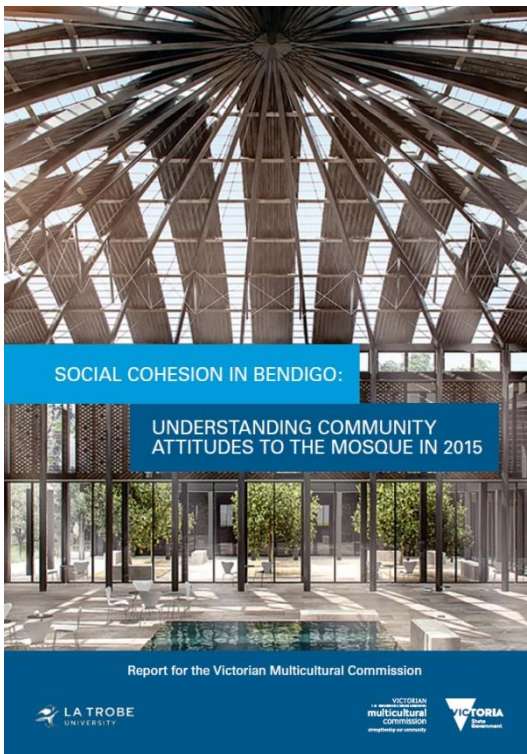




Civic Participation Kit

Engaging communities is about involving people and giving everyone an opportunity to participate.

Social Cohesion in Bendigo: Understanding community attitudes to the mosque in 2015



Key learnings and a way forward:

- * the mosque development created space for vibrant debates on the politics of diversity...but...
- * our democratic governance process is robust
- * the protests were ugly but at the same time intercultural understanding began
- * social interaction - a means to overcome community division
 - * engaging community members in intercultural conversations...

“The most important title is not ‘president’ or ‘prime minister’; the most important title is ‘citizen’”.

Barack Obama

Principles guiding the development of the ‘kit’:

* Civic engagement:

- * contributes to better decision making
- * real-life experiences of residents add value
- * Providing people with options to participate is beneficial

Our intention for the kit is to:

- * facilitate community conversations, and
- * include diverse groups

A civic participation kit in three parts

SECTION 1

NEW TO ENGAGEMENT?

- ▶ Begin at **Section 1** and work through the whole guide.
- ▶ This section gives you the story behind the kit and how you can use it to engage multicultural communities.

SECTION 2

CONFIDENT IN ENGAGEMENT?

- ▶ **Section 2** has checklist 'tools' to help you.
- ▶ This section will help you to plan, run and evaluate your own community engagement events.

SECTION 3

LOOKING FOR ENGAGEMENT IDEAS?

- ▶ **Section 3** includes additional resources and information.
- ▶ Sometimes you need to go to the community and meet them where they are.

Promoting civic understanding... taking the community along

BEING INCLUSIVE

- ▶ Refer to demographic and socio-cultural information
- ▶ Develop a communication strategy to provide information and support participation - translated materials, visual display
- ▶ Value contributions
- ▶ Engage purposefully
- ▶ Provide feedback

WHY IT HELPS

- ▶ Meets statutory human rights obligations
- ▶ Keeps the conversation and the process moving along
- ▶ Saves time and money in the long run
- ▶ Fosters social cohesion through inclusive civic participation
- ▶ Develops trust in the institution, establishes community connections

HOW TO PROCEED

- ▶ Think carefully about the best method - may be different for different groups
- ▶ Timing of consultation and venue - can at-home mothers and shift-workers attend?
- ▶ Factor in services to assist participation - language (interpreting, translation), childcare and other services as required.
- ▶ Seek collective solutions that build on common ground

Applying the Kit



- promote a culture of inclusive community engagement
 - involve multicultural communities
 - support civic understanding in the community
 - consider community opinion and knowledge
 - facilitate constructive dialogue between decision makers and the communities they serve.
- * Questions.....?
- * Comments.....?