



Australian Government
**Department of Immigration
and Citizenship**

**Diverse Australia Program
(incorporating the National Action Plan to Build on
Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security)**

Guidelines for Community Grants

2009

**Addressing
Cultural, Racial and Religious Intolerance**

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1 COMMUNITY GRANTS FUNDING

1.1 Introduction

The Australian Government believes that communities are in the best position to recognise and address issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance. The Diverse Australia Program (DAP) and the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security (NAP) are designed to provide the additional resources often needed by not for profit community organisations to develop their own projects and find their own ways of helping all Australians to build stronger community relations.

The NAP, developed in 2005-06, responds to the particular pressures Australian communities are facing as a result of increased intolerance and the promotion of violence arising from events around the world and in Australia since 2001.

The Government believes that strong social cohesion is best developed by projects that bring all Australians together and in particular create connections across the community.

This year, for the first time, the funding processes for DAP and NAP community grants have been merged. This is in response to stakeholder feedback seeking simplification in relation to both programs.

In 2009 \$2 million is available for community grants which includes \$1.5 million from the former Living in Harmony Program (now called the Diverse Australia Program) and \$500 000 from the National Action Plan to build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security community projects.

Of the funds available, some monies have been set aside to assist small organisations that may not be ready to manage major projects. Amounts of up to \$5000 will be available for less complex projects and activities. See *Diverse Australia Program (incorporating the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security) Guidelines for Small Grants 2009* for information about these small grants (at www.harmony.gov.au).

These guidelines set out the requirements for ‘major’ projects of between \$5000 and \$50 000 available under the DAP and NAP.

1.2 Funding Objectives

The objectives of the Australian Government’s DAP and NAP include the promotion of:

- the importance of all Australians respecting one another regardless of cultural, racial or religious difference;
- the fair treatment of all Australians, encouraging people to recognise that our interactions should be accepting of and responsive to people’s backgrounds, circumstances, needs and preferences;
- opportunities for people to participate equitably in Australian society and to understand the rights and responsibilities that we share as part of that society;
- a sense of belonging for everyone by helping communities work towards a spirit of inclusiveness and a shared identity as Australians; and
- the benefits of living in a culturally diverse society.

and seek to:

- increase community understanding and acceptance of diversity;
- support people who have recently settled in Australia understand the democratic values, social behaviour and aspects of Australian life that are important to the established community;
- increase the broader communities understanding of Australia's changing demographics.

The NAP seeks to do this in particular for Muslim communities.

2 APPLYING FOR GRANT FUNDING IN 2009

2.1 How to apply

The Community Grants funding round will employ a two-stage application process:

- Stage One: Expression of Interest; and
- Stage Two: Supplementary Application (by invitation).

These guidelines provide advice on how to complete both the Expression of Interest and the Supplementary Application.

3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

3.1 Eligible Organisation - Who can apply?

Eligible organisations

Funds will be provided to incorporated, not-for-profit organisations.

Groups such as school communities, non-profit foundations, service clubs, sporting bodies, ethnic organisations, youth organisations, local government authorities, universities and colleges of education are invited to submit proposals (government school applicants need not be incorporated).

Ineligible organisations

Applicants should not be:

- individuals;
- political organisations;
- un-incorporated organisations (with the exception of government schools); or
- Australian or State/Territory agencies.

3.2 Eligible Project and Priority Areas - What we fund?

Eligible projects

Project submissions must:

- directly address the program objectives;
- only involve activities taking place entirely within Australia;
- seek funds of between \$5000 and \$50 000; and
- be completed by the end of December 2010.

Funding applicants should demonstrate why the project is important in the particular community and how it could specifically address the identified issue.

Priorities.

Note: Applications seeking NAP funding should have a significant Muslim component.

In 2009, the department is particularly interested in projects that address any of the following priority areas:

Children and families

Activities could include:

- projects in schools, tackling issues of intolerant behaviour;
- life skills and leadership development for young people;
- projects and partnerships involving state/territory legal authorities such as the police and Police Citizen Youth Clubs; and
- projects which engage young people in civic participation with the broader community.

Youth

Activities could include:

- projects designed to encourage participation in the broad community through volunteering, clubs and community service groups;
- projects that bring youth from diverse backgrounds together through music, the arts, sport or multimedia;
- mentoring activities that prepare participants for the workforce and involvement in society.

