

**Submission  
No 3**

## **ADMINISTRATION OF THE 2019 NSW STATE ELECTION**

**Organisation:** Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW

**Date Received:** 31 August 2019

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Ethnic Communities'  
Council of NSW Inc.

**Submission to**  
**PARLIAMENT OF NEW SOUTH WALES**  
**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL**  
**MATTERS**

**September 2019**

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# List of Acronyms

AEC	Australian Electoral Commission
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
ECCNSW	Ethnic Communities Council of NSW
NSWEC	NSW Electoral Commission
SML	Speak My Language

# 1. About the Ethnic Communities Council of NSW

The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECCNSW) is the peak body for all culturally and linguistically diverse communities in New South Wales. It is a non-profit association that was established in 1975 at Sydney Town Hall by a mass rally of all ethnic communities in NSW.

The ECC of NSW actively promotes the principles of multiculturalism, and lobbies for the development of a culturally inclusive society. The ECC is committed to the principles for a culturally diverse society.

## Constitutional Objectives

The Constitutional Objectives of the Council are:

1. Promoting of joint action and co-operation between ethnic communities on issues of common concern to provide for social coherence and stability.
2. Ensuring the rights of ethnic communities including effective participation in decisions which affect them and sharing of community resources.
3. Encouraging the development of ethnic organisations concerned with the social and cultural life of their communities.
4. Participating actively in the development of a culturally pluralistic society in Australia and relating to relevant community organisations and structures keeping in mind the purpose of interaction with, rather than isolation from, the mainstream of Australian life.
5. Promoting actively the principles of multiculturalism.
6. Promoting democratic attitudes for racial harmony and understanding.
7. Opposing all forms of discrimination, defamation and vilification on the grounds of ethnic or national origin, race, religion, colour, gender, age, disability or sexual preference.

## Work

Our main activities are advocacy, education, and community development. The following pages provide an over-view of some of our work over the last 4 years.

## Outreach

We engaged with communities in person in these **17 languages:**

Arabic (formal, Dinka), Assyrian, Cantonese, Dari, Dinka, Greek, Hazaragi, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Mandarin, Nepali, Punjabi, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Vietnamese, Tagalog

We engaged with communities in writing in these **21 languages:**

Vietnamese, Turkish, Tagalog, Spanish, Serbian, Samoan, Portuguese, Macedonian, Lao, Khmer, Italian, Croatian, Chinese, Assyrian, Arabic, French, Maltese, Nepalese, Tongan, Punjabi, Polish

We outreached to these **metropolitan** Sydney locations:

Ashfield, Auburn, Bankstown, Blacktown, Burwood, Campbelltown, Canterbury, Canada Bay, Fairfield, Georges River area, Glenwood, Granville, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Liverpool, Parramatta, Rockdale, Sydney, Hills Council area, Willoughby, Windsor

And in **regional NSW:**

Armidale, Ballina, Central Coast, Illawarra, Hunter region, Coffs Harbour, Tamworth, Tweed Heads, South Coast, Wagga Wagga, Queanbeyan

## Collaboration

We collaborated with

**90+ Agencies**, including:

- 21 Government Agencies
- 25 Peak Bodies
- 9 Service Networks
- 4 Universities
- Consultants, ANROWS
- Corporates, CBA

A small sample of who we collaborated with:

- Commonwealth Ombudsman
- Department of Health
- Environment Protection Agency
- Greater Sydney Commission
- Human Rights Commission
- NSW Health
- NSW Justice Department
- Local libraries/State Library
- Universities – UTS, Macquarie, Sydney

## Action and Advocacy

We presented our Members' issues in more than **43 submissions** or reports to governments.

