

Wyndham City Council

Social and Economic Inclusion Policy Background.

March 2019



*We acknowledge the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history
and take this opportunity to move forward hand in hand.*

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	State and Federal Policy Context	4
3.	International Context	12
4.	International Best Practice	16
5.	Summary of Common Themes and Directions	19
	Appendices	22

1. Introduction

Wyndham is one of Australia's fastest growing regions and had the second largest percentage increase in the population of all Local Government Areas across Victoria in the five year period leading up to 2017. The average annual growth rate sits at 8% and reflects a breadth of diversity.

Wyndham residents come from over 170 countries and speak more than 170 languages. Close to half of Wyndham's population was born overseas and overall the demographic profile is young and more diverse than Greater Melbourne.

Wyndham City Council is proactively committed to strategic planning and policy development that ensure all its constituents are welcomed, celebrated and supported and able to achieve their aspirations.

This paper is intended to inform the development of Council's Social and Economic Inclusion Framework.

It sets out:

- A review and summary of current Victorian and Australian multicultural, settlement and social cohesion policies.
- A review and summary of the international context including media narratives, Sustainable Development Goals, New Urban Agenda, other relevant United Nations and UNESCO programs and other National Policy
- International Best Practice analysis to inform the design of policy and implementation strategies

The paper also provides a summary of common themes and directions including key terminology, practical initiatives that demonstrate integrated approaches across community, public and private sectors, and potential best practice models.

2. State and Federal Policy Context

The changing Federal policy environment, and structural changes to Commonwealth funded core settlement services, has increasingly impacted the ability of refugees and asylum seekers to successfully establish their new lives in Australia. In this changing context the unique ability and willingness of Victorian communities, and non-settlement community organisations, to fill the gaps in Commonwealth funded settlement support services has regained its historical importance.

While the Commonwealth funded services within the National Settlement Framework provide a structured response to initial settlement needs, they are neither exhaustive nor intended to meet the longer term needs of place based communities. The settlement sector recognises the integral role that non-government organisations such as private enterprise, community based organisations, arts / sports institutions and small business play in creating welcoming places that engage and embrace new arrival communities. The desire for flexible, responsive, place based and coordinated settlement supports is reinforced in global best practice.

2.1 Federal Settlement Policy Context

Policy

Australia's approach to the settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants is based on the principles of providing support based on need, fostering participation in Australian society as soon as possible, fostering welcoming communities and partnering with civil society to provide services and support.

The Australian Government has instituted an outcomes-based service framework that prioritises the three "E's of **English** proficiency, **Education** and training and **Employment**. The Framework highlights that settlement works best when the community in which refugees settle are prepared for their arrival, have information about their refugee experience and can play a role in helping them to settle. The Framework prioritises working cooperatively and in consultation with multiple sectors of government and civil society delivers robust results and innovation in services.

Relevant policy frameworks include:

- The **National Settlement Framework** which provides a structural blueprint for the three tiers of government to effectively plan, engage and deliver services that support the settlement of new arrivals in Australia across nine priority areas.
The framework provides a strong foundation for a commitment to ongoing engagement with the non-government sector, business and industry, and the broader community.
- The **National Settlement Services Outcomes Standards** which set out a consistent set of best practice benchmarks against the nine priority areas of the National Settlement Framework.
- The **National Youth Settlement Framework** which provides the foundation to addressing the settlement needs of young people in all areas of their engagement with the service system.

Governance

Under the National Settlement Framework, responsibility for settlement services and support is divided between the three levels of government and the non-government sector.

Local Government is expected to provide a range of services and infrastructure to the local community, including specialised services to migrants and initiatives to encourage settlement in a particular locality.

The Non-government sector is expected to provide a link between mainstream services, the settlement sector and communities, and, supports the specific needs of the community through targeted initiatives.

Additional commonwealth government funded settlement support programs are set out in Appendix 1.

2.2 Victorian Settlement Policy Context

Victoria's **Multicultural Policy Statement** '*Victorian and Proud of it*' has two main elements:

- Assisting those with diverse backgrounds to successfully participate and contribute to the state.
- Encouraging the whole community to recognise that Victoria's diversity is our greatest strength.

The Policy highlights that the Victorian government recognises these element can only be achieved through a partnership approach that will enable every Victorian to participate fully in society, remain connected to their culture, and ensure all have equal rights, protections and opportunities.

The Policy commits to a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Action Plan that will ensure a successful settlement experience for refugees and asylum seekers, namely through social and economic inclusion.

The **Multicultural Victoria Act 2011** mandates government departments to report annually to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and to the Victorian Parliament on their achievements in multicultural affairs for the previous financial year. These report reflect efforts to:

- Ensure that services are accessible and responsive to the needs of Victoria's increasingly diverse communities
- Promote and support Victoria's multicultural communities and the benefits that diversity brings to Victoria's economy and society
- Strengthen social cohesion and encourage all Victorians to access opportunities and to participate in and contribute to the social, cultural, economic and political life of the state

All state government departments have cultural diversity plans in place underpinned by the government's Multicultural Policy Statement. Key themes include Benefits of diversity, Social cohesion and participation, and Accessible and responsive services. A key objective of the departmental plans is to actively support

all Victorians to access critical government services through state-wide and local networks while enabling them to benefit from participation in social, economic and cultural opportunities.

Departmental plans must also respond to the specific activities:

- Culturally diverse representation on government boards, authorities and committees
- Use of interpreting and translating services
- Multilingual publications and resources
- Culturally diverse media and advertising campaigns
- Measures to promote human rights

Governance

The Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC) division sits within the Department of Premier and Cabinet and provides policy and program support to drive the Victorian Government's multicultural vision and priorities.

Working in partnership with Victoria's diverse multicultural communities, via the Victorian Multicultural Commission, MASC is committed to fostering an inclusive, engaged and harmonious multicultural community in Victoria. The division continues its involvement in national cross-jurisdictional forums, which provide an important opportunity to discuss and address issues relating to immigration and multicultural affairs and bring a local and state perspective to deliberations on issues of national importance.

MASC also includes the Victorian Government's Settlement Coordination Unit which is concerned with addressing critical gaps in settlement services by helping to coordinate service responses for newly arrived migrants and refugees between state, local and federal governments.

The Victorian Government is committed to facilitating a Whole-of-Government approach to multicultural affairs by ensuring that the needs of Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse communities are conveyed to the relevant bodies and that Government is kept abreast of community concerns.

Additional information on state-based arrangements and funded programs is set out in Appendix 2.

More broadly, the Victorian Government has worked to implement and embed policies to foster social and economic inclusion for vulnerable Victorians. Most recently this has translated into practical changes to improve access to vocational education via fee free TAFE places, free transport for homeless and low income people, increased funding to community legal centres, broader support for neighbourhood houses and extensive investment in family violence prevention and response services. Employment initiatives have also featured, with investment in diversifying the workforce in skill shortage areas such as construction, automotive and care industries.

