



The Hon Ros Spence MP

Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Minister for Youth

Shaun Leane

Minister for Veterans

The Hon Martin Foley MP

Minister for Equality

Tuesday 24 November 2020

KEEPING COMMUNITIES CONNECTED

This year we've been reminded that the greatest strength of our state is our people.

That's why the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* will invest more than \$88 million in our communities who supported each other throughout the year — to make their links even stronger.

Throughout the pandemic, we've seen the incredible connection of Victoria's multicultural communities. This year's Budget will help strengthen these connections, investing \$21 million towards the development of new or upgraded community facilities.

Building local halls and meeting spaces, this investment will make sure more multicultural and multifaith communities have a place to call their own and share their traditions.

Not only will this help bring multicultural communities together — it will also create vital construction jobs as we rebuild from the pandemic.

Recognising the vital role multicultural media plays in supporting and informing communities — particularly during the pandemic — the Budget provides \$3 million in new grants that will boost their operations and increase their audience reach.

The Budget also invests in more supported playgroups for newly arrived families — allowing parents and little ones to connect and find friends — and adds millions of dollars to our support for those who have come to Victoria on humanitarian grounds.

This pandemic has particularly impacted young people and Victorians from a diverse background. To help them find new opportunities and get back on their feet, more than \$14.4 million will support multicultural and young Victorians into jobs, break down barriers to employment and make sure they know their working rights — particularly for migrant workers and international students.

Our veterans have protected us, and it's our duty to look after them. That's why this Budget includes more than \$4.7 million to help them land jobs, transition to civilian life, find stable accommodation and get better access to mental health and wellbeing support.

The Budget also delivers \$2.2 million to ex-service organisations to help them continue providing welfare support to those that need it — particularly important assistance during the pandemic.

Victoria has long been the state where equality is not negotiable and the Labor Government is ensuring it stays that way, with \$1 million in funding for the LGBTIQ+ Community Grants program.

This program provides grants to LGBTIQ+ representatives and community organisations to help strengthen the sustainability and leadership capability of the sector.

The Budget also includes \$2 million for LGBTIQ+ organisations that have been hard hit by the pandemic, ensuring they can continue their work supporting LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs and Youth Ros Spence

“Throughout this pandemic, Victorians from all backgrounds and all walks of life have come together to support one another. It’s these connections that make Victoria strong, and we want to make them even stronger”

Quote attributable to Minister for Veterans Shaun Leane

“Our veterans are heroes and it’s our duty to support them – whether that’s finding work, accessing safe and stable housing, or helping them find meaningful reconnection.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Equality Martin Foley

“This pandemic has taken a lot from us – but it hasn’t taken our determination to achieve a more equal and inclusive future for every Victorian.”