Natural
Hazards
Research
Australia

Call for Expressions of Interest

T8-A1: A national framework and toolkit for multicultural inclusion in emergency management

Expressions of Interest due **5pm AEDT, 18 March 2025**
to research@naturalhazards.com.au

naturalhazards.com.au
Australia's leading research centre for natural
hazard resilience and disaster risk reduction

Australian Government

Overview

Natural Hazards Research Australia (hereafter the Centre) is seeking Expressions of Interest from project teams for the following project:

T8-A1 A national framework and toolkit for multicultural inclusion in emergency management

Project description	This project aims to:
	→ increase resilience and positive outcomes for multicultural communities before during and after emergencies and disasters
	→ increase inclusion and diversity in the emergency management sector
	→ inform and guide the systemic, structural, policy and investment reform and changes needed to drive inclusion in emergency management
	→ support the multicultural sector's role in disaster resilience
	→ strengthen partnerships between the emergency management and multicultural sectors.
	This project will provide:
	→ clear understanding of the outcomes for multicultural communities relative to the broader population in Australia in emergencies and disasters in Australia and the reasons why
	→ clear evidence of the strengths, priorities and needs of multicultural communities in emergencies and disasters
	→ good practice approaches to inclusion before, during and after emergencies and disasters
	→ the policy, investment, systemic and structural changes needed to effect change
	→ a tested framework and accompanying practical toolkit to support the emergency management sector's inclusion of multicultural communities across Australia.
Estimated duration	Three years
Budget	The budget envelope for this project is $400,000 to $550,000 (ex GST)
	The research team should note that this is a competitive process. Expression of Interest submissions will be assessed on value for money and justification for any funds requested.
Related national research priorities[1]	→ Communities and workforces of the future
	→ Evidence-informed policy, strategy and foresight
	→ Learning form disasters
	→ Operational response and innovation
	→ Resilient communities
Related Centre research priorities for 2024–26[2]	→ Understanding and mitigating risk
	→ Resilient recovery
	→ Social equity

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1   Natural Hazards Research Australia (2022) National research priorities for disaster risk reduction and community resilience to the impacts of natural hazards, accessible at www.naturalhazards.com.au/sites/default/files/2022-05/NatHazResAus ResearchPriorities FA02.pdf

2   Natural Hazards Research Australia (2024) *Biennial Research Plan 2024–26*, accessible at https://www.naturalhazards.com.au/sites/default/files/2024-07/NHRA%20ResearchPlan24%E2%80%9326%2004.pdf

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Supporting organisations	→ Australian Red Cross
	→ Chinese Community Council of Australia
	→ Coffs Harbour Multicultural Society
	→ Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
	→ Fire Rescue Victoria
	→ Ghana Association of Victoria
	→ Life Saving Victoria
	→ St Vincent de Paul Society
	→ The Salvation Army
	→ Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministry
	→ Federal Government Representatives
	→ Zara's House
Centre contact	For any questions regarding this Call for EOIs, please email research@naturalhazards.com.au.
Online project briefing	For more information or questions, an online project briefing webinar will be held at **12:00pm AEDT on 24 February 2025**
Submission of EOI	EOIs must be prepared using the Centre's EOI submission form and Budget Template. To ensure submissions from all states in light of Tropical Cyclone Alfred, the new EOI deadline for this project is **5pm AEDT, 18 March 2025.** EOIs are to be submitted to research@naturalhazards.com.au.

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Statement of requirements

Background and context

Research and experience show that multicultural communities are at greater risk of inequitable and disproportionate outcomes in emergencies and disasters. Multicultural community members and organisations are increasingly calling for inclusive approaches to better build and enable resilience and ensure that the work of emergency management agencies and organisations is inclusive, accessible and addresses the unique strengths and needs of multicultural communities.

This project is developed from the experiences of multicultural communities, groups and organisations that have been affected by a range of emergencies and disasters in recent years. It builds on previous research conducted by the Bushfire and Natural Hazards CRC (BNHCRC), Australian Red Cross's (ARC) Emergency Resilience in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities: Challenges and Opportunities report[3] , and addresses a key ARC future reform priority to further multicultural inclusion in disaster resilience. It also builds on a range of research, programs and projects undertaken other stakeholders in recent years.

