



Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

Annual Report

2024-2025

*Celebrating 25 years
1999 - 2025*



Acknowledgement of Country

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council respectfully acknowledges the traditional custodians of the Central Highlands and Grampians region: the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, Gunditj Mara, Wotjobaluk, and Wurundjeri elders past, present, and emerging. We extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, and recognise the unique position of Aboriginal people in Australian culture and history, and their continued connection to the land and waterways.

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc. (BRMC) is the peak multicultural agency in the Central Highlands Grampians Region.

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BRMC's Statement of Purpose and BRMC Objectives

Statement of Purpose

To actively promote and develop goodwill, understanding and harmony within our culturally diverse community.

Aims and Objectives

To provide opportunities for people of all cultural backgrounds to come together.

To provide advisory services, support and advocacy for the particular needs of people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

To advocate on relevant government policy and practice at the local, state and federal levels to ensure appropriate service provision.

To provide government and other bodies or agencies in the Ballarat region with an open channel of communication with cultural groups and organisations.

To promote a greater awareness of multicultural values and the specific needs of community groups within the region.

To advise relevant agencies in the region on the social, legal, cultural, educational, health and welfare needs of residents of culturally diverse backgrounds with an emphasis on equitable access to services.

To develop programs which will encourage ethnic people of all ages within the region to retain their heritage and thus optimise the benefits of cultural diversity for all Australians.



BRMC is proud to be part of the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Alliance, a partnership of organisations, businesses, clubs, and groups that share a vision for safe, equal, and respectful communities in the Grampians region.

Celebrating 25 Years

In 2024, the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council proudly celebrated 25 years of championing inclusion, connection, and empowerment across our diverse region. For a quarter of a century, BRMC has been a vital voice for multiculturalism; building bridges and fostering belonging throughout Ballarat and beyond.

Our anniversary celebrations brought together community leaders, partners, and members to reflect on our journey and honour the achievements that have shaped our organisation. The event showcased the rich cultural diversity of our region through performances, storytelling, and expressions of gratitude for those who have contributed to BRMC's success.

As we look ahead, BRMC remains dedicated to creating opportunities, strengthening resilience, and ensuring every community member feels valued and welcomed.



Chairperson's Report

This year, BRMC proudly marked its 25th anniversary – a milestone that invited us to reflect on our beginnings, celebrate our achievements, acknowledge challenges, and look with confidence to the future.

BRMC was launched in 1999 by Minister John Pandazopoulos, with over 200 people attending a vibrant community celebration. For many migrant families, this was a defining moment – the creation of an organisation that would advocate for multicultural communities, provide practical support, and foster a sense of belonging in Ballarat and across the region.

The journey since has not been without difficulty. Migrants and their families have faced barriers to employment, racism, and social isolation. Some long-established cultural communities have aged or moved away, while new communities have settled and grown. Yet through all these shifts, BRMC has remained a place of support, resilience, and welcome.

Over 25 years, BRMC has helped families to settle and thrive, supported women and men to make connections, children to build friendships through playgroups and homework clubs, created opportunities for seniors to connect and stay healthy, and provided settlement assistance to refugees – many of whom have gone on to guide and mentor others. Our work has always been about more than services; it is about building connections, belonging, and pride.

The past 12 months brought significant challenges. Core funding reductions required us to make difficult decisions, including downsizing and staff retrenchments. These were not easy steps, but they were necessary to ensure the organisation's survival and ability to continue delivering vital services. What has been remarkable is the way our CEO, staff, Board, partners, and volunteers responded – with resilience, creativity, and determination. Their commitment has ensured that BRMC continues to stand strong despite the pressures.

Looking forward, BRMC is committed to deepening existing partnerships and forming new ones. We will continue to empower multicultural communities, support cultural organisations, and create opportunities for new arrivals to thrive. As Ballarat's diversity continues to grow, and as global events bring new challenges, BRMC will remain a trusted, compassionate, and responsive presence in our community.

The past 25 years have shown that BRMC is not about individuals, but about collective effort: "by us, for us, with us." The successes we celebrate belong to all who have contributed – staff, volunteers, partners, and community members.

On behalf of the Board, I extend my sincere thanks to our CEO, Suzanne, and her team for their dedication; to my fellow directors for their leadership; to our partners and stakeholders for their ongoing trust; and to our volunteers – the often-unseen heroes who give so much. Above all, I thank our communities for their faith in BRMC and for making this organisation what it is today.

As we step into the next 25 years, we do so with confidence, optimism, and a renewed commitment to building a more inclusive, vibrant, and united community.



Dr Sundram Sivamalai
Chairperson BRMC

CEO's Report

This year has been one of resilience, growth, and renewed commitment for BRMC. Despite the challenges we faced, our organisation has continued to adapt and innovate, driven by a deep dedication to serving multicultural communities across the region. Our collective efforts have strengthened our foundation and opened new opportunities for sustainable growth, collaboration, and impact. I am proud to share the progress we have made and the exciting directions ahead.

This past year has been one of considerable challenges and important transitions for BRMC. With uncertainty surrounding the continuation of State Government core funding, we moved quickly to reduce overheads, choosing to remain at the Ballarat Welcome Centre but downsizing our rented space by relinquishing the Level One Training Room and Community Hall. We also made the difficult decision to sell our vehicles, reflecting our commitment to prudent financial management in a time of constraint.

Thanks to extensive lobbying efforts by regional ethnic councils, BRMC's Strategic Partnerships Program (SPP) core funding was extended for the 2024/25 financial year. However, funding for the Strategic Engagement Coordinator program was cut entirely, a shift that compelled us to pivot from focusing on organisational survival to actively exploring new avenues for business development. Our goal is to transform BRMC into a more sustainable organisation that can generate fee-for-service income and reduce reliance on grants.

Over the course of the year, we undertook extensive research in this space, successfully launching a Cultural Competency Training program. We are now developing additional training options, including Anti-racism and Active Bystander courses, as well as a Speakers Bureau. This initiative fosters greater understanding, respect, and connection across the wider community, while also upskilling multicultural members and amplifying their voices and stories to strengthen belonging.

In February 2025, Regional Multicultural Alliance Victoria (RMA VIC) formalised its commitment to advocacy and collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. Our collective efforts remain focused on strategic lobbying to secure government funding that is vital for the sustainability of multicultural services across regional Victoria.

March brought welcome recognition when the Ballarat Foundation Women's Fund selected BRMC's Project Sitara as their winning application. This important initiative complements and strengthens our ongoing work addressing family and sexual violence within multicultural communities — a complex issue that transcends cultural boundaries. BRMC is steadfast in its commitment to creating a safer, more inclusive community for all residents.

In April, The Hon. Catherine King MP announced a \$500,000 investment towards improving the Ballarat Welcome Centre. With our expanding programs and services, this funding is critical to enhancing the facilities that serve multicultural communities. On behalf of BRMC, I extend our sincere gratitude and look forward to working with her office to realise our vision of a modern, welcoming multicultural centre that meets the needs of our diverse community.

We have also been mindful of the ongoing hardships faced by many of our communities affected by turmoil in their homelands. BRMC recognises the pain and sadness that many have endured over the past 12 months. We have provided support by organising and attending events and continuing to stand with those deeply impacted by these difficult situations.

Another significant area of focus has been the Aged Care Reform, which aims to improve policies, funding, and service delivery for older people. BRMC remains actively engaged with key partners to ensure compliance and to be well-positioned to support our senior multicultural community members, who rely on these essential services.

June was marked by a bittersweet farewell to the Ballarat Afghan Action Group (BAAG), whose passionate advocacy for refugees, especially women and girls, has left a lasting impact. We honour their dedication and contributions over many years.

CEO's Report

The State Budget in June announced \$3.2 million over two years for regional multicultural communities. While partial funding for the SPP program was offered for July to December 2025, this highlights the need for ongoing collaboration to review and improve the funding model to better serve our communities.

