

City of
Greater Bendigo

Cultural Diversity & Inclusion Plan

2021-2025



CITY OF GREATER
BENDIGO

Acknowledgement of Country

The City of Greater Bendigo is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country.

We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung People, the Traditional Owners of the land.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

Acknowledgement of First Nations Peoples

The City recognises that there are people from many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities living in Greater Bendigo. We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to all First Nations Peoples who live and reside in Greater Bendigo on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country, and we thank them for their contribution to our community.

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Message from the Mayor

The City of Greater Bendigo is pleased to present its second Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2021 – 2025) for public comment.

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan aims to build on the success of the first plan and guide our work over the next four years to achieve Council's community vision and ensure we continue to celebrate our diverse community.

Our community already comes from many places around the world, bringing together many different languages, faiths and cultures that enriches our social fabric. With Greater Bendigo's population continuing to grow, we will be home to more culturally and linguistically diverse residents in the future. So, it is important to recognise that our multicultural communities are diverse within themselves, coming from a range of cultural and religious backgrounds including diverse visa pathways, such as skilled migration, refugees entering on Humanitarian Visas, family reunions and international students.

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan includes our commitment to ensure Greater Bendigo grows and develops as a *Welcoming City*, a city that is open, compassionate and dedicated to diversity and inclusion. Through the plan, the City of Greater Bendigo aims to continue supporting, promoting and celebrating our cultural diversity and recognise the value and importance of the economic, educational, social and cultural benefits of our multicultural community.

The plan has been developed in consultation with multicultural groups in the community, local partner organisations and City services. Central to the plan is our aim to continue working together with the community and in partnerships with other agencies to build community capacity and ensure we are achieving our Council Plan (Mir wimbul) aspiration to be a safe, welcoming and fair community. A community where people are respected, feel safe to participate in community life and have equitable access to the resources they need.

I wish to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of the plan and I look forward to watching its implementation as we continue our journey to celebrate our diverse community and ensure Greater Bendigo is a welcoming city for all.

Mayor Cr Andrea Metcalf

Message from the CEO

This Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan has been developed following a significant process of evaluation and community consultation involving a committed group of people including representatives of key stakeholder agencies, our local multicultural communities, La Trobe University and relevant City of Greater Bendigo services.

The plan aims to promote and guide the City's commitment for Greater Bendigo to be a welcoming community, a community that understands and respects cultural and religious differences and supports multiculturalism.

The plan will also act as our *Welcoming City Plan* as we seek to continue our accreditation with the Welcoming Australia Network. As a *Welcoming City* we are focused on achieving priority goals and actions for our community linked to the seven themes of: Leadership, Social and Cultural Inclusion, Economic Development, Learning and Skills Development, Civic Participation, Places and Spaces, and Health and Wellbeing.

The City of Greater Bendigo was the first Local Government in Australia to be accredited as a *Welcoming City* in the 'advanced' category and the plan now provides the foundation and renewed direction for the City to continue our accreditation journey and hopefully improve our standards to the level of 'excelling'.

I am proud of our efforts across the organisation to be fair, inclusive and welcoming of our multicultural communities. Now, through this plan, we have the important opportunity to continue working together to support residents from refugee backgrounds, international students and our growing population of skilled migrants to ensure they feel welcome, their contribution is valuable, and that Greater Bendigo is home.

I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with other levels of government and the many supportive community organisations and residents to achieve the plan's mission, goals and actions over the next four years. Together we can strive for a connected community where everyone feels welcome and encouraged to share their own cultural experiences with others.

Craig Niemann
Chief Executive Officer

Introduction

Greater Bendigo celebrates our diverse community.

Welcome to the City of Greater Bendigo's Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan for the four-year period 2021 to 2025. The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan provides a clear direction for the City and our partners to advance Greater Bendigo as a '*Welcoming City*' and celebrate and support the access and inclusion of our growing multicultural community.

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan aims to build on the significant 'whole-of-community' partnership approach taken by the first Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan between 2016 and 2019.

The new Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan has been developed following an evaluation of the previous Plan which commenced in 2020 with the establishment of the Project Steering Group comprising key City staff and valued community partners; and engaging Latrobe University as Evaluation Consultants to undertake the evaluation.

Identifying Themes for Action

In 2020 the City was accredited as the first '*Welcoming City*' in Australia with the Welcoming Australia Network in the 'Advanced' category. Accordingly, the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan has also been developed as a '*Welcoming City Plan*' with a focus on the six areas of assessment (Themes) for the City to be accredited as a '*Welcoming City*', these being:

1. *Leadership*
2. *Social and Cultural Inclusion*
3. *Economic Development*
4. *Learning and Skills Development*
5. *Civic Participation*
6. *Spaces and Places*
7. *Health and Wellbeing*

The additional area of *Health and Wellbeing* was added to the six Welcoming City themes following a recommendation by the Evaluation Consultant, feedback from key stakeholders; and the importance of there being a connection with Healthy Greater Bendigo (2021-25), the City's new Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan.

A 'whole-of-Council' partnership approach was taken in developing the new Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan, which aims to:

- Support our multicultural community to feel welcomed, safe, connected and like they belong in the Greater Bendigo community.
- Enable the equitable access to services and supports to improve health and wellbeing outcomes across the lifespan.
- Continue building on the achievements, partnerships and multicultural community connections attained during the time of the first Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2016 – 2019).

