

annual report

2013-14



settlement • support • independence

about **SSI**

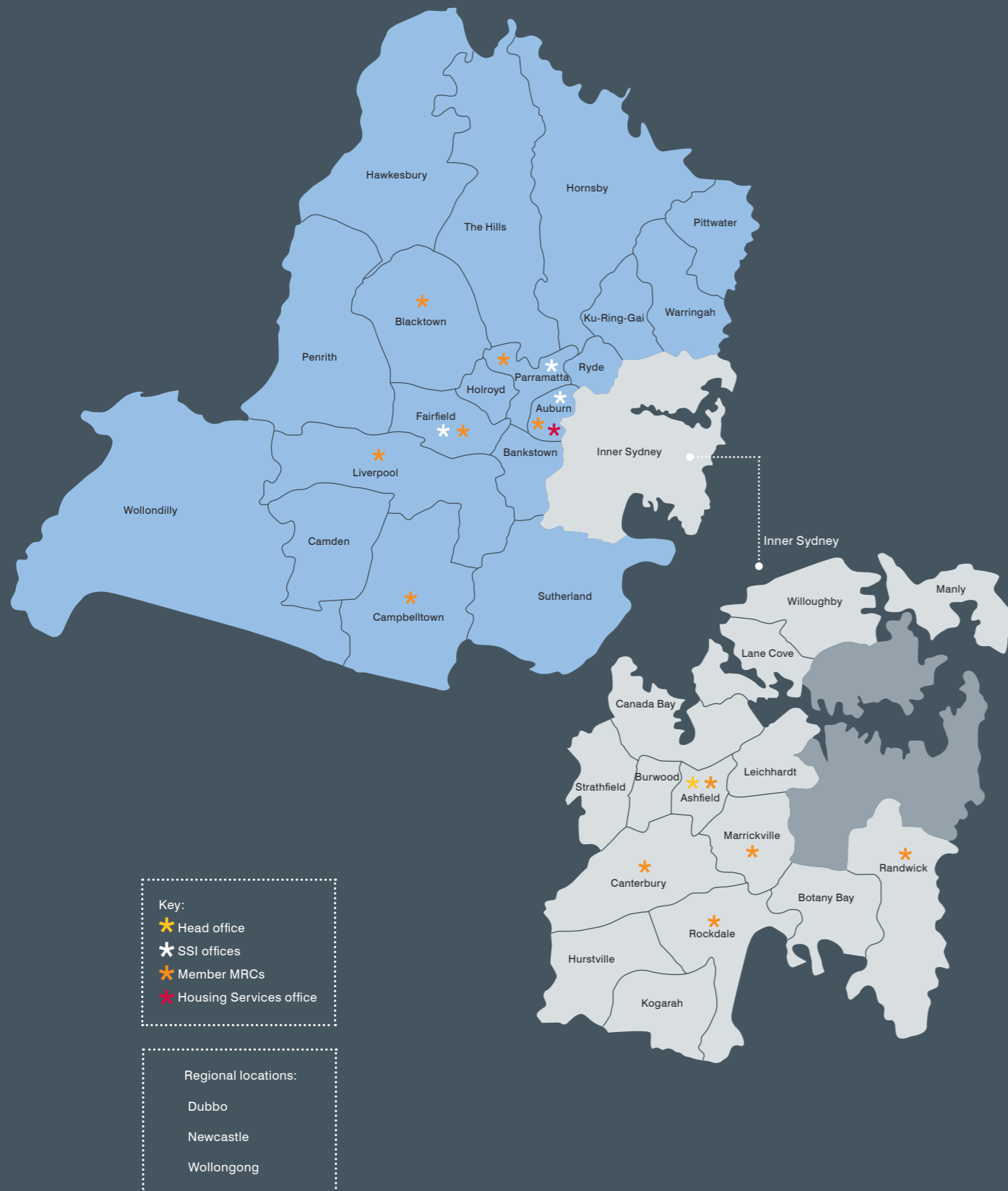
Settlement Services International (SSI) is a leading **not-for-profit organisation** providing a range of services in the areas of humanitarian settlement, accommodation, asylum seeker assistance, foster care and disability support in NSW. SSI is the largest not-for-profit **humanitarian settlement** organisation in Australia.

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where we are



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vision

To achieve a society that values diversity of its people and actively provides support to ensure meaningful social and economic participation and to assist individuals and families reach their potential. Our vision is also captured in our brand:

settlement • **support** • **independence**



mission

To be a leader in the settlement sector through the provision of settlement and support services that achieve independence for refugees and migrants.



At SSI, we value:

Social justice

Equity and access for all

Tolerance

Diversity and being non-discriminatory

Compassion

Caring, empathy and respect for the dignity of others

Respect

Co-operation and mutual respect

In delivering SSI services, we value:

Quality

Dynamic, flexible and responsive service

Ethics

Professional practices and accountability

Innovation

Commitment to partnerships and excellence



A snapshot of SSI's year



1. Head Office Launch, July 2013

SSI grew so much in the past couple of years that we needed a new head office. At a gathering of 120 stakeholders, including politicians and community leaders, SSI's Ashfield office was launched by Senator Matt Thistlethwaite, Parliamentary Secretary for Multicultural Affairs in the former Labor Government.

2. CSP One-Year Anniversary, September 2013

About 200 SSI Community Support Program (CSP) staff celebrated the first anniversary of SSI's role supporting asylum seekers as a CAS/ASAS provider. Staff put on dance performances spanning Afghani, Tamil, African, Arabic and Bollywood styles.

3. Senator Cash's visit, December 2013

Senator the Hon. Michaelia Cash, Assistant Minister Immigration and Border Protection and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Women, visited SSI. The visit highlighted for Senator Cash the challenges faced by our clients in the 'Woman at Risk' visa category and led to the planning of an SSI Women at Risk Forum for July 2014.

4. MFCS Launch, July 2013

The launch of SSI's Multicultural Foster Care Service, the first specialist out-of-home care service for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in NSW, was attended by distinguished guests including the Hon. Pru Goward MP. Read about the MFCS on page 38.

5. STARTTS Refugee Ball, October 2013

SSI was proud to sponsor, and also have some of our staff members attend the Refugee Ball, a fundraising event held annually by the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS).

6. Children's Christmas Party, December 2013

SSI held its first Christmas Party for our youngest clients. Santa handed out presents, and the families enjoyed a jumping castle, craft activities, sports, games, face-painting and a barbecue.

7. Toy Drive, January 2014

Police officers from the Ryde Local Area Command generously held a toy drive for SSI, and SSI case managers distributed the toys to children of refugee backgrounds.

8. Politicians' visit, April 2014

Member for Reid, Craig Laundry MP, and Luke Hartsuyker, Assistant Minister for Employment, visited SSI to learn more about our service delivery and to discuss refugee and asylum seeker employment.

9. Mothers' Day, May 2014

SSI hosted a lunch for 50 mothers who were refugees. SSI CEO Violet Roumeliotis told the gathering, "We hope this event makes people aware of the circumstances of refugee and asylum seeker women in our society...who have made incredible journeys through very difficult circumstances in order to make their families safe."

10. Harmony Day, March 2014

SSI celebrated Harmony Day, a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home, by putting on a barbecue for clients and staff. Two hundred attendees enjoyed traditional music performed by clients. Members of Gladesville Local Area Command also joined in to welcome our refugee and asylum seeker clients.

11. Art is Our Voice, May 2014

SSI produced an exhibition to showcase the creative work of refugees and asylum seekers who are professional artists. Read about Art is Our Voice on page 26.

12. Cultural Shift symposium, June 2014

SSI brought together leaders and experts at a symposium to share ideas about how to support migrant and refugee families through settlement in Australia. Read more about the event on page 32.

A statshot of SSI's year

Humanitarian Services...

THE TOTAL NUMBER OF NEW...

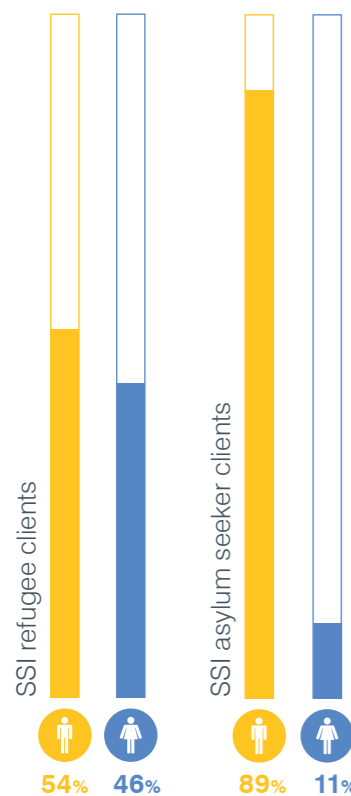
SSI **refugee** (HSS) clients

3,857

SSI **asylum seeker** (CSP) clients

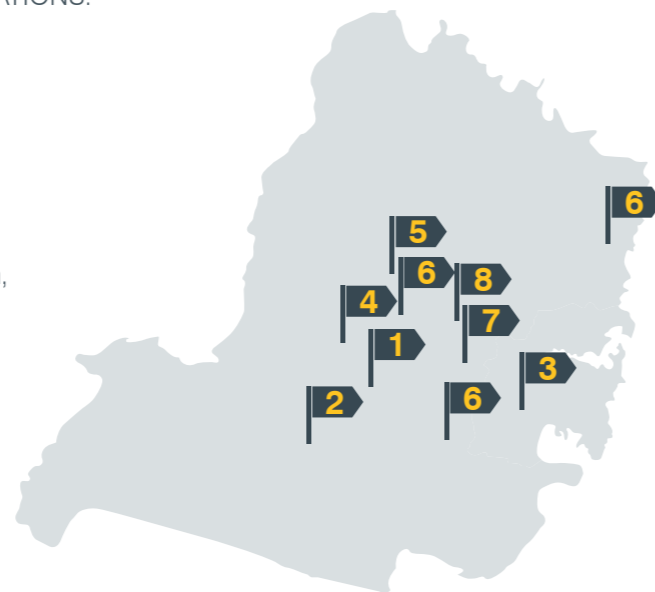
3,592

GENDER BREAKDOWN OF...



