



# National Community Hubs Program

2021 Year in Review

## From our CEO

This 2021 Year in Review tells the stories of our remarkable community hubs across another extraordinary year.

Someone once described our hubs as being like one set of core ingredients turned into 94 different cakes. The community hubs model is clear, tight and evidence-based. But each hub looks and feels different – flavoured by the school, the space and the community in which it is located.

With guidance from their school principal and regional hub support coordinator, each of our hub leaders draws these ingredients together and adds the right mix of programs and support services to suit their local conditions.

This ability to flex to local circumstances has always mattered, but in 2021 it was more critical than ever. We have always dealt with variability across the network: different-sized schools and different school systems; different types of migration and cultural mixes in communities; and different needs and services at the local level.

In 2021, the variability was amplified by COVID-19 related lockdowns across the network. Victorian and New South Wales (NSW) hubs experienced long lockdowns and continued to operate regardless, by offering remote programs, while our Queensland and South Australian hubs experienced sporadic (if any) closures.

Once again, this underlines the importance of allowing local decisions and giving school principals the power to decide when hubs can be physically open and when they need to be online.

The support provided to hub families affected by the pandemic throughout the year ranged from distributing food packages and other emergency relief, to hosting regular playgroups and social coffee catch ups (delivered either onsite, offsite or online).

In 2021, we welcomed 20 new schools to the network and farewelled three. Our plans for 2022 include opening more hubs in regional Australia.

From a funding perspective, we extended our agreements with the NSW, Queensland, and Victorian governments and received ongoing funding from the Department of Home Affairs.

Importantly, Deloitte Access Economics completed a comprehensive impact evaluation of the National Community Hubs Program, finding that hubs generated almost \$34 million in social benefits to Australian society in 2019. This represents an SROI of 2.2 – which means the hubs are returning \$2.20 in social value for every dollar invested in the program.

Deloitte's evaluation provides credible evidence to underpin what we already know: that hubs offer a significant return on investment to governments, schools and philanthropy.

Throughout 2021, our team continued to support the hubs network, improving online systems, finding new ways to bolster collaboration, and



investing in developing the skills and connections among hub leaders and support coordinators. Even when the national office and parts of the network were in lockdown, we were able to attend local network meetings, hold our national Connect. Share. Learn. online forum, and even host visits to hubs from local MPs – all online.

Thank you to everyone who helped keep our national community hubs network going, and growing, over the past year.

### **Dr Sonja Hood**

Chief Executive Officer  
Community Hubs Australia

## From our Chair

**“During COVID, when social isolation has quite literally paralysed our country, the hubs’ ability to continue to connect people has been absolutely remarkable.”**

When we first designed the community hubs model, we thought our biggest challenge would be getting schools to embrace the idea of running community programs on site.

As we approach signing on our 100th host school in 2022, that is clearly not a problem.

We thought that maybe families wouldn’t want to come to a hub located in a school. However, with more than 9,000 families a year attending our hubs, that is also clearly not an issue.

We also thought it might be difficult getting governments to fund the national hubs program. But we now have ongoing funding from the federal government, and funding from all state governments in our four current host states.

In 2020, when COVID first hit, we thought we had finally encountered a problem we wouldn’t be able to solve. After all, how do you run a place-based program when the place is closed?

Well, I have watched over the past two years as everyone across our hubs network has learned to run programs online or offsite. I have seen the home-delivered activity packs, heard about the countless direct phone calls to hub families, watched the videos and attended the online gatherings.

I have always known that the key to the hubs’ success has been the people working in and with them at the local level – our hub leaders and support coordinators, and our school principals and their staff.



Good people always find a way to keep doing good things, and that is exactly what I have witnessed across our hubs network over the past year.

Hubs have always been about connection. Since this program began, our hub teams have been creating connections for some of the most isolated people in our communities. This work is building stronger communities from the ground up.

During COVID, when social isolation has quite literally paralysed our country, the hubs’ ability to continue to connect people has been absolutely remarkable.

Of all the community support and development activities I am involved with, this is the one that has the most impact.

### **Peter Scanlon AO**

Chairman  
Community Hubs Australia

*\* This year’s message has been adapted from Peter’s address at the hub network’s Connect. Share. Learn. national online forum in September 2021.*

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*Photo: Spreading joy during an Eid celebration in one of the new hubs in the City of Brisbane.*

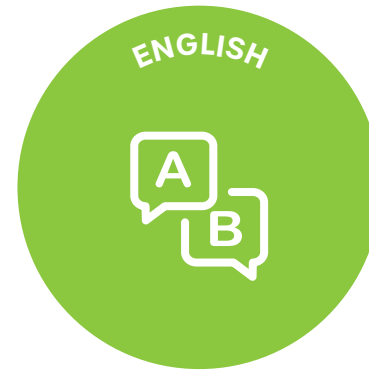
## Summary of hub activity in 2021



- **9,741 families** engaged with hubs
- **7,880 referrals** were made to external support services (e.g. family support, emergency aid, education and training, preschool and community health services)
- In response to continual lockdowns, **88% of hubs** ran online or offsite programs
- Hubs partnered with **297 local organisations**



- **92 hubs** delivered early years programs, either online or face-to-face
- **5,570 early years programs and activities** were attended **94,497** times (by children and adults)
- **660 referrals** were made to early childhood services, such as preschools
- **40+ hubs** ran targeted school-readiness programs



- **88 hubs** delivered English programs, either face-to-face or online
- **5,278 formal and informal English classes** were attended **43,083** times
- **1,300+ participants** attended English classes and activities
- **55 hubs** referred participants to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)
- **91% of English program participants** reported improved English competency



- **248 jobs** were secured by hub participants
- **724 people** volunteered on **17,351 occasions**
- **943 referrals** were made to training and educational services
- **1,584 formal and informal training sessions** were delivered

## What are community hubs?

Community hubs build social cohesion in Australia. They are welcoming places where families from diverse backgrounds, particularly mothers with preschool children, come to connect, share and learn.

The community hub model is a proven place-based and people-centred way of building connections and social and economic capital within culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

Hubs are embedded in primary schools and help bridge the gap between families and the wider community. They connect families with each other, with their school, and with local services and support.

Families take part in a variety of activities in the hubs, ranging from playgroups and social 'coffee and chat' sessions to learning conversational English and vocational skills. Attending a local hub helps improve participants' confidence, social connection, educational outcomes and employment potential.

### The National Community Hubs Program

The program is funded through a partnership between philanthropy (Scanlon Foundation), all tiers of government, and the education and community sectors.

Locating hubs in primary schools makes them safe and easily accessible places for women to visit with their young children.

The primary goal of the program is to improve the social and economic outcomes of migrant families and individuals.

The hubs focus on:

- **Engagement** – helping families connect and engage with their community.
- **Early childhood** – running playgroups and connecting families to local early years activities, to support the learning and development of preschool children, improve children's social skills, build relationships between families and prepare children for school.
- **English** – providing migrants and refugees with opportunities to learn and practise English through both formal and informal programs.
- **Vocational pathways** – building pathways to employment by encouraging volunteering and providing adults with access to formal and informal training opportunities.

Each hub is managed by the school in which it is based. Decisions about the way the hub operates and the programs it offers are made at the local level. This flexibility enables each hub leader to develop the space and the program offering to address the needs of their host school and the local community.

Hubs are clustered within local government areas (LGAs). Within each LGA, a local organisation serves as the support agency, providing coordination and connection.

Community Hubs Australia, a non-profit organisation committed to helping improve social cohesion in Australia, is responsible for overseeing the delivery, reporting and continual improvement of the program at the national level.

## The community hubs network

The community hubs network commenced in 2011 with nine pilot sites - all of which are still running - and by the end of the 2021 school year, comprised 94 sites across four states.

The hubs network grew considerably during 2021. Twenty new hubs were established: two in NSW, nine in Queensland, two in South Australia, and seven in Victoria.

Across all states, and in NSW and Victoria in particular, new hubs opened in the midst of highly unpredictable operating environments. For example, some Victorian hubs opened during the brief 'window' between that state's lockdowns in Term 2.

It was inspiring to see how quickly newly appointed hub leaders and their host schools got on with the task of connecting the hubs with their local communities, whether in lockdown or not. They offered 'soft entry' programs such as playgroups and 'Coffee and Chat' sessions to attract families into the physical and, when necessary, virtual spaces.

Three hubs left the network during 2021 and will be replaced in 2022. In addition, three new hubs in regional Queensland will open their doors in Term 1, 2022.

The map on the following page shows the network in 2021 and our plans for 2022.



