



# A Catalyst for Change

'Organised BY young people FOR young people'

## Catalyst Youth Summit 2016

Western Australia's inaugural youth summit  
for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds

**Catalyst** Inspiring Our  
Youth Future Leaders  
Summit

# Sponsorship and support

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The Catalyst Youth Summit was made possible by the generous support of a number of partners and sponsors



Supported by



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Local Government and Communities**  
Office of **Multicultural Interests**



# Acknowledgement of Country

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The Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians of country on which this report was based, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to them and their cultures, and to their Elders both past and present.

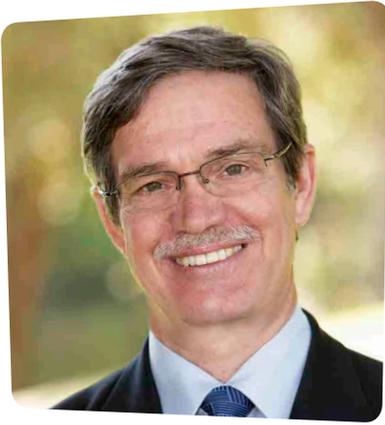
Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (2016). A Catalyst for Change: Catalyst Youth Summit 2016 - Western Australia's inaugural youth summit for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia: Perth



## Introduction

In February of 2016, 14 young people saw their dream realised when their hard work paid off and the highly anticipated Catalyst Youth Summit came to fruition. Held over three days, this unique event provided sixty young multicultural Western Australians the opportunity to build relationships, hone their leaderships skills, speak directly with politicians and work together to develop solutions to issues that face their peers. Furthermore, it provided young people the opportunity to set the agenda and lead the conversation around what mattered most to them. For many of these young people, the summit truly was a Catalyst for Change.

This report shares the major findings from the summit. It also paints a story of what many young participants have been doing since the event, and demonstrates the importance and benefits of such initiatives. Most importantly though, by sharing the solutions that were discussed by young people directly affected by these issues, this report signposts how you can join with us to improve outcomes for all refugee and migrant young people in Western Australia.



# Message from the Minister

It is with pleasure that I congratulate the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network of Western Australia and the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia on the success of the inaugural Catalyst Youth Summit.

The Catalyst Youth Summit is an important initiative, enabling young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to work together to identify and advocate on issues to some of Western Australia's key decision makers.

It is essential that young people from all parts of Western Australia have the opportunity to express their opinions on the issues that matter to them and to know that they have been heard.

The summit has acted as a channel for positive change for young people of all backgrounds, and as a key step in ensuring that young people from diverse backgrounds are empowered, valued, and supported to reach their full potential.

The Liberal National Government, through the Office of Multicultural Interests and the Department of Local Government and Communities, has been proud to fund the Catalyst Youth Summit.

On behalf of the Government of Western Australia, I commend the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia and the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Western Australia for presenting and organising this summit. I wish you every success in the years ahead.

**DR MIKE NAHAN MLA  
TREASURER; MINISTER FOR ENERGY;  
CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL  
INTERESTS**



## Message from YACWA

It is with great pleasure that I present this report on behalf of the young people who organised and attended the Catalyst Youth Summit. Young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds face a raft of challenges in their day-to-day lives. It is crucial if we are to be an equal society, that these issues are raised and discussed in constructive manners. YACWA was proud to support this innovative, groundbreaking project to discuss important issues, in a way that was designed by young people, for young people, and allowed opportunities for information and knowledge sharing.

I will always be grateful for my involvement in the conference, and hearing the stories and experiences of the young participants, as well as witnessing them convey their ideas and experiences to politicians and key decision makers across the community. I am sure the lessons and stories learnt from the conference that are outlined in this report, as well as the progress that has been made since, will leave you feeling like I felt afterwards, namely: inspired, in awe, grateful for the experience and knowledge, proud, and determined to make this summit live up to its name and continue to be a catalyst for change.

Thank you to all who supported the project, to the YACWA staff who helped make the event so successful, and a special thank you and congratulations are especially due to all the young people who were involved.

**ROSS WORTHAM**  
CEO  
YACWA

## From MYAN WA



**Sarah Janali**  
Chair MYAN WA

In 2014 I had the pleasure of accompanying six young people from WA to Sydney to attend the inaugural FUSE Multicultural Youth Summit. Over three days they had the opportunity to connect with other young people from the different states and territories, to share ideas, and to develop leadership and advocacy skills. These six young people then came back to Perth with a number of ideas – one of which was organising a FUSE style summit in WA to provide opportunities for more young West Australians like them to connect, develop skills and most importantly to have a voice on the issues that mattered to them. It has been an absolute thrill to see this idea come to fruition in the form of the Catalyst Youth Summit, and a catalyst it has indeed been.

As the Chair of the MYAN WA I have been delighted to see the way that the Catalyst project has provided a vehicle for the Network to deepen its engagement with multicultural young people and gain a better understanding of their needs and priorities. Most importantly, a group of motivated young people has emerged from Catalyst, who are inspiring and skilled-up young leaders who – as we witnessed on the last day of Catalyst – are confident in speaking their truths and committed to being agents of change in their communities. MYAN WA looks forward to working with these young people to help turn their ideas and visions into a reality over the years to come.

## From the team



**Tamkin Essa and Wahida Samim**  
Catalyst Youth Summit conveners

In February 2016 the collective passion and excitement of young people culminated in the form of Catalyst Youth Summit. After a year of planning, discussion, plenty of Facebook notifications and meetings, we made the YACWA office our second home. We got the opportunity to work with the most wonderful individuals to create an inclusive platform for youth to discover and build their voice and realise their ability to make a positive contribution in the community. We were excited to have so many people interested in the summit and were really lucky to have great support to help us achieve our aims and goals. Our favourite part of the summit was the bilateral conversation that the participants had with stakeholders and politicians, not to mention the opportunity to be very loud and proud of our respective heritage. Getting young people involved is crucial because the passion and excitement can lead to ground-breaking initiatives.