TOP SETTLEMENT LOCATIONS:

1. Fairfield
2. Liverpool
3. Auburn
4. Merrylands
5. Blacktown
6. Dee Why, Bankstown, Guildford
7. Granville
8. Parramatta



COUNTRIES OF BIRTH OF...

SSI **refugee and humanitarian entrant** clients:

- 59% Iraq
- 11% Afghanistan
- 8% Iran
- 5% Syria
- 4% Myanmar
- 2% Sri Lanka
- 11% Other



SSI **asylum seeker** clients:

- 40% Iran
- 19% Sri Lanka
- 12% Afghanistan
- 10% Iraq
- 7% Pakistan
- 6% Myanmar
- 6% Bangladesh

1,829

The number of clients who secured accommodation via SSI **Housing Services** during the 2013-2014 financial year.

Find out more about SSI Housing Services on page 26

Find out more about SSI Humanitarian Services programs on page 22

Arts & Culture Program...

- 40** The number of artworks on display at Art is Our Voice, SSI's May 2014 exhibition that showcased asylum seeker and refugee artists originally from Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Egypt.
- ? did you know** 'Coffee art' is an art form practiced by artists in detention centres. With no access to paints or other materials, asylum seekers began using instant coffee mixed with water to paint with. Coffee artist Masoud Akhava Ghassabzadeh, who says he still prefers the look of the medium over other materials even though he now lives in the community, had his coffee art on display at Art is Our Voice.
- 8** The number of young SSI clients, aged from seven to 17, who took part in a free creative writing workshop, run by Redfern's Sydney Story Factory. Half the participants were from our Multicultural Foster Care Service; the other half were refugee and asylum seeker clients.

Find out more about SSI's Arts & Culture Program on page 32

Our diverse workforce...

TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES BY YEAR:

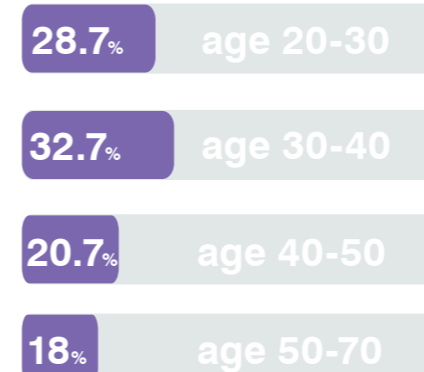


*Excluding SSI Bilingual Guides

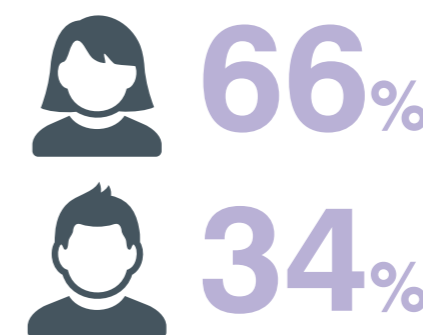
342%
IN 2 YEARS

83 The number of different languages spoken by SSI employees

SSI STAFF AGE DISTRIBUTION



SSI STAFF GENDER DISTRIBUTION



Volunteer Program...

LANGUAGES SPOKEN BY SSI BILINGUAL VOLUNTEERS

Number of volunteers	Language spoken
57	Arabic
45	Farsi
34	Hindi
24	Other
23	Dari
17	Urdu
15	Tamil
15	Assyrian
10	Bengali
9	Chinese
7	Vietnamese
7	French
7	Spanish
6	Punjabi
5	Turkish
5	Gujerati

Find out more about the SSI Volunteer Program on page 28

SSI Leadership Team

The SSI Leadership Team is made up of our CEO, Violet Roumeliotis, General Manager, Peter Zographakis, and a group of talented and skilled managers who cover a range of strategic and business development roles across the organisation, from humanitarian to child and family services. As SSI grew during this past year, so did the team, including the addition of: Patrick Yeung as the Manager of our new Housing Services division; and Policy & Research Manager, Tadgh McMahon, to enhance SSI's research and policy analysis and, in turn, build the evidence base for our operations. Judy Vergison took over the role of Manager People & Culture, and enhanced our workplace culture significantly. The Finance and Administration team is now under the strong leadership of Wayne Sankey, as Finance & Administration Controller. And Michael Hazell, our Quality Assurance & Audit Manager, has attained great achievements, such as gaining ISO9001 Quality Certification for SSI in March 2014. These people joined our impressive line-up of long-standing Leaders, who have all helped guide SSI through a successful year.



← JOSEPH FERRER
Manager Business and
Community Development



← TED THOMSON
Client Services Delivery
Manager

GHASSAN NOUJAIM →
Manager OOHC - Multicultural
Foster Care Service

"I'm very proud of SSI's unique Multicultural Foster Care Service – it grew very quickly during the financial year, with an additional 50 children. The team members put their hearts and souls into supporting the carers and children, and the feedback we get is overwhelmingly positive."



THANH NGUYEN →
Manager Early Intervention
& Capacity Building



← VIOLET ROUMELIOTIS
CEO

"I attended a Vietnamese foster carers and foster children lunch, and it was one of the most wonderful experiences, seeing those beautiful children living normal happy lives with their carers. I felt so incredibly proud of the SSI team that supports those families and children."



← PETER ZOGRAPHAkis
General Manager



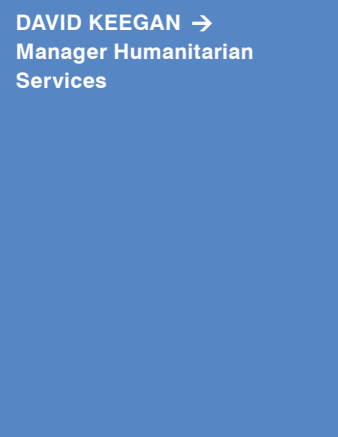
← PATRICK YEUNG
Manager Housing Services



← ANGELA CALABRESE
Marketing & Communications
Manager

"I'm inspired by the work of our case managers, team leaders and coordinators. Every day they work hard to make vulnerable people in all our programs feel part of our community and to make their lives that bit easier."

DAVID KEEGAN →
Manager Humanitarian
Services



YAMAMAH AGHA →
HSS Service Delivery Manager



TADGH MCMAHON →
Policy & Research Manager



MICHAEL HAZELL →
Quality Assurance & Audit
Manager

"I have two highlights of the 2013-14 year: on a professional note, gaining ISO9001 Quality Certification for SSI in March 2014 was a major achievement. And playing Santa for asylum seeker and refugee families in December 2013 is a memory I'll always cherish – seeing the smiles on the faces of families who previously hadn't had much to smile about."



← MAMTIMIN ALA
CSP Service Delivery Manager

"To bear witness to the smile of a client, however short or elusive it may be, is heart-warming for me."



← JUDY VERGISON
Manager People
& Culture



← WAYNE SANKEY
Finance & Administration
Controller



← HONEY MUIR
Senior Projects Officer

"Refugee clients from our Ignite Small Business Start-ups program have said to us, 'I don't feel alone anymore', and, 'You're the only ones who believed in me'. These convey the deep impact of a project that supports people to become economically independent."

A message from the SSI...

Chair

SSI remains a remarkable story of growth and success, and is increasingly taking its place as a world-leading organisation in the provision of services that are resulting in social impact and change, particularly in the area of settlement.



The organisation's story could not have been imagined better, since SSI's growth has been matched with quality and relevance. This is a testament to SSI's staff, Board members, member organisations and volunteers. The combination of experience, skills, foresight and vision has made SSI what it is today. The other factor contributing to SSI's success is the unique relationship we have with our member MRCs, which have provided the underlying long-term support to allow SSI to realise its potential. This will remain core to our success.

There is also the fact that SSI fulfils a need that had to be addressed. Supporting almost 10,000 clients, the social impact of SSI cannot be underestimated. It is difficult to imagine the effects on our community, as well as the vulnerable people we support, if SSI didn't exist.

SSI's income has grown to \$90 million, up from \$36 million the year before. Our workforce is now about four-and-a-half times larger than it was two years ago. And the scope and number of our programs has increased significantly.

We were successful in two tenders during the year: a tender for three regions of the State Government's Ability Links NSW program with our partners St Vincent de Paul and UnitingCare; and we were awarded the NSW contract for the Federal Government Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS). This builds on the excellent work that SSI has undertaken in Humanitarian Settlement Services, Housing Services, the Multicultural Foster Care Service and the partnership with Legal Aid NSW.

In addition to our government-funded programs, SSI has initiated Ignite Small Business Start-Ups to assist refugees with their small business ideas. SSI is also leading a youth initiative to provide frontline youth services through SSI's membership base of Multicultural Resource Centres (MRCs). There are numerous other valuable initiatives, and this Annual Report will highlight some of them.

“ Supporting almost 10,000 clients, the social impact of SSI cannot be underestimated. It is difficult to imagine the effects on our community, as well as the vulnerable people we support, if SSI didn't exist. ”

SSI continues to do its work while the public and media debate is largely negative towards our main client base. Despite this challenging environment, we notice opportunities and our work continues to grow. We value and will continue building relationships with organisations such as the Refugee Council of Australia, the Settlement Council of Australia and the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia.

The role of the Board – to be a representative for our constituents – needs to continue growing, and we have a responsibility to our constituents to ensure we are heard. This is already occurring thanks to the invitations we are receiving; for example, SSI taking a seat at the UNHCR consultations, at the International Metropolis conference, and with representatives from the International Organization for Migration.

The Board continues to develop its role in evolving SSI's strategic direction, more than ably led by the CEO, Violet Roumeliotis. We are also enhancing our governance structures to keep pace with the demands of a dynamic and growing organisation; we want to promote good practice and adopt models from around the globe, as well as being innovative. This includes continued development of our processes, quality assurance regimes, internal and external audits, and encouraging healthy discussion around key issues. All of which continue to energise and inspire us.

In the next year, we will also be moving to a company structure with a skills-based Board that meets our strategic plan. More than ever we will be relying on the work of the sub-committees that will allow broader representation and increased independence of the Board, to further enhance our integrity.

