

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03****BACK POCKET BRIEF****Immigration Group
Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2025****BACK POCKET BRIEF****Topic: Multicultural Programs (Grants)****Group/Division: Immigration/ Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs****Lead SES officer:****Handling note:** *the Critical Support for Multicultural Communities has not been announced but appears in Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements (PAES)***Key Points**

- The Department is responsible for administering the Government's multicultural grants programs (see Table 1).
- On 19 October 2023, the Government announced measures for *Supporting Australian Communities Affected by the Hamas Israel Conflict* in the 2023-24 MYEFO including grant funding of **\$25.0 million** over two years from 2023-24 (see Table 2).
- On 29 August 2024, the Government announced a further **\$5.1 million** for Australian Palestinian-led community organisations to provide emergency relief and to support young Muslim Australians impacted by the conflict in Gaza (see Table 3).
- Funding of \$118.2 million over four years from 2024-25 was announced as part of the 2024-25 MYEFO measure *Government Response to the Multicultural Framework Review* including **\$100.0 million** for Modernised Multicultural Grants (see Table 4).
- On 5 October 2024, the Prime Minister announced **\$25.0 million** over three years from 2024-25 to support the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia. This item was included in the 2024-25 MYEFO.
- On 11 December 2024, the Prime Minister announced **\$0.3 million** in 2024-25 for the replacement and restoration of Adass Israel Synagogue Torah Scrolls following the anti-Semitic arson attack that took place on 6 December 2024. Funding for this item is included in the 2024-25 PAES for the Home Affairs Portfolio. Measure details will be included in the next economic update.
- On 11 December 2024, the Prime Minister announced **\$8.5 million** over two years from 2024-25 to upgrade the Sydney Jewish Museum. Funding is included in the 2024-25 PAES under the \$44 million over five years from 2024-25 for *Critical Support for Multicultural Communities*.
- On 17 January 2025, the Government announced **\$4.0 million** in funding for upgrades to the Islamic Museum of Australia. Funding is included in the 2024-25 PAES under the \$44 million over five years from 2024-25 for *Critical Support for Multicultural Communities*.

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SB25-000227

Page 1 of 8

As at 19 February 2025

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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03**

- On 27 January 2025, the Prime Minister announced **\$6.4 million** in 2025-26 for the upgrade of the Holocaust Institute of WA's Education Centre in Yokine (\$2.0 million) and National Holocaust Education Centre in Canberra (\$4.4 million). Funding for the National Holocaust Education Centre is included in the 2024-25 PAES for the Home Affairs Portfolio under the *Critical Support for Multicultural Communities* item.

Table 1: Overview of current Multicultural Grants Programs:

Program	Number of Grants	Grants total (GST ex.) Inc Dept funding	FY Grant Funding Commenced	FY Grant Funding Ends
\$25 million* package to support Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other communities affected by the conflict in the Middle East	48**	\$25.0 million	2023-24	2024-25
Local Multicultural Projects	62***	\$6.0 million	2023-24	2024-25
Direct Support to Palestinian-led and Muslim Youth organisations	7 (<i>Tranche 1</i>)	\$5.1 million	2024-25	2024-25
Multicultural Framework Review	TBC	\$100.0 million	2024-25	2027-28
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Australia	1	\$25.00 million	TBC	TBC
Community Languages Schools Grant Program	606	\$15.00 million	2023-24	2024-25
Pre October Budget 2022 - Local Multicultural Projects	5****	\$0.1 million	2022-23	2024-25
FECCA funding	1	\$3.52 million	2018-19	2025-26
Critical Support for Multicultural Communities*****	TBC	\$44.8 million	2024-25	2028-29
Adass Israel Synagogue	1	\$0.3 million	2024-25	2024-25
Holocaust Institute of WA's Education Centre in Yokine	1	\$2.0 million	2025-26	2025-26

[*] \$25 million does not include \$6 million – for this funding refer to SB24-001300

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SB25-000227

Page 2 of 8
As at 19 February 2025

Released by Department of Home Affairs under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03**

[**] This is the number of grants executed as at 31 December 2024. It includes the grant to Social Policy Group (SPG) but does not reflect the (69) grants SPG have distributed. It also excludes the Australian Palestinian Muslim and Arab Communities (APMAC) Support Program.

