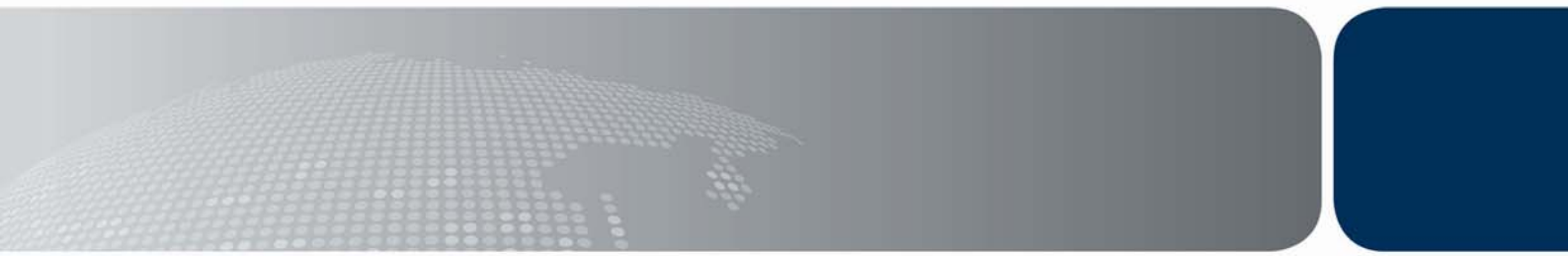




Australian Government
Department of Immigration
and Citizenship

Living in Harmony

Program Review



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1. Executive Summary

After ten years of program implementation, the Australian Government sought a review of the Living in Harmony program, including its national day of celebration, Harmony Day.

The review was to evaluate the program's effectiveness in addressing issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance while promoting respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Administered by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, the program falls within one of the Department's key output goals: to continue to foster a society which values Australian citizenship and social cohesion, and enables migrants and refugees to participate fully and equitably in Australian society.

Key drivers behind the review included the need to examine renewed strategies for bringing Australians from all backgrounds together in a positive and productive way, ensuring the program reached the broadest possible audience while delivering value for money, and that those communities most in need received assistance.

The review considered how to:

- direct funding to areas of need;
- support smaller inexperienced community organisations in obtaining funding;
- be more flexible in supporting and initiating broader community projects, and develop new approaches to issues of racial intolerance; and
- increase community awareness of the aims and objectives of the program.

Recommendations

Key recommendations from the review include:

- the adoption of a new strategic direction for the branding, positioning and communication of the program, to ensure program activities achieve maximum reach and are considered inclusive of all Australians;
- a clear statement of program objectives with a strong focus on racial intolerance to effectively position the program as reflected in:
 - the new program name: Diverse Australia Program
 - the new tagline: Everyone Belongs

- a stronger focus on addressing issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance, while promoting respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging for everyone
 - the retention of Harmony Day but with changes to the design imagery which encourages people to come together.
- a greater emphasis to be placed on funding large scale projects that respond to emerging issues in particular geographic locations;
- increased emphasis on supporting smaller inexperienced community organisations to apply for and manage grants, including a simplified grant application and reporting process;
- greater use of targeted research to help direct funding decisions;
- community grants under the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Security and Harmony (NAP) to fall within the scope and administration of the refocussed community projects program;
- the retention of Harmony Day as the program's national day of celebration; and
- development of a separate marketing and communication strategy to promote the new program approach.

Background – the Living in Harmony program

The Living in Harmony program resulted from a 1996 federal election commitment to implement an anti-racism campaign. At the time it was considered an increase in public awareness of the importance of community relations through education, was the most sustainable long-term approach to addressing issues of racism.

The program was launched in August 1998, and the first national day of celebration associated with the program, 'Harmony Day', took place on 21 March 1999.

The focus of the Living in Harmony program has evolved over the years in response to community needs, world events and government direction, but the program has always promoted the benefits of cultural diversity and Australia's democratic values.

