

Media Release

The Hon Natalie Hutchins MP
Minister for Education
Minister for Women



Tuesday, 8 August 2023

RIDING THE WINDS OF CHANGE AT THE ISLAMIC MUSEUM

Victorian students will be able to travel back in time to Arnhem Land in the 1700s and crew a Torres Strait pearl boat as part of a new augmented reality exhibition at the Islamic Museum – thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

Launching the *Winds of Change* exhibition at the Islamic Museum of Australia, Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins emphasized the importance of celebrating the historical connections between First Nations communities and Australian Muslims and their contribution to Victoria society.

As part of the Strategic Partnerships Program (SPP), the Labor Government has invested \$120,000 in the museum over to support the *Winds of Change* experience.

Winds of Change involves digital reconstructions, webinars, incursions, and excursions that explore early Muslim migration including the shared history of Australia's First Nations Peoples and Muslim migrants dating back hundreds of years.

The exhibition includes immersive reconstructions of Arnhem Land in the 1700s, a Torres Strait pearl lugger and a rail siding community in 1890s outback South Australia.

The resource can be used at the museum or accessed virtually through the Islamic Museum website and aims to reach 150 schools every year through school visits to the exhibition at the museum but also through school incursions and webinars.

The Minister also met with representatives of Victoria's 16 Islamic schools before the exhibition launch to hear from them about the challenges and opportunities for their school communities.

More than 15,000 people visit the museum each year and around 70 per cent are from schools, local community, senior clubs and interstate and international tourists.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Education Natalie Hutchins

"We are Australia's most multicultural state and the Muslim community is a significant and important part of it – I know Victorian students will learn a great deal from this fascinating and innovative exhibition."

"Our diversity is what makes Victoria such a wonderful and fascinating place to live. Sharing information about Islamic culture – and its deep roots within our country - is critical in promoting understanding and respect."

Quote attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Colin Brooks

"Victoria is a multicultural success story and I congratulate the Winds of Change exhibition, a fantastic celebration of the historic connections between our oldest culture of First Nations communities and Australia's Muslims."