I firmly believe that NSW is strengthened by the existence of SSI, and a strong SSI will be of increased benefit to

vulnerable communities in our state. SSI will continue to grow and develop, and the Board is pleased to have provided a solid base on which the organisation can prosper and go forward.

As with other success stories, SSI has attracted people with excellent skills and abilities, so I am proud to be able to work with a Leadership Team that is one of the best in the country. Their dedication to Team SSI is exemplary and I would like to thank them for this commitment. I would also like to thank all the staff and all the volunteers, as well as the Board for their support of me as Chair, and to all the members for their unwavering support of SSI.

SSI Chair Kamalle Dabboussy

A message from the SSI...

CEO

SSI recognises that Australia is a nation built on immigration and which has had a proud history of providing safe asylum to refugees. January 2014 marked the 60th anniversary of Australia's Liberal Prime Minister Sir Robert Menzies signing the United Nations Refugee Convention. This nation would barely be recognisable without new arrivals to its shores. Many prominent Australians who have contributed to the nation's prosperity have done so because Australia welcomed them here as refugees.

For the past year, SSI operated in a challenging political and social environment, characterised by an escalation in anxiety about people seeking asylum in Australia. Decisions were made to send asylum seekers even further offshore, to foreign territories, and we've witnessed growing community tensions due to a heightened focus on terrorism, cultural and religious differences, and conflicts overseas. Negative stereotyping and racial profiling intensified, and some of our clients' lives have been impacted.

And while refugees and new migrants have always faced some discrimination, SSI is also constantly in touch with large sectors of the community that want to welcome refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants as equals.

For instance, throughout the year, SSI has seen huge support from the public to foster our refugee and asylum seeker clients' involvement in sport – an activity that helps give new arrivals a sense of belonging and purpose. In March 2014 a group of our clients formed a soccer team. At first they didn't have enough money to pay for club registration and equipment. So SSI helped to publicise their challenges through the media, and we, as well as the soccer team members, were completely overwhelmed by the generous donations – more than \$10,000 plus gear sponsorship – that poured in from the public. The team went on to top the table.

Over the year we instigated many more unique and self-funded initiatives – in the areas of community engagement, enterprise facilitation and even arts and culture – to soften the impact caused by discrimination and improve the lives of our 8,000 refugee and asylum seeker clients in meaningful ways.

One of the community engagement initiatives that has helped link asylum seeker clients to others in similar

circumstances, as well as community organisations, is SSI's Community Kitchen. This fortnightly event, started in August 2013, gives people who have few social connections the chance to bond over a freshly prepared lunch, while engaging in activities such as cooking, soccer and cricket, board games and music performance.

Then there's Playtime, a multicultural playgroup established by SSI in April 2014, as a way for asylum seeker mothers to connect with each other while their children play. It's been inspiring to hear the feedback from SSI's case managers about the positive effects these two events have on their clients' lives, just by making them feel part of a community.

SSI's recently established Arts and Culture Program was started in recognition of the fact that visual arts, music and other art forms are effective tools for social connection and therapy, and also because many of our clients are professional artists. Some of the workshops offered to SSI's refugee and asylum seeker clients in the reporting period were arts therapy, music performance skills development, and creative writing lessons for children. We also held an art exhibition, Art is Our Voice, which displayed more than 40 artworks created by 15 professional asylum seeker and refugee artists. The exhibition aimed to give a voice to people who are too often spoken on behalf of by others, and to help these artists establish networks and access grants and employment opportunities in their new country.

Another initiative that SSI started in the reporting period is Ignite Small Business Start-ups, an enterprise facilitation program for refugees, which can help overcome the barriers they often face in attempts to gain meaningful employment. The program assists people of a refugee background who want to start a

small business, or expand an existing one, by providing a mentoring 'resource team', helping them get their skills and qualifications formally recognised in Australia, and connecting them to other services. During the reporting period, the program helped 12 entrepreneurs, originally from countries including Iran, Iraq, Egypt, Sri Lanka and Pakistan, to start their own small business. Many more businesses are in the development stage, with the client base quickly expanding.

During the year SSI also held forums, such as the Cultural Shift symposium, which discussed effective approaches for supporting recently arrived refugee and migrant families with hundreds of delegates from migrant, refugee, ethno-specific, mainstream and government agencies.

I was honoured to be voted to the role of Deputy Secretary of the Settlement Council of Australia (SCOA), a national peak organisation whose members provide a range of services to support refugees and humanitarian entrants as they settle into life in Australia.

This year SSI also partnered with the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA) and the NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) for the first time to stage the Refugee Week launch, which many of our clients participated in and joined as audience members.

Along with the proud achievements outlined, we have focused very much on strengthening our relationship with our long-standing member agencies, the 11 migrant resource and settlement agencies in NSW. SSI's establishment, in the year 2000, was the result of the vision and commitment of our members and our ongoing relationship is central to our mutual success. We have exciting plans ahead in the area of member relations.

Thanks to the passion, hard work and ingenuity of SSI's people, we managed to achieve all of this and more while also enhancing our core Humanitarian Services programs, focusing on services to improve the lives of particularly vulnerable refugee 'Women at Risk', significantly expanding the new Multicultural Foster Care Service, and winning a tender for the exciting new Ability Links NSW program that assists people with disability – see www.ssi.org.au for info on this last one, and read more about our other programs on the following pages.

Thank you to the SSI Chair, Kamalle Dabboussy, the Board, my Leadership Team and Executive Team, in particular Peter Zographakis. I want to acknowledge the important role you all play and the outstanding work you do.

I am extremely proud of what SSI has accomplished throughout the period, and I look forward to seeing what else we can achieve on behalf of our clients in the years to come.

SSI CEO Violet Roumeliotis



humanitarian services report

The 2013-2014 program year again provided SSI with challenges and opportunities as we welcomed a new federal government and a series of changes to both program areas.

Overall the work of the Humanitarian Services division focused on consolidation of previous high-growth periods and the pursuit of continuous improvement. In September 2013, following the change of government, there was a significant reduction in referrals to both the Humanitarian Services programs – the HSS program, for refugee and humanitarian entrants, and the CSP program, for people seeking asylum. This led to relatively steady, but much lower, activity than previous years. While this created significant budgetary challenges prior to expected activity levels increasing again towards the end of the financial year, it enabled teams to focus on training and improving our response to client needs.

The division also made significant progress in responding to the mental health needs of clients, and has invested in improving the support that we provide on arrival. SSI also strengthened its ongoing links with member services. In June, HSS Service Delivery Manager, Yamamah Agha, and I attended the annual UNHCR consultations in Geneva where we established connections with a range of NGOs working with refugees and asylum seekers around the world. This formed part of efforts to position SSI among networks of like-minded organisations and to be better informed about issues in the countries of origin of the clients we work with.

The HSS program: for refugees and humanitarian entrants

Within the financial year, SSI was rewarded for its excellent performance when our HSS contract was renewed in April for another three years, until 2017. This contract extension also included the awarding of HSS housing services exclusively to SSI in the Sydney and Western NSW contract region.

The HSS program saw a significant change in composition during the year, with a shift from single adult clients to large families consisting of four or more individuals.

This was due to a change in government policy relating to the granting of protection visas for clients who arrived by boat and an increase in emphasis on visas for clients sponsored by an Australian resident.

This has led to a program where all clients received by HSS have applied from an offshore location and been granted a protection visa before coming to Australia. Clients primarily came from Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran and, more recently, Syria. The larger family sizes have led clients to struggle to find suitable housing and to rely heavily on assistance from local links in the community. SSI has risen to the challenges, working closely with sponsors to ensure that clients make a smooth transition into the community and access all required support services.

The change in client cohort has also led to a reduction in staff numbers and a need to refocus resources in the south-western Sydney region, where many of the sponsors are located. The majority of SSI clients now live in the Liverpool and Fairfield areas, with strong numbers also remaining in the Auburn, Parramatta and Blacktown areas where there is more affordable housing.

The CSP program: for asylum seekers

The CSP program was also significantly affected by the new government's focus on deterrence policies. Since September 2013, referrals have been low and related only to clients who arrived in Australia before July 19, 2012.

During 2013-2014, SSI saw an increase in referrals for families, in response to a government decision to release families directly onto a Bridging Visa E in the community. SSI responded well to this new challenge, and was able to ensure effective engagement and community support.

Since the changes in policy, many clients have struggled with the uncertainty and increasing restrictions placed on them, which have led to increased mental health concerns, risk of self-harm and risk of suicide. As a

SSI established a new clinical support position and comprehensive training and tools on suicide and mental health assessment that have boosted caseworker confidence and resulted in more effective responses to mental health crises.

result, SSI established a new clinical support position and comprehensive training and tools on suicide and mental health assessment that have boosted caseworker confidence, resulting in more effective responses to mental health crises.

Despite lower referrals, across the year the program continued to grow steadily due to regular interstate transfers and few exits from the program as a result of low numbers of clients with visa applications pending. The Newcastle program has also continued to grow, with 1.5 full-time workers now based in the offices of our member organisation, Northern Settlement Services.

The best news of 2013-14 was that SSI was selected as a successful tenderer for the Status Resolution Support Services (SRSS) program, meaning that we will continue to provide services to asylum seekers until 2018 and will also commence delivery of community detention services.

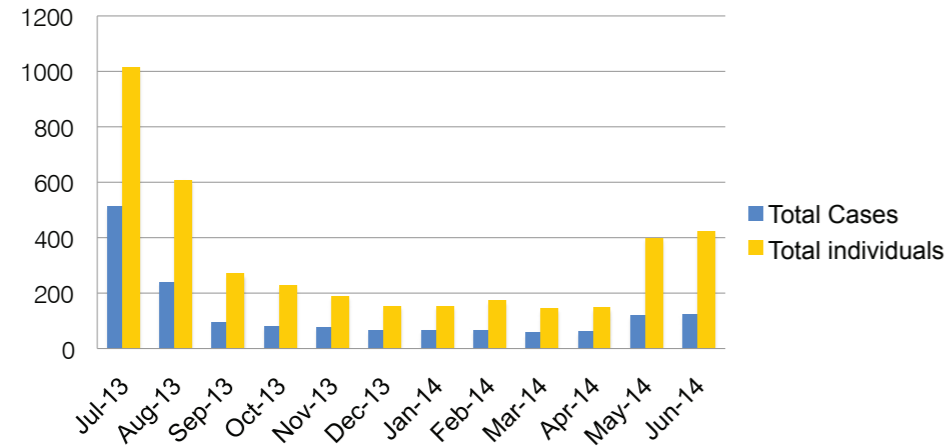
Special acknowledgement for the Humanitarian Services division's success this year should go to HSS Service Delivery Manager, Yamamah Agha, CSP Service Delivery Manager, Mamtimin Ala, and Regional and Community Engagement Coordinator, Trina Soulos.