The amazing participants that were part of the summit are the definition of Catalyst. We look forward to the ideas that Catalyst has been able to produce being used to make change.

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## The Journey

The Catalyst journey started back in November of 2014, when six Western Australian young people travelled to Sydney to attend the inaugural FUSE Summit, organised by the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network of Australia (MYAN Australia). FUSE brought together young leaders from refugee and migrant backgrounds across the country to discuss issues of importance to them and present their ideas to politicians. The Western Australian delegates were so inspired by the summit that they came home determined to organise a similar event in their own state. They wanted multicultural young people from across Western Australia to experience the same opportunities that they had. The passion, drive and determination displayed by this group convinced the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network of Australia (MYAN WA) and the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia (YACWA) to wholeheartedly support them in this endeavour.

With the support of MYAN WA, the young organisers secured grants from the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI), Lotterywest and the Department of Local Government and Communities (DLGC). These grants facilitated an accessible, high quality event by allowing it to be offered at no cost to successful delegates. It also enabled regional young people to attend by covering their travel and accommodation costs. The young organisers also secured a partnership with Edith Cowan University (ECU) who provided an in-kind venue and a high level of support from their Engagement team.



## The organising committee

The Catalyst Youth Summit was a youth led event and this was one of the keys to its success. Young people initiated the project and made all of the key decisions. MYAN WA and YACWA staff provided support and guidance and carried out a number of the logistics involved in executing decisions. Decisions and work allocations were determined at regular event meetings and via a social media private group page. YACWA provided a venue for the young organisers to meet at Foyer Oxford in Leederville.

As the project developed, due to competing commitments, two of the original young people withdrew from the organising committee, however they recruited ten additional volunteers to the team. The 14 young organisers came from a variety of backgrounds and brought diverse skills and experience to the project.

# Meet the organisers

The Catalyst Youth Summit was organised by this passionate group of young people, who volunteered their time to put together a experience for 50 of their peers. These profiles of the young organisers appeared in the original summit program.



**Aksh Handa**

Hi, I'm Aksh! I love watching movies, talking to people and trying out new food! I'm a self-confessed cake-addict. Multicultural youth are fast becoming a major part of Australia's future, and this summit is just one of a few to make their voice heard - can't wait to see how it goes!



**Gisele Haba**

Hello friends, I am Gisele, my aspiration is to make my existence worthwhile. The idea of seeing young people united, putting their differences aside and thinking about how we can make the future brighter for ourselves and those after us, just makes my heart skip a beat. Hence why it has been an absolute pleasure being part of the Youth Catalyst Summit.



**Anisa Mire**

Hi, I'm Anisa Mire - born and raised in Australia. I study Anthropology and Sociology at Curtin University. I'm passionate about and have been working in community development as well civil rights in the hope to be the catalyst for change that allows for multicultural youth to have access to the resources and opportunities needed in order to reach their potential.



**Jamila Jafari**

Hey guys! My name is Jamila, I'm a uni student and a die hard Hunger Games fan. The Mockingjay inspires me to not just wish for change but to actively be the change in my society! See what I mean by die hard? Being part of the organising team of an event is so out of my comfort zone. But I'm willing to leave the safety of what I know and venture into the unknown! I encourage you all to leave your comfort zones too and allow yourselves to grow!



**Daniel Matabishi**

Hi, I'm Daniel and I'm a physiology student at UWA. I got involved in organising this summit because I believe it provides a platform for young people to express and exchange ideas.



**Hafiz Nazari**

I am very passionate about promoting multicultural awareness and issues, community development, working with refugee and CALD communities. I was selected as a peer-consultation leader for a research project initiated by the commissioner of children and young people WA, which led me to organising the Catalyst Youth Summit.



## Rahila Haidari

I got involved in organising Catalyst Youth Summit because the youth are the leaders of tomorrow. I wanted to be apart of something that creates a platform for the youth to discuss social issues and find ways to make a difference.



## Sara Shengeb

Hi all. My name is Sara. I am a chemistry and psychology student at the University of Western Australia. I think we are capable and have the power to shape our future and the kind of society we want to be included in. With mutual respect and tolerance, I believe we can contribute so much to the multicultural society we have in here Australia, our differences in culture, traditions, race and religions are what make us the great nation that we are.



## Sitara Hussain

I'm Sitara and I'm studying Commerce at UWA. I believe that it is very important for young people to be directly involved in discussion and finding solutions to the problems that affect them and a I hope that Catalyst Youth Summit will be able to give young multicultural people that opportunity and also meet wonderful like minded people.



## Tamkin Essa

Hi guys! My name is Tamkin, I'm famous for my loud laugh and for always smiling! Currently studying psychology at Curtin University. I got involved in organising the youth summit to help empower young people within Western Australian to raise their voice on issues that matter the most to them and find solutions. This summit is not only about empowerment but also about opportunity.



## TJ Callas

I'm TJ - I speak French fluently (and I can make you laugh!) I got involved in organising the Catalyst Youth Summit because I see the youth of today as the future leaders of tomorrow.



## Wahida Samim

Hello friends, I am Wahida and I once ate sushi with a spoon. I got involved organising in this summit because I want to see us youth, collectively working for a more inclusive and developed society. It has been a fantastic ride and I encourage you all to apply I look forward to seeing your beautiful faces there!



## Ziagul Sultani

My name is Ziagul (well known as Zee mainly because it's a lot easier to say and I like it) – I live and work in Katanning. I got involved in organising the Youth Summit because it's a platform that will give young people a voice and that is very powerful.

