



Monday, 20 April 2020

ECCV signs the Victorian Multicultural CEO Network Open Letter to the Crisis Council of Cabinet on COVID-19

Chairperson of the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) Eddie Micallef is pleased to confirm that ECCV has joined 29 other ethnic and multicultural organisations across Victoria in signing the Multicultural CEO Network Open Letter to the Victorian Premier and Crisis Council of Cabinet, urging the government to meet the needs of culturally diverse Victorians amidst COVID-19.

The network's members represent and support the more than 2.2 million Victorians of culturally and linguistically diverse background, including the 1.6 million Victorians who speak a language other than English at home.

In signing the Multicultural CEO Network Open Letter, ECCV, alongside fellow signatories, strongly recommends the following actions from the Victorian Government to ensure the needs of culturally diverse Victorians are at the forefront of the response and recovery from COVID-19.

1. Deem SBS as an official emergency broadcaster and other ethnic media as essential services
2. Establish a CALD Taskforce in Victoria to support community planning and service implementation as part of the State's response and recovery from COVID-19
3. Provide funding certainty for all ethno-specific and multicultural organisations to ensure resources remain in place to support CALD communities through the pandemic
4. Ensure consistency across all government departments with regards to funding flexibility in current contracts
5. Multicultural events and festivals funding to be paid out for organisations that have expended money in preparing for events which were cancelled as a result of COVID-19
6. Financial packages to better support vulnerable groups within CALD communities, including women and children, young people, seniors, people with disability, new and emerging communities and those without welfare rights
7. Prioritise addressing the threats to social cohesion as a result of a rise in racism

"These actions reflect a wide range of inputs from multiple service providers and regions across Victoria. It would be good for the State Government to take on these concerns and respond accordingly", said ECCV Chairperson, Eddie Micallef.

For interview opportunities, please contact Anjali Nambissan – ECCV Membership and Communications Coordinator – on anambissan@eccv.org.au or call 0431 091 738



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“The Victorian multicultural sector is ready to work with all governments and groups to support migrant and refugee communities who are at greatest risk as a result of this crisis”, said Chris Christoforou, ECCV Executive Officer.

Bernie Nott, CEO of Spectrum, said, “Ethnic and multicultural organisations will be integral to the recovery from COVID-19. They are the trusted partners within diverse communities. They will play a vital role reconnecting communities, fostering social inclusion and supporting economic participation as we move through this emergency.”

“We are particularly concerned by the compounding of disadvantage for those who are most vulnerable in our community; newly arrived migrants and refugees, culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability and those experiencing mental health issues”, Veronica Pardo, CEO of Multicultural Arts Victoria, added.

Carmel Guerra, CEO of Centre for Multicultural Youth, highlighted, “Many young Victorians from refugee and migrant backgrounds experience socio-economic disadvantage alongside other factors that place them at risk of digital exclusion. In the current health emergency of COVID-19, this vulnerability is exacerbated and must be addressed immediately, as essential services such as education and health shift online.”

To read the Victorian Multicultural CEO Network Open Letter, [click here](#).

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Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) is the peak advocacy body for culturally diverse communities in Victoria, since 1974. As the voice for multicultural Victoria, ECCV is the conduit with government and other stakeholders. We are a member driven organisation representing over 220 organisations across Victoria. - www.eccv.org.au

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