



Social Impact Report 2025



Our vision



Full participation for all in a cohesive and diverse society

AMES Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands upon which we meet and work.

We extend our respects to the Elders who have walked and cared for this land for tens of thousands of years, and the descendants who maintain the spiritual connection to country, land, waters, sky, and cultures.

We are committed to our reconciliation journey because, at its heart, reconciliation is about bringing healing and flourishing relationships between First Nations and non-First Nations Peoples, for the benefit of all.

To the left: *'The Journey'* by Brenda Mau

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Message from the CEO

At a time when social cohesion is being challenged, with increasingly polarised politics driving division and anti-migration movements across the globe, the work of supporting newly arrived individuals and communities from refugee and migrant backgrounds to settle successfully and sustainably in Australia has never been more important.

AMES Australia's eighth Social Impact Report is released amid record numbers of conflict and displacement across the world. In this context, it is vital that we not only tell the story of our work but also show its impact. How we are supporting people gain language and life skills. How we are helping them build social connections. And how we are strengthening both individual and community capacity and wellbeing.

AMES Australia holds a unique position. As a Victorian statutory authority with responsibility across humanitarian settlement, education and employment, we are uniquely positioned to empower multicultural communities in achieving their social and economic goals, guided by our vision of 'full participation for all in a cohesive and diverse society'. This drives everything we do – from the programs we deliver to the partnerships we build. We continue to align our programs with five of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. These global ambitions guide our local action – whether it is in classrooms, community centres or homes.

Let me share just a few examples:

- One new national initiative, 'Many Voices One Future' is delivering family violence prevention in multicultural communities. It is empowering community champions and developing culturally tailored strategies that are already making a difference.
- Our 'Luminous Lantern Festival' brings together Melbourne's diverse communities in a celebration of culture, connection and shared values.

Through strong partnerships - with local government, business, mainstream services and education providers - we are delivering life changing benefits.

This report is more than a summary of our programs. It reflects our mission to create pathways to economic and social participation, and to help people build fulfilling lives in a multicultural Australia. It is also a record of the evidence-based, strengths-focused and collaborative approach we take – an approach that ensures we are not just responding to need, but working together to build resilience, opportunity and social cohesion.

Thank you to our staff, AMES Australia Board, partners, and communities for your continued commitment. Together, we make a lasting impact.

Melinda Collinson
Chief Executive Officer



AMES Australia's approach to impact and SDG alignment

AMES Australia's Social and Economic Participation Framework

AMES Australia's services, advocacy, and corporate operations are informed by our Social and Economic Participation Framework (the Framework) to achieve our goal of 'full participation for all'. The Framework's four domains affirm our commitment to making an impact. In aligning to relevant United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), statements of impact from our operational practice are defined.



Education

Delivering education focused on long-term, successful settlement and careers

Leads to a better skilled workforce, and a better educated Australian society



Employment

Supporting people into sustainable, long-term employment in the right job

Leads to reduced unemployment, and increased economic productivity



Health & Wellbeing

Fostering good health and wellbeing as foundations for thriving in the community

Leads to better health and wellbeing outcomes, and greater health equity and individual resilience



Safety & Security

Building safer, more socially cohesive communities

Leads to community impacts including improved perception of belonging and safety in the local community

SDG alignment

AMES' core services of settlement, education, employment, social participation, and disability and aged care services align most strongly to SDGs: **Goal 3 Health and Wellbeing**, **Goal 4 Quality Education**, **Goal 5 Gender Equality** and **Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth**. The AMES way of working with government, multicultural communities, and complementary providers is underpinned and compellingly evidenced in alignment with **Goal 17 Partnerships for the Goals**.

The AMES 'in practice' descriptions for each of the SDGs below provide a concrete impact statement. These statements are informed by evidence drawn from our clients' experience of the programs and services delivered by AMES and our partners. Volunteering is a powerful example of how multiple SDGs intersect in practice—promoting good health and wellbeing, enabling access to quality education, and supporting pathways to decent work and economic growth.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



SDG3 – Good Health and Wellbeing

AMES connects clients to culturally responsive health services, builds health literacy through targeted programs, and delivers specialist support as a NDIS and My Aged Care provider.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



SDG4 – Quality Education

As a specialist provider of foundational and vocational programs, AMES delivers inclusive, place-based education that builds pathways to social participation, further study, and employment for multicultural communities.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



SDG5 – Gender Equality

AMES is committed to a respectful, inclusive, and diverse workplace that values the unique skills of all people, guided by our Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Gender Equality Action Plan.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

As a specialist in employment services, AMES supports multicultural, refugee, and Indigenous jobseekers into fair, sustainable work, prepares them for the Australian workforce, and connects them to roles matching their skills—including entrepreneurial opportunities.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals

AMES works in partnership with multicultural communities, service providers, corporates, and government to expand reach, strengthen delivery, and build capability for client benefit.