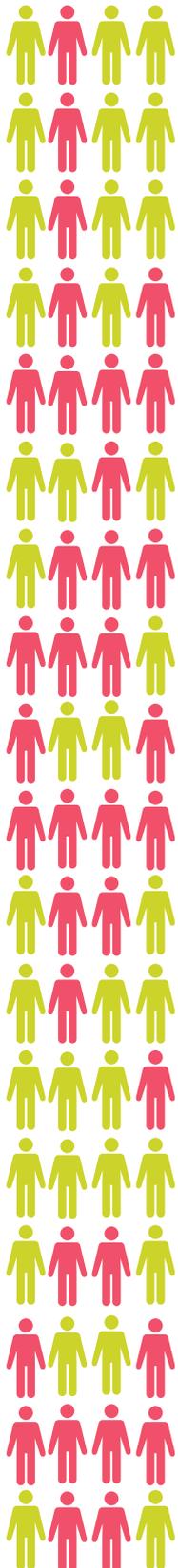


## Tawanda Kungache

Hey guys my name is Tawanda! I love empowering young people to dream bigger than they know possible, while helping shift the issues close to their hearts making the world a better place. That's why I joined the committee. Every piece of the puzzle counts, so why not put your piece in too? Because of a case of mistaken identity, (I promise..), I almost got arrested in China! Oh, and I study Japanese!

# The Summit delegates

**72** Applied



**50** Selected



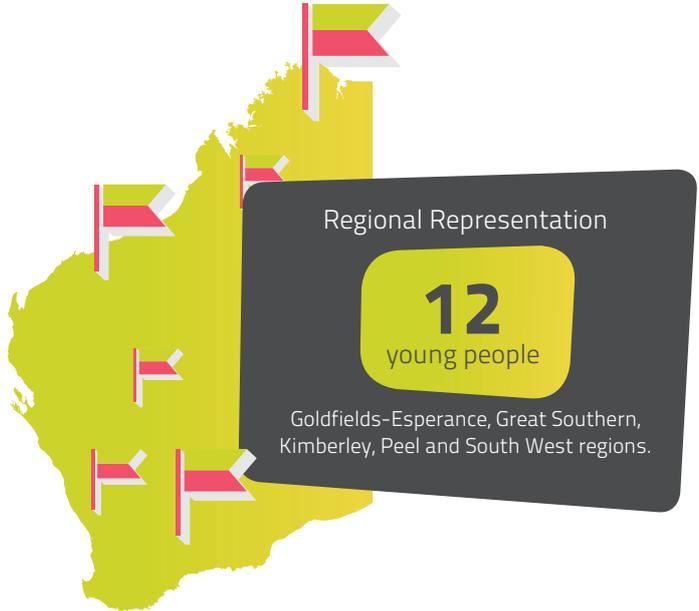
by a panel of

-  1 young person
-  MYAN WA staff member
-  OMI staff member

**46** attended



They came from **22** different countries of origin



# The Summit

## The topics

The key focus of the summit was the discussion of five topical issues and developing possible solutions to problems raised. The young organisers took a democratic approach to the selection of topics and asked delegates on their application form to vote on what issues were important to them. The five most popular were:

**DISCRIMINATION**  
**ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES**  
**REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS**  
**MENTAL HEALTH**  
**SENSE OF BELONGING**

## The teams

The young organisers divided delegates into five teams, with each team assigned one of the chosen topics. Each team was led by a team leader and five of the young organisers took on these roles. The role of the team leader was to be the go to point for their team members and to facilitate group discussions. Each team leader was supported by a sector worker that volunteered their time at the event.

## The program

The program content was developed over a number of months and informed by the young organisers' experiences of FUSE and the input of MYAN WA and YACWA staff. The young organisers were clear that they wanted the program to provide adequate time to focus on three key elements:

**TIME TO CONNECT WITH THE OTHER DELEGATES IN A MEANINGFUL WAY.** Unlike FUSE, the metropolitan delegates were not going to be accommodated together, so they wanted to ensure that there was time to develop the bonds that were such an important part of their FUSE experience.

**TIME TO TALK ABOUT THE ISSUES.** The young organisers wanted delegates to experience skill and capacity development opportunities, but they didn't want it to over shadow topic discussion. They felt that they had access to opportunities to develop a number of skills such as public speaking and self-care elsewhere.

**TIME TO TALK WITH POLITICIANS.** The organisers experience at FUSE was that talking to the politicians was a valuable and empowering opportunity, but that there weren't enough politicians and they didn't get enough time. They wanted this summit to be structured so that politicians really listened to what they had to say.



## Building connection

A critical part of the summit program involved providing plenty of opportunities for delegates to develop connections with their peers. Below are examples of how that was achieved:

### TEAM BUILDING SESSION

Two of the young organisers designed and ran a two-hour team building session on the first day – this was a huge hit with all the delegates and definitely the noisiest part of the event!

### SUMMIT CULTURAL DINNER

The summit cultural dinner was a chance for the young people to get to know each other in a relaxed way outside of the formal part of the summit – most young people chose to wear clothing that reflected their cultural backgrounds.

