



Hello, Moreland!

Building community leadership, social connection and respect for diversity across northern Moreland.

1. Summary

Hello, Moreland! is a project that builds community leadership, social connection and respect for diversity. The project ran from July 2021 to June 2022 and is an expansion of the highly successful Hello, Fawkner! which has been running since 2018. Hello, Moreland! includes a community leadership program for Glenroy residents, and a small grants program supporting community-led events in Glenroy, Fawkner and Hadfield. The intervention was evaluated using process and impact indicators and post-program surveys and interviews. Evaluation findings confirm Hello, Moreland was effective in achieving its objectives, and recommend minor changes for future implementation.

2. Intervention

Two interventions were delivered as part of the Hello, Moreland! project; The Party Program, and The Great Idea Program: Glenroy. Relation building and information sharing activities were also implemented. A gender lens analysis and community engagement were undertaken during the design and implementation of this intervention.

The Party Program

The Party Program provides microgrants of \$100 to Fawkner, Glenroy and Hadfield residents to support them to host an event in their community. The parties are about celebrating culture and diversity, learning something new, and meeting new people. Consultation was undertaken with 45 community members to determine which dates of significance would be celebrate in the 2022 Party Program. The following dates were selected:

- International Women's Day (March 8)
- Harmony Day (March 21)
- IDAHOBIT (May 17)
- National Reconciliation Week (May 27-June 3)

Promotion began in February 2022, applicants applied through survey monkey by completing a short questionnaire about their party plans and interest in the program. Successful applicants were selected on a first come, first served basis. Participants were provided with a 'Party Pack' which included an information booklet, merchandise for the significant day (such as posters, flags, badges), covid safe resources (face masks, hand sanitizer, wipes), and the \$100 pre-loaded VISA card. The information booklet provided tips for planning and hosting a party, information about the day of significance, examples of activities and an invitation template. Optional online information sessions were also available for participants who wanted to learn more, share their ideas, or seek support, as well as one-on-one phone and email support from Merri Health staff.



Party photos representing each day of significance.

The events were community-led and therefore participants decided where and when the event occurred, who was invited and what activities were conducted. Events were held roughly within a fortnight of the date of significance. Venues included local parks, community centres (Fawkner Bowls Club, Glenroy Hub), and participant's homes and gardens. There was also the option to hold events online, however with easing covid restrictions this option was not taken up. Some participants elected to hold smaller events this year to reduce COVID-19 risks. For the first time, schools were eligible to participate, this extended the reach of the program.

The Great Idea Program: Glenroy

After successfully running The Great Idea Program (TGIP), a Hello, Fawkner! initiative, in Fawkner since 2019, Merri Health expanded TGIP to Glenroy. TGIP supports community members to bring their ideas for improving their local community to life. Rather than a traditional 'service delivery' model, these projects are community-led, this ensures the projects have relevant and lasting impacts at the local level, whilst simultaneously empowering local residents.

Through community consultation and data analysis, Merri Health identified that Glenroy would benefit from this program. Glenroy is a diverse area with significant socio-economic disadvantage, having also experienced several severe COVID-19 outbreaks. These compounding factors have seen increased social isolation and financial hardship. In response to this need, TGIP was framed around the question 'Do you have an idea that will bring people in Glenroy together after COVID-19?', this aimed to build social connections, increase participation, and reduce isolation.



Photos representing each of the four TGIP projects.

Participant recruitment began in January 2022, with applications closing in February. Applications were then reviewed and shortlisted by a panel of 6 diverse, local residents. 4 projects were successful. Projects were implemented and delivered from March through to June 2022 and received \$2500 or \$5000 funding depending on the nature of the project.