We participated in government and non-government consultations regarding **50+ issues** you told us were **important to our Members**

A small sample of issues we advocated on:

- Children and Youth (education, jobs etc.)
- Law & Police (anti-racism, robberies)
- Health (smoking, cancer, GP training)
- Housing (homelessness, family housing)
- Access to services (health, housing, education, business rebates; water, electricity, aged care and more)
- People with disability (NDIA, housing)
- Settlement, Migration & Refugees
- Safety (water safety, road safety, crime)
- Seniors (care, pension, housing)
- Women (education, health, safety)
- Domestic violence
- Environment care
- Access to technology training for seniors

## Mentoring

**South Sudanese** community mentored to represent their own interests

**Pro bono work** to assist South Sudanese community with start-up of their own community Association

We auspice The Good Neighbour Project, providing trained volunteers to support **refugee & asylum seekers**

Mentored CALD **students** to study and develop **media skills** through the SBS Media Mentoring Program (partnership of SBS, **Macquarie University** & ECCNSW)

Mentored university **interns** from the Macquarie University Professional and Community Engagement Program and **NAVITAS placements**

Hosted NSW **Youth Parliamentarians**

## Capacity Building

We empowered and improved access for **seniors** via:

- Aged care information sessions delivered in 21 languages
- Training **6000+** in the use of IT
- Dozens of **focus groups** contributing to research & project design (e.g. Speak My Language)

We empowered 100's of **CALD organisations** to get access to grant information and resources

We empowered:

- 100's of CALD **businesses** to save money and access rebates for new equipment to reduce waste and increase recycling
- 100's of CALD **families** to save money and avoid waste (with 252 individuals attending)
- 100's of CALD **community** members to participate in environmental action
- 100's of people to address their **health** (quit smoking, bowel screening, breast screening) and **housing** needs

## Resource Development

- We empowered **people with disability** via:
- Community **infrastructure** sessions (in 6 languages)
- Community **information** sessions (using 11 trained bilingual workers)

We developed CALD resources on the topics of ageing, **technology**, housing, health and environment



## 2. Scope of this Submission

The ECCNSW is writing this submission to share with the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters the significant results and findings of a Project we delivered in partnership with the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and the NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC) in 2019.

The Project, 'Vote Talk' was an innovative initiative designed by the ECCNSW to assist culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities to better understand how they can actively participate in, and make informed decisions about, voting during election processes in Australia. During the course of the Project, ECCNSW was also approached by Elders and members of the local Aboriginal community (Redfern, Sydney district) to include their community in the Project. This resulted in findings that are also relevant to the work of the Committee.

ECCNSW is strongly of the view that the outstanding achievements of this project provide significant evidence for the Committee when considering the Terms of Reference, specifically:

*b) The administration of and practices associated with the electoral laws described at (a).*

This submission offers the recommendations of the Project as a means to outreach to Australian people of CALD backgrounds who are eligible to vote in Australian elections, to ensure they have equal access to democratic processes.

## 3. Recommendations

The ECCNSW recommends that:

- Further partnerships between NSWEC be supported to enable an extension of the Vote Talk initiative, and that additional language groups be added.
- Improvements to the Project as outlined in the Project Evaluation Recommendations be implemented in future Vote Talk initiatives. The project recommendations are reproduced below.

Project Recommendations are found at section 6.

## 4. Vote Talk – Including Australians of CALDB in the Democratic Process

### 4.1 About the Initiative

The Ethnic Communities' Council of NSW (ECCNSW) was engaged by the Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) and NSW Electoral Commission (NSWEC) to facilitate and deliver engaging and culturally appropriate educational information to culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) members in their own language ('Electoral Awareness Activities'). Through engaging in-language conversations this program would assist to address cultural / language barriers which hinder their participation and voting responsibilities as Australian citizens in the voting process.

The partnership between the ECCNSW, AEC and NSWEC provided the opportunity for the three agencies to work collaboratively in developing and conveying key messages which can be delivered across various languages and cultures on ethnic and multicultural radio. The messages, when delivered using the Vote Talk model, encourage communities to actively pursue their rights as Australian citizens to vote during different government elections. Using the ECCNSW 'Speak My Language' (SML) model and framework, the partnership codesign the Vote Talk program guidelines, training materials and activities.

Using trusted and recognised members of the community, the Vote Talk pilot program harnessed the power of ethnic radio, to deliver in-language information about voting and election processes which helped make voting in Australia simple and easy to understand.