## Talking about the issues

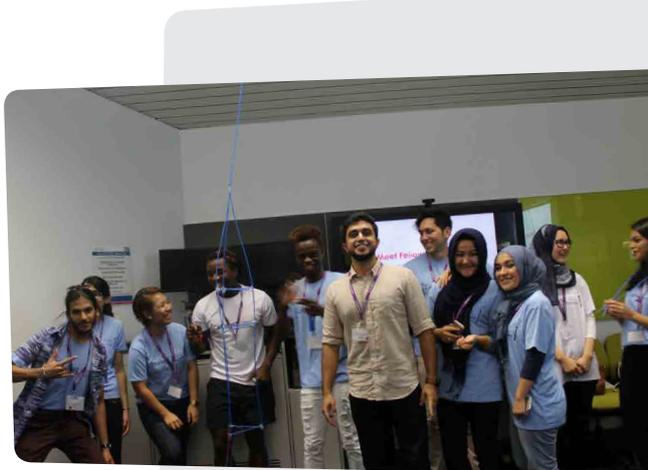
A significant proportion of the program was allocated to giving the young people time to talk in depth about issues important to multicultural youth. Below are examples of how this was achieved:

### WORLD CAFÉ DISCUSSION

On the second day, all delegates participated in a two-hour world café style workshop. Twenty minute rounds of conversation were held on each of the topics, with each group moving to a new table at the end of every round. This gave all delegates the chance to provide input into every topic.

### BRAINSTORM SESSION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

The young organisers wanted delegates to not only be able to talk about the issues, but also to develop their thoughts around possible solutions to those issues. On the final day of the summit, they worked closely with key stakeholders from the Government, community sector and research institutions in a solution driven session.



# Advocacy, influence and skill development

One of the most important elements of the summit was providing the young leaders with the tools and opportunities required to advocate about the issues important to them, to decision makers and people of influence. Below are examples of how this was achieved:

## HOW TO TALK TO POLITICIANS PANEL

On the first day, delegates attended a panel where they got to ask questions of four panel members that were either involved in the political sphere or had experience of talking to politicians.

## LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY TRAINING

On the second day all delegates participated in a morning of leadership and advocacy training led by Cameron Poustie, Principal Policy Officer at the Aboriginal Health Council and Ross Wortham, Director of Advocacy and Social Policy at YACWA.

## THE PRESENTATIONS

The highest profile and most keenly anticipated part of the program was the team presentations to politicians and key stakeholders on the last day. At the end of day two, teams were given two hours to develop a seven-minute presentation on their topic that they were able to deliver in any format they liked. It appeared that two hours was not enough, and organisers heard about texts and emails being sent between team members that night. Delegates arrived early the next day to prepare and nerves ran high, when they learnt that 11 politicians and over 20 key stakeholders would be in the audience. The young people blew everyone away with their informed, polished and hard hitting presentations.

After the presentations, conversations were continued over lunch – with delegates and young organisers, making the most of the opportunity to talk to politicians and key stakeholders about issues of importance to them.





**Evacuation**

- If you discover an...
- Remove anyone from d...
- Close all doors in area (...)
- Raise the alarm, use RE...
- Call Security 6304 3333
- Evacuate by nearest e...
- Follow Warden's inst...
- When building is being e...
- Do not re-enter the building

**If you hear Emergency Whistle**

- Evacuate to nearest safe...
- Follow instructions to Assembly
- When evacuating Building...
- Do not re-enter the building

Fire Area Warden report  
6304 3333

**Emergency call**  
Earthquake - Sh...



# Issues and Solutions

The passionate discussions on the five topics by the delegates over the three days of the summit revealed rich data about what is important to refugee and migrant young people. As the summit conversations developed, it became apparent that many of the issues in each topic overlapped with the others and that some of the solutions might address more than one issue.

## Discrimination

### The issues

Team Purple discussed the topic of discrimination. Their conversations centred on racism and stereotypes. Delegates felt that stereotypes fed into racism, and that both were perpetuated by a range of factors including:

- **A lack of exposure to a mix of races and cultures**
- **Segregation of people from different cultural backgrounds**
- **Media focus on negative stories of people from certain backgrounds**
- **Television programs reinforcing stereotypes of people from multicultural backgrounds**
- **Parents normalising racist thoughts or beliefs and influencing their children**
- **People's inability to recognise their own racism or prejudices**

Young people felt that racism was not only being perpetuated by people of the dominant cultural group, but within and between cultural groups. They talked about their personal experiences of discrimination and racism within schools they had attended – which they reported was perpetrated by both students and staff.

Young people talked about the strong connection between experiences of discrimination and being able to feel a sense of belonging. They frequently discussed the parallels they saw between the discrimination and racism that Aboriginal Australians experience and their own stories.



# The solutions

The solutions developed by the purple team had a strong focus on schools. The delegates were mindful that ideas get more entrenched as people get older, and that it's easier to challenge stereotypes and racism within young children. They felt that anti-discrimination education should be part of the early education curriculum. For children to get exposure to a mix of races and cultures and develop intercultural understanding, they thought that developing a program whereby schools of different faiths visited each other and built relationships, might start to achieve this. They also felt that there should be more events at schools where students dress up in multicultural dress and try foods from different cultures, and not just during Harmony Week.

This team felt that both teachers and service providers need to take more responsibility for, and action towards addressing racist and/or discriminatory behaviours. The experience of the young delegates was that incidents of discrimination and racism are often actively ignored, and at times even perpetrated by those in positions of power and responsibility. They wanted anti-discrimination policies to be stronger.



This team thought that community leaders, should encourage the coming together of different cultures to breakdown stereotypes. They suggested ways to do this might include hosting events that bring together people from different faiths, as well as making stronger connections between churches and mosques. They wanted to see more cultural events where different people come together and are encouraged to actually talk and get to know each other.

This team wanted to see more diversity in the media, and felt that this visibility would break down misconceptions and stereotypes which led to discrimination.

The young people agreed that positive personal stories are critical and should be used to tackle discrimination. They felt it was important to provide platforms for people from refugee backgrounds to speak about their experiences.