- Advance the City's commitments to Social Justice, Human Rights and Responsibilities and community participation in decision making.
- Position the City to continue being accredited as a '*Welcoming City*' with the Welcoming Australia Network.
- Ensure an integrated strategic approach connecting the vision and goals of the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan with the vision and goals of other City strategies and plans including: Mir wimbul Council Plan, Healthy Greater Bendigo, Barpangu 'Build Together' Reconciliation Plan, Climate Change and Environment Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Creative Greater Bendigo; and others.
- Respond to State government policy and priorities in order to attract funding to benefit the community and provide the capability to address priority issues.

Accreditation as a Welcoming City

The development of the new Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan has been significantly influenced by the City's accreditation as a '*Welcoming City*'. This Accreditation means the City of Greater Bendigo has achieved recognition under a National Standard for cultural diversity and inclusion policy and practice in local government. As part of the Accreditation process the City has received an overall assessment of its strengths and opportunities that has been incorporated into the development of this new Plan.

Accreditation as a '*Welcoming City*' recognises Greater Bendigo's commitment to cultural diversity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reconciliation; and social cohesion. It also highlights the contribution of our many community agency partners in helping to deliver the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

Victorian Government Support

Since 2016, the City of Greater Bendigo has received significant funding from the State government to coordinate:

- The Strategic Partnership Project with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Bendigo Community Health Services and Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services. This project delivers programs for multicultural communities that build: leadership and capacity, social cohesion, good health, access to information and services; and education and employment,
- The Intercultural Ambassadors Pilot Program; and
- The Community Harmony Project which welcomed Muslim residents and celebrated construction commencing at the Bendigo Islamic Community Centre.

The City of Greater Bendigo acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government and all of our local partners in ensuring Greater Bendigo is a safe, welcoming and fair community.

We aspire to a community where people of all cultures and backgrounds feel welcome, safe and respected.

Our Vision

Our Community Vision:

Greater Bendigo celebrates our diverse community.

We are welcoming, sustainable and prosperous.

Walking hand-in-hand with the traditional custodians of this land.

Building on our rich heritage for a bright and happy future.

Our Community Values: Transparency, Sustainability, Inclusion, Innovation, Equity

Our Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan Mission:

Greater Bendigo is a welcoming, inclusive and diverse community where people of all cultural backgrounds belong and participate equally in social, political, and economic life.

To realise our Community Vision and Mission for Cultural Diversity and Inclusion, the City will work in partnership with governments, local agencies, multicultural communities, and the broader community to promote our commitment to be a 'Welcoming City'.

Background and Key Achievements since 2016

'I feel proud that I can showcase my culture to the community – the traditions, food, music and language.'

'It makes me feel welcome in the community - that we are celebrating cultural diversity and inclusion in Bendigo.'

- Participant comments about the impact of the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan.

The City of Greater Bendigo launched its first Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2016 – 2019 in September 2016 following an extensive process of consultation and partnership development with community agencies and local multicultural groups. Since then, the City in partnership with a range of specialist local organisations and multicultural groups in the community, has worked to deliver programs and initiatives that aim to improve: access to services, a commitment to human rights, capacity building and leadership; and intercultural connections.

With a strong commitment to furthering cultural diversity and inclusion in Greater Bendigo, this Plan builds on the many achievements of the first Plan and provides a strategic direction and integrated approach to strengthen partnerships, share resources, and coordinate services and programs.

Since 2016, the City in partnership with 22 organisations and multicultural community groups has achieved significant progress in the inclusion of different cultural groups and social cohesion. Major initiatives included:

- Karen Connections Project
- Intercultural Ambassadors Pilot Program
- Building Culturally Inclusive Sporting Clubs and Programs Booklet
- Community Harmony Project
- Inclusive Multicultural Libraries Project
- Sponsoring the Zinda Festival, and
- Supporting the establishment of the Bendigo Interfaith Council and Annual Interfaith Dinner

Further details concerning the achievements since 2016 can be found in the Report Card https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-02/CDIP%202016-2019%20-%20Report%20Card_A4_Final_Final_30.11.2020.pdf

In 2019, the City of Greater Bendigo won the Victorian Multicultural Award for Excellence in the category of Government and Civic Leadership. This award recognises government bodies for their community partnerships and major initiatives that meet the needs of their culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse communities.

Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities

The City of Greater Bendigo is the regional capital of Central Victoria and covers almost 3,000 square kilometres. The municipality has an estimated residential population of 119,980 people in 2020¹, and encompasses Bendigo and surrounding townships, including Heathcote, Axedale, Huntly, Marong, Elmore, Goornong, Lockwood, Raywood and Redesdale.

The City of Greater Bendigo has attracted settlement from a wide range of migrants for many years dating back to the gold rushes of the 1850s that brought thousands of migrants to Bendigo and in doing so created a wave of multiculturalism. Greater Bendigo is very proud of its long migration history and the resulting multicultural communities that call it home. Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) figures from the 2016 Census show that the population of people born overseas in Greater Bendigo was 8,819. Whilst the ABS is the only formal measure of population, anecdotal evidence from local community organisations suggest that the total number of people born overseas is under represented from this source for Greater Bendigo.

Migration to Greater Bendigo has occurred for a variety of reasons, such as employment, education, family reunification and/or humanitarian reasons. Data from Department of Home Affairs Settlement Reports suggest that of a total of 88,319 people that arrived in Victoria in 2019, 447 of them settled in Greater Bendigo. Of these 447 people, 233 arrived as skilled migrants, 143 arrived on family reunification visas and 71 arrived as refugees on humanitarian visas. This suggests that a majority of the migration to Greater Bendigo is due to work purposes and people from refugee backgrounds comprise a small number of arrivals each year.