### 4.2 Target Groups

A total of eight CALD language groups across Western Sydney were targeted in the initial proposal (Arabic, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Chinese, Spanish, Hindi, Assyrian, Tamil). These groups were identified based on demographic research and a data review conducted at the time of the initial proposal (2018).

Once the program began the planning phase, a second demographic review was conducted in October 2018 which included three CALD community consultations attended by forty-six people across Western Sydney. These consultations identified the final languages which were selected to be part of the 2019 Vote Talk pilot program. These were:

- Arabic – as per initial research
- Cantonese – as per initial research
- Mandarin – as per initial research
- Spanish – as per initial research
- Hindi- as per initial research
- Urdu – *Note: A consultation with twenty-one community members from this community was conducted. These community members raised concerns that people from disadvantaged socio-economic communities, working poor, women and elderly members in their community were less likely to register to vote and/ or were unable decide for themselves on who they would vote for during an election campaign compared to men from the same Urdu community. Participants from Urdu women's group and representatives from the community requested that ECCNSW consider reaching out to Urdu women to participate in the Vote Talk program.*
- Indigenous – *The inclusion of indigenous conversations as part of the 2019 Vote Talk pilot was recommended following discussions held at a Seniors Rights Service forum in September 2018. Indigenous elders and members attending the community forum expressed not only their concerns and mistrust of the Australian government, but also the lack of meaningful engagement between indigenous members (particularly men), government representatives, candidates and members of parliament involved in elections. The community members*

*expressed their interest in being part of the Vote Talk program if it was to be tailored specifically to their needs. The messages from elders and inspirational indigenous members were perceived as a catalyst to provoke a call to action and potentially encourage younger indigenous people to register with the electoral commission and vote during the 2019 elections. Whilst this presented a challenge, the ECCNSW considered the value of including the indigenous communities in this pilot program in order to scope potential future engagement models for indigenous specific programs.*

- *Youth program – We note this was an additional target group not identified in the first research review. Young people over 18 years of age who had recently registered or intended to register for the 2019 elections to vote for the first time, were now required to vote twice, for the NSW State election and the federal election held in May 2019. Young adults participating in ECCNSW volunteer programs provided feedback in relation to concerns about the level of anxiety and confusion experienced by young voters leading up to the 2019 elections. A youth facilitator was engaged to interview university students and young people who had recently registered to vote. The radio conversations were delivered through the Newtown Skid Row radio program. This youth component included a series of online social media activities to encourage young people to be informed and build their confidence to participate in their first voting experience.*

### **4.3 The Model**

Two Vote Talk components form the Vote Talk conversational structure: Café Conversations and Radio Conversations.

#### ***Café Conversations***

The purpose of the Café Conversations was to scope and record community attitudes and responses towards voting and election processes. This provided the opportunity for the bilingual facilitator to explore the guest speaker's personal attitudes and experiences towards voting and elections. As the conversation evolved, the facilitator, where applicable, intervened by providing accurate information with the aim of dispelling any misconceptions which could affect the result of a formal vote.

All Café recordings were put through two Vote Talk Quality Assurance Checking Process (QAC). The first QAC was conducted by the ECCNSW language support team. The second QAC was supervised by AEC and conducted by Cultural Perspectives Group. Both QAC approvals were required before the podcast was disseminated to the public. Recordings which did not pass the quality assurance checks were not shared with the public, however, were still deemed as a valuable resource. The content and information provided in these recordings were used as case studies to debrief with the bilingual facilitator and correct any delivery issues before broadcasting live.

Café conversation recordings were:

- Pre-recorded interviews conducted in person or on the telephone involving two or more people
- Approximately 20-30-minutes in duration
- Conducted entirely in one of the eight languages
- Free flowing conversation
- Able to be edited prior to dissemination

#### ***Live on-air radio conversation using ethnic and multicultural radio***

Leading up to the state and federal elections, bilingual facilitators were responsible for contacting their respective radio stations to secure recording times with radio hosts.

Scripts developed by ECCNSW, AEC and NSWEC provided the facilitators with a guide to online discussion themes and topics. The facilitators were able to provide both scripted discussions and their own input based on the learnings gathered from the Café conversation recordings.

