

mediadiversity

A U S T R A L I A

We are a nationwide not-for-profit organisation run by journalists and communication professionals.
Australia is culturally and linguistically diverse. Australia's media should be too.

Dear MDA supporters,

In our August issue, *Spotlight On* features Courier Mail's Sophie Foster on the impact of diversity on the Olympics. Plus, Andrea Ho on the *Community Voices* program, the Walkleys and free reporting training!

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- **SPOTLIGHT ON:** Sophie Foster on the (mostly) highs of the Tokyo Games in showing the benefits of diversity
- **Community Voices now seen and heard:** Andrea Ho updates us on the groundbreaking media training program
- **The 66th Walkley Awards:** How to enter
- **Inclusive reporting webinar:** Our upcoming second professional development seminar with The Walkley Foundation and Scanlon Foundation



Pic: IOC/ Greg Martin



Spotlight On: Diversity triumphs at Tokyo Olympics



Sophie Foster, digital editor at News Corp

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Nowhere has the richness of Australia's diversity been as plainly obvious as the Tokyo Olympic Games we have just witnessed and the Paralympics beginning August 24. Sport has always been a great leveller as well as a favoured pastime of many Aussies. It breaks boundaries and celebrates the triumph of the human spirit, regardless of what package it comes in, and there's no doubt that it's a big money earner for many parties including the media.