2.3 Australian Asylum Seeker Policy Context

While there is significant Federal Government support for migrants and refugees, asylum seekers have faced harsh treatment and decreasing supports in the past 18 months. Up to 12,000 people seeking asylum in Australia, over 5,000 of whom reside in Victoria, may be at risk of losing core services and financial support due to recent Government changes in the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS). The SRSS is a regular payment to help with basic living costs for those who live in Australia and are waiting for a decision about their immigration status. The current SRSS program has different levels of support ('bands'), depending on the circumstances of the person on the program.

In the past 6 months this program has been drastically reduced leaving many people with no form of financial or service assistance. Charities and food banks around the country have reported a significant increase in the presentation of people seeking asylum who are destitute as a result of the reduction of services. The Red Cross, who has been a provider of services for asylum seekers for 25 years and is the largest provider in the country of SRSS, has not had its contract renewed. There are fears that the number of people who will become destitute is only going to rise, placing extraordinary pressure on charities and welfare agencies around Australia. Currently, there is no agency in Australia funded by Government to work with this specific group of people. They are surviving on crisis relief from a range of charities, and living with friends or community members, often in vulnerable or unstable conditions.

There are two main categories of asylum seekers who have been removed from financial assistance. The first situation is people who have had their financial, casework and/or counselling support cancelled due to a range of reasons, which may include:

- Sending money to family overseas from the allocation of their SRSS financial support which has totalled more than \$1,000 in a 12 month period.
- Having been assessed as 'job ready' in regard to their fitness to work and will be expected to find work.
- Breached the code of conduct for Bridging Visa holders living in the community through minor infringements
- People who have arrived by plane, and are ineligible for SRSS until their substantive (e.g. tourist, student, partner) visa has expired, even if financial circumstances change (e.g. For reasons of family violence, loss of assets back home etc.)

Being able to work is often a great desire for asylum seekers and refugees. Working not only brings financial benefits, it also builds significant social capital and can improve the self-confidence of a person living in a new culture. However, there are many challenges for newly arrived individuals in gaining employment that go beyond a simple assessment of being 'job ready' by a generalist employment service. Some of these challenges include a lack of recognition by many employers of work experience overseas. Without Australian based work experience many people find it difficult to secure employment. A lack of proficient language skills, bias or discrimination on racial or religious grounds or a lack of understanding of the Bridging Visa system can all contribute to an inability to secure employment.

The second group are people whose claim for protection has been considered ‘finally determined’ by Home Affairs. This means they have not been recognised as a refugee. The policy of removing the financial means to live from this group of people has a long history, having been in place for many years.

Home Affairs considers a person finally determined when:

- a person was refused the grant of the visa and has not sought merits review of that decision within the period allowed to seek merits review; or
- the Immigration Assessment Authority (IAA) or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal have affirmed the decision to refuse to grant the visa; or
- a person has been refused the grant of the visa and that decision cannot be reviewed at the IAA as they are an excluded applicant.

In contrast to the Federal Government, the Victorian State Government extends all of its funded settlement and diversity inclusion programs to asylum seekers. In addition to humanitarian entrants, Victoria is home to the largest cohort of asylum seekers (approximately 11,000 of the ‘illegal maritime arrivals’ out of the national total of 32,000).

Victoria continues to be highly concerned about the lack of Commonwealth support for asylum seekers who are not found to be owed protection, given the likelihood that these individuals will be placed on final departure visas and cut off from accommodation, income and other supports.

While the settlement of refugees and asylum seekers is primarily the responsibility of the Commonwealth Government, Victoria clearly plays a critical role in providing additional settlement support to new arrivals and funds a range of specialist programs to help refugees and asylum seekers settle in our state. Compared to other jurisdictions, Victoria has the largest amount of dedicated funding to assist humanitarian entrants to settle. Investment directly aligns with the priorities identified under the National Framework.

2.4 Anti-Racism Policy Context

Countering racism and eliminating racial discrimination continue to be at the forefront of the work of the United Nations. Through the work of the United Nations, international laws have been developed which require countries to work towards the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. In addition to international treaties and conventions, there are several international declarations, which express the international community’s aspirations to eliminate racial discrimination.

Australia is a party to the following conventions:

- *International Labour Organisation Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention (No.111) (1958)* obliges Australia to ensure that workers are not discriminated against in employment.

- *UNESCO Convention Against Discrimination in Education (1960)* prohibits discrimination in education on the basis of race and other factors, and obliges Australia to apply policies which promote equality of opportunity and treatment.
- *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965)* obliges Australia to eliminate racial discrimination and promote understanding among all races, including in education and training.
- *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)* guarantees rights in relation to an individual's economic and social circumstances and their right to participate in the nation's cultural life. Article 13 obliges Australia to recognise that education is a right irrespective of race and that education shall strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Further, that education shall enable all people to participate effectively in a free society, and promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among racial, ethnic and religious groups.
- *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)* obliges Australia to respect a range of rights dealing with government and civic life such as the right to life, the right to vote and the right to equality before the law. These standards inform the rights component of civics education. Importantly, Article 26 states that persons are equal before the law. Further, that the law should prohibit discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on the ground of race.
- *Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)* obliges Australia to ensure a child's right to education irrespective of race.
- *First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1991)* allows individuals to lodge complaints with the United Nations Human Rights Committee for alleged breaches of the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, when all Australian remedies have been exhausted.

The Declarations relating to these issues include:

- *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1963)* advocates the elimination of racial discrimination in all areas of public life including education.
- *Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples (1965)* advocates that young people shall be brought up in the knowledge of the dignity and equality of all men, without distinction as to race, colour, ethnic origins or beliefs, and in respect for fundamental human rights and for the right of peoples to self-determination.
- *UNESCO Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to Countering Racialism, Apartheid and Incitement to War (1978)* deals with the role of the mass media in countering racism in the media.
- *UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice (1978)* deals with the rights of people to maintain and develop distinct cultural identities.

- *Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (1981)* deals with the elimination of discrimination and the protection of the rights of people's religious beliefs.
- *Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious or Linguistic Minorities (1992)* deals with the elimination of discrimination and the protection of the rights of people of certain minority groups.

Victoria's **Multicultural Policy Statement** '*Victorian and Proud of it*' reaffirms the importance of a culturally diverse and socially cohesive nation. The policy demonstrates the Australian Government's commitment to a multicultural Australia.

In terms of national public policy, an expression of anti-racism was made in October 1996 when the Prime Minister, with the support of the Leader of the Opposition, made a *Parliamentary Statement of Racial Tolerance* by moving:

That this house:

- *reaffirms its commitment to the right of all Australians to enjoy equal rights and be treated with equal respect, regardless of race, colour, creed or origin;*
- *reaffirms its commitment to maintaining an immigration policy wholly non-discriminatory on grounds of race, colour, creed or origin;*
- *reaffirms its commitment to the process of reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, in the context of redressing their profound social and economic disadvantage;*
- *reaffirms its commitment to maintaining Australia as a culturally diverse, tolerant and open society, united by an overriding commitment to our nation and its democratic institutions and values; and*
- *denounces racial intolerance in any form as incompatible with the kind of society we are and want to be.*

The National Anti-Racism Strategy was launched in August 2012 for an initial period of three years. Its objectives were to raise awareness of racism and its effects, promote initiatives that prevent and reduce racism, and empower communities to take action to prevent and reduce racism. In 2015, it was extended for a further three years. The Strategy is a partnership-based strategy, involving government departments and a number of non-government organisations.