Project	Participants	Funding	Overview
Glenroy Walking Club	2	\$2500	A weekly Tuesday morning walking club open to all. After the walk, everyone shared a coffee and a chat, with the aim to get people moving and reduce isolation.
Meet and Greet Women's Social Group	1	\$2500	A monthly Saturday social group for women from all backgrounds to meet, make new friends, learn about local events and programs, and hear from guest speakers. Topics included: self-care with henna and massage, women entrepreneurs, women's health, exercise and counselling, multicultural celebration.
Glenroy Carnival	3	\$5000	A one-off community event to celebrate Glenroy. The Carnival included 40 stalls promoting local business and representing the diverse cultures of Glenroy. Stalls included petting zoo, face painting, children's activities, henna, food, clothing, jewellery, live music and local service providers.
Revitalise Your Mind and Body	3	\$5000	Two half-day events focusing on holistic wellbeing. One event for children and youth, and one for adults and seniors. Workshops included yoga, meditation, and guest speakers on mental health and food for your mind and body.

Participants were supported by Merri Health staff with project planning, budgeting, community engagement, promotion, COVID-19 safety, risk management and evaluation planning. Merri Health staff had regular online and in-person meetings with participants. Participants were also provided with opportunities to collaborate, problem solve and network with each other and other local service providers during two workshops. Participants were provided with a training budget of up to \$500 per person to provide further skill building opportunities that aligned with their projects. 10 courses were undertaken across a range of subjects including mental health first aid, grant writing, project management and IT.

Relationship Building

The Hello, Moreland! project was an expansion from Fawkner to include Glenroy and Hadfield.

Relationship building was therefore identified as an activity for this initiative in order to establish new relationships with the Glenroy and Hadfield communities and local service providers. A partnership gap analysis was conducted, and a contact database was established to support this work. Activities undertaken to build new relationships included the Merri Health team attending and presenting at local service provider network meetings. Additionally, the Community Engagement

Officer accessed local social media channels and engaged past program participants living in the area. The Hello, Moreland! team also held a stall at the Glenroy Festival, this large community



The Hello, Moreland! team and participants at the Glenroy Festival.

event was attended by over 4200 people and used as an engagement and networking opportunity.

Information Sharing

14 articles were written by program participants and published in The Fawkner Times e-newsletter between April to June 2022. Articles aimed to share information from participants with the local community, this gave agency to the participants to tell their stories and share what the program had meant for them. Articles included bios about TGIP participants, promotion about TGIP projects and upcoming parties, and stories from party hosts about the importance of the significant date and how they chose to celebrate.



A participant's article in The Fawkner Times.

3. Evaluation Methods

An evaluation plan was developed at the beginning of this project and implemented throughout the project lifecycle. The following evaluation methods were used:

- End-of-program participant survey (TGIP, Party Program)
- End-of-program participant interview (TGIP)
- Direct reach
 - Attendance logs (TGIP)
 - Participant survey (Party Program)
 - Email subscriptions (Information Sharing/The Fawkner Times)
- Internal SWOT analysis and desktop review

Shared indicators were used so that data could be analysed across Merri Health's IHP projects as well as with other local services including Moreland City Council. Demographic data was also collected which enabled data to be disaggregated and analysed using a gender lens.

4. Results/Key Findings

The following two tables demonstrate that Hello, Moreland! successfully met the process indicators and impacts indicators as described in the program logic. The third table reports the demographic data of participants. Discussion of the qualitative data has been reported below against the three Hello, Moreland! objectives.

Hello, Moreland! Process Indicators		
Party type	No. of parties/ participants	No. of attendees (direct reach)
International Women's Day	10	147
Harmony Day	3 ¹	580
IDAHOBIT	6	100
National Reconciliation Week	30	353
Total	49	1180
TGIP Project	No. of events/ sessions	No. of attendees (direct reach)
Glenroy Walking Club	9	27

¹ An additional 25 Harmony Day parties were funded through the Hello, Fawkner! initiative, please refer to Hello, Fawkner! narrative report for more information.