Greater Bendigo has also been welcoming international students from across the globe completing their educational journeys at the La Trobe University Bendigo Campus. Based on statistics received from La Trobe University's International Students Services, in 2017, 200 international students attended the Bendigo Campus. The top five countries where students have come from were: India, Nepal, Kuwait, Vietnam and China.

Greater Bendigo received its first Karen refugee family from Myanmar in 2007 and since then has been welcoming increasing numbers of refugees from Myanmar, Afghanistan and South Sudan. The largest cohort of refugees are the Karen people followed by Afghans from the Hazara minority ethnic group, and South Sudanese. The local Settlement Provider estimates that there are around 3,000 Karen, 250 Afghans and 150 South Sudanese people living in Greater Bendigo. The needs and settlement issues of people from refugee backgrounds are unique and far greater than of those who come as migrants (i.e. skilled migrants, family reunions, and international students). This is mainly due to the trauma and hardships they suffer as a result of many years of persecution, war, poverty, limited educational opportunities and living in refugee settlements. The City of Greater Bendigo is committed to support the work of the local Humanitarian Settlement Providers to ensure Greater Bendigo is a welcoming, safe and inclusive city that offers culturally appropriate and responsive services to all multicultural communities, especially, those of refugee backgrounds.

¹ This figure is the Estimated Residential Population for Greater Bendigo for 2020 as calculated annually by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Refer to the City of Greater Bendigo Community Profile <https://profile.id.com.au/bendigo>

Census Snapshot

This information will be presented via visual graphics

Census Snapshot :

- Total Greater Bendigo population: 119,980 (Estimated Residential population, ABS, 2020)
- Population forecast: 155,596 by 2036 (Forecast ID 2019)
- Annual population growth rate: 1.8% (Estimated Residential Population, ABS 2019)

From 2016 Census:

- 8% of residents (8,819 out of 110,476 total population in 2016) were born overseas with top 5 countries of birth being: United Kingdom, New Zealand, India, Myanmar, Thailand
- 5,258 (60%) of 8,819 residents born overseas are from Non-English-Speaking Backgrounds (NESB)
- Top 5 Languages spoken (other than English): Karen, Mandarin, Malayalam, Punjabi, and Hindi
- Employment: 93% of residents born overseas are employed compared to the 7% unemployed
- Age Group of NESB residents in Greater Bendigo:
 - 0 – 14: 11%
 - 15 – 24: 12%
 - 25 – 44: 39%
 - 45 – 54: 12%
 - 55 – 64: 9%
 - 65 – 74: 10%
 - 75+ : 7%
- 1.7% of the population identified as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

Census information will be updated after August 2022 when new data from the 2021 Census will be released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

From the 2019 Active Living Census:

- 43.8% of residents who speak a language other than English meet guidelines of Adults physical activity compared to 57.7% of English-speaking residents
- 58.4% of residents who speak a language other than English want to be more active more often compared to 53% of English-speaking residents
- 49.3% of residents who speak a language other than English use open spaces weekly or more
- residents who speak a language other than English were less likely to report low life satisfaction (3.5% compared to 7.6%) and were less likely to report not feeling valued by society (14.6% compared to 19.5%)

- residents who speak a language other than English were less likely to rate their general health as fair or poor (15.6% compared to 19%)
- residents who speak a language other than English were more likely to be overweight (38.6% compared to 35.5%)
- residents who speak a language other than English were less likely to smoke, binge drink alcohol and gamble weekly.
- 12.4% of residents who speak a language other than English meet the guidelines for vegetable consumption
- residents who speak a language other than English reported being time poor as the main barrier to being more physically active (58.9%)

Strategic and Policy Context

This information will be presented as a visual graphic

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan is underpinned by the following International, Federal, State and local government policies and legislation. These strategic links guide and inform our work in the cultural diversity and inclusion space.

International Links:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948
- The Refugee Convention 1951
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966
- The International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination 1975

Federal Government Links:

- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Multicultural Australia: *United, Strong, Successful* (Australia's Multicultural Statement, 2017)
- National Settlement Framework

State Government Links:

- Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001
- Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008
- Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Multicultural Victoria Act 2011
- Victoria's Multicultural Policy Statement 2019

City of Greater Bendigo - Strategic Links:

- Council Plan (Mir wimbul) 2021 – 2025
- Healthy Greater Bendigo 2021 – 2025 (Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan)
- *Barpangu* 'Build Together' Reconciliation Plan, 2021 – 2025
- Greater Bendigo Coalition Gender Equity Strategy 2020-2025
- City of Greater Bendigo's (draft) Social Justice Framework
- City of Greater Bendigo COVID-19 Relief and Recovery Plan
- Greater Bendigo Economic Development Strategy 2020 - 2030
- Greater Bendigo Climate Change and Environment Strategy 2021-2026
- City of Gastronomy Implementation Framework and Action Plan 2020-2024
- Integrated Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2019
- Greater CREATIVE Bendigo

Updating our Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan

The City's Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan - Project Steering Group was established in 2020 to guide and oversee the evaluation and update of this Plan. Its members included Intercultural Ambassadors, City staff and representatives of local networks, agencies and schools.

La Trobe University (LTU) in Bendigo was engaged by the City as a Consultant to evaluate the success of the first Plan in achieving its goals; and engage with the community and key stakeholders to identify future directions to be included in this Plan.

