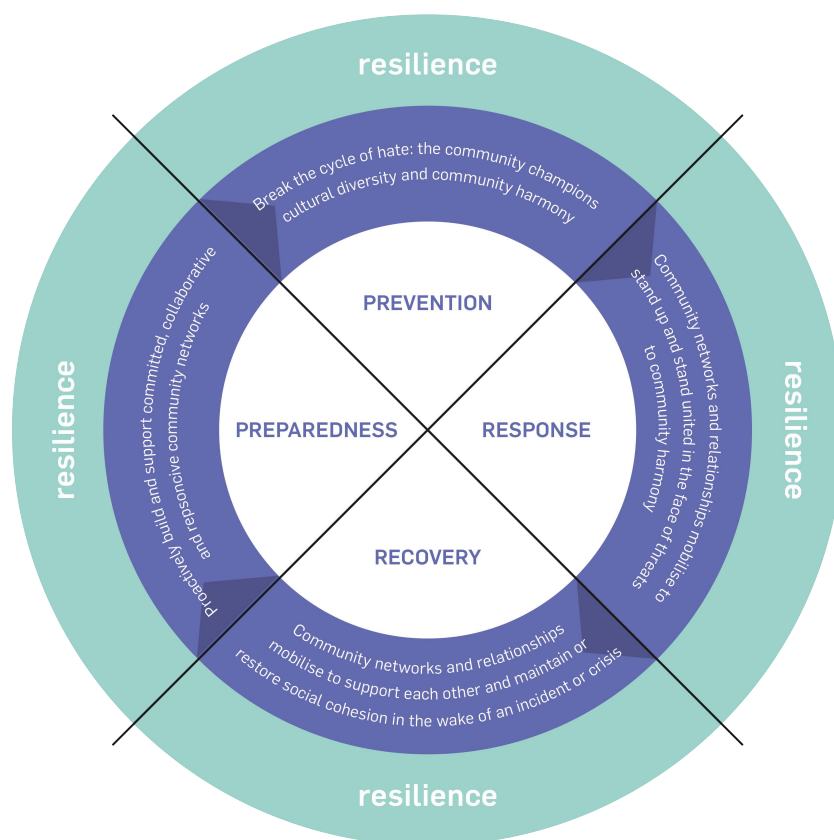
⁶ O'Donnel J. (2023). *Mapping Social Cohesion 2023*, Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, pp 6-8. Retrieved from <https://scanloninstitute.org.au/mapping-social-cohesion-2023>.

⁷ Multicultural NSW. (2023). *The COMPACT Story*. Retrieved from <https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/community-resilience/compact/>.

⁸ Multicultural NSW (2023). *Request for Quotation. COMPACT Program Strategic Partnership: Evaluation of the COMPACT Program 2021-2024*.

⁹ Multicultural NSW. (2021). *COMPACT Program and Grants Information*, p.2. Retrieved from <https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/wpcontent/uploads/2023/01/COMPACT-2020-21-A4-Prospectus.pdf>.

Figure 1 - COMPACT's resilience-based approach



At the program level, the collective outcomes Multicultural NSW work towards can be described as follows:

Preparedness

Proactively build and support committed, collaborative, responsive community networks

Prevention

Break the cycle of hate: the community champions cultural diversity and community harmony

Response

Community networks and relationships mobilise to stand up and stand united in the face of threats to community harmony

Recovery

Community networks and relationships mobilise to support each other and maintain or restore social cohesion in the wake of an incident or crisis

Source: Multicultural NSW

THE COMPACT PROGRAM

Summary of COMPACT Projects

Since 2015, COMPACT has received a total funding amount in excess of \$20 million. Projects funded under the current Program cycle (\$12 million between 2021 and 2024) can be broadly grouped into two main funding categories, the Partnership Projects and the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants Projects. All organisations funded are invited to participate in the COMPACT Alliance, which also comprises government departments and of interested stakeholders from aligned organisations with a commitment to community harmony.

Partnership Projects

A total of 24 Projects working with young people across NSW were delivered, with more than 80 COMPACT Alliance partner organisations. Of these Projects, 14 were funded from 2021-2024 and 10

were funded from 2022-2024. One additional Partnership Project was also funded from 2021-2022.

Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants

Under the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants funding, 19 six-month long Projects were funded in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Six of the organisations leading these Projects were subsequently successful in applying for funding under the 2022-2024 COMPACT Partnership Projects grants round.

Table 1 overleaf summarises the Partnership Projects and Social Cohesion Community Resilience Grants funded between 2021-2024. A more detailed overview, including Project partners, is included in Appendix B.

Table 1 – COMPACT Projects in scope for this report

Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Youth Off The Streets	Communities Inspiring & Teaching Youth (CITY)				✓		
		Walking Together Project					✓
Football NSW	Stand United				✓		
NRL	The Harmony Project				✓		
STARTTS	All One Under the Sun				✓		
Gallipoli Turkish Cultural Foundation	Generation Grit				✓		
PCYC Armidale	Better Together				✓		
Curious Works	Funpark				✓		
Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre	Community Cohesion Collective/ The Street Journal				✓		
All Together Now	Agent C				✓		
Western Sydney Community Forum	Codebreakers Western Sydney				✓		
Gymea Community Aid & Information Service	Empowering Youth to Inspire Change				✓		
Mosaic Multicultural Connections	Northern Youth Exchange				✓		
Islamophobia Register Australia	Advocacy for Victim Support				✓		
Western Sydney University	Positive Peace, Cultural Wellbeing & Youth Agency Initiative				✓		
Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra	Lead the Way				✓		
Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre		Stand Up: Multicultural Youth Conference				✓	
Metro Assist		Youth Champions				✓	
Multicultural Youth Affairs Network NSW		KAIROS				✓	
Catholic Mission		Interfaith Encounters				✓	✓
B'nai B'rith Courage to Care	Common Ground					✓	
		Harmony Taskforce					✓

Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Institute for Economics and Peace		Cohesive Communities				✓	✓
Voices of Women		Voices of Young Women				✓	
Arab Council Australia		Reconnecting East and West				✓	✓
Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency		Mount Druitt Youth for Peace and Understanding				✓	
Somali Australian Community Association of NSW		Somali Youth Community Connect				✓	✓
Greater Western Sydney Giants		Learn with Leek					✓
NSW Jewish Board of Deputies		School Harmony Programs					✓
University of New England		LEAAP					✓
The Trustee for Creating Chances Trust		Youth Game Changers					✓
South West Arts		Emerging from Isolation					✓
Ted Noffs Foundation		Street University LIVE					✓
Northern Beaches Multicultural Communities		Empowering Youth					✓
Youth Action		Collective Resilience					✓
PCYC Hornsby		RISEUP for Unity					✓
Health Consumers NSW		Walking the Talk					✓
Mentoring Men		Empowering Young Men					✓
Islamic Council of NSW		Arts Led Recovery					✓

THIS EVALUATION

Overview

MNSW commissioned Urbis to undertake an Interim and Final evaluation of the 2021-2024 COMPACT Program. The Interim Evaluation Report focused on implementation of COMPACT. Data collection for the Interim phase was undertaken between November 2023 and February 2024. The Interim Evaluation Report was delivered to MNSW in April 2024.

This report is the Final Evaluation Report, which presents the findings related to the outcomes COMPACT has achieved between 2021 and 2024. Data collection for the Final phase primarily took place between April 2024 and July 2024. Relevant findings from the Interim Evaluation Report have also been integrated into this report.

This evaluation was informed by several key data sources across both time periods:

- Desktop review of Program and Project materials, such as:
 - Partnership Project grant applications and reports
 - Social Cohesion and Community Resilience grant applications and reports
 - Published information and outputs from applicable Partnership Projects (including social media content, videos etc.)
 - Additional information supplied by Partnership Projects.
- Stakeholder interviews, including:
 - n=50 COMPACT participants (young people), from 15 unique Partnership Projects (at Outcomes phase)
 - n=42 interviews with Partnership Project lead organisations; n=21 interviews at Interim phase, n=21 at Final phase
 - n=6 interviews with MNSW stakeholders; n=5 at Interim phase, n=1 at Final phase
 - n=8 members of the COMPACT Alliance (at Interim phase)
- Stakeholder surveys, including:
 - n=173 participant respondents; n=103 respondents at Interim phase, n=70 at Final phase

- n=72 Alliance survey respondents; n=55 at December 2023 Alliance meeting, n=17 at March 2024 Alliance meeting

- Observation of n=2 end-of-Project events.

Consultation with participants was independently reviewed and approved by Bellberry Human Research Ethics Committee.

Limitations

The following limitations should be considered when reviewing this report:

- The sample of participants consulted for the evaluation should not be considered representative of the experiences of all participants, for the following reasons:
 - Only a small proportion of all participants that COMPACT reached engaged in the evaluation. Participation in the evaluation was voluntary, and participants self-selected to participate.
 - Participation in the evaluation was limited to participants aged 15 years and over. Parental consent to participate in an interview was obtained for participants aged 15-17 years.
 - Partnership Project staff assisted Urbis with contacting participants interested in the evaluation, such as distributing evaluation surveys and seeking participant consent to provide contact details.
 - Some participants may have participated in the evaluation more than once, having completed both an interview and responded to the survey.
- Data on participant reach was self-reported by Partnership Projects and collated by MNSW. Urbis has not independently verified this data but notes some concerns about its quality. Key issues include that data has been collected inconsistently across Projects. Suggestions to strengthen reach data capture are presented in Section 3.

Due to the above, this report provides commentary on the nature of outcomes achieved by participants that engaged with COMPACT, as reported by those that engaged with the evaluation. However, the extent to which these outcomes were achieved by participants across the entire COMPACT Program is not certain. Project-level evaluation reports, due to MNSW later in 2024, may provide more information on this – these were not available to Urbis at the time of the evaluation.

Key evaluation questions

The focus areas for the evaluation 2021-2024 are outlined below. The Interim Evaluation Report focused on COMPACT Program implementation to date, addressing the domains of Appropriateness, Process, Partnerships and Reach.

This report includes key findings from the Interim Evaluation Report, but also addresses key evaluation domains of Effectiveness and Efficiency. Key evaluation questions are detailed below in Table 2.

Table 2 – Key evaluation questions

Domain	Description
Effectiveness	How effective was the Program in building community resilience (as a means to countering hate, fear and division in society)?
Appropriateness	To what extent was the COMPACT Program implemented fairly and appropriately for all targeted stakeholders? How appropriate is the Program design for building community resilience?
Efficiency	To what extent were the activities undertaken in the most efficient way to achieve Program outcomes?
Process	How well was the Program implemented/delivered (e.g. governance, partnerships, management, contracting, timeframes, expenditure, evaluation of Program contractors)?
Partnerships	To what extent were COMPACT partnerships genuinely effective in developing a sustainable community resilience network and promoting community harmony? Are effective structures in place to build capability for long-term systemic change (e.g. research, relationships, resource production and sharing)?
Reach	To what extent has the Program reached communities impacted by hate, fear and division?



02

KEY FINDINGS

Program Design, Management
and Implementation

PROGRAM DESIGN

The COMPACT Program model demonstrates resilience to changing contexts

The COMPACT Program has expanded and evolved since 2015, but the Program's key objectives and underlying model have remained consistent: COMPACT adopts a whole-of-society, community resilience-based approach to build social cohesion. The Program emphasises youth-led, local solutions, building the capacity of young people to stand united against threats to community harmony including, but not limited to, the threat that extremism poses to social cohesion and community harmony.

The key element of the Program design was [the] whole-of-society element... this is not a Program that would suggest any particular community is at risk, it's saying we're all impacted by extremism, some very directly, all of us in some way, [and] we all have a role to play. – MNSW stakeholder

Since its inception, the Program has been delivered against a backdrop of diverse challenges, and threats to society more broadly, which have stress-tested the underlying Program model. MNSW stakeholders reported that adverse events have revealed strengths of the Program and validated design choices. For example, a MNSW stakeholder reported the Program's whole-of-society approach has rendered it sufficiently adaptable to respond to changes in the external threat landscape, such as the Christchurch masjid attacks and the rise of racist conspiracy theories during the COVID-19 pandemic, which were not as salient when COMPACT was conceived. Further, MNSW stakeholders reported the Program continues to be oversubscribed, indicating a clear demand for a COMPACT-type Program in communities across NSW. This sentiment was echoed among a broad range of stakeholders consulted for this report.

The COMPACT model has been validated at multiple levels of government in Australia and internationally and is considered a flagship Program for MNSW, featuring prominently in the agency's strategic communications activity. MNSW stakeholders reported the key principles underpinning COMPACT have shaped the work of the Community Resilience team (within MNSW) across other projects.

All our Community Resilience-based projects are aligned with COMPACT... [and] the COMPACT Program logic... it really is embedded in everything we do. — MNSW stakeholder

Program learnings and a focus on continuous improvement have informed the design of current and future funding rounds

The design and planning of the second four-year funding cycle of COMPACT Partnership Project grants (2021-2024) and the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants (2022) was strongly informed by previous COMPACT funding rounds. MNSW stakeholders reported many recommendations from the independent evaluation of the COMPACT Program 2016-2018 had been implemented. Recommendations pertaining to investment in evaluation and data collection and reporting templates have been implemented across the 2021-2024 funding round.

A key change recognised by several stakeholders in the current COMPACT funding round has been the focus on expanding the Program to regional areas of NSW. In the initial round of COMPACT funding, Partnership Projects were largely based in the Greater Sydney area and most evaluation participants reported living in Western and South-Western Sydney.¹⁰ MNSW stakeholders reported that expanding the reach of the Program to more regional areas of NSW was a key focus area for the second four-year funding cycle of funding. Six of the 24 Partnership Projects were based exclusively in

¹⁰ Wise P, Roberts S, Formosa J & Chan A. (2018). *Evaluation of the COMPACT Program*, report by Urbis to NSW Government. Retrieved from https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/COMPACT_Evaluation-Report_Final_010219a-3.pdf.

regional areas of NSW, while a further five operated across the state including in regional areas. In addition to geographical reach, MNSW has also acknowledged the need for additional Projects to respond to online threats to social cohesion. This remains a work in progress. MNSW stakeholders highlighted that only one COMPACT Partnership Project explicitly focuses on the online context as a paradigm that enables or disables social cohesion, while many other Projects use online tools, interact with Project participants online, or touch on aspects of navigating the online environment. This Project, Agent C, delivered by All Together Now, aims to equip young people with the tools to identify conspiracy theories and fake news encountered in online spaces. Further information on Agent C can be found in a Project case study on the next page.

More recently in July 2024, MNSW updated the grants guidelines for the next round of COMPACT funding drawing from lessons learned and stakeholder feedback documented in Urbis' Interim Evaluation Report. Changes included adding a new youth engagement method targeted at the online context, clarifying that grant applicants should demonstrate a track record of collaboration and encouraging partnerships at the application stage, and clarifying language around eligibility of recurrent Projects.

Partnership Projects are supported to adopt a co-design approach with young people

A key tenet of COMPACT's design is the engagement and empowerment of young people to stand up and stand united as champions for community harmony.¹¹ MNSW requires applicants to demonstrate how their Project addresses this objective through one or more of seven specified youth engagement methods, to support the active participation of the young people involved.¹²

Analysis of progress reports and insights provided by the Partnership Projects and Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants Projects demonstrates many adopted a participatory or co-design approach to Project design and delivery. The focus on engagement and empowerment of young people has filtered down to most, if not all, Projects.

We ensured... student leaders' ownership of the Project by fully engaging them through consultations to gauge their interests and understand their expectations. By tailoring the Program based on their input, we ensured that the Project was youth-led and aligned with the students' needs and aspirations. (Partnership Project Progress Report)

Youth advocates played a vital role in supporting the delivery of workshops, sharing their knowledge and experiences with younger participants. (Partnership Project Progress Report).

¹¹ Multicultural NSW (2022). *COMPACT: Program and Grants Information 2022-2024*, p.8-9; Multicultural NSW (2022). *COMPACT: Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants 2021-22*, p.6.

¹² Multicultural NSW (2022). *COMPACT: Program and Grants Information 2022-2024*; Multicultural NSW (2022). *COMPACT: Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants 2021-22*, p.6.

EMPOWERING YOUNG PEOPLE TO COMBAT FAKE NEWS AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

"(Agent C is) giving (participants) a better understanding of not just things like misinformation and conspiracy theories, but online hate, racism, privilege, identity... (and) then also how those things interact with each other." Program lead

Organisation: All Together Now

Project Name: Agent C

Project Partners: Headspace, Urbis

Delivery location: Statewide

COMPACT funding years: 2021-2024

DESCRIPTION

Agent C is a training program that aims to enhance the confidence and capacity of young people aged 14-21 to unpack and critically engage with divisive, hateful, and possibly violent conspiracy theories and fake news.

All Together Now developed Agent C in 2021 with reference to literature on what works to build capability in combatting misinformation, and through co-design with a group of interested young people. Agent C was then delivered virtually across NSW between 2022 and 2024, with content continually updated to reflect emerging evidence and trends in the fake news and conspiracy theory landscape.

Agent C was delivered as a series of three workshops. Over the three workshops, participants developed understanding of fake news and conspiracy theories, how identity shapes interactions with them, and strategies to counteract their harmful influence:

1. Making sense of the fake news world: what, why and how?
2. Fake news and conspiracy theories: the connection to racism, power and privilege
3. Fake news and conspiracy theories: what can we do about them?

Agent C attracted significant interest from NSW schools facing issues around student consumption of online misinformation – ultimately, 88% of all Agent C participants engaged with the project in schools.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Agent C contributed to COMPACT outcomes in a number of ways:

Agent C reached 1,012 young people between January 2022 and June 2024, exceeding its target of 720 young people by 41%. A substantial proportion of these participants (42%) engaged with Agent C in settings outside of Greater Sydney (i.e. regional settings).

Participants reported a range of outcomes following their involvement with Agent C:

- 77% felt more confident in their ability to tell when something is fake news
- 76% felt more confident in their ability to tell when something is a conspiracy theory
- 72% reported they had a better understanding of the media
- 72% learned new skills for talking to their friends and family about fake news and conspiracy theories

Nearly all school staff that participated in an evaluation of Agent C reported that the project had helped to address issues related to divisive or hateful misinformation at their school.

I used to not care much about what others think, but this workshop made me wonder more about what some people think and why they may think that way." – Program participant

(After Agent C) I have taken a closer look at news articles and I make sure to do my own research when I see something on TikTok or social media before forming an opinion. – Program participant



COMPACT's partnership focus is a critical aspect of the Program

Another key component of the COMPACT Program model is the emphasis placed on partnerships and collaboration. This starts at the agency level, with MNSW drawing on and strengthening relationships at a whole-of-government level to design and deliver the Program. Notable relationships include the Premier's Department, which provides policy coordination for the NSW CVE Program, the Department of Education, noting that several COMPACT Projects are delivered in schools, and the NSW Police Force, which is a formal partner on Projects led by PCYC NSW and a regular participant in the COMPACT Alliance. Stakeholders from these departments and other NSW agencies have been invited to review Project applications and attend COMPACT Alliance meetings.

Further, MNSW sees itself as partners to organisations funded by COMPACT. This includes providing advice and support to augment Projects, blended with a more conventional accountability role as funder. MNSW's partnership approach has been identified by both MNSW and Partnership Project stakeholders as enabling the flexibility afforded to Partnership Projects, a noted strength of Program implementation.

COMPACT also emphasises the importance of building relationships between organisations delivering Partnership Projects. There is an expectation that organisations receiving funding "contribute to the efforts of the COMPACT Alliance".¹³ Even prior to receiving funding, applicants are encouraged to partner with at least one other organisation in their application.¹⁴ It is noted that this requirement has been relaxed for the next round of funding (which opened July 2024), however is weighted favourably. The extent and sustainability of partnerships established through the Alliance are discussed further in Section 4.

