

Strategic Plan 2016-2020



Our Community: Our Work




Arab Council Australia
المجلس العربي استراليا



Contents



Background	3
Message from the Executive	4
Our Vision	5
Our Purpose	5
Our Values	6
Our Strategic Goals	7
Key services and programs	14



Background

Arab Council Australia was founded in 1979 as the Arabic Welfare Workers Interagency. It became a Council in 1988 and was then named Australian Arabic Welfare Council. In August 1998, Council changed its name to Australian Arabic Communities Council. The latest name Arab Council Australia was adopted in November 2004.

Council is a secular community based organisation working to bring about positive social change and improve the lives of the most vulnerable people in the community. We represent the interests of people from twenty-two Arab countries. Our membership reflects this diversity and also includes people of non-Arabic speaking backgrounds.

Since our establishment we have been providing a range of quality services such as: family support, child protection, youth projects, social support to older people, problem gambling and financial counselling, orientation and settlement, casework and educational support to children, youth and families, and emergency relief assistance.

We work with diverse communities and across sectors and play a pivotal role in capacity and community building and in advocacy. We promote solutions through consultations, research, education, and partnerships; we work inclusively across diversity and in forging strong collaborative practices with community, government and businesses.



Message from the Executive

The world around us continues to challenge us as an organisation and the communities we work with. At a global level, conflicts escalate and displace people and leave them homeless and in search of a safer future. Locally, Arab Australians continue to face exclusion, racism and significant socio economic disadvantage.

Even with this backdrop, we are hopeful.

We are inspired by the many individuals and organisations we work with for their openness to collaborate, to innovate and to advocate for human rights. But mostly, we are inspired by the resilience and tenacity of the people and families we meet everyday who despite great adversity are working to build their lives.

We want to continue to work with families, young people, children, older people, our members, our staff and our partners, as we implement our new strategic direction over the five years.

Our plan is to continue to advocate and to deliver the services that support the most vulnerable in our community.

We also want to innovate, explore new partnerships and funding opportunities and to listen more to our members, workers and partners. Their views and ideas have helped shape this plan and over the next five years we will continue the dialogue to implement it.



Our Vision

A community that participates socially, economically and politically and where reciprocal and respectful relationships continue to develop between Arab-Australians and the wider community.

A socially inclusive community in which people enjoy a sustainable quality of life and express pride in both their Arab heritage and Australian citizenship.

A future where the diverse Arab Australian community is respected, valued and celebrated and its organisations are strong and collaborate both to achieve common goals and for the greater good of Australian society as a whole.

Our Purpose

We are a peak secular organisation proactively promoting social inclusion and diversity, confronting racism and providing a community voice.

We are committed to improving the lives of the most vulnerable in our community with a focus on Arab Australians particularly newly arrived refugees and migrants.

We deliver culturally and linguistically appropriate social services to address isolation, inequity, discrimination, poverty and hardship.



Our Values

Our values are the fundamental beliefs of our organisation. They define who we are. They influence the way we work with each other and the way we serve and engage with our communities. Our values are underpinned by the **FAIR** principles and guide everything we do and strive to achieve.

FAIR

FREEDOM, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES – People are free to participate fully in the social, economic and political life of society. They have the right to dignity, respect, privacy and confidentiality; to make their own life choices and to participate in decisions that affect their lives. Along with rights come responsibilities to respect the rights of other peoples and society as a whole.

ACCESS AND EQUITY – People have the right to live free from discrimination and to fair and equal access and opportunity to services, education and employment.

INCLUSION – Inclusion is the foundation of a healthy society that respects, values and celebrates the diverse and unique attributes, characteristics and perspectives that make individuals who they are regardless of race, culture, ability, gender, colour, sexual orientation, income, language and religion. We also believe that bringing diverse individuals together allows us collectively and more effectively to address the issues that face our communities.

RESPECT and INTEGRITY – We believe in building mutual respect, personal relationships and understanding between communities and demonstrating the highest standards of integrity.

Our Strategic Goals

Goal 1: Wellbeing

Promote well functioning, healthy, productive, caring, and safe individuals, families and communities.

Goal 2: Inclusion and Social Justice

Promote inclusion and social justice, access and equal opportunities for all.

Goal 3: Poverty Relief

Alleviate poverty and promote greater equity for those in need.

Goal 4: Capacity Building

Build active, productive and cohesive communities and increase community skills and capacity.

Goal 5: Advocacy

Advocate on issues affecting the community and promote a positive community image.

Goal 6: Sustainability

Build a strong, representative and sustainable organisation.



STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal 1: Wellbeing

Promote well functioning, healthy, productive, caring, and safe individuals, families and communities.

Strategic focus

- 1.1** Strengthen Council focus on domestic and family violence and support women and children to have safe and healthy lives.
- 1.2** Expand additional outreach services through new partnerships and locations.
- 1.3** Continue to explore an expanded role for Council in ageing and disability services and mental health.
- 1.4** Expand the capacity of Council services to cater for newly arrived refugees and migrants.
- 1.5** Help the community in particular the aged with their health, accommodation and social needs to live independently with dignity and respect.
- 1.6** Work with families to ensure their children are safe and protected from abuse and neglect.
- 1.7** Promote healthy communities through health education programs in partnership with health services.