The community engagement process undertaken to evaluate and develop this plan included:

The following information will be presented as visual graphics

- Project Steering Group:
 - 13 meetings since May 2020
- LTU Evaluation:
 - Surveys: 10 City Staff, 15 partner agencies
 - Interviews: 7 partner agencies, 9 multicultural community members
 - 18 postcards (from multicultural community members)
- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2016 – 2019) - Report Card
- Welcoming Cities Accreditation process
 - 18 City staff consulted
 - 6 partner agencies consulted
- Imagine Greater Bendigo consultation
 - 77 multicultural community members provided feedback via postcards and listening posts
 - 15 members of the Multicultural Youth Network via interviews
- Staff Forums:
 - 22 City staff from key customer-facing Service Units
- Stakeholder Workshop
 - 3 Councillors and 11 City staff,
 - 7 multicultural community leaders, and
 - 16 representatives from partner agencies

The feedback and findings generated by the community engagement process led to a significant number of key themes and priority issues being identified for further focus as part of the Plan.

Key Themes Identified

Key themes identified in the Latrobe University Evaluation Report included:

1. **Governance:** ensure City policies and programs intersect with those of partner agencies and develop a digital platform to share information and achievements.
2. **Leadership:** build relationships with Bendigo Community Health Services (BCHS), Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS) and other partner agencies including faith-based organisations to develop a stronger network of community leadership.
3. **Social Inclusion:** develop a process to assess the level of visibility and engagement of different ethno-culturally and religiously diverse communities, as well as their differing needs to inform strategic planning processes and programming.
4. **Economic Development:** provide access to facilities, innovation support and business mentoring to increase ethno-culturally diverse representation and business ownership in commercial, retail and hospitality sectors.
5. **Learning and Skills Development:** work with industry groups to identify existing and future workforce needs and tailor programs to ensure different cohorts can learn transferable skills and knowledge to work in these sectors regardless of language skills or levels of education. Evaluate and extend industry specific training supports for employers to employ ethno-culturally and religiously diverse workers.
6. **Civic Participation:** enhancing civic participation by facilitating more opportunities for ethno-cultural and religiously diverse groups to influence policy, strategies, plans and programs.
7. **Spaces and Places:** provide appropriate facilities in public spaces that support ethno-cultural and religious needs, for example: ablutions, child friendly and breast feeding friendly public spaces.
8. **Health and Wellbeing:** work through BCHS and LCMS and faith-based organisations to identify, prioritise, communicate and link health information to familiar experiences, activities and events.

Priorities identified via forums and workshops involving community members, agency partners and City staff included:

Leadership:

- Increasing the connection between of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, history and story-telling and multicultural communities.
- Support for being a 'Welcoming City' and developing facilities, public spaces, services, events and communications that reflect this.

Social and Cultural Inclusion:

- Improving organisational cultural safety through information and training, increasing the level of City employees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and ensuring services are culturally responsive and equitably distributed.
- Support for the Intercultural Ambassadors Program and increasing the level of participation by multicultural community groups in decision making about City plans and programs.

Economic Development:

- Improving employment, business development and economic outcomes.

Learning and Skills Development:

- Enhance the cultural competency of City staff through training and information sharing concerning Greater Bendigo's cultural and religious diversity with a focus on meeting and hearing from a range of multicultural community members.

Civic Participation:

- Focusing on leadership pathways and human rights especially for children and young people.

Places and Spaces:

- Celebrating our diverse cultures and creating opportunities for interfaith connections and community harmony.

Health and Wellbeing:

- working in partnerships to respond to community priorities including emergency preparedness, gender equity, aging and understanding the NDIS.

Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2021 – 2025

The City of Greater Bendigo Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2021 – 2025) is focused on our growing population of multicultural communities including: refugees, international students, skilled migrants and other Visa holders.

The Action Plan which follows, responds to directions recommended in the Latrobe University Evaluation Report and feedback from community engagement processes with multicultural community members, key stakeholder agencies and City services. It is structured around achieving our Mission and goals in relation to the six 'Welcoming City' accreditation themes with the addition of 'Health & Wellbeing'. The implementation of actions will be phased over the life of the Plan.

Following information to be presented as visual graphic

Welcoming City Themes and Goals:

Leadership –

Cultural diversity is celebrated in Greater Bendigo and social inclusion strengthened.

Social and Cultural Inclusion –

Greater Bendigo is a place where multicultural communities can safely connect with their culture and identity.

Economic Development –

Greater Bendigo is a sustainable and prosperous community where all people from diverse backgrounds can contribute and thrive.

Learning and Skills Development –

City staff and the broader community have more knowledge and understanding about Greater Bendigo's cultural and religious diversity.

Civic Participation –

People from diverse multicultural backgrounds can actively participate in community life.

Places and Spaces –

There is equitable access to public places and spaces, which are culturally safe for multicultural groups in the community.

Health and Wellbeing –

Our multicultural community members are healthy and well, supported by responsive and culturally safe service provision.

Our Commitments

Underpinning the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan are the following commitments:

- Prioritising positive outcomes for our multicultural communities and authentically hearing their voice, will remain central to the actions of this Plan.
- Being proactive in engaging our multicultural community groups at all levels and making our services accessible, inclusive and responsive to community requirements.
- The Plan acts as a '*Welcoming City*' Plan to celebrate, support and promote our diverse community and focus our efforts to advance our Accreditation as a '*Welcoming City*' with Welcoming Australia.
- Build stronger relationships with our agency partners and multicultural community groups to ensure a collaborative approach to achieving the Plan and celebrating our shared achievements.
- To monitor, review and report on progress in achieving the Plan to the community and consider flexible responses to grant opportunities and emerging community priorities.
- Connect with other levels of government to share ideas, knowledge and opportunities that can improve access and inclusion for our multicultural community groups.
- We will strengthen our whole-of-Council partnership approach to cultural diversity and inclusion and maintain commitments to the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities, City of Greater Bendigo's Social Justice Framework; and applying an equity lens.
- The Plan is intended to be a 'living' document that remains flexible in order to respond to the changing needs and priorities of our local multicultural communities over time.