### Community hubs network snapshot



94

**active community hubs,**  
including **20 new hubs** in 2021



99

**hub leaders**



4

**states:** NSW, QLD, SA, VIC



22

**metro and regional LGAs**



11

**support agencies**

## A year of growth

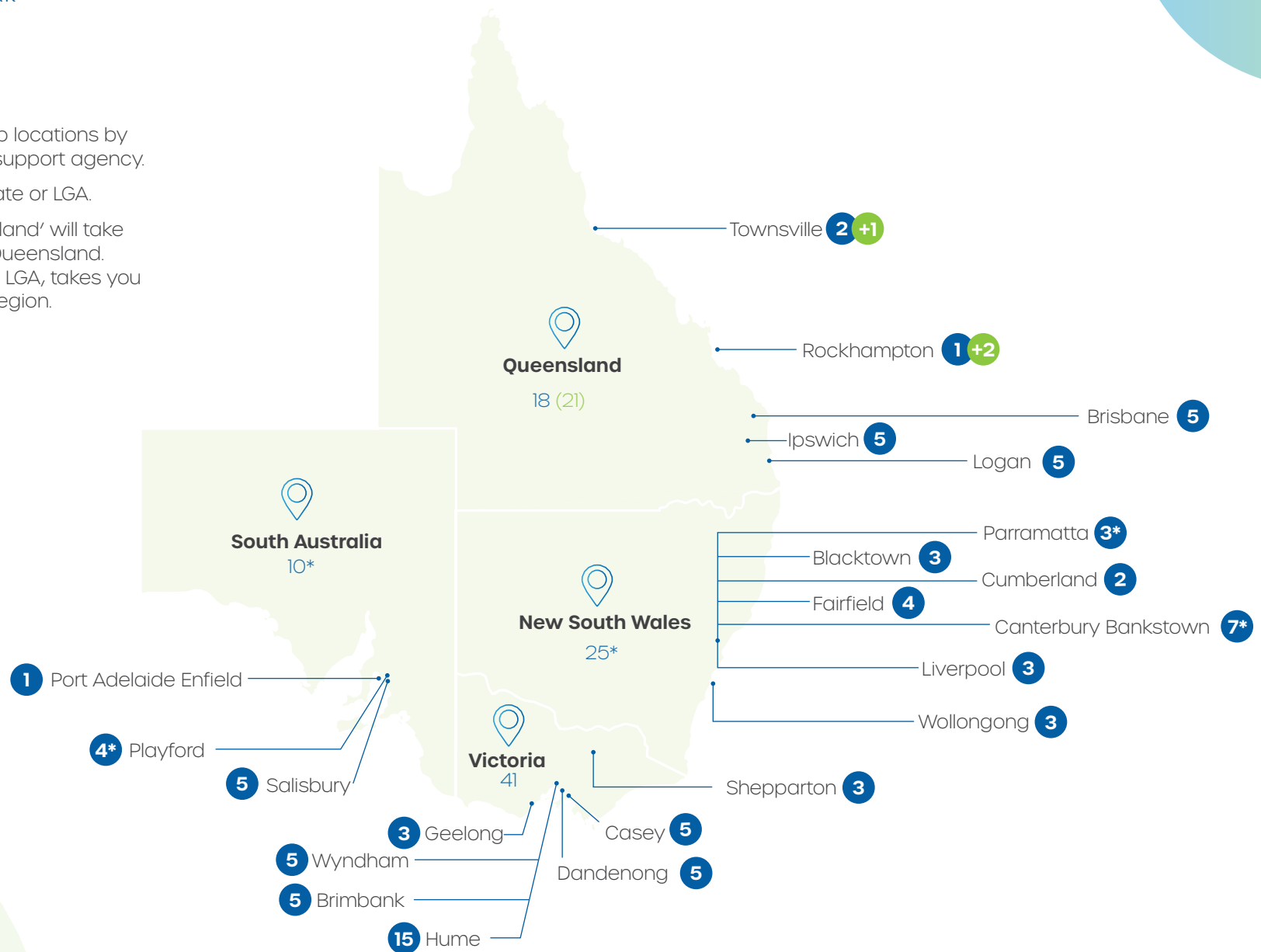
The map on this page shows hub locations by state, LGA and their designated support agency.

To see schools, click on either state or LGA.

For example, clicking on 'Queensland' will take you to the list of hub schools in Queensland. Clicking on 'Rockhampton' as an LGA, takes you to the list of hub schools in that region.

**94\*** active hubs in 2021

**+3** new hubs opening in 2022



\* Three hubs left the network in 2021.  
One from Canterbury Bankstown NSW, one from Parramatta NSW and one from Playford SA.

## The joy of a new hub

Watson Road State School in Brisbane was one of 20 new schools to open their hub doors in 2021.

Locally-based Community Queensland supported the school to engage with families and the local community. Like many new hubs, hub leader Louise Armstrong spent time in her first year promoting the hub and hosting events and organising early childhood activities.



*Photos: Above, attending a Meet and Greet event at the Watson Road State School hub, from left to right, principal, Murray Branch; hub leader, Louise Armstrong; and Graham Perrett MP, Federal Member for Moreton.*

*Left, children having fun inside the newly opened community hub at Watson Road State School in Brisbane, Queensland.*



## Who comes to hubs

Community hubs are highly successful at reaching and engaging culturally diverse women caring for young children.

These women can otherwise be difficult for government and community services to access.

Hubs offer programs such as playgroups; informal coffee catchups; cooking, sewing, craft and gardening sessions; exercise classes; and English tuition supported by childminding, to attract mums and their family members into the hub.



**85%** were women with dependent children



They spoke **80** different languages



**75%** of adults were aged between 25–44



**30%** spoke little or no English



Hub families came from **118** nations



**47%** arrived in Australia from 2011 onwards

Source: National Community Hubs Program: Census 2017/18



Photo: Women and children in the Learning Together program at Holy Eucharist Catholic Primary School Hub in Brimbank, Victoria.

The program was delivered in partnership with VICSEG New Futures and provides English classes for parents while their children enjoy an early learning and care program in an adjacent room.

## The social impact of hubs: Deloitte's evaluation

In early 2021, Deloitte Access Economics undertook a comprehensive social return on investment (SROI) evaluation of the community hubs network, concluding that it generated almost \$34 million in social benefits to Australian society in 2019. This represents an SROI of 2.2 – a return of \$2.20 for every dollar invested.

The study demonstrates the significant benefits and positive long-term impacts that hubs provide for children, families, schools and communities across all four pillars of the program: engagement, early childhood, English and vocational pathways.

A major finding was the hubs' contribution to improved quality of life of hub participants, which was assessed as returning more than \$20 million in social value. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the overall monetised impact.

Deloitte described the SROI finding as a conservative estimate of the hubs' impact, as it reflects only those benefits that could be reliably monetised at the time of the analysis.

CHA is looking at ways to improve data collection across the network so other benefits, such as providing families with better access to health and support services, can also be measured.

The full report is available on our website: [communityhubs.org.au/impact-evidence](https://communityhubs.org.au/impact-evidence).

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**“One of the most remarkable findings for us was how universal the benefits of the hubs were – it didn’t matter how long a hub had been running, or where it was located.”**

**Luke Condon**, Partner,  
Deloitte Access Economics

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Figure 1: National Community Hubs Program SROI evaluation- summary findings



**Deloitte's evaluation of the hubs program has been so important for us. It validates the work of every one of our hubs across Australia, and it has given hub teams and school principals a tangible understanding of the impact they have every day.**

**The five governments we work with now have even more robust evidence of their return on investment, and it's helping policy teams in government to give their colleagues in finance departments the evidence they need to keep funding us.**

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**Dr Sonja Hood**, CEO, Community Hubs Australia

## 2021 achievements: Engagement

Community hubs seek to engage with culturally and linguistically diverse families, particularly women with young children, to connect them with each other, the host school, local support services and the wider community.

Each hub leader identifies the needs of their surrounding community and tailors the hub's programs to directly respond to those needs.

### Community-level flexibility works well

This locally responsive and flexible approach was essential during 2021, as hubs across the network experienced vastly different and constantly changing operating environments depending on the impact the pandemic was having on their state and surrounding community.

As shown in Figure 2 on the following page, the first half of the year saw hubs in NSW and Victoria running program activity in a myriad of ways – place-based, offsite and online. This was largely as a result of hubs continuing to follow government guidelines from the previous year.

From Term 3 onwards, all states were affected, to some degree, by COVID-19 lockdowns. Hubs in NSW were hard hit and shifted to delivering all activity online, Queensland and South Australia blended delivery between place-based and online, while Victoria continued to deliver activity in a hybrid way.

Importantly, post lockdowns, 61% of hubs returned to pre-lockdown participation levels – testament to their ability to adapt quickly and sustain their engagement with families.

In many instances, hubs became the 'social glue' that kept families, schools and services connected during another challenging year. Adapting to the ever-changing rules and restrictions at federal, state and school level became 'business as usual'.



### Engagement snapshot

 **9,741**

**families** engaged with hubs

 **422,608**

**attendances** by children and adults were recorded at activities throughout the year

 **7,880**

**referrals** were made to external support services

(e.g. emergency relief, maternal and child health, early childhood intervention, preschools, domestic violence, financial counselling)

