

## Networking the Diaspora Communication between Dispersed Communities

Thursday October 30th, 2-5pm  
VicHealth Seminar Room,  
Ground Floor, 15-31 Pelham Street, Carlton

Networking the Diaspora: Communication between Dispersed Communities was an afternoon forum to examine how cultural participation can happen between dispersed communities through new communications, technologies and media channels.

Facilitated by Cultural Development Network Director, John Smithies, panellists presented on their projects and experiences, followed by questions and discussion with attendees.

Panellist David Vincent from the Centre for Multicultural Youth inspired attendees with personal stories from both sides of the diaspora, and insights into the imbalances in access to technology, as well as the ongoing challenges to maintain communication in new and changing environments.



Dr Raelele Wilding from La Trobe University was unfortunately unable to attend, however her research findings from work with immigrant Irish communities were presented to the group by Cultural Development Network Director, John Smithies. Dr Wilding has published widely on the impacts and ways in which migrants and refugees use communication technologies to sustain family relationships across distance, reinforcing David's presentation by showing parallels with a very different migrant group.



Rachael Bongiorno, the Youth and Women's officer at the National Ethnic and Multicultural Broadcasters' Council (NEMBC) spoke on a fascinating new project, 'Radioactive,' a multilingual multicultural play on demand online radio being developed by NEMBC. Rachael also spoke about community radio as a connecting and easily accessible medium with special significance for the widely dispersed communities within and beyond Australia.

Kirsty Baird then presented on the Homelands project, an exciting long term project connecting refugee communities in Melbourne with their homelands, building connections with camps on the Thai-Burma boarder and in Kenya. Home Lands has recently been awarded ARC funding for 2009-2012, and we look forward to some exciting developments with the project.



The afternoon concluded after afternoon tea with a general discussion, bringing in stories and experiences from those who attended.

Feedback from delegates was extremely positive; 79% of attendees found the afternoon very or extremely useful, 93% found the panellists very good or excellent, and 100% found the event overall either very good or excellent.

Comments include:

"Very informative. Particularly enjoyed personal presentation of David's story - was powerful to hear of his experience."

"Well structured, great speakers, just a top-notch job all-round"

'Especially enjoyed David's personal stories and his understanding of cross cultural and broader issues"

Networking the Diaspora: Communication between Dispersed Communities was presented by the Cultural Development Network in partnership with the City of Melbourne



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