



Australian Government
Department of Immigration
and Citizenship

The Australian Journey – Muslim communities



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Contents

Introduction	4
How did Muslim people come to Australia?	5
Through the years	6
Where do Muslims in Australia come from today?	8
Where do Muslims live in Australia?	9
Muslims in a multicultural Australia	10
Local government	13
Music, art and the written word	17
Business	29
Medicine	37
Emergency services	43
Education	55
Defence	61
Sport	67
Media	73
Theatre and film	77
Fashion	83
Cuisine	85
Acknowledgements	88



Introduction

The Australian Journey – Muslim communities is characterised by contributions of people from all over the world who have made Australia home. Today there are more than 22 million Australians. We speak over 300 languages, including Indigenous languages, identify with more than 200 ancestries and observe a wide variety of cultural and religious traditions.

In Australia people of all cultures and religions are able to express their beliefs and practise their religion without intimidation and without interference.

Muslims were some of the very first visitors to our shores and have helped to build our country into the prosperous and successful nation it is today. Many have chosen to live in Australia for the sake of their children, for education opportunities and for a better life. They bring with them a wealth of different ideas, skills and talents.

This publication recognises the diversity of Australia's Muslim communities and celebrates the important role many have played in Australia's past and present and will continue to play in the future. The following pages feature some successful Muslims in Australia and their thoughts about what it means to be both a Muslim and an Australian.

As we journey further into the 21st century, Australia continues to prosper thanks to its vibrant mix of people committed to their country and culture.

How did Muslim people come to Australia?

Muslim migration to Australia pre-dates European settlement and has been traced as far back as the 16th and 17th centuries. During this time Indonesians known as 'Macassans' shared their lives with local Indigenous people throughout northern Australia through trade, ceremony, marriage and family.

With the early fleets of European settlement, Muslims from the British Empire came to Australia as sailors and convicts in the 18th and 19th centuries.

As Australia grew, so too did the desire to explore this great country. In the 1800s Muslims known as 'Afghan cameleers' migrated from Pakistan and India, bringing with them camels which were used to trek the harsh land of the Australian outback. The 'cameleers' were vital to the early establishment of Australia's communication and transport infrastructure.

From the 1920s, Albanian Muslims established communities in Queensland providing much needed labour for the sugar cane, tobacco and cotton regions.

They also worked in Western Australia and Victoria clearing land or picking fruit, with some settlers becoming farmers in these areas.

Following the first and second world wars, Australia welcomed migrants from many countries. The 1940s saw the first migration of Turkish Cypriots and in 1968 it became easier for Turkish people to migrate to Australia through the Australian-Turkish Assisted Passage Scheme.

These new migrants were invaluable, providing necessary labour in Australia's numerous manufacturing industries and factories.

In the 1960s, Bosnian and Kosovar Muslims migrated to Australia to work with many other migrants in the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme. From the 1970s onwards, changes to Australia's immigration policy marked an increase in contemporary Muslim migration.

More recently, Australia has provided a safe haven for people escaping war or persecution. Since the 1990s, humanitarian resettlement has helped Muslims from Lebanon, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as African nations such as Sudan and Somalia to begin a new life in Australia.



Of course there are many Muslims who were born here, or chose to come to Australia to study or join family members who migrated previously. No matter how they came to Australia, Muslims from all walks of life have the opportunity to thrive in this vibrant and diverse country.

Would you like to know more?

The National Archives' 'Uncommon Lives' is an online information series. See the Muslim Journeys section for more information about early Muslims in Australia at www.uncommonlives.naa.gov.au

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade also has a fact sheet with information about Muslim history in Australia at www.dfat.gov.au/facts/muslims_in_Australia.html

Through the years

16 th –17 th centuries	Late 1700s	1830s		1860s-1870s	1860		1861	1885	1890
Fishermen and traders from the Macassar region of Indonesia engage in trade with Indigenous Australians in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland	Muslim immigrants from British Empire countries travel to Australia as sailors and convicts with the early fleets of European settlers	The first Afghan cameleers arrive in South Australia		Afghan cameleers assist in the construction of rail links across the Australian outback and build Australia's overland telegraph line	Two Muslim cameleers, Dost Mahomet and Esan Khan, accompany the Burke and Wills expedition from Melbourne		Australia's first mosque is built at Marree in South Australia	First Eid prayers held in Melbourne	Australia's first large mosque is built in Adelaide
Late 1800s		1920–1930	1940s	1950s		1954	1960s		1963
Malaysian and Indonesian pearl divers arrive in Broome to work in the pearling industry		Albanian migrants arrive in Australia to work on North Queensland sugar cane farms and Victorian fruit farms	Following World War II European Muslims (mainly Turkish) lead Muslim migration to Australia	Southeast Asian students, many of whom were Muslim, come to Australia under the Colombo Plan		The new diesel electric Ghan, named after Muslim cameleers	Bosnian and Kosovar Muslims arrive in Australia for the construction of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme		Australian Federation of Islamic Societies is established
	1968	1970	1983		1993		2005	2006	2007
	The Australian-Turkish Assisted Passage Scheme allows the permanent migration of a sizeable number of Muslims from mainland Turkey	Australian Federation of Islamic Councils is established	Australia's first Islamic schools open – the Noor al Houda Primary School in Sydney and King Khalid College in Melbourne		Muslim Scouts Australia is established		The Muslim Community Reference Group is established to advise government for a period of 12 months	Australian National Imams' Council is established	National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies opens