Meet and Greet Women's Social Group	4	73
Glenroy Carnival	1	2000
Revitalise Your Mind and Body	2	43
Total	16	2143
The Fawkner Times	No. of articles	No. of subscribers
Hello, Moreland! articles	14	590

Hello, Moreland! Impact Indicators			
Objective By July 2022 increase participants':	Indicator (immediate impacts) Participant's report:	Agree or Strongly Agree	
		Party Program (n=49)	TGIP (n=8)
1. Social connections within and between population groups in northern Moreland	Increased social connections	73%	100%
	Increased sense of belonging	78%	100%
	Increased participation in community activities	86%	100%
2. Understanding of the diverse cultures of people who live in northern Moreland	Increased knowledge about cultures/communities different to their own	78%	100%
	Increased opportunities to celebrate their culture	71%	100%
	Increased positive attitudes towards diversity	90%	100%
	Increased sense of belonging	As above	As above
3. Capacity for civic and social participation	Increased participation in community activities	As above	As above
	Increased leadership skills	73%	100%
	Increased capacity to take future action	84%	96%

Hello, Moreland! Demographic Data		
Indicator	Party Program n=49	TGIP n=9
Suburb	59% Fawkner 39% Glenroy and Hadfield 2% Pascoe Vale	44% Glenroy and Hadfield 11% Pascoe Vale 44% neighbouring Moreland
Age	43% 25-34 years old	33% 25-34 years old

	47% 35-44 years old 10% 45-54 years old	22% 35-44 years old 33% 45-54 years old 11% 55-64 years old
Gender	4% trans and/or gender diverse people 88% women 8% men	0% trans and/or gender diverse people 44% women 56% men
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	0% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	0% identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
Cultural background ²	16 different cultural backgrounds represented	6 different cultural backgrounds represented
Languages spoken at home ³	11 different languages spoken at home	5 different languages spoken at home
Country of birth	71% born overseas ⁴ 29% born in Australia	89% born overseas ⁵ 11% born in Australia
Year of arrival in Australia	22% within the last 5 years 47% in 2016 or before 29% born in Australia	0% within the last 5 years 89% in 2016 or before 11% born in Australia
LGBTIQA+ identity	8% identified as LGBTIQA+ (41% prefer not to say)	0% identified as LGBTIQA+ (33% prefer not to say)
Disability and/or long-term health condition	10% identified as having a disability or long-term health condition	0% identified as having a disability or long-term health condition

Objective 1: Increased social connections within and between population groups in northern Moreland

Party Program and TGIP participants reported increased social connections as demonstrated by the quantitative data above. Qualitative data also supports this finding.

Party participants reported making new social connections, including



An IDAHOBIT Party at the Fawkner Food Bowls.

² Cultural backgrounds include (open-ended responses): Arabic, Asian, Bangladesh, European, Hindu, Iban, Indian, Irish, Italian, Lebanese, Muslim, Nepali, Pakistani, South Asian, Sri Lankan, White Australian

³ Languages include: Arabic, Bengali, English, German, Hindi, Italian, Nepali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu

⁴ 43% born in Pakistan, 12% born in Indian, less than 5% born in each of Nepal, Bangladesh, Canada, Oman, Qatar, Singapore, Sri Lanka

⁵ 33% born in Nepal, 22% born in Pakistan, 11% born in each of Bangladesh, England and India.

with other parents, local women, people from different cultural backgrounds, new arrivals to the area (whether they be from overseas, interstate or elsewhere in Melbourne), international students, and meeting friends of friends. These new connections were reported as both intergenerational and cross-cultural. Interestingly, several hosts reported re-connecting with old friends whom they had lost contact with due to COVID-19 lockdowns.

TGIP participants also reported making new social connections, these included with the other participants (whom were from diverse cultural backgrounds and age ranges) as well as other local community leaders. Participants also reported increasing their social networks by connecting with the attendees who came to their events and sessions, participants also meet many new people whilst promoting their events and sessions. Likewise, participants reported that the people who attended their events shared feedback with them that by attending they too had increased their social connections. Participants shared that the program had provided a platform for the community to get together.

