



DIVERSITY  
COUNCIL  
AUSTRALIA

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## Joint Release

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# New project to take an intersectional approach to women in leadership

Diversity Council Australia (DCA), along with partners Settlement Services International (SSI) and Chief Executive Women, are delighted about [today's announcement](#) by the Minister for Women, Katy Gallagher, that the federal government would be investing in work to enhance opportunities for culturally and racially marginalised (CARM) women to move into workplace leadership roles.

DCA, SSI and CEW have received funding under the *Women's Leadership and Development Program* for a project to address the systemic barriers restricting CARM women's upward mobility into leadership roles in Australian organisations.

The 2022 Chief Executive Women [Senior Executive Census](#) shows progress for women in senior roles in Australia's ASX300 has stalled – with only 18 women holding CEO positions in the ASX300.

The Census does not report on representation of CARM women, but we know that women from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds have significantly lower representation in leadership roles, and this plays out far beyond the ASX, and across our country in organisations big and small.

This project is designed to take an intersectional approach to addressing these barriers for CARM women in leadership.

DCA will lead the project, working with key partners SSI and CEW over the next three years.

### Quotes attributable to Lisa Annese, CEO, Diversity Council Australia

“For too long, women's leadership programs have been designed in a one-size-fits-all way, that doesn't take into account the different experiences that different women have,” said Lisa Annese.

“This funding means that we can design a program that is led by and informed by culturally and racially marginalised women to understand what exactly the systemic barriers stopping them from entering executive and key decision-making roles in Australian organisations are.

“We are working directly with 375 culturally and racially marginalised women to simultaneously build their leadership capability, while at the same time providing evidence-based training to 25 national organisations to ensure that the systemic barriers locking culturally and racially marginalised women out of leadership in Australian businesses are removed and that the program can be sustained.

“DCA applauds the federal government for recognising the importance of taking an intersectional approach to addressing workplace gender inequality – experiences of marginalisation can be, and often are, amplified by multiple and overlapping barriers and systemic inequalities, including gender and racism.”

## **Quotes attributable to Violet Roumeliotis, CEO, Settlement Services International**

SSI CEO, Violet Roumeliotis, said that SSI would provide cultural responsiveness training and work with employers and CALD women on a career trajectory to achieve individual career goals.

“What makes this program unique is its approach and design,” said Violet Roumeliotis.

“It addresses the amplified experiences of discrimination and exclusion from intersecting marginalising identities of being culturally and linguistically diverse, plus being a woman.

“The racial ceiling is a very real phenomenon that creates additional barriers for refugee and migrant women to achieve career goals.

“Working collaboratively at individual and organisational levels, the program will identify, deliver and evaluate effective change interventions that can remove systemic barriers for CALD women and facilitate progression into leadership roles.”

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### **About DCA**

Diversity Council Australia is the independent not-for-profit peak body leading diversity and inclusion in the workplace. We provide unique research, inspiring events and programs, curated resources and expert advice across all diversity dimensions to a community of over 1,100 member organisations. Our member organisations are estimated to employ nearly two million Australians, representing up to 20% of the workforce. [www.dca.org.au](http://www.dca.org.au).

### **About SSI**

Settlement Services International is a community organisation and social business that supports newcomers and other Australians to achieve their full potential. We work with all people who have experienced vulnerability, including refugees, people seeking asylum and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, to build capacity and enable them to overcome inequality.