Measuring Success

Governance

The Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan Steering Committee, comprising Councillors, City staff, external partners and local multicultural community representatives, will guide and oversee the delivery of this Plan.

In-line with the Plan's whole-of-Council partnership approach, the City's Community Partnerships Unit is responsible for coordinating the implementation and evaluation of the actions under this Plan in partnership with multicultural groups in the community, relevant City Service Units and local community agencies.

To ensure accountability to our multicultural communities, the City will invite leaders and representatives from local multicultural groups and organisations to participate in the Steering Committee, Working Groups and project support groups to ensure the Plan is relevant to the local multicultural community and is achieving its goals.

The Plan will also be championed across the organisation by our:

- Councillors
- Executive Management Team (Chief Executive Officer and Directors)
- Organisational Leadership Team
- Staff from all levels of the organisation

Information below will be presented as a Governance Diagram

- Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan Steering Committee
- Working Groups (to deliver on identified goals and objectives in the Action Plan)
- Strategic Partnership Project: Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Strategic Engagement Coordinator, Bendigo Community Health Services and Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services

Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning

How will we know the Plan is successful?

The Plan will be monitored and reviewed annually by Council and the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan Steering Committee in conjunction with agency partners and community groups.

A Measurement, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework will be developed and endorsed by the Steering Committee at the commencement of the Plan.

The MEL Framework will include:

- Development of an Evaluation and Monitoring Plan including key evaluation questions, data collection methods and pathways for continuous improvement. Evidence will be collected to record which groups and how many community members benefited from key actions and

programs. Where possible evaluation of initiatives will be shared to build our collective capability and discuss new and emerging issues.

- Annual Progress Reports presented to Council and the community.
- Data and analysis via strategic indicators linked to achieving the seven 'Welcoming City' goals. Strategic indicators help us to evaluate our progress and understand if we are progressing to our desired outcomes, for example:

WELCOMING CITY THEME & GOAL	STRATEGIC INDICATORS
<p>1. Leadership – Cultural diversity is celebrated in Greater Bendigo and social inclusion strengthened.</p>	<p>Ongoing Welcoming Cities Accreditation</p> <p>Level of participation in the CDIP Steering Committee and other City Committees and working groups by multicultural community members</p> <p>Number of CDIP organisational partners</p> <p>Number of multicultural events/initiatives connecting our community</p>
<p>2. Social and Cultural Inclusion – Greater Bendigo is a place where multicultural communities can safely connect with their culture and identity.</p>	<p>Number of racism incidents reported via the online Community Reporting Tool (CRT)</p> <p>Level of community participation in the anti-racism initiatives delivered by the Council</p> <p>Community perceptions of inclusion survey during Zinda Festival</p> <p>Number of local cultural and religious celebrations and events and level of community participation</p>
<p>3. Economic Development – Greater Bendigo is a sustainable and prosperous community where all people from diverse backgrounds can contribute and thrive.</p>	<p>Number of culturally diverse staff, students, volunteers and trainees in the Council</p> <p>Number of CoGB community grants awarded to multicultural groups and businesses</p> <p>Number of small businesses owned by multicultural community members supported</p>
<p>4. Learning and Skills Development – City staff and the broader community have more knowledge and understanding about Greater Bendigo's cultural and religious diversity.</p>	<p>Increased number of capacity building opportunities around cultural safety and engaging with multicultural communities available to City staff</p> <p>Promotion of cultural events and community achievements in all forms of media, aimed at</p>

	<p>enhancing understanding and educating our community about the benefits of diversity</p> <p>Level of uptake of TIS National phone interpreting services by City staff and local businesses</p>
<p>5. Civic Participation – People from diverse multicultural backgrounds can actively participate in community life.</p>	<p>Number of City units engaging with multicultural communities during their key planning and decision-making processes</p> <p>Number of young people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds engaging with City's Youth Team, Youth Council and youth events/activities</p> <p>Number of inclusive Citizenship Ceremonies</p> <p>Qualitative surveys concerning level of participation</p>
<p>6. Places and Spaces – There is equitable access to public places and spaces, which are culturally safe for multicultural groups in the community.</p>	<p>Level of access and participation by multicultural groups in City facilities and events</p> <p>Increase in the number of places and spaces accessed by multicultural and religious community members to celebrate events</p> <p>Improved access to social and community housing/rental accommodation for our multicultural community</p> <p>Improved welcoming signage and multilingual messaging in City facilities</p>
<p>7. Health and Wellbeing – Our multicultural community members are healthy and well, supported by responsive and culturally safe service provision.</p>	<p>Gender Impact Assessments on identified City programs are conducted</p> <p>Increase in the number of multicultural community members accessing health and wellbeing services</p> <p>How people rate their level of health and health priorities</p> <p>Number of capacity building opportunities made available to the health sector to improve responsiveness to community need</p>

Action Plan

Mission

Greater Bendigo is a welcoming, inclusive and diverse community where people of all cultural backgrounds belong and participate equally in social, political, and economic life.