One MNSW stakeholder reported the partnership aspect of COMPACT has been validated, owing to the number of partnerships between organisations established or strengthened through COMPACT. This view was supported by COMPACT Partnership Project stakeholders and Alliance stakeholders, many of whom described wide-ranging benefits of having partnered to deliver Projects. Benefits cited

included the opportunity to leverage each organisation's capabilities, learn from other organisations, and deepen connections to facilitate future collaboration.

Planning and implementation was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic

The planning and implementation of all COMPACT Partnership Projects was disrupted, and in most cases delayed, by the COVID-19 pandemic. While COMPACT is designed to support multi-year Projects, NSW Government budget uncertainty due to the pandemic meant that COMPACT funding was initially only secured for a 12-month period, with a view to extending to up to four years once the four-year budget was approved. To accommodate Project delays due to the pandemic, initial 12-month funding was extended to 18 months. 14 of the 15 Partnership Projects funded for the initial 18 months in these circumstances were then successful in securing COMPACT funding for the remainder of the 2021-2024 period of funding.

COVID-19 also created some opportunities for COMPACT, with MNSW adding additional funding rounds to utilise underspends of delayed Projects. With surplus funds stemming from these delays, MNSW devised and implemented the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grant funding round to support community recovery from the challenges of COVID-19. The Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants were distinct from Partnership Projects in that they:

- operated for six months in 2022, with 19 organisations funded to deliver Projects in this timeframe
- aimed to achieve the same objectives as Partnership Projects, however were smaller in scale and delivered in a shorter timeframe
- were not required to be delivered via a partnership arrangement.

MNSW stakeholders reported the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants funding round provided new learnings for COMPACT and the MNSW team.

¹³ Multicultural NSW (2022). *COMPACT: Program and Grants Information 2022-2024*.

¹⁴ *Ibid*.

The Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants extended the reach of COMPACT, enabling the Program to respond to COVID-19 as a threat to community harmony through an agile and targeted approach.

Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Projects, while successful, had a more limited scope than Partnership Projects. A wide range of stakeholders involved in COMPACT noted the importance of long-term grants funding in social cohesion initiatives such as COMPACT, given the importance of co-design and trust-building with participants as well as the long-term nature of intended outcomes.

Similarly, a Program-level underspend following the COVID-19 pandemic provided MNSW the opportunity to fund 10 additional Partnership Projects from July 2022 to June 2024. These 10 additional Partnership Projects added to the 14 Partnership Projects initially funded from 2021 (initially 15, however one of these initial Projects was not funded beyond 2022). Projects funded from July 2022, while still contributing significantly to overall COMPACT outcomes, tended to have less time in their 'maturity' phase before funding concluded in June 2024. This phase was often associated with participant outcome achievement, as Projects had worked through challenges or issues that had emerged in Project design and early implementation, developed consistency, and deepened relationships with participants. This speaks to the importance of long-term funding for organisations delivering COMPACT Projects.

COMPACT Projects encompass many forms of diversity

In keeping with MNSW's organisational mandate, all COMPACT Projects aim to strengthen community harmony and social cohesion as it relates to cultural diversity. For example, nearly all Projects include elements of learning about different cultural, ethnic or faith backgrounds, or anti-racism principles. However, some COMPACT Projects are also explicitly addressing community attitudes around gender and sexual diversity, including attitudes within cultural and faith communities. For example, KAIROS (delivered by MYAN NSW) focused on supporting female and non-binary

participants to locally address global events that harm women and queer communities, while YCollab (supported by WSU) responded to community feedback to develop a safe space for queer young people in their highly culturally diverse area. There were also some instances of Projects adapting their Project to address evolving threats to community harmony. All Together Now, delivering the Agent C Project, observed a growing number of schools and institutions enquiring about the Project were facing issues of misogyny among young people, and tailored Agent C content accordingly.

The flexibility afforded to Projects in management of COMPACT and the centring of youth-led solutions across many Projects also enabled Projects to address a wide range of issues impacting inclusive, harmonious communities.

Some COMPACT funding has been invested in related strategic objectives

COMPACT funding, supplemented by other funding sources from MNSW and the NSW CVE Program, has been used to develop COMPACT Strategic Partnerships to support Program delivery. These Strategic Partnerships align with COMPACT Program objectives and aim to amplify the Program's impact. COMPACT Strategic Partnerships have included:

- Re-establishing the Witness to War program operated in NSW by STARTTS, which offers support and assistance to families directly exposed or impacted by overseas conflict.¹⁵ The program was re-instated to support the Afghan community in NSW following the fall of Kabul and later expanded to include the Ukrainian community in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.
- Partnering with Sonder, a mental health service provider,¹⁶ to provide safety and wellbeing services to Partnership Project stakeholders.

¹⁵ Head to Health (n.d.). *STARTTS- Witness to War Telephone Support Line*. Retrieved from <https://www.headtohealth.gov.au/service/startts-witness-to-war-telephone-support-line-16594>.

¹⁶ Sonder (2024). *What we do*. Retrieved from: <https://sonder.net.au/about-us/>.

More recently, MNSW has been working in partnership with DIGI, a not-for-profit industry association advocating for the digital industry in Australia,¹⁷ and Love Frankie, a social change creative agency,¹⁸ to develop an online COMPACT Alliance capability. This initiative aims to support the COMPACT Alliance as a 'digital community resilience network' and to link COMPACT participants from different Partnership Projects to form a COMPACT Digital Youth Alliance, that acts as a positive force for community harmony, mirroring the COMPACT Alliance. At the time of this report, the initial Youth Alliance summit had been held – the progression and achievements of the Youth Alliance should be monitored in future COMPACT evaluation activity.

These partnerships have supported COMPACT and MNSW to respond to emerging threats to community harmony, improve support to Alliance stakeholders and potentially expand the reach and impact of COMPACT. One MNSW stakeholder reported the Sonder support had not been utilised as much as expected, however individuals who had accessed the Sonder support greatly appreciated its introduction. One Partnership Project stakeholder noted their work often exposed them to vicarious trauma and this support was an important safety net, particularly if there is an unforeseen situation such as the ongoing conflict in Gaza, which was reported to have had a significant impact on participants and Partnership Project stakeholders alike.

The EAP program they made available... I think that's hugely important... they should be commended on it. It's really, really important that they recognise that this work can induce trauma, it can induce risk, you can be put in a position where you are an accidental counsellor and I think that was really well recognised. – Partnership Project stakeholder

Outside of Strategic Partnerships, other parts of the Community Resilience team not directly funded by COMPACT also reported involvement in furthering COMPACT's strategic objectives. This includes The New Point Magazine, funded separately under the NSW CVE Program. Stakeholders familiar with The New Point Magazine project reported this has

deepened the Community Resilience team's connection with Alliance partners through showcasing their stories and will play a future role in advertising the work of COMPACT and its partners to a larger audience.

Project selection processes were rigorous and have supported a diverse mix of organisations to be involved in COMPACT

MNSW invested significant efforts in developing the grants process and eligibility criteria. The selection process for each round has remained largely the same in terms of objectives and principles, including building on the strengths of diverse communities, implementing youth-led solutions and youth engagement methods. Indeed, an independent audit report of MNSW's grant processes, including for COMPACT, found that "MNSW's grants management practices is positive, indicating a sound approach", with any issues identified considered to be easily rectifiable.¹⁹

¹⁷ Digi (n.d.). *About Digi*. Retrieved from <https://digi.org.au/about/>.

¹⁸ Love Frankie (2020). *Home*. Retrieved from <https://lovefrankie.co/>.

¹⁹ Internal grants management audit report prepared for MNSW, July 2023.

There are two steps in the COMPACT assessment and selection process: an Eligibility Assessment and Panel Assessment.²⁰ The Panel Assessment focuses on:

- appropriateness
- capacity and capability
- value for money
- strategic value
- collaboration.

MNSW stakeholders reported the multi-agency Assessment Panel was composed of staff from several NSW Government agencies, including NSW Premier's Department and NSW Department of Education, and independent CVE experts from Macquarie University. One stakeholder highlighted the importance of the Department of Education's role in providing an educational perspective, given schools are heavily integrated in the Program through partnerships. MNSW stakeholders emphasised significant consideration is undertaken through Assessment Panel discussions and comparing Projects with the broader Program objectives. One stakeholder explained how grant applicants were grouped thematically to avoid direct comparison and promote a well-rounded mix of Projects. Geographic location and method of engagement were also considered.

MNSW stakeholders were generally positive about the Eligibility and Assessment Panel process and emphasised the Assessment Panel and the post-weighted score discussion added a further opportunity to make strategic-focused selections.

We were really happy with the [selected] mix. [We had] regional and metro Projects, Projects that demonstrated a commitment to working with women... [we looked] for geographic balance, Projects target[ing] both male and female participants, [and] ensuring we had a diverse range of activities, because that's part of the assessment process too. We're not going to fund all sports Programs... [or] all arts Programs, we want a mix of activities... we want that diversity of approaches and methods. – MNSW stakeholder.

²⁰ NSW Government (n.d). *COMPACT Program and Grants Information 2022-2024*. NSW Government, p.14-15

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

MNSW's partnership approach supports flexible and adaptive delivery

As noted above, COMPACT is designed and managed through a partnership model that focuses on building trust and collaboration between MNSW and grant recipient organisations. One MNSW stakeholder emphasised the importance of being involved and providing support as a funding partner rather than adopting a contract management approach that is solely focussed on compliance. MNSW stakeholders acknowledged their focus on enabling success and creating conditions of open communication with Projects.

MNSW stakeholders explained this as 'building a bridge' between government and communities to collaboratively work towards building community resilience. One MNSW stakeholder noted successful Program management and implementation is indicated by the lack of major challenges or issues and speaks to the partnership model and the strong relationships between MNSW and grant recipients. These stakeholders highlighted an instance where a grant recipient was struggling with staff turnover within the organisation, and MNSW workshopped with them to identify potential solutions. Consequently, MNSW contacted another grant recipient and connected the two organisations to support future collaboration and joint Project delivery.

We've always wanted COMPACT to be [collaborative]. We don't want to hand funding over and say, 'come back to us at the end of the Program and report back to us about what you did'. We're there to support Projects... to try and get them through challenges. We want to see these Projects succeed. It's not just a compliance funding Program or an acquittal process, we want these Projects to succeed [and] we do what we can to help you make it work. – MNSW stakeholder.

The importance of the partnership model, strong relationships and successful management was echoed during consultation with Partnership Project stakeholders. For example, one stakeholder explained MNSW was highly involved and saw them as a 'partner'. Another stakeholder explained MNSW were flexible to challenges they faced with engaging students during Project implementation and noted MNSW provided suggestions of key contacts within the Alliance to partner with.

Both MNSW stakeholders and Partnership Project stakeholders provided specific examples of Program management flexibility such as allowing submission of reports using partner organisation templates, approving legitimate requests for amended reporting timeframes, and changes to Project design and delivery where Partnership Project stakeholders faced challenges. This further illustrates the Program's iterative and flexible partnership model.


The diversity of selected COMPACT Projects aligned with Program intent





As noted in Section 1, MNSW recognises social cohesion can be supported through a wide range of activities. A key element of Project selection involves ensuring there is a balanced approach to including a range of delivery mechanisms and content. This is demonstrated through MNSW's strategic selection of grant recipients for the Social Cohesion and Community Resilience and Partnership Project rounds.

Projects have undertaken a diverse range of activities to achieve COMPACT's aims. An analysis of Social Cohesion and Community Resilience and Partnership Projects demonstrates that Project activities delivered with participants broadly align with the youth engagement methods MNSW specifies in the COMPACT Program and Grants Information guide,²¹ as demonstrated in Table 3 below. In addition, many Projects also invested time in participant co-design and community engagement to design their Project and activities, described above in Section 2.

²¹ NSW Government (n.d.). *COMPACT Program and Grants Information 2022-24*. NSW Government, p. 9.

Table 3 – Partnership Project youth engagement methods and activities

Youth engagement method	Partnership Project examples	Example activity types
 <p>Creative communicators – using creative methods to amplify the voices of young people and tackle tough issues.</p>	<p>All One Under the Sun</p> <p>Empowering Youth to Inspire Change</p> <p>FUNPARK</p> <p>KAIROS</p> <p>Reconnecting East and West</p> <p>The Street Journal</p> <p>Voices of Young Women</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentations or workshops ▪ Interactive training for creative development ▪ Writing, including creative writing, storytelling or journalism-style writing ▪ Social media content creation ▪ Song recording and production ▪ Interviewing and radio/podcast production ▪ Film/video-making ▪ Painting, drawing, sculpting and public art installations (i.e. murals) ▪ Theatre or dance projects and performances ▪ Community events, including exhibitions and days of celebration ▪ Conferences
 <p>Networkers and influencers – methods to create and sustain networks of youth leaders, allies and influencers.</p>	<p>Advocacy for Victim Support</p> <p>Empowering Youth to Inspire Change</p> <p>Lead the Way</p> <p>Positive Peace, Cultural Wellbeing and Youth Agency Initiative</p> <p>Stand Up</p> <p>Young Leaders Forum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentations or workshops ▪ Interactive training for leadership skill development ▪ Development of communications material/ collateral ▪ Community events, often led by youth leaders trained through the Project ▪ Excursions, including youth camps or conferences
 <p>Critical thinkers and problem solvers – methods to train and upskill young people to identify and respond to threats to community harmony.</p>	<p>Agent C</p> <p>Codebreakers</p> <p>Cohesive Communities</p> <p>Generation Grit 2.0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Presentations or workshops ▪ Interactive training for understanding of issues and strategies to address them ▪ Often delivered with a creative component noted in 'Creative communicators' above

Youth engagement method	Partnership Project examples	Example activity types
 <p>Intergenerational interpreters – youth-led methods to support intergenerational communication and understanding.</p>	<p>No 2021-2024 Partnership Projects explicitly addressed this category.</p>	<p>Nil.</p>
 <p>Volunteers and humanitarians – engage young people in volunteering activities beneficial to the local community.</p>	<p>Communities Inspiring and Teaching Youth Somali Youth Community Connect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local advocacy campaigns ▪ Presentations or workshops ▪ Community events including meals ▪ Excursions ▪ Development of communications material/ collateral ▪ Employment programs
 <p>Community connectors – methods of cross-cultural, cross-regional or interfaith engagement to bring communities together.</p>	<p>Better Together Interfaith Encounters Northern Youth Exchange Youth Champions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Excursions ▪ Presentations or workshops ▪ Interactive training to build cross-cultural understanding ▪ Community events
 <p>Sports for social cohesion – engaging and inspiring young people through sports.</p>	<p>The Harmony Project Mount Druitt Youth for Peace and Understanding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical activities, including touch football and soccer ▪ Excursions to participate in sport ▪ Presentations or workshops

As demonstrated in the table above, a shared activity across most youth engagement methods is some form of presentation, workshop or interactive training. Many Projects use this as the basis for participants to develop and deliver a project of their own using what they have learnt. Additionally, Projects utilising creative activities are prominent among current Partnership Projects, with a wide array of creative methods used to engage participants.

Progress and acquittal reports from Partnership Projects indicate most Projects are achieving their aims and are reporting a broad range of key achievements. Some of these achievements include building formal partnerships and relationships with other organisations to provide access to additional workforce resources, capability building and knowledge sharing.

We developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with [a nearby organisation]. We have also been building our relationship with [another COMPACT Alliance member] since December 2022. This has involved a number of meetings and invitations for collaboration. [Both organisations] have been working together on Train the Trainer initiatives. – Partnership Project Progress Report

Partnership Projects and Social Cohesion and Community Resilience acquittal reports highlighted another key achievement was high levels of enthusiasm and engagement from participants. Organisations reported that this has contributed to higher levels of participation in other programs and service offerings within their organisation.

[Our] Youth Leadership Committee (YLC) participants have displayed consistent engagement, actively attending meetings and expressing a keen interest in participating in other engagement opportunities we offer, such as local forums and community feedback evenings, which are hosted in collaboration with our local partners and industry associates. – Partnership Project Progress Report

Projects have adapted Project delivery to meet changes in the organisational and external context, including responding to participant needs

Social Cohesion and Community Resilience and Partnership Project acquittal reports indicate most Projects have adapted their delivery approach over the course of their Project, for a variety of reasons. This was enabled by the flexible approach MNSW took to administering the Program, outlined earlier in this report.

Many Partnership Projects adopted a participatory or co-design approach to Project design and delivery, allowing participants to influence the activities or Project outputs, within the frame of the Project's aims. For example, The Street Journal (delivered by Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre) pivoted from being a participant-led study of how trust plays out on Facebook, to being a more hands-on, content creation-focused Project using an Instagram account. Regardless of changes in implementation, almost all Projects reported their overarching vision for their Project or key intended outcomes had not changed substantially, if at all.

Participants interviewed greatly appreciated opportunities to influence or choose the nature of Project content, activities, or outputs. This flowed through to achievement of outcomes, as participants reported having a say in the direction of the Project increased their overall engagement and satisfaction.

(Our Project) truly was participant-led, [participants] came up with the ideas, they said 'this is important to us', 'this is how you tell our story', this is our story, and this is how we want to tell it, this is how we want it to look like. – Project participant

It wasn't a program we imposed on young people. That's why that initial phase was quite important... it was a mix of co-design and consultation. – Project lead

Every time that we had an idea... we were never told no. That's something I loved the most because I think that's why we achieved so much. – Project participant

A significant barrier to Project implementation was staff turnover within funded organisations, primarily at the Project coordinator/implementer level, rather than organisational leadership. These staff members were often those with the most intimate knowledge of the Project and the closest relationships with participants. Projects that enjoyed staff and organisational consistency tended to be well-progressed, while those that faced turnover of key staff were typically delayed. This is an issue facing many community service organisations, with the sector reporting significant workforce challenges including lower levels of retention and volunteerism since COVID-19.²²

In the external environment, acquittal reports and interviews with Partnership Project stakeholders revealed key barriers to implementation were COVID-19, natural disasters such as floods, and difficulty engaging partners. COVID-19 significantly delayed and impacted delivery for most Projects across 2021 and 2022. This was because of several factors, including NSW Government mandated stay-at-home orders, health anxieties, and increased regulations through mandated check-ins. While a significant number of Partnership Project organisations could address COVID-19 barriers through adapting their delivery model to online sessions, several organisations faced significantly decreased participant engagement levels. Partnership Project stakeholders also expressed their preference for face-to-face delivery as a more engaging delivery model for their participants.

The case study on the following page, Reconnecting East and West, is an example of a Project that was adapted in response to feedback from participants. The Project was originally planned as a series of conversational forums to be held in the community but was adapted to be delivered as a radio show based on feedback from participants.

²² Clarke J, Morley C, Warren S, Carrington K, Vitis L, Ryan V, Ball M. (2023). 'Resilience and Resistance in the Community Sector: Organisational Challenges and Responses by the Australian DFV Sector in the Time of COVID-19 Pandemic', *The British Journal of Social Work* 53(1), 349–367. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcac128>

A PLATFORM FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO EXPLORE ISSUES THAT MATTER TO THEM

Young people need to be represented more in mainstream and traditional media forms, rather than always being sidelined to social media campaigns or other methods such as like protests as a way of having a voice.
– Project participant

Organisation: Arab Council Australia

Program Name: Reconnecting East and West

Delivery location: Sydney metro

COMPACT funding years: 2022-2024

DESCRIPTION

Reconnecting East and West sought to increase young people's capacity to respond to challenges and threats to community harmony, resolve conflicts and actively promote social cohesion.

Originally developed as a pilot Project to respond to disparities experienced by communities in different areas of Sydney during the COVID-19 lockdowns. The Reconnecting East and West Project provided a platform for young people from different parts of Sydney to come together and share their diverse experiences of growing up in different communities across Sydney.

The Project engaged young people aged between 16 and 25 years. While its original intent was to hold guided conversational forums and public events across different Sydney LGAs to facilitate the sharing of young people's stories and experiences, the Project evolved to focus on using radio as a platform for young people to share their stories and discuss the issues affecting them.