 **297**

**local organisations** partnered with hubs

 **88%**

**hubs** ran online or offsite programs

## 2021 ACHIEVEMENTS: ENGAGEMENT

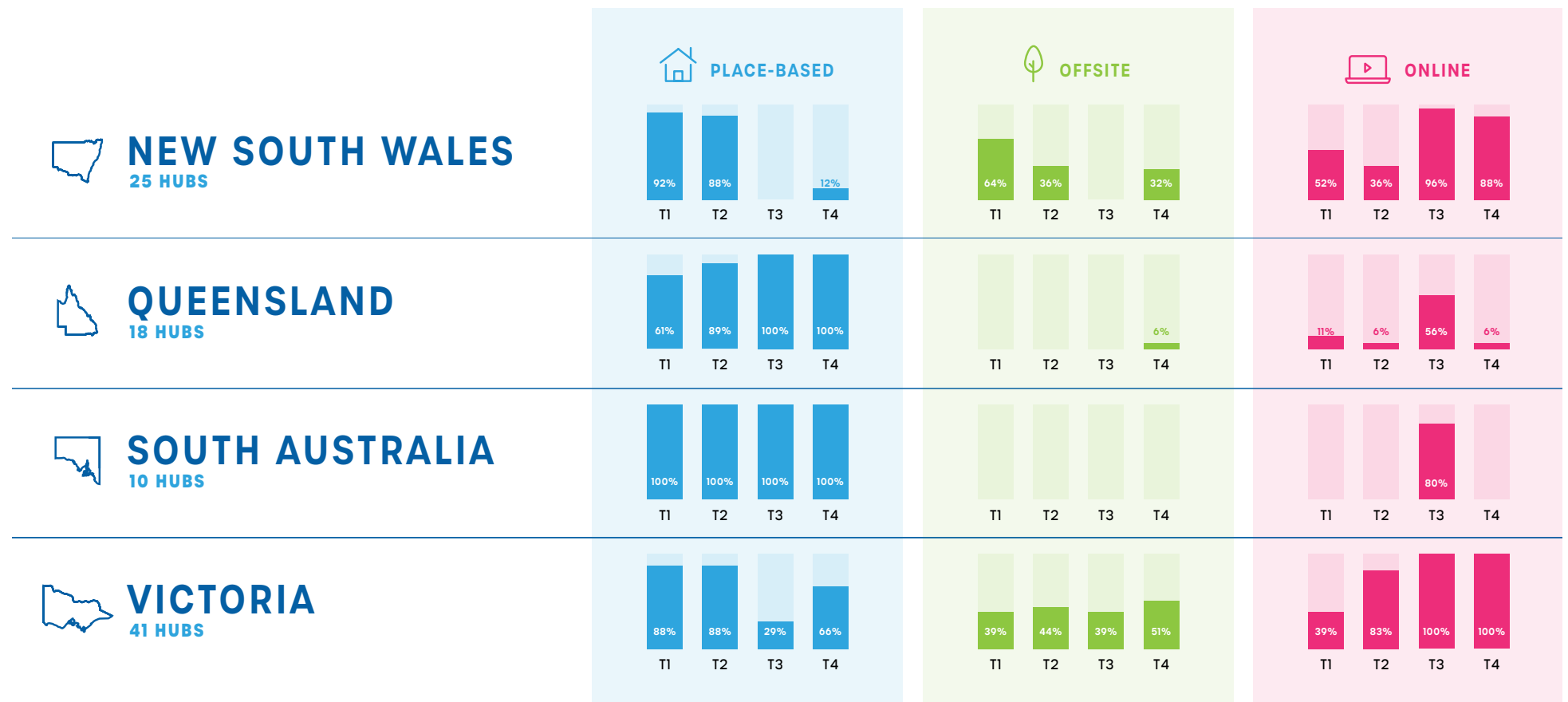
Throughout the year, hubs adjusted where they held their programs, depending on the pandemic regulations in their state.

The graphs below show, by state, the percentage of hubs that ran programs as either place-based, offsite or online - or a combination of

these, across each term. For example, in Term 1, NSW hubs ran place-based, offsite and online activities. However, given significant COVID-19 restrictions across Term 3, hub activity shifted online. Then, as restrictions eased in Term 4, hubs returned to running activity in a variety of ways.

The following pages provide just some of the many ways hubs provided engagement for families in 2021.

**Figure 2 :** Where hubs ran programs in 2021, by school term



Our purpose is geared around supporting families and building the community. Community Hubs Australia enables us more fire power to embed this strategy into everything we do.

We see this flourishing of engagement. [Families] know they will come, with no judgement, and they will be loved. Parents light up when they get here. They have a willingness to share their stories because they know they will be listened to and empathised with.

**Paul Sedunary**, Principal, Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School, Hume, Victoria

For many migrants, community hubs provide families with their first opportunity to engage in society, in a comfortable and non-judgemental environment, and with people who have shared experiences...

Deloitte social return on investment evaluation, p.19

*Photo: Women engaged in learning at a hub in South Australia.*



## Symbolic mural enriches hub space

Seven women from Westmead Public School hub in Cumberland, NSW, helped design and paint a stunning wall mural inside the hub, which was completed in June.

The women worked in partnership with artist and illustrator, Christina Huynh to produce the artwork.

Christina initially met with the women to find out what the hub space means to them, and to brainstorm ideas for the design. The final artwork features:

- several different flowers – representing the different cultures of the women involved
- chrysalises – symbolising the ladies when they first arrive in the hub
- butterflies – symbolising how the hub helps each woman gradually develop until she metamorphoses and spreads her wings as a butterfly, and
- an abstract impression of a woman's face embedded in the design.

With Christina's guidance and support, each of the women painted part of the design. All artists signed their name on the mural.

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**“One comes into a new space... apprehensive, uncertain or curious, and then discovers support, friendship and a sense of belonging. Eventually... with the help from experiences shared at the community hub, many leave with newfound skills and confidence.**

**The piece comprises predominantly green hues to suggest life, harmony, renewal, growth, and our natural world.”**

**Christina Huynh,**  
Mural artist

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**“The mural project bought a great sense of pride to those involved. Everyone is bringing their family and friends to see it.**

**The room the mural is in has become a focal point and a place to connect. People are drawn to the room and to the mural. That room now hosts a playgroup, as well as many social gatherings and meetings.”**

**Kimberley Massey,**  
Westmead Public School hub leader

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“We had an open discussion essentially about what the community hub means to each individual woman. In the discussion, there were recurring ideas that in a hub a sense of togetherness, support, unity and diversity was nurtured. A few mothers also described the hub as a place to showcase their creative talents and a great way to share knowledge, skills and customs from their countries of origin.

They often referred to the community hub as a place of familiarity and a sense of safety – a home.

One mother shared that the experience of coming to the hub, through the entirety of their child’s schooling years, is much like the metamorphosis of the butterfly.”

*Photo: The mural inside Westmead Public School hub has become an uplifting focal point for hub families.*



## Making mindfulness more accessible

Leading mindfulness organisation Smiling Mind collaborated with two Victorian hubs during the year to produce mindfulness meditation programs and resources in Arabic and Dari. The programs are available on the free Smiling Mind app.

Hub leaders and volunteers from Dandenong South Primary School and Roxburgh Rise Primary School worked with Smiling Mind's development team to co-design and record five new mindfulness meditations in both languages. Hub volunteers served as voice artists for both recordings.

An additional audio lesson and a bilingual booklet were produced to accompany each new language resource. They are designed to introduce non-English speakers to mindfulness concepts and benefits.

The collaboration began after hub leaders identified the challenge of finding in-language resources to support mindfulness and meditation practices within non-English speaking families.

The project was supported with funding from the Scanlon Foundation.

**"We've developed two excellent community-led programs in different languages, which will be used at a broader community level, helping to bridge the language barrier and cultural gap that can be present when disseminating health resources among culturally and linguistically diverse communities."**

**What became evident from the co-design was that participating hub members (all migrant women and mothers) were incredibly selfless, often putting the needs and wellbeing of their children and families first, ahead of their own wellbeing.**

**This insight led us, with the strong support of hub members, to embed concepts of self-compassion and gratitude into the resources we developed together."**

**Tim Thomaidis**, Project Manager, Smiling Mind



## Welcoming and supporting Afghan refugees

The rapidly unfolding humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan led to an influx of Afghan refugees arriving on humanitarian visas in the second half of the year.

Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs are home to a vibrant community of Hazaras – one of the largest ethnic groups of Afghan nationals seeking asylum in Australia.

The hub leaders and support coordinator in the cities of Dandenong and Casey banded together to work with the local Afghan community and support services to provide wraparound support for the new arrivals. This included connecting them with local Afghan families; providing translation support; and inviting them to participate in hub activities such as English classes, playgroup, mental health and wellbeing sessions, and information sessions.

Dandenong West Primary School hub leader, Rahima Rizai, herself a member of the local Afghan community, is passionately committed to helping connect newly arrived refugees with local Afghan families and appropriate support services.

Rahima, who speaks five languages other than English, including Hindi, Urdu, Hazaragi Persian and Dari, was invited by other hub leaders to provide compassionate support to some of their Afghan hub families, who were struggling with the traumatic situation in Afghanistan.

"Our hub is helping people who are newly arrived, and also those who have families in Afghanistan and are trying to support them," says Rahima.

"We have been supporting Afghan community members from other hubs as well, and they have been asking their friends and families to reach out to our hub.

"Our relationships with other hub leaders are very close and strong; we have been meeting every month to discuss and share ideas and suggestions," adds Rahima. "We are pleased to feel trusted by this lovely community and will extend this trust day by day."

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**"Rahima Rizai has been involved in supporting the Afghan community from day one and has been an invaluable support for the whole hubs network.**

**Rahima not only shares her language skills and cultural understandings with our team and with affected hub families, she also shares her heart and soul."**

**Jana Hovic**, Dandenong/Casey hubs support coordinator, The Smith Family, Victoria

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*Photo: Rahima Rizai (left), hub co-leader at Dandenong West Primary School hub, Victoria, with two women from the local Afghan community.*

## Supporting families in lockdown

Hubs worked with government agencies, community services and local businesses to convey information and support to vulnerable culturally diverse families impacted by extended COVID-19 related lockdowns.

In NSW and Victoria in particular, community hubs served as trusted channels for providing important public health updates and distributing emergency food relief.

## Promoting vaccination programs

In addition, hubs in COVID-19 hotspots stepped up to help health and community services convey reliable, in-language information about COVID-19 vaccinations to culturally diverse families.

For example, Springvale Rise Primary School hub in Dandenong, Victoria, collaborated with local health and multicultural services to promote the uptake of vaccinations among local families.

"Through our community hub, we worked with local pharmacists, Monash Health, South East Community Links and others to fast track the vaccination program, as our community was such a high risk," explains Principal, Debbie Cottier.

"Our focus was on reaching out to all our families by phoning them to have in-language conversations, with the aim of building their knowledge about vaccinations and supporting them to access vaccination programs."

## Bringing the hub to the community

The Villawood East Public School hub, in Canterbury Bankstown, NSW, took to the streets as a 'mobile hub' after the physical hub space had to close due to lockdown.

**"We wanted to make sure parents didn't feel more isolated, as they were already vulnerable," says hub leader, Sanjalin Krishan.**

**"So if parents couldn't come to the hub, we could take the mobile hub to them."**

The mobile hub project was supported by a grant from the City of Canterbury Bankstown.