Finally, young people in the purple team felt it was important to develop a shared understanding of the need for and importance of culture; that many young people migrating or arriving as refugees or asylum seekers to this country experience a disconnection from their culture. The young people felt that a solution or way of moving forward would be to build connections with young Aboriginal Australians who have a similar story of losing culture, who similarly felt the need to reclaim this.



## Access to equal opportunities

### The issues

Team Blue discussed the topic of access to equal opportunities and a significant focus of their conversation was language. Young people agreed that learning English, or rather the lack of ability to communicate well in English, created significant barriers for them. They felt that there was not enough support provided to help young people learn English. They also felt that whilst people were still learning English, there needed to be more interpreters provided, especially when young people were attending medical appointments or seeking help from services, organisations or Government. This was highlighted as being critically important in the area of mental health.

This team also talked at length about schools and education. They felt that often teachers were not diverse enough and/or culturally competent. They felt that the curriculum did not have enough content related to mental health and sexual health presented

in a culturally competent way, which impeded young people's access to that information. There were discussions around the inequity of fees for international students and the difficulties international students faced with not being able to work whilst studying.

This team discussed access to employment – they felt that significant challenges arose from language barriers, but also from having a different name or wearing a hijab. They felt that young people faced discrimination and were often denied opportunities based on these factors.

Young people agreed that sport could sometimes be unifying, but felt that that it needed to be more culturally inclusive, especially for women wearing hijabs.

# The solutions

The solutions developed by the blue team had a strong focus on language, with one of the main issues being the challenge that new migrants, especially young people, face with learning useful and conversational English. They felt that the focus of support they receive in the Intensive English Centres (IECs) should be broader. They stressed that the focus of IECs is on English for school, which does not necessarily translate well to living life. They identified the difficulty young people face with learning how to travel around and access what they need. This team suggested one solution could be to develop a matching program, whereby students in IECs are matched with either mainstream students or community mentors to exchange language skills. They thought that could be a trial/pilot project focused on a particular school.

This group felt that schools and parents needed to improve communication in order to provide a better study environment for young people. They wanted to see more help provided after school, via peer study groups and the like, and they noted that the English course structure needed to be more interactive.



For the challenges that international students face, the group felt solutions could include offering payment plans to help with fees and also allowing international students the freedom of choosing the course they want to study.

In terms of improving access to education and health services, the group agreed that the solution was for service providers to be more culturally competent, and that they needed training to assist them with this.

Solutions related to access to employment opportunities included providing young people with more real life exposure to work experience and providing more work and study opportunities for bridging visa holders.





# Refugees and asylum seekers

## The issues

Team Orange discussed the topic of refugee and asylum seekers and focused on three main areas - media representation, sharing stories and community education.

This team talked about how the media representation of refugee and migrant people was overwhelmingly negative and that there was a lot of misuse of terminology, depersonalisation and demonising of this group of people.

They talked about the voices of refugee and migrant young people not getting heard and of there being few opportunities for their stories to be known and understood, especially in mainstream media outlets.

The young people talked about how community members are mostly uneducated around issues faced by refugee and asylum seekers, and that this gap in education is only filled by misinformation from the media. They felt that the stories of people need to be heard more widely and directly.



# The solutions

The solutions developed by the orange team centred around shifting community attitudes. Just before the summit, one of the team members had set up a Facebook page titled Young Refugees of WA to share positive stories of refugee and migrant young people. The group felt that supporting this page and sharing these stories was one good solution.

To challenge community perceptions and share positive stories of refugee and migrant young people, the group also felt they could develop the Facebook concept into a short video or film that could be screened across Perth. They felt that screening it before films at community events, such as the Lotterywest community movies (Murdoch, Belmont, Bayswater, Joondalup) would have a huge impact.



Similar to the team looking at access to opportunities, the young people in this team identified a need for mentors to assist newly arrived (and settled) refugee and migrant young people and their families. Their solution was to develop an app that would enable the matching up of those who need support with mentors. This would assist them adjusting to life in Australia.



Finally, this team felt that because the topic of refugees and asylum seekers is usually a high profile issue during an election cycle, that creating stronger relationships with one or more politicians in the lead up to an election would be a good strategy to highlight refugee issues.



# Mental Health

## The issues

Team Red discussed the topic of mental health. One of the main issues that came up time and again was the challenge within many multicultural communities of acknowledging that mental health problems exist. They talked about how despite this lack of acknowledgment, mental health is a huge issue and young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds are often especially vulnerable due to their experiences of trauma, displacement and discrimination.

The issue of the invisibility of mental illness in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) young people was discussed. They felt that young people from CALD backgrounds often cover up problems and don't talk about them due to stigma and shame. This group felt that this was especially prevalent for young males.

This team's experience was that relationships between parents and children are often not strong enough for young people to open up about mental illness and that parents (especially those from CALD backgrounds), are not equipped with the relevant information about mental illness to help their children.

The young people talked about services being inflexible with the language that they use around mental health and how that often discouraged young people looking for and/or finding services to help them. They felt that there was a general lack of cultural competence in mental health services, including those for young people.

# The solutions

One of the priority solutions the red team identified, was that of normalising mental health discussions within the CALD community and addressing some of the inflexibility around language. They identified that there needed to be more awareness raising within culturally diverse communities of mental health issues and believed that normalising discussion about the issue will encourage young people to speak out about their mental health, as well as develop their parents understanding. One of the ways they thought they could do this was to provide a train the trainer model of Mental Health First Aid (or the like) to young people to participate in and then take back to their own communities. They felt young people were the key to not only spreading the message to other young people but also upwards, to parents, family and community members.

This team felt that raising mental health awareness through the media, such as a short movie or a poster campaign was a good solution. They thought that taking a CALD specific mental health video into schools was a good idea to reach young people and also to build the cultural awareness of school staff. They also felt that they could work with local governments. This team felt a video, or short clips, could be linked to the Young Refugees of WA page.