Depending on the radio broadcasters' protocols, the Vote Talk conversations were recorded and repeated several times a day, throughout the week, leading up to the next recording. This repetition provided ample time for the listeners to hear, understand and become familiar with the messages before it was replaced with the next recorded interview.

Unlike the Café conversations, radio conversations were:

- Recorded by the radio host
- Depending on the radio stations existing protocols, the radio interview may be a live interview or pre-recorded, or a fusion of both.
- Talk back (callers contacting the station during the live interview) was encouraged however, again this was dependent upon individual radio station existing protocols
- On-air recording timeframes varied from 10 minutes, 30 minutes to a maximum of 1 hour, with the exception of two youth recordings where the youth facilitator was invited to remain in the station for the full 2-hour session.
- To maximise community reach and exposure, each radio interview was repeated several times during the week leading up to the next interview

### ***Use of Bi-lingual Facilitators***

A total of ten bilingual facilitators were engaged to deliver the Vote Talk program. Recruitment was based on the following criteria:

1. Oral communication skills
2. Cultural expertise
3. Communication skills
4. Literacy skills
5. Organisational skills

A Code of Ethics also formed part of the recruitment. Facilitators were vetted for their understanding of and ability to apply the following standards of behaviour, to:

- Maintain neutrality at all times when discussing election processes, voting, and government policies.
- Remain impartial during conversations and at no time referring to their personal views relating to any particular political party policies.
- Exercise reasonable care and skill while discussing federal and state election matters without making comments which could negatively impact the AEC, NSWEC and related stakeholders
- Demonstrate they can act impartially during a discussion about voting and elections
- Refrain from making comments that he or she is not authorised to say, which could be incorrectly received as an official comment on behalf of the AEC, or ECCNSW and other stakeholders.

## ***Training and Development***

The pilot program utilised a 'cascade training' model, whereby bilingual facilitators were trained to deliver key messages relating to enrolment, voting and working at elections, in order to influence change within their own communities.

All bilingual facilitators were required to complete assessment tasks as part of their Vote Talk responsibilities.

In order to deliver Electoral Awareness Activities, bilingual facilitators were required to sign a confidentiality and neutrality disclaimer – agreeing to respect the strict political neutrality of the AEC, and NSW EC with the understanding they would not knowingly associate the Vote Talk program, the Electoral Commission or their own views with any particular political policy or candidate involved in the election.

## ***Resources and Materials***

A significant achievement of the Project was the development of extensive resources and training. Resources developed included:

- Website with Café conversations and links to other resources ([www.votetalk.org.au](http://www.votetalk.org.au))
- SML Revised Workshop – The Art of Persuasion (Speak My Language Copyright)
- Template for scripting interviews and additional tutoring on how to complete a live interview for the Café conversations held with members in the community
- Four online radio scripts for live radio
- Café Conversational Guide Handbook
- Weekly telephone support with the Vote Talk Program Manager
- Advertising promotional materials
- Vote Talk music jingle for podcasts and recordings purchased by ECCNSW, with music rights for public.

## **4.4 Key Messages**

The key messages that were communicated through the project were:

1. You must register to vote.
2. To make sure your vote is counted, you need to follow the instructions on the ballot paper, or you can ask polling staff for assistance. Ask for a polling staff that may speak your language
3. There is no other important example of freedom and democracy than a citizen's right to vote. This right provides a voice and allows for people to have a say about how their country, state and communities are governed.
4. You need to vote at each local State and Federal elections.
5. If you are registered to vote and do not vote on election day you will receive a fine – but remember it is not about the penalty, it is about the right to have a say.
6. If you are an Australian citizen and 18 years or older, you must enrol to vote, and remember that the consequences imposed when not voting
7. You can apply for casual work at elections which could be a positive experience and could enhance your job prospects especially for younger voters.
8. All levels of Australian government work together and are accountable to the people of Australia

9. A ballot paper is your opportunity to have your say about the way the country is governed
10. Be prepared on election day to vote and remember that people can tell you 'how' to vote, but ultimately it is up to you to decide on 'who' to vote for
11. Every valid vote counts. Did you fill out your ballot paper correctly? Did your Vote Count?
12. Do your homework – be prepared - Reach out to electoral candidates to learn more about their policies and how they will work towards supporting you and your communities' needs
13. Ensure the information you find is from a reputable source. Online information or anonymous junk mail may not be accurate. Cross check to determine if it is accurate.

