

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION

Department and presenter	Cultural Diversity officer- Shiva Foroutan
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I started my term on 1st of November 2021 and since then I have strived to achieve the goal of advocating for culturally diverse students and supporting them by organizing different events.

Objective 1: A campaign for CALD students: I have done a survey regarding international students' career to understand the barriers that they face to secure a job while they are studying. In the survey I posed both multiple choice and open-ended question, so I can get a general view towards the problem, but at the same time having an idea of different needs as well. I also partnered with VICWise and attended a session to understand how other universities are handling the issue.

Objective 2: Organise at least 1x forum/workshop/info session for CALD & EASL students: In line with my campaign, I organized a career workshop, integrating solutions tailored to most reported issues in the survey. I collaborated with VICWISE on this project.

Objective 3: Organise a social activity at least 1x a semester: I organized a trivia night for international student week in May in collaboration with SL team on City Tower Campus, which was very well attended, everyone had fun collaborating in groups on answering questions while learning new facts on miscellaneous topics.

Furthermore, to promote effective collaboration in diverse groups, I organized an escape room activity with Escape Room Melbourne Company. That was a good experience of thriving as a group to achieve an objective while having a laugh together.

Objective 4: Organise at least 1x event for Cultural Diversity/Multicultural Week: I organized a group sing for Harmony Day in April in collaboration with Diversity and Inclusion Department's coordinator, Heather Marsh, for both staff and students. The event was recorded by Video Hive group and the video was released on VU intranet and different social media accounts such as VUSU.

Objective 5: With President, Liaise and collaborate with VU departments including Inclusion & Engagement, and cultural clubs on social events including ISA: For the Cultural Diversity Week in March, the VUSU president contacted me regarding a possible collaboration with SL department. I agreed and assisted with the payment of some of the services such as the African Drum and Dance as well as indigenous smoking ceremony

Objective 6: Organise an activity/event for at least 2x cultural events aimed at connecting CALD students: I created the opportunity for international students from different backgrounds to come together, celebrate a cultural event and learn about other cultures and appreciate the diversity.

At the beginning of my term, I organized a Christmas giveaway to VU students. The criteria was for them to show us a picture the place in their country that they wish they could visit for Christmas and write a greeting message in their local language.

Moreover, I organised an online trivia in collaboration with the activities officer to celebrate the lunar new year in February and provided a good experience for them while the lockdown role were still in place. Food vouchers were also provided to all participants.

Furthermore, I held a stall for Raksha Bandhan celebration in August on City Tower campus where we celebrate love and bond that this event symbolizes, ate Indian sweets and made bracelets for loved ones.

Objective 7: Assist the VP Welfare in running the BaBH & IMB events ensuring that it adequately represents CALD students: I designed an information sheet for Respect and Empathy Week to be available to international students. Upon contacting Heather Marsh from Inclusion and Engagement department, I decided to translate the document to three languages based on international cohorts with the greatest number of students.