Young people felt that creating spaces for more conversations around mental health were critical and that more community events that encourage mental health talks, and programs that encourage young people to speak out about their mental health would begin to address this.



This team were aware that funding is often a challenge within most community sectors and thought that looking for sponsors to specifically fund community mental health programs was a solution.



This group of young people also discussed how CALD mental health issues need to be included in any discussions around youth mental health, which they felt is not really happening, and that more youth services should be starting that conversation with CALD young people directly.



## Sense of belonging

### The issues

Team Green discussed the topic of sense of belonging and agreed that it seemed to cut across so many of the other topics. They felt that in order to feel that you belong to a place or community, you cannot be discriminated against, you need access to equal opportunities and you need to have good mental health. And that if you are from a refugee or asylum seeker background, you need to feel welcome to be able to develop a strong sense of belonging.

Beyond the issues above, one of the main things this team felt prevented young people from developing a sense of belonging was the lack of strong relationships between multicultural communities and mainstream Anglo-Australian communities.

Language challenges came up again a number of times. Young people talked about having an accent or not learning English well leading to feeling like you don't belong. They also talked about how difficult it was for many newly arrived young people to develop conversational English and life-skills such as shopping and navigating public transport. Again, young people felt that schools focused very much on English for 'school' and written work, with IEC students not mixing with mainstream students and getting little conversational English practice.

# The solutions

Similar to other teams, this group felt that one of the best ways of developing sense of belonging was to create opportunities for connections between people of different backgrounds and cultures. They thought that one good idea would be to have school multicultural weeks where students can experience different cultural foods along with general school activities.

Young people felt that key to improving sense of belonging for young people of multicultural backgrounds was building understanding within the multicultural communities and forming more exposure to the mainstream Anglo-Australian communities.

This team also had the idea of developing an app to find multicultural events that were on at any given time around Perth. They felt that there was quite a lot out there, but that most people didn't know about them. A couple knew that OMI put events on their website, but felt that young people especially were unlikely to visit this or know about it and thought that an app would be great. They acknowledged that there would need to be an organising body to upload this information.



This group felt that service providers needed to develop their cultural competence in order to be more aware and understanding of the language and culture barriers of migrant families.

The experience of getting to know other young people from different cultural backgrounds and bonding through the Catalyst Youth Summit had a big impact on the young people in this team and they wanted other young people to have a similar experience. They felt that a week-long camp, with the focus being on developing intercultural exchange, team building activities and the like would be a great solution to fostering understanding between cultures and improving young people's sense of belonging.



## What was great

Overwhelmingly, the delegates favourite thing about the summit was the unique opportunity to forge connections with other like-minded young people and build connections and friendships – and these have endured beyond the summit. The importance of this outcome should not be trivialised and is especially significant in-light of the strong desire for a sense of belonging amongst young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

The delegates also really liked the summit being a youth led event. They found it empowering to see what young people could achieve and a couple suggested that this was the reason it worked so well - because young people knew what other young people wanted.

The summit aimed to inspire and empower young leaders and 93% of the young people that completed a post-summit survey reported that their leadership skills had improved.

Young delegates really appreciated the opportunity to discuss issues affecting young people like them

*"What I liked best about the summit were the people I got to meet and the bonds I got to make. It felt great being around good energy and a group of like-minded people."*

in depth with others that understood, and especially liked being listened to by politicians. The importance of being heard was a strong theme.

*"I liked when the politicians and decision makers listened to us"*

...

*"The opportunity that was given to us to have our voice heard"*

*"I found the Youth Summit extremely interesting and thought provoking and found many of the presentations and individual young people inspiring. I enjoyed hearing the views and aspirations of young people and feeling inspired and at times in awe of them."*



Key stakeholders that attended the last day really enjoyed meeting the young delegates and organisers and hearing their perspectives. Almost everyone that attended the summit talked about the positive vibe and energy surrounding the summit. Many reported feeling inspired by the young people and privileged to hear their stories and voices.

*"They were one of the most passionate groups I have had the pleasure of meeting in recent years. I am very proud to have been part of the discussions."*

*"I particularly appreciated the opportunity to hear young people speak without interruption. Thanks so much for the opportunity. It was clearly a well-run event and the young people involved were clearly very energetic and engaged."*

The partnerships and good-will in the project was crucial to its success. The ECU Engagement team were enthusiastic and supportive and went above and beyond to help the event succeed. Staff from OMI, YACWA and the City of Swan all volunteered their time to support team leaders in their roles and their assistance was invaluable.

The staff members involved were incredibly excited that so much went well at the summit. The delegates were really energetic and engaged right from the beginning and there was a great vibe to the event. Everyone contributed well and took great ownership over their topics. The presentations to politicians and key stakeholders were of great quality and had an impact. Staff felt that it seemed a safe space for the young delegates that they could open up and be supported, and that this was in large part due to the youth led element of the project.



# What we learnt

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We learnt that many of the young delegates wanted to open the experience to people from other backgrounds and cultures. This mirrored the theme that came through many topic discussions that looked at the need for more interaction between different groups and exposure to stories.

We also learnt that more structure around the solution driven session with key stakeholders and more facilitation training for the team leaders leading up to the event would have been helpful.

*"The stakeholder discussion in which I participated could have been improved by a strong facilitation to keep the discussion on track in terms of asking the questions posed and framing comments in a way suitable for feedback to the larger group."*

Finally, we learnt that youth led projects are still highly resource intensive for the organisation that supports the young people, and that this should be factored into future events of this kind.