David Keegan, SSI Manager Humanitarian Services



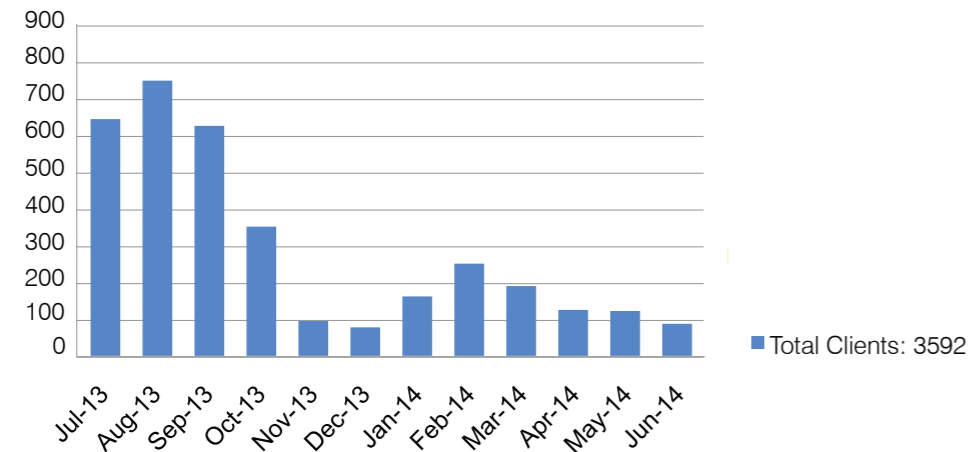
New Clients HSS

(July 13 – June 14)

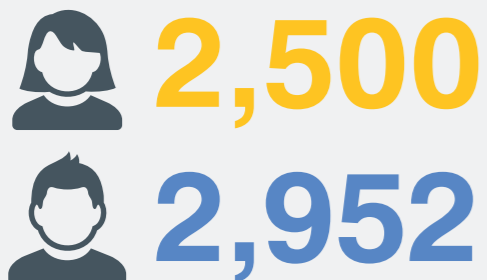


New Clients CSP

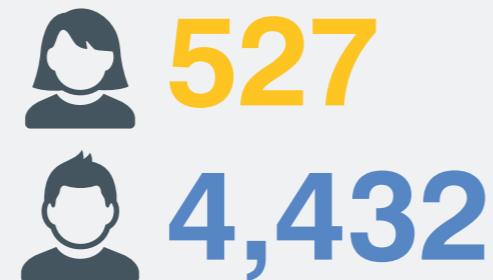
(July 13 – June 14)



HSS clients gender breakdown:



CSP clients gender breakdown:



As at June 30, 2014



Meet HSS Case Manager Daniel Hopkins

When did you start at SSI? "February 2013."

What attracted you to your role? "I was in Cambodia visiting my fiancée [now wife]. I was born in Vietnam to a Vietnamese/Cambodian mother, so while I was there I thought a lot about how lucky I was to grow up in Australia. We arrived in Australia mid-1974, just before Vietnam fell to communism in 1975. So very lucky. I thought about how many others hadn't been so fortunate, and decided I wanted to work with refugees."

What else are you involved with at SSI? "I'm a member of SSI's Youth Sub Committee. I thought I could contribute because I'm a tennis coach and musician, and I'm passionate about seeing young people engage in the community and reach their goals. I also coordinated the AFL football program, a partnership between AFL Australia and SSI."

What was a highlight of your year? "Not one thing, but a string of little things. Like bumping into a client six months after working with him and having a conversation with him in English for the first time. Another was seeing the change in one of my clients after she went to an SSI art therapy session in the Blue Mountains."

Meet CSP Case Manager Lara Ducasse

When did you start at SSI? "May 2013."

What did you do before SSI? "I case managed women released from prison, and I've also worked as a drug and alcohol counsellor and in domestic violence outreach."

What do you enjoy about your work? "We really help improve asylum seekers' lives. SSI acknowledges that it would not exist without its clients, so we are very client-focused. I enjoy the front-line, hands-on approach. And it's also a very supportive, encouraging workplace."

What makes you a good case manager? "I make sure I'm very flexible with assisting my clients with their issues. I listen carefully to them and make it a priority to earn their trust."

Which SSI initiatives have you been involved with? "I enjoy attending the Community Kitchen; I assisted with our 2014 Mother's Day event by setting up a free stall with donated items for women and children; and I did face-painting at the Children's Christmas Party in 2013."

What was a highlight of your year? "A client told me I was a blessing from God and that they prayed for me every day. Also, being present for the birth of another client's first baby."

housing services report

The creation of the SSI Housing Services division in November 2013 and the commencement of housing services under the Humanitarian Settlement Services program in July 2013 marked two milestones in SSI's sustainable growth strategy in housing during this financial year.



The development and implementation of the 2013-2014 Housing Services Business Plan firmed up SSI's commitment to take up challenges and explore opportunities within and beyond settlement services.

Housing for Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) clients

In July 2013, SSI was awarded a housing contract by the Department of Social Services under HSS to source and secure Short-Term Accommodation (STA), Long-Term Accommodation (LTA), the provision of Basic Household Goods (BHG) and tenancy information to 50% of the organisation's HSS clients (refugees and humanitarian entrants) in the Sydney region.

The SSI Housing Services team managed to source and secure STA and LTA directly through the private residential rental market, as well as through two community housing partnerships, namely, with the Hume Community Housing Association and Community Housing Limited.

During 2013-2014, SSI assisted 162 clients with STA, secured LTA for 219 clients, and provided 465 clients with a BHG package.

SSI aims to source and secure LTA for our clients within eight weeks, with the success rate at 80%.

The hard work of the SSI Housing Services team during the year paid off – not just in great outcomes for our clients, but also in the extension of the HSS contract. That makes SSI the sole provider of HSS housing services for the Sydney region.

SSI Housing Services is now in a strong position to further develop and implement self-financed, value-added services to HSS clients.

“The hard work of the SSI Housing Services team during the year paid off – not just in great outcomes for our clients, but also in the extension of the HSS contract. That makes SSI the sole provider of HSS housing services for the Sydney region.”

Housing for Community Support Program (CSP) clients

CSP was the first program under which SSI delivered housing services to clients, commencing in 2012. In the 2013-2014 financial year, SSI assisted 1,450 asylum seeker clients with STA. These clients have also been assisted to secure affordable and appropriate LTA. SSI managed to assist the majority of clients, despite the expensive private rental market, and clients' low income and uncertainty of residency status.

In recognition of the limited resources and barriers for specialist homelessness services to provide crisis accommodation for asylum seekers, SSI took the initiative to start its self-funded Emergency Housing Assistance

Program in December 2013. A total of 150 clients were assisted by the end of the 2013-2014 financial year.

The expansion of SSI Housing Services for refugee, humanitarian entrant and asylum seeker clients in coming years will focus on the areas of homelessness services, long-term housing assistance, residential care and settlement services.

Special acknowledgement goes to team Leader Housing Services (HSS), Charles Rich, Team Leader Housing Services (CSP), Ravi Emmanuel, and Client Services Delivery Manager, Ted Thomson, for their hard work this year.

Patrick Yeung, SSI Manager Housing Services

SSI asylum seeker clients

1,018
IN SSI ACCOMMODATION

432
IN OTHER ACCOMMODATION,
SUCH AS WITH A LINK

SSI refugee clients

219
IN LONG-TERM ACCOMMODATION

162
IN SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION

465
WITH BASIC HOUSEHOLD
GOODS PACKAGE

three cheers for SSI volunteers!

Without the support of volunteers, SSI would not be able to achieve such positive outcomes for our clients. Approximately 300 volunteers were on our database during the financial year, and these people assisted our refugee and asylum seeker clients with establishing meaningful new lives in Australia.

Led by Community Integration Coordinator, Tabitha Chepkwony, the SSI Volunteer Program makes sure its volunteer group is made up of people with a diverse mix of languages, cultures and ages so that clients have access to people who can give them social support by communicating clearly and empathising with them. About 75% of SSI's volunteers come from a migrant background, and many were refugees themselves.

Our main volunteer type, Social Support Volunteers, can assist with everything from orientating refugees and asylum seekers around Sydney and teaching them to use public transport, to taking them food shopping and helping children with their homework.

The benefits of the Volunteer Program are two-way, since the program provides valuable vocation skills and the opportunity to build local work experience.

During the past year, as well as providing social support, SSI's volunteers have:

- assisted at SSI's fortnightly Community Kitchen event, lending a hand with food preparation, leading activities, and helping set up and pack down;
- supported and led activities, such as English conversation, for the mums at SSI Playtime multicultural playgroup, and engaged in play with the kids;
- assisted with unpacking OzHarvest food deliveries and distributed them to asylum seeker clients;
- been involved in sporting activities with new arrivals;
- linked newly arrived asylum seekers to various community groups and organisations, including Tamil, Sikh and Hazara youth community organisations;
- gained work experience in areas such as administration.



Meet an SSI volunteer: June Simpson

"I was a school counsellor, I specialised in emotional disturbance, and when I retired three years ago, I wanted to work with asylum seekers. I saw an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* about SSI setting up a soccer team. I thought, what a great idea, giving asylum seekers a sense of purpose and inclusion. Since February 2014 I've volunteered about one day a week for SSI, helping out at Community Kitchen, with admin, at the Welcome to Sydney sessions, and I just started volunteering at Playtime. That went well because I'm used to working with children. It's been enormously interesting, meeting people from different cultures. And I'm very impressed with the professionalism of SSI and the commitment of staff members. The gratitude of the clients is huge; they recognise SSI is here for them. I find it very heartening, SSI offers hope and makes a difference."