In recent years the program has had a budget of around \$3.5 million. The funding component of the program involves providing grants to a range of organisations around Australia to conduct projects which address issues related to cultural diversity, particularly social cohesion and inclusion.

The information component involves promoting activities and outcomes of projects which have received funding, and more importantly promoting Harmony Day on March 21.

Harmony Day aims to engage the entire Australian community, particularly schools, in a celebration of the benefits of cultural diversity. It seeks to influence attitudes and behaviours and provides an important opportunity for individuals to show their support for cultural diversity while also encouraging participation in Australian life and the development of a sense of belonging and commitment to Australia.

Since 1998, the Living in Harmony program has funded over 450 projects, and public recognition of the program and participation in Harmony Day has grown each year since its inception, with over 400 000 Australians participating in Harmony Day in 2007.

3. Past research and evaluations conducted into the Living in Harmony program

The Living in Harmony program has been the subject of several evaluations including the 1997 Eureka Strategic Research, which informed the establishment of the Living in Harmony program; the 2005 Ernst and Young Review, conducted into the Department's multicultural affairs programs, and research in 2006 and 2007 conducted by Elliott and Shanahan Research, which provided insights into attitudes and approaches to communication.

All sets of research concluded that the most effective approach to an anti-racism campaign was to engage people through activities and messages that are subtle, non threatening, positive, apolitical, engaging, encouraging, warm, optimistic and non dictatorial.

The Eureka Strategic Research indicated that strong anti-racism messages tended to produce negative results by alienating a broad range of the audience. "Anti-racism" was found to be too negative and too explicit for the title of a mass media or community education campaign as it was likely to exclude both extreme racists and those who hold racist views but do not see themselves as racist.

It also suggested that the best approach to combating racism was to support local community activities, rather than to undertake large scale, media campaigns. For this reason the program was built around the funding of community projects as "local solutions to local issues".

The Ernst and Young Review found that the Living in Harmony program had been successful in meeting its aims and objectives and that the best approach to addressing the issue of racial intolerance was through the implementation of project activities in identified areas of need that were specifically aimed at achieving attitudinal and behavioural change, rather than awareness raising.

Ernst and Young further found, that at the time of their review, there had been the potential for approximately one third of the total Australian population to have seen, heard or read about the Living in Harmony program.

The 2006 and 2007 Elliot and Shanahan Research found that the issue of racism and community disharmony itself may be handled more effectively at the community or grass roots level ("more 'person to person' interaction"), expressing that community based projects seemed to be a more 'natural' or 'authentic' way of addressing these types of issues.

When study participants were asked whether integration was considered a key to the success or failure of a united Australia, participants commented it was important to promote a cohesive, united society with common values, and that English as a common language is a unifying element.

The Elliot and Shanahan Research further indicated there were common themes around which multicultural programs and promotion could be based. These themes included:

- integration and the importance of groups adapting and assuming Australian values and identity, while also preserving their own;
- 'give and take' and the need to accept Australian ways and the benefits of living in Australia, while also accepting that the broader community had responsibilities in welcoming people of different cultures;

- opportunities for people to have positive experiences of contact and social interaction, and to learn how to be good neighbours; and
- recognition of the importance of establishing a balance between cultural diversity and unity.

4. Origin, aim and conduct of the Living in Harmony program review

Over the past ten years, the Living in Harmony program has worked with the Australian community to develop projects that reduce prejudice and racism and deliver community education programs that promote the benefits of diversity, acceptance and inclusion.

Since coming into office, the Australian Government has been looking at how it can more effectively foster and promote the benefits of cultural diversity. As part of this approach, the government asked for a review of the Living in Harmony program, including its national day of celebration, Harmony Day.

The review sought to evaluate the program's effectiveness in meeting community needs to address issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance, while promoting respect, fairness, acceptance and a sense of belonging for everyone.