# Fast forward

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When the young organisers started planning the summit, they were adamant that they wanted the event to be a catalyst for change - they wanted the young delegates to get involved in opportunities after the summit and create change in their communities.

We are proud to profile a selection of the young delegates and organisers that have done exactly that and the projects they've gone on to be involved with.



# Shout Out

Since the summit, MYAN WA and YACWA have in partnership developed Shout Out, a leadership program and public speaking bureau for young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. Twelve of the young people involved in Catalyst are now Shout Out speakers.



YUNITA DEWIYANA



WAHIDA SAMIM



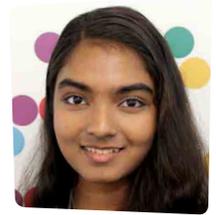
VITHAN THILLAIRAJAH



GOLDA SIGNAL



FATEMA SHALEMIE



RASA ISLAM



PARUL GOPLANI



AMRAN ABDI



ALI-RAZA YUSUFZAI



TAMKIN ESSA



ANISA MIRE



MUSA KAMARA



[www.yacwa.org.au/shoutout](http://www.yacwa.org.au/shoutout)

# Youth Educating Peers (YEP)

Three young people involved with Catalyst have become part of a 12 strong team of youth peer educators in YACWA's Youth Educating Peers (YEP) Project. YEP aims to educate, empower and positively evolve young people's perceptions, attitudes and behaviours around Sexual Health and Blood Borne Viruses (SH&BBV). These young people are speaking at schools, youth groups and festivals across Western Australia.



GOLDA SIGNAL



FATEMA SHALEMIE



AKSH HANDA



[www.theyeproject.org.au](http://www.theyeproject.org.au)

# Ali-Raza Yusafzai

Ali was a Catalyst delegate and took some fabulous photos of the event. Since this time, he has had his first exhibition as part of YACWA's Home Is Where My Heart Is photography mentorship project. He was also the photographer that captured the Shout Out participant's profile pictures.



[www.homeiswheremyheartis.org](http://www.homeiswheremyheartis.org)



Facebook: [ali.raza.photography](https://www.facebook.com/ali.raza.photography)

## Daniel Matabishi

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Daniel was one of the Catalyst Youth Summit's young organisers and has shown significant leadership qualities and since the event. He recently participated in WA's Youth Parliament camp and was awarded the Kevin van Helfteren award for showing the most significant personal development. He was one of four young people that participated in the highly esteemed young person's panel at the 2016 YACWA Fairground Conference, and most recently was selected to attend the Save the Children National Youth Summit in Melbourne.



## Ziagul (Zee) Sultani

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Zee was one of the original youth organisers that attended FUSE and helped organise Catalyst all the way from Katanning. She was integral to getting a large number of regional young people to the summit. Zee was nominated for OMI's Multicultural Stars Awards and received a Highly Commended in the Outstanding Individual Achievement category. Zee is also now the WA representative on the MYAN Australian National Youth Advisory Group and is actively organising the second National FUSE summit.



## Tamkin Essa

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Tamkin was also one of the original youth organisers that attended FUSE and was a driving force behind making Catalyst the success it was. Tamkin has demonstrated her dedication to advocating for the needs of multicultural young people over a number of years and is now a Project Support Officer working at MYAN WA two days a week.



## Jamila Jafari

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Jamila Jafari was one of the young organisers of the Catalyst Youth Summit. She came out of the summit inspired, motivated and confident in her ability to help bring about change in her community. She has recently been elected to MYAN WA's Executive Group. The Executive Group provides strategic oversight and leadership to the network.



## Yunita Dewiyana Mattoha

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Since Catalyst, Yunita has developed a blog in which has interviewed a number of the people involved in the summit.

*"For me, the Catalyst Youth Summit has been a life-changing experience, in which all participants have the same passions to solve issues in our community and to help others to believe in themselves. I felt so inspired after the Summit and I decided to work on blogging ideas that I've been thinking of in the last two years: YOUR 3 AM CALL. This blog aims to encourage people from all walks of life to dig deeper into their potential, and to take the first step to pursue their dreams. I'd like to continue helping others through my talents and making this community become a better place."*

[www.your3amcall.com](http://www.your3amcall.com)



## And there's more...

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There are so many more events and projects that the young participants have been getting involved in. One of the young organisers volunteered his time for YACWA's Music Feedback project interviewing musicians at the City of Swan's Hyperfest.

Since the summit, two of the delegates have joined the Youth Advisory Groups of Armadale headspace to advocate for CALD young people in the youth mental health space – they were connected to this by another delegate who worked at headspace Armadale.

Five of the young delegates and organisers developed and delivered a presentation at YACWA's Fairground Conference, talking about both the Catalyst Youth Summit and the Shout Out program, and advocating for youth led projects.

Young delegates have joined the MYAN WA network list and been attending network forums regularly. They have also presented at each network forum since the summit.



## Catalyst Youth Group

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One of the most exciting developments since the summit is the development of the Catalyst Youth Group. After the summit, MYAN WA hosted a debrief and review session with some of the delegates and organisers. At this meeting, the young people decided to set up a Catalyst Youth Group. They agreed that they wanted to organise another summit and that they would form the organising committee. They also decided that this group would work on some of their ideas from the summit to make them a reality. MYAN WA staff agreed to support the group and provide them with a space to meet.



## Call to action

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The Catalyst delegates spent three days talking freely and passionately about their experiences and stories, discussing and documenting the issues, and sharing their ideas for solutions.

The young organisers wanted the event to not only be a catalyst for change for young delegates, but also for key decision makers. They want to see changes in services, programs, policy and advocacy come out of the summit.

*So now it's your turn.*

We have listed **7** things you can do to honour the information these young people have given us in the hope of ensuring all refugee and migrant young Western Australians feel safe, feel like they belong and that they are able to reach their full potential.