According to the Scanlon Foundation's *Mapping Social Cohesion* study, 'the overwhelming majority of Australians (83 per cent) say that multiculturalism has been good for Australia'. Nonetheless, racism and racial discrimination continue to exist in Australia. In 2017, 20 per cent of Australians said they experienced discrimination in the past twelve months. Those from non-English speaking backgrounds continue to experience higher levels of discrimination (34.2 per cent in 2017). Moreover, particular migrant communities often encounter particularly intense forms of discrimination. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience racism in systemic and institutional ways. In 2016, 46 per cent of Indigenous respondents reported experiencing prejudice in the previous six months, compared to 39 per cent for the same period two years before. Thirty-seven per cent reported experiencing racial prejudice in the form of verbal abuse, and 17 per cent reported physical violence.

The objectives of the National Anti-Racism Strategy have been to:

- Create awareness and understanding of racism and its effects;
- Identify and promote initiatives to prevent and reduce racism; and
- Empower communities and individuals to take action against racism.

While Victoria is yet to establish its Anti-Racism Action Plan, there are multiple projects currently funded to address racism against the Jewish and Muslim communities. Early Initiative Projects are being delivered by:

- Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights
- Australian Turkish Association
- Islamic Council of Victoria
- Islamic Museum of Australia
- Jewish Christian Muslim Association
- Jewish Community Council of Victoria
- Somali Council of Victoria
- Australian Multicultural Foundation (lead for regional projects)

3. International Context

Introduction

International approaches to achieving social and economic inclusion have been, in the main, informed by the broader policies of the United Nations. Some of these are introduced below. In the last 5 years, there has also been a range of independent think tanks, not-for-profits and academic institutions established for the advancement of equity and inclusion. While some are still in their infancy, others are more established and making considerable contributions to global understandings and responses.

Note:

The following approaches have been identified for inclusion in this report given their broad approach and applicability. In undertaking research for this section the consultants identified that a more comprehensive documentation of contexts was not relevant given that most inclusion policies, frameworks and examples globally have focused on one specific vulnerable group.

Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufacturers and Commerce (RSA)

RSA established the Inclusive Growth Commission in the UK in 2016. The Commission focused on finding new and dynamic ways to enable all segments of a community to participate in, and benefit from, economic growth at a local level. Through a series of localised case studies, they identified four domains of inclusive growth:

- Inclusive livelihoods - The government under Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is determined to tackle these issues, to strengthen equality of opportunity and ensure that every Canadian has the chance to succeed in life.
- Inclusive wealth
 - Financial: tackling wealth inequality through broadening the ownership of wealth and assets.
 - Community or place-based wealth: developing institutions that generate economic value which remains within a town or city, closer to local people, instead of 'leaking' out.
- Inclusive voice - Giving citizens a greater say and influence over economic decision making, for example, through participative and deliberative platforms and in the workplace itself.
- Inclusive futures - Building an inclusive economy is a long-term endeavour that ought to make climate change and environmental concerns a core part of economic strategies. It is also about anticipating and responding to long-term mega trends, such as an ageing society.

The Commission also developed a Strategic Mindset for Inclusive Growth (*Table 1*).

From	To	Type of Systemic Intervention
Economic and social impacts of policy are considered separately	Economic and social impacts are considered together	Policy integration
Emphasis on the <i>quantity</i> of growth (number of jobs, dollar amount of investment)	Emphasis on the quality of growth (e.g., growth distribution, job quality)	Quality jobs
Physical investment in communities distributed in an inequitable manner	Equitable investment in people and places as a combined means to inclusive growth	Equitable infrastructure
Public, private and philanthropic resources distributed in a widespread, scattershot, one-time fashion	Public, private and philanthropic resources distributed in a concentrated, coordinated and sustained fashion	Coordinated, long-term investment
Top-down, non-participatory decision-making on policies impacting communities	Inclusive policy setting that leverages the talents, voice and experience of local residents	Shared decision making
Wealth building opportunities restricted to top income earners	Wealth building opportunities for people of color and low income	Widespread financial security

Table 1: RSA, 2017, Inclusive Growth Commission – Making the Economy Work for Everyone Report

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The UN SDGs identify the key indicators for peace and prosperity. They seek to ensure the most fundamental human rights are protected and met for all people regardless of gender, race, geographic location and economic circumstances. Particularly relevant to the development of a social and economic inclusion strategy are:

- SGD 1 – No poverty
- SGD 2 – No hunger
- SGD 3 – Good health and wellbeing
- SGD 4 – Quality education
- SGD 5 – Gender equality
- SGD 6 – Clean water and sanitation
- SGD 7 – Affordable and clean energy
- SGD 8 – Decent work and economic growth
- SGD 9 – Industry, innovation and infrastructure
- SGD 10 – Reduced inequalities
- SGD 11 – Sustainable cities and communities
- SGD 12 – Responsible consumption and production
- SGD 13 – Climate action
- SGD 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Framework for Policy Action on Inclusive Growth

In 2018 the OECD established a Framework for Policy Action on Inclusive Growth. The Framework aims to assist governments to sustain and grow more equitable distributions of the benefits of economic growth. Supported by a dashboard of indicators, the Framework consolidates three key OECD policy recommendations:

1. Invest in people and places that have been left behind through
 - (i) targeted quality childcare, early education and life long acquisition of skills;
 - (ii) effective access to quality healthcare, justice, housing and infrastructures; and
 - (iii) optimal natural resource management for sustainable growth.
2. Support business dynamism and inclusive labour markets through
 - (i) broad-based innovation and technology diffusion;
 - (ii) strong competition and vibrant entrepreneurship;
 - (iii) access to good quality jobs, especially for women and under-represented groups; and
 - (iv) enhanced resilience and adaptation to the future of work.
3. Build efficiencies and responsive governments through
 - (i) aligned policy packages across the whole of government;
 - (ii) integration of distributional aspects upfront in the design of policy; and
 - (iii) assessing policies for their impact on inclusiveness and growth.