2024 - 25 impact highlights

Education for successful settlement and careers

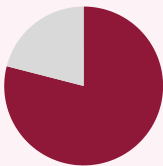


7,819

enrolments in accredited and non-accredited courses

79%

overall student experience satisfaction



92%

of SEE students achieved 2,322 measurable improvements in language, literacy or numeracy skills

Of Vocational Education and Training (VET) graduate survey respondents:

74%

rated their course experience 4 or 5 out of 5

85%

said they were satisfied with their jobs



myAMES Chat

3,550

students using MyAMES Chat

2,651

practice interviews

2,179

children supported to enrol in school

3,500

adults referred to and enrolled in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP)

Satisfying, long-term employment

1,533

jobseekers found sustainable employment, and of these:

1,137

identified as being from multicultural backgrounds

118

identified as First Nations people



68

Community Hub participants gained employment in AMES support regions of Dandenong, Casey, Wyndham, Brimbank and Greater Geelong



135

students successfully completed VET practical placements to build job ready experience

110



industry hosts provided structured vocational placement for students undertaking training in early childhood education and care; and ageing and disability care

Good health and resilience: foundations for thriving



14 podcasts on health topics
in **13** languages, accessed by
644 community members

41

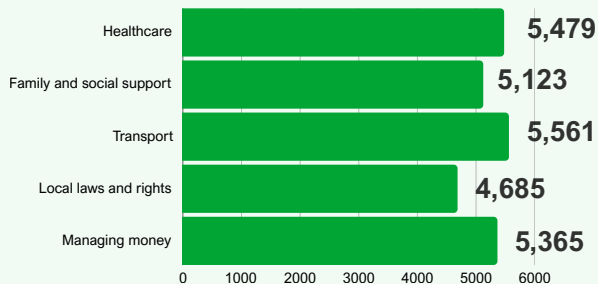
newly arrived women participated in
the Women's Retreat to support
social connections and awareness
of mainstream health services

174

women from multicultural
backgrounds attended **10** cervical
cancer information sessions in
Victoria and South Australia

Settlement outcomes

number of refugees who gained knowledge of



AMES leadership and influence

400



multicultural community members
participated in the Luminous
Lantern Festival hosted in
partnership with City of Melbourne

Safe and cohesive communities

1,556



newly arrived families supported into leased,
long-term housing with an average of **30**
properties per week secured

Representing diverse communities



\$4.8 million

relative value of media coverage
on multicultural, social and
economic issues

2,451

broadcast and online
coverage pieces

673

print items published
including iMPACT news
from the refugee and
migrant sector



29.1K AMES social media
followers with **86.3K** engagement



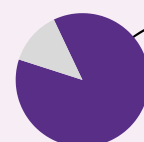
303,000

user interactions on AMES website



AMES ranks in the **top 5%** of
organisations nationwide with an AI
strategy (Responsible AI Index 2024);
and is among **20%** of RTOs with clear AI
integration (Voice of VET Report 2025)

AMES-supported
Community Hubs
awarded Community
Engagement
category at City of
Brimbank Awards



87%

of staff rated AMES
as a 'truly great
place to work'



Photo: Water safety training event, Melbourne

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



Wellbeing and community cohesion

Our impact in support of SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing is achieved through directly empowering clients to participate and thrive in the community. Our work in facilitating community activities exemplifies our broad focus on SDG 3 and closely related aspects of community cohesion, equality, and individual mental wellbeing.

We are a part of the communities we work for

70

languages spoken
across our
volunteer base

62%

of our
volunteers are
women

13%

of our volunteers self-
describe as coming from
a refugee background

80%

of our employees are
born overseas,
representing 77 countries



Health initiatives empower multicultural communities

Health literacy through education is vital for newly arrived communities. In the past year, AMES facilitated cervical cancer screening sessions for 174 women across five language groups, with 97% reporting increased awareness of services. A diabetes education session supported 42 participants in five languages; and a beach safety event introduced 140 families to water safety—many for the first time. These initiatives demonstrated impact by empowering communities with knowledge to improve health outcomes, and foster confidence in navigating Australia's health and water safety systems.