[***] Local Multicultural Programs includes the grant provided to the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo

[****] refers to the implementation of 5 election commitment projects prior to the October 2022 budget

[*****] has not been announced but included in PAES, includes funding of \$8.5 million for the Sydney Jewish Museum, \$4.4 million for the National Holocaust Education Centre in Canberra and \$4.0 for the Islamic Museum of Australia.

Please note: Grassroots, AMPAC and Peak Body rounds are currently under assessment therefore there are stricter probity considerations until recommendations and ministerial selections are made. Information regarding applicant numbers/names/breakdown and the assessment/selections process should not be shared and are on a need to know basis.

Overview of \$25 million package:

- The \$25 million package was designed to address the urgency and immediate requirement to support Australian Palestinian, Muslim and other communities affected by the conflict in the Middle East.
- It is being disbursed across a range of national projects, new and existing grassroots community projects and peak bodies to work with communities on locally led initiatives.

Grants Administration:

- The Australian Government Grants Framework provides transparency, accountability and flexibility in grants administration to achieve policy outcomes and ensure equitable access of grants to, and for, the Australian Public. The framework consists of 4 elements:
 - legislation including the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013 (PGPA Act) and the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014 (PGPA Rule);
 - the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024 (CGRPs);
 - other government policies relating to grants administration; and
 - whole of government guidance, tools and templates developed by the Department of Finance support the implementation of the other elements of the framework.

Due diligence

- All organisations funded under the \$25 million and the \$5.08 million packages were assessed against the eligibility criteria specified in the relevant Grant Opportunity Guidelines.
- The entity types of the organisations were verified to ensure the organisation had the legal capacity to enter into a legally binding grant agreement.
- Consideration of feedback from the Department's Community Liaison Officer (CLO) network and Regional Directors about the capacity of the organisations to deliver the specific grant was considered.

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SB25-000227

Page 3 of 8
As at 19 February 2025

Released by Department of Home Affairs
under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03**

- Grantees are required to deliver activities in accordance with a grant agreement, a Departmental approved Activity Work Plan and provide regular progress and financial reports.
- The Department does not actively monitor or review the social media and public statements made by individuals associated with the organisations that apply for multicultural grants programs.

Grantee Personnel

- The Grant Opportunity Guidelines and Grant Agreement documentation for the Direct Support to Palestinian and Muslim Youth Communities grant program includes clauses relating to personnel working on the grant activity maintaining the following registrations/ checks:
 - Working with Vulnerable People registration.
 - Working with Children check
 - National Police check.
- Grant recipients are required to submit a Child Safe Statement of Compliance Report for each year the grantee is funded under the agreement.
 - UMA Centre's Child Safe Statement of Compliance is due to be submitted on 18 October 2025.
- The Department has engaged with the Community Grants Hub to investigate allegations printed in the Australian on Wednesday 19 February 2025 in relation to UMA personnel.

Role of the Department of Social Services Grants Hub

- The Community Grants Hub provides a shared-services arrangement to deliver grant administration services on behalf of the Department of Home Affairs.
- The Department of Home Affairs is responsible for grant policy and the development of grant programs, while the Hub is responsible for administering grant programs at the direction of policy owners and consistent with the requirements of the Commonwealth Grants Rules and Principles 2024.

Terminating Grant Agreements

- No recipients of social cohesion grants have had their funding rescinded or cancelled to date.
- The grant agreement is a contract between the Department and the grant recipient and both parties have to comply with its terms and conditions.
- There are clauses in the standard grant agreement which may be applicable to a grantee's social media posts.