United Nations New Urban Agenda

The UN adopted the New Urban Agenda in 2016, representing a shared vision for a better and more sustainable future. It lays out standards and principles for the planning, construction, development, management, and improvement of urban areas along its five main pillars of implementation:

1. National urban policies
2. Urban legislation and regulations
3. Urban planning and design
4. Local economy and municipal finance
5. Local implementation

It is intended to act as a resource for every level of government, from national to local; for civil society organisations; the private sector; constituent groups; and for all who call the urban spaces of the world “home” to realise this vision. The Agenda prioritises the connection between good urbanisation and development outcomes - job creation, livelihood opportunities, and improved quality of life. The New Urban Agenda also acknowledges that culture and cultural diversity are sources of enrichment for communities and provide an important contribution to sustainable development in a globalising world.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Economic Inclusion

The UNESCO definition of economic inclusion is founded on the fact that everyone—regardless of citizenship—has the right to work, and Governments are obliged to take progressive measures to safeguard this right. Non-citizens who are lawfully present in a State are entitled to treatment equal to that enjoyed by citizens in the realm of employment and work. (*OHCHR, The Rights of Non-Citizens, New York and Geneva, 2006*).

Media Narratives

Media, undoubtedly, plays a role in shaping the way vulnerable people are viewed by society. The consequences of negative, targeted commentary towards specific population groups were profoundly evident in the recent devastating events in Christchurch, New Zealand. Whilst these events were at the extreme end of repercussions, the influence of media and public commentary as indirectly causal cannot be underestimated.

In Australia, we have witnessed a diatribe against African young people that has caused significant damage to the opportunities available to African community members. News outlets have also contributed to a view of welfare recipients as ‘leaners’ – lazy and entitled individuals who choose to be unemployed and make poor choices about their financial resources. Against a backdrop of unaffordable housing and welfare payments that force recipients to live below the poverty line, these portrayals are not only unhelpful but also incredibly misleading. Anecdotally, local media has proven to be a valuable weapon against national media narratives, increasing empathy and providing local context to national social issues. Local government has played a significant role in negating the revenue focused damage being done by news outlets and must continue to influence at the local level if social and economic inclusion are to be realised for marginalised groups.

Redressing media narratives alone, however, will not be sufficient in achieving this. Unaffordable housing and population growth are increasingly forcing low income community members to the urban fringes, where limited access to transport, services and employment opportunities further entrench disadvantage. The responsibility for national social challenges is being pushed to local governments who are grappling with significant population growth within their LGAs. This presents both challenges and opportunities for local governments to respond to changing community needs.

4. International Best Practice

Overview of Findings

Efforts are being made across the globe to improve social and economic inclusion within communities. The most effective examples highlight the importance of collaboration and localised responses that seek to address the particular needs of place based communities.

Although there are countless policy initiatives being established by nations (Canada, Scandinavian countries and Australia particularly), implementation has been slow and largely unsuccessful in addressing economic and social inequalities. Efforts are often poorly resourced and short term in nature, limiting the opportunities to design effective strategies. In effect, many of these policy initiatives do little more than change the language used within governments. Economic growth continues to benefit those in the top 20% of wealth, while the gap between them and low income earners continues to grow.

Through our research, we have noted that industry and business have tended to prioritise their own immediate success when determining their level of engagement with place-based initiatives. There has been some success in Australia with property developers, and this has been largely driven by policy changes at local government level. Planning policies that require a minimum percentage of social housing within new developments, for example, have ensured local developments contribute to the supply of affordable rental housing.

Importantly, many successful examples of place based social and economic inclusion initiatives have been focused on very specific locations. In Australia, for example, the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy was successful in its targeting of suburbs rather than whole LGAs. A focus on supporting people to feel safe, connected and valued actors within their local community has produced many positive outcomes. Developing wider networks within local communities significantly increases access to local employment opportunities. Social cohesion increased dramatically in areas targeted for Neighbourhood Renewal, particularly in areas of high cultural diversity, reducing rates of crime and racially based offences. In Australia, this approach has focused largely on welfare recipients, locating initiatives within public housing estates thus missing important opportunities to increase social and economic inclusion for low income earners.

These examples can be found internationally also. This is a rapidly growing field and a deep dive into the breadth of emerging initiatives was not within the remit of this project. In addition, the majority of emerging examples have not been adequately evaluated to determine the extent of sustainable outcomes. The consultants have researched, reviewed and discarded existing models which have not worked or are not applicable within the scope of local government's role.

EMPath (*Identified best practice model*)

The review of international best practice has highlighted the EMPath model as offering the best potential and applicability to Wyndham.

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, USA, EMPath, formerly Crittendon Women's Union, have developed an evidence based approach to increasing the social and economic inclusion of women and their families.

Their work, initially, focused on one low income high rise in Boston, where the majority of residents were living in social housing. Working across local service networks, EMPath have established the Bridge to Economic Self Sufficiency (*see model below*). The Bridge helps families plan, reach, and sustain their personal goals in five essential areas:

- family stability
- well being
- education and training
- financial management
- employment and career management

Sequencing of support is critical to the model, acknowledging that stable housing, good health, positive family relationships and access to transport are all essential for employment success. Social networks are also a strong focus, ensuring participants have real and accessible opportunities to contribute to the local community and develop friendships for support. Education assistance is provided to children and parents, building the necessary skills to support educational attainment for future generations.

The Bridge to Self-Sufficiency takes a comprehensive approach, because difficulties in one part of someone's life create difficulties in another. This is particularly true for low income families, where economic uncertainty is high and a small disruption frequently pushes the family into crisis. Fortunately, the opposite also holds true. Success in one part of someone's life can reinforce success in another. A coaching approach is taken, where each family has a coach working closely with them to plan, implement and achieve their goals. Consistent contact with one worker builds trust and ensures emerging risks are identified and addressed to prevent families slipping into crisis. ***Eighty percent (80%) of their participants have achieved economic independence within 12 months***, a remarkable outcome for families who have come from inter-generational poverty.

Equally critical to their success is strong collaboration with local service systems, industry and local government. They have also worked closely with local media outlets to promote the broad benefits of enabling participation in community and economic life for local disadvantaged people. Participants have been profiled to highlight the causes of their disadvantage, the structural barriers that perpetuate poverty and the success of individuals when the right supports are provided.

EMPath have now expanded their work to other parts of Boston, and through global partnerships with place based service providers who are tackling the issues of entrenched and inter-generational poverty. Their model has proven to be highly transferable, largely due to the brain science informed approach, which works to repair the developmental damage caused by inter-generational poverty. Through their research, they have worked closely with neurologists to identify the developmental impacts of poverty. The area of the brain affected by poverty is responsible for executive functioning, such as future oriented decision making and impulse control. The experience of poverty actively reduces the brains capacity to think ahead and plan for the future. EMPaths research has also highlighted that this part of the brain is highly elastic. This new knowledge has enabled a complete rethink of how poverty is best addressed. By working closely with individuals and families to coach them to 'plan their way out of poverty', the affected area of the brain grows to its normal size.