New and emerging communities

Activities could include:

- community based activities that increase understanding and acceptance by the broader community of changing demographics locally;
- mentoring or encounters involving men or women in which they share experiences, explore cultural misunderstandings and discuss their role in Australian society; and

- established and older migrant organisations helping emerging communities set up representative incorporated bodies and training for promising leaders.

Muslim Australians

Activities could include:

- encouraging more active participation by members of Muslim communities in mainstream sporting, social, arts-based and other activities to lessen feelings of isolation and marginalisation in some communities;
- promoting the positive contributions of Muslim Australians to Australia;
- encouraging current and emerging Muslim community leaders, particularly women and young people, to participate more widely in community activities, including holding positions of responsibility within organisations and representing their community at various fora;
- providing mentoring and volunteering opportunities to young people, in order to build their leadership and representational skills; and
- outreach projects and activities that encourage interaction among Muslim and non-Muslim community groups.

Indigenous Australians

Activities could include:

- projects promoting increased understanding and acceptance by bringing Indigenous and non-Indigenous people together;
- bringing both Indigenous youth and youth from diverse backgrounds together through music, the arts, multimedia and sport;

Integration and community based activities

Activities could include:

- projects that bring people together to cooperate on promoting common community interests such as bush fire control, the provision of emergency services and other volunteer agencies;
- sport, art, music, multimedia or other activities geared toward youth encounters and exploration of diversity issues;
- interfaith education and community/cultural bridge-building activities that draw in people of all ages from a range of cultural and religious backgrounds; and
- projects that build the capacity of migrants, refugees and humanitarian entrants to participate in education and employment.

Other Issues:

Projects that address other issues consistent with the objectives of the program or adopt other approaches will be given full consideration, including:

- inter-generational and cross cultural ‘skill exchange’, for example encounters where senior citizens share their knowledge of Australia’s history, culture and language with migrant youth who, in turn, share knowledge with or assist senior citizens;
- projects that promote diversity and address issues of intolerance in the workplace;

- projects developed by ‘established’ or ‘mainstream’ organisations that seek to actively promote a culture of inclusiveness; and
- projects that combine several of the priority areas such as activities that bring together the broader community with young people and new and emerging communities.

It is important that project proposals include clear ways to develop and sustain links between people of all backgrounds, and ways to sustain project outcomes beyond the period of the project. For example ‘established’ or ‘mainstream’ organisations that seek to develop and implement projects that are proactively inclusive will be considered for funding. **NAP project proposals will need to focus on Muslim Australians, but with a view of promoting community integration, resilience and harmony.**

Ineligible projects

Funding will generally **not** be available for:

- continuation of existing activities or current core functions of an organisation;
- retrospective or deficit funding for projects already under way or completed;
- subsidy of general ongoing administrative costs (eg electricity, rent) of an organisation (but a worker may be employed specifically for the project);
- cultural activities, in isolation, of a single ethnic, religious or racial group (eg funds for concert performance, instruments, costumes, dance performances);
- major capital expenditure such as on buildings, motor vehicles, computers, sound systems etc (although equipment can be hired for project work);
- projects which are only about employment, health, welfare or settlement-service provision (casework and assistance to access mainstream services);
- projects focused solely on accessing services (raising cross-cultural awareness amongst service providers can be part of a project but must not be the only activity/objective);
- projects which are focussed in the main on curriculum development, academic research or teacher development (but educational institutions may apply for funds for innovative projects to raise awareness of and involvement in relevant issues);
- translations/reprinting of existing materials or publication of existing manuscripts;
- travel to conferences and short training programs.

3.3 Project Strategy – What will you do?

Applications must clearly identify an issue and the proposed response.

Preference will be given to projects with the greatest potential for forming positive, long-term outcomes. Projects should involve the broader community, bringing people together to explore issues and develop meaningful community relationships over a sustained period of time (up to 12 months).

Activities that involve significant numbers from the local community will be favoured above projects involving small numbers of people (eg less than 20). Project activities that are likely to attract interest from local media, and therefore are able to promote respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging more broadly are also encouraged, as well as those that provide positive media coverage of relevant community groups.