Where do Muslims in Australia come from today?

Almost 40 per cent of Muslims in Australia were born in Australia. Their parents or grandparents may have migrated to Australia from one of more than 70 countries and there are over 1000 Indigenous Muslims in Australia.

Over half of the Muslim population in Australia is under the age of 30 making it one of the youngest faiths in Australia.

In Australia around 1.7 per cent of people describe themselves as Muslim. This includes people who may have been raised in another religion and chose to become Muslim.

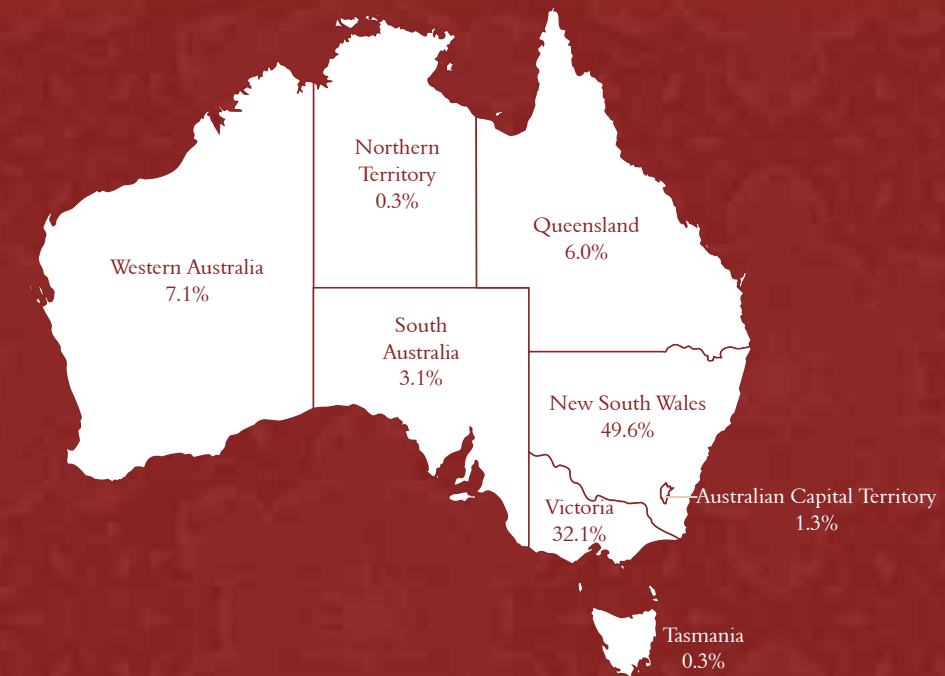
Top 10 countries of birth

Country of birth	Per cent
Australia	37.9
Lebanon	8.9
Turkey	6.8
Afghanistan	4.7
Pakistan	4.1
Bangladesh	3.9
Iraq	2.9
Indonesia	2.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.2
Iran	2.1
Other	24.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Where do Muslims live in Australia?

The map below displays the distribution of Muslim people throughout Australia as percentages of the total Muslim population – around 340 000.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2006 Census of Population and Housing

Muslims in a multicultural Australia

People from all over the world live in Australia in peace and harmony. Australia's approach to immigration and cultural diversity is one of our national strengths. The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council provides advice to government on:

- social cohesion issues relating to Australia's cultural and religious diversity
- overcoming intolerance and racism in Australia
- communicating the social and economic benefits of Australia's cultural diversity to the broad community.

The chair of the council is Mr Andrew Demetriou, the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Football League.

The council has three Muslim members, Ms Joumanah El Matrah, Executive Director of the Islamic Women's Welfare Council of Victoria, Dr Hass Dellal OAM, Executive Director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation and Professor Samina Yasmeen, Director of the Centre for Muslim States and Societies and Associate Professor in Political Science and International Relations at the University of Western Australia.

The strength of this council is its members, their wide range of backgrounds, experience and professional expertise and their determination to make a difference to the way we appreciate cultural diversity in Australia.

We are indeed fortunate to have the three Muslim Australian members, who provide valuable insights into the council's role of advising government.