Interested in volunteering? Email volunteer@ssi.org.au



Meet SSI employees who were formerly volunteers

RAVI EMMANUEL, TEAM LEADER, CSP HOUSING SERVICES

When did you start volunteering for SSI? "In October 2012, while I was working as a Legal Officer in a law firm. When I found out about SSI, I realised I could really help refugees and new migrants by sharing my legal and real estate skills and knowledge, especially in the area of tenancy law."

What volunteering did you do? "I helped clients from various countries, especially Tamil asylum seekers, to secure long-term accommodation in the private rental market, connect with communities and engage in sports."

When were you employed by SSI? "In January 2013, I decided to choose a career at SSI; I was employed as a Housing Officer before becoming a Team Leader."

What's your proudest achievement of the year? "The CSP Housing Services team delivered short-term accommodation and emergency housing assistance to hundreds of asylum seekers. It's very rewarding work."

PEPINA BELFORT, CSP CASE MANAGER

Why did you volunteer for SSI? "I wanted a volunteer position working with asylum seekers, so in September 2013 The Centre for Volunteering linked me with SSI."

What volunteering did you do? "I assisted at Community Kitchen events, with OzHarvest deliveries and on reception at the Auburn office, as well as helping clients who had work rights to draft their resumes."

What did you enjoy most about volunteering? "Having opportunities to make people feel really welcome in Australia."

Why did you start working for SSI? "I admired the work of dedicated, passionate and resourceful SSI employees, so when a CSP Case Manager position came up I decided to apply, then started working for SSI mid-2014."

What do you enjoy about working at SSI? "I love meeting people from all around the world and feel privileged to have them trust me with stories of their difficult pasts, and their hopes and dreams for the future."

SSI benefits clients with... community engagement

SSI organises a broad array of events and activities that give our clients, particularly community-based asylum seekers, opportunities to connect with people in similar situations and other organisations that can provide assistance to them. This helps give our clients a sense of belonging. Here are just some of the SSI Community Engagement initiatives:

Community Kitchen

SSI Community Kitchen is a fortnightly social day out for asylum seeker clients that began in August 2013. Thanks to the help of volunteer cooks and servers, up to 250 clients are invited to Auburn Centre for Community to learn how to prepare a simple, nutritious meal. It also provides them with a chance to interact with others by getting involved in a game of soccer or cricket, playing cards or chess, watching music performances by other clients or community members, and sharing a meal.

The Community Kitchen has provided an innovative way for community groups and leaders to engage with asylum seekers who live in the community, often providing food for the feast or hampers to take home. And it has become a space where clients use their skills to benefit their peers. For instance, a former barber has offered free haircuts, and others have led guitar workshops, run craft sessions and Tai Quon Do demonstrations.

Playtime multicultural playgroup

In April 2014, SSI established Playtime, a weekly two-hour playgroup, to provide our female asylum seeker and refugee clients and their pre-school age children with an opportunity for meaningful social interaction. These women, who mostly have little English, often also lack social networks and face financial barriers to taking part in community activities. So while the initiative has been beneficial for the kids, the most significant benefits have been for the mothers. Playtime is a safe, women-and-children-only space where they can make friends, talk about motherhood, engage in recreational activities and have a break from their children while SSI staff and volunteers engage them in structured play sessions.

A community health nurse from NSW Refugee Health Service has been attending Playtime to provide one-on-one health consultations. Outreach specialist health providers have also offered free optical and hearing tests.



And there has been a great deal of support offered by representatives from community groups who have presented on various topics. For instance, a former educator facilitated English classes; a member of the Embroiderers' Guild demonstrated sewing and knitting techniques; and wildlife experts shared their knowledge about native insects. SSI bilingual staff members assist by interpreting the information presented in the clients' languages.

Sporting activities

Many of SSI's asylum seeker and refugee clients love sport. However, due to language barriers, a lack of funds to pay club fees, and few social connections, they can find it hard to join teams. In response to these issues, SSI has assisted clients with getting involved

in sport. For instance, in March 2014 a group of clients formed a soccer team, the Newington Gunners. They faced some initial challenges – not having enough money for registration fees and gear, for instance – but SSI publicised the challenges via the media, which led organisations and members of the public to make generous donations to support the team. The team went on to top the table, with members of the SSI staff acting as their cheer squad.

A big thank you to Community Engagement Practitioner, Keren David, without whose dedication all of these initiatives would not have been as successful as they were this year.

Trina Soulos, SSI Regional and Community Engagement Coordinator

3,260

THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF MEALS PREPARED AT SSI COMMUNITY KITCHEN IN 2013-2014

8

THE NUMBER OF NATIONALITIES THAT MAKE UP SSI'S SOCCER TEAM. THE PLAYERS ORIGINATED FROM PAKISTAN, AFGHANISTAN, IRAQ, IRAN, SIERRA LEONE, TURKEY, NEPAL & TAJIKISTAN

SSI benefits clients with... arts & culture

In recognition of the enriching and therapeutic nature of arts and cultural activities, and their ability to connect people, February 2014 saw the launch of SSI's Arts and Culture program for asylum seeker and refugee clients.

There's wide recognition of the positive roles that arts and culture can play in the initial phases of refugee settlement and asylum seeker wellbeing. Research shows that creative expression can help build confidence and develop language skills among newly arrived migrants. And through the arts, people can express their identity, voice their concerns and connect with others.

Some of the year's Arts and Culture Program highlights, which were all free of charge to participants, included:

Art is Our Voice exhibition

In May 2014, SSI launched an exhibition to showcase the art of refugees and asylum seekers in Australia. Fifteen artists, from Iran, Iraq, Sri Lanka and Egypt, displayed 40 artworks across a range of media, including oil painting, photography, watercolours, copper and glass etching, and even 'coffee art'. Coffee art is practiced by asylum seekers in detention centres who have no access to paints, and who instead mix instant coffee and water to paint with.

The exhibition was arranged to give a voice to people who are too often spoken for, and about, by others, and to help these people, most of whom were artists in their country of origin, make community connections that will help them pursue their art here in Australia.

The show opened at Verge Gallery before being toured to Sydney TAFE's Limelight Gallery and Holroyd City Council, and was organised in conjunction with University of Sydney Amnesty International Society and Amnesty International's ARTillery project.

Art Therapy workshops

Just before the end of the financial year, SSI began its art therapy workshops for clients, which will grow and develop as the initiative continues. The first art workshop, designed specifically for women, saw four asylum seeker clients and one refugee – from Assyrian, Farsi and Tamil language groups, some of whom had very limited English – heading out of Sydney together on the train to artist Audrey Rhoda's studio in the Blue Mountains.

The workshop provided a relaxed, safe and fun space for women clients to explore their creativity using an art form involving beeswax, as well as enhancing their social and mental wellbeing.

Music showcases

SSI's client base is made up of a large number of talented musicians. They are keen to perform, so SSI arranges music showcases, such as a performance by two clients from Iran at Ashfield Council's Merry Month of May at Ashfield Civic Centre, and SSI events such as the fortnightly Community Kitchen and our 2014 Harmony Day celebration.

SSI Speakers' Series

As part of the Arts and Culture Program, in April 2014 SSI launched the Speakers' Series, a quarterly evening of panel discussion between experts from different fields who are knowledgeable about refugee and asylum seeker issues. The events aim to inform, connect and challenge the audience – made up of members of the public as well as SSI staff and volunteers – by providing opportunities for discussion that enhance knowledge and awareness about issues impacting our clients. The inaugural discussion focused on challenges faced by refugee women, specifically Woman at Risk visa holders, during resettlement. The second event, in June, looked at how storytelling gives voice to refugees and people seeking asylum in Australia. We are pleased with the event's success so far, and look forward to next year's program.

Creative writing workshop for children

In the April 2014 school holidays, eight of SSI's young clients (aged from seven to 17) participated in a creative writing workshop at The Sydney Story Factory in Redfern. Four children from the Humanitarian Services program, and four more from the Multicultural Foster Care Service, developed their use of expressive language and improved their ability to communicate thoughts and feelings.

The workshop participants – from Tamil, Farsi and Vietnamese language groups – each wrote a short story about 'flying', with help from experienced facilitators. In the second half of the workshop, the kids built kites and decorated them with the stories they'd written.

A special thanks to Marketing & Communications Manager Angela Calabrese for helping to make this program's first year so fantastic for our clients.

Carolina Triana, SSI Arts & Culture Coordinator



Meet an artist

Damon Amb, one of SSI's CSP clients, began his photographic journey about 20 years ago in Iran, when he started experimenting with his father's old Konica. In 2006 he completed his Advanced Diploma in Photography at Iran's Jihad Institute, then worked as a photographer in an advertising agency before making his journey to Australia. Damon has developed a distinctive style of abstract photography that was a highlight of Art is Our Voice.



Meet a musician

Babak Jahangirzadeh, another of SSI's CSP clients, is a man of many creative talents. He was born in Iran and, since arriving in Australia in 2013, he has joined a few musical ensembles, as a vocalist and guitarist. He is also a poet, painter and he creates sculptures. Two of his oil paintings also featured in Art is Our Voice.

Are you a musician or artist who is interested in helping out with SSI's Arts & Culture Program?

Contact Carolina Triana, Arts & Culture Coordinator, on ctrina@ssi.org.au or 02 8799 6700

SSI assists clients with setting up... small businesses

Census data shows that recently arrived refugees are more entrepreneurial than the average Australian. The average rate of entrepreneurship for refugees is 18.8% in the first generation, compared with 15.9% of the Australian-born population.

Yet despite their enthusiasm to work, and their vast skill sets, it can be difficult for refugees to secure employment. Research shows that even after three years in Australia, one third of refugees and humanitarian entrants will remain unemployed. This is largely related to language barriers and their overseas' qualifications not being recognised in Australia.

This is why, in August 2013, SSI established the Ignite Small Business Start-ups initiative, an enterprise facilitation program for people of a refugee background. The program helps clients who want to start a small business or expand an existing one.

