

Australian Muslim Youth Leadership & Peer Mentorship Program

A Toolkit for Young Leaders



**AUSTRALIAN
multicultural
foundation**

This project has been funded by the Australian Government acting through
the Attorney General's Department

Australian Muslim Youth Leadership & Mentorship Program

Toolkit for Young Leaders

As part of this program, the AMF selected seventeen Australian Muslim youth from across Australia to participate in a twelve-month leadership and mentorship program, **and** included the following activities:

- ◆ Four-day training held in Melbourne;
- ◆ One-day forum held in Canberra;
- ◆ Monthly telephone conferencing;
- ◆ Set tasks undertaken by each participant in their own State/Territory.

Training

The four-day training was based on a participative and action-oriented approach with emphasis on sharing and discussing experiences facilitated through the use of case studies, open space discussions, role plays and group work.

The training included the following topics:

- ◆ *Leadership development;*
- ◆ *Mentorship theory and practice;*
- ◆ *Communication skills* (public speaking, presentation skills, conducting consultations, writing skills including developing proposals);
- ◆ *Media workshop* (interviews and camera work for TV, radio and print, and writing media releases);
- ◆ *Lectures and focus group discussions on violent extremism and processes of radicalisation, Islam and the West and Engaging with the community.*

The learning processes involved developing alternative cultural narratives to those espousing discriminatory views, hatred, and violent extremism. This was done by connecting with the wider community, and also to other young Muslims at risk. The program also worked and increasing confidence and develop leadership capabilities in the young people.

Stage One – Leadership Training

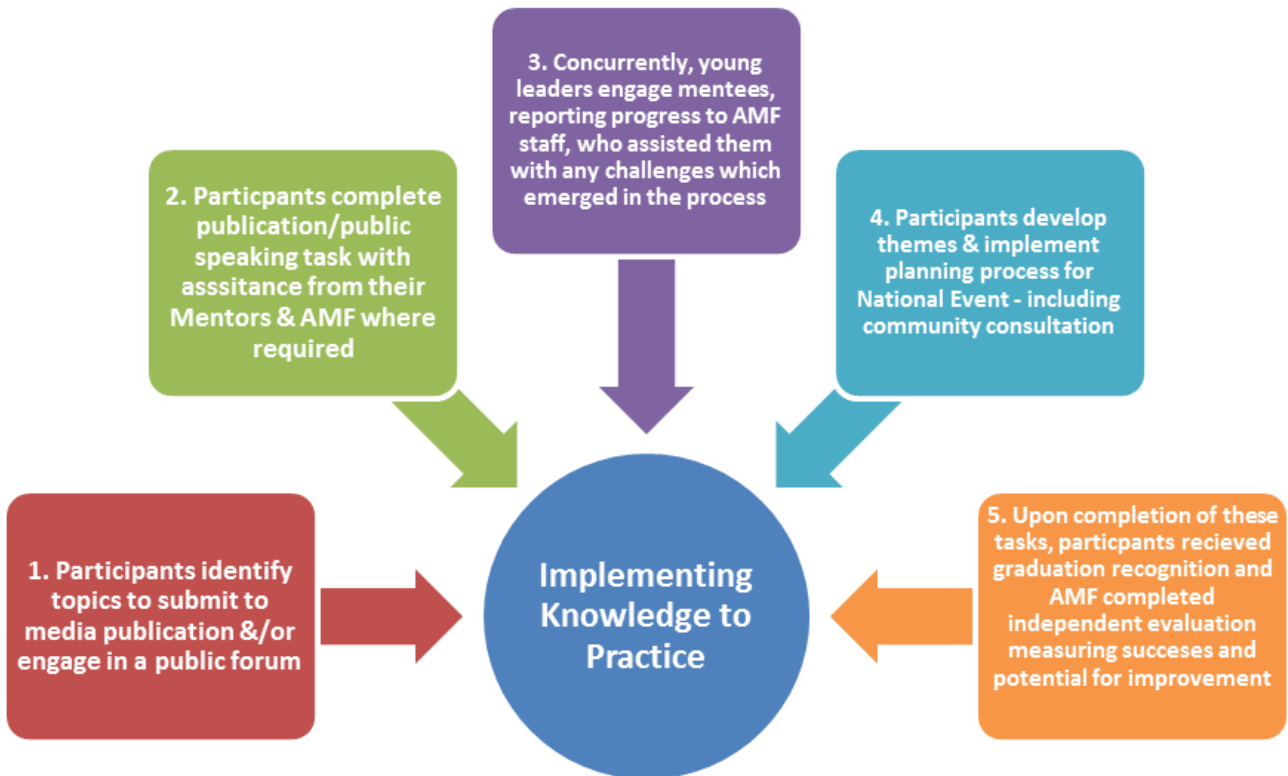
The Leadership Training process progressed through the following steps; ensuring knowledge gained through the program could be put into practical applications in everyday life. The steps below illustrate the skills developed during the leadership course.



Following the leadership training course, participants were given tasks to complete, ensuring knowledge gained through the training program could be integrated into their everyday lives. The following process illustrates the ways in which the course content explained above was integrated through practice.