*Photo: Hub leader, Sanjalin Krishan, and helper Omar welcome hub families during one of the outdoor mobile hub sessions.*



### Food donations provide welcome relief

The pandemic made access to fresh food challenging for many families in Sydney's inner west. With this in mind, the Parramatta West Public School hub in NSW ran a 'hamper drive' in October.

With generous donations from two local businesses, the hub handed out 100 free food hampers, pictured here, to families in need. The hampers were packed full of fresh fruit, vegetables and other nutritious foods.

In Melbourne, St Albans Heights Primary School hub teamed up with Eat Up Australia to distribute food packages to families struggling to put food on the table.

They also provided the school with lunch packs of sandwiches for students who would otherwise go hungry during the day.

*Below, a St Albans Heights Primary School student takes a donated box of food home for her family.*

*Photo: With generous donations from two local businesses, the Parramatta West Public School hub in NSW handed out 100 free food hampers, pictured here, to families in need. The hampers were packed full of fresh fruit, vegetables and other nutritious foods.*



## 2021 achievements: Early childhood

Embedding community hubs in primary schools enables them to support school readiness while also connecting migrant families into their local school community.

Ensuring young children start school ready to learn has lifelong impacts and delivers outcomes for the children, their families, the school and the local community. Many families who come to hubs haven't accessed any other early childhood services.

Hubs provide engaging early years programs for preschool children and connect families into local early childhood services. Our established hubs run playgroup – a cornerstone hub program that provides instant connection for children and for parents.

In 2021, many hub leaders once again had to find creative ways to keep preschool children engaged in hub programs while the physical hub spaces were closed due to lockdown restrictions. This included running outdoor and online playgroups and delivering creative activity packs direct to family homes.

In Queensland and South Australia, which were less affected by COVID-related lockdowns, place-based early years activities were able to continue largely uninterrupted.

The following pages show just some of the ways hubs provided early childhood support for families in 2021.

*Photo: Children enjoying some hands-on play at a hub in New South Wales.*



### Early childhood snapshot

 **92**

**hubs** delivered early years programs, either online or face-to-face

 **5,570**

**early years programs and activities** were attended **94,497** times (by children and adults)

 **660**

**referrals** were made to early childhood services

 **40+**

**hubs** ran targeted school-readiness programs

Overall, parents are more likely to be engaged in their child's education after participating in a community hub.

This includes: being more likely to read to their child in English at home; being more likely to engage and talk to their child's teacher about their education; and being more likely to support their child with their homework in the house.

Deloitte social return on investment evaluation, p.30

Children who come through the hub from an early age are confident, their language and peer interaction are highly developed. They don't have issues at prep that many children of the same age experience.

**Alison Bretag**, Principal, St Dominic's Primary School, Broadmeadows, Hume, Victoria

*Photo: Ahmad cooks up a special treat in a hub's outdoor 'mud kitchen' at St Georges Road Primary School Shepparton, in regional Victoria.*

*Community Hubs Australia provided the hub with a grant to pay for the fun new play space and a potting table near the hub's edible community garden.*



## Playgroups play a vital role

Attending a playgroup continues to be the main reason families visit their local community hub. Our playgroups are also the first early childhood programs the vast majority of hub families engage with after arriving in Australia.

Hub playgroups support parental engagement and learning as well as providing a vibrant, immersive learning experience for young children.

Hubs in Queensland and South Australia were able to host on-site playgroups for most of the school year, while hubs in NSW and Victoria adapted to offering remote programs during lockdown periods in Terms 2, 3 and 4.

*Photo: Learning to climb during an outdoor playgroup activity at St Brigid's hub in Kilburn, South Australia.*



## Daily playgroups offered in Hume

Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School hub in Hume, Victoria, has a strong focus on early childhood learning and ran daily playgroup sessions during 2021.

The hub's early years program had around 200 children registered, plus a waiting list.

"We did a lot of research into why playgroups are so important," says Nancy Greige, Good Samaritan's early years leader.

"We run seven playgroups a week, with two bicultural workers to assist with learning and translation.

"It's a very comfortable, joyful environment where the children are happy," adds Nancy. "That's what parents want, too."



Photo: Children from Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School hub, Hume, Victoria, enjoying playgroup.



### Mini Olympics a winner

Enthusiastic competitors from the Young Explorers Playgroup at Marsden State School hub in Logan, Queensland, took part in a Mini Olympics event in July.

The sports included balloon, sack and egg and spoon races; an obstacle course; and a bean bag toss.

"We loved the Olympics morning – it brought families together for a fun, connecting, competitive day," says hub leader, Penny Dearlove. "The medal presentation brought tears to many parents' eyes as the children stood on the podium accepting their medals (and chocolate frogs) proudly.

"I was extremely proud of their efforts and sportsmanship."



Over the years playgroup has provided a soft entry into school where families can practice English, share their stories (including their hopes and fears), gather information about the wider community, and learn with and from the friendships, which are ignited through parenting, lived experience and similarities of cultural practices.

Building a strong sense of belonging and connection to place makes a difference to living well in Australia.

**Carole Smith**, community hub & preschool room coordinator, St Augustine's Parish School, Salisbury, South Australia

*Photo: Children having fun at a hub playgroup in Queensland.*



I feel better when I visit playgroup as I learn techniques and strategies for engaging children at home.

Hub parent

My life would have been a lot harder as I was not aware of any other local help before joining playgroup. We have accessed lots of services through the group. Having support at the right time has been very good for me.

Hub parent

## Sharing a 'universal language'

Community hubs in Logan, Queensland, offered a selection of music-based programs during the year to support young children's language skills and development.

Sessions were held with music therapists and performers such as Happy Feet Fitness and Itty Bitty Stars. Parents joined in the singing and dancing, helping to build their own language skills and enabling them to continue the fun and learning with their children at home.

The music programs were made possible with support from the Logan City Council's First Five Forever Program.

## Modelling educational play for parents

Hub leaders from four new hubs in Wyndham, Victoria (which joined the hubs network in 2021) completed training in how to help parents support their preschool child's development through play.

Hub parents know how to nurture their child's development by providing food and love. However, many do not see themselves as also being 'teachers' during their child's early developmental years. They may not know how to actively help their child develop language and comprehension by engaging in interactive play and building learning opportunities into everyday life.

*Photos: Anne Flood, a music therapist from Musicability and the team from Happy Feet Fitness, sing and dance with the children from Woodridge North State School hub in Logan, Queensland.*

This professional development taught the hub leaders how to guide parents to use simple techniques to build a learning relationship with their child through play and by making observations during everyday activities such as eating a meal, changing a nappy or walking down the street.

Seeing the hub leader modelling the types of activities they can do with their child, helps parents recognise the value it can bring. This approach has been particularly successful with parents from Wyndham's Burmese, Chinese and Vietnamese communities.



## 2021 achievements: English

Supporting migrant women to develop their English language competency is a critical area of focus within our community hubs.

Many women who come to a hub to learn English have been in Australia for a long time and have spent several years focusing on raising a young family and/or working, rather than addressing their language needs.

For newer arrivals, the hub is a safe place to learn and practise English. The less-formal conversational English programs offered by hubs help build each person's confidence and competency in English. They also serve as pathways to more formal learning opportunities, such as the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), with some hubs offering the program onsite.

The hub environment is extremely effective for connecting people from diverse cultural and educational backgrounds into opportunities to improve their English.

Community hubs enable adults to learn English in an informal, welcoming and motivating environment filled with peer encouragement and support. They also provide extra opportunities for those already undertaking AMEP to engage in conversational English.

Learning English enables women to better support their child's education, engage in social and civic activities, gain new qualifications and skills, and access volunteer and paid work opportunities.

Time and again, we see the confidence and social connectedness of individuals completely transform once the language barrier has been addressed.

Additionally, many hubs provide access to childminding so that parents can focus on learning a new language.

### Activities included:



formal, beginners, intermediate and advanced English programs



conversational English programs

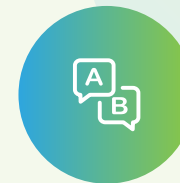


informal English practice sessions



publishing personal stories written by hub participants

The following pages include just some of the many ways that conversational English was provided across the network in 2021.



### English snapshot

 **88**

**hubs** offered English programs

 **5,278**

**English classes and activities attended** - an increase of **58%** on 2020

 **55**

**hubs** provided childminding alongside their English class

 **55**

**hubs** referred participants to external AMEP, and 2 hubs ran AMEP on site

 **1,300+**

**participants** attended English classes and activities

 **>50%**

**of English programs** were delivered remotely due to COVID-19 related lockdowns

## Funding boosts conversational English

In late 2020, as part of a wider package of measures to improve English proficiency among migrants and refugees, the Australian Government committed \$1 million to provide more conversational English programs across the community hubs network.

This funding enabled us to significantly increase the number of conversational English programs offered by hubs during 2021. It also enabled hubs to continue to provide childminding facilities to support mums who otherwise would not have been able to attend classes.

The hub setting is perfectly suited to learning conversational English based on topics encountered in everyday life. For example, themed classes during 2021 focused on cooking, gardening, sewing, preparing job applications,

conversing with school staff, and discussing health topics such as COVID vaccinations.

Across the year, 1,300 people attended English classes in their hub. Most participants in hub English classes were women, making up over 95% of the cohort each term. Some English participants arrived in Australia in the 1960s and others as recently as 2021, however nearly 80% of participants arrived between 2010 – 2019. Hub participants reported nearly 100 unique languages they speak at home, with the most common being Arabic, Dari, Persian and Vietnamese.

A significant majority of participants reported consistent improvement in their English skills and their confidence as a result of learning English in the hub. More than 80% of participants each term also reported that their confidence in themselves and in communicating with others had 'improved' or 'improved a lot'.

