

# Multicultural education and engagement plan

Victorian Electoral Commission

2025–27







Patel, Anuradha.  
"Eternal Spiral", 2020.  
*Digital print*

Anuradha Patel is an Indian born artist based in Australia with a professional practice of over 40 years. Her practice includes public art as well as studio-based works in paper, metal and print.

### **Acknowledgement of Country**

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of this nation, as the traditional custodians of the lands on which the VEC works and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present, and emerging. The VEC is committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

**Multicultural education and  
engagement plan (MEEP)  
2025–27**

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# Electoral Commissioner's introduction

I am proud to present the *Multicultural education and engagement plan 2025–27*. This new plan continues our work at the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) to engage diverse communities and make our services accessible.

Victoria is very diverse, with nearly 30% of people speaking a language other than English at home. As the state grows, so does our diversity. We aim to remove barriers that prevent multicultural Victorians from being active citizens. The plan outlines how we plan to meet these challenges.

All of the VEC education and engagement plans result from working closely with Victorian communities. The plan was developed with input from our Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Group, including many people with lived experience. We are grateful for their time and contributions and will continue to work with them to achieve the plan's goals. I look forward to seeing the plan in action as we deliver culturally responsive services to allow everyone to participate.

It is my sincere hope that we will also contribute to strengthening social cohesion within our diverse communities. By fostering trust and engagement, I believe we will see Victoria's democracy grow and thrive.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Sven Bluemmel'. The signature is stylized with a large 'S' and a prominent 'B'.

**Sven Bluemmel**  
Electoral Commissioner

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# Foreword from the Victorian Multicultural Commission

We congratulate the VEC on the launch of its second multicultural education and engagement plan, marking a significant step in the ongoing commitment to promote diversity and inclusion in Victoria's electoral processes.

The Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC) deeply values our strong partnership with the VEC and appreciates the opportunity to contribute through the VEC CALD Advisory Group.

As Victoria and Australia experience ongoing growth in CALD populations, it is crucial that the VEC remains responsive to the electoral needs of these communities, ensuring they can fully engage and participate in our democratic system.

The VMC looks forward to continuing our collaboration in supporting multicultural communities.

**Bwe Thay**

VMC Deputy Chairperson and  
CALD Advisory Group member

**Vivienne Nguyen AM**

VMC Chairperson

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# About us

The VEC is an independent authority set up under Victoria's *Electoral Act 2002*. Our vision is that all Victorians actively participate in their democracy, and our purpose is to provide high-quality, accessible electoral services with innovation, honesty, and independence.

**Our vision is that all Victorians actively participate in their democracy.**

Our responsibilities include:

- › running state, local council, and statutory elections
- › maintaining the register of Victorian electors
- › conducting electoral boundary reviews
- › administering political funding and donation disclosure laws
- › conducting research in the public interest
- › promoting public awareness and understanding of electoral issues
- › regulating obligations under the Electoral Act 2002.

Our values are:

- › independence – acting with impartiality and integrity
- › accountability – transparent reporting and effective stewardship of resources
- › innovation – shaping our future through creativity and leadership
- › respect – consideration of self, others and the environment
- › collaboration – working as a team with partners and communities.

## Our advisory groups

We have 5 active community advisory groups. These are the:

- › Young People Advisory Group (YPAG)
- › Aboriginal Advisory Group (AAG)
- › Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Advisory Group
- › Prisons and Without a Home (PAWAH) Advisory Group
- › Electoral Access Advisory Group (EAAG).

## **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Advisory Group**

The CALD Advisory Group has 10 members, including people from CALD backgrounds and the following multicultural sector service providers:

- › Carringbush Adult Education
- › Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria
- › Victoria University
- › Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network
- › Centre for Multicultural Youth
- › Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne)
- › Ethnic Council of Shepparton & District Inc.
- › AMES Australia
- › Victorian Multicultural Commission.

The CALD Advisory Group provides us with community advice, feedback and ideas for better elector engagement with multicultural communities. It gives us community advice, feedback and ideas for better elector engagement with multicultural communities.

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Figure 1: In front of the VEC stall at a cultural event, a male and female Democracy Ambassador hold enrolment forms and tea towels featuring a ballot paper and voting instructions in 20 languages.



# Developing the MEEP

Our work on the MEEP is shaped by the 2 governing documents outlined below.