#### 4.5 Deliverables

**Table 1.1 The following podcasts were recorded and played on radio as stage 2 'On Air Radio Conversations'**

Radio Station Name	Number of live sessions recorded on air	Number of times recording was replayed on air	Number of Radio Hrs on air
Voice of Islam Western Sydney	1	10 min, x every 4 hours, x 3 days p/w, 2wks - leading up to the federal election	240 min
Indian Link Radio	1	10 min x 12 TIMES x 7 days 1 week leading up to the state election	840 min
SBS Hindi Radio Station	3	10 min x every 2 hrs x 7 days x 3weeks leading up to federal election	2520 min
Radio Dosti	2	10 min, x every 2 hours, x 2daily x 2 weeks leading up to the federal election	480 min
Skidrow	4	75 min interviews played once per week x 4 days	300 min
2AC Chinese Radio	2 weeks prior to NSW State Elections  3 weeks prior to Federal Elections	10 min per interview, played 4 times per day x 6 days  10 min per interview, played 4 times per day x 6 days X 3 WKS	480 min  720 min
2AC Cantonese Radio	1 week prior to state , 4 x weeks prior to Federal Elections	10 min per interview, played 8 times per day x 5 days 4 weeks	400 min 1600min
Koori Radio Redfern	1 week leading up to Federal Election	30 min per interview  Repeat announcement re: upcoming elections short advert (2.2min) x 3 per day x 2 days	30 min  13.2 min
SBS Spanish Radio	1 week leading up to state election  3 weeks leading up to Federal Election	15 min per interview x 1 week, repeated x 3  15 min per interview x 1 week, repeated x 4	45 min  60min
<i>ACTUAL DELIVERABLE - Total face to face recording time with community members approved and uploaded to site (23 sessions)</i>			7728.2 min /162.8 hrs
<i>CONTRACTED DELIVERABLE – target hours for Radio Conversations expected was 144 sessions (8 x languages, x 18 sessions ) x 15 min interviews each session = 2160 minutes of air time discussing elections and voting</i>			2160 MIN / 36 HOURS

## 5. Feedback from those Involved

### 5.1 Bi-lingual Facilitators

When asked to comment on the program and their experience of Vote Talk, the bilingual facilitators stated the following statements were heard, or made by others which were noteworthy.

- Don't wait for election time to go on radio – by then it is too late, and the on-air programming is hectic. Every month we should be talking on radio about levels of government, how things work, how people can keep that connection with the MP who was once the candidate they voted for. While we know elections are now over, and yes, there may be another 3 – 4 years before the next election, our history tells us to be prepared because anything can happen.
- The training is excellent – I would like to do it as a refresher annually – it was a great reminder how our voice and our vote can make a difference every day.
- Put the radio hosts through the interview before we go on air. They too would learn so much from that 20 minutes discussion.
- The scripts for radio hosts are very important. They truly do not know very much about elections and voting processes.
- Interview booths at universities to target 1 st and 2 nd year students. While they feel they are politically minded, they had no idea about the 3 levels of government and who is responsible for their everyday needs.
- Booths in shopping centres manned by CALD speaking facilitators who cannot just give them information but have a conversation.
- Flyer or brochure with mock ballot paper in different languages.
- Training more sector industry workers and bodies to be able to give information to their communities during election time – eg Aboriginal staff at Neighbourhood Centre counters, front line staff at aged community services etc.
- Expand the pilot to include other states. My community in Melbourne were wondering why they weren't involved.
- Interview high level people, popular, profiled etc.
- Continuing the messages on radio now that there is momentum.
- It's a great program – I have been listening to other radio hosts and the interviews they have been conducting and recognized myself when information was not accurate or correct. It made me proud to be part of this program.