Andrew Demetriou, Chair, Australian Multicultural Advisory Council

Would you like to know more?

Find out more about the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council at www.immi.gov.au.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship funds community groups to run projects that promote tolerance and understanding through the Diverse Australia Program and the National Action Plan to Build on Social Cohesion, Harmony and Security. More information is available at www.harmony.gov.au and www.immi.gov.au/nap.



The Australian Multicultural Advisory Council

Back row: Ms Voula Messimeri OAM, Ms Nola Randall-Mohk, Mr Brian Schwartz AM, Dr Sylwia Greda-Bogusz, Mrs Katie Young OAM, Judge Rauf Soulio, Prof Samina Yasmeen, Mr Susai Benjamin, Dr Hass Dellal OAM, Ms Gail Ker, Dr Casta Tungaraza

Front row: Inspector Craig Waterhouse, Ms Rhonda Jacobsen, Mr Andrew Demetriou (Chair), Ms Carmen Garcia, Ms Joumanah El Matrah



Professor Samina Yasmeen and Dr Hass Dellal



Joumanah El Matrah



Bill Baarini

Local government

Australia is a parliamentary democracy, which means that all Australian citizens participate in how the country is governed and how Australian society is represented. Muslims in Australia are becoming increasingly involved in mainstream politics, particularly at the state and local level.

With a keen desire for local government, Bill Baarini became Victoria's youngest mayor in 2003 at the age of 26. He served with Hobson's Bay City Council for nearly eight years and three times as Mayor, being awarded the Municipal Association of Victoria Emeritus Mayoral Award. He is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and is General Counsel for a leading trade union representing members on industrial relations matters.

Each and every one of us contributes little by little to society, some more than others, some quicker than others and some more lasting than others. But we all contribute in our own way. This can lead others to contribute more than they already do and to encourage them to lead in areas where no one in the community has led before. Such persons have become role models.

Bill Baarini



Pinar Yesil

Local government

Local government also held appeal for Pinar Yesil, who was elected the City of Greater Dandenong's first Muslim Mayor in 2009.

As Mayor of the City of Greater Dandenong and as a young Turkish Muslim woman I believe I am a role model for young Australians. Becoming Mayor at such a young age was a significant achievement. I hope it acts as inspiration for other young people to achieve their dreams.

Mayor Pinar Yesil



“I am HIPHOP”

- MATUSE

MATUSE AND CRIMSON DIVISION ARE WORKING TOGETHER
TO CREATE HIS DEBUT ALBUM ‘ILL-ITERATE’

MATUSE

Music, art and the written word

Australia’s modern art scene is enriched by the contributions of Muslims—from art exhibitions exploring the fusion of Islam with the West, to hip hop performers rapping about growing up in multicultural Australia.

MATUSE got into hip hop music at an early age. He has already produced one album and is preparing to launch another. His music features in the new Australian film ‘Cedar Boys’.

As an individual doing the best I can to represent my fellow Australians and Muslims, I strive to place Australia on the map with my deep devotion for music and spiritual harmony. I have passion for teaching and helping our young Australians through my ongoing battle of living daily life, letting it shine through my sound. I am a reflection of the Muslim Australian experience and believe each individual has an integral part in moulding a better society. I mirror the view of my world through my music so it may reach those that feel that the world they live in is lost, giving hope, love, joy and even sadness, a path to move throughout each and everyone’s hearts and ears, regardless of religion or faith.

MATUSE



Asim Gorashi

Music, art and the written word

Asim Gorashi is an accomplished oud and violin player who performs around the country. His combination of Sudanese traditional music with contemporary jazz and Middle Eastern influences has garnered a strong following.

All religions are meant to be pathways towards wellbeing and proper humanity. I believe that Islam is the religion of peace, love and forgiveness, however like any other religious communities we have radical and tolerant members. Australian Muslims specifically have been participating everywhere - reflecting the multicultural face of Australia and providing role models for other young Australians.

Asim Gorashi



Fatima Killeen

Music, art and the written word

Fatima Killeen is a painter and printmaker who uses Arabic calligraphy and Islamic design in her work.

She has studied in Morocco, Australia and America and has exhibited extensively throughout Australia.

Use whatever skill you are blessed with to make a difference in the lives of those who are desperate for hope, love and peace. We cannot afford to lose the passion that nurtures our traditions and our Islamic values.

We must work together to close the gap of misunderstanding to be able to live in peace and to love again.

Fatima Killeen



Peter Gould

Music, art and the written word

Sydney-born designer and artist Peter Gould explores the rich traditions of Islam through his contemporary graphic design, art and photography.

Australia's Muslim community is vibrant, diverse and increasingly a positive force in this beautiful country.

It is an honour to be both Australian and Muslim.

Peace.