Together with RMA Vic members, we continue our strong advocacy efforts to ensure that SPP funding is anchored in the regions and led by culturally competent, local service providers — those closest to and most trusted by the communities they serve. With the right support, SPP has the potential to deliver meaningful, long-term outcomes for multicultural Victorians across all regions.

At this point, I want to sincerely thank our amazing Board volunteers for their dedication and heart throughout what's been a challenging year. Looking ahead, I'm really looking forward to working closely with the Board as we rethink and reshape our strategies to secure a strong, sustainable future for BRMC — including finding new ways to bring in income and stepping up our advocacy.

This year has truly shown the strength of our teamwork, compassion, and creativity. I'm especially grateful to our Chair for his steady support and guidance, and to Paul Tant, our Accountant, whose partnership in financial planning has been so important as we map out what's next.

I also want to thank our wonderful program partners, sector stakeholders, and supporters. Your collaboration and shared commitment have been essential to us delivering meaningful services and opportunities for our communities.

To our multicultural members and community leaders — thank you for welcoming us so warmly into your festivals and events, and for your ongoing involvement. Your voices help guide everything we do and make sure we're responding to what your communities really need.

And finally, a huge shoutout to our incredible staff. Your passion, resilience, and hard work have been the backbone of all we've achieved this year. I feel so lucky to work alongside such a dedicated team making a real difference every day.

Together, we face the future with determination and hope.



Suzanne Ryan- Evers
CEO BRMC

Treasurer's Report

As in previous years, the annual accounts for FY2024-2025 have been prepared in accordance with General Purpose standards rather than Special Purpose standards. There have been no significant changes to the Australian Accounting Standards applicable to BRMC, which means the financial reports for this year have been prepared similarly to previous years, with no new disclosures required.

FY 2025 result

BRMC recorded a surplus of \$38,865 (FY2024: \$104,938 deficit). Total revenue and other income were \$1.487m (FY2024: \$1.594m). The turnaround reflects disciplined management of overheads and careful program delivery.

Balance sheet and liquidity

Year-end cash and cash equivalents were \$1,136,396, supporting operational resilience. Operating cash flow was \$378,979, reflecting improved working capital and timing of grant receipts and expenditure.

Grant obligations

A material portion of cash is restricted for contracted program delivery. Contract liabilities (unspent but committed grant monies) were \$446,745 at year-end. These funds must be delivered and acquitted against agreed outcomes; we cannot underspend or cut costs from grant-funded programs. Our approach is therefore to protect program delivery while seeking efficiencies elsewhere. Net assets increased to \$512,311 from \$473,446 for FY2023/24, bringing our free reserve to \$313,355.

Asset optimisation to manage overheads

To reduce ongoing costs without affecting programs, we liquidated under-utilised assets (including motor vehicles). This step lowers future running costs and helps offset overhead pressures while maintaining service capacity.

Audit and compliance

The independent auditor issued a clean opinion stating the FY2025 financial report presents fairly and complies with Australian Accounting Standards – Simplified Disclosures and ACNC requirements; auditor independence was also confirmed.

FY2026 outlook and request for support - Revenue mix and diversification

Grants remain the majority of income. For FY2024-25, Fees for services contributed \$43,398 as we begin building a fee-for-service pathway. At the start of FY2025-26, we launched Cultural Competency Training (CCT) as a community-aligned offering. We expect a small loss in year one as the program scales, with breakeven anticipated in year two. Community referrals and commissioning of CCT by partners will be important to accelerate this trajectory.

The approved FY2026 budget incorporates an approximate 50% reduction in our core government grant that supports shared overheads. Because grant funds must be fully spent on programs, we cannot deliver savings by cutting program costs. The reduction is expected to result in a projected FY2026 loss of about \$66,000. Our response focuses on overhead control (including asset mix and space utilisation), delivering CCT and other fee-for-service pilots, and strengthening partnerships. We invite our community's support through donations, referrals, and commissioning CCT. This support will help bridge the transition while we safeguard vital services for our multicultural community.

Thank you to staff, volunteers, partners, CEO, and Finance team, as well as the Committee, for their stewardship and dedication.



Uphar Chhabra
Treasurer BRMC

BRMC Executive Committee



Dr Sundram Sivamalai
Chair



Syed Sami
Deputy Chair



Betty Mathew
Secretary



Meeta Narsi
Assistant Secretary



Uphar Chhabra
Treasurer



Dolma Tamang
Assistant Treasurer



Sheilagh Kentish
Community Representative



Katrina Baraqui
Women's Affairs Officer



Jack Yang
Interfaith Officer



Binsu Baby
Community Representative



Elangovan Shanmugam
Community Representative

BRMC Staff



Suzanne Ryan-Evers
Chief Executive Officer



Teresa Azzopardi
Social Support
Program Manager



Heeyoung Lim
SETS, Family & Sexual Violence
Programs Manager



Annie Dunn
Business Development
& Enterprise Manager



Sangeeran Mithranandarajah
Strategic Engagement
Coordinator



Helen Bennetts
HR, Finance & Social
Support Team Member



Caroline Parry
Social Support
Team Member



Abra Dham
Settlement
Program Worker



Nyibol Deng
Settlement
Program Worker



Tahsina Tasneem
Education
Program Coordinator
(July 24 - May 25)



Agum Reech
Family & Sexual Violence
Intake Practitioner



Anusha Lakshmanan
Program Assistant
& Bi-Lingual Storyteller



Olabisi Oladele
Education
Program Coordinator



Xiaoqiu Zhang
Bi-Lingual Storyteller



Mary Deng
Bi-Lingual Storyteller



Kavitha Sangavan
Bi-Lingual Storyteller

BRMC At A Glance

Children

- Homework Club
- Multicultural Playgroup



Youth

- Audio Lab
- Health and Wellbeing



Parents

- Parent Support
- Multicultural Playgroup
- Multicultural Storytime
- Family Education



Adults

- Intercultural Women's Friendship Circle
- Language support
- Family violence education support



Cultural Associations

- Information
- Governance
- Ballarat Welcome Centre



BRMC

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

New Arrivals

- Settlement Support
- Advocacy
- Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support



Community

- Festivals and Events
- Emergency prep and response
- Cultural Competency Training



Seniors

- Social Support
- My Aged Care Navigation
- Sector Support and Development
- Carers Respite Services
- Advocacy



Our Year In Review



Settlement Services Program

- 174** new multicultural clients settled
- 96** parents and children attending playgroup
- 50** women joined friendship circles
- 75+** attending bi-monthly welcome teas
- 34** joined Welcome Bus Tours



Social Support Program

- 230+** multicultural senior clients
- 1,708** Multicultural and Health & Wellbeing lunches served
- 39** new clients received individual support



Family Violence Prevention Program

- 121** community members attended forums
- 31** service providers engaged
- 17** FV & SV practitioners trained in cultural competency



Multicultural Emergency Management Program

- 4** community dialogues
- 20+** cultural backgrounds in attendance
- 100+** volunteer hours contributed
- 12** planning committees now include multicultural voices



Diversity Homework Club Program

- 2** Homework Clubs each week
- 50+** students registered
- 12–15** students attended each session
- 4** parent workshops
- 80%** student academic improvement



Multicultural Access Program

- 220+** care occasions
- 100+** clients
- 98%** received culturally appropriate information
- 94%** reported improved well-being
- 130+** attended the Mother's Day Vaccination Clinic

Building, Belonging, Safety & Inclusion Together

Strategic Partnership Program (SPP)

The Strategic Partnerships Program (SPP) is a Victorian Government initiative supporting culturally competent, place-based organisations to work together and deliver services that meet the changing needs of multicultural Victorians. It addresses challenges such as social cohesion, ageing populations, and family violence.