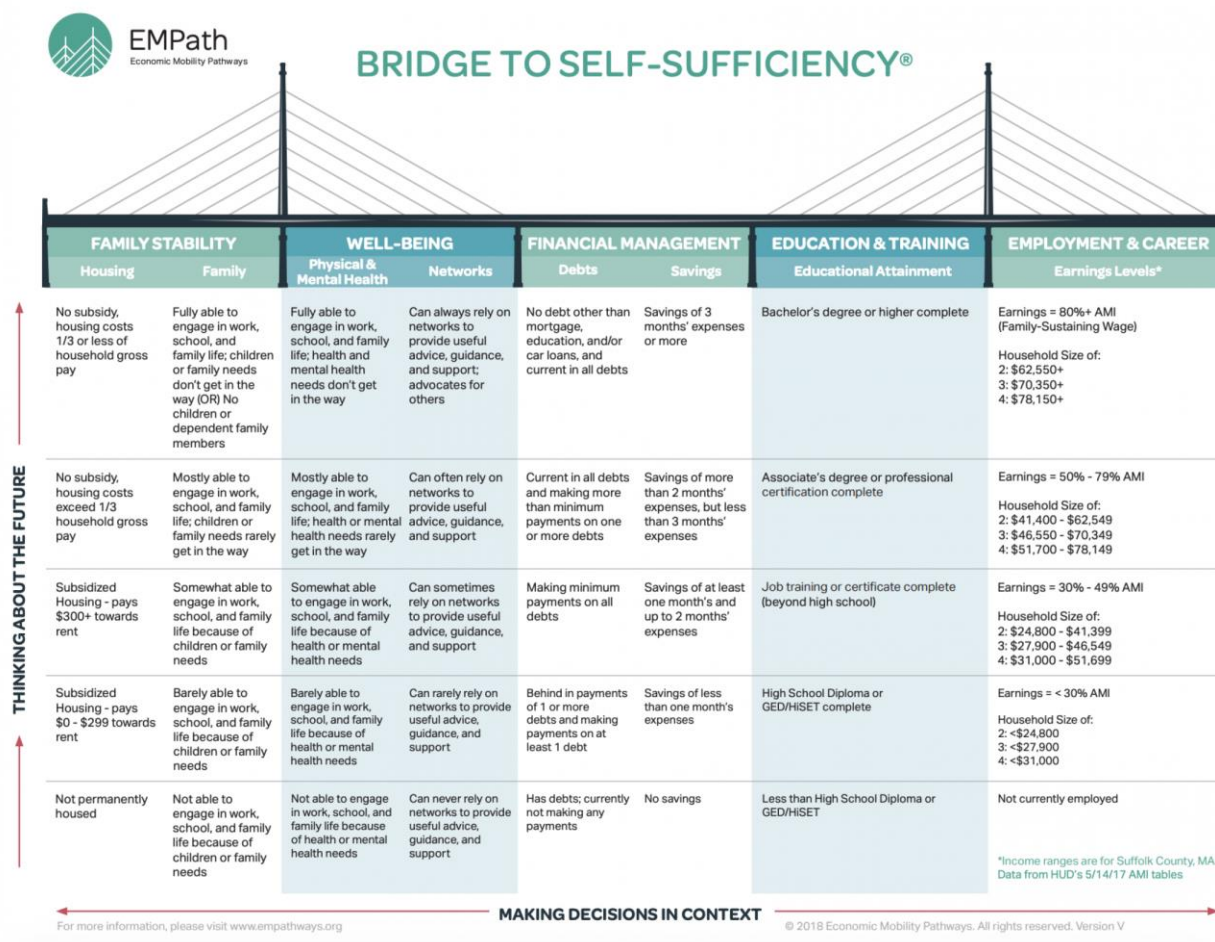


Diagram 1: EMPath Bridge to Economic Self Sufficiency

There are two organisations in Victoria who are exploring the potential of this model for local communities. Of particular interest is the transferability to people of diverse backgrounds. The model allows for additional pillars and as such could be extended to address areas of cultural identity and inclusion.

The EMPath model could be of value to Wyndham, where the local service system and business community could be led by local government to work in more responsive, future oriented and dynamic ways with disadvantaged community members. It offers a holistic response and recognises that one organisation alone in a local setting cannot realistically achieve social and economic inclusion without establishing the collaborations required to achieve real and lasting outcomes.

A potential approach to adopting the EMPath model is discussed in the next section of this paper.

Additional international practice examples are included as Appendix 3.

5. Summary of Common Themes and Directions

Globally, there is an increased recognition of the importance of bringing together social and economic inclusion to achieve the best outcomes for communities. In Australia, the urgent need to turn our attention to social inclusion was amplified by the release of the 2012 OECD income inequality rankings. Australia's income inequality was in the top 10 of all OECD countries. Clearly, economic growth and capital accumulation failed to benefit those in the margins.

Due to Australia's poor performance in economic inclusion, we have seen a high priority placed on developing policies that stimulate inclusion across all levels of government over the past seven years. This has gradually led to a more helpful combining of social and economic inclusion policy frameworks. Unfortunately, despite increasing efforts, little has changed for vulnerable community members across Australia.

Social inclusion and inclusive economic growth share parallel objectives. Traditionally, economic growth has been measured by assessing the performance of the highest earning potential of a nation, premised on the assumption that this results in greater opportunities for everyone. Inclusive growth seeks to address the non-financial reasons for inequality that cannot be addressed through job creation, economic policy and trickle-down economics alone.

The most successful examples of social and economic inclusion globally seek to improve the non-income well-being and quality of life for vulnerable groups. The correlation between inequality, poverty and negative outcomes for well-being is well established. Inequality and poverty result in negative outcomes for health, education and employment outcomes. When inequality is addressed for individuals, resilient economic growth is possible, with effective models providing broad benefits to whole communities.

Several **critical success factors** have emerged within Australia and internationally for place based social and economic inclusion:

- Building internal capability of government, service providers and business to understand the principles of inclusion and diversity
- Genuine commitment to addressing non-income barriers to social and economic inclusion
- Shared commitment to increasing social and economic inclusion
- Strong collaboration across government, service system, business and community to develop and implement approaches
- Strong guiding narrative developed with broad community representation
- Long term commitment and patience to continue investing over an extended period – big social change and attitude changes takes time

Research also highlights the following **critical elements** to be addressed in social and economic inclusion strategies:

- Alleviation of poverty
- Increased opportunities for social networking and engagement
- Increased opportunities to contribute to the local community
- Increased access to responsive health and well-being services
- Access to affordable, reliable and safe transport
- Fostering individual capacity through mentoring, tailored opportunities, etc.

Local governments play an important role in ensuring local infrastructure, services and community programs are accessible and inclusive and that their workforces reflect the diversity in their communities. Striving towards social and economic inclusion brings both challenges and opportunities for local governments. While local government tends to have more direct contact with service providers within their geographical area, they also have limited control over the resource levels and structures of most essential services. Their best impact is achieved through harnessing local resources and bringing together the broad range of actors whose contributions are critical to the success of dynamic place based policy developments.