Festivals, performances and cultural events tend not to achieve these aims due to their discrete one-off nature and will generally not be funded in isolation.

These events can however be a component of a more detailed and long term plan of activities, where opportunities exist, over time, for interaction amongst the community.

The DAP and NAP encourage innovation in the design and execution of project proposals. To that end, organisations are encouraged to ‘think outside the square’ in terms of developing proposals.

All projects must focus on active participation and involvement of the people they plan to reach. Projects can have a significant impact in a local community if they are well designed, supported and managed.

3.4 Community and Stakeholder Support – Who will work with you?

Applicants need to have the support of the organisations and people that will help the project to succeed.

In previous years the more successful projects have been those that have enjoyed continued community and stakeholder involvement and support for their activities. The nature of stakeholders can vary from project to project, but could include individuals such as key community leaders and organisations critical to the project’s success, including other community organisations, the relevant local school or council.

Local Indigenous support

Projects that have an Indigenous Australian focus or component must have the explicit agreement and support for the project from the appropriate local elders and Indigenous organisations. It should be noted that this support can take time to secure.

Project Steering Committee (or Reference Group)

Organisations will be expected to manage their funded projects through a steering committee comprising members of the funded organisation and members drawn from several other community organisations and representing relevant stakeholders in the project. Steering committee members should be contactable by the department if the need arises. Steering committees normally meet monthly, or more frequently as the need arises.

Letters of Support

When completing the Expression of Interest form organisations will be asked to indicate whether they have consulted with the relevant stakeholders in the project and identified representatives for the project steering committee. You will also be asked to indicate whether they support the project, or whether their support is still to be confirmed (eg community groups may be discussing the project proposal amongst themselves before providing a final commitment to support the project).

Short-listed organisations will be expected to substantiate their claims by providing evidence of stakeholder and steering committee support and participation. Letters of support are the usual way in which this evidence is provided. Community support should show commitment to and participation in the project proposed by the applicant.

Who will learn from the project?

Organisations will be asked to detail the anticipated reach of the project both directly and indirectly (i.e. the number of people directly influenced by the project and those exposed to the broader community relations message). Participation includes the number of people directly involved in a project, including coordinators, administrators and participants in training forums, workshops and the like, and others who directly participated in activities. Outreach includes all other people who may have received messages including audiences at events, radio listeners, and print media readers.

Projects will be favoured which can demonstrate substantial reach in terms of the outcomes of the project and the promotion of the DAP or NAP objectives, although the comparative situation of remote and rural communities will be taken into account.

3.5 Project Work Plan - How will you make it work?

In the Supplementary Application, short-listed applicants will be asked to provide a detailed project work plan. The work plan section of the Supplementary Application is where organisations will detail how their proposed strategies will link to the objectives of the project and the broader program objectives and how they will know if they have realised their objectives.

It is important that organisations develop a comprehensive and practical work plan that includes clear and achievable timelines, milestones and outcomes. The milestones should be relevant, achievable and clearly measurable. Funding recipients will report in terms of the project-specific performance indicators identified in their application work plans and milestones. Funding will be paid in instalments and payments will depend on achieving the agreed milestones.

As part of the acquittal requirements, funding recipients will be required to evaluate and report on the overall outcomes of the project in terms of meeting the program objectives, its impact on the community and to provide evidence that the project was carried out as agreed.

3.6 Harmony Day

Applicants should note that Harmony Day is an integral part of the DAP. Harmony Day celebrates the cohesive and inclusive nature of our nation and promotes the benefits of cultural diversity. The key message of Harmony Day is Everyone Belongs. It's about community participation, inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Funding recipients are generally expected to include a Harmony Day activity within their project, and should consider how they can use Harmony Day as a way of increasing exposure within the community of the issues addressed in their projects.

It should be noted that Harmony Day activities should cost no more than 5 per cent of the total project budget.

There are also other communication obligations successful applicants must comply with and which are set out in the funding agreement.

3.7 Budget and Funding - How much will it cost?

Organisations will be required to outline major budget items in their Expression of Interest, and to provide a detailed budget in their Supplementary Application. The budget must be reasonable and appropriate to the project strategy and objectives.

Note that the principle ‘value for money’ will guide consideration of project budgets.