Key drivers behind the review included:

- the need to understand attitudes towards cultural diversity and cross cultural interaction - to better align program activities with community requirements;
- evaluating existing awareness and understanding of the Living in Harmony program and Harmony Day - to establish the extent of the program's reach and communication effectiveness and retention;
- establishing the "perceived" value of the program and community "take up" of program activities such as perceptions of, and attitudes towards, the Living in Harmony program and Harmony Day;
- understanding community thinking, needs and requirements and how these contribute to or detract from barriers to participation in the Living in Harmony program and Harmony Day; and
- delivering a program which is perceived as being more inclusive of all Australians through a new design and communications approach.

As a community based education initiative, community adoption and support of the Living in Harmony program is critical to its success. Ensuring program activities continue to effectively meet stakeholders' needs has been a primary driving force behind the overall implementation of the review.

Given this, the review has sought the views and opinions of key stakeholder groups including, community groups, not for profit organisations, local councils, teachers, students, and the general public.

These groups are seen as instrumental to the success of the program, in that they deliver key activities to those communities in which the program seeks to achieve attitudinal change.

Market testing into the awareness of, and attitudes towards, the Living in Harmony program, and the testing of three new possible design concept alternatives for the program, was conducted by Elliot and Shanahan Research, and implemented through a series of qualitative and diagnostic research group discussion techniques.

The aim of the testing was to establish the perceived value of the program and the extent to which the alternative design concepts reflected program objectives and their effectiveness in engaging key target audiences. Focus group testing took place in Sydney, Adelaide and Ipswich.

Further, the review has taken into account feedback from the Department's state and territory offices, funding applicants, and past and current funding recipients, as well as assessed the outcomes of past research and evaluation relating to the program, and more broadly, recent research conducted into issues of migration and social cohesion.

5. Key findings of the Living in Harmony review and the need to respond to community requirements

While the overall aims and objectives of the Living in Harmony program are supported, it is clear from the findings of the review that the program requires change in the form of renewed strategies to better assist communities in addressing issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance.

Feedback received from participants involved in the 2008 market research conducted by Elliot and Shanahan Research, in particular the key drivers of and barriers to participation in the Living in Harmony program and Harmony Day, mirrors feedback received from the Department's state and territory offices, funding applicants, past and current funding recipients, and the general community.

In responding to community requirements, the program must consider how to:

- direct funding to areas of need;
- support smaller inexperienced community organisations in obtaining funding;

- achieve flexibility in its approach to support and initiate broader community initiatives that address issues of racial intolerance; and
- increase community awareness of the aims and objectives of the program.

In addition, the current communication element of the program needs to be refreshed to ensure it is perceived as being inclusive of all Australians, with the need for the program name, branding and key messaging to more effectively reflect community attitudes towards cultural diversity and cross-cultural interaction. From the research findings, the new design concept and program name appears to have achieved this objective.

To support the new funding, branding, and communication approach, a clearer statement of program objectives with a stronger focus on racial intolerance is also required. This will effectively position the revitalised program and avoid confusion surrounding the program's policy aims and objectives.

Further, as evidenced by the outcomes of the review, there is value in the retention of Harmony Day as the national day of celebration. The day represents a significant information component of the program, and is a positive vehicle for increasing understanding and appreciation of the variety of cultural groups within the community.

Separate to the review, a communications and marketing strategy is being developed to promote the new program approach.

5.1 Current awareness and understanding of the Living in Harmony program and Harmony Day

The 2008 research conducted by Elliot and Shanahan Research, as part of the Living in Harmony review, found that after ten years of program implementation there still remained strong support for the aims and objectives of the Living in Harmony program, and support for efforts made at the community level to bring people together.

Overall participation in the Living in Harmony program and Harmony Day held most relevance for those people in areas of high cultural diversity. Key stakeholders including not-for-profit organisations, councils, teachers and students were found to have a greater awareness of the program, and its aims and objectives, than the general public.

People aware of the Living in Harmony program generally viewed it as positive and worthwhile.