## Read and reflect

Read through all of the issues that young people raised and reflect on their suggested solutions. Do they have applicability to your work? Think about what you want to do or change as a result of reading this report.

## Share and talk

Share this report with your colleagues and your networks, talk about the issues and discuss how you can use this information.

## Incorporate

Incorporate this information into the way that you work. Review your projects, programs and policies - look where gaps need to be explored or changes and improvements made.

## Connect

Connect with the young people involved in this project – they are keen to continue these conversations. You can contact them through MYAN WA.

## Support and fund

The Catalyst Youth Summit is a best practice example of how to support a youth led process to achieve great outcomes. Many young people have great ideas and the drive to get them going. Are you able to provide a small amount of support and/or funding to get some of these grassroots, youth led projects up and running?

## Provide opportunities

The young people involved with Catalyst have grabbed every opportunity that has come their way since the summit. Look for ways to provide opportunities to young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds and support them to achieve their goals.

## Value

Young people's contribution to your work keeps it authentic, informed and on-track. Value young people's time, expertise and lived experience when they contribute to your project by remunerating or rewarding them for their participation.

# Final words

The Catalyst Youth Summit was an exciting and inspiring project to be involved in. The young delegates and organisers were energised and motivated to continue and build on connections made and ideas developed during the summit.

One of the delegates posted on his own Facebook profile after the summit about his experience. He was asked by a youth organiser to share it to the Catalyst Youth Summit group which he did, to great acclaim and fervent agreement by other delegates. In keeping with the theme of the summit and allowing young people to voice their experiences, we have (with permission) used his words to eloquently summarise the outcomes of this project and what it meant to many of the young people involved.



*"Over the last three days, I've been staying at Joondalup City Hotel (as I'm a regional delegate) and attending the Catalyst Multicultural Summit. The Summit is for young adults (18-25) from various cultural groups to get together and discuss issues affecting people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. I promised I'd post something about it, so here it is!"*

*Although the purpose of the summit was to learn about advocacy, I found that the biggest plus was making friends with other people who faced the same issues as me. I left after three days feeling truly inspired by the people I've met and the number of "firsts" that I encountered:*

*-The first time I sat next to people (no-family members - just people I had just met!) of a whole range of skin colours, speaking in range of accents, wearing hijabs and various other costumes without feeling threatened that some bogan would try to cause trouble. When I'm with my family, the first thing I notice is people looking at us. But during the hangouts and dinners with my summit friends, it was the last thing I noticed and I couldn't give a shit who was looking.*

*-The first time I spoke to a Karen person. The Karen people don't really have a nationality and are scattered across a number of refugee camps (such as in Thailand) and face persecution in Myanmar.*

*-The first time I spoke to a Shi'ite Muslim. I made friends with the Afghan boys in our hotel - a great bunch to be with. They are not only part of a religious minority (often persecuted by the Sunni majority). They are also from a persecuted ethnic group (Hazara). I heard how some of their parents, after leaving Afghanistan to a refugee camp in Pakistan, continued being persecuted. Not only that, they are discriminated against in mosques in Perth (which I find personally disgusting. No mosque or religious centre should promote discrimination over social cohesion).*

*-I met someone who came by boat and was in a detention centre*

-I heard the story of a refugee from Guinea, who managed to come to Australia but found it difficult to access welfare and mental health service. I tried very hard to think of the words for "mental health" in Malay and Hokkien (my own family's languages). I've found out the other day that these words do exist, but the VERY common usage is still to call someone with mental health issues a 'crazy person'.

-I talked with Preston Colbung, WA Young Person of the Year. Despite being Aboriginal, his family knows how to speak Malay (my mother's adopted culture/language) because if they spoke Malay, Child Protection wouldn't take away their children. (Preston, himself, can understand Malay).

## Thank you

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### YACWA would like to thank:

Taku Scrutton for her inspirational opening speech.

Abdullahi Alim for his fantastic and timely MCing of the summit.

Shaun Nannup for his energising Welcome to Country.

The panel members – Dave Kelly, MLA, Steph Jackson, Anania Tagaro and Adam Kovalevs for sharing their wisdom and expertise.

Cameron Poustie and Ross Wortham for their leadership and advocacy training.

Tony Simpson, MLA for opening the presentations session.

The summit had a profound effect on me. I talked with people who lived diversity within diversity, who faced the same ethnic-culture-religious-skin colour issues that I'd faced, trying to balance a sense of belonging with their cultural background and the society they live in.

What I got from the summit is the concept of 'know your story'. And I know my story is still being written. And I know I have a shady family history – but this, I hope, has made me a better person, insightful and compassionate. No one's perfect and life isn't simple. Sometimes, we're not a perfect fit.

Sometimes there's happiness in loneliness and not having obligations. Reality is, we live with others and so with that, is the obligation to be harmonious and treat others as how you would like to be treated."

Staff from YACWA, MYAN WA, ECU, OMI and the City of Swan who supported the young delegates and organisers throughout the summit.

All of the politicians and key stakeholders who listened to the young delegates and talked with them at the summit.

All of the young delegates that participated in the summit and wholeheartedly shared their stories, experiences and ideas.

And finally to the 14 young organisers whose vision and hard work made this event a success.

We look forward to doing it all again in July 2017!

"Thanks so much for such an opportunity. I got so much more out of this summit than I had ever hoped to. Truly profound time for me!"

The Catalyst Youth Summit was made possible by the generous support of a number of partners and sponsors



If you would like to join the Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network of Western Australia (MYANWA), please contact us at [myanwa@yacwa.org.au](mailto:myanwa@yacwa.org.au) or 9227 5440.



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'Organised BY young people FOR young people'