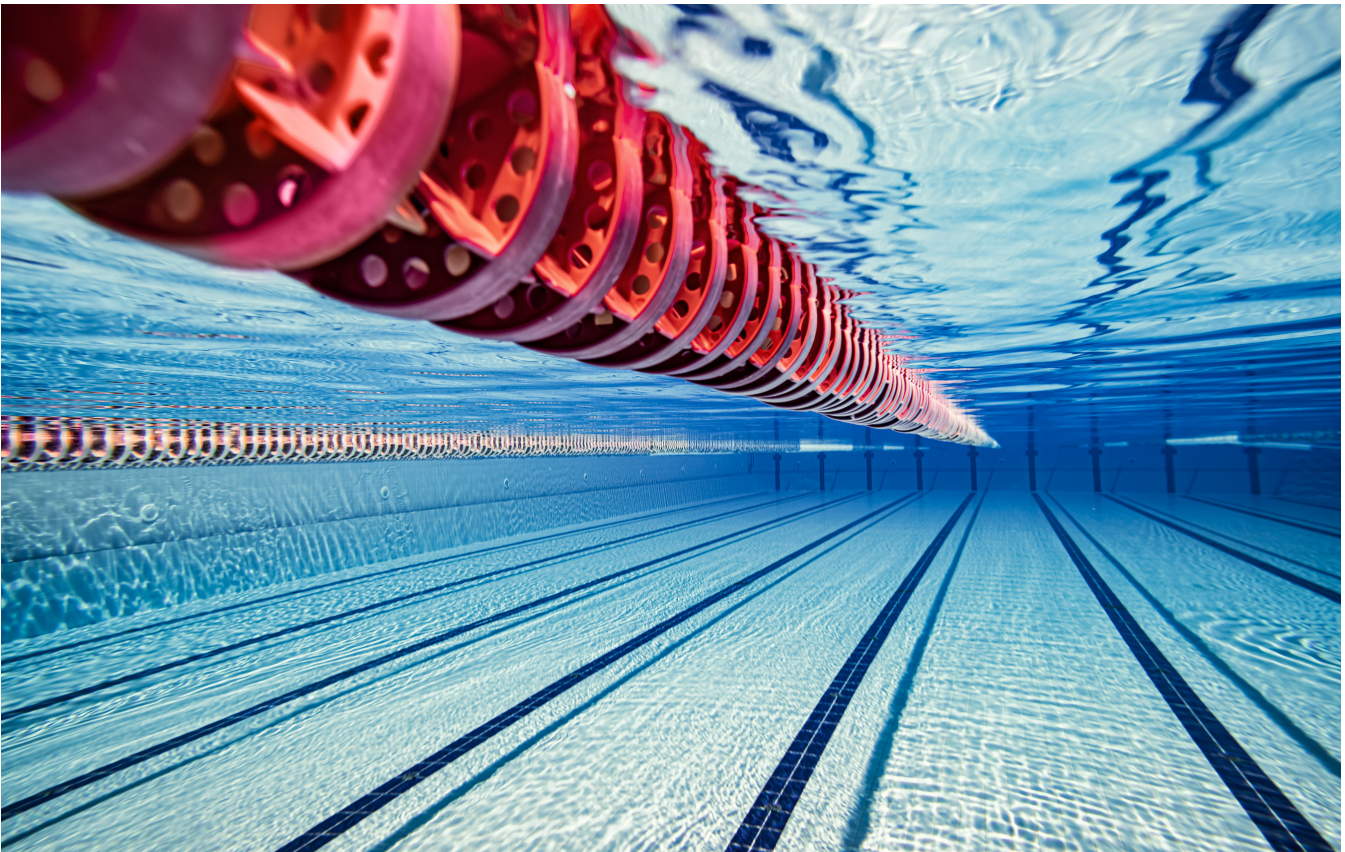
@SophieFoster 

It is heartening to see wide acknowledgement and celebration of the diverse tapestry of people that emerged as the best this nation has to offer. From our First Nations people coming to the forefront with Patty Mills leading the team out, to a record number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people representing Australia at this Olympic Games, to putting Peter Bol and his family in every living room in this country, celebrating as he smashed Australian records and proudly represented the place he now calls home.

This time around, even the Australian Olympic Committee was held to account for its failure to portray the diverse nature of athletes representing this nation in its Jockey campaign - when the athletes chosen for a photoshoot fell short on diversity. Jockey itself acknowledged "we fell short in representing our diverse Australian community in these images of Olympic and Paralympic athletes", a key statement for the times we live in where such matters can't simply be brushed away anymore.

***F**or me these Olympics have heralded a shifting of the sands of time, raising hope that Australia has grown to own its place as one of the great peaceful multicultural nations of the world.*





It was plainly obvious that the feast of sporting achievement was also a feast of the diversity of the Australian experience. For the first time in a long time, more people seemed to take note of how uplifting that can be – especially given almost half the country was in lockdown through much of the Olympics. A multitude of experiences came to the fore from Aussies who battled for their place off a refugee base like Peter Bol to those representing the oldest living civilisation, our First Nations people, like Patty Mills, to the Olyroos' talented team of Aussies many of whom were born overseas.

For many young people, gone are the days when seeing the Aboriginal flag draped on the shoulders of our sporting elite is cause for drama. Gone should be the days when our children are limited by whom they are presented with as role models for excellence. Our Olympians spanned sports, backgrounds, cultures, abilities, united in their pride as Australians.

For me these Olympics have heralded a shifting of the sands of time, raising hope that Australia has grown to own its place as one of the great peaceful multicultural nations of the world. Where talent is recognised, celebrated and rewarded, regardless of the colour of your skin, the generations that your family has lived here, how you got here or if you conform to what the heroes of the past may have looked like.

I only hope Australia's media was taking note because the industry is in desperate need of some representation wins.

Each issue, Spotlight On amplifies the views and perspectives of a diverse journalist. If you'd like to write about a diversity and inclusion issue for this newsletter, please click [here](#)

Community Voices now seen and heard

Community Voices is an initiative of the Judith Neilson Institute, in partnership with Media Diversity Australia. Its goal is to strengthen the ability of individuals from diverse backgrounds to participate in Australia's national conversation.



Executive Editors panel. L-R: Jim Carroll (Community Voices, former SBS News Dir); Claire Harvey (Sydney Editor The Australian); Gaven Morris (News Director ABC); Michelle Stephenson (News Director NOVA) being interviewed by Antoinette Lattouf. Image: Andrew Griffiths



Andrea Ho
*Director Of Education at the
Judith Neilson Institute for Journalism and Ideas*

Each month I spend an extra Wednesday night at work, gladly hanging out with an excellent, interesting group of people: JNl's Community Voices crew.

In an industry where long and weird hours are normal, it hardly counts as an imposition, but in this situation, both the company and the activity are real standouts.