The program's objectives were thought to be about bringing people of different cultures together and, as a result, to:

- increase awareness, understanding and acceptance of culturally and linguistically diverse groups living in Australia;
- build respect between people of different cultural backgrounds;
- promote social inclusion and cohesion;
- promote harmony and stability throughout the community;
- encourage positive cross-cultural engagement; and
- increase appreciation of the benefits of diversity.

While there remained broad support for these aims, some of the target audiences in the study tended to prioritise certain objectives over others. Some stakeholders saw the promotion of multiculturalism as more significant than encouraging social cohesion.

By contrast, those with negative or ambivalent attitudes towards immigration, tended to view the need for social integration and cohesion as more critical, and were slightly cynical about the apparent benefits of celebrating cultural differences.

Nonetheless, most in the study saw the focus on both diversity and social unity as equally significant. Both of these aims were considered important for Australia generally, and for individual communities, particularly those with high or increasing levels of diversity, and/or a history of racial unrest.

In addition, across all groups, including those who had and those who had not participated in the program previously, there was notably greater awareness of Harmony Day than the Living in Harmony program, with Harmony Day representing a significant information component of the program.

For those living or working in locations with high levels of diversity the perception of 'Living in Harmony' was considered aspirational and largely unrealistic. Conversely, for those living in areas with low levels of diversity the program name 'Living in Harmony' suggested they were not living in harmony, which for these people was regarded as untrue.

The Elliot and Shanahan research also found that while there was the general desire among those participants tested to support the program aims, for those living in areas of high levels of cultural diversity, and who had negative experiences with those from other cultures, it was

felt that to achieve true harmony, substantial and ongoing effort from all members of the community would be needed.

5.2 Drivers of, and barriers to, participation in the Living in Harmony funding program

Most in the Elliot and Shanahan research study felt that the Living in Harmony program had contributed to some very beneficial social programs.

Many of the organisations specialising in migrant issues claimed to regularly apply for Living in Harmony funding to develop programs to complement their existing services.

It was noted that the frequent involvement of both mainstream community groups and organisations that focussed on migrant issues specifically, was considered significant in encouraging the integration of ethnically diverse groups into the broader society, and strengthening communities generally.

The formation of partnerships between organisations involved in Living in Harmony projects was also regarded as a key benefit, often leading to further collaboration on other community projects.

Local councils in areas with increasing levels of diversity were particularly conscious of the need to build both community acceptance of newcomers, and encourage integration, and viewed funding for projects designed to facilitate this process as a positive.

There were however a number of perceived problems with the Living in Harmony funding program that did discourage involvement, including:

- the perception that smaller organisations were unlikely to be awarded Living in Harmony funding over larger organisations and councils. Many of the representatives from smaller community service organisations and ethnic community groups felt they were more likely to secure funding indirectly, through their local council;
- the perception that the application and reporting process was considered both difficult and time consuming, particularly for smaller organisations;
- many felt the amount of funding available was relatively meagre compared to other types of funding for social issues, and claimed their projects had to be discontinued due to budget and time constraints, just as they were producing beneficial outcomes;

- suggestions it would be more productive to make larger grants available to those organisations with greatest familiarity of the needs of the community, enabling the development of sustainable programs, and/or integration of funded projects with other existing services;
- stakeholders representing organisations with a strong focus on multiculturalism had felt the program tended to fund projects run by the private sector and those that promoted integration over diversity; and
- among some organisations, most notably schools, there was a general lack of awareness and understanding of the funding program, including their eligibility to apply.

5.3 Drivers of, and barriers to, participation in Harmony Day

As with the funding element of the program, the Elliot and Shanahan research found that among stakeholders in the study there was widespread support for the program's national day of celebration, Harmony Day.

Harmony Day was seen as being an extremely positive initiative, with many potential benefits for community relations in general. The research found these included:

- allowing people of different cultural backgrounds to come together, to get to know one another and form friendships;
- enabling people from different cultural groups to showcase their cultures, religions and traditions;
- providing a format for the local community to welcome new immigrants;
- increasing understanding and appreciation of the variety of cultural groups, and the benefits of multiculturalism in specific communities;
- demystifying traditions and cultural practices;
- strengthening communities generally;
- providing a means for the community and for schools in particular, to share and connect with others, and have fun;

- breaking down social isolation and developing networks between groups; and
- complementing other social programs.