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SB25-000227

Page 4 of 8
As at 19 February 2025Released by Department of Home Affairs
under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03**

- For example, Clause 1.1 provides that the grantee is fully responsible for ensuring the performance of all its obligations under the grant agreement is in accordance with all relevant laws – which could be relevant where social media posts are contrary to law, but provided those posts are made in connection with the performance of the grant activity.
- A breach of the grant agreement provisions does not automatically give the Department the right to terminate the grant agreement.
 - The Department would have to address the relevant contravention in accordance with the requirements of the grant agreement.
 - In the event that the grantee does not remedy the contravention following engagement by the Department in accordance with the requirements of the grant agreement, the Department may be entitled to ultimately terminate the grant agreement.

OFFICIAL

Clearing Officer: Sneha Chatterjee, A/g First Assistant Secretary, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

SB25-000227

Page 5 of 8

As at 19 February 2025

Released by Department of Home Affairs
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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03****Table 2: Delivery of the \$25 million package as at 31 December 2024:**

\$25 million Social Cohesion Package over FYs 2023-25 - current as at 31 December 2024								
Grant Title (\$m)	No. of grants	Original Budget Allocation	Current Budget Allocation	Paid	To be paid	Committed Funds (Including Paid)	Uncommitted	Type of grant
PART A – National Projects	5	7.000	7.000	7.000		7.000		Ad hoc, non-competitive
PART A – Youth Projects	2	2.000	2.000	1.625	0.375	2.000		Ad hoc, non-competitive
PART B – Social Cohesion grant variations	12	1.250	1.240	1.240		1.240		Variation to existing grant agreements
PART B – Social Cohesion new grants	28	3.220	2.595	2.595		2.595		Ad hoc, non-competitive
PART B – Community-led Open Round - APMAC	TBA	5.218	5.853		5.853		5.853	Open competitive
PART C – Social Policy Group (SPG) grant round	1	4.000	4.000	4.000		4.000		Variation to existing grant agreements
TOTAL GRANT FUNDING	48	22.688	22.688	16.460	6.228	16.835	5.853	
<i>Admin Costs - Grants Hub and staffing</i>		2.312	2.312	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
GRAND TOTAL		25.000	25.000	16.460	6.228	16.835	5.853	
[1] The current budget allocations reflect re-allocation of funds between the \$25 million Social Cohesion projects. The re-allocations have occurred due to organisations not submitting applications or accepting funding offers within some projects.								

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SB25-000227

As at 19 February 2025

Page 6 of 8

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03****Table 3: Delivery of the \$5.1 million in Direct Supports as at 31 December 2024:**

Grant Title	Original Budget Allocation	Current Budget Allocation	Paid	To be paid	Committed Funds (Incl Paid)	Uncommitted	Activity start date	Activity workplan	Activity workplan progress report	Final report due
Tranche 1 Direct Support to Palestinian- led Organisations - current as at 31 December 2024										
Glimmer of Hope	0.150	0.150	0.150		0.150		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
Palestine Australia Relief and Action	1.250	1.250	0.625	0.625	1.250		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
Palestinian Christians in Australia	0.477	0.477	0.239	0.239	0.477		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
Palestinian Community of Western Australia	0.339	0.339	0.170	0.170	0.339		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
Tranche 1 Direct Support to Muslim Youth organisations - current as at 31 December 2024										
Australian Multicultural Foundation	0.350	0.350	0.175	0.175	0.350		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
Himilo Community Connect	0.100	0.100	0.050	0.050	0.100		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
United Muslims of Australia	1.500	1.500	0.750	0.750	1.500		19/09/2024	31/10/2024	18/04/2025	18/10/2025
Total Tranche 1	4.166	4.166	2.158	2.008	4.166	-				
Tranche 2 Muslim Youth	0.450	0.450		0.450		0.450				
Tranche 2 Palestinian Led	0.384	0.384		0.384		0.384				
Total Tranche 2	0.834	0.834		0.834		0.834				
<i>Admin Costs - Grants Hub and staffing</i>	0.080	0.080	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A				
Total	5.080	5.080	2.158	2.842	4.166	0.834				

As at 31 December 2024, all Tranche 1 agreements were executed and some payments made to all organisations. The remainder Tranche 1 payments are scheduled for March 2025. Tranche 2 is still being finalised.