### 5.2 Radio Hosts

Some Radio Hosts also provided feedback on the program:

- The callers kept calling after the first recording to ask to keep repeating the session. It was well received and valuable to have the Vote Talk program collaborate with us. (India Link Radio)
- The messages were simple and easy to understand. Thank you, it was great to work with you and share this information with our community. (2AC Radio)
- The scripts provided by Vote Talk were fantastic, easy to follow, the questions were suitable for our listeners, and the facilitator was very professional. (SBS Spanish Radio)

### 5.3 Extraordinary Results

When asked to comment on the program and their experience of Vote Talk, the bilingual facilitators stated the following statements were heard, or made by others which were noteworthy.

- I was surprised how much we learnt in such a short period of time
- I knew very little about election processes before I began the training and was worried about how I was going to cope with all the information, but after the 2 nd day of training, I felt more confident and equipped with the right information to deliver a radio interview representing AEC, NSW EC and ECCNSW
- It was fantastic training. Interesting and full of interesting conversation. I would do it again
- I want my colleagues in my office to complete the training. It is so important that our community learns more about voting and election in Australia.
- The feedback from the radio host demonstrated how valuable the program was. We were receiving calls from people asking why they did not receive this information during other previous elections
- It was really great. The radio hosts said they would normally struggle to find someone to speak on their radio program who had accurate information about the voting and election processes in Australia.
- I received feedback from the radio station that the script developed on how to complete the ballot paper was simple and easy to understand and my responses were very clear and detailed. I had to tell him/her that I only did a short course and I learnt it all – they were impressed and said they would be interested in doing the course before any next election.
- The information provided was simple and easy to understand. The scripts put together by from AEC and ECCNSW made it easy to follow.
- While on radio we discussed politics from all over the world and even in my country (India) and how privileged we were to be here in Australia and have the freedom and right (democracy) to have a say about what happens in this country
- People stopped me while I was shopping at the grocery store to tell me that they enjoyed the regular updates on radio and found it very interesting. They even organised carpooling for election day to ensure they would accurately submit a formal vote, not a donkey vote.
- I enrolled and was accepted as an electoral officer on the day of the state election in my local area. This made a significant difference as my community heard me on radio and then arrived at the voting centre confirming they had heard and responded to the key messages on radio.
- Many of my guests started off confident because they thought they knew enough to pass the talk quiz, but later realized their knowledge was limited when they were unable to answer the questions. This showed them they need to learn more about these issues.
- The way the Vote Talk scripts are designed allowed me to inform them of community issues along the way. By the time my guests finished their interview they were able answer most of the questions which addressed community issues. It was nice to see them smile with pride when they were answering them correctly.
- The three levels of government were covered throughout the interview and podcasts.
- Making the interview interesting and fun was a great way of helping people make the connection. They were particularly interested in learning more about how their Members of Parliament can help their local communities.
- I was surprised how confident people thought they were when they first began the Café conversation and commented they were surprised at how much they did not know about the basic information on



Australian levels of government, how it operates and how and how the election process affects everyday life and the ways in which Members of Parliament work with community.