Stakeholders consulted to develop this concept include:

→   a range of emergency management and multicultural organisations
→   Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience
→   Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia
→   Australian Red Cross teams

The following questions have been identified to highlight the research priorities:

→   What are the key strengths, needs and priorities of multicultural communities in emergencies and disasters?
→   What is the collective evidence and insight on effective approaches to working with multicultural communities before, during and after emergencies and disasters?
→   What are the key principles for effective inclusion?
→   What is a practical, best-practice approach to embedding inclusion and effectively working with multicultural communities before, during and after disasters?

Multicultural communities form an integral part of our society.

The 2021 Census highlights Australia's diversity. More than 29 percent of people in Australia were born overseas while around 50 percent have at least one parent born overseas. More than 5.5 million people speak a language other than English at home. This diversity is further reflected within multicultural communities themselves, from long established and highly integrated communities, to newly arrived, more isolated vulnerable multicultural communities, and others in between.

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3   https://www.redcross.org.au/globalassets/cms-assets/documents/emergency-services/arc-cald-resilience.pdf

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While progress has been made by the emergency management sector in working with communities, there is increasing recognition that enhanced approaches are needed to improve outcomes for multicultural communities. These include:

→ The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 which calls for disaster risk reduction (DRR) practices to be inclusive and accessible to be efficient and effective, including migrants as a priority cohort.

→ Inclusive engagement is a key guiding principle in the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework, calling for all sectors to connect with diverse stakeholders to ensure inclusive decision-making leading to more effective solutions.

→ Australia's National Strategy for Disaster Resilience calls for a better understanding of the diversity, needs, strengths and vulnerabilities within communities.

→ The Australian Disaster Recovery Framework calls for respect for the role of Australia's culturally diverse communities throughout recovery; and approaches that engage and mobilise community strengths and capacity.

→ The Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements Report recommended that Australian, state and territory governments take steps to develop tools, methods and guidance to identify and assess the vulnerability of individuals and communities.

→ The National Disaster Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework guiding principles include providing culturally safe and appropriate support.

→ The National Emergency Management Agency's (NEMA) Second Action Plan's priority areas includes creating spaces, opportunities and governance arrangements for inclusive and diverse community representation, participation and access to the disaster management system.

→ The current Multicultural Framework Review which is capturing and reflecting on the lessons learned from the pandemic about how government supports and works with diverse communities in crises.

→ The Australian Human Rights Commission National Anti-Racism Framework (under development).

Despite these calls to action, collective progress has been slow. While many initiatives, projects and research in recent years have made similar findings and recommendations, they have not been translated into pragmatic actions and work with multicultural communities across the emergency sector remains ad-hoc and inadequate as emergency management personnel scramble to manage the next disaster.

This project proposes elevating multicultural inclusion to a national level to encourage and provide access for all stakeholders to clear evidence and community-informed best practice guidance and tools.

Project description

This project aims to:

→ increase resilience and positive outcomes for multicultural communities before, during and after emergencies and disasters

→ increase inclusion and diversity in the emergency management sector

→ inform and guide the systemic, structural, policy and investment reform and changes needed to drive inclusion in emergency management

→ support the multicultural sector's role in disaster resilience

→ strengthen partnerships between the emergency management and multicultural sectors.

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This project will provide:

→ clear understanding of the outcomes for multicultural communities relative to the broader population in Australia in emergencies and disasters in Australia and the reasons why

→ clear evidence of the strengths, priorities and needs of multicultural communities in emergencies and disasters

→ good practice approaches to inclusion before, during and after emergencies and disasters

→ the policy, investment, systemic and structural changes needed to effect change

→ atested framework and accompanying practical toolkit to support the emergency management sector's inclusion of multicultural communities across Australia.

Activities will include:

→ Literature review/s of relevant research

→ Environmental scan of relevant programs and projects

→ Consultation with key emergency management agencies and multicultural organisations

→ Surveys, interviews and focus groups

→ Cross-sector workshops, forums and symposiums

→ Co-design workshops with multicultural groups and organisations, peak bodies and multicultural community members

→ Pilot testing and refinement of the framework and toolkit with at least one organisation

→ Multicultural Inclusion Network or Community of Practice

Key research considerations and principles for this concept include:

→ Accessibility

→ Asset/strengths-based

→ Building connections and relationships

→ Co-design

→ Collective trauma, mental health and wellbeing

→ Communications

→ Community-led

→ Cross-sector cooperation and collaboration

→ Cultural competency and sensitivity

→ Empowerment

→ Equity

→ First Nations Centrality

→ Gender

→ Integration of lived experience

→ Intersectionality

→ Psychosocial impact and support

→ Racism

→ Shared responsibility

→ Social capital

→ Trust

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Please note: Close collaboration with multicultural community members, leaders and organisations will be critical to the success of this project. Applicants are encouraged to explicitly articulate how they would seek to engage these critical stakeholders and articulate their previous experience in collaborating with multicultural organisations.