Participants in the Project received training in media literacy, media protocols, research and critical thinking, and technical skills in radio production and post-production.

The radio Project focused on exploring disparities between the East and West of Sydney, producing a total of seven episodes. Each episode was focused on a specific form of inequality, including health disparity, postcode disadvantage, police monitoring, right to protest, housing, and media representations.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Reconnecting East and West has supported the achievement of stronger social cohesion outcomes by:

Supporting young people to develop their research and critical thinking skills, and improve their media literacy. By engaging in research and critical analysis activities necessary to develop each radio show, participants strengthened their ability to break down complex issues and examine them from multiple perspectives.

Supporting young people to build their public speaking skills, allowing them to share their unique perspectives and experiences which helps foster empathy and understanding among diverse groups. Such sharing can breakdown cultural barriers and promote social cohesion by highlighting common human experiences and values.

Providing a public platform not typically accessible to young people to discuss their views and perspectives on key issues affecting them.

Creating a community resource which will endure beyond the life of COMPACT. This means young people have ongoing opportunities to create, discuss and share their stories and experiences through radio.

Everyone was very much committed to this program... we're really, really invested and we feel like what we're doing here is very, very important. It was a very positive experience, but I think the most enlightening part of the process was the fact that all these young people had different views and opinions and perspectives of their own. – Project participant



The case study on the following page, Lead the Way, is an example of a Project that has been adapted to meet the changing needs of participants. The Project was adapted to respond to less commonly understood elements of social cohesion, namely enabling the Project to meet the needs of gender diverse participants from varied backgrounds in addition to meeting the needs of female students.

The only barrier we had was... unexpected staffing shortages... which reduced our capacity to engage with the Alliance meetings as much as we would have liked. – Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Project stakeholder.

At the start of 2022 when we started re-engaging with the schools, it was really difficult. [T]hey still had COVID protocols... that was a massive challenge, so I had to think about alternative ways of how to deliver [the Project]. Online is okay, but the face-to-face interaction is a lot better. – Partnership Project stakeholder.

Projects offered a variety of engagement methods

COMPACT Partnership Projects utilised a range of engagement methods to achieve Project and Program-level outcomes. This was partly shaped by choices made in COMPACT Program design as MNSW recognises social cohesion can be supported through a wide range of activities. MNSW specifies several youth engagement methods that prospective Projects should align with.²³ A key element of Partnership Project selection involves ensuring there is a good mix of cohorts and skills present across COMPACT. In keeping with this, Projects are undertaking a diverse range of activities to achieve COMPACT's aims. Partnership Project activities delivered to participants broadly align with the youth engagement methods specified in the COMPACT Program and Grants Information guide, as demonstrated above in Table 3.

Program design also shaped the depth of engagement targeted by Partnership Projects. As above, Partnership Projects enjoyed some latitude in how they sought to address intended COMPACT outcomes, with Projects ranging in their intended scope and reach. This allowed for variation in the depth of engagement required from participants across Projects. Some Projects adopted approaches with an intense period of engagement over a shorter time, often with higher numbers of unique participants across the Project. For example, The Harmony Project, delivered by the NRL, ran over the course of a school term and reached over 5,000 participants in the 2022 to 2023 financial year. Other Projects worked with a smaller number of participants, usually over a longer period. For example, MCCI's Let's Lead activity (delivered as part of their Project, Lead the Way), provided a leadership program to participants over 12 months, which had approximately 15 regular attendees in the 2022 to 2023 financial year.

There were also some notable commonalities across Projects. The clearest was the general subject matter of Projects which aligned with the COMPACT Program's key aim and MNSW's organisational mandate to encourage community harmony and combat racism and division. Similarly, nearly all Projects incorporated some element of participant discussion and opportunities to share their experiences of the Project with one another. COMPACT Projects largely achieved the Program's intention that participants can discuss issues in a safe environment.

²³ NSW Government (n.d). *COMPACT Program and Grants Information 2022-2024*. NSW Government, p.9.

SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE TO DREAM BIG ABOUT THEIR FUTURES

I've definitely built confidence through the program. I was very shy growing up, but it's helped me break free of that shyness. And being able to meet new people is a privilege and getting to know them and what they've gone through is very good thing to do. – Project participant

Organisation: Multicultural Communities Council, Illawarra

Project Name: Lead the Way

Project Partners: University of Wollongong, Office of Sport NSW via Duke of Edinburgh International Award, Illawarra Women's Health Centre

Delivery location: Illawarra

COMPACT funding years: 2021-2024

DESCRIPTION

Lead the Way is a collaborative youth leadership Project seeking to empower the next generation of community leaders in the Illawarra Area.

Lead the Way provided young women, aged 15 to 24 years, with a supportive environment and opportunities to challenge cultural stereotypes faced by young women from migrant and refugee backgrounds.

Adapting Project design to accommodate gender diverse participants from migrant and refugee backgrounds, the Project aimed to:

- help participants build greater awareness of their own inherent strengths and resilience
- equip young women with new skills to navigate employment and community pathways
- provide mentoring support, via existing women's networks and role models, to support participants' ongoing learning and personal growth.

Participants were also offered opportunities to engage in a 12-month youth development program.

Lead the Way was a collaborative Project run in partnership with the Office of Sport, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, SCARF Refugee Support, The University of Wollongong and the Illawarra Women's Health Centre.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Lead the Way has supported stronger social cohesion outcomes by:

Providing opportunities for young women to challenge gender stereotypes and explore careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). This was facilitated through a partnership with the University of Wollongong. Accessing the university campus broadened participants' vision for future engagement, with participants considering attending university an attainable outcome.

Adapting Project design to accommodate gender diverse participants from migrant and refugee backgrounds, promoting further inclusivity for students more likely to experience multiple challenges to their identity and sense of belonging.

Providing opportunities for participant's families to engage with support services and build trust, safety and connections. This also had a positive impact on the wider community.

Supporting participants to build their confidence and skills to advocate for themselves, share their lived experience and discuss topics that matter to them.

It was really interesting to see how we all connected. I think culture is a big part of that, because most of my friends are not from multicultural backgrounds. It was good to be able to connect on that level, and I had that with everyone in the program. – Project participant



Strong partnerships between organisations and organisational reputation were key enablers in supporting delivery

An analysis of Project acquittal and progress reports and consultation with Partnership Project stakeholders indicates a key enabler to implementation was being a more established organisation with a well-recognised name and established trust within local communities. Acquittal and progress reports show grant recipients partnered with a mix of other organisations and agencies such as NSW Police, local schools, and other funded organisations to support access to additional activities and resources for their own participants. This included activities such as workshops, conferences and community events.

Consultation with Partnership Project stakeholders revealed trust between organisations and pre-existing relationships allowed organisations to reach their target cohorts and resource their Projects more efficiently. One stakeholder observed their relationships with communities and schools had enabled trust to be built with participants and contributed to successful delivery of activities. Another Partnership Project stakeholder suggested lived experience and local knowledge of the Project leads supported trust building with participants and encouraged high levels of engagement.

Relationships between funded organisations also played a role in facilitating partnerships with schools and allowing Partnership Projects access to participants and physical spaces. Many of the partnerships were established either through the joint grant application or the Alliance. However, some organisations had been partnering for some time. Therefore, there are opportunities to further leverage the strong partnerships, relationships and networks within the Alliance to support Project delivery in the future.

The Social Cohesion and Resilience Project built trust and collaboration across cultural, religious and geographic communities and between communities and government. [This was done] by building trust and collaboration with law enforcement agencies such as NSW Police to deliver culturally appropriate law enforcement workshops and seminars for the... CALD young people of Western and South-Western Sydney. – Partnership Project stakeholder

One of the reasons why the program has been so successful is that [Partnership Project organisation] has been working in multicultural communities in [location] for nearly 50 years and so we have very good relationships with communities, but also with schools and stakeholders. There's a high degree of trust and rapport with the partners working with us on this initiative. – Partnership Project stakeholder

Relationships were a key enabler. It was core to us. I don't think we would have started this program without our connection to [Alliance member] because [they] have such strong ties and credibility with the [particular community], I don't think we could have gone to [a] school and just asked to run our program... it was the fact [Alliance member] wrote to the principals [they] knew and spoke highly of our work. – Partnership Project stakeholder

03

KEY FINDINGS

Participant outcomes



PROFILE OF COMPACT PARTICIPANTS AND PROJECTS

COMPACT reached more than 23,000 young people across NSW between 2021 and 2024

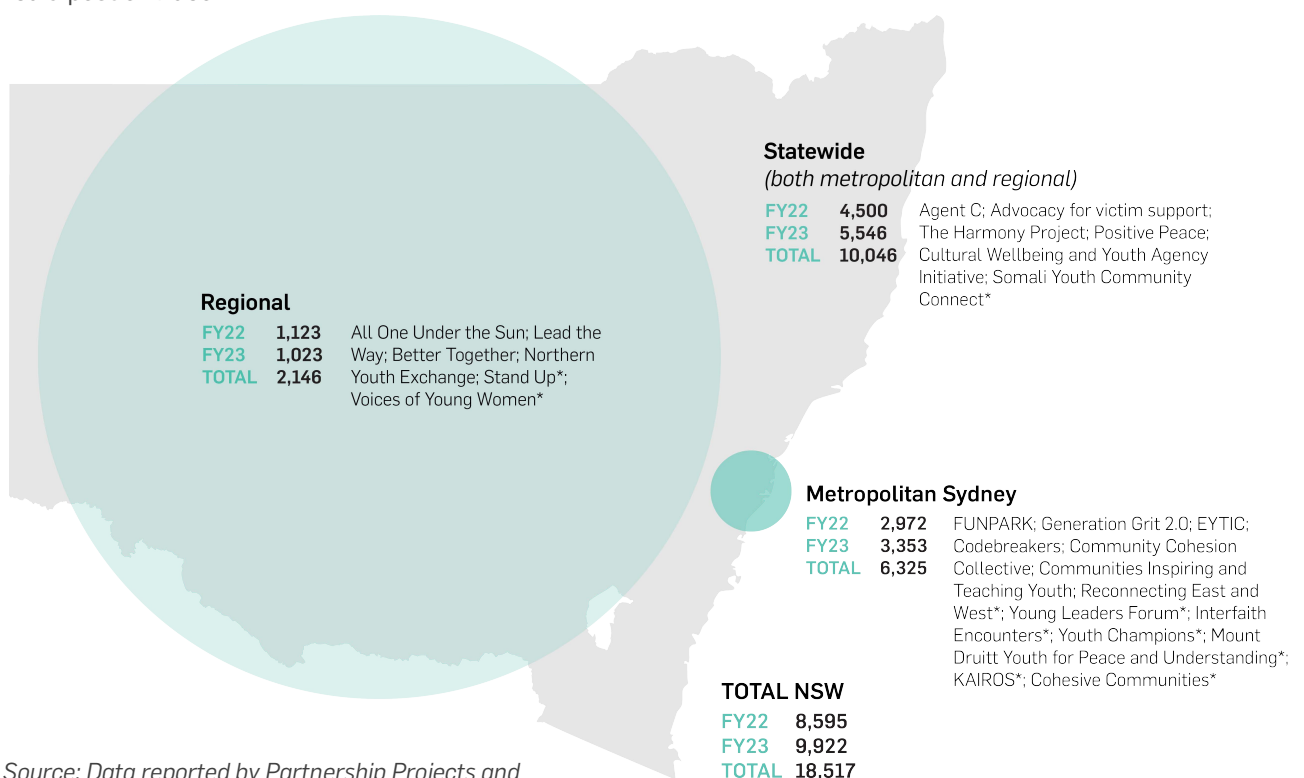
Based on reporting from Partnership Projects, MNSW estimates COMPACT-funded Projects have reached over 18,000 young people between 2021 and 2023 (to June 2023). Additionally, reporting available from a small number projects for the 2023-24 financial year brings this to an estimated over 23,000 young people between 2021 and 2024, with this figure expected to rise as more reporting becomes available.

This means COMPACT-funded Projects have now reached over 80,000 young people since the first Projects commenced in 2016, as estimated by MNSW. There are likely to be more young people who have been reached by COMPACT through involvement with initiatives such as the COMPACT Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants. There are also further community members reached through interaction with content created by COMPACT Partnership Projects or Strategic Partnerships such as engaging with a Project social media post or video.

MNSW stakeholders reported more young people in regional areas were engaged after the Program's deliberate expansion into the regions. Figure 2 provides an overview of Program reach data reported by Partnership Projects across two financial years, demonstrating more than 2,000 young people have been engaged in regional NSW during the current COMPACT funding round. This number is likely to be far greater, given the number of regional participants in Projects operating statewide are unknown.

It should also be noted the reach of COMPACT Partnership Projects over this period is likely to have been significantly impacted by COVID-19, associated school closures and the transition to remote learning. Many Partnership Project stakeholders reported these complications had substantive impacts on their proposed Projects, and limited options for youth engagement.

Figure 2 – COMPACT Reach (to June 2023)



Source: Data reported by Partnership Projects and collated by MNSW. Projects denoted with a star (*) were not funded as Partnership Projects in FY22.

COMPACT reach data is inconsistently collected and reported

COMPACT reach data should be interpreted with caution for two reasons. Firstly, Partnership Projects work in different ways and with different levels of intensity with participants. Partnership Projects frequently reported it could be challenging to engage young people on a consistent basis, with attendance and engagement often fluctuating over their involvement with the Project. Additionally, some Projects are 'light touch' with participants engaged for a brief period, while other Projects work with a smaller group of participants more intensely or for a longer period. Some Projects may generate broader ripple effects from their participants, who in turn reach others in their social circles and expand the influence of the Project. Many participants and Projects also hosted events, created content, and produced resources that many people interacted with, extending the Program's reach in ways not captured in reporting (examples of Project outputs are included on the following page). Reach data therefore does not provide a full picture of Project engagement.

Secondly, there is currently little standardised participant data collection required by Projects, and as a result there is varying quality and depth of data collection across COMPACT Partnership Projects. This precludes further analysis of the characteristics of participants, including their age, gender, ancestry, religious affiliation, migrant or refugee status, and languages spoken. However, Partnership Projects reported working closely with young people from diverse backgrounds. On a small scale, this is demonstrated in the respondents to Urbis' COMPACT participant surveys – across both surveys:

70%

at least 70 per cent of respondents reported one or both of their parents were born overseas

66%

at least 66 per cent spoke a language other than English at home.

Reach data collection could be strengthened through incorporating a threshold for the depth of engagement of recorded Project participants. This could distinguish regular, ongoing participants from more casual participants, or those that interact with a Project or its outputs but have no other involvement. Requirements for additional data collection should be balanced against the potential burden on Projects, and Premier's Department grant requirements that data collection requirements should be only what is necessary.²⁴

Projects delivered against at least one COMPACT Program outcome

Partnership Projects employed various approaches to address COMPACT outcomes. Notable differences in approaches included:

Scope of Project

There was variation in the intended scope of Partnership Projects, with Projects sitting along a spectrum of narrow to broader intended scopes. Projects with tightly defined scopes included All Together Now's Agent C Project, which leveraged research and co-design with participants to focus on the issue of young people interacting with fake news and conspiracy theories. Projects such as Agent C were geared towards raising awareness and building skills to support participants to thoroughly address a specific issue (or issues). Other Projects had a more general scope, often commencing with intended overall longer-term aims and/or a particular activity as a starting point, which could evolve or change over the course of the Project. For example, Youth off the Streets' Communities Inspiring and Teaching Youth (CITY) had a broad aim of empowering young people to address community issues. This resulted in delivery of a range of activities, events and initiatives, including an online platform, a study support network, and a community resourcing toolkit to support volunteer work. Irrespective of scope, both narrow and broader approaches could still address a range of intended COMPACT Program outcomes.

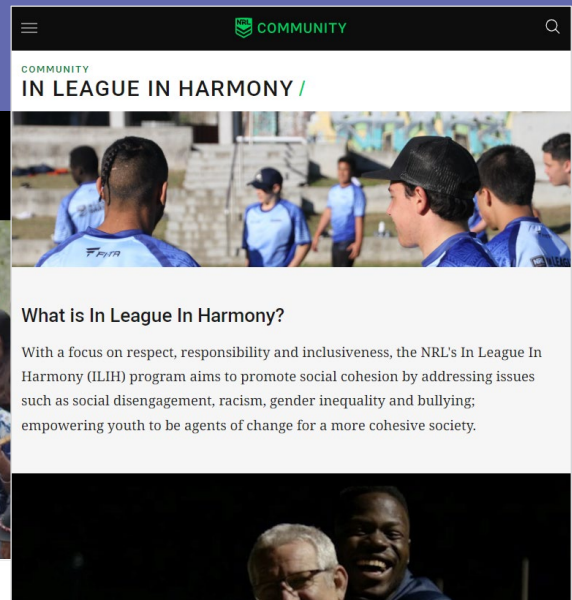
²⁴ Department of Premier and Cabinet (2022). *Grants Administration Guide*, NSW Government, p.34. Retrieved from <https://www.nsw.gov.au/grants-and-funding/grants-administration-guide..>



gymecommunityaid • Follow
anayemeklerimiz • Original audio

gymecommunityaid The Empowering Youth To Inspire Change (EYTIC) youth ambassadors at The Jannali High School delved into the world of Aboriginal culture and Art at a special painting workshop led by the talented Auntie Deanna. What an incredible day it was, canvas's were transformed into 2 stunning pieces of art, symbolizing the beauty of inclusion and community. Each canvas represented the unique voice of the student group, coming together as one.

#Empoweringyouth#Inspiringcha
#inclusion #Auntiedeanna #TJHS
#paintingworkshop
#Empoweringyouthprogramsinc
52 w



Young multicultural women to 'Lead the Way' in the Illawarra

June 24, 2021 | No Comments

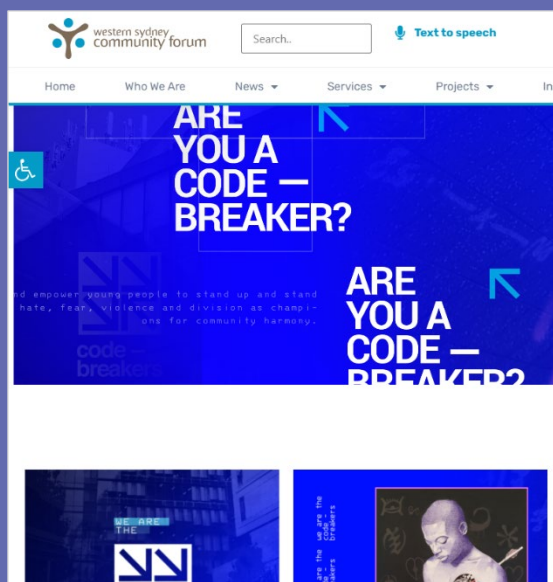


60 young women from multicultural backgrounds will take part in 'Lead the Way', a new collaborative youth leadership initiative funded by the Multicultural NSW COMPACT program which will support and develop the next generation of community leaders in the Illawarra.

The youth initiative is led by the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI) in collaboration with the Office of Sport who delivers The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award under license in NSW, SCARF and the Illawarra Women's Health Centre - all four organisations with extensive experience working with young people and culturally diverse communities and broad network locally.

"I learned so much from these amazing women. They told me that I should never give up and always keep trying," says Zahra, who would like to get into construction and discussed her career options with women mentors from various industries at a networking session at Wollongong Youth Centre recently.

"It is great to see communities, private business, industry, government and not-for-profit organisations work together for young women to make successful life transitions and pursue their dreams and aspirations. 'Lead the Way' seeks to inspire and empower young women to exercise practical leadership and take action for themselves, their families, and their communities," says Allyson Pazos, MCCI's Youth & Community Manager.