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SB25-000227

As at 19 February 2025

Page 7 of 8

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-03****Table 4: Modernised Multicultural Grants Program as at 31 December 2024:**

Multicultural Framework review	
Grant Name	Grant Funding (\$ millions)
Grass roots and local initiatives	\$ 9.77
Faith leaders training	\$ 2.00
Peak bodies	\$ 4.00
Infrastructure for multicultural communities	\$ 70.00
Sub-Total	\$ 85.77
Administration costs - Grants Hub	\$ 14.21
Total	\$ 99.98

Consultation

- The Finance Division has cleared financial data contained within this brief.

Additional References

SB25-000226: BPB Multicultural Affairs Priorities

SB25-000065: Key Brief Multicultural Grants

SB25-000049: Social Cohesion and Office of Community Cohesion

Attachments: nil**Additional Information**

Statistic and Financial Reporting Period: 31 December 2024

Since last hearing 1 October 2024 – 31 December 2024
 Financial Year 1 July 2024 – 31 December 2024

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SB25-000227

 Page 8 of 8
 As at 19 February 2025

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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-02****BACK POCKET BRIEF****Immigration Group
Additional Estimates Hearing – February 2025****BACK POCKET BRIEF****Topic: Multicultural Affairs Priorities****Division: Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs****Lead SES officer: Sneha Chatterjee, A/g First Assistant Secretary****Key Points**

- The Government is prioritising engagement with Australian communities affected by the Conflict in the Middle East.
 - Between 9 October 2023 and 31 December 2024, the Community Liaison Officer Network undertook more than 1,300 engagements with affected community stakeholders.
 - Events overseas have an impact on Australians here, highlighting the importance of our respect for individual freedoms and equality of opportunity for all Australians. In Australia, everyone has a right to feel safe and can be proud of who they are, regardless of their religious, ethnic or cultural background.
- The Government welcomed the release of the Multicultural Framework Review's report, *Towards Fairness: a multicultural Australia for all*, on 24 July 2024 and released its Government Response on the same day.

Multicultural Australia and social cohesion

- The Australian Government places multiculturalism at the centre of the national agenda.
- Our success as a multicultural nation is underwritten by our respect for individual freedoms and equality of opportunity for Australians in all our diversity.
 - Events overseas also have an impact on Australians here, highlighting the importance of our respect for individual freedoms and equality of opportunity for all Australians.
 - Our sense of Australian community demonstrates how resilient Australians are and how much inclusive communities matter.

Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Network

- The Department's CLOs support Australia's vibrant multicultural society by building and maintaining relationships with a wide range of cultural, ethnic and faith communities.
- Between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024, the CLO Network undertook more than 8,730 engagements with community stakeholders.

OFFICIAL

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SB25-000226

Page 1 of 4
As at 3 February 2025Released by Department of Home Affairs
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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-02****Supporting community members affected by the Conflict in the Middle East**

- To support communities in Australia affected by the Conflict in the Middle East, the Department has prioritised engagements with Jewish, Palestinian, Muslim, Arabic and other affected Australian communities.
- Regional Directors and CLOs are providing accurate and up to date information, listening to concerns, and passing on relevant sentiment to key stakeholders across government.
 - Since the outbreak of the Conflict, the Department has supported sixteen (16) Ministerial roundtable meetings with affected communities. Roundtables were either virtual or in-person.
- Regional Directors and CLOs are working collaboratively with relevant federal, state and territory government agencies and with communities to share information, understand concerns and respond to events at the local level.
- The Department is engaging closely with all impacted communities to monitor for any potential issues or heightened tension that may occur as a result.