- I debriefed with my guest after our conversation had ended and they admitted that the discussion was incredibly helpful and that they would be sharing this information and experience with others in their family and community.
- The participants were very eager after completing the interviews and were excited about the new information and knowledge they gained. What would have been better would be a follow up 1 month later with that person to see who they ended up talking to, how confident they felt telling people information about how government works etc.
- This quiz should be taught in all high schools, TAFE, first year university students etc. I'm surprised how much people were able to learn after a little bit of promoting.
- Our culture and sense of identity is strong and will always be strong, however the discussion we had was able to tie in our knowledge and understanding of how government in Australia operates compared to our government overseas.
- Our Chinese speaking community are incredibly influenced by government and many escaped china to protect their families against government exploitation. Watching how government allows its people to participate regardless of religion or culture allows us to be more positive and prouder, because we can be who we are without retribution or punishment. For this reason, it is impactful.
- Our cultural identity is celebrated in this country because of the way in which our government accepts all cultures and faiths. In our discussion we did talk about the differences between Australian government and back home.
- Our indigenous community reflected that government plays a significant role in the way on which indigenous Australians live today. Discussing voting with the indigenous community is very difficult and emotional but it has to be done!
- We are not telling you who to vote for, we are telling you how to vote...
- Don't turn up to the ballot box without knowing what to do. Be prepared, Practice before the day. Make your vote count
- Many of us had to escape our country because of political oppression – Now we are lucky to live in a country that begs us to be part of the decision making – yet we don't have time and are saying we are too busy. How can we so easily forget the privilege we are given?
- This is not just your right, it's a privilege – use it
- Using funny or interesting messages or points was very effective. When asked what they could remember from their interview and something they learnt that was new, they would always giggle and say – I didn't know about donkey vote.
- Your vote today is only a part of the solution. Get to know your candidates – they represent you and are there to be your voice for the next three to four years.
- Getting a fine isn't ok. Save your money, get up early, go and vote, and then head to the shops and buy nice shoes with the money you saved from getting a fine. Every time someone compliments you on your shoes, say "thank you, I got them because I remember to vote in the recent election"

## 6. Project Recommendations

### ***Model***

- Following the Speak My Language (SML) model of recording Café Conversations first, followed by radio interviews was the most effective method of delivery. The time spent encouraging facilitators to use the café recordings to practice using their knowledge about government, elections and voting, provided a safe platform for them to practice and learn more about the boundaries and parameters prior to any public interaction. Facilitators confidence that the information they were providing was accurate was also imperative in order to maintain public confidence in both the facilitator and the information given.
- The “Vote Talk Yarn” face to face workshops with CALD and indigenous groups were incredibly effective and valuable. The workshops were strategically delivered prior to the on-air radio interview. This provided the necessary time for the community to discuss the information amongst their peers before hearing it on radio. Having done so, the interview on elections and voting was welcomed as it was already known and endorsed by the elders and members in the local community (Redfern district). An indigenous specific ‘Vote Talk Yarn’ model will have a significant impact on the community given the positive feedback we received from the Redfern focus groups. The cultural requirements, podcast processes and language did differ with these groups and need to be taken into consideration when codesigning future educational models.

### ***Recruitment***

- New facilitators joining the program should be inducted using the old podcasts to demonstrate how an interview should be delivered and to test their knowledge and communication skills.
- The criteria used this round was effective
- A reserve of back up facilitators are required to ensure the program does not experience delays due to staff illness, disruption to service, or personal reasons.
- The criteria used for the Vote Talk Pilot is recommended for future facilitators.

### ***Training***

- The 3-day training workshops were facilitated by ECCNSW and supported by AEC and NSWEC. Feedback from the training has been extremely positive. We recommend using the procedure and activities for future training. We note that the training module uses the SML toolkit available through ECCNSW. (98% satisfaction rate by facilitators who completed the training)
- Highly recommend the use of the inhouse training model to deliver education to the broader community (95% satisfaction rate received from the focus groups).
- Education and training to front line staff and community development workers E.g. ECCNSW received a request from Maroubra Indigenous Neighbourhood Centre to place all their front line staff through the Vote Talk training workshops to assist them to build links between their community and local MP’s, and educate their communities about the importance of registering to vote.
- Incorporating sessions into the Senior Curriculum by the Department of Education for students in year 10, 11 and year 12 students to become more aware about voting, the different levels of government and how the political system operates in Australia.
- Incorporating sessions into universities targeting first year university students who are unaware of voting and election processes.

### ***Marketing and Communications***

- A more comprehensive marketing and communication strategy in the next round would ensure an increase to the Program's exposure. Extending the Program to further states through the ECCs and MCC's would allow for a national platform able to be supported by their extensive membership base with over 4000 CALD associations and affiliates.
- Radio advert with branded jingle to be sent out through YouTube, What's App, and email networks

### ***Materials and Resources***

- Very positive feedback was received about the Vote Talk Handbook. The information was clear, easy to understand and the imagery and visual cues assisted in breaking down challenging concepts such as the process of passing bills, how laws are proposed, and the various roles and responsibilities of MP's
- The Vote Talk Program pilot is now complete and updated to take into account recommendations, new activities to meet gaps and a review of café recording processes. The package itself can be used as a CALD marketing and promotions training package with the training to be made available to CALD associations, CALD groups, services etc.
- Recommendation that the Vote Talk handbook is accompanied with either face to face training, webinar or an eBook to ensure the user does not interpret the themes and learnings incorrectly.