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**“Community hubs are more flexible and easier to attend for migrant families, compared to programs held in learning institutions ... Community hubs have a broader variety of opportunities to learn English, including formal and informal programs, skill development programs, and English programs of varying difficulty. This is different to TAFE, which teaches English in a more academic structure.”**

**Deloitte social return on investment evaluation, p.26-7**

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*Photo: An English class at Aitkenvale State School hub in Townsville, Queensland.*

One of the things that became clear when we were visiting hubs early on was that women were having real trouble accessing English classes, and really wanted to learn.

There are lots of reasons why women won't go to AMEP when they first come to Australia, usually around family responsibilities or children. So, the opportunity for people to come to a hub and practice and improve their English was really clear.

Learning a new language in a new country is tough. But when you create a learning environment that's supportive and welcoming, people will come.

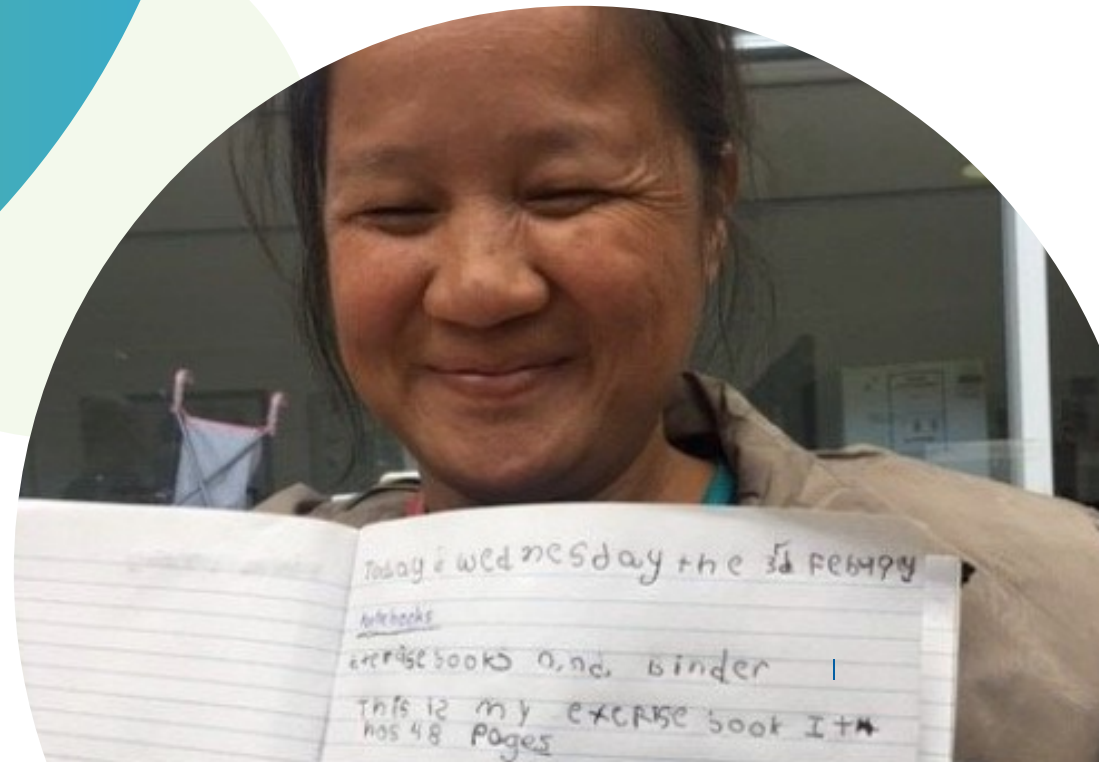
Dr Sonja Hood, CEO, Community Hubs Australia

### Bee finally goes to school

Bee Htoo was not given the opportunity to go to school as a child.

Now a mum herself, Bee is learning English at Wyndham Park Primary School hub in Wyndham, Victoria.

Here, Bee proudly displays what she wrote during her first English class in early 2021.



## Publishing personal stories

With funding from the South Australian Government, three hubs in the City of Salisbury engaged hub women in 'Writing Our Story' projects during the year.

The initiative aimed to improve each participant's English speaking, writing and reading skills, while also building mutual understanding and strengthening relationships.

Ten women in Karrendi Primary School hub's English Conversation class were introduced to the idea of personal autobiographical story writing. A wellbeing and safety counsellor was also involved, to help the women discuss and work through any challenges and feelings that arose as they were writing their stories.

The group worked collaboratively to compile their stories into a book, which was published in Term 1.

Following the success of the project, the activity was extended to two other Salisbury-based hubs at St Augustine's Parish School and Para Vista Primary School. Published stories from all three hubs were featured in an exhibition at Salisbury Library.

*Photo (Below): One of the women, Tahira Qalandari, who contributed her personal story, visits the 'Our Story: A Writing Project' exhibition in Salisbury Library.*

*Photo (Bottom Left): Women from St Augustine's Parish School hub proudly display their published book at the end of the 'Writing Our Story' project.*

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**"This project ... has given these women a voice and the opportunity to reflect, not only on themselves, but to also convey themselves to others.**

**They have used their backgrounds and memories to talk about themselves, which has also helped to get to know each other in the English class and build a sense of a community of powerful learners.**

**The pride, self-confidence and self-worth that these women have exhibited and that are portrayed from their stories and writing is tremendous."**

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**Hayley Wilmer**, Karrendi Primary School hub leader, Salisbury, South Australia

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## English stories from across the network

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**"I have started learning English at Smithfield Public School hub in 2019. It was good for my English level, and it is at my kid's school. And the teacher helps us to understand the language very much.**

**Thank you for community (hubs) to help us to learn English. Thank you so much!"**

**Dole**, hub participant, Smithfield Public School hub, Fairfield, New South Wales

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**"I would like to share my story with the community hub at Wollongong Public School.**

**I joined the English class program at the community hub in 2018. The initial purpose was to improve my English there, but I had to say that it was not just a place to learn English!**

**After being with them for almost three years, it was a great place for me to gain a good understanding of the local traditional cultures and build up friendships with people from different backgrounds and cultures. Apart from that, it helped me enhance my confidence to communicate with people.**

**The last but not the least, it had tailored sessions to meet students' needs, such as providing guidance of how to make a professional resume for job hunting. Thanks to those gainings, I luckily received a full-time job offer in February 2021 as a production planner. I would like to say thank you to WPS hub for the great English program. It not only helped me improve my English, but also helped build up my confidence to talk to people."**

**Zoe**, hub participant, Wollongong Public School hub, Wollongong, New South Wales

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*Photo: Learning English at a hub in South Australia.*

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**"I started coming to Woodlinks back in May. It has helped me to listen better. I was very shy and now I speak more and feel more comfortable chatting with others. I understand more when people talk to me, and I try to ask questions and clarify when I do not understand."**

**Conversational English program participant,**  
Woodlinks State School hub, Ipswich, Queensland

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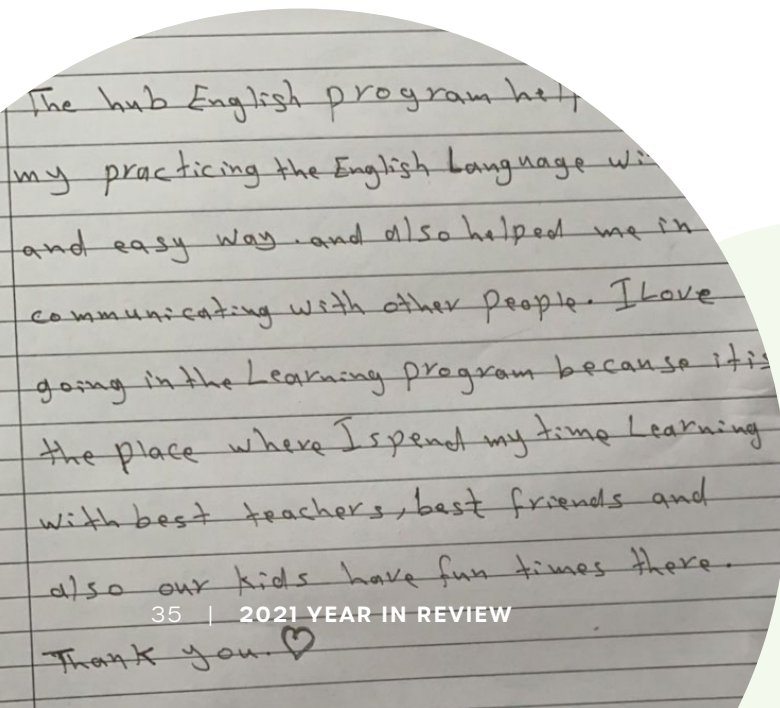
**"The English programs that we have operating through the hub are giving our parents the confidence to participate more fully in school life. So, things like parent-teacher interviews ... volunteering in the tuck shop ... just coming to the school and talking about fees ...**

**We have actually employed two of our African ladies back in the hub. Because they have been through our English classes, they have been able to upskill themselves in English and in Certificate IV in Educational Support Training, and then we employ them back in our playgroup.**

**So, some really amazing stories of how we are actually employing people within our community; those mums and dads who have been through those programs in the hub."**

**Matt Mackinlay,** (former) school principal, St Paul's Catholic Primary School, Logan, Queensland

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*Photo: Feedback from an English student in a Melbourne hub.*

### When words fail ...

Learning and practising English happens in many formal and informal ways across the hubs network, including among women attending playgroups.

Pam Cooper, former hub leader at Hampton Park Primary School in Casey, Victoria took this photo in early 2021 of three hub mums helping each other translate and fill out a form in English during a playgroup session.