The program is based on the well-respected Sirolli principles of enterprise facilitation. Dr Ernesto Sirolli is the founder of the Sirolli Institute, a not-for-profit organisation and social enterprise, established in 1995 to teach community leaders, governments and corporations how to establish enterprise facilitation projects in their community.

The SSI Ignite Small Business Start-ups initiative:

- provides free and confidential support;
- removes barriers to starting a business, including transport, language, and Australian business and market knowledge;
- helps source funding;
- supports capacity-building for product development, marketing and financial management by helping to build a management team around the entrepreneur;
- uses a 'Resource Team' to put people in touch with those who can assist them, including volunteers from established businesses, chambers of commerce, educational institutions and local government.

By the end of the 2013-2014 financial year, Ignite had received 82 referrals and helped 12 entrepreneurs, seven men and five women, originally from countries including Iran, Sri Lanka and Sierra Leone, to start their own small businesses. By that time, there were also seven more businesses almost launched, and six more close to launch.

The established businesses so far span diverse areas, including packaged foods, video production, leather goods, woollen beanies, photography and catering. SSI is proud of the success that Ignite has been so far, and we look forward to seeing many more businesses bloom within the program.

Honey Muir, SSI Senior Project Officer (left) and Dina Petrakis, SSI Enterprise Facilitator (right)



Maria Sorki, Fly Trap Photography

Maria, a refugee who has tertiary qualifications in visual arts from her birth country, Iran, joined Ignite after five months in Australia, with the aim of starting up a commercial photography business. Maria was Ignite's first client to receive an invoice, and her business is now in full swing; she's been doing photo shoots – mostly wedding, portrait, architecture and food photography – for individuals as well as local councils, community organisations and Ignite's Resource Team members.



82

THE NUMBER OF REFUGEE CLIENTS WHO WERE REFERRED TO IGNITE IN THE 2013-2014 FINANCIAL YEAR.

24

THE NUMBER OF REFUGEE CLIENTS THE IGNITE PROGRAM IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH TO START OR EXPAND THEIR SMALL BUSINESS.

12

THE NUMBER OF SMALL BUSINESSES THAT THE IGNITE PROGRAM HELPED ESTABLISH WITHIN THE FINANCIAL YEAR.

2

THE NUMBER OF BUSINESSES SUPPORTED BY IGNITE THAT ARE ALREADY EMPLOYING STAFF.

Bassam Jabar, Bassam Glass Art

Bassam, an artist originally from Iraq, made his way to Australia via Syria, where he learnt to create hand etchings on glass. Since joining Ignite, he's been selling his work in Australia, mostly at Marrickville's Addison Road Markets, and his work will soon be available at the prestigious Kirra Galleries in Melbourne. In May, Bassam had his creations displayed at Art is Our Voice, an SSI exhibition of artworks by refugee and asylum seeker clients. The works have also been entered in several national art competitions.

Interested in joining SSI's Resource Team?

Contact Dina Petrakis on dpetrakis@ssi.org.au or 02 8799 6700



SSI strengthens families through... early intervention

With funding from NSW Family and Community Services under the Keep Them Safe initiative, SSI ran a number of important early intervention and capacity-building projects during the 2013-2014 year. These projects focused on strengthening recently arrived refugee and migrant families, and resourcing service providers working with these families.



A highlight of the year was the SSI Cultural Shift symposium, held in June 2014. The symposium brought together delegates from migrant, refugee, ethno-specific and mainstream organisations as well as government to explore the needs of recently arrived migrant and refugee families, and to showcase and promote effective services, delivery models and approaches for supporting these families through their settlement journey. Delegates developed a range of recommendations for the NGO and government sectors in the areas of early intervention and child protection, early childhood services, parenting support, health, education and legal issues.

Throughout the year, SSI delivered workshops covering parental rights and responsibilities for recently arrived refugee and asylum seeker parents as part of their orientation. The workshops addressed laws on child abuse in Australia, making a report, rights of children and parents, acceptable forms of discipline and support services. The project was a good example of the effective integration of settlement support and child protection matters.

SSI also started creating a resource for recently arrived parents called *Caring for Children*. The booklet – which will be translated from English in to Arabic, Dari, Farsi, Tamil, Swahili and Dinka – will contain information on children's development; communicating with children; parenting teenagers in a cross-cultural context; discipline guidelines and supervision of children; Australian child protection laws; and where to seek support. The booklet, and translated versions, will be available in electronic form at www.ssi.org.au.



Training on Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting was provided by SSI trainers for staff from 15 migrant and refugee services throughout Sydney as well as in Wollongong, Newcastle and Wagga Wagga. The training covered: types of harm; responsibilities of mandatory reporters; the online Mandatory Reporter Guide; the process of making a referral; information sharing; family referral services and collaboration.

SSI also implemented a successful Pacific Community Foster Carer Recruitment project during the year, addressing barriers that prevent people from Pacific backgrounds from being involved in foster care. This out-of-home care sector capacity-building project involved SSI being funded by the Association of Children's Welfare Agencies to promote interest in fostering in five Pacific communities as part of Fostering NSW. The project developed culturally

tailored campaign messages and resources. Bilingual presenters from Pacific and Maori backgrounds built support from community and church leaders, delivered more than 45 information workshops, and promoted fostering in social media, community radio and at festivals. The project generated an enormous response from Pacific community members interested in becoming foster carers, and was a finalist in the ACWA 2014 Achievement Awards. Read more about SSI's involvement with multicultural foster care overleaf.

Special acknowledgement goes to Manager Business and Community Development, Joseph Ferrer, for his commitment to these projects and more this year.

Thanh Nguyen, SSI Manager Early Intervention and Capacity Building

407

SSI DELIVERED WORKSHOPS COVERING PARENTAL RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO THIS MANY NEWLY ARRIVED PARENTS

250

SSI'S CULTURAL SHIFT SYMPOSIUM BROUGHT TOGETHER THIS MANY DELEGATES TO EXPLORE APPROACHES FOR SUPPORTING REFUGEE AND MIGRANT FAMILIES DURING SETTLEMENT

multicultural foster care service report

In 2013, after years of developmental work, SSI launched the Multicultural Foster Care Service (MFCS), the first specialist out-of-home care service for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds in NSW. The aim of the service is to place children who require out-of-home care with foster carers from the same cultural and linguistic background whenever possible. Research by DoCS as well as anecdotal evidence shows that children in care who can maintain connections to their culture, religion and language of origin have better outcomes than those who do not.

To run this service, SSI employs bilingual case workers with cross-cultural and technical out-of-home care services skills and knowledge who develop an appropriate 'Cultural Plan' for every child and carer.

At the beginning of the reporting period, SSI had case management responsibility for 21 children; by the end of the period we were responsible for a total of 61 children, with many more transfers in progress.

The service began with a strong representation of Vietnamese children in metropolitan Sydney. This part of the program has become well established, with a total of 29 children from Vietnamese backgrounds in SSI's care. The second most established ethnic group within our client base, initially, was African, mostly in the Hunter-Central Coast area.

Throughout the period, children from other ethnic origins, including from Arabic and South-East Asian backgrounds, began entering SSI's care in more significant numbers. And as the year progressed, SSI started a Pacific Islander program, which at this stage is largely focused on children from Maori and Samoan backgrounds. Indications are

that the program for Muslim children in SSI's care is set to grow significantly. All of these developments have required expansion of our team of bilingual and bicultural case workers.

SSI is extremely proud of the MFCS program, particularly the fact that our care arrangements have remained stable – there were no placement breakdowns or changes of placement within the year. And, to date, the program has achieved two restorations (children being returned to their birth families), which is considered the best possible outcome for an out-of-home care service. These two successful outcomes, and another on its way, were made possible due to SSI providing carers with support to continue the link with the children's birth family's culture. While these connections are largely about developing children's sense of belonging and identity, they also help children build more positive connections with their birth families.

Another key to the program's success was the contribution throughout the year of Manager Business and Community Development, Joseph Ferrer.

“ While these connections are largely about developing children's sense of belonging and identity, they also help children build more positive connections with their birth families. ”

Want to find out more?

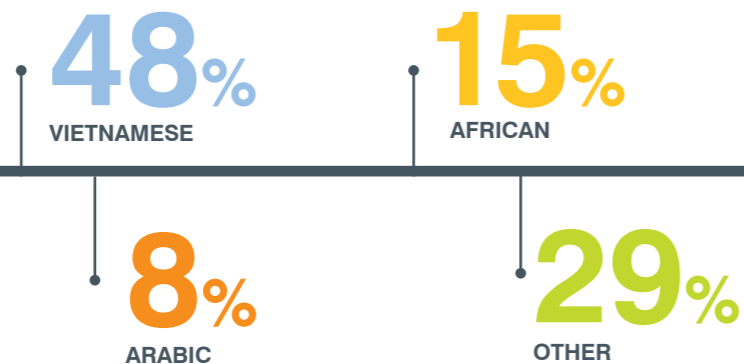
While SSI has a strong focus on recruiting foster carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, inquiries are welcome from people from all cultural backgrounds who have a genuine interest in providing safe and caring homes for children in care, particularly siblings, and ensuring that their cultural connections are maintained. For carers from different backgrounds to their foster child, SSI's program supports them to do things in the child's cultural interests, such as connect with local support services that offer in-language activities, and cook meals that are familiar to the child.

All foster carers with SSI have access to a range of support services, including initial and ongoing training; a professional bilingual and bicultural caseworker to support carers and the child through monthly visits and regular phone contact; access to 24-hour phone support; financial support to meet the cost of care; and referrals to a range of support services for the carer and the child.

For more information on this program, contact Ghassan Noujaim at gnoujaim@ssi.org.au or 02 8799 6700.

**Ghassan Noujaim, SSI Manager OOH
- Multicultural Foster Care Service**

The ethnic backgrounds of children in the SSI Multicultural Foster Care Service:



SSI benefits employees with... a health & productivity program

SSI CEO, Violet Roumeliotis, is just as passionate about the wellbeing of SSI staff members as she is about the wellbeing of clients. That's why she's also known as SSI's Chief Wellness Officer, and why the organisation has a health and productivity program, Be Well. It was established in April 2013 to sustain personal and organisational behaviour change.