Target cohort

Projects also differed in the cohorts they targeted for participation. For example, Voices of Young Women (delivered by Voices of Women) focused on rural NSW women from a range of backgrounds, while KAIROS (delivered by MYAN NSW) worked only with female or non-binary young people. The majority of Partnership Projects did not target participation from specific cohorts, however some Projects targeted certain groups of participants based on existing organisational affiliation with a particular community or based on community context. For example, PCYC NSW's Better Together and STARTTS' All One Under the Sun specifically sought to include Ezidi young people, as the locations for both Projects are key Ezidi refugee resettlement areas (Armidale and Coffs Harbour, respectively).

Activities developed

Projects offered an array of activities to support achievement of intended outcomes. While patterns emerged across Projects and were influenced by COMPACT Grant Guidelines, each Project was unique in its activity offering. This is further detailed above in Section 2.

The mix of Projects and the varying approaches taken strengthened the overall COMPACT Program, enabling participation from a broad range of young people with different backgrounds and interests. The flexibility afforded to Projects to tailor their scope, target cohort and activities supported innovative Project ideas and community centred and youth-led solutions – this is discussed further above in Section 2.

PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

COMPACT participants have learned about and celebrated diversity within their communities

Participants of COMPACT Projects learned not only about different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds, but in many instances were able to reflect on and celebrate their own.

80%

of participants agreed they have learnt about different ways of life as a result of their participation in COMPACT.

80%

of participants agreed they have learnt about different perspectives as a result of their participation in COMPACT.

Projects employed a range of approaches to develop participant understanding of different backgrounds. These included:

- Workshops, seminars or talks delivered to participants, such as Gallipoli Turkish Cultural Foundation's Generation Grit 2.0 delivering modules on topics such as combatting Islamophobia, colourism, white supremacy, institutional racism and xenophobia.
- Artistic, musical or performance activities, such as STARTTS' All One Under the Sun hosting concerts featuring participants performing original music, and a theatre production that educates the audience about anti-racist behaviours.
- Cultural events, such as participants of PCYC NSW's Better Together arranging a community event that highlighted various foods and cultures, including those of Ezidi participants.
- Immersive experiences, such as visiting places of significance for other cultures or religions. For instance, participants from Catholic Mission's Interfaith Encounters' Project frequently reported visiting places of worship, such as mosques or churches, among their Project highlights.

Many Projects also integrated building participant understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives as a core part of their Project. For example, visiting other parts of NSW and bringing communities together was the premise behind Mosaic Multicultural Connections' Northern Youth Exchange Project. Participants reported a sharp increase in their understanding of the history of Aboriginal people as taught to them by Aboriginal Elders.

Across Projects, many participants reported pride in sharing aspects of their identity, including culture and faith, and the comfort and sense of belonging they felt being accepted by their peers. For example, participants reported sharing their story with new friends, and expressed their culture through a range of mediums, such as creating videos, and through song and art.

Everybody in the Project is from completely different backgrounds. From speaking [with] them, I'm getting to know... their traditions, their religions, the values from their cultures, seeing how that has made them the person they are. Even though we're all so different and diverse, we can all come together over a shared interest. All our different backgrounds offer different perspectives on the situation. – Project participant

Australian culture brings everyone together. We come from different perspectives and nationalities, but we share common values. [The Project] gave us the chance to express our values and identify our common values. – Project participant

Participants demonstrated increased empathy and respect for others

Participants reflected that, having learnt more about different ethnic, faith and cultural backgrounds and having met new people from these backgrounds, their empathy and respect for others had increased. Participants reported a higher level of awareness of other cultures, and how their words and actions could impact on others.

77%

of participants agreed they could discuss issues that mattered to them without being judged during COMPACT activities.

Some participants reflected learning more about and meeting people from other cultures and faith backgrounds had prompted reflection of their own identity, and the implicit biases or assumptions they held. In some instances, this extended to deep-seated issues between some ethnic or cultural groups, stemming from historical grievances or conflict.

Some Projects specifically delivered activities centred around building participant empathy and tolerance. Many participants also reported this could be self-driven, derived from skills they had learned through the Project, conversations they had with other participants, and the friendships they had developed.

Further, participants expressed that they were better able to harness their curiosity about ethnic, cultural and faith backgrounds that differed from their own. Some participants reported some initial hesitancy when talking to participants from different backgrounds to their own, due to fear of saying the wrong thing. Many participants reported this fear dissipated over time and increased their confidence to approach new people and broaden their social network.

I wasn't really [living in] areas where I knew a lot of refugees, so it was very eye opening for me to [understand] their struggles, [which] were so unfortunate. [It] definitely made me more motivated to continue the program and really try to help them. – Project participant

Seeing all these youth members... take that time out of their days to come and listen to these programs [about racism and discrimination has] really opened my eyes about how much they actually care about these issues... they care more than I thought they would have. – Project participant

I was talking to one of the girls who is Palestinian... about the current conflict in Israel and Palestine, Australia's political landscape and response to world events, and the racism and stereotyping that has evolved from [that]. Our conversations [have]... helped me become more conscious and reevaluate my own understanding. – Project participant

Projects adopted a range of approaches to bolster participant confidence

Participants attributed an increase in self-confidence to their participation in COMPACT Projects. Participant improvements in confidence were fostered in a number of ways:

- **Training or workshops:** some Projects included specific training that aimed to increase participant confidence, both in specific areas (such as encountering misinformation or microaggressions) and more generally (i.e. leadership training, discussed further below). Some Projects also included training on community leadership including theories of community development.
- **Skill development:** many Projects offered participants the opportunity to learn new skills or further develop existing skills. This included critical thinking skills and creative skills, such as songwriting, poetry, art or photography.
- **Providing a platform:** some Projects gave participants the opportunity to share what they had learned or developed to a broader audience. This was achieved through online platforms (such as The Street Journal, which provided young content creators greater exposure for their work) and in-person events (i.e. an anti-racism forum delivered by Generation Grit 2.0, All One Under the Sun's concert).

For participants, this increased confidence was reported to manifest in a number of ways:

- **Developing new social connections** through shared activities: as described above, hesitancy among some participants to talk with or ask questions about others' cultural or faith backgrounds dissipated over time as connections strengthened.
- **Consideration of new pathways and opportunities:** skill progression, accompanied by a forum to demonstrate these skills, provided young people confidence they could pursue these endeavours as future voluntary work, hobbies or employment.

I've definitely built confidence through the program. I was very, very shy growing up, but [the Project] ...it's helped me break free of that shyness. Being able to meet new people is a privilege, and getting to know them and what they've gone through is [a] very, very good thing to do. – Project participant

I am an introvert and there are challenges in that... teamwork and meeting new people is challenging for me. This program helped me overcome some of my fears around public speaking, meeting new people, [and] having confidence. – Project Participant

[The Project] taught me how to be more confident... some of my talents [came] out, like I can actually write a song or I can actually be a mentor for someone else. I can do drama... I'm going out there and presenting [on] issues like racism to schools and making it in drama form. [It] was a bit challenging, but in a way that builds your thinking and challenge[s] you. – Project participant

COMPACT augments participant leadership capacity and perceptions of agency

In addition to increases in confidence, there were demonstrated improvements to participant leadership capacity and perceptions of their own agency. This is illustrated by responses to the participant survey.

79% of participants agreed they could contribute to their local community.

76% of participants agreed they had learnt new leadership and advocacy skills.

74% of participants agreed they had greater confidence to engage in leadership and/or advocacy opportunities.

74% of participants agreed they felt more confident speaking up among friends and family about issues that mattered to them.

Participants reported a range of leadership opportunities and forums to create change they had taken up during or due to their involvement with COMPACT Projects – these included volunteering for local community groups or forums, developing advocacy campaigns, and even becoming volunteers or paid employees of COMPACT funded organisations to support delivery of Partnership Projects. There were also many instances of one-to-one leadership opportunities, such as participants mentoring other young people. The Empowering Youth to Inspire Change Project, detailed below, included a leadership component targeting school students in South-East Sydney to better understand and respond to racism.

It should also be acknowledged that participants commenced COMPACT Projects with varying levels of confidence and leadership capacity. For the most part participants involved in the evaluation reported holding leadership aspirations or sought some influence in their community prior to their involvement with COMPACT Projects, and their involvement with COMPACT had accelerated their leadership journey. However, there were also some remarkable examples of young people that hadn't previously seen themselves as leaders assuming this mindset.

When I graduated [I was] taken on board as a facilitator... it was like a new experience for me because I was teaching and mentoring... it's a great feeling. – Project participant

[Before the Project] I wouldn't really be involved much, now I'm trying to put myself out there and I'm trying to bring awareness to things that people might not have thought about before... even if it's not a big impact... it could be a big impact in somebody else's life. – Project participant

I enjoyed the experience of [the Project], it's kind of inspirational. I guess knowing how things work, knowing how things can be done [in my community], I'm optimistic today. – Project participant

BUILDING ON STUDENT'S POTENTIAL TO BECOME LEADERS AND EDUCATORS IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES

I was able to teach my fellow peers what I had learned, and they were able to teach me more... I helped them become leaders and I to have a voice themselves and become a lot more confident. – Project participant

Organisation: Gymea Community Aid

Project Name: Empowering Youth to Inspire Change

Project Partners: Shopfront Art Co-op, Headspace, Georges River Council, Reg Mahoney and Associates, Sutherland Shire Council, Bayside Council, NSW Police Youth Liaison Officers

Delivery location: South-Eastern Sydney: St George and Sutherland

COMPACT funding years: 2021-2024

DESCRIPTION

Empowering Youth to Inspire Change (EYTIC) brought together young people, including those from migrant and refugee backgrounds, from the Sutherland and St George regions in south-east Sydney. It provided upskilling and mentoring to young people to become ambassadors within their schools to drive and implement social cohesion Projects via a youth leadership, peer education and creative arts.

The Project was a collaboration between Gymea Community Aid and partners Shopfront Arts Co-op, Reg Mahoney & Associates, Sutherland Shire Council, Georges River Council, Bayside Council, Cronulla Sharks and Black Rose Media.

During 2022-23, 92 young people were recruited from five schools in the Sutherland and St George regions. Youth ambassadors received training in critical thinking, communication and leadership skills and practical strategies to build resilience and emotional intelligence and were offered the opportunity to run social cohesion activities within their schools. All participants received anti-racism and active bystander training.

Youth ambassadors who completed the Project also had the opportunity to mentor new cohorts of participants.

[EYTIC] is an amazing program, it allows students to really reflect and also learn about other people's experiences and their own experiences... we look at refugees [and] asylum seekers... you're able to empathise, you're able to connect with other people a lot better. – Project participant

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

EYTIC has supported stronger social cohesion outcomes by:

Providing opportunities for students from migrant and refugee backgrounds to find their voice and become more confident in their leadership and communication skills.

Adding enduring value to community spaces by facilitating a creative arts Project that resulted in the creation of two murals which increase awareness of social justice issues and promote community inclusivity.

Increasing students' understanding and awareness of racism and its impact on individuals lives. Leadership training also equipped students with the skills to fight back against racism, with the majority of participants reporting they now felt confident taking an active bystander role.

Increasing the confidence participants have in themselves as leaders, with many Project youth ambassadors pursuing on leadership roles, such as school captaincy and student representative council, in their schools.



COMPACT provided an outlet for young people to explore new skills and interests

Many Partnership Projects incorporated creative or other pursuits for interested young people to experiment with. Examples of skills and interests explored in COMPACT Projects included:

- **Creative skills:** art, poetry, songwriting, music production, and performance as a way for participants to express themselves or become more involved in their communities.
- **Media skills:** media literacy, research, interviewing, photo and audio editing; content creation including videos, radio production, podcasts, and social media content.
- **Events and Project management skills:** coordinating events or initiatives, including social gatherings and fundraising and advocacy events.

Many COMPACT Projects were able to provide participants access to superior equipment, or close instruction from professionals. While some participants brought some experience in these pursuits, many reported the opportunities provided through COMPACT Projects exceeded opportunities they had previously.

Participants reported COMPACT Projects had further encouraged them to pursue passion areas, often as hobbies, but in some cases as potential future career paths.

I attended a cooking class with one of the workers... and I found that I genuinely do have a love and passion for making food, when people enjoy something I cook... it makes me happy. That was something that I discovered [by participating in the Project]. – Project participant

[Participants] were very much able to develop their leadership and Project management skills... from gathering interest, organising artists, organising caterers, marketing on social media... all the boxes you would need to tick to run an event. They were upskilled and then took those skills and applied [them] somewhere else. – Project participant

The Project's not just investment in the community... it's a bit of an investment in us to improve... [in] event planning and Project management... I guess with the hope that volunteers... have the skills to run their own events. – Project participant

COMPACT facilitated awareness of educational and career opportunities for young people

As discussed above, the opportunities afforded to participants to explore skills and interest areas sometimes translated into participants exploring these opportunities as potential educational or employment pathways. Some also reported participation in COMPACT Projects had changed their perspective on the world, such that they were reconsidering their career ambition. These participants indicated they were considering careers that would have them working more in the community, and directly with disenfranchised community members.

A small number of Projects incorporated explicit employment or career development programs into their Project, such as PCYC NSW, which supported participants with job readiness skills. This was particularly relevant for the large proportion of Ezidi Project participants, many of whom had recently arrived in Australia and appreciated this support.

Additionally, at least one Project, Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre's 'The Street Journal', adopted a paid employment model with participants. Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre's employed participants to create social media content and the paid employment model was reported to assist with future employment opportunities in similar roles.

The case study featured below, Better Together, highlights a Project with a clear focus on career development for young people from refugee or migrant backgrounds. This included providing support to young people in building their long-term career vision and ambition as well as practical support for skills needed to gain employment (e.g. interview skills).

SHAPING A SAFE AND THRIVING COMMUNITY IN ARMIDALE

One of the biggest outcomes for us is [establishing] a really positive relationship between the young people and PCYC as an organisation and as a safe social space, where youth can have fun, seek support and help from - whether from the team, from other youth and community members or police officers. – Project lead

Organisation: PCYC Armidale

Project Name: Better Together

Project Partners: NSW Police Youth & Crime Prevention Command and New England Police District, STARTTS, Oorala Aboriginal Centre – University of New England, Armidale Secondary College

Delivery location: Armidale

COMPACT funding years: 2021-2024

DESCRIPTION

Better Together aimed to foster stronger links between migrant and refugee young people and the broader community. The Project helped connect members of the Ezidi refugee community and recently arrived migrants to PCYC Armidale and provided support to young people from Aboriginal Communities.

Better Together sought to support refugees and migrants to overcome some of the key challenges faced when moving to a new country, such as social and cultural isolation, lack of understanding by community members from different cultures, and poorer employment prospects.

Better Together offered a range of sporting, wellbeing, personal and career development as well as creative arts programs for young people aged 8-24. The programs supported building social and communication skills, helping increase young people's resilience, developing a growth mindset and learning about healthy relationships and acceptance.

All programs and activities offered as part of Better Together aimed to help young people build a strong sense of self-identity, resilience, independence, and hope for their futures.

The Project's design was informed by stakeholder consultation, which indicated that young people preferred integrated activities and programs as opposed to separate or 'targeted' programs for their communities.

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Better Together has supported stronger social cohesion outcomes by:

Facilitating social connections between young people from diverse backgrounds and fostering deeper connections between young people and PCYC. Initially, these connections were developed via sports and other physical activities. Participants were then offered further opportunities to engage in leadership, pre-employment, mental health support, creative activities and life skills.

Creating opportunities for multicultural and broader community members to engage and socialise with each other at multicultural community events, during which opportunities to learn about a range of cultural traditions and elements were created.

Supporting young people's pathways to employment through both direct practical supports, such as resume writing and interview skills, and indirect supports for nurturing their long-term ambitions and goals.

Increasing the level of trust participants have in police. Many participants came from countries where there are low levels of public confidence in police. Better Together helped create positive relationships between participants and police officers.

[Better Together] showed me the pathway to [becoming] a police officer, which has been a dream of mine since I come to Australia. It's my dream job, PCYC was the reason that kept me [on track]. – Project participant



I've been gaining experience in the event management sector [and] in working with my community which is basically what I'm aiming to do in life. I'm currently studying marketing [and] business, so [the Project] helped me get an understanding of [and choose] what I want to do with my future. - Project participant

Additionally, participants reflected their involvement with COMPACT Projects, and exposure to community leadership and development work, had inspired them to continue volunteering in some capacity moving forward. Some participants took on voluntary or paid roles in COMPACT Projects after their initial involvement in the Project, and some participants even emerged to deliver other COMPACT partnership Projects.

[The Project] has made me realise I do like helping people... be better [and] achieve their goals. I have been interested ever since [the Project]... in getting into social work or politics [and] advocating for people. - Project participant

[During the Project] we went to a spot where they had little stalls everywhere... that really gave me an insight into small businesses and that even the smallest of ideas can be a business idea. At one point I did open up my own business, which I currently run on the side. It's just a small pottery business where I make little mugs and stuff like that. I also went to so many business seminars that really pushed me into wanting to own my own business because I felt like the business world had so much to offer. - Project participant

Some COMPACT Projects have encouraged school attendance and engagement

For school-aged COMPACT participants, there was some evidence that COMPACT Project engagement improved school attendance and engagement. A small number of participants attributed COMPACT Projects as 'getting them through' school. These sentiments were supported by several Project leads who reported students re-engaging in school who otherwise would have ceased formal secondary education. There were several reported reasons for this: 1) attendance at school could be tied to Project participation 2) the Project provided an outlet to explore other interests outside of the classroom, or 3) the Project developed a new perspective that aided the student's engagement and attendance at school. As discussed previously, the opportunity to form new connections or strengthen existing bonds with peers also contributed to a more positive school environment that supported attendance and engagement.

Further, some Projects delivered in schools had an influence at a whole-of-school level, imbuing participants with knowledge or new perspectives that fostered a more welcoming school environment. Participants at schools that had COMPACT Projects delivered to students reported that students had collectively improved school culture, through increased student curiosity about one another's experiences, understanding and empathy. In one instance, a Partnership Project (Institute for Economics and Peace) was requested to return to the school to run their Project again to address high levels of bullying within the school.

On a smaller level, participants of Projects that worked directly with schools (i.e. the Project was delivered in the school environment, such as workshops or seminars) reported that these Projects provided a refreshing change to their usual classroom routine. Some participants acknowledged they initially viewed Projects primarily as a welcome opportunity not to do schoolwork. Many participants reflected that they soon saw the value in participating, with Projects offering interesting and challenging content that changed the way participants saw themselves or others in the school environment.

It's really helped me through school, it gave me something to look forward to, like if I go to school, I can go to the studio. That got me through Year 11 and 12. – Project participant

Within our school, we actually noticed kids being a lot nicer to each other, which is a shocker for teenagers, you know? Within the program itself, we had a range of students from different friend groups. Kids who would sleep at the back of the class actually engaging, being kind, being able to empathise with others... there was just a lot more respect in general. – Project participant

COMPACT Projects have strengthened young people's connections to their communities

COMPACT participants reported increased connection to their local communities. This included increased pride in their local community, awareness of community dynamics, and an increased willingness or desire to be involved in initiatives that improve their communities. This was most strongly observed, although not exclusively, among Projects that focused on a specific community or local area.

79% of participants agreed they could contribute to their local community after taking part in their COMPACT Project.

76% of participants agreed they felt greater pride in their local community after taking part in their COMPACT Project.

Participants also reported increased awareness of issues in their community. This had in turn made them more critical of aspects of their community and how these issues had been handled, sometimes spurring them into action. For example, some participants reported now having perspectives on issues such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dispossession or racism in the community.

In addition to meeting new people and learning about the diversity within their communities, the most significant strengthening of community connection was observed through participation in Project events. Most COMPACT Projects delivered events periodically throughout their Project, and in many instances an 'end-of-Project' event to celebrate the conclusion of their Project. These events included showcases (i.e. for artwork), social events, concerts, and conferences and forums. Project participants often contributed heavily to the development and delivery of these events.