Over the past year, BRMC has been proud to advance the goals of SPP by:

- Sharing vital information with more than 5,000 followers through monthly newsletters and daily social media updates, ensuring even the most marginalised communities stay informed and connected.
- Strengthening leadership in community organisations and helping more cultural groups access grants and run their own programs, through such initiatives as the Monthly Multicultural Members Catch-ups and BRASSN meetings supporting asylum seekers.
- Promoting healthy family relationships through targeted information sessions and forums on family and sexual violence.
- Expanding education and employment pathways through the Diversity Homework Club, Sewing Clubs, and Youth Hubs.
- Encouraging health and wellbeing through newsletters, clinics, and cultural-specific health sessions.
- Building inclusion and participation, supporting over 46 community and multicultural events and attending festivals across the region.

While the year has brought many successes, uncertainty about the future of SPP funding remains a serious concern. Long-term, strategic investment is vital to protect this momentum, prevent service disruption, and ensure regional multicultural communities continue to thrive. BRMC, through RMA Vic will keep advocating for sustained funding and working with our partners to secure a strong future for these essential services.



BRMC 25th Year Anniversary Media Shoot

The Regional Multicultural Alliance Victoria (RMA Vic)

The Regional Multicultural Alliance Victoria (RMA Vic), made up of seven regional ethnic peak organisations, formalised its commitment to advocacy and collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding. We worked to advance equity, cultural inclusion, and place-based services for multicultural communities across regional Victoria. Together, we advocate for regional diversity to be embedded in state policy, systems, and investment.

RMA Vic is comprised of: Albury Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council (Albury), Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc. (Ballarat), Cultura (Geelong), Ethnic Council of Shepparton and District (Shepparton), Gippsland Multicultural Services (Gippsland), Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (Bendigo), and Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council (Mildura).

Over the past year, RMA Vic has continued strategic advocacy, developing what we believe is a sustainable funding model for our regions. Highlights include:

- Presenting the new funding model to Minister Ingrid Stitt’s office (Sept 2024)
- Meeting Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles at Geelong’s Pako Fest (Feb 2025), securing his support to connect us with key federal ministers post-Budget
- Engaging with regional MPs at Parliament House (Apr 2025), resulting in the Regional Caucus recommending \$2.5m annual principal funding to Treasury

In the current climate with growing community needs, increasing migration to and settlement in the regions, and funding uncertainty, this Alliance is more important than ever. It will ensure that regional ethnic councils remain recognised, respected, and sustainable, able to deliver trusted, culturally competent services to the communities we represent. Our united voice strengthens our influence, safeguards our future, and keeps the needs of multicultural Victorians in regional areas firmly on the policy agenda.



Members signing the RMA Vic MOU- February 2025



RMA Vic members with the Premier of Victoria Jacinta Allen - July 2025

Migration and Settlement Support Services



The Settlement Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program walked alongside newly arrived individuals and families on their settlement journey—helping them navigate the practical challenges of starting over while building the confidence, skills, and connections that make a place truly feel like home.

Through personalised case management, BRMC supported people to find housing, access health care, explore job opportunities, understand legal rights, and settle into parenting in a new country. Just as importantly, we created spaces where culture, friendship, and community could flourish. Multicultural Playgroups became places where children laughed, learned, and shared their heritage, while parents connected over stories, songs, and seasonal celebrations. Intercultural Women’s Friendship Circles provided opportunities to cook together, learn new skills, and talk openly about topics like financial wellbeing and mental health, fostering trust and belonging.

Our Welcome Morning Teas brought the wider community together in a spirit of celebration, sharing food, performances, and practical local knowledge. One standout moment was the Ballarat Welcome Bus Tour, where new arrivals explored key community spaces, met local service providers, and left feeling more confident about navigating their new surroundings.

Behind the scenes, BRMC worked closely with local partners—from health and legal services to education and childcare providers; ensuring that every person we supported had access to the right help at the right time.

We are deeply grateful to our partners, funders, and volunteers. Their commitment and generosity have helped create not just services, but a welcoming community where newcomers are valued, supported, and empowered to thrive.

Migration and Settlement Support Services

Building Confidence through the Intercultural Women's Friendship Circle

When Amina* arrived in Ballarat, she felt isolated and unsure how to connect. Through the Intercultural Women's Friendship Circle, she found a welcoming space to learn, share, and practise English alongside women from diverse backgrounds.

What began as quiet participation grew into leadership—Amina now leads craft activities, shares traditional recipes, and supports new members navigating the same challenges she once faced.

"I look forward to it every week," she says. "We try cooking, painting, poetry...and make friends in a safe space."

Amina's story shows how culturally-safe and inclusive programs transform isolation into belonging and empower new leaders to emerge.

*Name changed for privacy.



1st year Anniversary Celebration - Barkly Square Peace Pole

Diversity Homework Club

The Diversity Homework Club set out to do more than just help with schoolwork. Our goal was to provide consistent academic and social support for children from multicultural backgrounds — helping them strengthen literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills while building confidence, resilience, and a sense of belonging in both school and the wider community.

Each week, our two vibrant hubs — Thursdays at Sebastopol Library and Fridays at Alfredton Primary School — became welcoming spaces where students could receive one-on-one tutoring and join in group activities designed to inspire curiosity.

This year, we took learning beyond the basics by integrating STEM into our regular sessions and school holiday programs. From exploring digital systems and 3D design to stepping into virtual reality, students developed creativity, critical thinking, and a growing enthusiasm for science and technology. Parents were part of the journey too, with four dedicated workshops strengthening home-school connections and equipping families to better support their children’s education. Cultural celebrations throughout the year brought everyone together, fostering mutual respect and a stronger sense of community.

Highlights included seeing students grow in confidence — asking more questions, tackling challenges with determination, and showing measurable gains in literacy and numeracy, as reported by teachers and parents alike. The excitement around STEM was unforgettable, with students embracing new technologies and discovering skills that will serve them far beyond the classroom.

In 2025, more than 50 students participated in over 90 sessions, with strong attendance averaging 12–15 students per session. Over 80% of regular attendees improved their academic performance. These achievements were made possible thanks to our dedicated volunteer tutors, the enthusiastic engagement of families, and the collaborative support of our school partners. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Department of Education – VACAP, Collier Charitable Fund, and the Australian Communities Foundation’s Homework Club Partnership Fund (HCPF) for their generosity in helping us make this vision a reality.



Alfredton Homework Club - Peer Tutors





Laur's Journey with Fractions

When Laur first joined the Diversity Homework Club, she was a capable student in most subjects — but fractions were her stumbling block. No matter how hard she tried, the concepts felt out of reach, leaving her frustrated and unsure of herself. Even with her strong overall performance at school, this single subject was chipping away at her confidence.

The Homework Club team recognised that Laur needed more than just extra worksheets — she needed patient, targeted support and a way of learning that made sense to her. Through consistent one-on-one sessions, our tutors explained tricky mathematical concepts in clear, relatable ways, using examples tailored to her learning style. Laur came prepared to every session, bringing her questions and practising until the lightbulb moments arrived. Week after week, her attendance never faltered, and she began to approach her homework knowing there would be someone ready to guide her through the challenges.

The change was remarkable. Laur's mother noticed a newfound calmness when maths problems appeared on the page. Her skills improved, her confidence grew, and before long she was meeting — and often exceeding — classroom expectations. Today, Laur doesn't just face mathematical challenges; she seeks them out, a testament to how personalised, consistent support can unlock a child's potential and build resilience for life.



BRMC Cultural Training: Inclusive Practice

In 2024–25, BRMC focused on building stronger cultural understanding and inclusion through its Inclusive Practice program. The project has three goals: to enhance service providers' cultural capability, to create pathways for community members with lived experience to become professional facilitators and educators, and to make our region inclusive and welcoming for all.

This year, BRMC delivered Cultural Competency Training to aged care and family violence sectors, helping participants reflect on cultural perspectives and adopt inclusive practices. The curriculum was redesigned into a flexible modular framework, adaptable across various sectors.

A major milestone was launching the inaugural Speakers Bureau in June 2025, with nine community members trained in storytelling and public speaking. This initiative empowered authentic voices to lead education while opening new employment opportunities. The pilot Cultural Conversations series explored cross-cultural communication in aged care, highlighting strong demand for practical, accessible inclusion training.