Information sharing activities through The Fawkner Times e-newsletter also contributed to a sense of increased connection to the local community. Participants reported that it gave neighbours something to stop and chat about in the street, and increased residents awareness of local events and opportunities for connecting, such as at the parties and TGIP projects.

Quotes related to Objective 1.

[An] older gay man had caught two buses from Pascoe Vale(!) to be there. He ... talked about the stigma attached to his sexuality. I think he was really grateful for the space being made and felt welcomed as himself. Queer community is really important!

Party Program participant

My close friend took one of their Bangladeshi friends to the party and she enjoyed this occasion so much and asked my close friend to let her know if this sort of party will be again organised.

Party Program participant

A 75-year-old lady was [living] by herself and looked forward to having a good old chat... [Attending] gave her something to look forward to.

TGIP participant

From reading the Fawkner newsletter, I became aware of the recent Queer Garden Party. I then attended that on Sunday and met some great people from the community that I wouldn't have met otherwise. I now intend to volunteer at the food bowl gardens. I really enjoy reading the newsletter and hearing about what's going on in the community. It makes me feel more connected to this beautiful suburb.

The Fawkner Times reader

I didn't used to talk with so many people. I don't feel shy to speak with anyone now.

TGIP participant

After COVID it's a great opportunity for people to get to know each other.

TGIP participant

Objective 2: Increased understanding of the diverse cultures of people who live in northern Moreland

Party Program and TGIP participants reported increased understanding of diverse cultures as demonstrated by the quantitative data above. Qualitative data also supports this finding.

International Women's Day and Harmony Day participants that they learnt about new cultures from the guests at their events.

Learning occurred through sharing stories about traditions (eg. marriage ceremonies), experiences, values and childhood memories, as well as food. Many participants recognised similarities between their cultures and experiences. IDAHOBIT participants reported that the parties helped raise awareness among attendees, children and the wider community about the LGBTIQ+ community and about LGBTIQ+ people living in the area. This increased a sense of belonging for participants who identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community. National Reconciliation Week participants reported increased learning about Aboriginal culture, languages and histories. For many participants, this was the first time they had done an Acknowledgement of Country. Several participants did additional research using the internet and were proud to share this information with their guests.

TGIP participants reported that they learnt about the different cultures of people living in Glenroy through community engagement, promotion and networking activities undertaken for their projects. Participants also reported meeting and learning from the diverse people who attended their events and sessions. Further, the Glenroy Carnival event was a celebration of Glenroy, with around 40 community-run stalls representing many diverse cultures and providing opportunities for attendees to learn about the foods, languages, and dress of diverse groups in Glenroy.

Information sharing activities through The Fawkner Times e-newsletter also supported readers to increase their understanding of diverse cultures. Participants wrote articles about each of the four Party Program days of significance, explaining the meaning and importance behind these days. Participants who wrote the articles were proud to share stories about their culture and their events. Newsletter readers reported learning more about the diverse cultures of people living in their area from reading the newsletter, this demonstrates the program learnings were able to reach beyond direct attendees.

Quotes related to Objective 2.

Each of us said a few words about our background and the significance to be here in Australia.

Party Program participant

I did a bit of study before taking [National Reconciliation Week] printouts and planning kids activities.

Party Program participant

I got to know so many cultures. Arab, Turkish and Pakistani culture too. The cultures of people who live here. So many things which I didn't know.

TGIP participant

Even people who didn't attend learned about the existence of IDAHOBIT day.