"Today I had 28 children and their parents come to a playgroup, many with no English, but all trying to translate to help each other," says Pam. "They are so proud that they can help each other, it warmed my heart."

*Photo: Women helping each other to translate and complete a form at Hampton Park Primary School hub, Casey, Victoria.*

*Photo: Women from Meadows Primary School hub in Hume, Victoria, learn gardening-related words and practice their conversational English, while potting plants.*

Chester Hill Public School hub in Canterbury Bankstown, NSW, offered the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) at beginners and intermediate levels during the year, with classes delivered online during COVID-related lockdowns.

Hub leader, Anisha Singh Thapa, says the hub's efforts to stay in regular contact with families, including running English programs remotely, were rewarded with strong engagement in the AMEP.

**"We were amazed to see that all the Afghan ladies have continued attending and more people are showing interest to join," says Anisha. "AMEP has also offered counselling support for Afghan participants, and we also have established a referral pathway to STARTTS for the Afghan families in the school."**

## 2021 achievements: Vocational pathways

Women regularly encounter challenges returning to the workforce after spending several years at home caring for young children. Migrant and refugee mothers can face additional barriers to workforce participation.

These women may not have established professional networks in this country. Any qualifications and experience they obtained in their homeland may not be recognised in Australia. They can also encounter language and cultural barriers.

These factors can significantly undermine a woman's confidence when it comes to pursuing further study and looking for work.

Women across the community hubs network continually tell us they want to improve their job readiness and find paid work. Hubs help them to do this by:

- providing English language tuition and practice
- helping with resumes, job applications and preparing for interviews
- connecting them with vocational training and volunteering opportunities, and
- linking them to job opportunities in the host school and local community.

Despite hub operations once again being disrupted by the impacts of COVID-19, particularly in NSW and Victoria, the network continued to connect hub families into study, training, volunteering and job opportunities.

The following pages show just some examples of how hubs provided support to women who were learning new skills and preparing to enter the workforce in 2021.

*Photo: Computer skills training at Paralowie R-12 School hub, South Australia.*



### Vocational pathways snapshot

 **248**

**jobs** were secured by hub participants as a direct result of their participation in the hub

 **724**

**people** volunteered on **17,351** occasions

 **943**

**referrals** were made to training and educational services

 **1,584**

**formal and informal training** sessions were delivered

 **13,803**

**attendances** at formal or informal training via their hub

 **81%**

**of all formal training sessions** at hubs in NSW and Victoria were delivered online or offsite in Terms 3 and 4.



**“The primary focus of community hubs is to initially develop English skills and build connections between community members.**

**However, over time, it is often the case that once hub participants have built a sense of confidence, they expand their horizons towards volunteering, training, education, and employment prospects.”**

**Deloitte social return on investment evaluation, p.35**



### Brewing work-ready baristas

Rydalmere Public School hub in Parramatta, NSW, partnered with Hills Community Aid to conduct a two-day Ready to Work course, which included barista skills training.

Thirteen people enrolled, with nine completing both days' training and receiving a certificate of completion.

Participants learned how to tailor their resumes for job applications, and the types of questions asked during job interviews. They also discussed their work interests and developed action plans to move forward with their career aspirations.

The students, pictured below left, received hands-on barista and customer service training in a fully functional mobile coffee van. They were taught how to take orders from school staff, make different types of coffee and deliver them to customers.

### A budding future in floristry

This group of women, pictured right, from the Bert Oldfield Public School hub in Blacktown, completed their Statement of Attainment in Floristry with TAFE NSW – Nirimba during the year.

For many in the group, it was their first opportunity to complete studies in Australia.

In addition to developing their creative skills, the course gave the women the chance to come together and practise their English. Several of the participants have plans to put their new skills to use by starting their own businesses.

### Sasika cooks up a career

Sasika, pictured below, and her family migrated to Australia from Sri Lanka and settled in Adelaide. She started attending the Para Vista Primary School hub's conversational English sessions, to improve her English skills.

Sasika also volunteered to work in the school canteen. The experience gained from learning and practising conversational English, and volunteering with the school, helped Sasika secure full-time employment as a cook in a kindergarten and childcare centre.



## Refugee, Parisa, now supports others

Parisa, her husband and 7-year-old son, Iliya, arrived in Australia as refugees in 2010 after fleeing their homeland of Iran.

The family initially fled to Indonesia, where they were assured they would be given a safe passage to Australia. Instead, they were squashed into a fishing boat with more than 70 other refugees with no food and no space to sleep or rest. Frightened and traumatised, they feared for their lives.

The boat was lost at sea for two weeks before those on board were rescued by the Australian Navy Coast Guard and taken to Christmas Island.

The family was eventually resettled in the City of Salisbury in Adelaide's northern suburbs, and Iliya began attending St Augustine's Parish School. Parisa discovered the school's community hub and brought her young daughter to the playgroup.

This is how hub leader, Carole Smith, describes Parisa's involvement with the hub:

"I first met Parisa when she came to playgroup with her baby daughter Homa. Playgroup was a perfect way for Parisa to begin to build a relationship with the school as well as making new friendships.

Parisa's English was very limited, but this didn't stop her from engaging with and participating in the regular singing and storytime experiences.

As time passed, Parisa grew in confidence and her support to playgroup continued even after Homa started school. This naturally led to further volunteering within the school, including the Parents and Friends Committee, and representing that committee on the School Board.

At the beginning of this year, St Augustine's migrant English programs expanded and with that came an opportunity to employ more staff. It was an obvious choice to include Parisa in our hub team.

She is now employed as an Education Support Officer for the community hub, working closely with families and their children in the preschool room, which includes playgroup, occasional care, and crèche.

Parisa and her family are filled with gratitude toward our country and, in particular, toward the St Augustine's community. However, the school feels grateful and honoured to have been given the opportunity to support this family throughout their journey.

Parisa's lived experience is invaluable to the hub and its participants, many of whom have survived similar journeys."

*Photos: Parisa, above, at work as an Education Support Officer in the hub; and, at right, with St Augustine's hub leader Carole Smith.*



### Volunteering leads to paid work

The Toy Well free toy-lending library service available through a growing number of community hubs in Victoria, has generated both volunteering and paid employment opportunities for local community mums.

Hina Batool, a parent volunteer at Dandenong Primary School hub, Moona Farad from Geelong and Mervat Abdou from Hume, have been employed in a paid casual position as Regional Toy Well Coordinators for the Dandenong, Geelong and Hume regions.

*Photo: Cultural Cooking Program participants in Logan, Queensland.*



### Cultural cooking serves up work opportunities

A cultural cooking program being delivered across hubs in Logan, Queensland, has become so popular it is generating paid work opportunities for hub mums.

The Cultural Cooking Program began in St Paul's Catholic Primary School hub. Inspired by the success of the St Paul's program, the hubs at Woodridge North State School and Marsden State School also adopted the program, with support from Metro South Health.

The two-day program includes food safety training, sharing and trying out recipes from different cultures, and learning about healthy eating and cooking practices.

The popularity of the program has led to a number of hub mums being trained as 'cooking teachers' and then paid to help organise and run cultural cooking programs in the hubs.

"Two of my ladies from different cultural backgrounds (one is Indonesian, and one is Hazaragi), who already are accomplished cooks, participated in the training ... They will now become the facilitators for a cooking program at my hub for which they will get paid," says Woodridge North hub leader, Silja McIvor. "Part of their responsibility is to plan the program in conjunction with me and work out what ingredients need to be purchased and how to manage the time.

"This is a good opportunity for them to grow in confidence, and to practice skills and get some work experience."

Penny Dearlove, Marsden State School's hub leader, says that cooking together helps the women build confidence, socialise, form friendships and improve their mental health.

She particularly wanted to run the program to support a group of Somali women who were experiencing loneliness and isolation. "They have a vision to start a community kitchen," says Penny.

Examples of feedback from Cultural Cooking Program participants:

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**"I loved all the food! My kids would love the chicken nuggets and burgers and I loved the healthy salads and learning how to make salad dressing."**

**"The training was wonderful. We had the chance to meet each other and share our thoughts."**

**"I like meeting Mums from different cultures."**

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## Awards and recognition

### Multicultural award for hub school

Hampton Park Primary School in Casey, Victoria, received a 2021 Victorian Multicultural Award for Excellence in School Education. The award recognises the rapid and positive impact of the school's community hub, which opened in 2020.

Principal, Elizabeth Davey told the Berwick News the hub is making a big difference to the school community.

**"The work we do in the hub of making connections, empowering people to overcome a language barrier and to feel fully accepted in our school community is so rewarding and humbling," Elizabeth said. "This award means we are making a difference."**

### Jane awarded for excellence

Jane Poi-Terekia, Granville Public School's hub leader, received a NSW Department of Education Award for Excellence in her role as the school's community liaison officer.

The award was presented to Jane by the Director, Education Leadership for the Parramatta Principals Network.

*Photo: Hampton Park Primary Principal, Elizabeth Davey, holds their award.*



## Seetha is a Local Hero

**“(Seetha) creates positive new pathways for migrant parents and is a pillar of support for isolated and vulnerable women.**

**As community liaison officer at Rydalmere Public School, she coordinates various programs to make migrant parents feel included, empowered and confident to thrive in the community. She is known for her hard work, commitment and friendliness.”**

**Excerpt from article on Westfield Local Heroes website**

Sethalakshmi (Seetha) Srinivasan, our hub leader at Rydalmere Public School hub in NSW, was named a 2021 Westfield Local Hero for Parramatta.

Westfield Local Heroes are nominated and voted by their communities. The top three finalists in each Westfield centre catchment are each awarded a \$10,000 grant for their affiliated organisation. Seetha is using the funds to provide swimming, driving and first aid lessons for hub families.