### ***Café Conversations and Radio Conversations***

- The scripting process was incredibly valuable and assisted the bilingual facilitators to develop interactive, interesting conversations which were able to test and challenge the interviewees, while keeping them engaged and enjoying the process. The combination of humour, fun quizzes and direct questions provided a balance approach which allowed the interviewee to learn about the Australian government and different levels of government in Australia in an informal and non-threatening manner.
- The 5-week on air radio scripts were extremely valuable. These provided not only a guide to on air discussions but delivered key messages and information in simple and easy steps that could be understood by the listener.
- Due to broadcasting protocols and policies, the on-air radio recording time could not be extended in most cases beyond the 10 minutes time slot. However, the option of a repeated playback of the interview had a greater impact and the listeners would often call the station to congratulate them on the interview. (Hindi, Chinese, Urdu, Spanish)
- Recommend that scripting, as delivered in this pilot, remains a s a main component of the Project.

### ***Unexpected Activities and Outcomes***

#### ***Community Conversations / Groups***

- Four community sessions were delivered to encourage communities to vote and complete ballot papers correctly during the federal election. Two of these sessions were held in the Waterloo / Redfern district with 35 Chinese and Russian residents from the public housing estate.
- Two were held with the indigenous community (one with young men's group, and one with youth – predominately young women). The feedback was extremely positive.

Participants stated that:

- The information was easy to understand

- They were unaware of absent or early voting options, and were not confident on how to complete the ballot paper, and did not know they had the option of speaking to an interpreter or someone in their own language on the voting day.
- Young people in the group became inspired and requested further information on how they could learn more about their local Member of Parliament. Three members requested more information on career pathways in politics for indigenous youth, working alongside MP's to support them to consider indigenous or CALD issues as priorities.
- Three young men were so inspired, that they recorded a rap song about Vote Talk.

### ***Call in and public feedback***

- Several bilingual facilitators were approached while grocery shopping or attending community events, and were told that the interviews on radio were very well received. The people stated that the information was simple and easy to understand and noted that the neutrality statement read out and maintained during the interview was incredibly important to the communities.
- The decision about where to go to vote was often made only after the listeners were informed that language specific electoral staff would be available at certain venues (eg Hindi facilitator during the state election observed the number of Hindi speaking people requested to speak to her when they arrived at the centre.

### ***Future Target groups/ Activities***

- There is a significant need for an indigenous specific Vote Talk program, suggesting the name 'Vote Talk Yarn' used by CCNSW for the focus groups. The delivery of the workshops in the community leading up to the election demonstrated how much people do not actually know about basic Australian government operations and the value of voting. A number of historical events such as the stolen generation, mistrust of government and feelings of being underrepresented by their MP have shaped younger generations' perceptions of government. The Vote Talk workshops were empowering and provided an opportunity to affirm to the community members that choice, options and exercising your right as an Australian citizen is a powerful way of contributing to your community.
- The language and communication styles would need to be considered in particular the use of appropriate language and vocabulary choices as well as the cultural sensitivity around delivering this approach.
- The introduction of Vote Talk BBQ's in public housing estates provide an opportunity to assure the community how local Members of Parliament are listening to their local community and the broader community issues, and provides a place to learn how to drive change when issues are identified in the community. To do this the community needs to educate and train ambassadors to drive the discussion and organise the events.
- Collaboration with the Department of Education to ensure this is incorporated into the curriculum in high schools, TAFE and tertiary education.
- Collaboration with providers offering support during the settlement process for refugees entering the country using the CALD specific model designed by Vote Talk
- Career pathways – Internships for young indigenous men's / women's program -finding a career in politics that will create sustainable, long term change.