The overall value of Harmony Day was considered the greatest in areas where there were high levels of cultural diversity, and where there had been incidences of racial unrest.

Further, the focus on promoting diversity and encouraging integration was found to be generally in keeping with the strategic direction of many councils, not-for-profit organisations and schools in these areas, with Harmony Day celebrations often supporting other community initiatives with similar aims.

All councils and not-for-profit organisations in the study recognised the potential benefits offered by being involved in Harmony Day. The day was viewed as an effective format to publicly demonstrate commitment to strengthening communities, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion.

Among the general community the perceived value of Harmony Day was mixed. Those who had participated in Harmony Day activities in the past thought the day offered significant community benefits.

Motivators for participation among this group tended to be through invitations to attend events from friends, or being drawn to events by different foods or music. People also attended events held at their workplace and schools.

For non-participatory councils, not-for-profit organisations and schools, barriers to involvement in Harmony Day varied according to the level of diversity in the area.

For those in areas with lower levels of cultural diversity, Harmony Day was generally seen to have little relevance. Representatives of organisations in some areas were unaware of Harmony Day, unsure of what sort of event would be appropriate, uncertain how to go about organising and implementing it, or saw no need to hold an event.

Among this group there was also scepticism about whether or not events would be attended. Teachers in these areas tended to be more favourably predisposed to Harmony Day, recognising its educational benefits for students generally, regardless of the ethnic make-up of the school or of the area in which the school is situated.

For those stakeholders in areas with higher levels of diversity, Harmony Day was considered particularly relevant and worthwhile, however, limited resources often made participation difficult. Some also felt there was an over-supply of community or school celebratory

“days” that they had to choose between, several of which were said to have similar aims in bringing the community together.

Among the general community, it was the lack of awareness and understanding of Harmony Day that acted as the fundamental barrier to participation. Few non-participants in the study had heard of the day, and those who had, tended to assume it was primarily for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

A minority of participants, particularly those residing in areas of high levels of cultural diversity, were cynical about the extent to which Harmony Day could affect any real change in the community. These participants felt that an annual event for people of different races to “come together” was neither viable nor productive, given the extent of social unease between different cultural groups in their local area.

In addition, they questioned the feasibility of bringing different cultural groups in the community together. Some were uncertain about how they would go about initiating contact, and were somewhat fearful of the response they would receive if they did. There was a general lack of understanding of different cultural groups, and many found dress, eating habits, and different ways of life strange, and, in some cases, intimidating. Language also presented an additional barrier.

These participants felt Harmony Day offered greater benefits for young people than for adults, suggesting that the attitudes and behaviours of many adults, including themselves, were entrenched, and unlikely to change. However, this group did see a strong need for young people of all cultures to accept each other, and felt that participation in Harmony Day events at school could contribute to this process.

5.4 Response to the new Living in Harmony design concept alternatives, including a new program name

Of the proposed design concept alternatives presented to study participants, the concept which elicited the strongest positive response across all target audiences was one which included the use of a variety of people standing, silhouette-like, “hand-in-hand” under the words “Everyone Belongs”.

The depiction of a variety of people standing “hand-in-hand” communicated the notions of diversity, unity, and of belonging: ideas that were also reinforced by the tagline “Everyone Belongs”. While some students and members of the general community were unsure of the meaning of the word “diversity”, the imagery of the design successfully communicated its meaning.

Overall the design was found to be stylistically appealing and tonally appropriate and conveyed messages about both the nature and underlying values of Harmony Day and the program.

Message “take-out” from the design concept included:

- we should celebrate our diversity;
- we are all different and we all belong in the community (“Everyone Belongs”);
- we should encourage togetherness;
- we are all diverse in some way and we should recognise and appreciate our diversity (on both a cultural and individual level); and
- we should respect each other.