A **network governance approach** has proven effective in addressing the need for coordination and meeting the priorities of community. Often used interchangeably with 'collaborative governance', network governance approaches recognise that there are few social issues that governments are capable or equipped to resolve alone. Working together, formal and informal actors both inside and outside of government, can pool resources, leverage information, respond quickly to emerging needs and generate momentum for change. Research on network governance highlights a diversity of success factors: some suggest that a network structure that is integrated around a core-agency, rather than scattered, is critical, while others suggest that the role of network managers in connecting actors, coordinating information and generating 'soft' factors such as inter-organisational trust are most important. The service delivery environment, most particularly the mix of public, private and not-for-profit organisations, will also determine the most appropriate network and brokerage forms that will maximise service effectiveness and efficiency. In complex settings involving multiple service types and agencies, the 'lead organisation' network governance model enables strategic coordination of resources and opportunities to leverage the expertise and resources of members. Wyndham is well placed to play this role.

Further consultation is advised with the following key stakeholders:

- Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
- Social Inclusion Policy Branch, Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion Division, Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Settlement Council of Australia
- Asylum Seeker Resource Centre
- Welcoming Cities
- Refugee Council of Australia
- All Together Now
- Australian Human Rights Commission

Appendix 1

COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENT FUNDED SETTLEMENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Settlement Engagement and Transition Support Grants (SETS)	Supports both humanitarian entrants and other eligible permanent migrants in their first five years of life in Australia. The program focuses on social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being and community connectedness. (administered by the Department of Social Services)
Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)	The AMEP provides up to 510 hours of English language tuition to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants to help them learn foundation English language (administered by the Department of Education and Training).
Skills for Education and Employment (SEE)	SEE provides language, literacy and numeracy training to eligible job seekers, to help them to participate more effectively in training or in the labour force (administered by the Department of Education and Training).
jobactive	jobactive connects job seekers with employers and assists job seekers to develop a Job Plan and search for a job (administered by the Department of Jobs and Small Business).
Disability Employment Services (DES)	DES assists people with disability, injury or health condition to prepare for, find and keep a job (administered by the Department of Social Services).
Program of Assistance for Survivors of Torture and Trauma	This program provides specialised support services to eligible migrants who are experiencing psychological difficulties associated with surviving torture and trauma before coming to Australia (administered by the Department of Health).
Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)	TIS provides interpreting services 24 hours a day, seven days a week (administered by the Department of Home Affairs).
Helping refugees webpages, DSS	Through the Helping Refugees webpages, DSS seeks to help individuals, communities and workplaces to understand and support the refugee settlement journey. The Helping Refugees pages are designed to encourage people to support refugees in their local areas in practical and meaningful ways.

Targeted Health Services	In the May 2017 Budget, the Australian Government announced that it will commit \$14.1 million over four years to expand the National Immunisation Program to provide ongoing catch-up vaccines for almost 375,000 Australians aged 10 to 19 years, including 3,000 humanitarian entrants, and more than 8,000 adult refugees and humanitarian entrants.
Youth Transition Support Pilot	<p>The Youth Transition Support pilot commenced in 2016 and helps develop the capabilities, resilience and social connections of young humanitarian entrants and other vulnerable migrants aged 15 to 25 years to stay engaged in education and make successful transitions to employment.</p> <p>The Youth Transition Support pilot has four components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships for Employment helps improve the work readiness and work awareness of youth through work experience, job readiness training and support to fill existing job vacancies; • Strong Connections to Education helps support ongoing engagement with education through programs that build self-confidence and peer connections for young people; • Sports Engagement for Youth builds social connections and confidence through sporting programs; and • Increased Vocational Opportunities helps youth obtain and strengthen vocational skills.
Career Pathways Pilot	The Australian Government invested \$5.2 million in 2016-17 for a three-year Career Pathways pilot for humanitarian entrants. The pilot provides targeted, early intervention assistance to help newly arrived humanitarian entrants who have skills and/or qualifications and vocational English language proficiency. Pilot participants receive assistance to develop and pursue a career pathway plan which will guide them in sourcing and securing meaningful employment opportunities appropriately suited to their pre arrival work history, qualifications and skills. Services provided through the pilot complements employment assistance already available to job seekers in Australia. The pilot has been implemented in six locations across Australia: Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne, Perth, Hobart and Toowoomba.
Recognition of foreign qualification	Australia assesses overseas qualifications as per its obligations under the Lisbon Recognition Convention 2002. Australia has policies and processes for the recognition of the qualifications of refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation. This supports participation in education and employment.

	<p>The Department of Education and Training provides official information and advice on the comparability of overseas qualifications and works with the Overseas Qualification Unit to facilitate the recognition of overseas qualifications in Australia.</p>
--	--

OTHER STRATEGIES SUPPORTING SETTLEMENT AND COMMUNITY COHESION

<p>National Community Hubs Program</p>	<p>Australian Government partnership with the Scanlon Foundation and Community Hubs Australia to implement the National Community Hubs Program (the Hubs).</p> <p>Migrant and refugee women and their young children are among Australia's most vulnerable residents. The Hubs support these women, children and their families.</p> <p>Based in schools and community centres, the Hubs aim to create spaces across Australia for local residents, businesses and community services to assist migrants and refugees learn English, develop new skills, integrate and access support provided by federal, state and territory and local governments. Services supporting the acquisition of English, active participation in the workforce and access to education are critical elements to successful integration. Community Hubs facilitate this engagement and empowerment at the local level and provide family friendly gateways that link migrant women with their families to school, local services, communities and each other. In 2017 more than 8,000 families attended hub activities, including job or skills training. They were also referred to community services outside of the hub over 8,500 times.</p> <p>There are currently 32 Community Hubs in operation in primary schools and community centres across Victoria in local government areas including Banyule, Brimbank, Dandenong, Greater Geelong, Greater Shepparton and Hume.</p>
<p>National Anti-Racism Strategy</p>	<p>The Australian Human Rights Commission and other partners implement the National Anti-Racism Strategy. This strategy is designed to provide a clear understanding of what racism is and how it can be prevented and reduced.</p> <p>The strategy is about working together to take action against racism, in all its different forms, wherever we see or experience it and focuses on public awareness, education resources and</p>

	<p>youth engagement and be underpinned by research, consultation and evaluation.</p> <p>The aim of the National Anti-Racism Strategy is to promote a clear understanding in the Australian community of what racism is, and how it can be prevented and reduced. This aim is achieved through three objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create awareness of racism and how it affects individuals and the broader community • identify, promote and build on good practice initiatives to prevent and reduce racism • empower communities and individuals to take action to prevent and reduce racism and to seek redress when it occurs.
Harmony Day	<p>Harmony Day is held every year on 21 March to coincide with the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Harmony Day is about inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone. It is a day for all Australians to embrace cultural diversity and to share what we have in common.</p>

Appendix 2

STATE GOVERNMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND FUNDED PROGRAMS

Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC)	<p>The Multicultural Affairs and Social Cohesion (MASC) division sits within Fairer Victoria and provides policy and program support to drive the Victorian Government's multicultural vision and priorities.</p> <p>Working in partnership with Victoria's diverse multicultural communities, MASC is committed to fostering an inclusive, engaged and harmonious multicultural community in Victoria. The division continues its involvement in national cross-jurisdictional forums which provide an important opportunity to discuss and address issues relating to immigration and multicultural affairs and bring a local and state perspective to deliberations on issues of national importance.</p> <p>MASC has four branches: Community Participation; Community Resilience and Social Inclusion; Communications, Corporate, and Community Grants; and the Office of the Victorian Multicultural Commission (OVMC).</p> <p>MASC also includes the Victorian Government's Settlement Coordination Unit which is concerned with addressing critical gaps in settlement services by helping to coordinate service responses for newly arrived migrants and refugees between state, local and federal governments.</p>
Victorian Multicultural Commission	<p>The VMC provides independent advice to the Victorian Government to inform the development of legislative and policy frameworks, as well as the delivery of services to our culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse society.</p> <p>The VMC is the voice of Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities and is the main link between them and the government.</p> <p>Operating under the Multicultural Victoria Act 2011 the VMC consists of 12 commissioners</p> <p>A key function of the VMC is to provide honest and candid advice to the government on multicultural affairs and citizenship in Victoria. The work of the Commission includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • state-wide consultations via a network of Regional Advisory Councils to determine the needs of Victoria's diverse communities • developing and maintaining partnerships between community organisations that provide settlement support and service delivery for diverse communities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing and maintaining harmonious community relations • researching, advising and reporting to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship on any matter relating to the commission's objectives, and • focusing on systematic and community-wide settlement and service issues.
--	---

STATE GOVERNMENT FUNDED PROGRAMS

Employment Support	<p>The Jobs Victoria Employment Network, which commenced in October 2016, has now assisted more than 3,500 job seekers into employment (as at 31 March 2018), focusing on high need locations across the state.</p> <p>More than \$50 million has now been allocated to 51 employment services under the Jobs Victoria Employment Network, including funding for specialist multicultural employment services. A total of \$6 million (\$4 million from the multicultural affairs portfolio, and \$2 million from Jobs Victoria) has been committed to the Jobs Victoria pool to specifically target culturally diverse Victorians, including refugees and asylum seekers.</p> <p>Over 1,350 multicultural jobseekers have been supported into work, including more than 600 people who arrived in Victoria as refugees or asylum seekers (as at March 2018).</p>
---------------------------	---

Health support	<p>The <i>Refugee Health Program</i> aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increase refugee access to primary health services ○ improve how health services respond to refugees' needs ○ coordinate a response to newly arrived refugees ○ help individuals, families and refugee communities improve their health and wellbeing. <p>The program is delivered by community health services (CHSs), and employs community health nurses, allied health professionals and assistants, and bicultural workers. The nurses and other health professionals have expertise in working with culturally and linguistically diverse and marginalised communities.</p> <p>The program operates in 17 local government areas with high numbers of newly arrived refugees. CHSs are well positioned to deliver services to refugees because they have a close relationship with their community and they can connect people with a broad range of other health and human services.</p> <p>The Victorian Government also supports The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (Foundation House) which provides training for refugee health nurses and community-based nurses who care for refugee populations. Foundation House also undertakes a range of other work, including direct care, advocacy and research.</p> <p>Foundation House is also the auspice for the Refugee Health Network, providing a significant level of resources and support (including use of facilities).</p>
-----------------------	--

Education support	<p>The <i>Refugee Education Support Program</i> (RESP) is a Department of Education and Training funded initiative in partnership with Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) and Foundation House in collaboration with Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) and Independent Schools Victoria (ISV).</p> <p>RESP aims to have a positive impact on the educational and wellbeing outcomes of young people from refugee backgrounds in Victorian schools.</p> <p>The program works with schools to identify and implement strategies to support the achievement outcomes, wellbeing and engagement in learning of students from refugee backgrounds through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the provision of professional learning and consultation which builds the capacity of school staff and out-of-school-hours learning support providers, including volunteers ○ community engagement and participation strategies which support recently arrived families from refugee backgrounds ○ the development of partnerships with community, business and government organisations. <p>Additionally, the <i>Refugee and Asylum Seeker Wellbeing Supplement</i> provides funding to eligible schools to support the wellbeing needs of students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds for the 2017 to 2020 school years.</p> <p>DET also funds <i>English as an Additional Language (EAL) programs, English language schools and centres, and Multicultural education aides</i> which assist with communication between the school and parents of students from language backgrounds other than English.</p>
Strategic Partnerships	<p>A total of 14 Strategic Partnerships have been funded \$2,850,000 per annum over four years through the Capacity Building and Partnerships grants program to deliver coordinated settlement support for new and emerging communities across Victoria.</p> <p>The Strategic Partnerships bring together settlement and asylum seeker service providers, peak multicultural organisations, local governments and other local stakeholders to take a more coordinated approach to settlement and other issues affecting culturally diverse communities.</p>

Capacity Building and Participation (CBP) grants	<p>The CBP grants provide funding for a range of initiatives and projects aimed at supporting good settlement outcomes, both in terms of refugee and asylum seeker groups, but also more broadly. The latest CBP round provides funding of \$7.1m over two years across small grants streams (seniors groups, organisational support for multicultural organisations, and community language schools), medium grants (up to \$75k), and family violence specific grants (also up to \$75k).</p>
Refugee Legal Assistance	<p>The Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre is receiving \$1.8 million over four years to, to support its role in providing legal advice to asylum seekers, including assistance in lodging claims for protection with the Commonwealth Government.</p>

Support for African Communities	<p><i>African Communities Action Plan</i></p> <p>The African Communities Action Plan (launched April 2018) was developed through the African Ministerial Working Group and involved extensive community consultations in 2017. To support its initial implementation, \$8.6 million has been allocated.</p> <p>In its initial response, the Victorian Government has committed \$3m to three priority areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ jobs (\$1m) ○ education support, including homework clubs and school-community liaison officers (\$1.5m) ○ health particularly responding to drug and alcohol misuse (\$0.5m). <p>The Action Plan proposes over 250 actions to improve the wellbeing of all Victorians of African heritage across six focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business ○ Employment ○ education and training ○ health and well-being, particularly addressing issues of mental health and family violence ○ empowerment and inclusion ○ community engagement, cohesion and leadership. <p>The AMWG was appointed by the Victorian Government in 2016 to advise on issues affecting African communities. The AMWG comprises 22 members of African heritage including from Somalia, South Sudan, Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Malawi, Kenya and Uganda.</p> <p>The Action Plan was designed by 37 community leaders, young people and professionals, most of whom are AMWG members.</p> <p><i>African Leadership Development Program</i></p> <p>The Program will receive \$50,000 per annum for four years and be delivered through a partnership with the African Think Tank and Leadership Victoria to develop the leadership capacity of Victoria's African communities.</p> <p><i>South Sudanese Partnership Fund</i></p> <p>The partnership fund provides \$250,000 per annum to support the development and implementation of community-led initiatives. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct funding for the Federation of South Sudanese Associations in Victoria, and the South Sudanese Community Association in Victoria (\$75,000 each per annum over three years), two peak bodies that undertake a range of activities to support their communities. • Grants funding of approximately \$300,000 provided through a participatory grants round, in which
--	---