Building on the work of the 2016-2019 CDIP, we will continue to:

- Be an active member of the Welcoming Cities Network and participating in meetings and events
- Maintain and promote our status as a 'Welcoming City' and as a Refugee Welcome Zone
- Promote the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (CDIP) as our Welcoming Cities Plan and hold events and activities to welcome new residents from diverse and multicultural backgrounds
- Co-ordinate the CDIP Steering Committee through quarterly meetings to oversee the implementation, monitoring and review of actions in the CDIP, and encourage the participation of local multicultural community leaders and senior City staff
- Promote and support the dissemination of accessible information and awareness raising about staying healthy while living with COVID-19. Ensuring all information is provided in local community languages, and support other pandemic-related efforts, including crisis support and food security
- Promote CDIP actions and accomplishments to the wider community through a number of mediums, and provide opportunities for greater public awareness of Greater Bendigo's multicultural communities, such as via diversity and inclusion at Annual Bendigo Easter Fair
- Utilise the STEP-UP Employment Resource Kit to raise awareness and educate local employers about employing culturally diverse workers
- Support our partners to provide opportunities for service providers in the healthcare system to increase their understanding of the unique health needs of multicultural communities and advocate for systemic change
- Work in partnership with Greater Bendigo Coalition for Gender Equity to promote gender equity; and raise awareness of gender-based violence and relevant support services available to multicultural communities, with particular focus on newly arrived migrant and refugee communities.

Goals, Objectives and Actions

This Action Plan has 7 goals, 22 objectives and 42 Actions to be commenced in 2021/22, the first year of the Plan's operation. All the actions have been developed through ongoing conversations and community engagement processes with multicultural community groups, local agencies and responsible City Service Units. This Action Plan reflects the needs and priorities of our local culturally and religiously diverse communities. The implementation of this Action Plan will be phased over the four-year span of the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan and will be monitored, reviewed and reported on annually to ensure accountability, transparency and continued relevance in meeting the needs of our local multicultural communities.

Leadership:**Goal: Cultural diversity is celebrated in Greater Bendigo and social inclusion strengthened.**

Objective 1: Promote and celebrate Greater Bendigo's accreditation as a Welcoming City with the Australian Welcoming Cities Network					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
1.1	Hold launch events, forums and Cultural Diversity Week activities to welcome new residents from culturally diverse backgrounds and promote the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (CDIP) as our Welcoming Cities Plan	Greater Bendigo Community	Annually	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications LCMS BCBS
1.2	Renew accreditation with the Welcoming Cities Network and aim for a higher level of accreditation	Greater Bendigo Community	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications LCMS BCBS

Objective 2: Ensure effective governance, monitoring and reporting on the Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Plan (CDIP) to deliver outcomes					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
2.1	Prepare and implement a CDIP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework leading to continuous improvements, and provide an annual report to the community on CDIP achievements	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities Councillors and City staff CDIP Stakeholders	2022	Community Partnerships CDIP Steering Committee	Active and Healthy Communities, Research & Evaluation
2.2	Consider the membership and update the Terms of Reference for the CDIP Steering Committee to ensure its membership supports the delivery of the Plan's intended outcomes	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities Councillors and City staff CDIP Stakeholders	2022	Community Partnerships CDIP Steering Committee	

Objective 3: Enhance our delivery of policy and programs for multicultural communities through partnerships, networks and advocacy					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
3.1	Apply for the next funding round of the Strategic Partnership Program (SPP) released by the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to ensure CDIP actions are supported and SPP partnerships strengthened	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities CDIP Stakeholders Intercultural Ambassadors	2022	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Bendigo Community Health Services (BCHS) Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services (LCMS)

Objective 4: Increase the opportunities for greater connections and learnings between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and multicultural communities					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
4.1	Develop and implement one story-telling and/or art initiative to promote cross cultural awareness and understanding between multicultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	Traditional Owners Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Multicultural Communities	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities) Goldfields Library Corporation	Traditional Owners & Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Multicultural Arts Victoria (MAV) Intercultural Ambassadors Bendigo Venues and Events, Creative Communities (BV&E)

Social and Cultural Inclusion:

Goal: Greater Bendigo is a place where multicultural communities can safely connect with their culture and identity.

Objective 5: Support initiatives that prevent racism and discrimination					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
5.1	Develop and implement educational programs and awareness raising events to inform the community of the purpose, benefits and outcome of using the Community Reporting Tool (CRT) to report incidents of racism, discrimination, hate-speech and religious vilification	Councillors and City staff Intercultural Ambassadors Multicultural Communities Greater Bendigo Schools Multicultural Youth Network	2022	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) VIC POL
5.2	Explore opportunities to develop and implement anti-racism initiatives, campaigns and workshops to discuss 'unconscious bias', the impact of racism on the community, and ways to take a stand against racism	Councillors and City staff Intercultural Ambassadors Multicultural Communities Greater Bendigo Schools Multicultural Youth Network	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	LCMS BCHS CDIP Stakeholders
Objective 6: Support Greater Bendigo's multicultural communities to celebrate significant cultural and religious events, and to safely connect with their culture and identity					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
6.1	Provide and promote information on significant dates, celebrations and festivals that showcase the many cultures of Greater Bendigo, via a Multicultural Calendar of Events	Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Broader community	Annually	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications Strategic Partnership Project (SPP) LCMS & Bendigo Interfaith Council (BIC) & BCHS