Expected outputs

Outputs are the products that are expected to be delivered by this project

Core outputs

→   A tested national framework and toolkit for multicultural Inclusion in emergency management

→   Final report – with finding and recommendations drawn from the literature review, environmental scan and consultations, and identification of future research opportunities

→   Multiple presentations at key conferences such as the AIDR/AFAC conference, alongside co-presenters from the research reference group

→   Up to four 1-hour online stakeholder presentation/s

→   Academic publications in high-ranking international journals

→   Implementation plan including communications and advocacy plans

→   Policy brief

→   Please detail other innovative outputs that your team can deliver to address the outcomes below – In particular outputs that would support implementation.

Additional outputs

→   Project plan and plain language statement

→   Quarterly progress reports

→   Project evaluation report

Collaborative approach

Researchers are expected to undertake the research using a collaborative approach to assist in the translation and transfer of knowledge to end-users and to ensure the project meets their needs. Researchers are encouraged to outline their approach to ensuring effective collaboration which could include embedding researchers within end-user organisations for a period of time to facilitate implementation and test/improve the framework and toolkit with one or more organisations.

As close collaboration with multicultural community members, leaders and organisations will be critical to the success of this project, applicants are encouraged to explicitly articulate how they would seek to engage these critical stakeholders.

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Anticipated outcomes

The short-term outcomes of this concept include:

→ increased understanding of the strengths, priorities and needs of multicultural communities in emergencies and disasters

→ evidence base of good practice approaches to working with multicultural communities in emergencies.

Longer term outcomes from this project include:

→ increased safety and resilience of communities across Australia

→ improved safety, resilience and outcomes for Australian multicultural community members in emergencies or disasters

→ increased engagement, relationships and trust between multicultural communities, groups and organisations and emergency management agencies and organisations

→ increased capacity by the emergency management sector to work with diverse communities

→ consistent approaches to inclusion by emergency management agencies and organisations across Australia

→ strengthened Australian Red Cross Emergency Services strategy, advocacy and operational responses

→ strengthened Australian Red Cross Migration Programs' strategies, advocacy and operational responses.

Quality control and reporting

The project will be overseen and supported by a Project Management Committee (PMC) comprising the Principal Researcher, a Centre representative, and at least one stakeholder representative. Composition of the PMC will be determined in consultation with the Principal Researcher.

Reports

The Centre expects that the outputs delivered by this project will meet the highest scientific standards and will be suitable for publication on the Centre website and in industry newsletters, as well as in high-quality scientific journals.

The successful research organisation/s must co-develop with end-users a project plan and project summary using the Centre's templates. The project summary should explain in plain language what the project is about, what questions it intends to answer and describe the expected practical outputs that will make use of the research findings. The project plan must be approved by the PMC and will become an attachment to the contract.

Reports (and any supporting material) must be submitted to the PMC's satisfaction and will be subject to review by PMC members. The project team will be required to ensure an internal peer review process is undertaken prior to the final report being submitted.

Milestone reporting

The project team must report all milestone deliverables and engagement activities into the Centre's Project Management System. This will include sufficient justification for the completion of milestones to the satisfaction of the PMC and the Centre.

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Communication

To further assist with quality assurance, it is expected that:

→ regular PMC meetings will be held

→ the project team will use a consultative approach, documented in quarterly reports

→ the Principal Researcher will give periodic presentations to key stakeholder groups to gain critical feedback on project milestones.

Additional quality control processes may be agreed as part of the project planning process.

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Contractual arrangements

A copy of the 'Research Services Agreement' the proposed form of contract
for the purposes of this project, can be found here.

The Centre reserves its rights to make amendments to the form of contract.

This agreement should be reviewed by applicants as part of the EOI submission.