Seetha, an immigrant herself, understands how difficult it can be for families to start a new life in a new country that has different laws, a new language and new cultural expectations.

Like many hub leaders, during the COVID-19 lockdowns, Seetha supported mothers with home-schooling and using online technology. One of the challenges families faced was the cost of masks, so she organised a workshop where 30 mums learned how to make fabric masks for their families.



Westfield  
*Local Heroes*

**Westfield Parramatta  
Local Hero 2021**

**Deloitte.**



**National Community Hubs  
Program SROI Evaluation Report  
FINAL**  
Community Hubs Australia  
30 July 2021

**Deloitte**  
Access **Economics**

### SROI evaluation commended

Deloitte Access Economics' rigorous SROI evaluation of the National Community Hubs Program was a finalist and then runner-up in the major award category of the Social Impact Measurement Network Australia (SIMNA) Awards 2021.

Judges of the Excellence in Social Impact Measurement category noted that the quantitative methodology Deloitte applied to the evaluation was 'extensive and impressive'.

The annual SIMNA Awards shine a light on the leaders in the Australian social impact measurement ecosystem and recognise those organisations and initiatives achieving the best possible outcomes for all Australians, our communities and our environment.

## Improving network operations

Community Hubs Australia is continually working with our hubs and partner organisations to improve network operations.

In 2021, Community Hubs Australia (CHA) implemented a new Quality Improvement Framework, provided grant funding to support hubs returning to place-based programming, and coordinated professional development opportunities across the network.

CHA organised an online national forum and regularly attended virtual catch ups with hub leaders, principals and support coordinators, to help build and strengthen the connective tissue underpinning the network.

### Quality Improvement Framework

2021 saw the first full implementation of the new Quality Improvement Framework (QIF) across the entire community hubs network.

The QIF was developed by CHA in partnership with Murdoch Children's Research Institute and the hubs network including school leadership, hub leaders and support agencies. It's designed to help hubs plan, assess, reflect and revise their programs and activities at regular intervals throughout the year, with the aim of ensuring the best outcomes for their community.

The framework will be adjusted over time to ensure it meets the needs of the network and enables us to capture critical information about what works on the ground in each community.

### Grants support the return to place-based programs

With the support of the Department of Home Affairs, CHA offered a one-off grant to support hubs returning to place-based programs to ensure their hubs adhered to COVIDSafe guidelines.

The grant supported minor building works, the purchase and installation of equipment, and technology. Across the network, 70 hubs used the grant to:

- buy air conditioners, room dividers, furniture and storage units
- create better access to the hub building
- renovate the hub space
- build outdoor play areas
- install indoor play equipment
- buy sewing equipment, and small appliances such as kettles and microwaves and,
- upgrade in-hub technology, including purchasing laptops, tablets, projectors and printers

### Expanding Hub Central

Hub Central was established in 2020 as a rapid-response online platform to help hub leaders plan and deliver remote programs during COVID-19 lockdowns.

In 2021, the digital platform was developed further into a one-stop collaboration and resource hub containing all the information and tools needed to manage a hub.

Hub Central now encompasses program planning and scheduling, data reporting and insights, funding applications and reporting, and resource sharing. The platform also provides access to a continually evolving hub operations manual, Hub Toolbox.

### Connecting across the network

Embodying the hubs network's ethos of 'Connect. Share. Learn.', people working across the network met regularly throughout the year, either in-person or online.

When possible, local hub teams met face-to-face, while online group conferencing platforms supported regular virtual meetings at the state and national levels.

We continued to hold quarterly Zoom Coffee and Chat sessions and brought everyone together for an inspirational national online forum in September.

The forum was attended by 180 hub leaders, support coordinators, school principals, national support team members and our Chairman, Peter Scanlon.

**"Our national support team operates to empower those working at the regional and local levels to manage their own decision making and programming."**

**We provide resources and support, and then we leave each hub leader and their school to get on with the task of responding to the unique needs of their local community, with support from their regional support coordinator."**

**Hiranthi Perera**, Head of Program,  
Community Hubs Australia

*Photos: Many faces from across the national community hubs network, captured during our Connect. Share. Learn. national online forum.*



## Program governance

The National Community Hubs Program is supported by a strong, cohesive, multi-level governance framework.

Governance at the grassroots community level, through local leadership groups, enables decisions to be made locally about how to respond to each community's unique circumstances and needs.

A National Advisory Committee sits at the policy level of the governance framework and comprises specialist academic and sectoral expertise. The committee is responsible for overseeing the operation and development of the hubs network.

The CHA Board of Directors provides high-level strategy and business acumen to guide the sustainability, direction and evolution of Community Hubs Australia.

**Figure 3 :** National Community Hubs Program Governance Framework 2021



## Program funding

The National Community Hubs Program is funded and delivered by a highly effective partnership between philanthropy, all tiers of government and the education and community sectors.

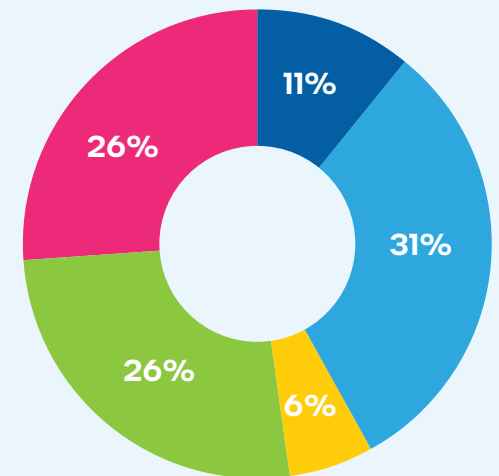
The program is now entering its thirteenth year of operation. Increasing federal and state government investment, combined with consistent year-on-year funding from Scanlon Foundation, has enabled the hubs network to be steadily scaled across four states and hub programs to be significantly expanded. In 2021, the network was more than three times the size of the original 30 hubs, which opened in 2014.

For every dollar provided by the Australian Government, the hubs program draws another two dollars from other sources, either as direct funding or in-kind.

The SROI evaluation conducted by Deloitte Access Economics in 2021, which was based on 2019 national program costs and operations, conservatively assessed that every \$1 invested in the program returns \$2.20 in social value to Australian society.

Governments, host schools and philanthropy provide direct funding for hub operations, staffing and program administration; host schools provide support with facilities and overheads; partnerships with service providers, corporate and non-profit supporters attract funding and in-kind support for hub programs; and host schools and partner support agencies contribute in-kind management support.

This ability to triple our core operational funding by attracting additional support is one of the program's critical success factors and delivers excellent value for the Australian Government's investment.



- Federal government
- Scanlon Foundation
- State and local government
- Schools
- Services



We wish to acknowledge the ongoing support and contributions of our major program funders:



**Australian Government**



Supported by  
**Government  
of South Australia**



human  
services



**Queensland  
Government**



## Our hub schools

### NSW

#### Blacktown

Bert Oldfield Public School  
Colyton Public School  
Kings Langley Public School

#### Canterbury Bankstown

Banksia Road Public School  
Bankstown Public School  
Bass Hill Public School  
Chester Hill Public School  
Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School  
Villawood East Public School  
Yagoona Public School\*

#### Cumberland

Granville Public School  
Westmead Public School

#### Fairfield

Bossley Park Public School  
Fairfield West Public School  
Prairievale Public School  
Smithfield Public School

#### Liverpool

Heckenberg Public School  
Hoxton Park Public School  
Marsden Road Public School

#### Parramatta

Parramatta West Public School  
Rydalmere Public School  
Toongabbie East Public School\*

#### Wollongong

Warrawong Public School  
Wollongong Public School  
Wollongong West Public School

### QLD

#### Brisbane

Acacia Ridge State School  
Grand Avenue State School  
Inala State School  
Watson Road State School  
Zillmere State School

#### Ipswich

Fernbrooke State School  
Kruger State School  
Riverview State School  
Staines Memorial College  
Woodlinks State School

#### Logan

Marsden State School  
St Francis College  
St Paul's Catholic Primary School  
Woodridge North State School  
Woodridge State School

#### Rockhampton

Waraburra State School

#### Townsville

Aitkenvale State School  
Kelso State School

### SA

#### Playford

Elizabeth Vale Primary School  
Pinnacle College - East Elizabeth Campus\*  
Playford College  
St Mary Magdalene's School

#### Port Adelaide Enfield

St Brigid's School

#### Salisbury

Karrendi Primary School  
Para Vista Primary School  
Paralowie R-12 School  
Salisbury Primary School  
St Augustine's Parish School

\*Left the network in 2021.