6.2	Explore opportunities to promote the Multicultural Calendar of Events via a number of mediums to make it as accessible as possible (i.e. Connect Greater Bendigo, print, media, social media etc.)	Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Broader community	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications BCHS LCMS
6.3	Support Zinda Festival as Greater Bendigo's major multicultural festival during Cultural Diversity Week in March	Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Broader community	Annually	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities) Tourism and Major Events	LCMS
6.4	Evaluate the Intercultural Ambassadors Pilot Program and explore options to action the recommendations of the Evaluation Report	Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Broader community	2021/2022	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications Active and Healthy Communities - Research & Evaluation LCMS BCHS
Objective 7: Ensure multicultural communities have access to culturally and religiously safe and inclusive City of Greater Bendigo services					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
7.1	Explore opportunities and develop processes to ensure programs and services are culturally and religiously safe and accessible through policy development and service reviews	City Staff Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities	2023/2024	People & Culture Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	All customer-facing City services

7.2	Update the New Resident Welcome Kit to include key information about cultural diversity and access to services for new residents of culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	2022	Communications Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	BCHS LCMS BIC
7.3	Promote and support Mayoral welcomes for new arrivals during Humanitarian Settlement Orientation Programs	New arrivals/ residents of refugee background Mayor and Councillors	Annually	BCHS	Community Partnerships Governance

Objective 8: Improve the knowledge and understanding of the wider community on diversity, inclusion and Greater Bendigo's multicultural communities

Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
8.1	Work with partners to create an opportunity for young people to come together for story-telling, artistic expression and/or intercultural/ inter-faith sharing to foster harmony, understanding and respect	Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Broader community	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive & Engaged Communities)	Goldfields Library Corporation Youth Council LCMS/ Multicultural Youth Network Traditional Owners & Aboriginal Community Bendigo Venues and Events (BV&E)

Economic Development:

Goal: Greater Bendigo is a sustainable and prosperous community where all people from diverse backgrounds can contribute and thrive.

Objective 9: Promote inclusive employment and increase the cultural diversity of the City of Greater Bendigo workforce					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
9.1	Review internal recruitment processes to ensure inclusive advertising, easy English position descriptions and diversity on interview panels	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities Key City Service Units	2022	People & Culture	Community Partnerships
9.2	Establish a baseline and aim to increase the number of culturally diverse employees within the City's workforce	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities	2022	People & Culture	Community Partnerships
Objective 10: Support small businesses owned by multicultural community members					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
10.1	Provide information and support to CALD small business operators to improve their understanding of the small business regulatory environment, such as, the planning and permit requirements, Food Act requirements, Local Laws and regulations, and COVID-19 rules; including small business grants	Small businesses owned by multicultural community members	2022	Safe and Healthy Environments Economic Development Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	SPP BCHS LCMS Be.Bendigo Rural Financial Counselling Service Victoria
10.2	Provide training sessions for multicultural community members on grant writing and understanding of City of Greater Bendigo (CoGB) Community Grants, including the eligibility requirements and application process	Ethnic Associations Local community groups Small Businesses	2023	Economic Development Community Partnerships (Strong Communities)	LCMS Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)

Objective 11: Support access to training and employment pathways for multicultural jobseekers					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
11.1	Establish a system to support young people and adults from diverse cultural backgrounds to have opportunities to undertake student placements, work experience, apprenticeships and traineeships, and temporary paid or voluntary roles at the City	Multicultural Jobseekers Intercultural Ambassadors	2023	People & Culture Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Community Employment Connectors Program Bendigo TAFE Bendigo Senior Secondary College
11.2	Explore and develop partnerships to assist and support multicultural jobseekers find training pathways, employment opportunities, and sustain financial independence during and post the COVID-19 pandemic	Multicultural jobseekers Bendigo TAFE Local Employers	2022	Community Partnerships (Resilient Communities) Community Employment Connectors Program	Department Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Jobs Victoria Advocates Program Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions Local Employment Agencies

Learning and Skills Development:

Goal: City staff and the broader community have more knowledge and understanding about Greater Bendigo's cultural and religious diversity.

Objective 12: Enhance cultural awareness and competency of City of Greater Bendigo Councillors, leadership and staff					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
12.1	Develop an annual training program to enhance City staff's cultural competence and understanding. Such as, sessions on cultural competency, the refugee journey, understanding Greater Bendigo's cultural and religious diversity, and use of interpreting and translating services	Customer-facing City Services Councillors Executive Management Team (EMT)	2022	People & Culture Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications SPP BCHS LCMS BIC
12.2	Develop and promote digital resources and fact sheets on the City's SharePoint site about Greater Bendigo's multicultural communities and culturally-responsive service delivery	Customer-facing City units Councillors EMT	2022	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Information Technology Communications People & Culture SPP BCHS LCMS
Objective 13: Enhance local employers and service providers' cultural competency and understanding through workplace training and education					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
13.1	Offer opportunities for local businesses to deliver culturally-safe and responsive services, including regular use of TIS National over-the-phone interpreting services	Local business sector, i.e., Real Estate agencies, pharmacies, medical centres, optometrists	2022	DFFH/ Strategic Engagement Coordinator Be.Bendigo	Community Partnerships LCMS BCHS

13.2	Support our partners to provide opportunities for local service providers, such as, VIC POL, Bendigo Health, NDIS, local schools, etc., to enhance their confidence and competence around cultural awareness via educational/ information sessions and digital resources	Local key service providers	Annually	BCHS LCMS	Community Partnerships Refugee Settlement Network
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Civic Participation:

Goal: People from culturally diverse backgrounds can actively participate in community life.