Peter Gould



Randa Abdel-Fattah

Music, art and the written word

A novelist with three books to her name, Randa Abdel-Fattah draws on her own cultural heritage and experiences to explore issues of growing up as a teenager in a multicultural society.

The arts are a wonderful medium for celebrating diversity, exploring identity and expressing dissent. Through literature, theatre, music, comedy and so on, Australian Muslims are emerging as members of Australian society, rather than negotiable citizens.

Randa Abdel-Fattah



Omar Musa

Music, art and the written word

Omar Musa is a spoken word artist who won the Australian National Poetry Slam in 2008. He is a published poet and writer who also performs hip hop and released his debut CD ROM in 2008.

I believe that my Muslim background has given me a sense of compassion for the less fortunate as well as a commitment to social justice.

Omar Musa



John Ilhan (1965–2007)

Business

The business world in Australia is as varied as its people. On these pages we profile successful Muslim business people who use their business skills in a range of industries, from multi-million dollar enterprises and philanthropic endeavours to small owner-run businesses, they aim to improve life for all Australians.

Mustafa Ilhan (later known as John Ilhan) was born in Turkey and migrated to Australia with his family in 1970, facing the struggles that came with being from a migrant family. In 1991, he established his first business and went on to open more than 120 stores with 600 employees.

He was a generous philanthropist and a strong believer in corporate and social responsibility. Mr Ilhan died at the age of 42 in 2007 and is survived by his wife Patricia and their four children.

John was proudest of two things - being Australian and being a Muslim. Australia had given John and his family a chance to shine after immigrating from Turkey and for that he was forever thankful. His faith gave him the inner courage to succeed. The two mixed with him so easily. They bonded to propel him to the heights he achieved.

Patricia Ilhan

< Photograph courtesy of Marina Oliphant/Fairfaxphotos



Ahmed Fahour

Business

Lebanon-born and Melbourne-raised Ahmed Fahour has risen to the heights of international finance and banking both in Australia and overseas. He joined the National Australia Bank in September 2004 as Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer Australia. In 2009 Mr Fahour took up the role as Interim Chief Executive Officer of The Australian Business Investment Partnership (ABIP), a joint venture between the Australian Government and the four largest Australian banks.

Mr Fahour has moved to the Middle East to head the Islamic investment bank, Gulf Finance House.

For over 200 years Muslims have made a vibrant contribution to the multicultural fabric of Australian life, bringing with them great diversity and remarkable energy. They have become doctors, artists, journalists and lawyers; they have built new businesses and played sport at the highest level. In all, good Muslims and great Australians.

Ahmed Fahour



Dr Hass Dellal OAM

Business

Business doesn't always involve commerce and trade. Dr Hass Dellal OAM is the Executive Director of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, which runs community programs and advises governments on how to support diverse communities. He is currently involved in philanthropic work with the Scanlon Foundation in promoting social cohesion and is a member of the Australian Multicultural Advisory Council.

Australian Muslims have made major contributions to Australia's social, economic and cultural development and well-being over the decades. They are committed to Australia's growth and engage with all Australians, promoting harmony and understanding.

Dr Hass Dellal OAM

< Pictured left
Dr Hass Dellal OAM with Mr Peter Scanlon from the
Scanlon Foundation



Shameem Bhatti

Business

Success can also be found in niche markets. Shameem Bhatti runs her own small business assisting mostly migrant women to learn how to drive, read maps and build confidence and independence. In 2006, the Moreland City Council recognised Mrs Bhatti for her community work and leadership.

Working only with women is more comfortable with my religious values, and also helps other women who feel the same. In Australia I am able to run a successful business without compromising my beliefs or values and still contribute in a meaningful way to my community.

Shameem Bhatti



Dr Jamal Rifi

Medicine

Doctors by nature are dedicated, caring professionals. Muslim doctors are helping to keep our country healthy and happy.

NSW's Local Hero for 2009, Lakemba GP Dr Jamal Rifi is an active community volunteer. As president of the Lakemba Sports and Recreation Club he brought cricket back to Lakemba and recruited the first group of Muslim surf life savers. He recently led a group of young Australians from his local community together with youth from Cronulla on a Kokoda Trail Expedition and sponsored the first Aboriginal dance group to perform in Lebanon.

Look within this nation's institutions. Look within government, the public service, our schools, corporations, sport, hospitals and any profession or trade. In all these places you will find Australia's Muslims playing a role.

Dr Jamal Rifi on the Kokoda Trail



Dr Ahmed Hassan

Medicine

Dr Ahmed Hassan performs and teaches paediatric and adult eye surgery in Melbourne. He has also worked for the Royal Flying Doctor Service in the Northern Territory, where he provided much needed medical care to our most remote communities.