Identified budget expenses must include:

- salary costs (plus on costs);
- public liability insurances for the life of the project, coverage at \$10 million minimum (if the proposed activities are not covered by the organisation’s existing public liability insurance) from an insurer authorised to conduct insurance business in Australia.

For most projects, salary costs should be less than 50 per cent of the total project budget.

Fundraising activities should not be used as a means of supplementing the project budget. For example, an organisation seeking funding for a project that involves events should not charge admission fees. Similarly, any materials produced by the project should be distributed free of charge.

Other funding

If the organisation applies for, or receives, other funding for the proposed project, the Department should be notified immediately so that this can be taken into account in the application assessment. Please note that if the project is contingent upon other funding sources being received, the other funding must be verified prior to the DAP funding being awarded.

In-kind support

Organisations may wish to identify any ‘in-kind’ or non financial support for their project if appropriate.

3.8 Project Management Capacity - Can you manage the work?

The capacity of the organisation to successfully manage community grants is a key criterion in assessing applications. Community relations or community development projects are those that enjoy strong community participation in their conception and delivery. They focus on outcomes that strengthen a sense of community harmony and address social issues.

Organisations are required to demonstrate their capabilities in this area by providing evidence of previous projects of this nature, successfully delivered on-time and within budget. Please note that the information supplied in applications may be shared, on a confidential basis, with other relevant agencies, particularly to assess your organisation’s project management capacity.

Management committee (note: different from steering committee)

The Supplementary Application seeks some details of the members of the management committee. An organisation's management committee will fulfil a critical role in supporting the project and in ensuring that the project and funds are well managed. We are therefore interested in gaining an understanding of the make-up and stability of the organisation's management committee.

3.9 Financial Management Capacity – Can you manage the funds?

In the Supplementary Application organisations must be able to demonstrate a sound administrative and financial base. They must be able to comply with all reporting and financial accountability requirements as set out in the funding agreement, in a timely manner and to a high standard and to the satisfaction of the Department. Evidence of the organisations past financial management will be required. This evidence will include copies of the organisations most recent annual report and annual audited financial statement.

Past receipt and management of government funding will be relevant. If an organisation has not had previous funding, it is possible for the organisation to demonstrate its capacity to manage project funding, using their previous financial management experience.

4 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

4.1 What makes a good project?

The DAP and NAP programs fund a range of projects across diverse target areas. Experience has shown that the better quality projects are those that understand, or seek to understand the issues they are trying to address and target those issues through a realistic project. Given the focus of the programs, community support is essential for projects to succeed.

We favour projects that involve people from different backgrounds in activities that create positive relationships which are likely to continue when the project is completed. For NAP funding purposes, projects should have a significant focus on Muslim Australians.

Examples of projects funded in previous years include:

Diverse Australia Program (formerly Living in Harmony):

The Albury City Council's program 'Firing Up Community Harmony' which introduced newly arrived residents from Bhutan, China, Sudan and other countries to the broader Albury community and encouraged them to enjoy the city's public spaces.

A range of "Firing Up" activities gave new arrivals a sense of belonging and showcased different aspects of life in the city of Albury.

The Albury Indigenous Australian community shared their traditions, stories and bush tucker delicacies with those from different backgrounds.

A 'Blokies Bake' - where local and newly arrived men swapped experiences of footy, fishing and cars and generally got to know each other – was held over a meal cooked in a wood fired oven. The innovative thinking behind this novel series of events came from the City's experience with new arrivals.

In another example, a project by Strathfield South High School in 2007-08, titled *We are all Australian*, responded to the alienation being experienced by young people of Middle Eastern backgrounds in schools in Western Sydney. The project brought together students from Strathfield High School and Windsor High School and produced a DVD about young Australian's of Lebanese and Asian backgrounds getting to know students of Anglo-Saxon backgrounds and the issues they explored together. Created by the students, the film examined stereotypes with particular emphasis on how Muslims, Lebanese and Asian groups are represented. The film also looked at how stereotypes are manipulated throughout history and in the media. The film was accompanied by a teaching resource kit for distribution into schools, containing a series of structured activity questions based on subjects in the film including racism, stereotyping, discrimination and religion.

In Tasmania, Glenorchy City Council was aware that racism and discrimination towards people from new communities, especially towards young people, was having an impact on their education and their confidence to use public transport. Racism and discrimination also affect health and well being, and restrict people from fully participating in society.