This foundational year laid the groundwork for a scalable, community-led training model that strengthens inclusion and empowers both service providers and multicultural communities.

2024–25 Highlights:

- Nine diverse speakers were recruited to the inaugural Speakers Bureau
- Four new cultural training staff members appointed
- One pilot Cultural Conversations session delivered
- Multiple service providers trained in aged care and family violence sectors
- Comprehensive, modular curriculum framework developed and implemented
- Speaker Workshops held, supporting community skill development

We are deeply grateful to all the emerging speakers, sector partners, and staff who contributed to this foundational year. Participant feedback and reflective practice will continue to guide our work — and we look forward to a big year ahead.



Speakers Workshop Series Graduation

Multicultural Storytime

In 2025, Multicultural Storytime became much more than a literacy program; it became a place where stories sparked laughter, culture came alive, and families found belonging.

Designed to offer children from diverse backgrounds rich literacy experiences while supporting parents' confidence, the program ran 63 joyful sessions in four language streams: Multicultural, Mandarin, Hindi, and Nuer. Families gathered to hear stories told in English and their own community languages.

Our bilingual storytellers brought books to life with warmth and cultural authenticity. Each story included important health messages about nutrition, sun safety, hygiene, and emotional well-being, turning lessons into playful learning experiences. Songs, movement, and crafts kept children engaged, while parents treasured shared language moments that strengthened family bonds and cultural identity.

Beyond the stories, parents valued the friendships formed and the welcoming atmosphere. A highlight was partnering with Ballarat's Community Outreach Librarian and Maternal and Child Health Nurses, who provided bilingual health resources to support learning at home.

This program thrived thanks to funding from the Department of Health, the creativity of our bilingual storytellers, Ballarat City Council's support to expand access, and, most importantly, the families whose enthusiasm shaped Multicultural Storytime into a vibrant, inclusive community.

Together, we created more than a program; we built a bridge between cultures, generations, and hearts.



Expanding Community Access through Local Partnerships.

For many families in Lucas, Alfredton, and Winter Valley, travelling to Multicultural Storytime in central Ballarat was a barrier. Long trips, limited transport, and caring for young children meant some missed out on early learning and cultural connection.

Responding to this, BRMC partnered with the City of Ballarat Community Hub team and local parents to bring Storytime closer to home. From Term 3, 2025, sessions in Hindi, Mandarin, and Nuer were held at the Djila-Tjarri Community Hub in Alfredton.

The change was immediate—families who couldn't attend before joined in singing, storytelling, and making friends nearby. Parents praised the convenience, cultural connection, and sense of belonging the local sessions fostered.

By embedding Storytime in a trusted local hub, we removed transport barriers and strengthened community ties, ensuring every child can learn, play, and grow in an inclusive space.

BRMC Social Support Program

At its heart, the BRMC Social Support Program is dedicated to reducing social isolation, promoting independence, and fostering meaningful connections for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) older adults and younger people requiring low-level care. Funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) and the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP), our focus in 2025 was to create welcoming, culturally inclusive environments where clients feel safe, respected, and supported to maintain their dignity and wellbeing while continuing to live in their own homes.

Throughout the year, BRMC delivered a diverse range of group activities, individual supports, and culturally tailored programs, designed to foster social connection, build friendships, and promote ageing well. These initiatives also provided vital respite for carers while strengthening community belonging. BRMC supported many clients to navigate the complexities of the aged care system, ensuring equitable access to services and culturally appropriate care.

One of the year's highlights was the Multicultural Tucker Daytime Dinner Dance — a vibrant celebration attended by 100 clients aged between 55 to 100 years. Featuring live music from The High Street Boys, the afternoon rekindled fond memories for many clients who had grown up attending dances as a central form of recreation and social connection. The event was filled with music, dancing, and cultural pride, creating a powerful sense of belonging and well-being. Staff, volunteers, and clients alike reflected on the unique joy and togetherness it inspired, marking it as one of BRMC's most memorable initiatives of the year! .

Thanks to the ongoing support of the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, and our dedicated clients, the program thrived. Our heartfelt thanks go especially to the volunteers whose generosity of time and spirit made every activity richer and more welcoming.

The impact of this program extends beyond participation figures, underscoring the critical role of culturally-safe initiatives in supporting socialisation and wellbeing within the ageing community. By fostering inclusion, recognition, and connection, BRMC strengthens community cohesion and affirms the value of every individual. As we look to the future, BRMC remains committed to advancing these essential programs that enhance quality of life and uphold the dignity of our diverse communities.

Real Stories that Inspire

BRMC's Social Support Programs have brought joy and connection back into the lives of an 87-year-old Greek woman living with dementia, her husband, and their daughter.

Once isolated and struggling to find culturally appropriate care, the family discovered a place where Greek music, traditional meals, and dancing sparked treasured memories and genuine smiles. Her husband, once reluctant to leave home, now enjoys BRMC's welcoming gatherings and practical, culturally tailored ageing-well sessions. Their daughter, previously feeling alone in her caring role, found new purpose and friendships by volunteering—offering gentle hand pampering to other clients.

For this family, BRMC is more than support—it's a community where culture is celebrated, connections thrive, and everyone feels at home.



BRMC Multicultural Tucker Celebrating 20 Years of Culture, Connection & Community

For 20 years, Multicultural Tucker has been a much-loved part of Ballarat's community life. It is a monthly celebration of culture, friendship, and belonging. Funded through CHSP and HACC PYP, the program offers a welcoming space where seniors and younger people experiencing isolation can gather, share a three-course meal, enjoy live music and dancing, and mark life's special moments together.

Each month, over 100 participants from more than 35 cultural backgrounds come dressed for the occasion, bringing stories, songs, and traditions. For many, it is the highlight of their month—a place that lifts loneliness, sparks joy, and restores a sense of purpose. Some have been attending for more than 15 years, a testament to the program's impact.

Multicultural Tucker is a living expression of unity and resilience. People from diverse nations, including those once divided by conflict, come together in laughter, music, and harmony. It is a space where cultural difference is embraced, friendships flourish, and participants—some in their 90s and even over 100—dance, sing, and celebrate life.

For many, Tucker has changed their lives: "I haven't had this much fun in years," they say. It is more than connection—it is hope, joy, and community. A true celebration of culture, togetherness, and love.



Real Stories That Inspire

Multicultural Tucker is filled with stories of joy and connection. One of the most memorable is a 100-year-old Italian gentleman who arrives each month with a smile, ready to dance, laugh, and embrace everyone with warmth and gratitude. "I feel so good being here," he says, capturing the spirit of what Tucker means.

His story is a reminder of why social connection matters. Tucker is far more than a meal—it is a place where people share memories, celebrate culture, and feel seen and valued. For our ageing community, it offers dignity, joy, and a legacy worth celebrating with love.



Family & Sexual Violence Community Engagement Services

At the heart of BRMC's 2024–25 family violence prevention program was a simple but powerful goal: to ensure every person in our multicultural community can live free from violence, with access to the right support at the right time. We set out to strengthen prevention, provide earlier intervention, and improve responses — all in ways that are culturally safe, community-led, and shaped by the lived experiences of those we serve.

To achieve this, BRMC invested in building our own capacity and working hand-in-hand with local service providers. We trained BRMC staff and Board members in intersectionality, cultural humility, safety planning, and effective referral pathways, ensuring our whole organisation is ready to respond with understanding and care. Our flagship Building a Better and Safer Community Together forums brought 156 community members and 43 service providers together over four vibrant sessions. These gatherings became a space for honest conversation, shared learning, and collective action against family violence.

We also strengthened the skills of family violence practitioners from Berry Street and WRISC through our specialised Cultural Competency Training, helping them understand the unique experiences of refugee and migrant communities and build culturally appropriate services. Innovation was at the forefront and included three art therapy series with WRISC, offering creative healing for women affected by violence, and Project Sitara with GenWest, which will see trained community peers lead Hindi-language workshops in prevention and awareness.