In working for six months as an eye doctor in Alice Springs, I flew to remote Aboriginal communities with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. I was intrigued to meet descendants of the early Muslim cameleers and came to appreciate the massive contribution they made to this country – from accompanying Burke and Wills, to ferrying sick patients across the outback to Adelaide. It was an example to me of Muslims' strong roots in this great nation of ours.

Dr Ahmed Hassan



Dr Nabilah Islam

Medicine

As a young doctor, there was much for Dr Nabilah Islam to learn when she began practising in outback Australia. Now she is working in emergency medicine in Western Australia and is proud of her achievements and her culture.

Muslim pride!

Dr Nabilah Islam



Hassan Fahd

Emergency services - Australian Federal Police

Look around you, Muslims are working in Australia as police officers, ambulance officers and fire fighters. In times of emergencies or just providing a helping hand for the community, these brave Australians, like their other colleagues, play an important part in Australia's emergency response.

Australian Federal Police community engagement ensures that the important process of dialogue occurs on a variety of levels, affecting deeper, long-term social connections between the community and law enforcement.

Hassan Fahd, Protective Service Officer



Constable Mouhammed Abdou
Senior Constable Maha Sukkar
Senior Constable Sahin Sahinkaya

Emergency services - Victoria Police

In 1983, Victoria Police became the first Australian police service to introduce a dedicated multicultural unit, the Victoria Police Ethnic Affairs Advisory Unit, which became the present day Multicultural Advisory Unit (MAU).

Staffed by bilingual and multicultural background police officers and public servants, the MAU provides advice to operational police members and the wider community on multicultural issues relevant to policing including cross-cultural training to recruits and constables at the Police Academy.

While Senior Constables Sukkar and Sahinkaya work in the MAU, Constable Abdou works at Caroline Springs Police Station.

Victoria Police recruits people from all cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds and this is a reflection of the community we serve. Everyone, regardless of origin, has an interest in community safety.

Constable Mouhammed Abdou
Senior Constable Maha Sukkar
Senior Constable Sahin Sahinkaya



Constable Nasser Dib

Emergency services - New South Wales Police

Senior Constable Nasser Dib was born in Lebanon and came to Australia at the age of one. He is one of six boys and one girl, his oldest brother is Jihad Dib, Principal of Punchbowl Boys' High School, who also features in this publication.

Nasser joined the NSW Police Force in 2004 saying it was something he had always wanted to do since he was a child. He is attached to Hurstville Local Area Command.

The NSW Police Force seeks to reflect the diversity of the community in its staff as well as to empower Australians from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds to play a part in preventing and reducing crime and the fear of crime.

Constable Nasser Dib



Kamal Hamidani

Emergency services

New South Wales Ambulance Service

Kamal grew up in Algeria, North Africa, where he trained to become a nurse. He moved to London where he worked as a chef and met his wife. Both Kamal and his wife moved to Newcastle 10 years ago to be close to his wife's mother. He is now working as a Patient Transport Officer for the Ambulance Service of NSW.

As an Equal Opportunity Employer, the Ambulance Service of NSW thoroughly supports and encourages cultural and religious diversity.

Kamal Hamidani

< Photograph courtesy of Trevor Lee, Ambulance Service of NSW



John Killeen

*Emergency services
Australian Capital Territory Ambulance Service*

John Killeen is an intensive care paramedic practising in Canberra where he also works as an international vehicle safety consultant. John's award winning high-visibility markings are now displayed on emergency vehicles throughout the world.

Australia's diverse national heritage is interwoven with people travelling from overseas to live in this vast country. As an ambulance paramedic I witness countless snapshots of the daily struggle. I see the difficulties and the joy encountered by so many people from different backgrounds all living as neighbours, with each and every person striving to make their Australia a better place.

John Killeen



Mohammed Haddad

*Emergency services
New South Wales Fire Brigades*

Firefighter Mohammed Haddad was born in Australia to an Italian mother and Lebanese father. With his father already a technician with the NSW Fire Brigades, Mohammed believed that by joining the Fire Brigades himself, he could help the Muslim community in further understanding the role of the Brigades.

The NSW Fire Brigades recognises that New South Wales is a culturally, linguistically and religiously diverse community and will continue to develop and create partnerships that increase opportunities for all people to participate in and access our services.

Mohammed Haddad



Dr Berhan Ahmed

Education

A good education is an important first step for a successful life. These Muslims liked school so much they decided to make their careers in education and research, striving to make Australia a better country for all.

Victorian of the Year 2009, Dr Berhan Ahmed is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne where he is researching more environmentally friendly methods of timber protection. As well as his professional work, Dr Ahmed works with community organisations to build bridges between African and wider Australian communities.

Our youth need to be shown that there are pathways out of our current predicament. They need to be shown how prevailing norms and systems can be adapted. They need to be shown how small changes can lead to larger changes. How to participate actively in such changes? They especially need to be given hope. Our youth cry out for leadership. Are we prepared to give it to them?

