

# Stories of Multicultural Australia



## AT A GLANCE

### Target participants:

Migrants and refugees in Australia

### Program aims:

Prepare multilingual and multicultural storytellers for interviews and commentary in news media

### Organisations involved:

Settlement Council of Australia, Community Media Training Organisation

### Location:

Australia wide

### Funding:

Crowdfunded through SCOA website



Sydney Media Training Workshop Participants & Trainer Kween G

### About Stories of Multicultural Australia

Settlement Council of Australia launched the Stories of Multicultural Australia Project during Harmony Week in March 2022. With more than 40 participants from across Australia, this project is training the next generation of diverse storytellers for media commentary and helping them shape the conversation on multicultural affairs in Australian news media.

In 2022, SCOA facilitated a series of bespoke webinars and workshops to ensure our storytellers are media ready. The project is led by Mahsa Fratantoni, who launched the inaugural program on behalf of SCOA, with broadcast skills training provided by the Community Media Training Organisation.



**40+ storytellers and commentators**

**15+ countries or ethnicities represented**

**9 guest speakers**

**3 live media training webinars**

**2 bespoke broadcast workshops**

## Who are our storytellers?

In our search for storytellers we cast our net far and wide. We shared the project across our own media channels and member networks, and via traditional press. People from refugee and migrant backgrounds hailing from all corners of Australia responded to SCOAs call-out and they were invited to apply for the media training program.

Our successful applicants come from all walks of life. They are people with refugee and migrant backgrounds but they are also: skilled professionals, academics, small business owners, community advocates, case workers, students, and much more. Each participant has a personal story or insight to share with the Australian media, or wishes to engage in media commentary on behalf of their community or in partnership with SCOAs.

**“This program is one of the best that I have had the privilege of doing and I would highly recommend more funding to help our communities learn how to tell their stories to the mainstream media!”**

**-Catherine Jonathon, 2022 Participant**



**Melbourne Media Training Workshop Participants: 3ZZZ Radio Station**

**“Thanks to the training I am able to get ready for interviews and feel more confident sharing with the media.”**

**-Hamidullah Nadeem, 2022 Participant**

## Media training webinar series

Presented by Settlement Council of Australia, the three-part webinar series helped storytellers to navigate the media landscape, prepare for interviews, and to understand their rights when providing news commentary. Participants also heard from a panel of special guests including seasoned journalists and media personalities, community advocates and commentators on their experiences with multicultural storytelling.

### 1. Interacting with the media

The first session featured a panel discussion with high-profile community leaders, advocates and commentators on the highs and lows of being in the media spotlight. Special guests:

Mariam Veiszadeh (Media Diversity Australia, Islamophobia Register)

Carlo Carli (FECCA Chair, former MP)

Jahin Tanvir (Youth Advocate).

### 2. Championing multicultural voices

How can storytellers stand out in a sea of media releases and competing news stories without compromising the integrity of their story? For our second installment, webinar participants were provided tangible steps for media engagement by award-winning journalists and media insiders.

Special guests: Sowaibah Hanifie (ABC reporter)

Hass Dellal AO (AMF Executive Director, Former SBS Chair)

Laurie Howell (AMES media advisor)

### 3. Storytelling on your own terms

Storytelling can be a deeply personal experience. This session covered the importance of shaping the narrative and 'owning your story', the legal considerations of media commentary and how to access support services. Guest speakers included Jasmina Bajraktarevic-Hayward and David Ajang from STARTTS NSW who presented a case study on their media engagement work with South Sudanese community leaders, and RACS principal solicitor Sarah Dale who briefed us on the legal implications of speaking with the media.



Project Lead, Mahsa Fratantoni- Sydney Workshop

## Broadcast training workshops: Storytellers practise their interview skills

The inaugural SCOA Media Training Workshops were held in Sydney and Melbourne in October and November, respectively. The highly anticipated sessions brought together our storytellers for a jam-packed day of mentoring and exercises to put their newly developed media skills into practice.

SCOA partnered with the Community Media Training Organisation (CMTO) to prepare and deliver the bespoke workshops. Held at radio stations in Sydney and Melbourne, delegates had the opportunity to tour the studios and be in the hot seat for a series of mock interviews.

Delegates also learned about: The Australian Media Landscape; Anti-Discrimination and Defamation Laws; How to Prepare for an Interview; Key Messaging; Tips for Speaking on Camera; Radio Mic Technique and Using Your Voice Effectively; and Advice on Handling Tough Questions.

### ***SCOA is a proud TEST signatory advocating for Safe, Ethical Storytelling***

The Stories of Multicultural Australia project has been designed to facilitate ethical, informed and inclusive reporting. As part of the program, participants also have access to peer-to-peer networking, mentoring, translation services, and legal and mental wellbeing support services.

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**“Australia is a multicultural country, yet many people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are missing from the public conversation and are severely underrepresented in mainstream media. In fact, fewer than 6% of people in our media come from diverse backgrounds.”**

**—Sandra Elhelw Wright, SCOA Chief Executive Officer**



**Participants practicing their interview skills- Melbourne Workshop**



# STORIES OF MULTICULTURAL AUSTRALIA

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**“Positive and accurate representation of diverse communities is long overdue in mainstream news, and as a migrant woman working in the media I’m proud to be part of the change we want to see.”**

**—Mahsa Fratantoni, Stories of Multicultural Australia Project Lead**

## Acknowledgements

SCOA wishes to thank and acknowledge all organisations and individuals who made this project possible. A special thank you to Mahsa Fratantoni for her leadership in driving the project and the Australian Neighbourhood Houses Association for their generous donation to support the program.

Thank you to our guest speakers and panellists who generously gave their time for the webinars. Thank you to CMTO and media trainers Kween G and Emma Sharp for facilitating the workshops, and FBi Radio, Community Broadcasting Association of Australia, and 3ZZZ Melbourne Ethnic Community Radio for accommodating our workshop participants. Most importantly, thank you to all participants for being willing to share their stories and being part of the change in our media landscape.

To learn more about the project or nominate someone for the 2023 round of submissions, contact [communications@scoa.org.au](mailto:communications@scoa.org.au).