The results speak for themselves: stronger partnerships, more confident practitioners, and safer spaces where community members feel heard and supported. Feedback confirmed what we saw in action that culturally responsive, interactive approaches can open doors, break down barriers, and inspire hope.

We are deeply grateful to Family Safety Victoria and The Ballarat Women's Fund for their funding, and to our partners Berry Street, WRISC, CASA, CHIFVC, and GenWest for their dedication, trust, and collaboration in building a safer, stronger Ballarat for all.

Healing Through Art

For many women from multicultural backgrounds, family violence is more than just the trauma itself. Language barriers, cultural stigma, social isolation, and the lack of culturally safe therapeutic services can leave them feeling invisible and alone, with few places to turn for support that truly understands their experiences.

Seeing these gaps, BRMC joined forces with WRISC to create something different: a series of three art therapy programs designed specifically for women from diverse cultural backgrounds who had lived through family violence. These sessions were safe, nurturing spaces where women could explore difficult emotions, share their stories without fear, and rediscover their own voices. Skilled facilitators, trained in both trauma-informed care and cultural awareness, guided participants through creative activities that opened new pathways to healing and self-expression.

The results were powerful. Women spoke of feeling lighter, more resilient, and more connected to their community. Some described it as the first time they had been truly seen and heard in a space that honoured both their culture and their experiences. What began as an art project became a stepping stone to trust, belonging, and hope — empowering women to move forward with dignity and renewed strength



Building a Better and Safer Community Together forum

Regional Multicultural Emergency Management Program (MEMP)

BRMC's Regional Multicultural Emergency Management Program set out with a clear mission: to make sure multicultural communities in the Grampians and Central Highlands are informed, prepared, and confident in the face of emergencies. Our goal was vital yet straightforward: to ensure that people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have equal access to safety information, resources, and decision-making so they can protect themselves and their communities.

To achieve this, we worked on two fronts: empowering communities directly and embedding their voices in the systems that keep us safe. Over the year, we engaged more than 160 participants from over 20 language backgrounds through targeted safety initiatives, delivering four major community dialogues and workshops. We maintained an active presence on all 11 Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committees and the Regional Emergency Management Planning Committee, ensuring multicultural perspectives shaped regional emergency strategies.

There were many moments to celebrate. In Nhill, a culturally tailored bushfire preparedness workshop for the Karen community led to a 100% adoption rate of the Vic Emergency app. Our Autumn Community Safety Dialogue in Ballarat brought together 59 community members with Victoria Police, MPs, and local government leaders to discuss crime prevention and community safety. We were also on the ground and on the phone providing critical support to residents during high fire-risk months in areas including Yarram Gap, Horsham, and the Little Desert. Multilingual outreach, from translated resources to community radio and peer-led information sessions, made complex emergency information accessible and actionable for all.

This year's success was only possible through collaboration with the Country Fire Authority, State Emergency Service, Victoria Police, Life Saving Victoria, Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, local councils, and multilingual radio networks. We especially thank the community leaders who acted as cultural brokers and the volunteers who stood ready during emergencies. Together, we have strengthened resilience, built trust, and ensured that in times of crisis, no one is left behind.



Karen Community Bushfire Preparedness Workshop

After the devastating Little Desert fires, the Karen community in Nhill was left facing more than the threat of future bushfires — they also had to navigate serious barriers to vital safety information. Language differences, limited culturally relevant resources, and a lack of trust in mainstream communication channels meant that many were missing out on critical guidance to keep their families safe.

Recognising the urgency, BRMC worked with local partners to create a workshop designed with, not just for, the Karen community. Delivered with professional interpreter support and rich with practical demonstrations, the session showed participants how to assess fire danger, prepare their homes, and confidently use the Vic Emergency app. Every detail was carefully crafted to reflect cultural needs and build trust, transforming what could have been just another information session into a truly engaging and empowering experience.

Every participant downloaded and learned to use the Vic Emergency app — a 100% adoption rate. More importantly, people are left with the confidence to recognise fire risks early and take protective action. This success has become a model for culturally responsive emergency education, now being adapted for other multicultural communities across the region.

Multicultural Access Program

Funded by the Western Victoria Primary Health Network, BRMC partnered with Ballarat Community Health in 2025 to ensure Ballarat’s multicultural communities have equal access to healthcare. The program’s goal was to remove language, cultural, financial, and systemic barriers and to build health literacy so everyone can confidently navigate the healthcare system.

Over the year, MAP provided more than 220 occasions of care to over 100 individuals from under-served communities. Nearly all participants reported to us that they received culturally appropriate health information, felt confident accessing further care independently, and reported improved health and wellbeing.

Highlights included community-specific clinics for Chinese and Nepalese groups, designed with cultural values and language needs in mind. The Mother’s Day Vaccination Clinic attracted over 130 participants for free flu shots and COVID boosters. The event combined healthcare with a joyful community celebration, helping to overcome location, cultural, and trust barriers.

This success was made possible by collaboration between BRMC staff, Ballarat Community Health, community leaders, NAATI-certified interpreters, volunteers, and cultural organisations. Together, we ensured healthcare access with respect, dignity, and cultural understanding, building a healthier, more equitable Ballarat for all.

Breaking Down Systemic Healthcare Barriers

For many multicultural families in Ballarat, accessing healthcare can feel like navigating a maze. Language barriers, cultural disconnects, limited transport options, and lack of awareness about healthcare rights often stand in the way. These challenges add up, leading to lower vaccination rates and missed opportunities for preventive care compared to the wider community.

Recognising these intertwined barriers, the Multicultural Access Program took a bold, holistic approach. On May 10, 2025, we transformed the Ballarat Welcome Centre into a vibrant, culturally responsive vaccination hub. More than 130 community members came together for free flu vaccinations in a space designed to feel welcoming and familiar. Multilingual support, family-friendly activities, and a trusted location helped break down not just logistical, but also social and cultural barriers.

Vaccination rates among multicultural families rose significantly, winter flu risks decreased, and perhaps most importantly, trust in the Australian healthcare system grew through this positive, affirming experience. This event showed that when healthcare is delivered with cultural respect and community at its heart, it becomes a powerful driver of health equity and connection.



Nourish Together Project

The Nourish Together Project began with a simple but powerful goal: to support vulnerable multicultural families in Ballarat by improving access to regular, nutritious food while nurturing a strong sense of community. Funded by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing and delivered by BRMC, the program is committed to providing culturally appropriate, healthy food that respects the diverse backgrounds of participating families.

In 2024–25, BRMC strengthened partnerships to expand food access. Collaborating with Foodbank Victoria, families received fresh, chilled, and frozen foods at no cost, while Peaches Fruit Market supplied discounted seasonal fruit and vegetable boxes — prioritising nutritious, culturally-appropriate options.

Beyond food delivery, the program took an exciting next step by empowering families to grow their own produce. In partnership with Food Is Free Inc., BRMC launched gardening workshops where volunteers demonstrated how to build vegetable boxes from recycled materials. The first workshop, held in August at The Green Space in Ballarat, created a joyful, inclusive space filled with music, food, and children’s activities — fostering interfaith and multicultural friendships alongside practical skills. A second workshop is planned for October.

Families referred from Ballarat Community Health, The Orange Door, and BRMC programs represent diverse cultures, including the Philippines, India, Colombia, Ghana, South Sudan, Afghanistan, Libya, and Sri Lanka. Originally designed to support 20 families, the program has grown to 25 due to ongoing community demand.

BRMC extends heartfelt thanks to Foodbank Victoria, Peaches Fruit Market, Food Is Free Inc., and our dedicated volunteers for their vital contributions. Together, we are nourishing bodies, growing skills, and strengthening community connections across Ballarat.