## Strategy 2027

*Strategy 2027* sets VEC objectives until 2027. It reflects the dynamic and complex environment we work in, and responds to new challenges including:

- › changes to the law
- › changes to the way people expect elections to run, including using technology
- › misinformation and disinformation across the media landscape and their impact on political views
- › decreasing trust in democratic systems
- › increasing threats to our systems and applications and a need for better cybersecurity.

The strategy has 4 thematic areas that guide our work and help address these challenges:

- › Trust – we are trusted to deliver electoral services with integrity and high quality.
- › Voters – we deliver a great voter experience.
- › Processes and systems – our processes and systems respond to a complex environment.
- › Wellbeing – our people are capable, engaged and satisfied.

These themes inform the goals and actions of our education and engagement plans.

## The VEC Strategy 2027 has 4 thematic areas:

- › trust
- › voters
- › processes and systems
- › wellbeing.

## Inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA) framework

We are committed to providing inclusive and accessible services to Victorians and creating a workplace that reflects the diverse communities we serve. We aim to foster respect and prevent all forms of discrimination, harassment, and violence.

We are developing an IDEA framework which will explain how we will work with people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, ethnicities, cultures, religions and socio-economic backgrounds. Our IDEA framework will build on our previous diversity and inclusion framework to increase trust in the VEC through recognising and celebrating diversity.

The VEC has a history of championing inclusion through initiatives such as our democracy ambassador program. The IDEA framework will support the goals of our education and engagement plans to help our staff and communities thrive.

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Figure 2: A male Democracy Ambassador stands among multicultural community members in cultural attire, holding a tea towel displaying a ballot paper and voting instructions in 20 languages.



## Goals of the MEEP

Our culturally accessible and responsive services for CALD communities have made us a recognised leader in fostering electoral participation. Our innovative voter education and inclusion programs were created with the help of community leaders, services, and organisations. The MEEP will build on these relationships and explore new ways to work together.

**With Victoria's growing diversity, increased engagement and participation in democracy can strengthen bonds within and between diverse communities.**

True democracy depends on inclusion. We want to support CALD communities, especially where there is low voter turnout and high informal voting rates. We aim to:

- › increase trust, understanding, and access to the electoral process
- › help people learn how to vote correctly
- › promote lifelong engagement in voting and democracy
- › increase electoral enrolment and participation.

The MEEP has 3 focus areas:

- › access
- › knowledge and confidence
- › relationships, visibility, and representation.

The actions we will take to achieve these goals are outlined under the headings below.

## Access

To improve CALD communities' access to electoral services and processes, we will:

- › ensure resources are culturally and linguistically inclusive
- › create and promote in-language videos
- › keep translated enrolment forms up to date
- › identify and address barriers to CALD electoral participation
- › monitor and respond to changes in migration and growth in multicultural communities.

## Knowledge and confidence

To improve CALD communities' electoral knowledge and confidence, we will:

- › employ people from CALD backgrounds as VEC democracy ambassadors (DAs)
- › deliver DA sessions to language groups with lower English proficiency
- › provide active citizenship workshops to new multicultural communities

## Relationships, visibility, and representation

To increase stakeholder relationships and CALD communities' visibility and representation in electoral matters, we will:

- › maintain relationships with the CALD Advisory Group and support CALD stakeholders and communities
- › support multicultural service providers
- › strengthen relations with multicultural communities
- › attend multicultural events, conferences and forums
- › acknowledge important multicultural events across VEC communication channels.

## MEEP outcomes

At the end of the MEEP, some of the outcomes we hope to see are:

- › more people from CALD communities knowing how, and feeling confident, to enrol and vote
- › more people from CALD communities enrolling, voting and being able to access help to vote if needed
- › stronger ongoing relationships with CALD leaders
- › stronger engagement, representation from, and visibility of CALD stakeholders
- › more CALD stakeholders helping community members participate effectively in elections.

# Measuring the success of the MEEP

The Electoral Commissioner, VEC Executive Management Group, and staff are responsible for ensuring we achieve the actions in the MEEP.

We will maintain a progress report for the MEEP and invite feedback twice a year from the CALD Advisory Group. We will also publish a yearly progress summary in our VEC annual reports.

This education and engagement plan is guided by its own program logic. The monitoring and evaluation plan includes measures and targets, using data from various sources that we report quarterly, annually and for elections.

For a copy of the program logic, or monitoring and evaluation plan, please contact [education@vec.vic.gov.au](mailto:education@vec.vic.gov.au)

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(Victorian Electoral Commission)  
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