Dr Berhan Ahmed



Jihad Dib

Education

At Punchbowl Boys' High School in Sydney, Principal Jihad Dib's guidance and leadership is helping to keep all students on the same page.

The rich Australian fabric interweaves a great number of elements from various cultural and religious backgrounds. Each person adds their experience and heritage to the pattern and together, we develop something most unique. The Islamic faith complements all elements of our iconic Australian psyche and opportunities exist for everyone to make a positive difference to the lives of others. The legend of the Anzacs and those who endured the Kokoda campaign live in every person who is proud to be Australian. How lucky am I to work with proud young Australians as part of a nation which accepts all who 'have a go'?

Jihad Dib



Fatema Sowaid

Education

Teacher Fatema Sowaid from Parramatta High School is certain she can contribute to Australia's multicultural future.

As an English/History High School teacher, I continue to play a direct role in providing all students, regardless of their backgrounds, with the necessary skills to become critical, empowered and active citizens. I am also dedicated to making a difference through my union activism and the struggle for a more robust and well resourced education system.

Fatema Sowaid



Commander Mona Shindy

Defence - Royal Australian Navy

People are, and will always be, a fundamental part of our defence forces. Different backgrounds and experiences in defence personnel means we are prepared for any situation, whether humanitarian aid or protecting Australia's security.

More than 100 nationalities are represented in the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) with people from Australia's Muslim population an important part of the defence community, supporting the ADF and providing role models for many young Australians.

Commander Mona Shindy was born in Egypt and migrated to Australia with her family at the age of three. She was raised Muslim and her family settled into and formed a part of the broader Australian Islamic community.

Her interest in a Navy career was sparked by postcards from her older brother and his stories of adventure in foreign ports as a member of the Australian Defence Force.

I was two years into obtaining my degree when I considered joining the Navy. I viewed it as an admirable and worthwhile job to do. I stay for the culture, the community, the friendships and the opportunities to undertake different types of work, and interesting work at that.

Commander Mona Shindy



Private Edin Zulic

Defence - Australian Army Reserve

Private Edin Zulic decided to join the Army Reserve for the benefits it offers and to get fit.

I wanted to increase my discipline as well as meet the challenges and adventure the Army offers. Also, every member or ex-member always told me about the mateship, honour, duty and sheer determination for challenges and adventure that the Army offers and this really motivated me.

Private Edin Zulic



Squadron Leader Rais Khan

Defence - Royal Australian Air Force

Squadron Leader Khan is a Civil Engineer with the Royal Australian Air Force. He and his wife migrated to Australia from Pakistan in 1995 after Rais obtained his Masters degree in the USA.

We moved to Australia because we wanted a secure life, as well as quality of life as a family and Australia offers that. Working in the Air Force provides that and more. It's definitely a myth that being a Muslim in the ADF you will not be able to practise your faith. I'm in my 14th year in the ADF and I practise my religion candidly. To those that baulk at the idea of joining, I say come and join us and then see what it has for you.

Squadron Leader Rais Khan



Bachar Houli

Sport

Australians love their sport, whether it's netball, cricket, swimming, soccer or Tae Kwan Do, and we are represented at all levels internationally. Many Muslims in Australia are demonstrating that taking part in competitive sport does not mean compromising religious beliefs.

In 2007, Bachar Houli made waves when he joined the Australian Football League (AFL) impressing all with his football prowess. Both he and the AFL take their responsibilities as role models to young Australians seriously.

< Photograph courtesy of The Slattery Media Group

Football brings together people from all cultural backgrounds and all walks of life. One of the highlights of the AFL draft system of recent years has been the recruitment of Bachar Houli, a Lebanese Australian who is a practising Muslim and a great role model for all young Australians. Bachar has used his profile to speak to many audiences about his journey, about how proud he is of his faith and Australia and the opportunities he has been able to access through dedication and willingness to learn. He sets a great example of how sport, and Australian football in particular, provides opportunities for people from all backgrounds.

Andrew Demetriou, CEO Australian Football League



Fatima Kourouche

Sport

As a young woman Fatima Kourouche played with the NSW State Hockey team. She has worked with the NSW Department of Sport and Recreation, Surf and Royal Life Saving, the Lakemba Sports Club and now works for the Australian Sports Commission encouraging women from diverse backgrounds to participate in sport.

Sport is an integral part of the Australian culture and my love for sport began the minute I landed in Australia as an 11 year old migrating from Lebanon. I have been fortunate to work with some amazing, dedicated people who enabled me to open many doors for thousands of Australian Muslims and non-Muslims to participate in sport together to enjoy a more active, healthier way of life without having to compromise on religious or cultural values.