BRMC is grateful for the support we receive from our funding partners, stakeholders, members and community supporters

BRMC Funding Partners



Australian Government
Department of Education



Australian Government
Department of Health,
Disability and Ageing



Australian Government
Department of Social Services



Collier
Charitable
Fund



Program Partners and Stakeholders



BRMC Paying Members as at 30 June 2025.

Organisations and Associations

- Ballarat Bangladesh Association Inc.
- Ballarat Croatian Association
- Ballarat Hindu Temple & Cultural Centre
- Ballarat Indian Association
- Ballarat Interfaith Network
- Ballarat Italian Association
- Ballarat Malayalee Association
- Ballarat Nepalese Samaj Inc. (BNS)
- Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)
- Circolo Pensionati Italiani
- Djerriwarrh Community & Education Services
- Filipino-Australian Association of Ballarat (FAABI)
- Sri Lankan Australian Association of Ballarat
- Wat Thai Bavana - Ballarat Buddhist Centre
- Women's Health Grampians Inc.

Individual Members

- Dianne Hadden
- Maureen Doonan
- Meg Lee
- Paul Tant

BRMC Community Members and Supporters

Australian Pakistani Community of Ballarat, A Tuk, Ballarat African Association, Ballarat and District Irish Association, Ballarat Historical Association, Ballarat Keralites' Foundation of Australia Inc., Ballarat Permaculture Guild, Ballarat Region Indonesian Community, Ballarat Tamil Sangam Inc., Ballarat West Police Complex, Child & Family Services Ballarat, City of Ballarat, Emotional Well-being Institute, Geneva, Filipino Australian Sports Club of Ballarat Inc., German-Austrian Association, Grampians Community Legal Service, Islamic Society of Ballarat, Mat Tetni, Solomon Island Victoria Association, Thai Australian Association of Ballarat and Central Highlands Inc., Thai Cultural Group of Ballarat, Victoria Togolese Association, Virasat E Punjab Ballarat Inc., Voice FM 99.9 and Women of the Well.

BRMC Volunteers

We are deeply grateful to our volunteers, who generously give their time, energy, skills, and talents. They are the backbone of our programs, making invaluable contributions that enable BRMC to continue supporting and empowering multicultural communities across the region.



Celebrating BRMC volunteers at the International Volunteer Day Celebration



Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc.

Ballarat Welcome Centre
 25-39 Barkly Street, Ballarat VIC 3350
 Phone: 03 5383 0613
 Email: info@brmc.org.au
 Web: www.brmc.org.au
 ABN: 24 776 744 519

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Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council

ABN 24 776 744 519

Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

ABN 24 776 744 519

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For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

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Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

ABN 24 776 744 519

**Statement of Comprehensive Income
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025**

		2025	2024
	Note	\$	\$
Revenue and other income	3	1,487,233	1,594,418
Employee benefits expense		(1,077,439)	(1,205,113)
Depreciation expense		(33,267)	(18,880)
Other expenses	4	(109,309)	(238,826)
Program costs		(228,353)	(236,537)
Surplus / (Deficit) before income tax		38,865	(104,938)
Income tax expense	1(b)	-	-
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year		38,865	(104,938)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		38,865	(104,938)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position

30 June 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	5	1,136,396	768,783
Prepayments		3,859	9,701
Trade and other receivables	6	18,670	27,464
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,158,925	805,948
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	24,817	27,369
Right-of-use assets	8	37,587	7,076
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		62,404	34,445
TOTAL ASSETS		1,221,329	840,393
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	8	28,684	957
Trade and other payables	9	133,184	148,380
Employee entitlements	10	92,848	85,761
Contracted liabilities	11	446,745	125,830
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		701,461	360,928
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	8	7,557	6,019
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		7,557	6,019
TOTAL LIABILITIES		709,018	366,947
NET ASSETS		512,311	473,446
EQUITY			
Reserves	12	174,136	208,820
Retained surplus		338,175	264,626
TOTAL EQUITY		512,311	473,446

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

ABN 24 776 744 519

Statement of Changes in Equity**For the Year Ended 30 June 2025****2025**

	BRASSN Reserve	Piano Funds Reserve	DFFH Cash Reserve	Specific Purpose Funding Reserve	Retained Surplus	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2024	2,484	5,939	20,000	180,397	264,626	473,446
Surplus for the year	-	-	-	-	38,865	38,865
Transfer from Retained Earnings	137	-	-	(34,821)	34,684	-
Balance at 30 June 2025	2,621	5,939	20,000	145,576	338,175	512,311

2024

	BRASSN Reserve	Piano Funds Reserve	DFFH Cash Reserve	Specific Purpose Funding Reserve	Retained Surplus	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance at 1 July 2023	2,032	5,939	20,000	320,890	229,523	578,384
Deficit for the year	-	-	-	-	(104,938)	(104,938)
Transfer from Retained Earnings	452	-	-	(140,493)	140,041	-
Balance at 30 June 2024	2,484	5,939	20,000	180,397	264,626	473,446

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows
For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

	2025	2024
Note	\$	\$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:		
Receipts from government and communities	1,772,343	1,548,502
Payments to suppliers, employees and communities	(1,414,580)	(1,761,584)
Interest received	24,004	22,113
Interest paid	(2,788)	(468)
Net cash provided by / (used in) operating activities	378,979	(191,437)
	13	
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(16,680)	-
Proceeds from disposal of property, plant and equipment	26,364	477
Net cash provided by investing activities	9,684	477
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES:		
Repayment of lease liabilities	(21,050)	(3,127)
Net cash used in financing activities	(21,050)	(3,127)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held	367,613	(194,087)
Cash at beginning of year	768,783	962,870
Cash at end of financial year	1,136,396	768,783
	5	

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

1 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

The financial report covers Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc. as an individual entity. Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc. is a not-for-profit Association, registered and domiciled in Australia.

The principal activity of the Association was the provision of social support, training, service linkages and material aid to alleviate hardship for vulnerable new migrants and their families from culturally diverse communities and frail and aged people from CALD backgrounds.

Basis of Preparation

The financial statements are general purpose financial statements that have been prepared in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and *the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are based on historical costs and does not take into account changing money values or, except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following material accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(a) Revenue and other income

The core principle of AASB 15 is that revenue is recognised on a basis that reflects the transfer of promised goods or services to customers at an amount that reflects the consideration the Association expects to receive in exchange for those goods or services. Revenue is recognised by applying a five-step model as follows:

1. Identify the contract with the customer
2. Identify the performance obligations
3. Determine the transaction price
4. Allocate the transaction price to the performance obligations
5. Recognise revenue as and when control of the performance obligations is transferred

Generally the timing of the payment for sale of goods and rendering of services corresponds closely to the timing of satisfaction of the performance obligations, however where there is a difference, it will result in the recognition of a receivable, contract asset or contract liability.

None of the revenue streams of the Association have any significant financing terms as there is less than 12 months between receipt of funds and satisfaction of performance obligations.

Grant income

Where grant income arises from an agreement which is enforceable and contains sufficiently specific performance obligations then the revenue is recognised when control of each performance obligations is satisfied.

Grant income for contracts which are either not enforceable or do not have sufficiently specific performance obligations is recognised when received in accordance with AASB 1058.

Donations

Donations and bequests are recognised as revenue when received.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

1 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

(a) Revenue and other income

Interest revenue

Interest is recognised using the effective interest method.

(b) Income Tax

The Association is exempt from income tax under Division 50 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(c) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Tax Office. In these circumstances, the GST is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of the asset or as part of an item of the expense. Receivables and payables in the statement of financial position are shown inclusive of GST.

(d) Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short-term highly liquid investments.

(e) Financial instruments

Financial instruments are recognised initially on the date that the Association becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

On initial recognition, all financial instruments are measured at fair value plus transaction costs (except for instruments measured at fair value through profit or loss where transaction costs are expensed as incurred).

Financial assets

All recognised financial assets are subsequently measured in their entirety at either amortised cost or fair value, depending on the classification of the financial assets.