Party Program participant



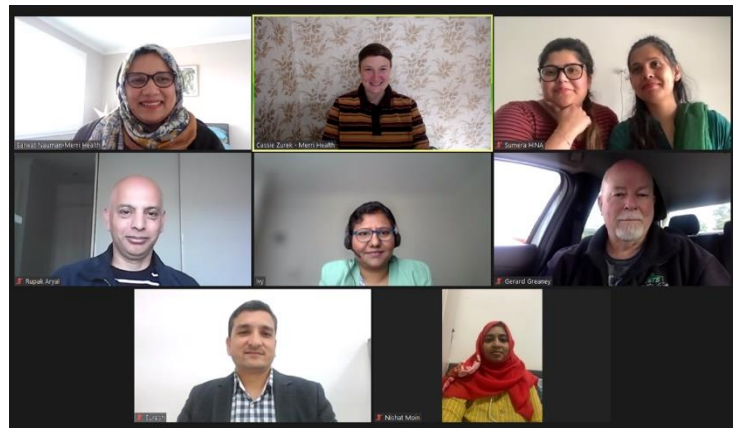
A Harmony Day Party at a local school.

Objective 3: Increased capacity for civic and social participation

Party Program and TGIP participants reported increased participation, and increased skill development, confidence and capacity to lead future events as demonstrated by the quantitative data above. Qualitative data also supports this finding.

Party participants reported developing new skills including organising, planning and hosting a community event, as well as time management skills, social skills, public speaking and stress

management. Many participants reported that their confidence had increased, and they had gained experience that would support them to lead future events. Further, applications were on a first come, first served basis, this meant that some Harmony Day Party applicants missed the opportunity to participate. Merri Health received reports that these applicants (who had participated in previous years), had decided to host a Harmony Day party on their own. This demonstrates that the program model has effectively increased capacity for community-led events that enable civic and social participation.



A TGIP Workshop.

TGIP participants reported a significant increase in skills, confidence and networks. These include time management skills, teamwork skills, planning, problem solving, networking, documentation and program management, event management, and using social media for promotion. Participants reported that their skills and confidence in working with the community and general public had substantially increased, participants notes they had a deeper understanding of the different perspectives and needs of people in their community, and more patience and listening skills when working with the community. Participants also reported that their networks had significantly increased, in particular their networks with local service providers such as Merri Health, the Library and Glenroy Hub, Moreland Council, local schools, community groups, and local businesses. Participants reported that their increased networks have supported them to feel equipped to take on projects like this in the future. All participants are looking into funding opportunities to continue their projects beyond TGIP. This demonstrates that their capacity for civic and social participation has increased.

Further, TGIP participants reported an increased understanding of themselves as community leaders, and an increased motivation captured by a sense of 'I can do anything' and 'if I want something done, I can do it'. The training provided to the participants further enabled this, one participant commented that it was the first time they had studied in Australia and they plan to do more now, another commented that the course was a highlight and has motivated them to continue in that direction. These training courses further build skills needed for civic participation and community-led work.

Information sharing activities through The Fawkner Times e-newsletter increased opportunities for civic and social participation by informing the community of upcoming events and programs. Many applicants for the Party Program and TGIP learnt about the programs through The Fawkner Times. Similarly, many residents attended parties and TGIP events after reading about them in The Fawkner Times. The Fawkner Times provided a space where opportunities for community consultation with Merri Health and Moreland Council were shared, this supported community members to have their voices heard and contribute to civic participation activities.

Quotes related to Objective 3.

I have not previously hosted any events where I've made a speech, so it was a new experience to have all eyes on me and to Acknowledge the Country we were on.

Party Program participant

I got confidence that I can also organise a successful party.

Party Program participant

Working on this project is the starting point for me to continue community work in future.

TGIP participant

I can guide and support others [to lead projects] now that I have gained experience through working on this project.

TGIP participant

Additional outcomes

A school approached the Hello, Moreland! team wanting to apply for an International Women's Day Party Program. Whilst schools' were not the intended target, it was decided that the school community would benefit from participation inline with the objectives of the program. The school held a picnic for the small cohort of Year 7 girls, as well as an activity sheet and classroom presentation for all students about diverse female leaders. Following this unintended pilot, the Hello, Moreland! team approached other schools in the target area asking if they would like to participate in the Party Program. 5 school-led parties were held across all 4 of the Program's days of significance. Schools reported that these events supported students from diverse background to feel included and empowered, increased understanding about diverse cultures and were a fun way for students to come together.