Participants reflected these events had brought community members together, and prompted discussions based on the messages or stories that participants wanted to share with the community. Participants that assisted in delivering events reflected their pride in having contributed to their communities.

I felt I needed to do my part in the local community, even if it is like a small difference... becoming aware of what's going on so close to your home and knowing you can do something about it. I kind of felt obligated to do my part. – Project participant

I look out for more stuff that could happen in the suburb and the part of community I live in. We have a lot of cultural diversity here, and we've got many events and festivals, which I love about my community. – Project participant

[People in the community] know who I am from [being in] the program and they understand more of my culture in a way that sort of gives me a bit more respect throughout the community or [from] anyone that knows me from the program. – Project participant

The case study below, All One Under the Sun, illustrates an example of a Project that promoted strong community connections and celebrated diversity.

DEVELOPING COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE THROUGH CONNECTIONS

It really would be nice to have [this Project] everywhere in Australia, [so] people can understand a bit more about each other's culture... we're all living in Australia and we all have to live in harmony... understanding people's culture helps us learn how to live with one another. – Project participant

Organisation: NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors

Project Name: All One Under the Sun

Project Partners: Blue Sky Community Services, Headspace, Coffs County Council, Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council

Delivery location: Coffs Harbour

COMPACT funding years: 2021-2024

DESCRIPTION

All One Under the Sun aimed to support young people to address hate, fear and division through arts-based community messaging and community engagement activities.

The Project was formed on the premise that a connected community is a resilient and harmonious community, able to overcome issues when they arise. It aimed to increase pride in the cultural diversity present within the community, create connections between community members, and support young people to stand up against racism.

All One Under the Sun created community connection through three key areas of activity. These were:

- youth engagement which included the creation of a youth action collective and series of youth engagement forums and intensives
- community messaging through a range of creative arts mediums and programs
- community engagement through volunteering and community events.

[I've learned about] the different cultures and diversity... we did a performance... at the auditorium in Coffs Harbour. After, the Ezidi mob fed us food from their country... I know they've been through a lot of struggle, there's a war over there going on. – Project participant

We just wanted to send a message that we want to include everyone, and that's all about coming together. – Project participant



PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

All One Under the Sun has supported stronger social cohesion outcomes by:

Supporting the personal growth of individual young people, particularly in the areas of self-confidence, advocacy and leadership skills. For some young people, participation in the Project led to increased school engagement.

Increasing young people's communication skills, enabling them to confidently and directly address issues such as racism which can affect them personally.

Creating a strong awareness of different cultures within the local community. This was facilitated by a large-scale event – the 'All One Under the Sun Festival', which was significantly larger and more impactful than originally planned. The festival, held in both June 2022 and June 2024, were major community events with over 5000 attendees and more than 200 performers at each event with many community partners. This created a significant opportunity to showcase and celebrate the cultural diversity of the Coffs Harbour region.

Promoting cross cultural connections, inclusion, belonging and empowerment of young people through a hip hop and cultural awareness Project 'Change the Story'. This Project initially ran with Aboriginal and Ezidi young people from two high schools, and was then extended to multiple schools across the region.

The songs were 'Black and Deadly'... we just wanted to show that we're proud to be blackfellas... it's a song for the mob, our families, we know that they'll love it. – Project participant

More broadly, some COMPACT Projects have had a profound impact in their communities and provided other indirect community benefits. Some place-based Projects reported they established 'community hubs' that signal safety and belonging for community members, just by their presence. Two examples include PCYC Armidale, with their Better Together Project helping to establish the PCYC as a place for young community members, including newly resettled Ezidi refugees, to drop in for questions and support. Similarly, YCollab (funded under Western Sydney University's Positive Peace, Cultural Wellbeing and Youth Agency Initiative) has established a safe space for queer youth in South Western Sydney.

As with Better Together discussed above, some Projects have helped to raise awareness of other community institutions, events and services among community members. For example, a focus of The Street Journal's content was interviewing key leaders at community institutions to share their and their organisation's stories.

Participants reported attendance at Project events such as an All One Under the Sun concert, which had an estimated 5,000 attendees, have also supported a more vibrant and inclusive community.

Participants made new social connections

Among the strongest outcomes observed for participants was forming new social connections.

83% of participants agreed to having met new people.

73% of participants agreed to having made new friends that they would hope to be in contact with next year.

This was supported by feedback from qualitative consultations, where this was among the most common outcomes participants reported. In some instances, participants noted they formed very close friendships with participants they had not previously met.

More commonly, participants reported they kept in touch with other participants via social media – these were usually more casual acquaintances.

There were also many friendships formed between participants across different cultural, ethnic or religious backgrounds, with participants reporting these connections would not have happened without the Project. For example, participants frequently reported that opportunities for inter-school relationships had been highly valued. Participants reflected that having a shared experience of a Project supported deeper connections to be formed over time. The Interfaith Encounters Project, detailed below, provides an illustration of young people building cross-faith connections across schools in metropolitan Sydney.

In addition to meeting other participants, many participants reported valuing the connection they had developed with Project leads or Project partners. Participants were often inspired by these individuals and hoped to remain in contact with after the conclusion of the Project.

This did not extend to all participants, with some reporting others could be reluctant to engage or preferred the company of existing friend groups. Overall, this was infrequently reported.

I wasn't much really much of a talker before... I wasn't talking to strangers, like I would talk to people I would know, and then that was about it. I wouldn't mix with other people besides my own group. Now I like to talk with other people, I like to make new friends, I like to start random conversations with people, it's actually really quite fun. - Project participant

A lot of the people were like shy at the start, a lot of people like didn't talk or interacted with each other, but by the time the song was released everyone was social, like friends... it was cool. - Project participant

I think that because I've developed a personal relationship, I can better respond and sort of see the connection that how these things (racism and stereotyping) can hurt people, and given me the courage to confront or respond better to issues of stereotyping and racism in Australia. – Project participant

BUILDING CROSS-FAITH CONNECTIONS, ACCEPTANCE, RESPECT AND FRIENDSHIPS

If society comes to realise that there's more similarities than differences in any aspect, whether you look at religion or nationality or in any case... if we unite together, the differences are so small. – Project participant

Organisation: Catholic Mission

Project Name: Interfaith Encounters

Project Partners: Catholic and Islamic schools in Western Sydney

Delivery location: Sydney Metro

COMPACT funding years: 2022-2024

DESCRIPTION

Interfaith Encounters brought together students from diverse faith and cultural backgrounds. It aimed to provide an inclusive, respectful, and mutual learning space for senior secondary students (Year 10 and 11) to support them in becoming champions for community harmony and inclusion.

Interfaith Encounters sought to achieve this by:

- offering students a broad spectrum of religious, spiritual and ideological worldviews through face-to-face encounters
- providing experiential learning opportunities in areas such as identities, diversity, inclusion, and implicit bias. This supported students in critically analysing potential misunderstandings and distrust between people of different faiths, cultures, and ideologies. It also guided them in identifying ways they could actively participate in building social cohesion.
- encouraging exploration and celebration of the diversity of experience and understanding of faith and culture within communities.
- creating connections between schools and community organisations to support them in proactively promoting harmony in their communities.

The Project was facilitated by culturally diverse staff, who each added their own value to the Project and connection with students.

My message for other students is if you get the opportunity to meet other people and go out and explore different faiths, then definitely go for it because it is so rewarding. – Project participant

PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS

Interfaith Encounters has supported stronger social cohesion outcomes by:

Building young people's understanding of different religions, increasing recognition of cross-cultural similarities, and increasing acceptance of other' faith and worldviews.

Creating opportunities for dialogue between members of different religious groups and a platform for students to express their own views and listen to others, promoting understanding and empathy. This supported dialogue helped build a sense of safety and belonging for young people participating in the Project, who felt confident they wouldn't be judged on stereotypes.

Creating opportunities for young people to build connections, trust and friendships with students from outside their immediate social circle. This promoted inclusivity and diversity and helped to create an environment in which individuals felt valued and included regardless of their cultural background or religious beliefs. Forming deeper connections with a broader social circle also contributed to breaking down stereotypes.

Creating a space for students to express how they feel about current world events, supporting students to be more engaged as social participants and active citizens.



KEY FINDINGS

04

KEY FINDINGS

COMPACT Alliance outcomes

THE COMPACT ALLIANCE

There has been significant investment from MNSW to build the Alliance

MNSW has invested significant resources to ensure the Alliance is useful for members and a force for community harmony. The Alliance holds quarterly meetings alternating between online and in-person delivery, as well as out-of-session meetings held in response to emerging issues such as COVID-19 and a full-day COMPACT Alliance Summit is held annually. Between July 2021 and June 2023, COMPACT Alliance meetings are estimated to have attracted more than 400 attendees from a range of organisations.²⁵ A COMPACT Alliance Convenor (the Convenor) arranges quarterly COMPACT meetings, designs training and capacity-building activities, and drives communication with Alliance partners. The Convenor also supports Partnership Projects to prepare for and present at Alliance meetings.

MNSW stakeholders reported Alliance meetings have become more valuable for members over time, a sentiment echoed by Alliance partners. The allocation of time to structured team-building and networking activities, and the tailoring of activities to the delivery context were cited as reasons for this improvement. Continuous improvement is also informed by the feedback sought from Alliance members in the form of a post-meeting survey.

The last three or four COMPACT Alliance meetings at least someone, or several different people will come to us and say these meetings just keep getting better and better. – MNSW stakeholder

MNSW operates a closed Facebook group with approximately 120 members, where Alliance members can interact. Partnership Project stakeholders reported this was an effective way of hearing what was happening with other Projects and supporting each other. A small number of stakeholders reported there may be further opportunities to activate the Facebook group and improve its interactivity.

COMPACT Alliance members are satisfied with their experiences

COMPACT Alliance members were generally satisfied with their experiences. Results from the December 2023 Alliance survey were overwhelmingly positive around the utility of the forum for individual attendees and their organisations. As shown in Figure 3, 82 per cent of respondents reported they were either extremely satisfied or very satisfied with their experiences of the Alliance.²⁶ This finding is supported by evidence from interviews with Partnership Projects and Alliance members, who reported they most valued opportunities for networking and professional learning.

A small number of organisations noted the COMPACT Alliance was one of several communities of practice or similar groups they contribute to. Some organisations noted the COMPACT Alliance compared favourably with these other communities of practice, noting features such as the option to remain involved regardless of whether the organisation was currently funded by COMPACT and the effort MNSW invests in engaging with COMPACT Alliance members.

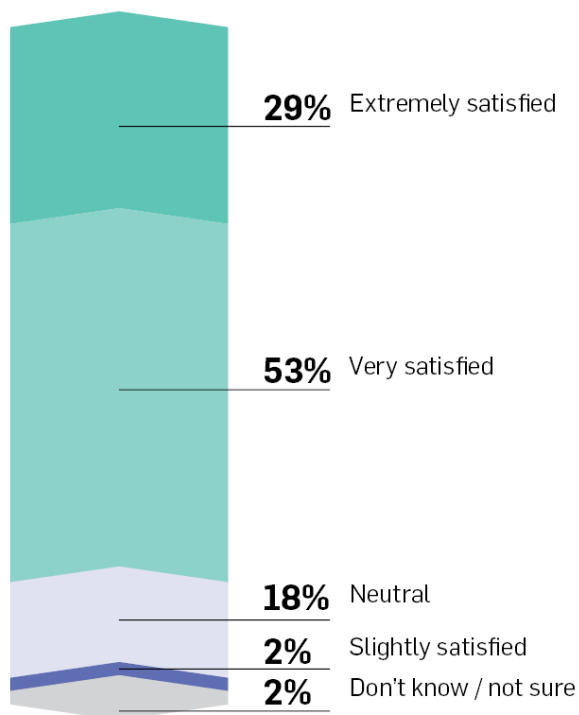
²⁵ Multicultural NSW (2023). *Annual Report 2022-2023*, p.21, 36. Retrieved from https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/wpcontent/uploads/2023/11/Multicultural-NSW_Annual-Report-2023.pdf. Accessed 22 February 2024.

²⁶ The survey was only completed by attendees of the COMPACT Alliance Summit in December 2023. This excludes organisations that were not in attendance, which may be less likely to have positive views on the Alliance.

The positive sentiment of members towards the COMPACT Alliance and the driving factors for its success may provide valuable information for other NSW Government agencies to leverage.

The concept of the summit and the engagement that this particular grant round has continued I think is second to none. I manage all grants across my organisation and there is no other sort of funding stream that has this kind of support, alliance and allegiance. If you're no longer a COMPACT Partner, you're still welcome to be part of the COMPACT Alliance and attend the COMPACT Summit and hear about new initiatives and partner with other Projects. It's just I think it's incredibly innovative... an absolute credit to MNSW. – Partnership Project stakeholder

Figure 3 – Satisfaction with overall experience of the Alliance (December 2023 meeting)



Alliance members most value opportunities for networking and professional learning

Two primary benefits of the Alliance reported by its members were opportunities to network with other organisations and professional learning. Stakeholders reported the Alliance provides an opportunity to build connections, gain exposure to different perspectives, and further their own organisational or Project-level objectives. The opportunity for networking and partnership-building was of particular benefit to smaller organisations who may have struggled to build such networks independently. Alliance members reported opportunities to meet with similar organisations validated their work and provided a sense they weren't 'going it alone'.

I remember when we got the... grant and we were presenting about it a staff meeting, and I was saying I'm more excited almost about the Alliance than about the funding, obviously the funding is critical but that Alliance has been amazing. – Partnership Project stakeholder

The opportunity for professional learning afforded through the Alliance was also highly regarded by members. A range of presentations and activities to build capacity and support good practice, including evaluation, research showcases, safety and well-being, and communications have been delivered at Alliance meetings.²⁷ Organisations delivering Partnership Projects emphasised the benefit of hearing directly from other Partnership Projects about their work, noting this information highly relevant and applicable to their own work. This was also supported by survey data.

79% of Alliance members agreed that **knowledge and learnings from the Alliance informed the delivery of their Project and/or work.**

²⁷ NSW Government (n.d.), *COMPACT Program and Grants Information 2022-2024*, NSW Government.

Partnership Projects and Alliance stakeholders indicated they would like to see an even greater emphasis placed on networking and professional learning opportunities. MNSW stakeholders reported a common critique of Alliance meetings was a lack of time for networking.

Conditions for relationship-building are present in the COMPACT Alliance

An environment for relationship-building and collaboration has been evidenced in the COMPACT Alliance.

87% of Alliance members strongly agreed other members had demonstrated willingness to share knowledge and learnings.

74% Of Alliance members agreed they felt comfortable requesting assistance from other members.

82% of Alliance members reported their organisation had formed new partnerships or networks through the Alliance.

Stakeholders observed variability in how members approach relationship development, reporting that some organisations invested significantly more effort in cultivating relationships than others. This was a point of frustration for some members of the Alliance given participation in the Alliance was a funding requirement.

We had some initial conversations [with another organisation], but it wasn't until like we got into COMPACT and we got our pilot off the ground and I presented to the COMPACT Alliance that [this organisation] reached out to me and like this whole doorway opened up. – Partnership Project stakeholder

Partnerships formed through the Alliance have benefitted members at the organisational level and in Project implementation

Partnerships and relationships formed between COMPACT Alliance members were reported to have had substantive benefits for active members. For COMPACT Partnership Projects, stakeholders reported the most common benefits of these relationships were at the organisational level. Common examples included benefits to organisations working in a similar geographic region, providing opportunities to partner together on community initiatives or diversify their offerings to minimise duplication in the local area, or organisations working in a similar sector (i.e. arts-based Projects) who shared learnings about effective techniques or strategies for engaging participants.

There were some examples of new relationships formed at the COMPACT Alliance resulting in changes to Project implementation, or the involvement of other organisations in a Partnership Project. This included recruiting other Alliance members to support with Project design and inviting an Alliance member to deliver a presentation or activity or assist with promotion of activities. One Partnership Project formed a partnership with another Alliance member to co-design and co-facilitate a training program. Many stakeholders were optimistic new relationships developed through the Alliance would lead to deeper ties and potential joint Project delivery opportunities, as has been observed among former Partnership Projects.

We called on [a speaker at one of the COMPACT Alliance meetings] who was introduced to us through COMPACT... she gave us I think like four hours of her time and has been really helpful when we've asked for more resources and references, and she's been very approachable. – Partnership Project stakeholder

The Alliance is a positive force for community harmony and is responding to emerging threats

Members of the Alliance and MNSW expressed confidence in the role of the Alliance as a positive force for community harmony and as a network effectively mobilising against emerging threats.

Stakeholders involved in the COMPACT Alliance are confident it is meeting its objective of being a positive force for community harmony. As shown in Figure 4 below, most respondents to the Alliance survey agreed or strongly agreed the Alliance had mobilised effectively to respond to emerging issues, gained public recognition as a collective force for community harmony, effectively utilises its members to build community harmony, and that participating in the Alliance had increased their organisation's capacity to respond to community harmony.

Over the last four years, MNSW has relied heavily on the COMPACT Alliance in delivering its mandate to promote community harmony and social cohesion.

In addition to the ongoing networking and professional learning activities augmenting capabilities of Alliance members, examples of the activities targeted towards responding to emerging threats to community harmony have included:

- Whole-of-COMPACT Alliance activities which brought together Alliance members to contribute to overcoming an issue, such as a series of 'COMPACT Action Group' sessions delivered during the 2021 COVID-19 Delta outbreak in NSW.²⁸ The sessions invited members to contribute input and direction to addressing three issues facing social cohesion in NSW at this time: personal wellbeing and collective trauma, engaging and inspiring young people in lockdown, and combatting the spread of misinformation.²⁹

- COMPACT Alliance members also participated in an out-of-session workshop/hypothetical scenario exercise for the Crisis Points research project, a MNSW-Deakin University CVE research project examining extremist exploitation of disasters and crises.
- Providing MNSW with reach into the community to quickly gauge community sentiment, particularly the voices of young people, test communications and disseminate resources. For example, following the escalation of violent conflict in Israel and Gaza in October 2023, MNSW contacted a range of current and former COMPACT Projects to provide their feedback and their participants' feedback on the impact of the conflict on them. Similarly, following the 2024 Wakeley church stabbing, MNSW utilised the Alliance to test sensitive communication collateral and coordinate dialogue with community and faith leaders.

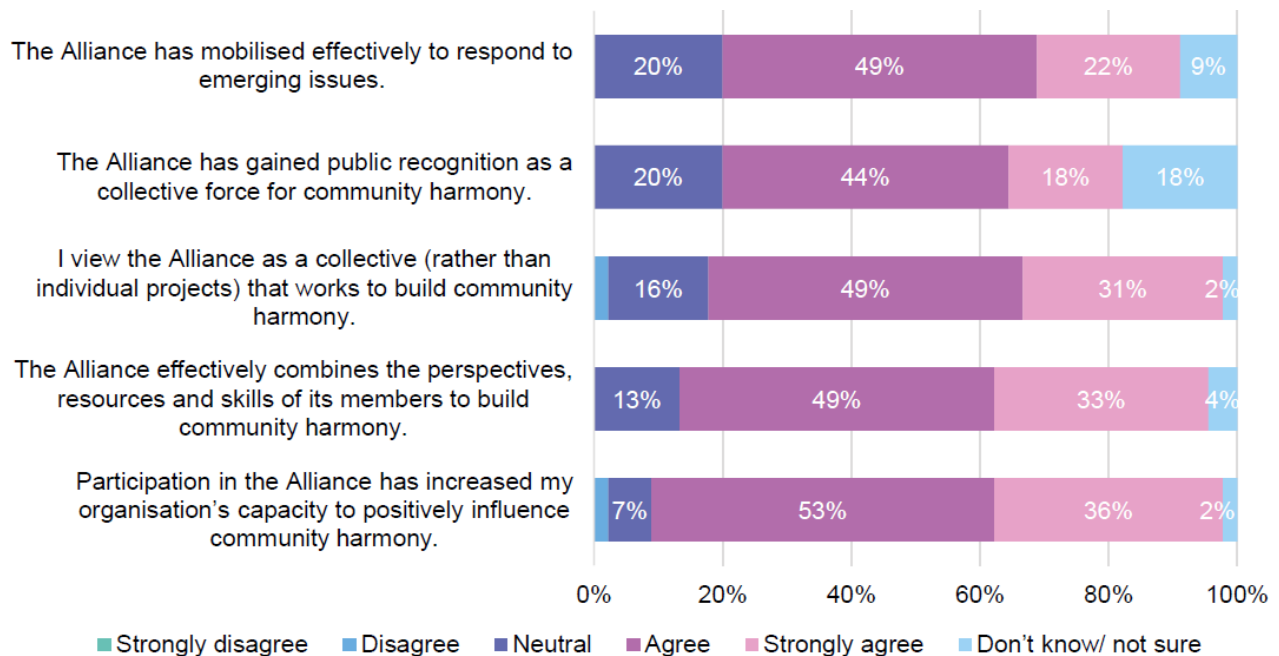
The COMPACT Alliance is an integral component of MNSW's Community Resilience and Response Plan (COMPLAN) – a whole-of-government approach to preventing and managing risks to community harmony.³⁰ When a threat to community harmony is identified and the plan is activated, the Alliance is one of the key community engagement networks activated to share key messaging with the view to deescalate tensions. MNSW reports this network as highly credible, with membership comprised of vetted 'community harmony champions' committed to the Program aims of COMPACT.

