

Guidance for portraying culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people and cultures



Purpose

A guide to cultural considerations when planning an event or developing communications or resources for or about older people within CALD communities.



Audience

Internal communication teams, external media agencies, program and service developers seeking to engage with CALD communities.

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Cultural protocols and age considerations

Migrant and refugee people and cultures are diverse and every person is unique. When planning events or developing communications or resources, it is important to pay attention to cultural protocols of the target audience and age considerations.

Where possible, talk to local cultural groups and individuals to gain a deeper understanding of specific cultural considerations in the community where your publication will be circulated, or where your event is happening.

Key Messages

- Embrace a 'not knowing' mindset in order to learn about the most appropriate ways to engage with the CALD community.
- Be prepared to listen to the specific requirements of CALD community members and use their feedback to tailor your methods and approaches.
- Ensure that you're following cultural protocols - don't be patronising.
- Be mindful of the language you use to communicate - simplify and paraphrase if you are engaging with a community for whom English is a second language.
- Don't make assumptions - always ask for clarification.
- Be careful with translations - they could be offensive.
- Connectedness to and belonging within a CALD community are essentially different to some cultures.

General guidance for portrayal of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) people



When portraying specific cultures, whether in words or images, start from a place of deep respect. Key points to remember are:

- 1 **Culture has sustained CALD people.** Acknowledge that their culture is a positive and enduring source of strength which helps them to maintain connections within their Australian community. There is something missing for culturally diverse people without it.
- 2 **Each culture is diverse.** There is not one but many cultures, representing varied ancestral and community connections. Culture plays different roles in different people's lives, but connection to culture is important to CALD people and their families.

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- 3 **CALD people are resilient and resourceful.** They have endured leaving their country of origin to create a new life in a new country. They value maintaining their cultural practices and connections as well as the opportunities that living in a new country bring. They work and live between two worlds (non-English speaking and English speaking).
- 4 **CALD communities have a deep understanding of culture and sense of belonging.** CALD people bring their knowledge and wisdom with them and often wish to share it with others openly in their new home environment. Reflect this in the resources and materials you are developing by capturing everyday moments that illustrate this connection and belonging, not just the important annual cultural events.
- 5 **Older people are respected and hold valued roles within CALD communities.** Older people are deeply valued by their families and communities within many CALD communities, and can actively maintain key roles and responsibilities connecting culture, language, knowledge and practices.
- 6 **Consult with CALD communities to develop written resources and promotional materials.** Work with bilingual staff and community leaders to work out the best way to consult with the relevant community and co-design the resources or materials.

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Guidance for language and words

- 1 Ask people how they would like to be referred to, when named verbally or in writing.** Some cultural communities use “Aunty” and “Uncle” when greeting older people within their community, but do not assume that it is alright to use that title if you are not from the same cultural background. Ask permission and identify the appropriate cultural greeting. Check how people would like you to refer to them as each community may have different cultural practices.
- 2 Use the culture’s language via an interpreter for verbal communication and a translator to check and proofread any written drafts.** It is important that you use the language of the cultural community that you are seeking to engage with. This may mean arranging an interpreter when engaging directly with the community and a translator to check over any written promotional material or other resources you are developing. It is critical that you check translation as some English words may not easily translate to another language which could accidentally cause offence or confusion. Remember to include costs for translation and interpretation services in your budget and do not expect the community to offer this free of charge.
- 3 Draw on lived experiences.** Share examples and stories of culturally diverse older people empowering themselves and others to thrive. Identify older people locally, or seek to connect with those who can share positive experiences and perspectives that relate to the topic.
- 4 English and other cultural languages and practices are not the same.** Be aware of potential misunderstandings or where you may make cultural assumptions based on your own worldview, for example in how you understand the role of older people in family structures, their connection to maintaining cultural practices and links with community members. Be respectful of these differences and do not pass judgment.
- 5 Use words that illustrate their respected and valued role/s in their communities.** Words that reinforce stereotypes and generalisations about older people are off-putting for older people, including those in CALD communities. Use words that reflect their status and roles within their communities and highlight their strengths.
- 6 Use simple language and easily identifiable images for specific cultural groups.** Be cautious of transferring generic words and images as these may not be culturally appropriate and may cause offence.

Guidance for photographs and images



- 1 Capture the diversity of CALD people.** Ensure you use images that illustrate the range of older people across cultural communities inclusive of age and sex - where they live, their everyday roles and their lifestyles.
- 2 Use positive images.** Show the achievements of culturally diverse older people who are actively contributing to the community, not just their participation in important cultural events. Show culturally diverse people in a range of roles and activities that connect them with their CALD communities as well as their broader neighbourhood.
- 3 Include imagery of culturally diverse people living everyday lives.** Ensure images reflecting the general public include CALD people and their cultures' everyday activities e.g. using technology, interacting with different generations at home, talking with friends and participating in group activities with others.
- 4 Capture community connectedness and belonging.** Older people from culturally diverse backgrounds often have a strong sense of connectedness with their local community and with younger generations. Images need to reflect this.

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