The students came together to celebrate our background, respect our land, and get to know each other.

School participant

It's kind of a stress relief after covid.

Party Participant

Another additional outcome centred around mental wellbeing. Whilst improved mental wellbeing is a long-term outcome for Hello, Moreland! many discussions with participants indicated that this impact was much more immediate than expected. Participants discussed feeling refreshed and happy to be leading and attending events, they felt excited to see people and be involved in the community again after COVID related isolation. Many wanted to participate to help bring people together again, demonstrating an understanding of the link between social connection and mental wellbeing. Participants also noted how important it was to them to incorporate elements of wellness, self-care and mental health information into their projects and events. It is likely that participant's awareness of mental health and the impacts of isolation has increased since COVID-19 lockdowns.

Challenges and Lessons

COVID-19 continued to create challenges. For the Party Program, this included reduced attendance from participants having to (or choosing to) limit numbers, no shows from people who were sick or close contacts, reluctance to attend due to covid safety concerns and/or social

anxieties. Some participants found the additional administration required for COVID safety was a challenge, such as recording guests details and maintaining covid safe practices with young children around. TGIP was similarly impacted by COVID, with increased administration for COVID safety and limits to attendee numbers. In addition, both the Party Program and TGIP were intended to have face-to-face information, collaboration and networking events, these however had to move online. For TGIP the online workshops were still effective, albeit less engaging. For the Party Program, the information sessions were held online for the first two days of significance, they were both poorly attended due to a range of factors (technology barriers, challenges parenting whilst videoing, clashes with work, disengagement from online events). The information sessions were therefore not held for the second two days of significance, and were replaced with one-on-one phone calls and 'party packs' were dropped to each participant's home.

Another challenge for the Party Program was a need for additional information about the IDAHOBIT and National Reconciliation Week Parties. Multiple people applied for these parties without understanding what the days of significance were about. Applicants were followed up with a one-on-one call to discuss their application and the meaning of the day of significance. For the IDAHOBIT parties, the applicant often preferred to withdraw their application. Whereas, for the National Reconciliation Week Party, they applicant often wished to proceed once they had been provided with some additional information and examples of activities and ways to celebrate. Despite this, a minority of these parties did not seem to recognise National Reconciliation Week at the event. In future, more information about these dates will be provided prior to applications opening, application questions will be adapted to gauge understanding of the dates, and in-person information sessions will be held.

TGIP was delivered in a 4-month timeframe, as opposed to the usual 6 months. This reduced the amount of time assigned to support participants with the project design and promotion stages. This also contributed to less time for participants to determine which training courses they wanted to do and then undertake the courses. In future, it is recommend TGIP is implemented over a 6-month timeframe.

Finally, finding large enough community halls in Glenroy was a challenge for TGIP participants. Similarly, finding parks with public toilets was a challenge for the Party Program participants.

5. Conclusion

Hello, Moreland! successfully achieved its objectives of increasing participants' social connections, understanding of diverse cultures and capacity for civic and social participation. Additionally, the Party Program is an effective model for building engagement and relationships with new communities. Similarly, The Great Idea Program is an effective and sustainable model for supporting community leadership, civic participation and skill building. As CH-HP priority areas change, the Merri Health team will continue to explore the use of these models to engage and empower new priority groups and respond to new priority areas.

6. Dissemination

Evaluation findings will be disseminated in this report available on the Merri Health website and shared with local partners including Moreland Council. The findings will be presented by Merri Health staff at the Fawkner and Glenroy Service Providers Network in September 2022. A summary infographic of the findings has been developed, it is available on the Merri Health website and will be shared with all program participants.