²⁸ Internal MNSW email.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Multicultural NSW. (2017). *New South Wales Community Resilience and Response Plan*, Multicultural NSW. Retrieved from <https://multicultural.nsw.gov.au/community-resilience/complan/>

Figure 4 – COMPACT Alliance survey responses on the community value of the Alliance



n=45.

Note: Question asked was 'To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?'

There is optimism about the sustainability of the Alliance, but involvement outside of grant funding may be tenuous

MNSW stakeholders noted the benefit of the Alliance to organisations is proven by the attendance of Partnership Projects no longer funded under COMPACT. MNSW has encouraged all organisations previously funded to deliver COMPACT Program activities to continue as members of the Alliance. MNSW and some Projects have invited many more organisations and individuals undertaking relevant work to attend the Alliance and join as members. Many organisations have taken up this opportunity and continue to be involved in the Alliance on a regular or semi-regular basis.

88%

of Alliance members who responded to the March 2024 Alliance survey planned to attend the next COMPACT Alliance meeting

However, stakeholders involved in the Alliance noted that attendance could be challenging if their organisation was not currently funded under COMPACT. For example, in the December 2023 COMPACT Alliance survey, the majority (63%) of respondents identified themselves as being involved in the delivery of a current COMPACT Partnership Project, 13 per cent reported they were involved in a past COMPACT Project (not currently funded) and 8 per cent reported having been involved in a COMPACT Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grant Project. The proportion of currently funded organisations was even greater at the March 2024 Alliance survey, where 86 per cent of respondents indicated they were involved in delivery of a current Partnership Project.

Some long-term members of the Alliance observed staff turnover negatively impacted Alliance continuity. Organisations may have one COMPACT Alliance 'champion' and with their departure, the organisation may not persevere with Alliance membership, with no other employee willing or able to resume the organisation's involvement. Similarly, a range of stakeholders observed representatives of

non-MNSW government departments differed from meeting to meeting, limiting opportunities for relationship-building and collaboration with key government stakeholders.

opportunities for MNSW to clearly establish their vision for this group if indeed this extends beyond its current practical function.

The Alliance is a strong community of practice but has further potential as a resilience network

The Alliance is highly valued by MNSW and considered integral to its COMPLAN response arrangements as a highly trusted and vetted network of allies and community leaders committed to overcoming threats to community harmony. While this evaluation has found strong evidence of the Alliance providing integral support to MNSW to test communications, validate approaches and distribute resources, there is limited evidence to suggest it is functioning independently as a strong resilience network. Alliance members reported high levels of satisfaction with the content and operation of Alliance meetings, however it is important to note that attendance and representation at these meetings has fluctuated. The majority of members are recipients of COMPACT funding under the second four-year funding cycle and attendance and participation in the meetings is an assumed component of the Program.

The community impact of the Alliance remains largely indirect. While the Alliance augments individual and organisational capabilities of members, it does not produce Alliance-generated communications or outputs for community-wide dissemination. This may contribute to complications articulating the impact of the Alliance to non-members. There may be an opportunity to provide more detailed information about objectives and achievements publicly, and celebration of the Alliance's impact, similar to the quarterly 'COMPACT News' which summarises Alliance meeting discussions and outcomes. One MNSW stakeholder noted new communication channels such as 'The New Point Magazine' were in development, which would publicise examples of the impact of COMPACT Partnership Projects and the Alliance. There is no formal induction to Alliance membership, and consequently this may be causing some ambiguity as to the scope or potential of the Alliance to, for example, act as a mouthpiece on certain issues relevant to community harmony or act as a collective in the public arena. As such, there may be future

05

CONCLUSION



CONCLUSION

Program context

The delivery of the 2021-2024 COMPACT Program has coincided with a challenging period of unforeseen and dynamic global and domestic threats to community harmony. These threats have stress-tested the COMPACT model and illustrate the importance of measuring and learning from programs that build resilience and strengthen social cohesion.

The COMPACT Program has evolved as a highly credible and sought-after grants Program empowering young people as champions of community harmony across metropolitan and regional NSW. MNSW has delivered the second four-year funding cycle of COMPACT with a strong focus on outcomes and via a partnership model that has enabled and celebrated the agility of Projects. The Program is enabling diverse and innovative Partnership Projects with an opportunity to meaningfully engage with young people from diverse backgrounds, including in some instances vulnerable individuals and groups.

Program design, management and implementation

The design and delivery of this round of COMPACT has been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges have, however, illustrated the flexibility of MNSW as funders, as well as the commitment of funded Projects to deliver positive outcomes for young people, despite adversity.

MNSW has instilled a strong culture of monitoring and evaluation within Program design and implementation, and this has cascaded down to robust Project level measurement and reporting.

The second four-year funding cycle of COMPACT reflects a highly considered approach to Program design and builds upon the learnings of previous rounds, illustrating a clear emphasis on continuous improvement. Modifications made to this round include a focus on encouraging strong and impactful applicants across regional and metropolitan areas, expanding the range of activity and engagement types and including more varied content.

Participant outcomes

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and harnessing Program underspends, MNSW instigated a separate Social Cohesion and Community Resilience Grants Program to support community recovery. These shorter and more targeted Projects supported COMPACT objectives and some were repurposed as Partnership Projects and funded until 2024. This re-design and expansion exemplify the commitment of the MNSW Program management team to adapt Program delivery and repurpose funds to target real and evolving threats to community harmony.

While the variety of Projects and engagement methods is a significant strength of the Program, it adds complexity to the consistency of measurement of participant reach. There remains significant room for improvement in capturing the extent of Program reach, however it is estimated that COMPACT has reached more than 23,000 young people between 2021 and 2024.

Collectively, this evaluation has found Projects are instilling agency and confidence in young people and helping to build connections within and between communities. Participants reported increased understanding of the diversity within their communities as well as increased empathy and respect for others. For example, 80 per cent of participants surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that as a result of their participation in the Project they had learnt about different ways of life. The vast majority (83%) reported meeting new people. Similarly, a majority (79%) of respondents reported that since participating in a COMPACT Project they felt they could contribute to their local community, and a similar proportion (76%) reported greater pride in their local community.

COMPACT Projects are also providing opportunities for young people to learn leadership skills and gain awareness of education and career opportunities. Some Projects also identified an unforeseen positive benefit of encouraging school attendance and engaging young people in education.

Participants interviewed during this evaluation spoke of the profound benefits and learnings they had received from participating in a COMPACT funded Project. Some examples include:

We are from different parts of the world... when we come together, we are all stronger.
– Project participant

I'm more aware of the people around me and what they might be feeling when it comes to certain topics. – Project participant

Everybody in the Project is from completely different backgrounds, and I think from speaking to them I'm getting to know why they are the way they are: their traditions, their religions, the values from their cultures, seeing how that has made them the person they are. Even though we're all so different and diverse, we all can come together over a shared interest. And all of our different backgrounds offer slightly different perspectives on the situation. – Project participant

COMPACT Alliance outcomes

The COMPACT Alliance is a robust and valued community of practice supporting the delivering of the COMPACT Program. Qualitative interviews and two member surveys confirmed that the Alliance is widely praised by members as a forum in which to build professional networks and learning. Attendees to the quarterly meetings appreciate the relevant content canvassed and the indirect and direct benefits of the Alliance to their Project delivery.

The COVID-19 pandemic and a range of domestic and international events that have posed a threat to community harmony have employed the collective experience, cultural connections and credibility of Alliance members. The Alliance has played an important role for Multicultural NSW on behalf of NSW Government to test and disseminate government messaging, share key resources and provide insights on community sentiment. There is, however, untapped potential to amplify the impact of the Alliance and establish a sense of collective identity and purpose. Much of the benefit derived from the Alliance is indirect and future iterations of COMPACT could consider whether there would be benefit in establishing a public-facing presence and function for this group, noting the challenges this could present with membership largely tied to grant funding.

Next steps

Overall, COMPACT is a successful grants Program with sound evidence it is achieving its intended outcomes and contributing to a more tolerant, confident and connected generation of young people. The NSW Government should continue to invest in the COMPACT Program, ideally in 4-year funding periods in acknowledgement of the time taken to establish partnerships between community organisations, engage young people and to employ co-design principles. Funding certainty also enables staff certainty and continuity which supports Program outcomes and will continue to attract high calibre and motivated Projects.

As new threats to community harmony emerge, the COMPACT Program should remain agile and open to investing in and supporting community-led responses. For example, future rounds could include Projects that address a range of threats to community harmony, including extremism, hate, racism, polarisation, disinformation, malign foreign influences, overseas conflicts and tensions, or natural or human-generated disasters that impact local community harmony.

In continuing to measure the impact of COMPACT on the NSW community, MNSW should develop and employ a consistent approach to measuring Project participation. Standardised definitions and approaches that account for differences in length and depth of engagement would support a clearer understanding of the Program reach. Future rounds should continue to engage rural and regional areas, and standardised reach approached would encourage accountability on this front.

The membership and aligned purpose of the Alliance has unique characteristics and value to community and the NSW Government. In its current form, the desired purpose and impact of the Alliance outside of MNSW and as a community of practice is opaque. It should continue to facilitate professional development opportunities and networking for and between its members. In addition, MNSW should clarify the remit and desirability of extending its function to the wider community as a voice on matters relevant to community harmony and to publicise externally its outcomes.

DISCLAIMER

This report is dated 24 October 2024 and incorporates information and events up to that date only and excludes any information arising, or event occurring, after that date which may affect the validity of Urbis Ltd (**Urbis**) opinion in this proposal. Urbis prepared this report on the instructions, and for the benefit only, of Multicultural NSW (**Instructing Party**) for the purpose of Final Evaluation Report (**Purpose**) and not for any other purpose or use. To the extent permitted by applicable law, Urbis expressly disclaims all liability, whether direct or indirect, to the Instructing Party which relies or purports to rely on this report for any purpose other than the Purpose, and to any other person which relies or purports to rely on this report for any purpose whatsoever (including the Purpose).

In preparing this report, Urbis was required to make judgements which may be affected by unforeseen future events, the likelihood and effects of which are not capable of precise assessment.

All surveys, forecasts, projections and recommendations contained in or associated with this report are made in good faith and on the basis of information supplied to Urbis at the date of this report, and upon which Urbis relied. Achievement of the projections and budgets set out in this report will depend, among other things, on the actions of others over which Urbis has no control.

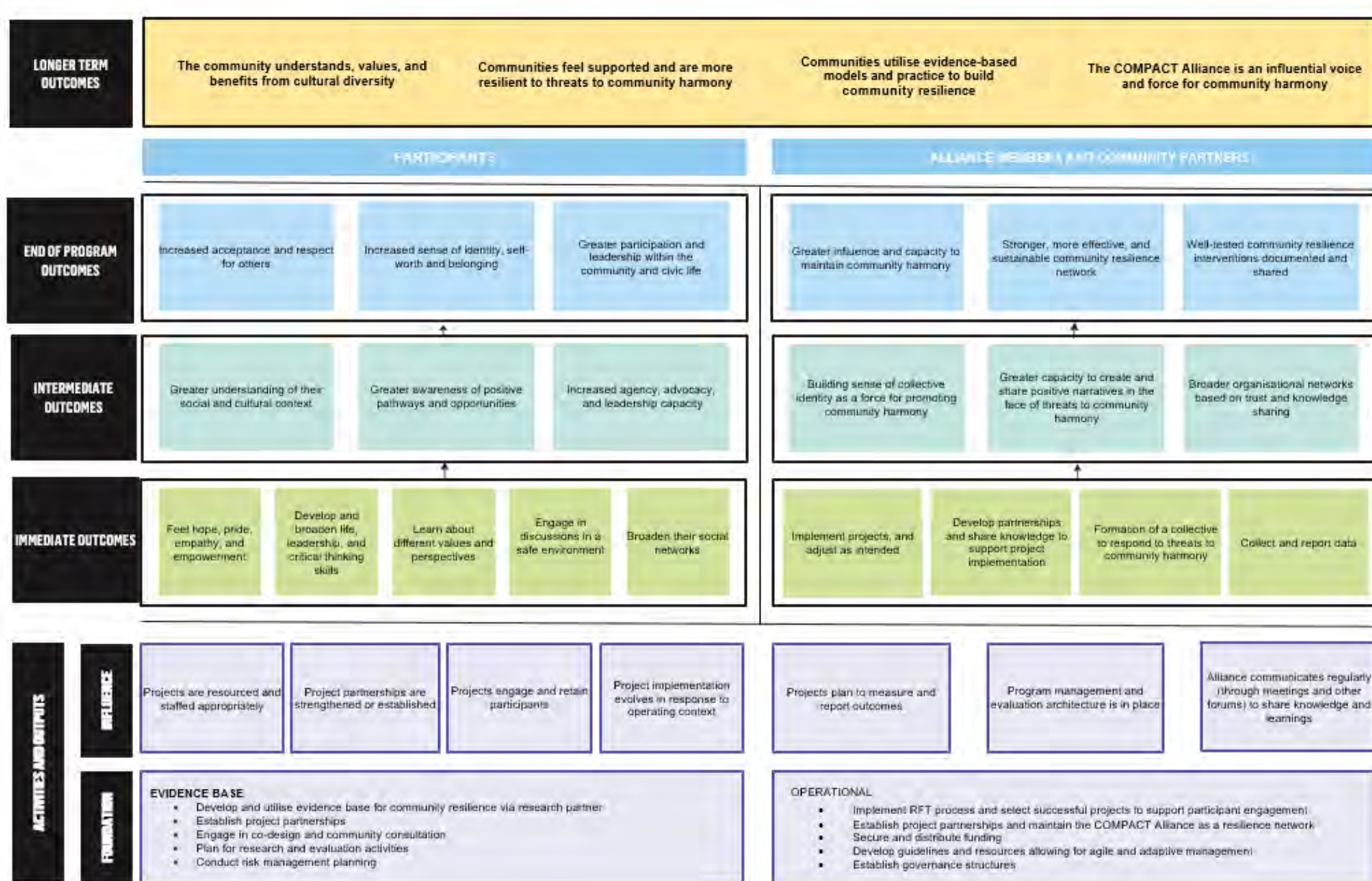
In preparing this report, Urbis may rely on or refer to documents in a language other than English, which Urbis may arrange to be translated. Urbis is not responsible for the accuracy or completeness of such translations and disclaims any liability for any statement or opinion made in this proposal being inaccurate or incomplete arising from such translations.

Whilst Urbis has made all reasonable inquiries it believes necessary in preparing this report, it is not responsible for determining the completeness or accuracy of information provided to it. Urbis (including its officers and personnel) is not liable for any errors or omissions, including in information provided by the Instructing Party or another person or upon which Urbis relies, provided that such errors or omissions are not made by Urbis recklessly or in bad faith.

This report has been prepared with due care and diligence by Urbis and the statements and opinions given by Urbis in this report are given in good faith and in the reasonable belief that they are correct and not misleading, subject to the limitations above.

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM LOGIC



2024

2020

APPENDIX B

COMPACT PROJECTS 2021-2024



Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Youth off the Streets	Communities Inspiring & Teaching Youth (CITY)				✓		
Community Minds		Walking Together Project					✓
Football NSW	Stand United				✓		
National Rugby League	The Harmony Project				✓		
Moving Forward Together							
NSW Police							
PCYC NSW							
NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS)	All One Under the Sun				✓		
Blue Sky Community Services							
Headspace							
Coffs County Council							
Coffs Harbour and District Local Aboriginal Land Council							
Gallipoli Turkish Cultural Foundation	Generation Grit				✓		
Giving Back Australia							
Lighthouse Community Services							
PCYC Armidale	Better Together				✓		
NSW Police Youth & Crime Prevention Command and New England Police District							
STARTTS							
Oorala Aboriginal Centre – University of New England							
Armidale Secondary College							

Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Curious Works Blacktown City Council Blacktown Arts PYT Fairfield Bidwill Uniting	Funpark				✓		
Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre	Community Cohesion Collective/ The Street Journal				✓		
All Together Now Headspace Urbis	Agent C				✓		
Western Sydney Community Forum Blacktown Youth Services Association Platform Youth Services Youth Action	Codebreakers Western Sydney				✓		
Gymea Community Aid & Information Service Shopfront Art Co-op Headspace Georges River Council Reg Mahoney and Associates Sutherland Shire Council Bayside Council NSW Police Youth Liaison Officers	Empowering Youth to Inspire Change				✓		
Mosaic Multicultural Connections Manning Valley Neighbourhood Centre Multicultural Neighbourhood Centre STARTTS Newcastle & Armidale PCYC Newcastle & Armidale	Northern Youth Exchange				✓		

Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Islamophobia Register Australia Islamic Sciences and Research Academy of Australia Charles Sturt University	Advocacy for Victim Support				✓		
Western Sydney University Institute for Economics and Peace Young Africans Wellbeing Group Matavai Regional Opportunities Australia & Leeton Shire Council YCollab	Positive Peace, Cultural Wellbeing & Youth Agency Initiative				✓		
Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra University of Wollongong Office of Sport NSW via Duke of Edinburgh International Award Illawarra Women's Health Centre	Lead the Way				✓		
Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre		Stand Up: Multicultural Youth Conference				✓	
Metro Assist Settlement Services International		Youth Champions				✓	
Multicultural Youth Affairs Network NSW ABC News For Purpose Evaluation Phronesis Consulting Turkan Askoy		KAIROS				✓	
Catholic Mission Catholic and Islamic schools in Western Sydney		Interfaith Encounters				✓	✓
B'nai B'rith Courage to Care The Ethics Centre Moving Forward Together		Common Ground				✓	
		Harmony Taskforce					✓

Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Institute for Economics and Peace PCYC NSW Rotary Club of Sydney		Cohesive Communities				✓	✓
Voices of Women Wagga Wagga Art Gallery ShoreTrack Shoalhaven Regional Art Gallery		Voices of Young Women				✓	
Arab Council Australia		Reconnecting East and West				✓	✓
Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency Blacktown City Council Settlement Services International The Street University		Mount Druitt Youth for Peace and Understanding				✓	
Somali Australian Community Association of NSW Auburn Youth Centre		Somali Youth Community Connect				✓	✓
Greater Western Sydney Giants		Learn with Leek					✓
NSW Jewish Board of Deputies		School Harmony Programs					✓
University of New England		LEAAP					✓
The Trustee for Creating Chances Trust		Youth Game Changers					✓
South West Arts		Emerging from Isolation					✓
Ted Noffs Foundation		Street University LIVE					✓
Northern Beaches Multicultural Communities		Empowering Youth					✓

