



Settlement
Council
of Australia

AT A GLANCE



Target Participants

Migrant and refugee women who have a product or service to sell and are looking to start or expand their business



Aim

To connect customers with migrant women who have a product or service to sell



Organisations Involved

Migrant Women in Business (MWiB)



Location

Australia Wide



Funding

Unfunded and Self-Sustaining

CASE STUDY

Made by Many Hands *Migrant Women in Business*

Migrant Women in Business is a social enterprise that nurtures the leadership and entrepreneurship of migrant women. Their 'Made by Many Hands' initiative is an online marketplace that connects customers with migrant women who have a product or service to sell, empowering and supporting their business.

Background

Migrant and refugee women can experience particular barriers to entrepreneurship. These barriers may include access to marketing tools, limited understanding of the Australian workplace culture, family and caring responsibilities, lower financial and technical literacy, and financial barriers. The 'Made by Many Hands' platform, developed by Migrant Women in Business (MWiB), was born from this understanding and sets out to level the playing field by connecting migrant women who have a product or service to sell with customers.

Made by Many Hands is an online platform hosting products and services made or delivered by migrant and refugee women. Customers are able to view and search for a range of products and services across numerous categories, including home & living, food & cooking, clothing & accessories, health & wellbeing and experiences & services.

What makes Made by Many Hands Unique?

- All product sales are managed by the vendors. MWiB provide migrant and refugee women with advice, along with the autonomy to create their own products, set their own prices and sell directly to the market.
- Unlike other platforms – women are paid immediately and directly for their product or service. MWiB recognises the critical importance that their vendors have control and stewardship of their own income.
- Once established, profits from the platform will be ploughed back in to support migrant women to become independent entrepreneurs – through skill and literacy enhancing programs.
- Products are all ethically sourced and manufactured.



Participant's story

KELKAY - Alejandra

Hailing from Chile, Alejandra grew up with an entrepreneurial spirit that saw her first selling tomatoes from her family's farm as a young girl. But when she had to give up her career as a journalist when she moved to Singapore with her husband, her entrepreneurial spark was ignited again. "When in Singapore, I found a jewellery teacher who taught me how to design beautiful pieces," she said. "Then when I returned to Chile to visit, I learned traditional jewellery in a workshop in the city of Rancagua. I learned to work with aluminium, a flexible allergenic material that looks like silver, as well as copper and lapis lazuli. I wanted to offer these pieces to clients in my new home of Australia."

While Alejandra initially found the language barrier a challenge, she has been delighted by the reception to her pieces and said that Australians really appreciate handmade jewellery. "Lots of doors have opened to me," she said. "But this is because I am brave and I will do whatever it takes when an opportunity comes my way."

KELKAY – which means necklace in the Indigenous Chilean language – is a beautiful collection of jewellery that combines Alejandra's Chilean heritage with inspiration from Australia. She also offers jewellery-making classes and workshops.

Key Learnings

This experience has generated two key learnings for Migrant Women in Business:

1. Migrant women are resilient and strong individuals with a lot to contribute to Australia's prosperity. They don't need help, just the opportunity and support to develop their business idea.
2. The online marketplace is an effective, and proactive way to connect migrant and refugee women's businesses with the Australian community

Outcomes

The program has achieved the following outcomes:

1. Increased income generating opportunities for migrant women
2. Built entrepreneurial skills among migrant women

More information

Find out more at the MWiB website [here](#) and the Made By Many Hands website [here](#)



