



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Local Government and Communities**
Office of **Multicultural Interests**

Welcome to Western Australia!

Western Australia is one of the most diverse States in Australia with almost one-third (31%) of our population born overseas. More than half (52%) have at least one parent born overseas and three-quarters (75%) identify that they have a non-Australian ancestry. In addition to English, 15% of the population speak a language other than English at home.

Western Australia is home to people from more than 200 countries, speaking approximately 270 languages and dialects (including around 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages). Western Australians follow more than 130 religious faiths.

People from the United Kingdom, Europe, South-East Asia and the Middle East, and more recently from South Asia and Africa, have made Western Australia their home, creating a harmonious environment that respects diversity.

This website will provide you with a wide range of information and resources to help you participate in all aspects of the social, economic and cultural life of our great State. It will also provide you with an appreciation of the extent of our State's diversity and the benefits it provides.

The Office of Multicultural Interests

The Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) is a division of the Department of Local Government and Communities. OMI supports the development of State Government policies and programs to promote multiculturalism and improve services to Western Australians from diverse cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. OMI provides leadership on multiculturalism within the public sector, to the WA community and the business sector—creating partnerships for a more inclusive and productive society.

Our [Strategic Plan 2014–18](#) focuses on the following objectives:

- Strengthen the capacity of culturally diverse communities.
- Support the development of culturally inclusive policies, programs and services.
- Facilitate full participation by culturally and linguistically diverse communities in social, economic, cultural and civic activities.
- Develop intercultural understanding and promote the benefits of Western Australia's cultural diversity.

OMI is not responsible for citizenship (naturalisation), visa or immigration matters. For information about immigration or becoming an Australian citizen, please contact the Department of Immigration and Border Protection on 13 18 81 or visit www.immi.gov.au.



Our policies and programs

Language Services

The [Western Australian Language Services Policy 2014](#) is a Western Australian Government policy that aims to ensure that language is not a barrier to services and programs for people who require assistance in English. Many Western Australians require assistance in communicating effectively, for example, some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and migrants, and people who are Deaf or hearing impaired.

If you visit a government office and need help with communicating in English you can request an interpreter, who will be provided free of charge. If you have a Western Australian Interpreter Card it

will assist in obtaining an interpreter in your language. These can be obtained by emailing: harmony@omi.wa.gov.au.

More information about the WA Language Services Policy can be found under the [What we do](#) area of this website. There are also information sheets in a number of different languages.

Community Grants Program

The [Community Grants Program](#) (CGP) funds projects and activities that strengthen the capacity of culturally diverse communities and support the development of culturally inclusive policies, programs and services. CGP grants also aim to encourage intercultural understanding and to promote the many benefits of WA's cultural diversity.

Not-for-profit, incorporated community organisations and groups based in WA can apply for funding. There are two funding rounds each year, one in February and one in September. The CGP has four funding categories: Small Projects (\$5000–\$20,000), Major Programs (\$20,000–\$50,000), Community Celebrations (\$20,000) and Events and Activities (up to \$5000).

For more information, please contact the OMI Grants Officer by emailing grants@omi.wa.gov.au.

Guidelines and application forms can be found under the [Grants](#) area of this website.

Resources and publications

A wide range of resources and publications are available on the OMI website under the [Diversity information](#) and [Resources](#) sections. These include statistics on WA's cultural diversity, culture and religion information sheets and educational materials. There are also links to government and community organisations.

Directory of Services and Contacts in Western Australia

It can be a challenge to find your way around the many services available from government and non-government organisations and business groups in WA. The [Directory of services and contacts in Western Australia](#) provides the essential information and contact details in the important areas of housing, employment, education, health, transport, childcare and legal services, as well as background information on the Commonwealth, State and local governments. You can find the directory in the [Contact directories](#) section on this website.



Settlement Services Catalogue

The [Settlement Services Catalogue](#) provides information on settlement services and programs available in WA for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds. The aim of the database is to provide information from many organisations, all in one place. You can find programs and services under the following categories:

- civic participation
- education
- employment
- family and social support
- health
- housing
- justice
- language services
- transport.

You can also search by location. Some programs and services are offered statewide, so please contact the agency direct for more information on the best location to access its programs and services. You can find the directory in the [Contact directories](#) section on this website.

Equal Opportunity

Being an inclusive society, Western Australia does not tolerate discrimination and the *Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984* renders discrimination unlawful. Advice can be sought from the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity in Western Australia (www.eoc.wa.gov.au). Please report incidents considered to be racially motivated to the WA Police via the WA Police Assistance Centre on 131 444.

Feedback welcome

OMI welcomes feedback from the community. If you have an important issue you would like to raise with us or have any queries regarding cultural diversity in Western Australia, please send an email to our dedicated Harmony email address: harmony@omi.wa.gov.au. We also welcome submissions to our [Events Calendar](#) so we can help you publicise your not-for-profit events. Please see the [Events Calendar](#) webpage for information on how to submit an event.

For more information about OMI initiatives and programs, please contact:

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(08) 6552 1555

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Website: www.omi.wa.gov.au