Lead organisation	2021	2022	2023	2024	Partnership Projects 2021-24	Partnership Projects 2022-24	Social Cohesion Grants 2022
Youth Action		Collective Resilience					✓
PCYC Hornsby		RISEUP for Unity					✓
Health Consumers NSW		Walking the Talk					✓
Mentoring Men		Empowering Young Men					✓
Islamic Council of NSW		Arts Led Recovery					✓

APPENDIX C

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
Influence	Foundation				
	Projects are resourced and staffed appropriately	Were adequate resources allocated to develop and deliver COMPACT projects? To what extent has the COMPACT Program successfully scaled up over time?	MNSW and Alliance partner views on the adequacy of project resourcing MNSW and Alliance partner views on how COMPACT has scaled over time	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Meta-analysis of project evaluations	Process Appropriateness
	Project partnerships are strengthened or established	To what extent did project partnerships facilitate successful project implementation? What have been the key enablers / barriers to establishing and developing partnerships?	MNSW and Alliance partner views on the effectiveness of project partnerships Identification of opportunities created by partnerships Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Meta-analysis of project evaluations	Process Partnerships
	Projects engage and retain participants	Were projects successful in meeting participant enrolment and completion targets? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Number and % of projects that successfully met targets Differences in regional/metro projects Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Meta-analysis of project evaluations Program database	Process Reach
	Project implementation evolves in response to operating context	To what extent did project implementation successfully respond to the evolving operating context?	MNSW and Alliance partner views on the operating context and how project implementation evolved in response	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews - Alliance partners	Process

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
	Projects plan to measure and report outcomes	To what extent did projects measure and report outcomes?	Completion of meaningful and useful project evaluations	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Meta-analysis of project evaluations	Process
	Program management and evaluation architecture is in place	How effective were the program management structures for COMPACT and individual project delivery? To what extent did the evaluation architecture support measurement of outcomes?	MNSW and Alliance partner views on the effectiveness of program management structures Appointment of external evaluator MNSW and Alliance partner views on the appropriateness of the evaluation approach	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Meta-analysis of project evaluations	Process
	Alliance communicates regularly (through meetings and other forums) to share knowledge and learnings	How effective was the Alliance in sharing knowledge to support positive outcomes for participants? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Number and type of meetings/forums attended by Alliance members and participation rates at each meeting/forum Number and % of Alliance members who attend quarterly meetings MNSW and Alliance partner views on how effectively the Alliance worked and communicated together Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Survey – Alliance members Program database Report of meetings	Process Partnerships
Immediate outcomes					
Participants	Feel hope, pride, empathy and empowerment	To what extent have participants experienced a positive shift in attitudes due to program participation? Are some participants more likely than others to have experienced a positive shift in attitudes? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Project participants' views on and degree of hope for their future, pride in themselves and their community Project participants' views on and degree of concern for people in their neighbourhood, and for a range of minority groups Project participants' views on and belief in their ability to affect change in their local community	Discussion groups with project participants Participant postsurvey Sentiment analysis Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families Analysis of project content creation / social media analytics	Effectiveness Appropriateness Reach

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
			<p>Number, % and profile of program participants who report positive shift in present to future wellbeing on the Cantril Self-Anchoring Striving Scale. Imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time? On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now? <p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on participants' shift in attitudes</p> <p>Project participant views on other participants' shift in attitudes</p> <p>Examples of participants expressing hope, pride, empathy and empowerment via content created or social media</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of shifting attitudes</p>		
	Develop life, leadership and critical thinking skills	<p>To what extent have participants strengthened their life, leadership and critical thinking skills?</p> <p>Are some participants more likely than others to have experienced a positive shift in attitudes?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on participants' life, leadership and critical thinking skills development</p> <p>Project participant views on other participants' life, leadership and critical thinking skills development</p> <p>Examples of strengthened life, leadership and critical thinking skills via content created or social media</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of developed skills</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families</p> <p>Participant postsurvey</p> <p>Analysis of project content creation / social media analytics</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Appropriateness</p> <p>Reach</p>

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
	Learn about different values and perspectives	<p>To what extent have participants been exposed to different values and perspectives?</p> <p>Are some participants more likely than others to have been impacted by this exposure to different values and perspectives?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>Project participants' reported exposure to different value systems and life perspectives</p> <p>Number, % and profile of participants who report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning something about different value systems and life perspectives than their own An increase in their belief in the value of diversity <p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on participants' exposure to different values and perspectives</p> <p>Project participant views on other participants' exposure to different values and perspectives</p> <p>Examples of participants learning about different values and perspectives via content created / social media</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of exposure to new values and perspectives</p>	<p>Discussion groups with project participants</p> <p>Participant post-survey</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families</p> <p>Analysis of project content creation / social media analytics</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Appropriateness</p> <p>Reach</p>
	Engage in discussions in a safe environment	<p>To what extent did participants engage in discussions?</p> <p>To what extent did participants feel they could discuss issues that matter to them without fear of being judged via participation in the program?</p> <p>Are some participants more likely than others to have felt they could engage in discussions in a safe environment?</p>	<p>Project participants' and staff views on participants' willingness to engage in discussions</p> <p>Number, % and profile of participants who report that via the program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> They could discuss issues that mattered to them without fear of being judged 	<p>Discussion groups with project participants</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff</p> <p>Participant post-survey</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Reach</p>
	Broaden their social networks	<p>To what extent have participants met new people as a result of the program?</p>	<p>Project participants' reported changes in their social network as a result of the Program</p> <p>Number, % and profile of participants who report:</p>	<p>Discussion groups with project participants</p> <p>Participant post-survey</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Appropriateness</p> <p>Reach</p>

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
		<p>To what extent do participants believe they will still be in contact with these new people in 12 months' time?</p> <p>Are some participants more likely than others to have met and maintained contact with new people as a result of the program?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I met new people as a result of [insert project name] I believe I will still be in contact with at least some of these people in 12 months' time <p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on participants' broadened social networks</p> <p>Examples of broadened social networks via content created or on social media</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of broadened social networks</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families</p> <p>Analysis of project content creation / social media analytics</p>	
Alliance members and community partners	Implement projects, and adjust as intended	<p>Have the COMPACT projects been implemented as planned?</p> <p>To what extent has project implementation been adaptive to best meet intended outcomes?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers to effective implementation?</p>	<p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on implementation</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of implementation</p> <p>Identification of potential solutions to any implementation challenges</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – MNSW</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners</p> <p>Meta-analysis of project evaluations</p>	Process
	Develop partnerships and share knowledge to support project implementation	<p>To what extent have partnerships been developed?</p> <p>How effective have these partnerships been in supporting project implementation?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers/barriers to establishing partnerships?</p>	<p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on the quality and effectiveness of partnerships in supporting project implementation</p> <p>Identification of enablers/barriers</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – MNSW</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners</p> <p>Survey – Alliance members</p> <p>Report of meetings</p>	Process Partnerships
	Formation of a collective to respond to threats to community harmony	<p>To what extent have Alliance partners demonstrated a collective response to threats to community harmony?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers/barriers?</p>	<p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on the Alliance members as a collective to respond to threats to community harmony</p> <p>Identification of enablers/barriers</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners</p> <p>Survey – Alliance members</p> <p>Report of meetings</p>	Process Partnerships

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
	Collect and report data	Have the COMPACT projects collected and reported data as planned? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Completion of project-level evaluations MNSW and Alliance partner views on data collection and reporting processes Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Meta-analysis of project evaluations	Process
Intermediate Outcomes					
Participants	Greater understanding of their social and cultural context	To what extent have participants developed a greater understanding of their social and cultural context? Are some participants more likely than others to have developed a greater understanding of their social and cultural context? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Project staff, teachers and families' view of participants' increased understanding of social and cultural context Examples of increased understanding of social and cultural context via content creation	Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families Analysis of project content creation	Effectiveness Appropriateness Reach
	Greater awareness of positive pathways and opportunities	To what extent do participants believe there are positive pathways and opportunities available to them? Are some participants more likely than others to have a great awareness of positive pathways and opportunities? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Project participants' belief that there are positive education, training and employment opportunities available to them Project participants' belief that there are positive opportunities for community involvement available to them Number, % and profile of participants who report they feel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive about the education, training and employment opportunities available to them Positive about opportunities for involvement in their local community Project staff, teachers and families' views on participants' improved awareness of positive pathways and opportunities	Discussion groups with project participants Participant postsurvey Sentiment analysis Analysis of project content creation Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families	Effectiveness Appropriateness Reach

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
			<p>Examples of improved awareness of positive pathways and opportunities via content created</p> <p>Identifications of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of improved awareness of positive pathways and opportunities</p>		
	Increased agency, advocacy, and leadership capacity	<p>To what extent have participants developed increased agency, advocacy and leadership capability?</p> <p>Are some participants more likely than others to have improved their agency, advocacy and leadership capabilities?</p> <p>To what extent have participants created and shared positive narratives, or combatted negative narratives?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>Project participants' reported confidence to speak up about issues that matter to them among family, friends and their community</p> <p>Project participants' reported belief that their contribution to discussions on issues important to them has the potential to drive change for themselves and their community</p> <p>Number, % and profile of participants who report they feel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time ▪ Able to have a say within their community on important issues all or most of the time ▪ They have the potential to positively influence their own future ▪ They have the potential to positively influence their community's future <p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on participants' increased leadership capability and confidence</p> <p>Examples of increased agency, advocacy and leadership capabilities (including narrative building) via content created</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p>	<p>Discussion groups with project participants</p> <p>Participant post-survey</p> <p>Sentiment analysis</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers, families</p> <p>Analysis of project content creation</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Appropriateness</p> <p>Reach</p>

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
Alliance members and community partners	Building a sense of collective identity as a force for promoting community harmony	To what extent have Alliance partners established themselves as a collective that promotes community harmony? What have been the key enablers/barriers?	MNSW and Alliance partner views on the extent to which Alliance partners are a collective that promotes community harmony Examples of how Alliance partners have demonstrated a collective approach to community harmony Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews - MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Survey – Alliance members Alliance Quarterly Report of Meetings	Effectiveness Appropriateness Reach
	Greater capacity to create and share positive narratives in the face of threats to community harmony	To what extent have project staff been trained to create and share positive narratives, or combat negative narratives? What have been the impacts of sharing positive narratives, or combatting negative narratives, in the face of threats to community harmony? What resources have been created that support positive narratives, or combat negative narratives? To what extent have these resources been shared, and with who? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	Alliance partner views on increased capacity to create positive narratives/combat negative narratives Number and profile of project staff trained to create and share positive narratives/ combat negative narratives Examples of extremist narratives being successfully countered with positive narratives Alliance partner views on the availability and reach of resources Identification of resources created that support positive narratives/combat negative narratives Number and profile of positive narrative resource users Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Survey – Alliance members Meta-analysis of project evaluations	Effectiveness Appropriateness Reach
	Broader organisational networks based on trust and knowledge sharing	To what extent have Alliance partners developed trusting relationships with each other, and other community partners? What opportunities have been facilitated by these relationships? What have been the key enablers / barriers?	MNSW and Alliance partner views on the strength of networks and degree of knowledge sharing Examples of knowledge sharing among Alliance partners and other community partners Identification and opportunities facilitated Identification of enablers / barriers	Stakeholder interviews – MNSW Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners Alliance Quarterly Report of Meetings	Effectiveness Appropriateness Reach

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
End of program outcomes					
Participants	Increased acceptance and respect for others	<p>To what extent have levels of acceptance and respect among COMPACT program participants changed since program participation/completion?</p> <p>Are some program participants more likely than others to have increased levels of acceptance and respect for others?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>Number and % of young people who report positive changes in relation to the statements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My local area is a place where people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together The mix of different national or ethnic backgrounds improves local life <p>(Comparison of pre and post survey results & comparison of COMPACT to Scanlon-Monash Index Survey results for NSW and other states and territories)</p> <p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on changed levels of acceptance and respect among participants</p> <p>Examples of improvements in levels of acceptance and respect for others</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p>	<p>Sentiment analysis – pre and post survey</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers and families</p> <p>Analysis of project content creation</p>	Effectiveness Reach
	Increased sense of identity, self-worth and belonging	<p>To what extent have COMPACT program participants experienced a strengthened sense of identity, self-worth and belonging since program participation/completion?</p> <p>Are some program participants more likely than others to have experienced a strengthened sense of identity, self-worth and belonging?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>Number and % of young people who report positive changes in relation to the extent they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take pride in the Australian way of life and culture Have a sense of belonging in Australia <p>(Comparison of pre and post survey results & comparison of COMPACT results to Scanlon-Monash Index Survey results for NSW and other states and territories)</p> <p>Project staff, teachers and families' views on increased sense of identity, self-worth and belonging among participants</p> <p>Examples of improvements in strengthened sense of identity, self-worth and belonging among participants</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p>	<p>Sentiment analysis – pre and post survey</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – project staff, teachers and families</p> <p>Analysis of project content creation</p>	Effectiveness Reach

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
	Greater participation and leadership within the community and civic life	<p>To what extent have COMPACT program participants increased their participation and leadership within community and civic life since program participation/completion?</p> <p>Are some program participants more likely than others to have increased participation and leadership within community and civic life?</p>	<p>Number and % of young people who report positive changes in relation to the extent they have done any of the following over the past six months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signed a petition (including online petitions) ▪ Liked or shared content on social media related to your community ▪ Written or spoken to a religious or elected official about your local community ▪ Attended a local community event ▪ Read, watched or listened to the news (including online news) on average a few times a week 	Sentiment analysis – pre and post survey	Effectiveness Reach
Alliance members and community partners	Greater influence and capacity to maintain community harmony	<p>Has the COMPACT Alliance increased their influence and capacity to build and maintain community harmony?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on increased influence and capacity to support community harmony as a result of the COMPACT Alliance, specifically in relation to relationships established and developed with relevant community organisations, program design and implementation capabilities, and development and sharing of resources and tools</p> <p>Examples of increased influence and capacity to build and support community harmony</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – MNSW</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners</p> <p>Survey – Alliance members</p> <p>Alliance Quarterly Report of Meetings</p>	Effectiveness Efficiency Appropriateness Partnerships

Category	Outcome	Key evaluation questions	Key indicators	Data sources	Evaluation domains
	Stronger, more effective, and sustainable community resilience network	<p>To what extent has the COMPACT Alliance built a strong and effective network of community resilience building practitioners?</p> <p>To what extent is this network likely to be sustained over time?</p> <p>What have been the key enablers / barriers?</p>	<p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on the strength and effectiveness of the COMPACT Alliance</p> <p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on the sustainability of the network</p> <p>Examples of opportunities enabled by the COMPACT Alliance to build community resilience</p> <p>Identification of enablers / barriers</p> <p>Identification of unintended consequences of the Alliance development</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – MNSW</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners</p> <p>Alliance Quarterly Report of Meetings</p>	<p>Effectiveness</p> <p>Efficiency</p> <p>Appropriateness</p> <p>Partnerships</p>
	Well-tested community resilience interventions documented and shared	<p>To what extent has the evidence base for COMPACT, both for individual projects and for the Program overall, been effectively documented and shared?</p>	<p>MNSW and Alliance partner views on the quality of the evidence base and the reach of the dissemination strategy</p> <p>Examples of publications / presentations focused on sharing the documented evidence base for COMPACT</p>	<p>Stakeholder interviews – MNSW</p> <p>Stakeholder interviews – Alliance partners</p>	<p>Process</p> <p>Partnerships</p>

APPENDIX D

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

EVALUATION OF THE COMPACT PROGRAM 2021-2024: DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS (OUTCOMES)

INTRODUCTION

Acknowledgement of Country

Before we start, I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today. I'm joining from the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, so I'd like to pay my respects to their Elders past and present, and extend those respects to the Elders of the lands from which you're joining. I'd also like to acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded, and that this always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Welcome and overview of evaluation

Thank you very much for your time today and for agreeing to participate in an interview. My name is <xxx> and I work for Urbis, an independent research company that specialises in undertaking research and evaluation projects for government.

We have been engaged by Multicultural NSW to undertake an interim and final evaluation of the 2021-2024 COMPACT Program. The evaluation will examine how the Program has been implemented across each of the different projects, outcomes achieved by each project and the COMPACT Alliance, and identify any opportunities for improvement.

Over the course of the evaluation, we'll be delivering two reports to MNSW. Today's interview will inform our Final Report which is scheduled to be delivered to MNSW in September 2024. At this stage of the evaluation we're speaking with Partnership Project leads such as yourself, stakeholders from Multicultural NSW, COMPACT project participants, and some select members of the COMPACT Alliance to get a range of perspectives on the Program. This phase of the evaluation, and our Final Report, will have an 'outcomes' focus. This includes any outcomes the COMPACT projects and COMPACT overall have achieved for the COMPACT Alliance, for young people, and for the community.

This interview

Our interview today is voluntary and should take about 30 minutes.

A note on confidentiality – what you say to us today will be used to inform our report to Multicultural NSW, and we'll assume the information you provide today can be used in that report unless you explicitly say otherwise. However, we will not share any raw outputs (i.e. notes or transcripts) of today's interview with anyone else outside of the evaluation team. That information you provide will be aggregated together along with the other interviews and data sources available to us and organised thematically for the report to MNSW. This report will be publicly available.

Your opinions and suggestions might be included in the report we write for MNSW, but your name or any other identifiable information won't be included. We might quote you if you say something better than we could put it ourselves, but we will only identify you as a 'COMPACT partnership project stakeholder'. However, there's only a small number of stakeholders being interviewed, so while we'll remove any identifying information, there is a chance you may be identifiable to an informed reader.

If you change your mind about anything you've said after the interview, just tell us and we will delete the information you shared. If you don't tell us, we will continue to use the information you gave us.

Do you have any questions before we start? <If yes – proceed.>

Our preference is to record this interview so we can fully capture your words. This will only be used by our research team to create a transcript for analysis purposes; however, you can decline to have the interview recorded, in which case detailed notes will be taken. **Are you happy for me to record this discussion?**

<If yes – turn on recording; if no, take notes>

QUESTIONS

Introduction

The last time we spoke you told us a bit about your role, your project and its alignment to COMPACT. Given we already have an understanding of your project, we can move into the questions around program outcomes, which are the focus of the Final Report.

1. Before we do, have there been any major changes in the project since we last spoke (in regard to implementation, objectives, activities etc)?
2. I'm interested to hear about some of the outcomes you have observed for participants throughout the COMPACT program. What are the key outcomes participants have achieved through your projects?
 - a. Can you provide any examples that demonstrate these outcomes?

Intermediate outcomes: [Focus on outcomes most relevant to each project]

- Understanding of social and cultural context
- Awareness of pathways and opportunities
- Increased agency, advocacy and leadership capacity i.e. increased confidence to speak on issues that matter to them, reporting that they feel they have the potential to make a positive impact on their community.)

End of program outcomes: [Focus on outcomes most relevant to each project]

- Increased acceptance/ respect for others
 - Increased sense of identity, self worth, belonging
 - Greater participation and leadership within community/ civic life
3. What factors have contributed to achievement of these outcomes?
 - a. What factors, if any, have hindered achievement of these outcomes?
 4. What differences have you observed in how different participants or cohorts of participants have achieved outcomes?
 5. Are there any examples that stand out for you where you have observed the impact of the program that we haven't covered yet? (unintended consequences – positive and negative)
 6. Are there any final comments you would like to add that we haven't covered today?

Thanks very much for your responses today, it's greatly appreciated.

End

EVALUATION OF THE COMPACT PROGRAM 2021-2024: DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR MSNW (OUTCOMES)

INTRODUCTION

NOTE: Questions to be adapted to the MNSW stakeholder being interviewed.