Community Voices hit the ground running at the start of 2021. As I wrote earlier this year, JNI undertook to develop the media skills of a selected group of culturally diverse community representatives. It was a lateral way to respond to mainstream news organisations that continue to fall short of representing contemporary Australia, and journalists' perennial cry of 'but I can't find the talent'.

With our partner Media Diversity Australia, we embarked on a training program that's part skills development, part environmental familiarisation, part introductions to key people like editors, and with the benefit of iterative learning over time.

Now as we plan for Community Voices' seventh session, it's time to give you an update. Here are the halftime highlights.

Insights from the experts

Early on, the Community Voices met and heard from senior media executives from The Australian, the ABC, and Nova Entertainment in a personal, intimate setting about how the news is made. They spoke with different newsroom editors and senior journalists about the way news teams make daily story choices. They heard from communications experts about how to pitch stories into media.



Practice, practice

Each session, the Community Voices practiced new skills: writing headlines, points for press releases, mock interviews on camera and in front of their peers. They've practiced conversational interviews in studio settings with community radio programs.

Healthy practice

The media can be a tough arena, so Community Voices discussed techniques for managing media and social media from culturally diverse leaders. They learned how to plan for and manage the personal effects of media interaction and a public profile from media trauma experts DART Centre.

Increased screen time

Community Voices project manager and lead trainer Jim Carroll arranged for group members to join the audiences for Q&A and Insight, which was as up close and personal with mainstream media as most participants had been.



Hit the ground running

It's fortunate the Community Voices have had all this and more in the first six months of the program. Very quickly they came into demand as the news cycle turned.



- Amar Singh was in 'high rotation' across many outlets when repatriation flights from India were paused.
- Joy Adan spoke about women facing domestic violence on a recent Insight program.

- Jeffery Wang appeared on SBS news after Taiwan was excluded from the WHO.
- Basim Al-Ansari featured in an SBS TV story and on SBS Radio Arabic on the COVID-19 lockdown in Sydney.



There have been happy stories too: Daniel Gobena spoke at length about his community's garden on Gardening Australia, and Amar again on community-based disaster relief activities.



Others have had their first media experiences with 2SER and FBi Radio on a range of topics, from Refugee Week to teaching democracy and civics, religious freedoms, mental health in the African community, endometriosis, and migrant support for Reconciliation.

It's been exciting to see the Community Voices participants grasp this program with both hands, and watch them meet and exceed expectations. Just as importantly, they've become a peer group learning with and from each other as they stretch themselves on unfamiliar ground. Each session they leave wanting more and return hungry for new experiences. And with each media appearance, they cheer each other on.

I can't wait to see their progress through the remainder of the program.



Three weeks left to enter this year's Walkleys

Entries are open now for the [annual Walkley Awards for Excellence in Journalism](#). The awards cover all media, with 30 different categories where you can be recognised for excellence, independence, innovation and originality in storytelling and distinctive reporting.

Enter before midnight, Tuesday 31 August, 2021.



Register now: free media training with the Walkley Foundation and Scanlon Foundation



Media Diversity Australia is excited to be co-hosting a second professional development webinar to help Australian journalists bring greater diversity and inclusion to their reporting. Presented by the Walkley Foundation and the Scanlon Foundation, this session focuses on how you can engage with diverse communities. Hosted by Julie Szego, our featured guest is Chinese Australian community leader and advocate Jieh-Yung Lo.

Date: Thursday 19 August
Time: 5:30pm – 7:00pm

This event is FREE, however, spots are limited. Register [here](#) to secure your place.





Want to help create a media that looks and sounds like Australia?

As a not-for-profit organisation, we rely on the help of our incredible volunteers. With your financial and volunteer support, we can continue to run programs to support culturally and linguistically diverse journalists, conduct agenda-setting research, run networking events, provide practical solutions for the media industry, and much more. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to support the vital work we do, please click [here](#)

About us

Media Diversity Australia (MDA) is a national not-for-profit organisation led by journalists and media professionals. Australia is culturally and linguistically diverse, and our media should be too. Established in 2017, MDA has a unique role as a champion of cultural diversity in Australian journalism and news media. We have a vision for a media industry with full and equal participation for culturally diverse people at all levels.

"When we listen and celebrate what is both common and different, we become wiser, more inclusive, and better as an organisation." - **Pat Wadors** -

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