The Council received funding to run an innovative project called '*We Are Who We Are*'. Through activities such as presentations, interactive forums, visits to cultural clubs to experience cultural foods, music and cultural experiences, young people were given an opportunity through their school communities to break down the barriers of misunderstanding between cultures. The youth created posters which were displayed on public buses and in other areas of the broader community.

The Multicultural Youth South Australia's (MYSA) research into newly arrived refugee young people and public space showed that acceptance and understanding are issues for young people, the community, and service providers. MYSA and the Shopfront Youth Health Service received a grant to develop a project to work with young men at risk, particularly African young men, who were identified by schools, community groups, providers and police. The project delivered life skills development workshops and provided training and support to sector and service providers. This included the production of a training manual suitable for national distribution to help community and government service delivery organisations.

National Action Plan:

In Victoria, the Brunswick Neighbourhood House was funded for a project aiming to bring women from Muslim and non-Muslim backgrounds together through music and dance. The project aims to overcome the social isolation experienced by Muslim women by connecting them with the broader community. The project will run workshops, covering team building, communication skills, conflict resolution, and public speaking, which will equip participants with leadership and representational skills and increase their confidence to engage in the public arena.

A mentoring project in partnership with the ICRA Youth Centre and IBM Australia working with unemployed youth aged 18 and over, aimed to improve employability, encourage self development and foster an awareness of career options and life opportunities. Students at local high schools were encouraged to focus on future employment and careers and other relevant topics negotiated with the staff at the schools and IBM.

Examples of other projects can be found at <http://www.harmony.gov.au>

4.2 Where can you find help?

If you require assistance in developing an idea for a project, please contact:

- the application hotline, 1800 782 002 or
- e-mail: diverseaustraliagrants@immi.gov.au

4.3 When will I know if I am successful?

The timing of the funding round is as follows:

Early April 2009	Funding round announced.
Early May 2009	Closing date for on-line Expressions of Interest.
Mid July 2009	Short-listed and unsuccessful applicants advised.
Late September 2009	Successful applicants announced.
October 2009	Funding agreements negotiated.
November 2009	Projects commence.
December 2010	All projects are completed.

4.4 What if you are awarded funding?

If you are awarded funding for your project, the Department will negotiate a funding agreement (contract) based upon your successful project proposal and the amount of funding awarded.

The awarded funding will be paid in instalments. The first payment (normally 50%) will be made once a funding agreement has been signed.

The request for the second grant payment (normally 40%) must be accompanied by an activity report and certified financial statement and will follow completion of agreed project milestones.

The funded organisation must have sufficient resources to finalise the project before the final payment (usually 10%) is made. The request for the final payment must be presented as soon as possible after the completion of the project and be accompanied by the final report, the self-evaluation report and an income and expenditure statement or audited financial statement for the completed project.

4.5 What about other funding sources?

If your project does not meet these guidelines for funding, other funding sources might be identified by consulting:

- The Australian Government's Grantslink website, www.grantslink.gov.au;
- www.grantsearch.com.au; and
- www.ourcommunity.com.au.

Note: Feedback will be provided to unsuccessful applicants.



A National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security

Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs

A National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security

Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs



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Introduction

In the aftermath of the 7 July 2005 London bombings and recent experience of international terrorism, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), at its 27 September 2005 Special Meeting on Counter-Terrorism:

- recognised the work already being done by all Australia's government jurisdictions to strengthen links with Australian Muslim communities and promote respect and understanding
- encouraged inter-faith dialogue
- noted the outcomes from Commonwealth and State initiatives involving faith leaders to strengthen community harmony, safety and understanding, and
- to further address intolerance and the promotion of violence, requested the Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (MCIMA) develop a national action plan building on the principles agreed to at the Prime Minister's 23 August 2005 meeting with Muslim community leaders and at meetings between state and territory leaders, and faith and community leaders.

Purpose

The purpose of this National Action Plan (NAP) is to reinforce social cohesion, harmony and support the national security imperative in Australia by addressing extremism, the promotion of violence and intolerance, in response to the increased threat of global religious and political terrorism. It is an initiative of Australian governments to address issues of concern to the Australian community and to support Australian Muslims to participate effectively in the broader community.