Fatima Kourouche



Ali Abdo

Sport

Wrestler Ali Abdo is a three time Olympian, having competed at Sydney, Athens and Beijing. As well as continuing his interest in wrestling, he is also studying osteopathy.

I was fortunate enough that I had the right support and upbringing when I began my journey. Sporting success helped develop a desire within to succeed, not only in sport, but in all aspects of life. In saying that, one needs to acknowledge that victory or success comes at a price and the question that needs to be asked is, how much are you willing to pay? Time, determination, perseverance, consistency, equal achievement and success.

Ali Abdo



Nadia Jamal

Media

Reporting on issues and events domestically and around the world has enticed many Muslims to join the mainstream media industry. As well as newsprint journalism, many Muslims in Australia are enjoying careers behind news cameras, monitoring online news sites and broadcasting on radio.

Nadia Jamal has been a journalist at The Sydney Morning Herald since 1997. She has worked as an education reporter, urban affairs writer, world desk editor and deputy Chief of Staff. Nadia is currently online Chief of Staff.

Muslims in Australia have long contributed to the rich social texture of Australia, a fact that should be celebrated as one of the success stories of multicultural Australia. Across all areas of our society, including business and sport, Australians of Muslim faith are emerging as role models for many Australians.

Nadia Jamal



Farah Farouque

Media

As a senior writer for The Age, Farah Farouque has reported on the tsunami disaster in Sri Lanka in 2004/05, the Bali bombings of 2002 as well as domestic issues affecting us all.

Australian Muslims are achieving at every level – and our contributions help make Australia the diverse and interesting place it is today.