If you would like to request amendments to any of the terms and conditions set out in the proposed form
of contract, details of the proposed changes and the reason the changes are requested must be included
in the EOI submission form. Requests for any changes will be at the sole discretion of the Centre.

Selection as a shortlisted or preferred provider does not give rise to a contract (express or
implied) between the shortlisted or preferred provider and the Centre for the supply of goods
or services. No legal relationship will exist between the Centre and the shortlisted or preferred
provider until such time as a binding contract in writing is executed by both parties.

In the case of consortiums, the Centre requests that one consortium member be nominated
as Lead Research Provider and take responsibility for subcontracting other parties.

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Submitting an Expression of Interest

Application and review process

Project selection and approval will be a two-stage process. The first stage is evaluation of the EOIs that are received. The second stage is development of a project proposal, where a preferred provider will be selected and offered an opportunity to co-develop a detailed project proposal with input from key stakeholders.

Key dates

10 February 2025	Call for EOIs opens
24 February 2025	Online project briefing
18 March 2025	Due date for EOIs

Submission requirements for this EOI

Project teams responding to this EOI are required to submit their response using the Centre's EOI submission form and Budget Template. Submissions must include:

→ a statement of capability (max 600 words), including the proposed contributions of each research team member to the project

→ a statement (max 400 words) about the diversity of the project team

→ a statement (max 400 words) about the project's inclusion and respect of First Nations peoples, philosophies, cultures, rights and/or knowledges

→ an outline (max 1000 words) describing how the project team intends to approach the project, strategies for effective collaboration and an indicative methodology

→ an indicative schedule of work and interim milestones/project outputs as described in this document

→ a proposed project budget in line with the budget envelope provided, including details of any in kind contribution from research organisation/s – a detailed budget to be provided using the downloadable Budget Template provided on the Centre's website

→ a clear statement (max 400 words) describing the outcomes that will be delivered for this project and how they will be used by stakeholders

→ a clear statement (max 400 words) describing the outputs that the proposed approach to this project will deliver and how the findings could translate into practice

→ a statement (max 500 words) demonstrating the project team's relevant industry and stakeholder engagement

→ a risk management statement (max 500 words)

→ any requested changes to the Centre's proposed form of contract

→ up to two-page CVs for each proposed project team member.

Additional information

In responding to this Call for Expressions of Interest, advice should be provided on any known or anticipated impacts of COVID or other pandemic restrictions or human resource risks on the timely delivery of the project. Where appropriate, risk management for the impacts of pandemic restrictions should be incorporated into the EOI.

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Frequently asked questions

Additional information provided to individual respondents will also be published on the Centre's website to ensure access to all interested parties. Respondents are encouraged to check the website for any additional information via these published FAQs, prior to the closing date.

Online project briefing

An online webinar scheduled for **12:00pm AEDT on 24 February 2025** will provide a more detailed briefing of the project and the opportunity for interested parties to pose specific questions.

Registrations for this webinar can be made via the project page on the Centre's website. Once completed, a recording of this webinar will be posted to the website to ensure all interested respondents have access to this information.

Evaluation criteria

After the closing date, the Centre will review submitted EOIs against the evaluation criteria below. The evaluation criteria provide an indication of those matters that should be included in the EOI and supporting material – details are provided in the table below.

The Centre reserves the right not to offer the work, or only allocate a proportion of the available funding, if a proposal does not meet the Centre's needs. The Centre reserves the right to invite any other specific researchers as it sees fit to submit proposals before or after the closing date.

Evaluation criteria	% weighting
Research capability: the capacity and capability to deliver an excellent research project in an Australian environment	20
Project approach: a demonstrated understanding of the project requirements and a proposed project approach and methodology that is appropriate, feasible and robust Relevant outline of a collaborative approach to assist in the translation and transfer of knowledge to end-users and to ensure the project meets their needs. Suggestions on potential co-design with multi-cultural communities and/or organisations.	20
Project outcomes and outputs: demonstrate a high-level understanding of the intentions of the project and how outputs/outcomes translate to practice	20
Industry engagement: strong track record of industry engagement with the ability to support and influence Australian disaster management at a national or state/territory level through interaction with key stakeholders	20
Value for money: delivery of required outcome within available budget along with the ability to leverage the funds provided with in-kind contributions or supplementary opportunities	20

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