## OUR HUB SCHOOLS

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### VIC

#### Brimbank

Deer Park North Primary School  
Holy Eucharist Primary School  
St Albans Heights Primary School  
St Albans Primary School  
Stevensville Primary School

#### Casey

Cranbourne Primary School  
Fountain Gate Primary School  
Hampton Park Primary School  
Holy Family Catholic School, Doveton  
St Therese's Primary School

#### Dandenong

Dandenong Primary School  
Dandenong South Primary School  
Dandenong West Primary School  
Springvale Rise Primary School  
St Anthony's Primary School

#### Geelong

Bell Park North Primary School  
Northern Bay College - Goldsworthy  
Northern Bay College - Peacock

#### Hume

Bethal Primary School  
Broadmeadows Valley Primary School  
Campbellfield Heights Primary School  
Coolaroo South Primary School  
Craigieburn South Primary School  
Dallas Brooks Primary School  
Good Samaritan Catholic Primary School  
Holy Child Primary School  
Meadow Heights Primary School  
Meadows Primary School  
Mount Ridley College  
Roxburgh Park Primary School  
Roxburgh Rise Primary School  
St Dominic's Primary School  
Sunbury Heights Primary School

#### Shepparton

Gowrie Street Primary School  
St Georges Road Primary School  
Wilmot Road Primary School

#### Wyndham

Davis Creek Primary School  
Dohertys Creek P-9 College  
Point Cook P-9 College  
Truganina South Primary School  
Wyndham Park Primary School

## New hubs opening in 2022

### QLD

#### Rockhampton

Berserker Street State School  
Lakes Creek State School

#### Townsville

Wulguru State School

## Our support agencies and hub partners

### Our support agencies

#### NEW SOUTH WALES

Illawarra Multicultural Services  
Liverpool City Council  
Settlement Services International

#### QUEENSLAND

Access Community Services  
Community Queensland  
Multicultural Australia  
The Smith Family

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Lutheran Care

#### VICTORIA

Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project  
Hume City Council  
The Smith Family

### Hub partners - NSW

Ability Links  
Anjali Fisher  
Arab Council Australia  
A Start In Life  
AusRelief  
Australian Multicultural Community Services  
Ayden Littleford  
Bankstown Community Health Centre  
Bankstown Women's Health Centre  
Barbe Dolan  
Baserite Constructions  
Big Fat Smile  
Boronia Multicultural Services  
Breakthru  
Cancer Institute NSW  
Centrelink  
Charmaine Barretto  
Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre  
City of Canterbury Bankstown  
City of Parramatta Council  
Coles  
Communities for Children

Community First Step  
Creating Links  
Cumberland City Council  
Department of Education & Training  
Ermington Library  
Ethnic Communities Council of NSW  
Fairfield City Council  
Fathering Project  
Foodbank  
Greenacre Area Community Centre  
GyMEA Community Aid and Information Service  
Head Start  
Heartfulness Institute  
Hello Canteen  
Hills Community Aid  
Illawarra Multicultural Services  
Karabi Community & Development Services Inc  
Karitane  
Kiama Community College  
Koorana Child & Family Services  
Lebanese Muslim Association (LMA)  
Legal Aid

Liverpool City Council  
Liverpool Hospital Rainbow Cottage  
Liverpool Neighbourhood Connections  
Merrylands Youth Centre  
Metro Assist  
Mission Australia  
Multicultural Australia  
National Heart Foundation of Australia  
National Rugby League  
NSW Police Force  
NU4YU Whole Body Health  
OzHarvest  
Parramatta Artist Studios  
Parramatta College  
Piccolo Me Australia  
Pink Sari Inc  
Playgroup NSW  
Rachel Bryne  
Ramya Kodiyalam Santhanam  
Royal Life Saving Society - NSW  
SDN Children's Services  
SecondBite  
Services NSW

## OUR SUPPORT AGENCIES AND HUB PARTNERS

Settlement Services International

Sing & Grow

Spinal & Sports Care

St George and Sutherland Community College

St Vincent de Paul Society

STARTTS

Sydney Community College

Sydney Community Group

Sydwest Multicultural Services

TAFE NSW

TAFE Outreach

The Multicultural Network

The One Box

The Salvation Army

The Smith Family

The Social Outfit

Trim's Fresh

Uniting

WEAVE Parramatta

Wesley Mission

Wollongong City Council

Woodville Alliance

Woolworths

Yoga Peace Australia

### Hubs partners - QLD

123 Grow Child Care Centre

Above and Beyond Fitness

Acacia Ridge Community Centre

Access Community Services

Active Kids Early Learning Centre

Aldi Woodridge

Aqua English

A Start In Life

Australian Red Cross

Autism Queensland

Brisbane City Council

Brisbane South Primary Health Network

Centacare

Centerlink

Children's Health Queensland

Coles Supermarkets

Crestmead Early Education Centre

Department of Education & Training

Department of Home Affairs

Diversity with Dance

Domestic Violence Action Centre

EACH

First 5 Forever

Griffith University

Happy Feet

Harmony Place

Head Start

HIPPY

Ipswich City Council

Jabiru Community, Youth and Children's Services

John Paul College

Kambu Health

Kiwi Kids Education and Care Childcare Centre

Koobara Kindergarten and Pre-prep Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation

Kummara Association Inc.

Lilli Pang

Logan City Council

Marsden Early Learning Centre

Metro South Health

Mission Australia

Multicultural Australia

Musicability

Oral Health

OzHarvest

ParentsNext

PCYC

Phoenix Learning

Playgroup Queensland

QPASTT

Queensland Blue Light Association

Queensland Department of Education

Queensland Health

Queensland Police Service

Queensland University of Technology

RACQ

Reclink Australia

Refugee Association of Logan

Refugee Health Network Queensland

Rockhampton Children & Family Centre

Save the Children

Scripture Union QLD

SecondBite

Sing and Grow

Smartskill Health

St Vincent de Paul Society

TAFE Queensland

The Benevolent Society

The One Box

The Smith Family

Tiny Tots Early Learning Centre

Townsville Intercultural Centre

Townsville Multicultural Support Group

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National)

University of Southern Queensland

## OUR SUPPORT AGENCIES AND HUB PARTNERS

University of the Sunshine Coast  
Volunteers West  
Waterford West World of Learning  
West Moreton Health  
YMCA  
Zillmere Library  
Zillmere State School's P&C Association  
Zonta

### Hub partners - SA

Anglicare SA  
Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Australian Multicultural Community Services  
Australian Refugee Association  
Bakers Delight  
Carers SA  
Catholic Education South Australia  
CHATS Community Help and Togetherness  
Communities for Children  
Department of Education South Australia  
Department of Human Services South Australia

Family Zone Ingle Farm  
Foodbank  
Kickstart for Kids  
Kilburn Community Centre  
Kudos Services  
Hills Community Aid  
Lutheran Community Care  
Morella Community Centre  
Multicultural Communities Council of SA  
MyTime  
Playford Library  
Playgroup SA  
Relationships Australia  
Salisbury Community Hub  
Save the Children  
SHINE  
Sing & Grow  
Smiling Mind  
Terry White Chemmart  
The One Box  
The Quickest Warmth  
The Smith Family  
University of South Australia

### Hub partners - VIC

AB Corporate Fitness  
Access Community Services  
Achievement Program  
Ambulance Victoria  
AMES Australia  
Anglicare Victoria  
Arabic Welfare Incorporated  
Arndell Park Community Centre  
Arthur Mawson Children's Centre  
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre  
Australian College of Optometry  
Australian College of Professional Studies  
Australian Vietnamese Women's Association  
Baby Circus  
Banksia Gardens Community Services  
Barwon Health - Community Health Services  
Bethany Community Support  
Brimbank City Council  
Broadmeadows Aquatic and Leisure Centre  
Brotherhood of St Laurence  
Bunjil Place Library  
Bunnings Warehouse

CareWorks  
Centrelink  
City of Canterbury Bankstown  
City of Casey  
City of Greater Dandenong  
City of Greater Shepparton  
Communities for Children  
Dallas Neighbourhood House  
Department of Education & Training  
Department of Transport Victoria  
Diversitat  
Djerriwarrh Education & Community Services  
Doveton College  
Doveton Neighbourhood Learning Centre  
DPV Health  
Drummond Street Services  
Duke Street Community House  
Eat Up  
Emerson School  
Energy and Water Ombudsman Victoria  
Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria  
Ethnic Council of Shepparton  
Eve's Garden – The Essence of Womanhood

## OUR SUPPORT AGENCIES AND HUB PARTNERS

FamilyCare	Melbourne City Football Club	SecondBite	The Water Well Project
Fathering Project	Melbourne College of Further Education	Shepparton Sailability	Toy Libraries Australia
Foodbank	Melbourne Polytechnic	SHINE	Uniting
Foundation House	Merinda Park Learning & Community Centre	Sing & Grow	VICSEG New Futures
Foundation Learning Centre	MiCare	SisterWorks	Victoria University
Free to Feed	Migrant Resource Centre North-West Region Inc	Smiling Mind	Visy Cares Learning Centre
Goulburn Valley Health	Monash Health Community	South East Community Links	Wellsprings for Women Inc.
Goulburn Valley Libraries	Monash University Museum of Art	South-East Monash Legal Service Inc.	West Justice
Government House	Multicultural Centre for Women's Health	Southern Migrant Resource Centre	Wyndham Central College
Gowrie Victoria Broadmeadows	Murdoch Children's Research Institute	Sporting Schools	Wyndham City Council
Greater Dandenong Library	Nella Centorbi	Springvale Learning and Activities Centre	Wyndham Community & Education Centre
Greater Shepparton City Council	Partners in Training	Springvale Neighbourhood House	Wyndham Park Community Centre
Greater Shepparton Lighthouse Project	Picnic 4 Peace	St Dominic's Broadmeadows Parish	YMCA
Hampton Park Community House	Play Tennis	St Kilda Mums	
Helping Hand Helping Hearts	PlayConnect	St Paul's African House	
Hume City Council	Playgroup Victoria	St Vincent de Paul Society	
IndianCare	Prace	Steps to Life	
IPC Health	Primary Care Connect	Stows Waste Management	
Jenny Coutts	RACV	Sussex Neighbourhood House	
Jesuit Social Services	Reading Out of Poverty	The Creche and Kindergarten Association	
Keysborough Learning Centre	Reclink Australia	The Homestead Community and Learning Centre	
KS Environmental	Relationships Australia	The One Box	
La Trobe University	Rural Australians for Refugees	The Pasefika Hub Inc.	
Life Saving Victoria	Save the Children	The Salvation Army	
MacKillop Family Services		The Smith Family	
Meadow Heights Education Centre			

Good people always find a way to keep doing good things, and that is exactly what I have witnessed across our hubs network over the past year.

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**Peter Scanlon AO**

Chairman, Community Hubs Australia



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*Cover photo: Hub leader Mai Nguyen from St Brigid's School in Kilburn, South Australia taking part in playgroup activity.*