

# CULTURAL DIVERSITY POLICY

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## 1 Purpose

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Concern Australia supports Cultural Diversity in our community and embraces the valuable contribution different cultural groups make to our society. Concern Australia also recognises Indigenous Australians as the original custodians of Australia and respect and promote the importance of Aboriginal empowerment in contemporary Australia. Central to Concern Australia's values is a commitment to the wellbeing of others and an understanding of the infinite value of each individual. Furthermore Concern Australia understands the expectations of our funding bodies in regards to delivering services that meet the needs of a culturally diverse community.

As a result Concern Australia seeks to be responsive and accessible to all vulnerable young people, regardless of their backgrounds. In order to achieve this we seek to incorporate cultural diversity into our Strategic Planning and Quality Improvement Processes, so that our programs remain relevant and responsive to a diverse and changing community.

## 2 Scope

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This policy is applicable to all workers and organisational representatives of Concern Australia.

## 3 Related policies / procedures / forms

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- Concern Australia Core Values
- Code Of Conduct Policy
- Grievance Policy/Procedure
- Equal Employment Opportunity Policy
- Learning and Development Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy / Procedures

## 4 External related standards / legislation

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- Cultural diversity guide (DHHS 2006)

## 5 Definitions

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CALD      Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

## 6 Policy

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### 6.1 Communication with the Community

Concern Australia seeks to build relationships and networks with other agencies and community groups in order to broaden our profile and further our knowledge regarding the character and needs of the community. In doing this Concern Australia encourages and seeks the input of people in the community from CALD backgrounds as well as build networks and partnerships with Indigenous and cultural diverse welfare services and advisory bodies.

Individuals from indigenous or CALD backgrounds are also welcome to help improve our services by providing feedback on their experiences with our or similar programs, they can also provide donor support, volunteer assistance, become an employee or a client in one of our Programs.

As a sign of respect and acknowledgement to the traditional custodians of the land, Concern Australia workers and organisational representatives will provide an Acknowledgement of Country statement at the start of each organisational gathering and public event organised by Concern Australia.

The Concern Australia Governance Manual (Equal Employment Opportunity) states the following in this regard:

#### **26.1 ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY**

*Recognising the traditional owners of the land:*

The first speaker at any event shall acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, as the traditional people and owners of the land we live, work and play on. If an event continues over more than one consecutive day, the acknowledgement need only be given on the first day.

### 6.2 Communication within the Organisation

In accordance with Concern Australia's existing values, all workers and organisational representatives are required to actively promote respect and racial harmony within the minds of the young people we work with. This includes challenging racism and negative stereotypes where they exist and when they are promoted in the media. Furthermore Concern Australia aims to work towards reducing social inequalities and promoting hope and pride within communities. Therefore, all workers, organisational representatives and young people in our Programs are treated equally and given equal access to support, promotion as well as grievance and appeals procedures. All workers, organisational representatives and young people are also encouraged to exercise their right to practise and express their own ethnic culture and individual personality and to respect, embrace and learn from each other.

Concern Australia also aims to remain up to date with community trends and social research and to develop our services in response to this. To ensure that this knowledge permeates the whole organisation, Concern Australia is committed to ongoing cultural awareness training of all workers and organisational representatives including volunteer and Board Members. This training, provided as part of a worker's induction, will develop an understanding of the historical context of the various issues affecting contemporary indigenous Australians and the importance of recognising that different approaches to working with Aboriginal children are required because of their culture. The training will also aim to introduce workers and organisational representatives to new and emerging CALD communities in Australia and the various issues they face as well as how to best engage with such groups.

### **6.3 Participation**

Concern Australia will seek to identify and remove any barriers preventing young people and members of the community from CALD backgrounds from participating in our programs as well as providing for any special cultural needs that may be required to enable participation. Concern Australia will also investigate and promote the development of new culturally appropriate programs as well as services targeted at particularly marginalised and vulnerable groups.

Concern Australia will identify a young person's cultural background during the initial referral and allocation stages of their involvement with a Concern Australia program. Where a young person is identified as being from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, as and where appropriate, Concern Australia will liaise with an Aboriginal advisory service on appropriate ways of engaging and working with that young person.

Concern Australia workers and organisational representatives will also seek the support of an Aboriginal advisory service when incorporating cultural planning into the young person's existing client plan. Concern Australia believes that it is central to working with a young person from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background that we promote an appreciation of the young person's culture and identity as an Aboriginal Australian. In order to achieve this, workers and organisational representatives will seek to maintain or enhance the young person's connection to their immediate and extended family as well as the wider aboriginal community.

Concern Australia will further ensure that clients and their families feel comfortable in communicating with our services as well as being listened to and appropriately understood through the use of the On Call Interpreter and Translator Service. As a registered user of this service, Concern Australia workers and organisational representatives will offer this service where appropriate.

Concern Australia will continue to investigate other ways of promoting participation in our Programs by people from indigenous and CALD backgrounds through our Strategic Planning and the review of our Service Scope and Planning Policy.

## Document History

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### Revision History

Issue date	Version	Modify by	Approved by	Summary of Changes
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08/08/2013	1.1	Nerida Jermy		Review
20/02/2014	1.2	Paul Romano		Final Review
May 2014			Bruce Tucker, Chief Executive Officer	
June 2016	1.3	Beyanid Caicedo	Georgette Wardam	Updated position names