Classification

On initial recognition, the Association classifies its financial assets into the following categories, those measured at:

- amortised cost

Financial assets are not reclassified subsequent to their initial recognition unless the Association changes its business model for managing financial assets.

Amortised cost

The Association's financial assets measured at amortised cost comprise trade and other receivables and cash and cash equivalents in the statement of financial position.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

1 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

(e) Financial instruments

Financial assets

Subsequent to initial recognition, these assets are carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for impairment.

Interest income, foreign exchange gains or losses and impairment are recognised in profit or loss. Gain or loss on derecognition is recognised in profit or loss.

Impairment of financial assets

Impairment of financial assets is recognised on an expected credit loss (ECL) basis for financial assets measured at amortised cost.

When determining whether the credit risk of a financial asset has increased significantly since initial recognition and when estimating ECL, the Association considers reasonable and supportable information that is relevant and available without undue cost or effort. This includes both quantitative and qualitative information analysis based on the Association's historical experience, and informed credit assessment including forward looking information.

The Association uses the presumption that an asset which is more than 30 days past due has seen a significant increase in credit risk.

The Association uses the presumption that a financial asset is in default when:

- the other party is unlikely to pay its credit obligations to the Association in full, without recourse to the Association to actions such as realising security (if any is held); or
- the financial asset is more than 90 days past due.

Credit losses are measured as the present value of the difference between the cash flows due to the Association in accordance with the contract and the cash flows expected to be received. This is applied using a probability weighted approach.

Trade receivables

Impairment of trade receivables have been determined using the simplified approach in AASB 9 which uses an estimation of lifetime expected credit losses. The Association has determined the probability of non-payment of the receivable and multiplied this by the amount of the expected loss arising from default.

The amount of the impairment is recorded in a separate allowance account with the loss being recognised in finance expense. Once the receivable is determined to be uncollectable then the gross carrying amount is written off against the associated allowance.

Where the Association renegotiates the terms of trade receivables due from certain customers, the new expected cash flows are discounted at the original effective interest rate and any resulting difference to the carrying value is recognised in profit or loss.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

1 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

(e) Financial instruments

Financial assets

Other financial assets measured at amortised cost

Impairment of other financial assets measured at amortised cost are determined using the expected credit loss model in AASB 9. On initial recognition of the asset, an estimate of the expected credit losses for the next 12 months is recognised. Where the asset has experienced significant increase in credit risk then the lifetime losses are estimated and recognised.

(f) Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment is carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation.

The depreciable amount of all property, plant and equipment is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset are shown below:

Fixed asset class	Depreciation rate
Plant and Equipment	10% - 20%
Motor Vehicles	18.75%

At the end of each annual reporting period, the depreciation method, useful life and residual value of each asset is reviewed. Any revisions are accounted for prospectively as a change in estimate.

(g) Leases

At inception of a contract, the Association assesses whether a lease exists.

Lessee accounting

At the lease commencement, the Association recognises a right-of-use asset and associated lease liability for the lease term. The lease term includes extension periods where the Association believes it is reasonably certain that the option will be exercised.

The right-of-use asset is measured using the cost model where cost on initial recognition comprises the lease liability, initial direct costs, prepaid lease payments, estimated cost of removal and restoration less any lease incentives received.

The right-of-use asset is depreciated over the lease term on a straight line basis and assessed for impairment in accordance with the impairment of assets accounting policy.

The lease liability is initially measured at the present value of the remaining lease payments at the commencement of the lease. The discount rate is the rate implicit in the lease, however where this cannot be readily determined then the Association's incremental borrowing rate is used.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

1 Summary of Material Accounting Policies

(g) Leases

Subsequent to initial recognition, the lease liability is measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method. The lease liability is remeasured whenever there is a lease modification, change in estimate of the lease term or index upon which the lease payments are based (e.g. CPI) or a change in the Association's assessment of lease term.

Where the lease liability is remeasured, the right-of-use asset is adjusted to reflect the remeasurement or is recorded in profit or loss if the carrying amount of the right-of-use asset has been reduced to zero.

Exceptions to lease accounting

The Association has elected to apply the exceptions to lease accounting for both short-term leases (i.e. leases with a term of less than or equal to 12 months) and leases of low-value assets. The Association recognises the payments associated with these leases as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

(h) Employee benefits

Provision is made for the Association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period.

Employees benefits are presented as current liabilities in the statement of financial position if the Association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement of the liability for at least 12 months after the reporting date regardless of the classification of the liability for measurement purposes under AASB 119.

Employee benefits expected to be settled more than twelve months after the end of the reporting period have been measured at the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made for those benefits. In determining the liability, consideration is given to employee wage increases and the probability that the employee may satisfy vesting requirements. Cashflows are discounted using market yields on corporate bonds with terms to maturity that match the expected timing of cashflows. Changes in the measurement of the liability are recognised in profit or loss.

(i) Adoption of new and revised accounting standards

The Association has adopted all standards which became effective for the first time at 30 June 2025, the adoption of these standards has not caused any material adjustments to the reported financial position, performance or cash flow of the Association.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

2 Critical Accounting Estimates and Judgments

The Association makes estimates and judgements during the preparation of these financial statements regarding assumptions about current and future events affecting transactions and balances.

These estimates and judgements are based on the best information available at the time of preparing the financial statements, however as additional information is known then the actual results may differ from the estimates.

The significant estimates and judgements made have been described below.

Key estimates - impairment of property, plant and equipment

The Association assesses impairment at the end of each reporting period by evaluating conditions specific to the Association that may be indicative of impairment triggers. Recoverable amounts of relevant assets are reassessed using value-in-use calculations which incorporate various key assumptions.

Key estimates - revenue recognition

The determination of whether a contract with the funding body includes sufficiently specific performance obligations is a significant judgement involving discussions with the funding body, review of the proposal documents prepared during the grant application phase and consideration of the terms and conditions. If this determination was changed then the revenue recognition pattern would be different from that recognised in these financial statements.

Key estimates - receivables

The receivables at reporting date have been reviewed to determine whether there is any objective evidence that any of the receivables are impaired. An impairment provision is included for any receivable where the entire balance is not considered collectible. The impairment provision is based on the best information at the reporting date.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

3 Revenue and Other Income

Revenue recognised from contracts with customers under AASB 15

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Fees for services	43,398	42,715
Government and community grants	509,805	425,183
	<u>553,203</u>	<u>467,898</u>

Other income recognised on receipt in accordance with AASB 1058

Donations	2,455	452
Government and community grants	881,449	1,086,913
Interest income	24,004	22,113
Other income	22,529	109
Rental income	3,593	16,933
	<u>934,030</u>	<u>1,126,520</u>

Total Revenue and Other Income

<u>1,487,233</u>	<u>1,594,418</u>
------------------	------------------

Disaggregation of revenue from contracts with customers

Revenue from contracts with customers has been disaggregated into government and community grants and fees for services - social support, and the following table shows this breakdown:

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Revenue recognised over time		
- Government and community grants	509,805	425,183
- Fees for services - social support	43,398	42,715
Revenue from contracts with customers	<u>553,203</u>	<u>467,898</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

4 Other expenses

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Accounting & audit fees	33,605	50,996
Advertising	243	-
Consulting fees	28,030	87,280
Interest expense on lease liabilities	2,788	468
Memberships & subscriptions	2,783	1,893
Motor vehicles expense	952	3,627
Occupancy expenses	24,826	72,380
Printing & stationery	9,542	13,023
Repairs & maintenance	222	2,054
Sundry expenses	6,318	7,105
	109,309	238,826

5 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash at bank and in hand	742,573	392,983
Short-term bank deposits	393,823	375,800
	1,136,396	768,783

6 Trade and other receivables

Trade and other receivables	5,118	1,709
Provision for doubtful debts	-	(120)
Accrued income	8,843	21,554
Other receivables	4,709	4,321
	18,670	27,464

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

7 Property, plant and equipment

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
<u>Plant and equipment</u>		
At cost	107,316	95,186
Accumulated depreciation	(82,499)	(73,409)
	24,817	21,777
<u>Motor vehicles</u>		
At cost	-	52,848
Accumulated depreciation	-	(47,256)
	-	5,592
Total property, plant and equipment	24,817	27,369

Movement in the carrying amounts for each class of property, plant and equipment between the beginning and the end of the current financial year:

	Plant and Equipment	Motor Vehicles	Total
	\$	\$	\$
Balance at the beginning of year	21,777	5,592	27,369
Additions	16,680	-	16,680
Depreciation expense	(13,002)	(461)	(13,463)
Disposals	(638)	(5,131)	(5,769)
Balance at the end of the year	24,817	-	24,817

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

8 Leases

The Association has a lease of photocopier with a term of 3 years, and a lease of office space in Barkly Square with a term of 1 year and options to renew for 3 further terms.