SSI's management believes employees' work-life balance and the organisation's performance rely on staff members' self-care. So Be Well is crucial for both the organisation and its staff. In 2013-2014, Be Well focused on enhancing staff members' emotional resilience, engagement and productivity in meaningful ways. A summary of Be Well's outcomes for the reporting period includes:

- Be Well strengthened productivity at SSI, according to evidence of behaviour change. The program data confirms that the Be Well tools and techniques for managing workloads have proven effective (Be Well Behaviour Change Survey results, 2013).
- Mindfulness is being recognised by industry leaders globally as a way to boost innovation and competitive advantage, and there is clear evidence that learning and practicing mindfulness both captured the imagination and strengthened the professional practice of SSI staff members who took part in mindfulness training.
- Time pressures have had an impact on Be Well workshop participation rates. The program dealt with this problem by increasing the number of

training places available at workshops from the accepted adult education maximum of 12 per workshop, to 18, to accommodate no-shows and ensure a cost-effective participation rate. The strategy effectively increased workshop numbers.

- The progressive evaluation of Be Well suggested that participation in the program was higher among staff based at SSI's main offices: Ashfield and Parramatta. Despite multiple outreach initiatives, reaching staff in the growing network of satellite offices continues to present challenges, so outreach remains a priority.
- Online training evaluations have been collected from the majority of training participants, and have been resoundingly positive (see figures, below).
- Be Well's strategic approach has captured the attention of various researchers and academics who are collaborating on the publication of the program's evidence base. Activities such as conference presentations and published evidence all strengthen SSI's reputation as an Employer of Choice and industry innovator.

294

THE NUMBER OF STAFF WHO PARTICIPATED IN AT LEAST ONE BE WELL TRAINING COURSE DURING THE YEAR. 155 OF THESE HAVE ATTENDED UP TO 6 WORKSHOPS.

407

THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO REPORTED OUTSTANDING LEVELS OF SATISFACTION WITH WORKSHOPS.

96.8%

THE PERCENTAGE OF BE WELL PARTICIPANTS WHO REPORTED THAT THE TRAINING HAD PROMPTED THEM TO CHANGE THE WAY THEY DO THINGS.



Meet a Be Well champion: Marcela Hart

In January 2014, CSP Case Manager Marcela, who's also a Zumba instructor outside of work, was awarded a CEO Wellness Award for leading Zumba classes for SSI staff. Marcela has been a Zumba fan since the dance workout was first introduced, and did instructor's training in 2011. "I love that Zumba's a very inclusive, uplifting exercise," she said. "I'm happy to share Zumba with my SSI colleagues because I believe that fun exercise can contribute highly to our individual wellbeing and performance. They seemed to really enjoy the classes."

“I'm happy to share Zumba with my colleagues because I believe that fun exercise can contribute highly to our individual wellbeing and performance.”

Meet a Be Well champion: Mark Campion

In 2013, CSP Case Manager Mark, who started at SSI in May 2012, decided to overhaul his eating and exercise habits. He started going to the gym four to five days a week to do cardio and weight training, and choosing healthier lunch options instead of junk food. As a result, Mark is looking and feeling healthier. "I have more energy and feel more productive." His efforts inspired his colleagues, so in April 2014 he was awarded a CEO Wellness Award.



A message from the SSI...

Treasurer

In a year of uncertainty, it is pleasing to report that for the year ended June 30, 2014, SSI experienced considerable growth through the addition of new services, the expansion of current programs, as well as consolidating its financial position.

The audited financial statements for the financial year highlight the significant increase in income from \$36 million in 2012-2013 to \$91.5 million in 2013-2014. This increase is due in part to the addition of new programs, such as Housing Services and the Ability Links NSW program for people with disability, together with expansion of services in the Multicultural Foster Care Service and the CAS/ASAS programs for asylum seekers. SSI's income includes a component of direct cost recovery of client costs of \$57 million. The client costs are comprised of a living allowance and other payments made to asylum seeker clients in the CAS/ASAS program. Also included in income is a component of capital funding in the CAS/ASAS program of \$532,000.

In line with the growth experienced by SSI, operating costs have also increased from \$31.6 million to \$91.7 million.

Included in these costs are the reciprocal payments of the client costs of \$57 million received as income in the CAS/ASAS program. Staffing levels have increased in the financial year due to new and expanding programs, increasing from 253 in July 2013 to 336, plus many paid Bilingual Guides, one year later, with a commensurate increase in costs.

Current Assets have increased by \$10.5 million over the previous year. This increase is predominantly an increase in Cash at Bank. Non-Current Assets increased by \$948,000 over the previous year, reflecting the capital expenditure requirements for the growth in funded programs. Liabilities increased by \$11.7million over the previous year. This is mainly due to unearned income for services invoiced in advance for the CAS/ASAS program.

SSI's strong financial position is reflected in the Net Assets for the year at \$5.9 million.

New initiatives

SSI has implemented state-of-the-art financial management, payroll and human resources software to enable an integrated solution to financial management, improve productivity, cost management, regulatory compliance and financial reporting.

Connect Australia Foundation

For the financial year 2013-2014, the foundation did not receive any funding and no grant submissions were lodged.

Rosa Loria, SSI Treasurer

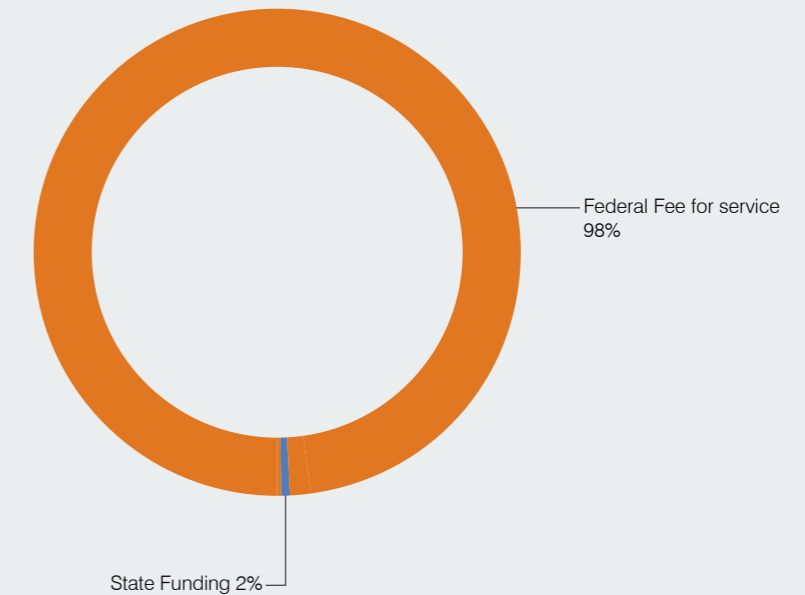
\$91.7m

OPERATING COSTS FOR 2013-2014

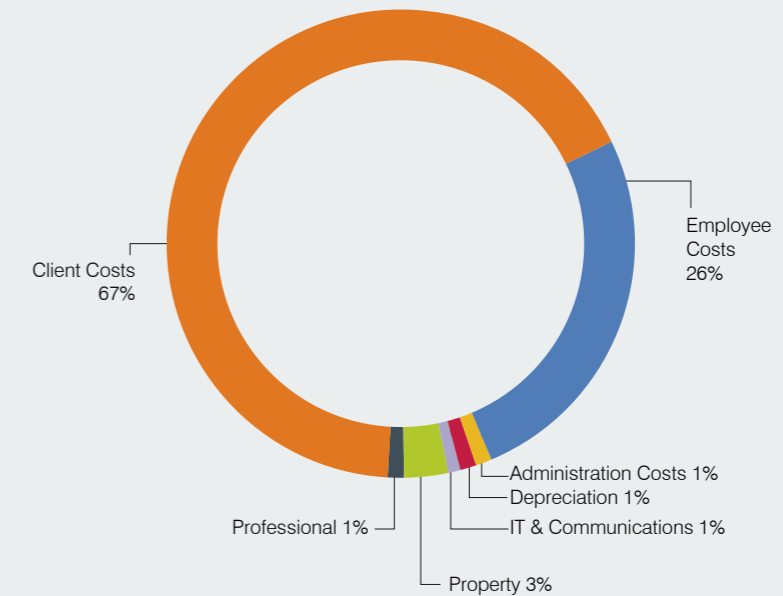
\$532,000

CAPITAL FUNDING IN THE CAS/ASAS PROGRAM

Income



Expenses



\$5.9m

NET ASSETS FOR 2013-2014

\$948,000

NON-CURRENT ASSETS INCREASED BY THIS MUCH OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR

\$91.5m

INCOME FOR 2013-2014

\$10.5m

CURRENT ASSETS INCREASED BY THIS MUCH OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR

June 2014 Annual Report Data

INCOME	2014
Federal Funding	88,885,232
State Funding	2,200,780
Interest Income	212,262
Other Income	171,628
	91,469,902
EXPENDITURE BY SOURCE	
Client Costs	61,711,157
Employee Costs	23,447,095
Administration Costs	715,699
Depreciation Costs	932,599
IT&C Costs	1,378,270
Property Costs	2,624,821
Professional Costs	835,004
	91,644,645

Cash Flow Statement for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2014

	\$
Cash at the beginning of the year	9,482,428
OPERATIONS	
Net Cash Flow from Operations	11,217,795
INVESTING ACTIVITIES	
Net Cash Flow from Investing Activities	(1,688,112)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Net Cash Flow from Financing Activities	-
Net Increase/(Decrease in Cash)	9,529,683
Cash at Bank 30 June 2014	19,012,111

SSI Board



SSI Board Members, pictured with SSI CEO (bottom right) and General Manager (top left)

Clockwise, from top to bottom: Peter Zographakis (SSI General Manager); Om Dhungel; Lou Bacchiella, Kamalle Dabboussy (Chair); Violet Roumeliotis (SSI CEO); Tia Roko; Rosa Loria (Treasurer); Karin Vasquez (Vice Chair). Not pictured: Litsa Nossar (Secretary)

acknowledgements

SSI would like to sincerely thank the following organisations and people for their support during the 2013-2014 financial year...