Stage Two—Implementing Knowledge into Practice

The following diagram illustrates the process of integrating knowledge and skills gained through the program into the everyday lives of participants :



Participants were given several tasks to complete upon their return to their respective States/Territories. Some tasks required participants to undertake individual work while others required a team approach to attain an end goal. Throughout the program the AMF staff supported participants through a system of regular teleconferencing and organised visits. This provided the opportunity for participants to regroup and discuss their progress with respect to their designated tasks. Participants were required to engage with each other and with the broader community to fulfil the leadership requirements of the program. The following is a list of the tasks undertaken by the participants, and some 'Do's and Don'ts identified during the process. These are illustrated in the following pages

Media Engagement

Media presenters explained to participants that, as a community, it is important to consider the messages which are portrayed, in doing so however it is important to recognise that there is a 'transaction' involved. The community *want* to promote Islam in a positive light, to enhance the profile of the community and reduce stereotyping. *Media* look for a good story, an interesting story relevant to their audiences. So, in engaging media, it is important to keep the following basic points in mind:



Community Consultation

Working with focus groups and developing community consultation in planning for a community event involves identifying issues and challenges facing young people as a result of alienation, discrimination and marginalization. The following points highlight, in brief, some of the do's and don'ts in engaging in this process.



Mentoring a Young Person

Each participant was required to identify a peer or younger person to mentor. The aim of peer mentorship was to link a trained Muslim Youth Leader with an 'at risk' young Muslim to reduce the potential of him/her becoming 'high risk'. The mentor was responsible for developing a trusting friendship with his/her mentoree, offering support and advice, developing links to recreation and other positive social outlets and strengthening their self-esteem. The young Muslim leaders accessed their mentorees through social networks and contacts, local mosques, universities,

Do

1. Understand the significance of being a mentor and show commitment your mentee

2. Create a relaxed, non-threatening introduction to the relationship

3. Agree to regular & realistic timings, and be reliable

4. Define outcomes/objectives of the relationship

5. Do reflect on the progress of the relationship and acknowledge if it isn't working

Don't

1. Feel pressured to take on all of your mentee's issues - you are there to provide guidance and cannot be expected to solve all of your mentee's "issues"

2. Forget the purpose of the mentor/mentee exercise and take on more than you are expected to as a mentor

3. Let your mentee down by cancelling meet-ups. If you can't commit, be up-front about what you can commit to to begin with

4. Preach, instead facilitate an exploration of needs, motivations, desires, skills and thought processes to assist your mentee in making real, lasting change in their life

5. Stress if the relationship isn't working. There is no one at fault in this situation—sometimes it just happens

Public speaking engagements to non-Muslim audiences

Participants were required to organise a public speaking engagement which would be attended by the broader community or give a media interview. Participants were expected to engage with the broader community through consultations with their local communities. One of the aims of the task was to increase public awareness and dispel myths around Islam and Muslims.



Extra Resources

Cross Cultural Education Resources

Australian Human Rights Commission – a number of educational resources on multiculturalism, racism and diversity, including: Face the Facts and Voices of Australia. Resources are available for both students and teachers.

www.hreoc.gov.au

Languages and Multicultural Education Resource Centre (LMERC)

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/lmerc/default.htm>

Key Multicultural Organisations

Australian Multicultural Foundation

www.amf.net.au

AfricanOz – website for and about the African-Australian community

www.africanoz.com

Australian Services for Survivors of Torture and Trauma

www.fasstt.org.au/contact/members.html

Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria

www.eccv.org.au

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils – contact details for ECCs across Australia

www.fecca.org.au/About/Members.html

Migrant Resource Centres – contact details for MRCs across Australia

www.immi.gov.au/grants/mrc_msa_b.htm

Refugee Council of Australia

www.refugeecouncil.org.au

Victorian Multicultural Commission

www.multicultural.vic.gov.au

Extra Resources

Key Youth Organisations

Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) <http://www.cmy.net.au/>

MYSA <http://www.mysa.com.au>

The Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies – provides information for those working in the youth field. ACYS publish Youth Studies Australia.

www.acys.utas.edu.au

Australian Youth Affairs Coalition – lists peak youth organisations for each state

www.ayac.org.au/about.html

Working with Refugee and CLD Young People

Good Practice Principles: Guide for Working with Refugee Young People

www.immi.gov.au/settle/publications/GPP_July2005.pdf

Wealth of All Nations: Identification of strategies to assist refugee young people in transition to independence – report

www.acys.utas.edu.au/ncys/nyars/n23.htm

Long Journey, Young Lives – online documentary about refugee young people and their journey to Australia

<http://abc.net.au/longjourney>

Working with young refugees – resources from YAPA in NSW

www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/refugee.php

Refugee Young People: Examples of Effective Service Delivery in Queensland

www.immi.gov.au/settle/publications/qld_youth_intro.htm

Coping in a new world: The social and emotional wellbeing of young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

www.health.qld.gov.au/pahospital/docs/qtmhc/qtmhc_nesd.pdf

Bridging Refugee Youth and Children - US-based organisation with Clearinghouse of useful resources

Extra Resources

Websites for Young People

Reachout

www.reachout.com.au

Headroom

www.headroom.net.au

Youth Central

www.youthcentral.vic.gov.au

Somazone

www.somazone.com.au

Noor Events - Muslim youth website

www.noorevents.com.au

Bank of I.D.E.A.S - Initiatives for the Development of Enterprising Actions and Strategies

www.bankofideas.com.au

Youth Participation, Leadership and Mentoring

Bank of I.D.E.A.S - Initiatives for the Development of Enterprising Actions and Strategies

www.bankofideas.com.au

Mentoring Australia

www.mentoring-australia.org

Noor Events - Muslim youth website. Includes details of participation opportunities

www.noorevents.com.au

Office for Youth - Participation

www.youth.vic.gov.au/participation/participation.htm#Resources

Western Young People's Independent Network (WYPIN)

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~wypin/>

Extra Resources

Government Links

This website provides information on what communities and the Australian Government are doing to build resilient communities that take action against violent extremism.

www.resilientcommunities.gov.au

Attorney General's Department

<http://www.ag.gov.au>

Department of Immigration and Citizenship

www.immi.gov.au/