

Multicultural Speakers Development Project: Reimagining a HIV Positive Speakers program into the 2030s



"Being part of this project has been empowering as someone from a multicultural background living with HIV because I felt my lived experience was genuinely valued, not just consulted. Living Positive Victoria created a true partnership where our voices helped shape the learning, and that gave me confidence to tell my story and feel like I was part of future decision making." – Mohamed Al Abri



"The Positive Speakers Program has been transformative, giving me the confidence to embrace my identity as a migrant living with HIV and advocate for others from multicultural communities. I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to use my voice to empower others and help create positive change." - Javier Solis



"The Positive Speakers Program showed me that being Polynesian is a strength, and that our stories and values belong at the heart of HIV and sexual health work." - Ko'lini Posimani



QR code to Positive Speakers Program webpage

Context

- Multicultural communities affected by HIV have been prioritised in the National HIV Strategy
- Increased demand for speakers from multicultural backgrounds
- **The proportion of multicultural speakers within LPV speakers' program has increased from 10% in 2019 to 40% in 2026**
- The speakers program needed to adapt to both the demand and the profile of speakers and adapt the program to more effectively embed views and experiences of PLHIV from multicultural backgrounds

The Positive Speakers Program (PSP) of Living Positive Victoria (LPV) has acted to achieve a significant change in the cultural diversity of its membership. This provided the program with an opportunity to review and adapt the program to more effectively embed views and experiences of PLHIV from multicultural backgrounds.

This program sits within the Multicultural Engagement Strategy of Living Positive Victoria by which LPV is making changes to ensure our organisation meets the needs of multicultural PLHIV, and that they can feel psychologically and culturally safe when they use our services and programs.

Collaboration

- An advisory group of PLHIV was invited to review and provide input in how to address the changes needed to make the Positive Speakers Program best suit the needs of community members from multicultural backgrounds.
- **Specially constituted advisory group of PLHIV from diverse communities (South America, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the South Pacific regions)**
- Reviewed key components of the program including the program's name, recruitment, training, promotion, website.

Innovation and Significance

This novel project resulted in changes to the program beyond what had been expected.

- It demonstrated the benefits of collaboratively and meaningfully reviewing program policies and practices through the lens of a multicultural perspective.
- The lesson from this approach is that this is important in the response and adaptation to the needs of the PLHIV from multicultural backgrounds.
- The review process saw structural changes in how the Positive Speakers Program improved its recruitment process, applications forms, website look to make them more relevant to multicultural communities as well as the wider PLHIV community.

Next Steps

Sustainability will depend on ongoing visibility, culturally appropriate recruitment processes, and structured speaker support. Emphasis will be placed on embedding multicultural representation benchmarks within PSP reporting processes to ensure gains achieved.

- **Representation – expand the reach of the PSP by scaling up digital capabilities, diversifying outreach channels, forming strategic partnerships, and reducing barriers to engagement.**
- It will also see a diversification of presentation topics that intersect with HIV (such as mental health, equity access to healthcare services, immigration issues, access to housing) so as to appeal to a broader audience.

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David O'Keeffe - Living Positive Victoria



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Department of Health