Combating antisemitism and islamophobia

- The Australian Government has serious concerns about the rise of both Antisemitism and Islamophobia following the 7 October 2023 Hamas terrorist attacks on Israel.
 - Antisemitism and Islamophobia threaten the safety and security of Australia's Jewish and Muslim communities, but also Australia as a whole and its future as a peaceful, free, cohesive and diverse multicultural society.
- The separate appointments of a Special Envoy to Combat Antisemitism and a Special Envoy to Combat Islamophobia are a critical part of the government's efforts to addressing these concerns.
 - *[Handling note] Please refer to the Key Brief Special Envoys to combat Antisemitism and Islamophobia SB25-000066.*

Ministerial Forum on Multicultural Affairs

- The Ministerial Forum brings together relevant Commonwealth, state and territory ministers to advance inter-governmental cooperation on Australia's multicultural affairs agenda.
 - The most recent face to face meeting of the Forum was held on on 6 December 2024 in Canberra, hosted by the Assistant Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Julian Hill MP and co-hosted by Michael Pettersson MLA, Australian Capital Territory Minister for Business, Arts and Creative Industries, Minister for Children, Youth and Families, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations.
 - At the Forum the Ministers unequivocally and strongly condemned antisemitism. The Ministers discussed the significant impact the conflict in the Middle East continues to have on Australian communities and on social cohesion in Australia.

OFFICIAL

Clearing Officer: Sneha Chatterjee, A/g First Assistant Secretary, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs

SB25-000226

Page 2 of 4
As at 3 February 2025Released by Department of Home Affairs
under the Freedom of Information Act 1982

OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-02****Multicultural Framework Review Panel and Reference Group**

- Former Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, the Hon Andrew Giles MP appointed a panel of three eminent Australians to conduct and co-author the Multicultural Framework Review (the Review). Review Panel members were:
 - Dr Bulent Hass Dellal AO, Chair
 - Ms Nyadol Nyuon OAM
 - Ms Christine Castley
- The Panel commenced government and community consultations on 11 July 2023 and continued to consult through to the end of November. Consultations were conducted in metro and regional locations.
- The Panel consulted with more 1430 individuals and 750 organisations, including community groups, in more than 200 consultation events across 22 locations Australia-wide.
- Submissions for the Review were accepted in a range of languages, by written submission, audio or video message. This is a new and innovative approach to fielding submissions. 796 submissions were received.
- The Review Panel identified the need for a multi-decade, coordinated, and strategic response to Australia's growing multicultural diversity.

Government response to the Multicultural Framework Review and deliverables

- The Government Response outlines the Government's commitment to the careful, continued consideration of the Review Panel's report and its key themes into the future.
- The Australian Government will draw from and embed the key features of the Review across all Commonwealth agencies and activities, now and into the future.
- Key pieces of work to help mainstream multiculturalism across government and community includes:
 - Consideration of Australia's Multicultural Statement which was last updated in 2017
 - Reviewing the Commonwealth Multicultural Access and Equity Policy
 - Working with the Australian Human Rights Commission and states and territories on a national approach to celebrating multiculturalism including Harmony Week and to formally recognise and observe the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March
 - Development of an Australian National Multicultural Framework.
- On 24 July 2024, the Government announced more than \$100 million (over four years from 2024-25 and \$0.5 million per year from 2028-29) to complement the release of the Review and the Government Response. The commitment addresses key priorities such as sustaining the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) Network, translation services, and in-language website content, commissioning an annual Multiculturalism in Focus research

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OFFICIAL**Back Pocket Brief Index Number: IPGBPB-02**

report from the Scanlon Foundation Research Institute, as well as grants to flow directly to communities.

Multicultural Access and Equity Report

- As part of the Governments support for culturally and linguistically diverse communities, the *Multicultural Access and Equity: Australian Government Services Report 2017-22* (the Report) was tabled in Parliament on 8 August 2024.
- The Report details government departments and agencies' performance against the six Multicultural Access and Equity Policy commitments designed to ensure their programs and services deliver equitable outcomes and meet the needs of all Australians, regardless of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- The tabling of the Report was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and competing priorities, including surge requirements in both the Department of Home Affairs and other participating departments and agencies.
- The Department is currently in the process of compiling the 2022-25 Multicultural Access and Equity Report. It is expected to be tabled in Parliament in the 2025-26 financial year.

Consultation

- **The Chief Finance Officer has cleared financial data contained within this brief.**

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SB25-000226

Page 4 of 4
As at 3 February 2025Released by Department of Home Affairs
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