

26 September 2023

To: The Multicultural Framework Review Panel

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Submission to the Multicultural Framework Review

Thank you for the opportunity for us to provide the following inputs for the Multicultural Framework Review.

1. Reaffirming Multiculturalism:

Noel Pearson introduced the concept that Australia's national heritage comprises three key components: "our ancient heritage, our British inheritance, and our multicultural triumph." Multiculturalism is one of these integral elements of Australia's identity. Upholding multiculturalism is essential for the ongoing social cohesion and success of this country.

It has been six years since the Turnbull government's 2017 statement, "Multicultural Australia: United, Strong, Successful," was issued. It is now appropriate to consider issuing a new statement on multiculturalism, reaffirming Australia's enduring commitment to this fundamental cornerstone that has made Australia one of the most successful multicultural societies in the world.

2. Fostering Sense of Belonging:

As proud Australians with Chinese heritage, we are privileged and grateful to call Australia home and actively contribute to the society. However, despite the history of Chinese Australians spanning more than two hundred years, our loyalty to this country has been questioned from time to time. Such questioning is not only unfair, unsettling and hurtful for our community, but is also detrimental, potentially undermining our shared sense of belonging.

The updated multicultural framework should aim to ensure a fair go for all Australians and promote social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

3. Enhancing Engagement with Multicultural Communities and Value their Contributions:

Increased engagement with multicultural communities benefits both these communities and the society at large. This was evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when multicultural communities were actively engaged, listened to, and included in the response and vaccination campaign, leading to a positive outcome of keeping the community safe.

Multicultural communities are valuable assets that enrich and strengthen our nation. Their diverse experiences, unique perspectives, and international connections are advantageous for trade and fostering people-to-people friendships. It is essential to acknowledge and celebrate these contributions.

4. Encouraging Participation in Democratic Processes and Public Affairs:

Consider strategies to encourage and promote greater participation of multicultural communities in democratic processes and public affairs, ensuring their equitable representation at all levels of representative bodies.

5. Addressing Aged Care Needs:

The shortage of culturally appropriate aged care remains a critical concern as our society ages and more community members require care. Our senior community members are in need of aged care facilities that meet both of the following two key criteria.

- A facility that caters for their specific cultural, linguistic, dietary and spiritual preferences and needs.
- A facility that is close to where their children and relatives/friends live so that they can be conveniently visited and can socially engage in local community activities when they want and are able to.

Our senior community members deserve a suitable place to be looked after when they need to.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Li

Jimmy Li, Ph.D. | President

Chinese Community Council of Australia (Vic)

維州澳華社區委員會

Email: cccav.committee@gmail.com

Website: <https://cccav.org.au/>