The NAP is part of the Australian governments' national strategic framework to address terrorism, developed since the events of 11 September 2001. The framework is based on the principles of maximum preparedness, comprehensive prevention and effective response and recovery.

Governments are committed to working in partnership to ensure the NAP is implemented in a co-ordinated and co-operative manner so that duplication does not occur, for example via exchange of information protocols. However, the approach adopted by individual jurisdictions will vary due to local demographic, social, cultural, religious and economic factors and these will be reflected in each jurisdiction's implementation of the plan.

Current Situation

Australia is a land of many faiths, many languages and many cultures. Today, Australia's 20.3 million residents come from 230 countries, speak more than 190 languages and follow more than 100 religious faiths. Apart from Indigenous Australians, all Australians can trace their roots to somewhere else, and Australia's heritage does not belong to any one individual, group or faith. Over the last 150 years many diverse groups have worked together to build a multicultural community based on the principles of democracy, tolerance and equality.

All Australians, whether they were born here or migrated here, have equal rights and responsibilities – the right to freedom of speech, religious practice, freedom of cultural expression, and the responsibility to respect the rights of others and follow Australia's laws and democratic principles.

The current global security environment and the threat of international terrorism places unusual stress on Australian society. Events such as 11 September 2001 and the July 2005 London bombings have increased anxiety about the likelihood of such events occurring in Australia. Already, Australian citizens have suffered the consequences of terrorist action overseas, in places like New York, Washington, London, Bali and Jakarta.

Australian security authorities have identified that Australians are at risk of being terrorist targets both at home and abroad, including from home-grown extremists, and that this risk will continue for some time. Although all Australians overwhelmingly condemn acts of violence and terrorism, there is evidence that the potential for violent or extremist group action exists in Australia, and the demographic group most at risk of involvement in this behaviour is young people.

The NAP seeks to address the underlying causes of terrorism, including the social and economic factors that encourage radicalisation and motivate extremist behaviour, as a contribution to a comprehensive approach to counter-terrorism.

Shared Australian values are set out in the Citizenship pledge¹ and National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools². In addition, all Australian governments have various mechanisms in place to protect the rights of all Australians through legislation on human rights, discrimination and vilification.

The NAP recognises the importance of these policies, associated programmes and legislation. The NAP builds on this by introducing additional measures to improve national security and social cohesion and to help build a society resilient against extremism and terrorism.

¹ All new Australian citizens pledge, in English, to be loyal to Australia and its people, and that they share Australia's democratic beliefs, respect the rights and liberties of the Australian people and uphold and obey Australia's laws. Existing Australian citizens may make an affirmation to the same effect.

² The *National Framework for Values Education in Australian Schools*, endorsed by all State and Territory Education Ministers in early 2005, enunciates common values identified from a study undertaken in school communities and from consultations that followed: care and compassion, doing your best, fair go, freedom, honesty and trustworthiness, integrity, respect, responsibility, and understanding, tolerance and inclusion.

The Way Forward

This NAP is a co-ordinated government and community approach to 2010 addressing issues that contribute to the potential for extremism to develop in this country. It proposes that:

- appropriate existing government policies and programmes supporting the national security imperative be taken into account by the NAP, but that action be directed to a new and integrated approach, by all levels of government, to address the causes of radicalisation leading to extremism in Australia;
- research findings and community input be incorporated into NAP programmes and information already available to Australian governments be used in determining the direction of NAP-related programmes;
- further research be undertaken into the causes of extremism, the potential for the radicalisation process to result in violence and disruption, and the extent to which extremism is already present in Australia; and
- leaders of communities at risk of having members susceptible to radicalisation be actively involved in responding to issues within their community that potentially threaten Australia's social cohesion and national security.

NAP initiatives will:

- reduce the vulnerability of Australians to extremist recruiters through targeted education, mentoring and employment programmes and initiatives;
- support educational and community programmes and projects encouraging loyalty and commitment by all Australians to their country, especially its parliamentary democracy and legal structures, and the promotion of Australian values;
- build leadership capacity in communities, members of which might be susceptible to radicalisation, so that all leaders can be proactive in addressing the potential for extremism within their own communities;

- promote and build closer collaboration, liaison, information-sharing and trust between governments and communities and encourage increased participation in mainstream Australia by those communities currently feeling disengaged or marginalised.