Acknowledgement of Country

Before we start, I'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet today. I'm joining from the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, so I'd like to pay my respects to their Elders past and present, and extend those respects to the Elders of the lands from which you're joining. I'd also like to acknowledge that sovereignty has never been ceded, and that this always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

Welcome and overview of evaluation

Thank you very much for your time today and for agreeing to participate in a formal interview. As you are aware, today's interview will inform our Final Report which is scheduled to be delivered in September 2024. This phase of the evaluation, and our Final Report, will have an 'outcomes' focus. This includes any outcomes the COMPACT projects and COMPACT overall have achieved for the COMPACT Alliance, for young people, and for the community.

This interview

Our interview today should take about 30 minutes.

A note on confidentiality – what you say to us today will be used to inform our next report, and we'll assume the information you provide today can be used in that report unless you explicitly say otherwise. However, we will not share any raw outputs (i.e. notes or transcripts) of today's interview with anyone else outside of the evaluation team.

Your opinions and suggestions might be included in the report, but your name or any other identifiable information won't be included. We will identify you and other colleagues from the Department as a 'MNSW stakeholder'. However, there's only a small number of stakeholders being interviewed, particularly from MNSW, so while we'll remove any identifying information, there is a chance you may be identifiable to an informed reader.

If you change your mind about anything you've said after the interview, just tell us and we will delete the information you shared. If you don't tell us, we will continue to use the information you gave us.

Do you have any questions before we start? <If yes – proceed.>

Our preference is to record this interview so we can fully capture your words. This will only be used by our research team to create a transcript for analysis purposes; however, you can decline to have the interview recorded, in which case detailed notes will be taken. **Are you happy for me to record this discussion?**

<If yes – turn on recording; if no, take notes>

QUESTIONS

Introduction

1. The last time we spoke you told us a bit about your role at MNSW and your involvement in the design and delivery of COMPACT. Given we already have an understanding of your involvement, we can move into the questions around program outcomes, which are the focus of the Final Report. Before we do, if there have been any developments or challenges in program management and administration since we last spoke, could you please speak to these?

Outcomes for community

I'd like to hear your reflections on the COMPACT Alliance.

2. To what extent have you observed Alliance partners demonstrating a collective approach to promote community harmony? In what ways has this been achieved?

- a) How has MNSW and government more broadly leveraged the COMPACT Alliance in response to threats to community harmony in recent times?
- b) In what ways has the Alliance changed or evolved over the last four years?
- 3. What changes within community, if any, have you seen as a result of the work of the Alliance?
- (a) What have been the key barriers or enablers for the Alliance to develop community harmony?

Outcomes for Alliance - relationships

- 4. How strong do you feel the relationships are that have been developed through the Alliance? Have there been any factors that have contributed to the development of these relationships?
- 5. How sustainable do you feel these relationships are and why?
- 6. Can you identify any unintended consequences of the Alliance development?

Outcomes for Alliance and broader CVE space - Resources and learnings

- 7. To what extent have the projects' learnings and achievements been shared across the Alliance and beyond?
- (b) What impact has this had, if any? What factors have helped or hindered this information sharing?

Conclusion

- 8. Is there anything else that we haven't covered today, or that you'd like to add?

End

EVALUATION OF THE COMPACT PROGRAM

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Explanatory notes

- This document helps guide interview discussions but will not be used as a script – phrasing, wording, and order will be adapted as appropriate.
- The interview guide does not represent a complete list of the questions that may be asked or covered in each interview. The coverage and flow of issues will be guided by the evaluators and informed by participants. All questions are fully open-ended.
- Reported issues/data will be probed for evidence and/or examples wherever relevant.
- Prior to commencement, interviewer to confirm receipt of signed parental consent form for all participants less than 18 years old.

Introduction

Thank you for your time today. My name is <xxxxx> and I'm a researcher from Urbis.

Urbis is an independent research organisation that undertakes research and evaluation projects for government.

Multicultural NSW has asked us to undertake an independent evaluation on the COMPACT program. This program is a community resilience-building program that provides funding to 24 community organisations to support young people.

The goal of this evaluation is to understand what worked, what didn't work, and any suggestions you had for improvement.

Information about the interview

Our interview today should take about an hour but can be shorter or longer if you wish.

Participation in this discussion is voluntary and confidential. You don't have to take part if you don't want to. You don't need to give us a reason. During the interview, it's okay if you decide you want to skip a question or if you decide you don't want to keep going.

We will not share your comments or anything you say in this interview with anyone else outside of the evaluation team. Your opinions and suggestions might be included in the report we write Multicultural NSW in late 2024, but your name or any other information that could identify you won't be included. If we put your words into the report, we will only identify you as a 'Program participant'. This means that anyone reading the report won't know who said what.

It is likely that Multicultural NSW will share this report with all key stakeholders as well as publicly.

Only the team at Urbis will have access to the information you provide us. All information you give us will be stored on a password protected computer for seven years.

You can change your mind before talking to us, while you are talking to us, and up to a week after you have finished talking to us. If you change your mind after the interview, just tell us and we will delete the information you shared. If you don't tell us, we will continue to use the information you gave us.

Do you have any questions before we start? Are you happy to chat with me today?

Our preference is to record this interview so we can fully capture your words. Is this okay?

<If yes – turn on recording; if no, take notes>

QUESTIONS

Thank you for talking with me today. Before I ask anything, could you please state your name and that you consent to be participate in this project and consent to be recorded.

Participant outcomes

1. How did you become involved in *[project name]*? Did you have to participate or was it something you chose to do?
 - 1.1. *If chose to:* Why did you choose to participate?
2. Looking back on *[project name]* what did you think of it?
 - 2.1. What did you like about it? Why is that?
 - 2.2. What didn't you like about it? Why is that?
 - 2.3. How often did you engage with the project?
 - 2.4. Did you finish it? (If relevant, what kept you engaged until the end of the project?)
3. Did you learn anything new or interesting you hadn't learnt before? Prompt for:
 - Thinking about different perspectives and ways of life
 - Value of diversity in the community
 - Degree of concern for people in neighbourhood, and for minority groups
 - Awareness of education, training and work opportunities
 - Leadership skills and advocacy
4. Are you doing anything now that you weren't doing before? If so, what is that? Prompt for:
 - Identifying community members who may need support
 - Supporting minority groups

You and your local community

5. When people use the word 'community' what does that mean to you? *[Explore responses]*
6. What words would you use to describe how you feel about your local community? *[Explore responses]*
Prompt for:
 - Sense of belonging
 - Pride in local community
 - Ability to speak up about issues important to you
 - Ability to influence change
7. Do you think about your community any differently since taking part in *[project name]*? How so? *[Prompt increased hope, pride, empathy and empowerment]*
8. To what extent to you feel you are able to create positive change in your community?

New connections

9. Did you meet many new people as a result of taking part in *[project name]*?
10. What was it like to meet new people? *[Prompt exchange ideas, learning about different cultures, learning about new opportunities]*
11. Do you think you'll keep in touch with some of these people? Why or why not?
12. Anything else you'd like to share about your experience participating in *[INSERT Project]*.

That is the end of my questions, thank you very much for your time.

EVALUATION OF THE COMPACT PROGRAM

PARTICIPANT SENTIMENT ANALYSIS

About

Urbis, an independent research and evaluation company, has been engaged by Multicultural NSW to conduct the 2021-2024 evaluation of the COMPACT Program. The COMPACT Program supports a range of initiatives across NSW that aim to inspire communities and young people to stand up and stand united against extremism, hate, fear and division. The evaluation will examine what outcomes the COMPACT Program has achieved and any opportunities for improvement.

This survey

As part of the evaluation, we'd like your feedback as you have participated in a COMPACT Program initiative.

This survey should take around 5 minutes to complete. You don't have to complete the survey if you don't want to. You can choose to stop and leave the survey at any time.

People who complete the survey can enter a 25 words or less competition, with the best entry receiving a \$100 gift voucher – further information is included at the end of the survey.

Your responses will be used to inform a report that will be shared with Multicultural NSW, and the report might be made available for anyone to read. Your response cannot be used to identify you, so anybody reading the report won't know who said what.

Contact

If you have any questions about this survey, why you have been contacted, or the evaluation, please contact....

If you feel upset and need any more support, you can also call or contact a support service such as:

- Lifeline (ph.13 11 14)
- Beyond Blue Support Service (ph. 1300 22 4636)
- Kids Helpline (ph. 1800 55 1800) for people aged 5 to 25
- 13YARN (ph. 13 92 76) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services.

You can download a copy of this information about the survey here [<link to this information sheet>.](#)

Screenener Questions

S1.	What is your age?	Single response Required
	13 years or less	1
	14 to 19 years	2
	20 to 24 years	3
	25 to 29 years	4
	30 to 34 years	5
	35 to 39 years	6
	40 years or more	7
	I'd prefer not to say	8

If S1=2-8, then S2.


If S1=1, screen out: 'Thanks for participating in the evaluation of COMPACT. Unfortunately, we can only hear from participants 14 years or more in this survey.'

S2. Which initiative or project do you participate in?	Single response Required
<i>If you've participated in more than one, please select the initiative or project you've had the most involvement in.</i>	
Advocacy for Victim Support (Islamophobia Register Australia)	1
Agent C (All Together Now)	2
All One Under the Sun (STARTTS)	3
Better Together (PCYC Armidale)	4
Codebreakers Western Sydney (Western Sydney Community Forum)	5
Cohesive Communities: Building social cohesion through youth agency (Institute for Economics and Peace)	6
Communities Inspiring and Teaching Youth (CITY) (Youth off the Streets)	7
Empowering Youth to Inspire Change (Gymea Community Aid & Information Service)	8

FUNPARK (Curious Works)	9
Generation Grit 2.0 (Gallipoli Turkish Cultural Foundation)	10
Interfaith Encounters Inter-School Program (Catholic Mission)	11
KAIROS (Multicultural Youth Affairs Network NSW)	12
Lead the Way (Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra)	13
Mount Druitt Youth for Peace and Understanding (Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency)	14
Northern Youth Exchange (Mosaic Multicultural Connections)	15
Positive Peace, Cultural Wellbeing and Youth Agency Initiative (Western Sydney University)	16
Reconnecting East and West: COVID and Beyond (Arab Council Australia)	17
Somali Youth Community Connect (Somali Australian Community Association of NSW)	18
Stand Up – Multicultural Youth Conference (Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre)	19
The Harmony Project (National Rugby League)	20
The Street Journal (Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre)	21
Voices of Young Women (Voices of Women)	22
Young Leaders Forum (Courage to Care NSW)	23
Youth Champions (Metro Assist)	24
My project / initiative isn't listed above	25

If S1=1-24, then A1.

If S1=25, then S3.

S3.	What is the name of the project or initiative you have participated in, or the name of the organisation delivering it?	Open-ended Required
		

Part A – Survey Questions

A1.	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?						Single response per statement Required
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	
A1.1	I feel proud of the Australian way of life and culture	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.2	I feel I belong in Australia	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.3	My local area is a place where people from different national or ethnic backgrounds get on well together	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.4	The mix of different national or ethnic backgrounds improves local life	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.5	I am able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.6	I am able to have a say within my community on important issues all or most of the time	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.7	I am able to get involved in my local community if I want to	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.8	There are education and training opportunities available to me now and in the future	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.9	There are work opportunities available to me now and in the future	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.10	I have the potential to positively influence my own future	1	2	3	4	5	
A1.11	I have the potential to positively influence my community's future	1	2	3	4	5	

A2.	Please indicate which of the following you have done over the past 6 months:	Multiple response Required
	I have signed a petition (including online petitions)	1
	I have liked, posted or shared content on social media related to my local community or an issue important to me	2
	I have written or spoken to a religious or elected official about my local community or an issue important to me	3
	I have attended a local community event	4
	I have read, watched or listened to news (including online news) on average a few times a week	5
	None of the above	6

A3.	Imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you.											Single response per question Required
A3.1	On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
A3.2	On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now?	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Part B – About You

And finally, just a few questions about you...


B1.	What is your gender?	Single response Required
	Woman	1
	Man	2
	I identify my gender as: (please specify) 	3
	I'd prefer not to say	4

B2.	Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?	Single response Required
	No	1
	Yes, Aboriginal	2
	Yes, Torres Strait Islander	3
	Yes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	4
	I'd prefer not to say	5

B3.	What is your country of birth?	Single response Required
	I was born in Australia	1
	I was born overseas	2
	I'd prefer not to say	3

B4.	Were your parents born in Australia?	Single response Required
	Yes, my parents were born in Australia	1
	No, one or both of my parents were born overseas	2
	I'd prefer not to say	3

B5.	Do you use a language other than English at home?	Single response Required
	No, English only	1
	Yes, another language	2
	I'd prefer not to say	3

B6.	What is your postcode?	Single response, 4- digit number validation Optional
		1

COMPACT END OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANT SURVEY

About

Urbis, an independent research and evaluation company has been engaged by Multicultural NSW to conduct the 2021-2024 evaluation of the COMPACT Program.

As part of the evaluation, we want to hear from you about your experiences with the Program. This should take around 5-10 minutes to complete.

If you complete the survey, you can enter a competition to win one of three \$150 gift vouchers.

Confidentiality

In reporting, your responses will not be identifiable in any way.

Contact

If you have any questions about this questionnaire or the Evaluation please contact...

If you feel upset and need any more support, you can also call or contact a support service such as:

- Lifeline (ph.13 11 14)
- Beyond Blue Support Service (ph. 1300 22 4636)
- Kids Helpline (ph. 1800 55 1800) for people aged 5 to 25
- 13YARN (ph. 13 92 76) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services.

You can download a copy of this information about the survey here [link to this information sheet](#).

Screening questions

S1.	What is your age?	Single response required
	14 years or less	1
	15 to 19 years	2
	20 to 24 years	3
	25 to 29 years	4
	30 to 34 years	5
	35 to 39 years	6
	40 years or more	7
	I'd prefer not to say	8


If S1=2-7, then S2.

If S1=1 or S1=8, screen out: 'Thanks for participating in the evaluation of COMPACT. Unfortunately, we can only hear from participants 15 years or over in this survey.'

S2. Which initiative or project have you participated in? <i>If you've participated in more than one, please select the initiative or project you've had the most involvement in.</i>	Single response Required
Advocacy for Victim Support (Islamophobia Register Australia)	1
Agent C (All Together Now)	2
All One Under the Sun (STARTTS)	3
Better Together (PCYC Armidale)	4
Codebreakers Western Sydney (Western Sydney Community Forum)	5
Cohesive Communities: Building social cohesion through youth agency (Institute for Economics and Peace)	6
Communities Inspiring and Teaching Youth (CITY) (Youth off the Streets)	7
Empowering Youth to Inspire Change (Gymea Community Aid & Information Service)	8
FUNPARK (Curious Works)	9
Generation Grit 2.0 (Gallipoli Turkish Cultural Foundation)	10
Interfaith Encounters Inter-School Program (Catholic Mission)	11
KAIROS (Multicultural Youth Affairs Network NSW)	12
Lead the Way (Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra)	13
Mount Druitt Youth for Peace and Understanding (Mount Druitt Ethnic Communities Agency)	14
Northern Youth Exchange (Mosaic Multicultural Connections)	15
Positive Peace, Cultural Wellbeing and Youth Agency Initiative (Western Sydney University)	16
Reconnecting East and West: COVID and Beyond (Arab Council Australia)	17
Somali Youth Community Connect (Somali Australian Community Association of NSW)	18
Stand Up – Multicultural Youth Conference (Queanbeyan Multilingual Centre)	19
The Harmony Project (National Rugby League)	20
The Street Journal (Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre)	21
Voices of Young Women (Voices of Women)	22
Young Leaders Forum (Courage to Care NSW)	23
Youth Champions (Metro Assist)	24
My project / initiative isn't listed above	25

If S2=1-24, then A1.

If S2=25, then S3.

S3.	What is the name of the project or initiative you have participated in, or the name of the organisation delivering it?	Open-ended Required
		

Part A. Sentiment analysis

This section asks some questions about how you feel and your perspectives.

A1.	To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Single response per statement Required				
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
A1.1	I feel proud of the Australian way of life and culture	1	2	3	4	5
A1.2	I feel I belong in Australia	1	2	3	4	5
A1.3	My local area is a place where people from different ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds get on well together	1	2	3	4	5
A1.4	The mix of different ethnic, cultural or religious backgrounds improves local life	1	2	3	4	5
A1.5	I am able to have a say among family and friends on important issues all or most of the time	1	2	3	4	5
A1.6	I am able to have a say within my community on important issues all or most of the time	1	2	3	4	5
A1.7	I am able to get involved in my local community if I want to	1	2	3	4	5
A1.8	There are opportunities available to me now and in the	1	2	3	4	5

	future to learn new skills and gain knowledge					
A1.9	I have learned new skills and knowledge that will create opportunities for me now and in the future	1	2	3	4	5
A1.10	I have the potential to positively influence my own future	1	2	3	4	5
A1.11	I have the potential to positively influence my community's future	1	2	3	4	5

A2.	Please indicate which of the following you have done over the past 6 months:	Multiple response Required
	I have signed a petition (including online petitions)	1
	I have liked, posted or shared content on social media related to my local community or an issue important to me	2
	I have written or spoken to a community leader about my local community or an issue important to me	3
	I have attended a local community event	4
	I have read, watched or listened to news (including online news) on average a few times a week	5
	None of the above	6

A3.	Imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to ten at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you.	Single response per question Required
A3.1	On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
A3.2	On which step do you think you will stand about five years from now?	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Part B – Experiences of COMPACT project

We are interested to hear about your experiences taking part in your COMPACT project/initiative.


This is the project/initiative that you selected earlier in this survey.

B1.	To what extent do you agree with the following statement? During the project...						Single response per question Required
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/not sure
B1.1	I could discuss issues that mattered to me without being judged	1	2	3	4	5	99
B1.2	I met new people	1	2	3	4	5	99

B2.	To what extent do you agree with the following statements? As a result of my participation in the project...						Single response per question Required
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/not sure
B2.1	I have learnt about different perspectives	1	2	3	4	5	99
B2.2	I have learnt about different ways of life	1	2	3	4	5	99
B2.3	I have learnt new leadership and advocacy skills	1	2	3	4	5	99
B2.4	I made new friends that I hope to still be in contact with next year	1	2	3	4	5	99

B3.	To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Since taking part in the project...						Single response per question Required
------------	---	--	--	--	--	--	---------------------------------------

		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know/ not sure
B3.1	I now feel more confident in my ability to speak up about issues that matter to me among friends and family	1	2	3	4	5	99
B3.2	I now have a greater appreciation for different perspectives and ways of life	1	2	3	4	5	99
B3.3	I now feel greater pride in my local community	1	2	3	4	5	99
B3.4	I now feel I can contribute to my local community in some way	1	2	3	4	5	99
B3.5	I now know more about life and learning opportunities available to me now and in the future	1	2	3	4	5	99
B3.6	I now have greater confidence to engage in leadership and/or advocacy opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	99
B3.7	I now have an increased sense of control over my own life	1	2	3	4	5	99

B4.	Is there anything else you'd like to say about <i>[insert project name]</i> ? Optional
	

Part C – About you

Lastly, a few questions about you...


C1.	What is your gender?	Single response Required
	Woman	1
	Man	2
	I identify my gender as: (please specify) 	3
	I'd prefer not to say	4

C2.	Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?	Single response Required
	No	1
	Yes, Aboriginal	2
	Yes, Torres Strait Islander	3
	Yes, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	4
	I'd prefer not to say	5

C3.	What is your country of birth?	Single response Required
	I was born in Australia	1
	I was born overseas	2
	I'd prefer not to say	3

C4.	Were your parents born in Australia?	Single response Required
	Yes, my parents were born in Australia	1
	No, one or both of my parents were born overseas	2
	I'd prefer not to say	3

C5.	Do you use a language other than English at home?	Single response Required
	No, English only	1
	Yes, another language	2
	I'd prefer not to say	3

C6.	What is your postcode?	Single response, 4-digit number validation Optional
		1