Objective 14: Increase participation and engagement of multicultural communities in the City's planning and decision-making processes					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
14.1	Build the capacity and confidence of City units to ensure multicultural community members are properly engaged and consulted with during key decision-making processes by developing resources on SharePoint	City Service Units Intercultural Ambassadors Multicultural Communities Secondary schools Community agencies	2023	Community Partnerships (Engaged & Inclusive Communities)	Relevant City Units BCHS LCMS
14.2	Raise awareness on local government election processes; reduce barriers to voting; and provide information about being a Councillor in the lead up to the next Council election	CoGB Multicultural Communities	2024	Governance Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	LCMS
Objective 15: Promote and support volunteering and leadership opportunities for multicultural communities					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
15.1	Explore opportunities for culturally diverse young people to engage in leadership and volunteering activities with the City's Youth Team and embed in youth participation processes	CALD Young People	2023	Community Partnerships (Engaged & Inclusive Communities)	LCMS/ Multicultural Youth Network Youth Council

Objective 16: Support multicultural community members to achieve citizenship, and ensure inclusive citizenship ceremonies					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
16.1	Work with local partner agencies to provide better pathways to citizenship	Multicultural Communities City of Greater Bendigo	2022	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	SPP LCMS BCHS
16.2	Work with Traditional Owners and multicultural communities to make the City's citizenship ceremonies more welcoming and inclusive	Multicultural Communities City of Greater Bendigo Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	2022	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities) Tourism and Major Events	Communications Governance Traditional Owners SPP
Objective 17: Enhance the knowledge and understanding of multicultural communities regarding their civic compliance obligations and relevant local law requirements					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
17.1	Develop partnerships to provide opportunities and resources to newly-arrived CALD residents to better understand local government and their civic obligations and relevant local laws	Multicultural Communities City of Greater Bendigo	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	Communications Relevant City Units BCHS

Places and Spaces:

Goal: There is equitable access to public places and spaces, which are culturally safe for multicultural groups in the community.

Objective 18: Promote the need for affordable housing and accommodation options for multicultural communities					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
18.1	Advocate for multicultural communities in the delivery of the Affordable Housing Action Plan	Multicultural Communities	2023	Strategic Planning Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	DFFH LCMS BCHS
Objective 19: Provide public places and spaces that are inclusive and enhance social cohesion					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
19.1	Explore, trial and evaluate the placement of welcome signage and/or messaging opportunities in multiple local languages at City-owned venues and facilities across the municipality	Multicultural Communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive & Strong Communities) Active and Healthy Communities Business Transformation Parks and Open Space Property Services Communications	BCHS LCMS MAV Traditional Owners
19.2	Investigate establishing a Multicultural Hub that provides space for culturally and linguistically diverse communities to hold their cultural/religious events, art exhibitions, social gatherings and community consultations	Multicultural Communities	2023	Community Partnerships (Inclusive Communities)	BV&E MAV LCMS Welcoming Cities

19.3	Provide opportunities for multicultural communities to participate and connect with recreational spaces, through community programs and initiatives	Multicultural Communities CALD Young People Sporting clubs	Annually	Community Partnerships Active and Healthy Communities	Sports Focus LCMS
19.4	Develop a project brief to explore opportunities to enhance the cultural safety and accessibility of major public spaces and sporting facilities.	Multicultural Communities CALD Young People Sporting clubs	2023	Community Partnerships Active and Healthy Communities	Sports Focus LCMS

Health and Wellbeing:

Goal: Our multicultural community members are healthy and well, supported by responsive and culturally safe service provision.

Objective 20: Develop and strengthen partnerships to understand and respond to current and emerging health and wellbeing needs of multicultural communities					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
20.1	In partnership with key stakeholder agencies ensure the needs of multicultural communities are considered in the implementation of Healthy Greater Bendigo (2021 – 2025) initiatives	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities	Annually	BCHS Bendigo Health Community Wellbeing (Early Years Programs)	Community Partnerships Refugee Settlement Network LCMS
20.2	Work with partners to support CALD Seniors' Initiatives to raise awareness of community members and service providers on issues and needs of seniors from a CALD perspective	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities Local Service Providers	2022	BCHS LCMS Community Wellbeing (Home Support)	Community Partnerships Refugee Settlement Network

Objective 21: Support initiatives that enhance multicultural communities' understanding of the climate change, how they can respond, and limit its impact on their health					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
21.1	Annual review of summer preparedness and emergency response resources to support multicultural communities to build their capacity in responding to community emergencies, i.e., bush fire safety, heat health, and floods	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities	Annually	Community Partnerships (Resilient Communities) BCHS	LCMS Refugee Settlement Network
Objective 22: Develop partnerships and implement mechanisms to advance gender equity and prevent gender-based violence among multicultural communities.					
Proposed Action		Applicable To	Timeline	Responsibility	Partners
22.1	In partnership, develop and promote resources to raise awareness of gender-based violence and relevant support services available to multicultural communities, with particular focus on newly arrived migrant and refugee communities.	Greater Bendigo's Multicultural Communities Intercultural Ambassadors	2023	Community Partnerships (Resilient & Inclusive Communities) BCHS LCMS	Refugee Settlement Network Greater Bendigo Against Family Violence Greater Bendigo Coalition for Gender Equity
22.2	Commit to the implementation of a Gender Impact Assessment in relation to a CDIP goal, program; or project with multicultural communities.	CDIP Actions and Initiatives	Annually	Community Partnerships (Resilient & Inclusive Communities)	BCHS LCMS

Acknowledgements (inside back cover)

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