Right-of-use assets

	Buildings \$	Plant and Equipment \$	Total \$
Year ended 30 June 2025			
Opening balance	-	7,076	7,076
Additions	50,315	-	50,315
Depreciation expense	(16,771)	(3,033)	(19,804)
Balance at end of year	<u>33,544</u>	<u>4,043</u>	<u>37,587</u>

Lease liabilities

The maturity analysis of lease liabilities based on contractual undiscounted cash flows is shown in the table below:

	< 1 year \$	1 - 5 years \$	> 5 years \$	Total undiscounted lease liabilities \$
Lease liabilities	30,653	7,663	-	38,316

Lease liabilities are measured based on discounted cash flows and are recognised in the statement of financial position as shown in the table below:

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Current lease liabilities	28,684	957
Non-current lease liabilities	7,557	6,019
	<u>36,241</u>	<u>6,976</u>

Statement of Comprehensive Income

The amounts recognised in the statement of comprehensive income relating to leases are shown below:

Interest expense on lease liabilities	2,788	468
Depreciation of right-of-use assets	19,804	2,958
Expenses relating to short-term leases or low-value assets	15,816	58,382
Loss on termination of lease	-	87
	<u>38,408</u>	<u>61,895</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

9 Trade and other payables

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Auspiced activities	1,088	3,088
GST payable	38,709	25,233
PAYG withholding payable	26,862	22,443
Trade payables	35,037	69,936
Superannuation payable	31,488	27,680
	133,184	148,380

10 Employee entitlements

Provision for annual leave	91,241	71,803
Provision for long service leave	-	11,748
Provision for time in lieu	1,607	2,210
	92,848	85,761

11 Contracted liabilities

Government grants	446,745	125,830
	446,745	125,830

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

12 Reserves

BRASSN Reserve

The BRASSN Reserve has been created to quarantine the cumulative donations and funds raised to service the Ballarat Refugee and Asylum Seeker Support Network.

Piano Funds Reserve

The Piano Funds Reserve has been created to quarantine the cumulative donations and fundraising held to purchase a grand piano by the Association for future performances.

DFFH Cash Reserve

The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing provided a cash buffer of \$20,000 to the Association some years ago, when the Association was experiencing low levels of cash. This money is only to be used with the consent of the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing if there is an inability to make payments from other sources of cash, and is to be offset against future funding if not used.

Specific Purpose Funding Reserve

The specific purpose funding reserve is used to record the balances of unspent grant funding, where the grant funding has been recognised as revenue under Australian Accounting Standards.

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

13 Cash Flow Information

Reconciliation of surplus to cash provided by operating activities:

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Surplus (Deficit) for the year	38,865	(104,938)
<u>Non-cash flows in surplus:</u>		
- depreciation	33,267	18,880
- gain (loss) on disposal of plant and equipment	(20,595)	2,638
- loss on disposal of right of use assets	-	87
<u>Changes in assets and liabilities:</u>		
- (increase) decrease in trade and other receivables	8,794	17,079
- (increase) decrease in prepayments	5,842	(4,316)
- increase (decrease) in contracted liabilities	320,915	(43,607)
- decrease in trade and other payables	(15,196)	(82,045)
- increase in provisions	7,087	4,785
Cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>378,979</u>	<u>(191,437)</u>

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

14 Financial Risk Management

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Financial assets		
Cash and cash equivalents - at amortised cost	1,136,396	768,783
Trade and other receivables - at amortised cost	18,670	27,464
	<u>1,155,066</u>	<u>796,247</u>
Financial liabilities		
Trade and other payables - at amortised cost	133,184	148,380
	<u>133,184</u>	<u>148,380</u>

15 Auditors' Remuneration

Remuneration of the auditor, CountPro Audit Pty Ltd, for:

- auditing or reviewing the financial statements
- other services

8,050	7,625
785	2,250
<u>8,835</u>	<u>9,875</u>

16 Related Parties

The Association's main related parties are as follows:

Key management personnel - refer to Note 17.

Other related parties include close family members of key management personnel and entities that are controlled or significantly influenced by those key management personnel or their close family members.

17 Key Management Personnel Disclosures

The remuneration paid to the 5 key management personnel of the Association is \$515,606 (2024: 5 key management personnel totalling \$547,660).

18 Contingencies

In the opinion of the Committee, the Association did not have any contingencies at 30 June 2025 (30 June 2024: None).

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

ABN 24 776 744 519

Notes to the Financial Statements

For the Year Ended 30 June 2025

19 Events Occurring After the Reporting Date

No matter has arisen since the end of the financial year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Association, the results of those operations or the state of affairs of the Association in future financial years.

20 Association Details

The registered office and principal place of operation of the association is:
Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc
25 Barkly Street
Ballarat East VIC 3350

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

ABN 24 776 744 519

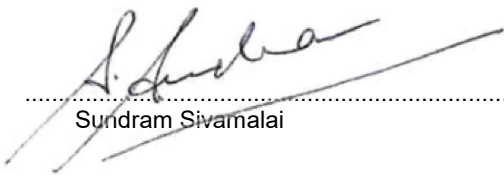
Statement by Members of the Committee

In the opinion of the committee:


1. the financial statements present a true and fair view of the financial position of Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc as at 30 June 2025 and its performance for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, and
2. at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is made in accordance with subsection 60.15(2) of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013* and a resolution of the committee by:

Chair


.....
Sundram Sivamalai

Treasurer


.....
Uphar Chhabra

24 September 2025

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

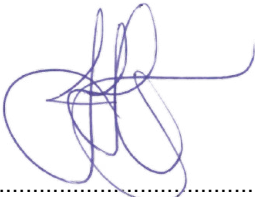
ABN 24 776 744 519

Auditors Independence Declaration To the Members of Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, during the year ended 30 June 2025, there have been no contraventions of:

- (i) the auditor independence requirements as set out in *Division 60 of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* in relation to the audit; and
- (ii) any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

CountPro Audit Pty Ltd
CountPro Audit Pty Ltd

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J. Hargreaves", written over a dotted line.

Jason D. Hargreaves
Director

180 Eleanor Drive, Lucas

23 September 2025

Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

Independent Audit Report to the members of Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc (the Association), which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2025, the statement of comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of material accounting policies, and statement by members of the committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report of the Association for the year ended 30 June 2025 presents fairly, in all material respects, including:

- i) giving a true and fair view of the Association's financial position as at 30 June 2025 and of its financial performance for the year ended;
- ii) complying with Australian Accounting Standards - Simplified Disclosures and Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Regulation 2013*.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Association in accordance with the auditor independence requirements of the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We confirm that the independence declaration required by Division 60 of the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, which has been given to the members of the Association, would be in the same terms if given to the members as at the time of this auditor's report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and the Committee

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Association's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the committee either intends to liquidate the Association or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The committee is responsible for overseeing the Association's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Association's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Association to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the committee regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

CountPro Audit Pty Ltd
CountPro Audit Pty Ltd

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jason D. Hargreaves', is written over a dotted line.

Jason D. Hargreaves
Director

180 Eleanor Drive, Lucas

25 September 2025