Humanitarian Services & Community Engagement:

Afghan Australian Noor Association Inc
Afghan Youth (AYANA)
Amnesty International
Anglicare
Auburn Centre for Community
Auburn District Cricket Club, Peter Abboud
Australia 21
Australian Afghan Hassanian Youth Association (AAHYA), Sayeed Karimi
Australian Iranian Community Organisation
Australian Relief Organisation
Big Bite Restaurant, Auburn
Blue Mountains International Hotel Management School, Monica Gragg
Blue Mountains Refugee Support Group/Lizzards Pre-school, Tony Sharpe
Brother Steve Cram
Commonwealth Bank, Auburn and Parramatta branches
Conscila Emilianus and the Tamil Meet and Greet Group
Dandelion Support Network
Darban Persian Restaurant
Dubbo Neighbourhood Centre Inc
Fairfield City Council, Erica Egyed
Fairfield Police Commander, Superintendent Peter Lennon
Feast Magazine
Francesca Molluso
George Rigatos
Granville Youth Centre
Hillsong
Holroyd Rangers Soccer Club Inc, John Nash
House of Welcome
Hunter New England Health Refugee Health Program
Immigrant Women's Health Service, Dr Eman Sharobeem
Mission of Hope
MRCs: Auburn Diversity Services Inc; Community Migrant Resource Centre (CMRC); Illawarra Multicultural Services; Fairfield MRC; Liverpool MRC; Macarthur Diversity

Services Initiative; Metro Assist; Northern Settlement Services; St George MRC Inc.; Sydney Multicultural Community Services; SydWest Multicultural Services
Nabi Akram Islamic Centre
Newington Gunners Soccer Club, Ben Nilsson, Shane McNeill & Andrew Hirschhorn
NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and Margaret Bailey
NSW Refugee Health Service, Sandy Eagar & Sarah Wong
Old Knox Grammarians Association (OKGA)
Opal Dental
Owl's House, UNSW Early Years, Megan Mason
OzHarvest
Parramatta City Council
Parramatta City Library, Nada Antoun
Parramatta Salvation Army Hall
Penola House
Playfair
RACS
RCOA
Richard Hardy, Partner, Baker Love Lawyers
Rotary Club of Morisset
Ryde Local Area Command
SAHELI, Shantha Viswanathan
Samaritans Foundation
SecondBite
Soroptimist International
Sponsors of the Newington Gunners Soccer Club team: Anne Noakes, Archana Ghale, Barrie Goldsmith, Emily Patterson, Joseph Ferrer, Mark (anonymous), Margaret and Steven Faux, Safar Samed, Synapse
Medical Services
STARTTS
St Vincent de Paul Society
Sydney Shuttle
TAFE
Tamil Meet and Greet Committee
The Body Shop, Nina Kranjc Orel

The Embroiderers' Guild NSW Inc, Wendy Schmid
The Salvation Army
Welcome to Australia

Housing Services:

APX Apartments
Australian Motel Group (AMG), Ryde, Rob Fraser
Church Resources
Comfort Inn Hunts Liverpool, Casula
Community Housing Limited
Evolution Cleaning
G Group Investments Pty Ltd
Hume Community Housing Association
Little & Rabie Betta Electrical
Providential Homes

Arts & Culture Program:

ARTillery
Ashfield Council
Art-In-Sight Workshops, Audrey Rhoda
Holroyd City Council
Information and Cultural Exchange (ICE)
Music for Refugees, Philip Feinstein
Sydney Story Factory
Sydney TAFE, Limelight Gallery
University of Sydney Amnesty International
Verge Gallery

Ignite Small Business Start-ups:

Addison Road Community Centre
Australian Arab Business Network (AABC)
Bankstown City Council
Business Enterprise Centres (BECs) across western and south-western Sydney
Community Commerce
Cremeria De Luca, Luigi de Luca
Enactus, University of Sydney (Culinary Tales)
Forbes Accounting & Business Consultants (FABC)

Many Rivers
Marrickville Council
Multicultural Enterprises Australia
R.M. Gregory Printers, Hassan Moussa
Small Biz Connect, University of Western Sydney
Social Enterprise Outcomes Ltd
TAFE NSW
The Social Outfit
UTS Business School
UTS Shopfront

Child and Family Services

Association of Children's Welfare Agencies (ACWA)
Child and Family District Units
Community Services Centres
Connecting Carers NSW
Ethnic Child Care, Family and Community Services
Co-operative, Newcastle
Hunter African Communities Council
NSW Council for Pacific Communities (NSWCPC)
NSW Department of Families and Community Services
NSW Office of the Children's Guardian
Pacific Community Foster Carer Recruitment Project
Reference Group: Bronwyn Hadife, Fatai Slender, Joy Siamoa, Losena Fuko, Rosaline Havea, Tia Roko
And all NGO OOH Services that have supported SSI and our clients

Legal advice:

Holding Redlich law firm
Sparke Helmore Lawyers
Spruson & Ferguson law firm

Corporate:

Apex Executive Interiors
Ayandeh translation services
Syncomp

glossary of acronyms

TERM	DEFINITION	TERM	DEFINITION
ACOSS	Australian Council of Social Service	CSP	Community Support Program
ACWA	Association of Children's Welfare Agencies	DEC	NSW Department of Education and Communities
ADHC	NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care	DHS	Department of Human Services
AHRC	Australian Human Rights Commission	DIPB	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
ALNSW	Ability Links NSW	DPC	NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet
ARC	Audit and Risk Committee	DSS	Department of Social Services
ASAS	Asylum Seeker Assistance Scheme	EICB	Early Intervention and Capacity Building
ASI	Asylum Seekers Interagency	EPAC	Salary Packaging Solutions
BCD	Business and Community Development	FACS	NSW Department of Family and Community Services
BG	Bilingual Guide	GHSH	Going Home Staying Home (Homelessness Service Delivery Framework)
BHG	Basic Household Goods	HNSW	Housing New South Wales
BNP	Basic Needs Package	HS	Housing Services
BPKPID	Business Plan Key Performance Indicator Dashboard	HSS	Humanitarian Settlement Services
CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse	ITC	Information Technology Committee
CAS	Community Assistance Support	LHD	Local Health Districts
CCD	Community Cultural Development	LTA	Long Term Accommodation
CF	Communities Foundation	LWB	Life Without Barriers
CHP	Community Housing Provider	MC	Multicultural
CIP	Community Integration Program	MIF	Market Industry Fund
CPAN	Cultural Performing Arts Network		
CRC	Community Relations Commission		
CRR	Centre for Refugee Research, UNSW		

TERM	DEFINITION	TERM	DEFINITION
MoH	NSW Ministry of Health	SHS	Specialist Homelessness Service
MRC	Migrant Resource Centre	SIBs	Social Impact Bonds
MYC	Marist Youth Care	SRSS	Status Resolution Support Services
MYNSW	Multicultural Youth NSW	SSI	Settlement Services International
NCOSS	NSW Council of Social Services	STA	Short Term Accommodation
NDIA	National Disability Insurance Agency	STARTTS	The NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors
NDIS	National Disability Insurance Scheme	SVDP	St Vincent De Paul
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council	UCB	Uniting Care Burnside
NRAS	National Rental Affordability Scheme	UNSW	University of New South Wales
NSW GISPC	NSW General Immigration and Settlement Planning Committee	UTS	University of Technology Sydney
OOHC	Out of Home Care	WHS	Work Health Safety
PAC	People and Culture	WWCC	Working with Children Checks
QAC	Quality Assurance Committee		
QMS	Quality Management System		
RACS	Refugee Advice and Casework Service		
RC	Red Cross		
RCOA	Refugee Council of Australia		
REMCO	Remuneration Committee		
RHS	NSW Refugee Health Service		
RSN	Refugee Support Network		
SCOA	Settlement Council of Australia		
SGP	Settlement Grants Program		

how can you help?

Donate:

Go to www.ssi.org.au/donate

Volunteer:

Email volunteer@ssi.org.au
or call 02 9685 0100

Help out with the Arts & Culture Program:

Contact Carolina Triana,
SSI Arts & Culture Coordinator,
on ctriana@ssi.org.au
or 02 8799 6700

Become a foster carer:

Contact Ghassan Noujaim,
SSI Manager Out-of-Home Care,
on gnoujaim@ssi.org.au
or 02 8799 6700

Join our small-business start-up resource team:

Contact Dina Petrakis,
SSI Enterprise Facilitator,
on dpetrakis@ssi.org.au
or 02 8799 6700

To find out more,
go to www.ssi.org.au,
call 02 8799 6700
or email info@ssi.org.au

Meet our cover stars



Jawad (left), who was born in Afghanistan and lived in Pakistan before arriving in Australia in May 2013, started coming to SSI's Community Kitchen when the initiative first began, mainly as a way to learn English. About six months on, **Mostafa** (right), a Kurd who arrived in Australia from Iran in May 2013, started coming along to help out, as a way of staying active. Since then, the two men, both asylum seeker (CSP) clients on bridging visas, have become buddies, as well as invaluable members of the Community Kitchen team. Every second Wednesday, they arrive at Auburn Centre for Community at 9am to help set up. And, after a big clean-up, they're the last ones out the door in the evening, along with SSI's Community Engagement team Trina Soulos and Keren David.

Jawad says he thinks of the Community Kitchen crew like a big family. "I meet so many different people; I learn English; I get a lot of love from these people and I don't feel alone anymore." Mostafa agrees: "It's a good idea that SSI holds the Community Kitchen. We [people seeking asylum] feel homesick, but when we come here, we forget our problems; we feel part of a community."

Also pictured on the cover is Muhammad Sadiq, an SSI Case Manager who happened to know Jawad back in Pakistan, where Muhammad was an English teacher. "Jawad was one of my best students in my English classes," said Muhammad. In 2009, Muhammad, who speaks eight languages, migrated to Australia, and in August 2012 he started with SSI. "One day, as I walked in to SSI's reception, I saw a very familiar face: Jawad. That was the merriest moment of my life, to see the fruit of my teaching career – Jawad was communicating in English with his case manager. And he is always the most helping hand in the Community Kitchen."



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