Farah Farouque



Nazeem Hussain

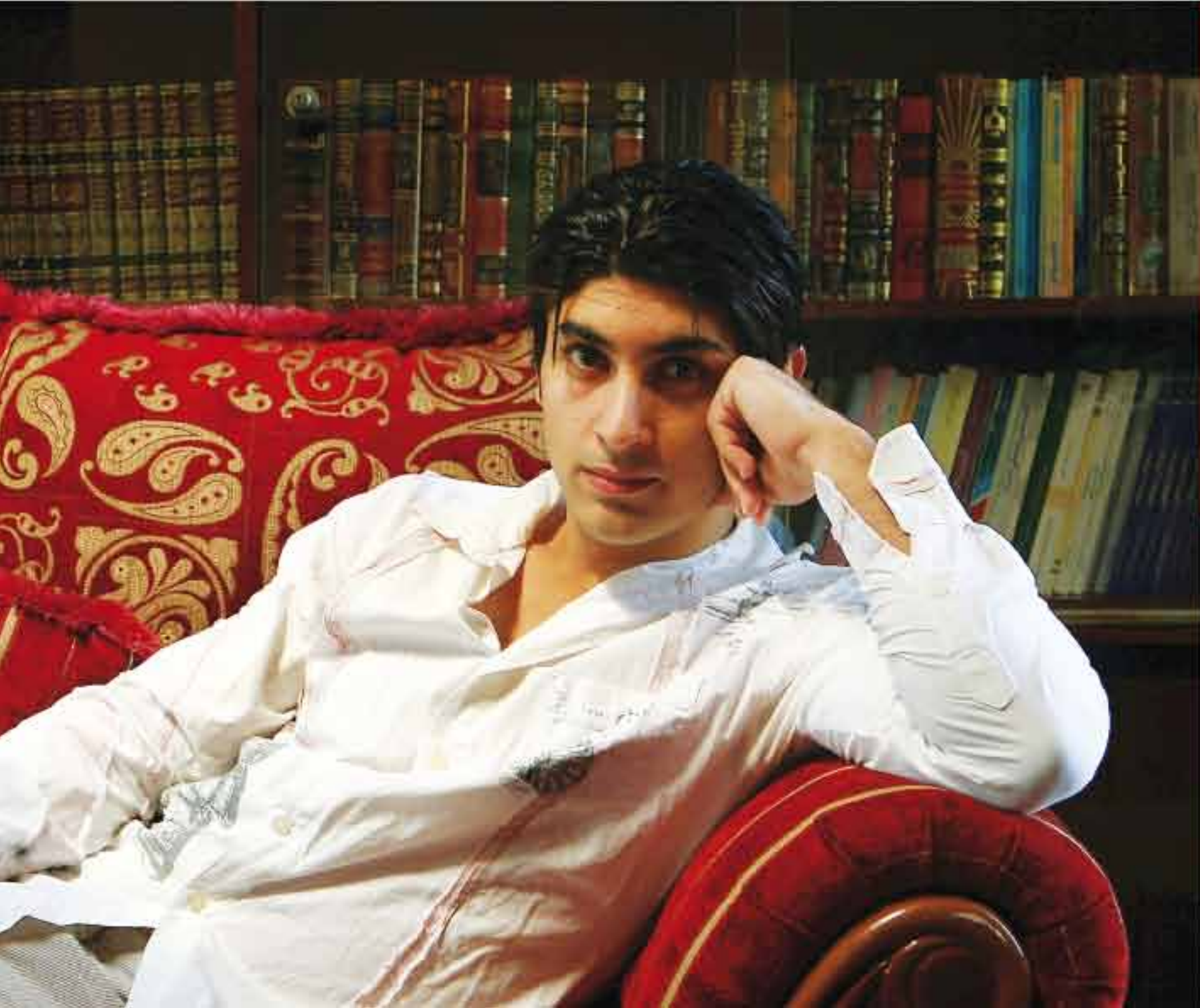
Theatre and film

Representing the diversity of our multicultural society, more and more Muslims in Australia are appearing on local television, in theatre performances and on the big screen in new Australian movies.

Nazeem Hussain studies law at Deakin University, teaches Islamic classes for children, is a youth worker and a Director of the Islamic Council of Victoria. He also appeared on SBS Television's Salam Café and at the Melbourne Comedy Festival.

I'm part of the indigenous Australian Muslim identity. We are multi-ethnic and of all ages. Our incessant involvement continues to add vibrancy and progress to the social tapestry of Australia.

Nazeem Hussain



Osamah Sami

Theatre and film

Born in Iran to Iraqi parents, Osamah Sami migrated to Australia in 1995 and continued to pursue his dream of being an actor by training at the Australian Film and Television Academy and the Victorian College of the Arts. Since then he has built up a long list of film and theatre credits including appearing in recent Australian films, *Lucky Miles* and *Saved*.

< Photograph courtesy of John Woudstra/Fairfaxphotos

Down here in Australia, we're all Australians. We all live in one home. I'm glad to be part of this bridge between Muslim Aussies and Aussies in general. And I've been fortunate enough to work in the entertainment industry and work with people who I idolised as a kid – and now I can give something back to Australia through the wonderful storytelling film and theatre medium – to say thanks for giving me a home. And boy am I glad to call Australia home.

Osamah Sami



Fadle El Harris

Theatre and film

Many Muslims in Australia are also carving out successful careers behind the camera, such as Fadle El Harris who has run his own film production, video, multi-media and animation company since 1999.

As a professional filmmaker, I was inspired by the contributions Muslims have made over the centuries. It was not until I was involved in such a documentary that I realised Muslims are not new in Australia and have been one of the oldest and most successful communities ever established. I believe it's my obligation to continue to be part of this tradition through my own filmmaking and excel in a society that is full of opportunities.

Fadle El Harris



Eisha Saleh and Kathlene Fry

Fashion

Muslims in Australia wear a wide variety of dress, many reflecting their countries of origin. An increasing number of young entrepreneurs are establishing themselves with new and innovative clothing styles that fuse the Islamic and Western worlds.

Baraka Women is one Australian fashion house that prides itself on maintaining modest Muslim traditions but in contemporary and beautiful styling.

We are passionate about 'Australian Made'. We have a fantastic fashion industry here producing some of the world's best things ... we are proud to be able to tap into it. Running a successful business here can be done and our aim is to educate the younger generation about the benefits. Anyone has access; really the sky is the limit.

Eisha Saleh and Kathlene Fry



Serif Kaya

Cuisine

Australia enjoys a wide variety of cuisines, thanks to our migrants.

As owner/head chef of one of Canberra's premier restaurants, The Ottoman, Serif Kaya successfully blends traditional Turkish food with Australian and Asian influences to present food widely renowned throughout the country.

Mr Kaya has also opened The Ottoman restaurant in Sydney.

Born and raised in Turkey until I was 16, I was fortunate to live in a secular society, which gave protection to different ethnic backgrounds and all walks of life. I'm happy that I have continued living like this in Australia. Islam's true meaning is peace – and I am all for this!

Serif Kaya



Siti Ibrahim
Nuria Khalil
Rahma Ibrahim

Cuisine

In Melbourne the Sorghum Sisters, all from refugee backgrounds, have established a thriving catering business providing school lunches to the students at Carlton Primary School and Brunswick South Primary School as well as providing traditional food for the local community.

Being a good Muslim and respecting others, I feel I am a role model for my community as well as Australians. You can work and be successful.

Siti Ibrahim

As a Muslim and as a single mum, life can be hard still. Though it makes me happy to work and be part of my community and this enables me to promote healthy eating for all children and helps young Australians learn about African food and culture.

Nuria Khalil

I always endeavour to work hard and be a good member of the community. Hopefully showing young Australians and the community that anything can be achieved if you want and if you make an effort, even if my English is not so good.

Rahma Ibrahim



Acknowledgements

Images/photos/text sources

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Australian Archives – National, Sydney,
South Australia and Victoria

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Department of Immigration and Citizenship –
National Communications Branch