Empowering families to fulfil their dreams

Families from migrant backgrounds can experience isolation, insecure housing and mental health issues. The Community Hubs initiative provides place-based support for families, carers and their children. Hubs support families in overcoming barriers to their settlement through providing regular, targeted activities and facilitating engagement in their local communities. In 2024-25, across the 23 AMES Hubs, 3,694 families were engaged; 1,835 English sessions were delivered; 995 school events were co-facilitated; and 1,477 early childhood sessions were conducted, including children's language and literacy and playgroup sessions.



Storytelling builds understanding, wellbeing and belonging

AMES' annual Heartlands event provides a platform for migrant and refugee communities to share their stories through writing and performance. The 2025 Heartlands publication, "At the Heart of Identity", featured 30 stories written by the children of migrants and refugees. Through each contributor's personal and family journeys to Australia, themes of identity, belonging, homeland, and opportunity were explored. Heartlands was showcased in Melbourne, Adelaide and Canberra with presenters highlighting the affirming impact of telling their families' settlement experience and strengthening emotional wellbeing.

"I grew up in a country town in NSW and was pretty much the only dark-skinned kid. That made things difficult, but I found community through football" - Archie Thompson, contributor to Heartlands 2025 publication



Purposeful education pathways

Education and learning are important for settlement success. AMES education programs and activities, and our community-focused approach to social participation is aligned to SDG 4 Quality Education for all. Extending the opportunity to access services, employment and social participation through place-based education is at the heart of AMES work: all rely on foundational language, literacy, numeracy, employability, and community orientation.

Supporting learning to enhance education impact

34%

of volunteers assisted clients to learn English

170,340

user login sessions on the online education platforms

89,600

hours of learning delivered via the MyAMES digital learner management system



Developing independence through digital access

Digital inclusion transforms how newly arrived communities access education and employment. Since 2022, over 7,700 people have used AMES' AI-powered MyAMES Chat app to build their English, communication, and job-readiness skills with increasing numbers each year. To strengthen digital literacy, programs were delivered to AMES clients in first languages including Dari, Pashto, Hazaragi, and Burmese. These initiatives impacted clients by breaking down digital barriers, empowering clients to study independently, stay connected, and confidently participate in Australia's digital society.



Pathway to employment

Education pathways for newly arrived refugees build skills and confidence to support settlement goals. AMES Education pathways strategy offers jobseekers a structured learning pathway. For example, starting with foundational English to strengthen communication skills, followed by developing digital skills, and job-readiness training and work experience. AMES client, Tun Aungkyaw, followed this pathway and is now employed and planning to start his own painting business.

"The course helped my English and gave me the confidence to follow my dream" - Tun Aungkyaw, AMES client



Partnerships build mental health literacy in multicultural communities

Mental health awareness and strategies positively impact the wellbeing of multicultural communities. AMES and Beyond Blue partnered to deliver *culturally appropriate mental health easy English guides on Understanding anxiety and depression* – downloaded 109 times, and *How to get support* – 34 downloads, to refugee and migrant communities, providing access to mental health concepts and support pathways. This mental health education partnership empowered individuals to recognise early signs of distress, seek help confidently, and support others — laying the foundation for stronger, more informed communities.

"This partnership helps people understand mental health in their own language and culture — it's life-changing" - AMES Community Engagement Coordinator Reshma Manandhar



Photo: Class in Lonsdale Street, Melbourne



Promoting gender equality and safety

Gender equality is essential to successful settlement outcomes, with societies that are more equitable showing widespread economic and social benefits. AMES is committed to creating an environment in which all genders can work and flourish, aligning our ambition to Social Development Goal 5. Part of AMES commitment to gender equality is our robust Prevention of Violence against Women program, which provides essential and culturally tailored training and skills to members of multicultural communities through leadership and bystander programs.

Prevention of Violence against Women (PVAW) leadership program leads community change

31

interviews with alumni part of the PVAW leadership program review

75%

of alumni reported excellent confidence in speaking publicly about PVAW

84%

of alumni reported excellent confidence in undertaking prevention action within their workplace or community

6

culturally informed bystander action videos in Arabic, Dari and Pashto



Community-led prevention of violence initiative empowers leaders

Preventing family violence in multicultural communities requires community-led, culturally-informed strategies. For nearly a decade, AMES has delivered a unique Prevention of Violence Against Women program, graduating 225 community members from 19 language communities who now lead workshops, influence policy, and launch prevention initiatives. In 2025, AMES launched *Many Voices, One Future*, a national rollout of this impactful model, and delivered the program and graduated 24 community participants in Ballarat and Mildura. Delivered in trusted settings, the program has built leadership, fostered inclusion, and equipped communities to challenge harmful norms and promote gender equality.