There was generally an immediate, spontaneous, positive response to the design from all target audiences:

- the design concept was described as “active”, “friendly”, engaging and non-threatening;
- the depiction of people representing a variety of races, ages and gender encouraged the audience to consider diversity in a broader sense, and to recognise that everyone is diverse in some way;
- the slogan “Everyone Belongs” conveyed notions of inclusiveness and belonging for everyone; and
- the concept reinforced the favourable views of those who have previously supported the program and engaged those who were unaware of the program or who displayed initial negative attitudes to cultural diversity.

The new program name “Diverse Australia Program” also tested well among study participants, with the term “diverse” considered an important element for most participants in the study.

Importantly, the name was effective in conveying a move away from Living in Harmony (associated with “just tolerance”) to a more positive focus on respect, fair treatment, opportunities to participate, inclusiveness, encouraging understanding and acceptance of diversity and cross cultural interaction.

The name was considered succinct and included important trigger words which elicited a positive response. The use of the word

“diverse” was considered an important element for most participants in the study, indicating everyone was included.

There was also wide support for the use of the word “diverse” together with “Australia” as it conveyed a national approach and national program.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Revised program objectives

Consistent with the findings of the review, it is recommended that the program objectives be revised to provide a stronger focus on addressing issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance, while promoting respect, fairness, inclusion and a sense of belonging for everyone.

It is recommended that the refocussed objectives specifically promote:

- the importance of all Australians respecting one another regardless of cultural, racial or religious differences;
- the fair treatment of all Australians, encouraging people to recognise that our interactions should be accepting of, and responsive to, each other’s backgrounds, circumstances, needs and preferences;
- opportunities for people to participate equitably in Australian society and to understand the rights and responsibilities that we share as part of that society;
- a sense of belonging for everyone by helping communities work towards a spirit of inclusiveness and a shared identity as Australians; and
- the benefits of living in a multicultural society.

It is further recommended that the objectives seek to:

- increase community understanding and acceptance of diversity, particularly in areas where these attitudes are not strong;
- help people who have settled in Australia understand the values, social behaviour and aspects of Australian life that are important to the established community;
- promote positive cross-cultural interaction; and

- place an increased emphasis on funding projects that address issues often impacting on new and emerging communities in specific geographic locations.

6.2 New funding approach

Complementing the revised program objectives, it is recommended the funding element of the program be delivered through two main components: an **emerging issues program** and a **community projects program**.

It is recommended that the **emerging issues program**:

- make greater use of research to identify community relations issues, and the geographic locations in which they occur;
- place greater emphasis on bringing together a range of organisations and different levels of government, to identify and develop projects to address specific issues of intolerance in identified areas of need;
- use existing and commissioned research to examine community attitudes towards diversity and experience of racism, and the extent of empathy that exists between different community groups;
- include outcomes of research under which the attitudes of participants and communities would be measured before, during and following particular projects;
- analyse media coverage as an indication of issues that need to be addressed and develop a short report at the beginning of each program year to identify key community relations issues by broad location; and
- project funding amounts of up to \$150 000 to be available under the program, with greater scope for projects to be delivered beyond a 12 month period.

Under the **community projects** component of the program the following is recommended:

- an increased emphasis placed on supporting smaller inexperienced community organisations to apply for and manage funding through the availability of a small grants program, with funding amounts of up to \$5000 available, for which minimal reporting would be required; and