Many of the initiatives put forward in the NAP will require a long-term approach. Increased understanding of the process of radicalisation leading to extremism will be acquired as issues are addressed. The direction of the NAP may change as a result of ongoing research and consultations.

The Focus Areas of the National Action Plan

The NAP encourages tolerance and social cohesion through public education, employment and community activities; engaging with communities through consultations and ongoing dialogue; building leadership capacity and communication skills in Australian communities; supporting leaders and teachers, and improving understanding of the causes of extremism.

These elements are addressed under the focus areas of education; employment; integrating communities and enhancing national security.

Education

The education and training sectors are fundamental in equipping students of all ages and backgrounds with the skills, democratic values and principles for effective participation in a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse society. Preliminary findings indicate that some Australian communities have social and educational needs that are not being addressed.

Reinforcing values and civics education

The message that the education and training sectors must reinforce is that every Australian is responsible for ensuring that we live in a safe, prosperous and cohesive society. Action under the Plan could:

- support the extension of Australian civics and values education throughout all government and non-government education systems and sectors;
- support leaders and teachers from different cultural and religious backgrounds by providing learning materials and professional development opportunities to learn about Australian values, to enable them to effectively guide their communities to greater mainstream involvement;

- support programmes enhancing cross-cultural interaction and learning at schools, vocational education and tertiary levels;
- address the isolation and marginalisation of some young people, through education programmes promoting mutual understanding and inclusion.

Informing Australians about religious and cultural diversity

Consultations and research findings indicate that much of the animosity directed towards some communities is the result of misunderstanding and misinformation about their culture, values and beliefs. Action under the NAP could include:

- encouraging all faith and community leaders to promote respect and mutual understanding and tolerance across communities, including through multi-faith and multicultural collaboration and activities;
- reinforcing the message that religious and cultural diversity is an important and permanent feature of Australian society; and
- providing all citizens of Australia with information and opportunities to learn about and accept Australia's cultural and religious diversity.

The training of religious leaders and teachers in Australia

The professional development needs of some religious workers, leaders and teachers in Australia are not currently being met. Some communities are therefore seeking to obtain their religious and pastoral education and training outside Australia. Religious leaders from these communities may therefore be inappropriately trained, in some cases, to meet the needs of their congregation in an Australian environment.

Action under the NAP could include:

- providing professional development opportunities in an Australian context, which will promote greater understanding of Australian values and culture;
- supporting the development of appropriate institutional training for communities with identified faith-based professional development needs;
- encouraging community leaders to inform their members about the cultural norms of mainstream Australian society;

- introducing professional development courses for newly-arrived religious workers, leaders and teachers from overseas; and
- fostering inter-faith dialogue and awareness.

Employment

Second and third generation Australians from some minority communities experience greater problems in finding employment compared to others. Unemployment, particularly among young people, has negative social and economic consequences for individuals and, by extension, the wider community. In contrast, active and gainful workforce participation builds self-esteem, promotes understanding and acceptance of cultural and religious differences, thereby contributing to the economy and broader national security objectives.

Action under the NAP could address existing employment barriers and issues facing particular communities by:

- commissioning research into the reasons for the higher unemployment rate of some culturally and linguistically diverse communities;
- linking job seekers with employment service providers, to maximise employment opportunities available to them and to encourage them to access and use existing training and employment opportunities;
- encouraging local chambers of commerce and industry and local employers to work with communities to address specific cultural employment issues in their community;
- encouraging industry and major corporations to provide career development opportunities for potential employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
- assisting communities to themselves contribute to develop solutions, to address unacceptable unemployment rates.

Integrating communities

Participation in wider society

Preliminary research findings and community consultations demonstrate that young members from some communities do not participate widely in mainstream Australian sporting, social and cultural activities. They also feel increasingly excluded from participation in other mainstream activities. The isolation, alienation and marginalisation of some young Australians in our society will be addressed through a strategy of positive engagement and liaison, between governments, communities and individuals.