Goal 2: Inclusion and Social Justice

Promote inclusion and social justice, access and equal opportunities for all.

Strategic focus

- 2.1** Promote the social and economic participation of young people and their leadership and engagement.
- 2.2** Expand the capacity of Council to support young people who experience difficulties in accessing and participating in formal learning and guiding them through educational pathways.
- 2.3** Offer young people opportunities to exercise leadership and to interact and engage in civil society.
- 2.4** Assist newly arrived refugees, humanitarian entrants and migrants with their settlement needs and encourage their social and economic participation in society.
- 2.5** Combat racism and discrimination.

Goal 3: Poverty Relief

Alleviate poverty and promote greater equity for those in need.

Strategic focus

- 3.1** Expand and diversify emergency relief assistance.
- 3.2** Raise awareness about poverty and disadvantage within the Arab-speaking community.
- 3.3** Create a social enterprise partnership with the business community.
- 3.4** Continue to provide emergency relief such as food and clothing to individuals and families in crisis.
- 3.5** Provide support to individuals and families experiencing hardship.
- 3.6** Support problem gamblers to overcome their addiction and provide financial counselling.
- 3.7** Continue to connect unemployed people to employment and training services.

Goal 4: Capacity Building

Build active, productive and cohesive communities and increase community skill and capacity

Strategic focus

- 4.1** Strengthen connections between Arab organisations.
- 4.2** Strengthen Council's representation of Arab organisations and communities.
- 4.3** More actively engage and build the capacity of small Arab organisations and groups.
- 4.4** Invite members and other partners to pitch innovative ideas that they can lead in partnership with Council.
- 4.5** Strengthen the Arabic Workers Network and build capacity of its members.
- 4.6** Create opportunities for volunteers and students to develop new skills, gain more experience and contribute positively to the benefit of the community
- 4.7** Run community building events, new projects and educational activities that address identified needs in the community.
- 4.8** Promote cultural awareness and respect for diversity in Australian communities.
- 4.9** Act as a resource and consultative body on issues relating to Arabic-speaking communities.

Goal 5: Advocacy

Advocate on issues affecting the community and promote a positive community image.

Strategic focus

- 5.1** Continue to expand the engagement of individuals and community organisations in the process of lobbying and advocacy.
- 5.2** Consult Council members to gauge their views on topical issues.
- 5.3** Strengthen the reach of the Council's social media communication.
- 5.4** More actively engage young people in Council and on community issues.
- 5.5** Take a public stand (including through the media) on issues affecting the community.
- 5.6** Encourage and commission research projects of relevance to the community.
- 5.7** Act as an advocacy body on issues affecting the Arab Australian community.
- 5.8** Hold cultural and/or other events to promote the positive image of the community.

Goal 6: Sustainability

Build a strong, representative and sustainable organisation.

Strategic focus

- 6.1** Identify and test new funding models such as crowd and philanthropic funding.
- 6.2** Collaborate and establish funding consortia with other organisations.
- 6.3** Develop a consultancy arm of Council to deliver advisory and training services including translation service and cross-cultural training.
- 6.4** Increase the number of members and improve the benefits for member.
- 6.5** Relocate to new premises, preferably through co-location with other organisations.
- 6.6** Implement equal employment opportunity and workplace health and safety practice.
- 6.7** Support and develop Council's staff.
- 6.8** Identify and manage risks.
- 6.9** Operate a healthy governance structure.
- 6.10** Comply with funding agreements and quality standards.
- 6.11** Promote ethical practice throughout the Council.

KEY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Services for Families and Children

- Early intervention and prevention
- Case work, referral and home visits
- Parenting information
- Community education
- Information sessions, workshops and training
- Children activities including reading groups

Services for Youth

- Educational and social support
- Information sessions, workshops and training
- Group activities eg. life skills, sports, arts and craft
- Building resilience and confidence
- Students Placement Program

Services for Women

- Women support group
- Health and safety education program
- Cooking and fitness classes
- Domestic violence awareness program

Services for Seniors

- Day care service
- Social outings
- Social support for seniors and carers
- Educational sessions

Other specialised services

- Problem gambling counselling
- Financial counselling
- Settlement services including case work, referral and advocacy
- Emergency relief and material assistance

Community programs and initiatives

- Community building and development
- Collaboration and social inclusion projects
- Coordination and capacity building
- Research projects
- Campaigns on issues of relevance
- Cultural awareness training and seminars
- Workshops and training on relevant topics
- Arabic Workers Network
- Translation service
- Volunteer program
- Venue hire and community library





Arab Council Australia
المجلس العربي استراليا

Level 1, 194 Stacey Street
Bankstown NSW 2200
PO Box 1103
Bankstown NSW 1885

T +61 2 9709 4333

F +61 2 9709 2928

E info@arabcouncil.org.au

W www.arabcouncil.org.au