- National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Security and Harmony (NAP), community grants to fall within the scope and administration of the refocused community projects funding program. Benefits to this approach would include:
 - the delivering of a grants program with a “whole of community” approach to addressing issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance;
 - removing confusion within the community sector about the already closely aligned objectives of the two grants programs. Among other things, clients would need to respond only to a single application process, streamlining the process for the sector;
 - greater capacity for the Department to hold information sessions in major centres to improve the quality of applications; and
 - more effective use of time and resources for both the applicant and the Department with regards to the development and distribution of guidelines, application forms, and support to applicants through inquiry lines.
- an increased focus on strengthening the funding program’s evidence to help identify locations where funding assistance may be required. This would involve:
 - utilising existing research and working with the Department’s state and territory offices to identify issues and locations that require government assistance;
 - commissioning research into community issues of racial intolerance and social cohesion; and
 - monitoring media coverage to identify key community relations issues by broad location.
- more generally, for the community projects funding program to build on existing activities to further support and encourage groups to apply for funding through a range of communications and marketing activities including:
 - advertising, workshops, a telephone advice service and publications;
 - providing on-going face to face assistance and guidance on the management of projects;

- analysing the outcomes of projects so that best practice guides can be developed and circulated to other community groups considering developing similar activities; and
- simplifying the application and reporting process for organisations, especially in regards to the management of smaller grants, to make the overall process of applying and managing a grant easier and less time intensive.

It should be noted that as part of the review, applications were sought, for the first time, for small grants of up to \$5000. Organisations eligible to apply for funding were incorporated not-for-profit organisations with an operating budget of less than \$200 000 per annum. The advertising of the small grants attracted 420 applications, seeking a total of almost \$2 million in funding interest.

The amount initially allocated for small grants was increased from \$100 000 to some \$260 000 due to the quality of the applications received.

At the completion of the 2008 Community Relations Funding round, out of \$1.5 million available in funding, some 56 organisations were awarded small grants and some 29 organisations received larger grants making a total of 86 funded organisations compared to 41 in 2007.

6.3 New branding and positioning

It is recommended that the proposed new program design and name “Diverse Australia Program” be adopted and implemented.

One of the most significant advantages of the new design and name is its appeal to both those with and without positive attitudes toward cultural diversity.

The new design was found to:

- strengthen the program’s appeal to those not aware of the program, and those not positively predisposed towards its objectives;
- retain support from audiences already in favour of the program;
- use positive trigger terms, “diverse Australia” and “everyone belongs”, to better reflect the objectives of the program and its national focus;

- establish common ground by encouraging people to come together, making the program more inclusive to a broader cross section of the community; and
- be more in keeping with the refocused program objectives and demonstrate, to stakeholders in particular, that the program has been revitalised.

6.4 Retention of Harmony Day

Due to existing stakeholder support of Harmony Day 21 March, it is recommended that the name and date of Harmony Day remain the same, with changes made only to the imagery of the design.

As evidenced by the outcomes of the review, Harmony Day represents a significant information component of the program. The Day:

- has become well identified;
- is celebrated among key stakeholders;
- is viewed as an effective format for publicly demonstrating commitment to strengthening communities, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion; and
- coupled with the refocussed program, should continue to grow within the community.

As recommended by the research, the day should be targeted at youth, with community groups, businesses, local councils and schools continuing to drive community engagement through the delivery of public events, supported by the Department.

7. Conclusion

It is clear from the findings of the review that the delivery of a revitalised program with refocussed program objectives, funding priorities and renewed communication strategies will better assist the Australian community in developing projects to reduce prejudice and racism, and deliver community education programs that promote the benefits of diversity, acceptance and inclusion.

By placing a greater emphasis on issues of diversity and belonging the renewed program will strengthen the program's appeal and the capacity to reach and engage a broader cross section of the community.

In addition, an overarching funding program delivered through two main components (an annual funding round and the delivery of projects as they emerge) allows the program greater flexibility in responding to issues of intolerance as they arise and to support those communities most in need.

Further, adapting to meet client requirements with the delivery of a small grants program empowers smaller community organisations to deliver locally relevant solutions to locally based issues.

By better understanding attitudes towards cultural diversity and cross cultural interaction, the renewed program will position itself to more effectively address issues of cultural, racial and religious intolerance while strengthening communities through the promotion of respect, fairness, acceptance and a sense of belonging for everyone.