Action under the NAP could:

- encourage more active participation in mainstream sporting, social and cultural activities to lessen feelings of isolation and marginalisation in some communities;
- encourage current and emerging community leaders, particularly women and young people, to participate more widely in community activities, including holding positions of responsibility within statutory bodies and representing their community at various fora;
- inform community leaders about existing government mechanisms and available social services to encourage them to assist their communities in accessing and using existing support services; and
- provide mentoring and volunteering opportunities to young people, in order to build their leadership and representational skills.

Leadership training

Research³ indicates that some newly-established communities in Australia lack leaders who are able to represent their community effectively. Consequently, misinformation about some minority cultures and religions can develop and become accepted in the absence of accurate and reliable information and representation.

³ Professor Abdullah Saeed, Preliminary Research on the Muslim Communities of Australia. Summary of Key Issue, Strategies and Areas for Further Research February 2006

Action under the NAP could include the provision of opportunities for leadership training to existing and new leaders of communities in need, including to women and young people, to enable strong and effective leadership skills to be developed in those communities. Governments will work with such leaders to ensure that their views are conveyed effectively in a manner consistent with the Australian values and principles referred to earlier (see Current Situation section).

Media training

The media plays an important role in forming public opinion and developing attitudes about different cultures, religions and ethnic groups. Preliminary research findings show that negative, distorted or ill-informed media reports about ‘others’ can promote racial prejudice and division.

Jurisdictions could build constructive dialogue between community leaders and the media by:

- assisting community leaders to become competent and assertive communicators, using English and non-English media, including newer information technology such as the Internet, to deliver accurate and positive messages about their communities;
- when appropriate, actively countering biased and inaccurate information, including through newer technologies such as the internet, and
- providing media representatives with opportunities for cultural and religious awareness training, to promote balanced and informed reporting.

Communication and consultation

Communities and governments have committed to continued consultation to build trust and to promote positive relations between communities. Action under the NAP could include:

- assisting leaders of communities whose members may be at risk of becoming extremists to convey to the wider community that they will actively respond to issues within their community that potentially threaten Australia’s social cohesion and national security;
- informing all Australians about the objectives of the NAP in order to maximise the effectiveness of desired outcomes; and

- implementing projects, such as inter-faith forums, to promote dialogue between communities to engender greater understanding between, and across, different cultures and religions.

Enhancing national security

A significant impact of the NAP on national security will be the effective implementation of the education and employment initiatives and the successful involvement and inclusion of communities and individuals into mainstream community activities.

Government actions under the NAP will add to the extensive national security initiatives and strategies already being implemented by Australian, state and territory governments by:

- commissioning research into
 - the underlying causes of violence and extremism
 - reducing the potential for extremism to develop in Australia
 - the causes of religious intolerance, stereotypes and perceptions
 - improving our understanding of racism, discrimination, the social isolation of young people, violence and alienation issues;
- enhancing dialogue and cooperation between communities, law enforcement, emergency managers, and security structures and organisations;
- improving community understanding of national crisis and emergency management planning, to empower communities and individuals to be able to plan for and respond to issues, incidents or crises as they arise;
- improving community knowledge and use of lawful grievance redress mechanisms; and
- encouraging communities and their leaders to publicly condemn acts of violence and to confront signs of radicalisation within their communities as they occur.

Outcomes

Outcomes of the NAP for government, the community and individuals at risk of radicalisation may include:

- increased understanding of the causes of extremism and the radicalisation process through commissioned research;
- enhanced opportunities for vocational training, for meaningful and gainful employment;
- greater awareness by employers of workplace diversity issues impacting on communities and workplaces;
- increased opportunities for participation in mainstream social, cultural and sporting programmes, thereby fostering social cohesion and inclusion;
- further opportunities for young Australians from different cultural and religious backgrounds to enhance their leadership skills and participation in mainstream Australia;
- strengthening mutual trust within communities and between communities and governments, through ongoing dialogue;
- increased understanding about and use of existing community support and complaints mechanisms by minority communities to deal with conflict and grievance within the law, without resorting to violence;
- enhanced awareness amongst Australians of national security arrangements and crisis management processes;
- targeted education initiatives to build better understanding and acceptance of Australia's cultural and religious diversity; and
- enabling faith and community leaders to better represent their communities in mainstream Australia.

Reporting

Governments will work with the community and other stakeholders to implement the NAP and will provide reports on its implementation. The NAP will be evaluated in 2009-10.