	<p>community members came together to put forward and agree on 15 proposals.</p> <p>The projects agreed and funded under the grants round seek to address a range of key areas identified by the South Sudanese community including employment, education, youth justice, family relationships and cultural traditions.</p> <p><i>Supporting disengaged and at risk young people and their families</i></p> <p>Supporting disengaged and at risk young people and their families was allocated \$15 million through the budget to support disengaged and at risk young people and their families, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establishing Community Support Groups in Wyndham, Melton/Brimbank and the South East which will provide a hub for the delivery of a range of services that support young people from African communities, and their families, including access to jobs, counseling, mentoring, and support for engagement or reengagement in sport and education. • an increased focus on recruiting members of African and Pasifika communities and other culturally diverse backgrounds to work in the services involved in youth offending, including the Youth Justice system and Victoria Police • activities to support engagement of young people and families with education • funding to support capacity building of African community organisations; and • grants to support community-driven responses to issues faced by their young people. <p>Of this funding, \$1.7 million will be managed through the multicultural affairs portfolio, made up of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1 million towards community capacity building grants with a focus on supporting community-led youth focused initiatives; • \$0.660 million towards the evaluation of the full suite of initiatives covered by the \$15 million youth offending package.
<p>Social Cohesion Partnership Project</p>	<p>Funded at \$460,000 by Department of Premier and Cabinet, the project supports Victoria Police's engagement with vulnerable multicultural populations such as women/girls and "at risk" young people who otherwise do not regularly seek contact with police or other government services. It aims enhance police knowledge and understanding of the community they serve through co-designed projects. Projects are being rolled out across 18 sites, including:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Melton – working with South Sudanese mothers and youth○ Brimbank – South Sudanese youth engagement○ Maribyrnong – addressing youth engagement, primarily with South Sudanese youth.
--	---

Appendix 3

Additional International Practice Examples

NewBees Program, Netherlands

This initiative focuses on employment outcomes for migrants and refugees, matching their skills to local employers. The objective of the program is to provide local work experience that enhances potential for entering the workforce. NewBees staff offer guidance and support throughout the traineeship.

Since its inception in 2016, NewBees have helped almost 500 newcomers and have now joined forces with the municipality of Zaanstad to measure the impact of all those matches.

This initiative has an employment focus and there is no information available around how other directly relevant areas of social inclusion for new arrival communities are addressed.

Refugee Social Services and Targeted Assistance Plan, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Social Services

The Refugee Employment Program (REP) is designed to provide culturally and linguistically sensitive employment and specialised services for refugees. The program is intended to assist refugees through the initial adjustment period with the ultimate goal of becoming self-sufficient. Services under the REP are available for up to 60 months from the date of arrival in the United States.

The program objective is to enable refugees to obtain jobs within one year of becoming enrolled in services and achieve economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible.

The model adopts a holistic approach in addressing individuals and family's settlement needs as part of the process.

It is largely a settlement program approach with similarities to Australia's settlement program.

Welcoming America One Region Initiative

The One Region Initiative based in Atlanta is led by Welcoming America and supported by the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta and regional entities. It has an inclusion focus for newly arrived communities.

The strength of the initiative is the collaborative approach involving local government, business leaders, community organisations, communities, and members of the receiving communities to create and then adopt welcoming practices.

Expected outcomes of the initiative include

- Increased leverage for business attraction, economic development, international student enrollment, and culture and arts.

- More in-depth resident investment as evidenced by business entrepreneurship, school enrollment, and community engagement.
- The region will rise as an innovative leader amongst a nationally competitive economic environment.

The initiative plan was developed by representatives across collaborating sectors and is being implemented by a volunteer led community engagement taskforce.

The plan focuses on activities to achieve:

- Civic engagement
- Government leadership
- Safe communities
- Connected communities
- Equitable access
- Economic development (supplier diversity programs, traineeships, mentors etc)
- Education

The plan is similar to multicultural action plans developed by local governments in the past but demonstrates a greater involvement of other stakeholder groups. A copy of the plan can be accessed here: <https://www.welcomingamerica.org/sites/default/files/WA%20One%20Region%20Plan.pdf>

There is no evidence base of outcomes as the initiative is still in its infancy.

Welcoming Economies (WE) Global Network

The WE Global Network is a regional Network of immigrant economic development organizations working in cities and regions across the Midwest in the US. The Network is designed to strengthen the work, maximize the impact, and sustain the efforts of individual local initiatives across the region that welcome, retain, and empower immigrant communities as valued contributors to local economies. The Network is a project of Welcoming America in partnership with Global Detroit and comprises over a dozen regional economic development initiatives from across the Midwest working to tap into the economic development opportunities created by immigrants.

Members of the Network benefit from peer-to-peer learning exchanges, increased publicity, policy and research tools developed for immigrant economic development organizations, access to technical assistance, and other capacity building resources.

A network of this nature sits well beyond the scope of one local government agency.

Welcoming Economies Playbook

This Resource was created by Welcoming America in partnership with Global Detroit and was informed by extensive work across the US focused on harnessing the economic potential of new arrival communities.

It offers an accessible resource for organisations working to achieve social and economic inclusion.

Information included in the resource covers:

- Strategies to develop an inclusive and welcoming approach
- Tips for achieving success
- Examples of model programs

The Playbook offers a useful reference / resource for Wyndham.

Intercultural cities programme

The Intercultural cities programme supports cities in reviewing their policies through an intercultural lens and developing comprehensive intercultural strategies to help them manage diversity positively and realise the diversity advantage. The programme proposes a set of analytical and practical tools to help local stakeholders through the various stages of the process.

The programme helps cities to devise such strategies cutting across institutional silos and mobilising leaders, policy officers, professionals, businesses and civil society behind a new model of integration based on the mixing and interaction between people from different ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds.

The programme helps cities to:

- **Create a sense of pluralistic identity** embracing cultural pluralism and the complexity of identities through leadership discourse and symbolic actions based on the pride and appreciation of the city diversity.
- Set up a governance model **empowering all members of the community, regardless of their origin or status**, to develop their potential, realise their talents and enable them to contribute to local prosperity.
- Promote **participation and power-sharing**, involving people of diverse origins in decision-making in urban institutions, be they political, educational, social, economic or cultural.
- **Open up spaces and opportunities for deep interaction and co-creation** between people of different cultural origins and backgrounds, to build trust, cohesion and solidarity, and thus realise the creative potential of diversity.
- **Foster intercultural competence and empower intercultural innovators** in public, private and civil-society organisations.
- **Manage conflict, busting stereotypes and engage in a debate** about the impact and potential of diversity for local development.

Victorian based local governments who have signed up to intercultural cities include:

- City of Melton
- City of Ballarat
- City of Maribyrnong

The Intercultural cities programme has a social inclusion focus promoting diversity, interaction of diverse communities in public spaces and achieving greater social cohesion.