Women supported to learn, lead and thrive

Empowering newly arrived women is key to advancing gender equality. In November 2024, 41 women from 12 countries attended the annual AMES Multicultural Women's Retreat. Over three days, workshops provided information on women's health and family safety. A cultural showcase celebrated traditions through music, dance, and poetry including Bollywood dancing, African drumming, and candle making. All participants reported learning new information and making friends—leaving the retreat feeling empowered, connected, and more confident in their new lives.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with an attendee reporting: *"There is no word to describe our thanks to AMES for giving us this opportunity"*



Sport builds wellbeing and belonging for newly arrived communities

Sport is a powerful tool for community capacity building and improving gender equity. In partnership with the Football Federation Sunraysia, AMES hosted the Mildura Multicultural Cup, connecting 120 players, including for the first time since its inception in 2022, three women's teams, and was supported by 150 spectators from diverse cultural backgrounds. During the two-day tournament, participants, including women who played football for the first time, built friendships, joined local clubs, and accessed ongoing sport programs. The event fostered cross-cultural connection, wellbeing, and gender inclusion through safe and inclusive participation.

"It was a great community event", said player Dr Motaz Bahageel.

stop family violence

elow to show your support for the
ork across our diverse communities

TO SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

CONGRATULATIONS

Keep up
the amazing
work!
Lisa
Vetter
FSV

I'm excited to
be part of the great
project. Thank you!

an inspiring day!



Photo: "Many Voices One Future" event, Melbourne



Photo: AMES Epping site, Melbourne

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Creating opportunities for better employment

Employment is both an AMES impact domain and is captured in SDG 8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth. Finding a job is a critical turning point for new arrivals from migrant and refugee backgrounds. AMES champions the vision of decent work for all people to have access to good jobs and fair pay.



Jobseekers launch new careers

For jobseekers from diverse backgrounds, entering preferred job roles can be challenging. AMES provides tailored employment support to overcome barriers. In Western Sydney, six newly arrived clients secured roles at Sydney Airport, opening pathways into aviation. A First Nations woman secured a crane driver role in a male-dominated field, and a refugee from Gaza is working towards re-establishing his career. A resilient former refugee, from Iraq, has established her own thriving nail artistry business. These outcomes demonstrate AMES' focus on career development as an enabler for clients to achieve their job of choice, stability, independence, and meaningful contributions to their communities.

"I feel like I belong. I'm planning to [...] continue my life in Australia" - Khalil, refugee from Gaza

"I never thought I could work in Australia. I used to feel like I had no place here, but now I feel proud. I'm doing something good for me and my son. Every time a client comes to my home and leaves with a smile, I feel stronger"
– Sanaa, nail salon business owner



Work experience gets the job

Practical experience in Australian workplaces is central to AMES' strategy for supporting jobseekers into job roles. Through AMES Skills for Education and Employment (SEE) program, 100 clients gained hands-on experience across IT, hospitality, and public services organisations, building skills directly aligned with employer needs. Participants were supported through job readiness training using the MyAMES digital platform to practice English pronunciation and AI-powered interview responses. This integrated approach has demonstrated outcomes and impact that strengthen employability, promote fair access to decent work, and support long-term economic participation for newly arrived communities.

"The placement was valuable to learn about the English used in Australia and to gain knowledge about how to get a job in Australia"
– Ahmad Milad Mansour



Building futures together

Securing meaningful employment is a core goal and pivotal step in the settlement journey for many newly arrived migrants and refugees. AMES supported 11 multicultural community members on a pathway to a professional career into paid internships through collaborations with City of Melbourne and Telstra Foundation, providing experience in marketing, media, and policy roles. With guidance from AMES *Settling into Work* mentors, participants reported gains in confidence, workplace skills, and professional networks. As an outcome of the internships, six interns have already transitioned into permanent employment, demonstrating how targeted support can unlock long-term economic participation and social inclusion.

The internship inspired me... in adapting to the Australian professional culture and building confidence in my career path." - Asset Data Intern at City of Melbourne



Photo: Taste the Difference, Melbourne



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