MEDIA RELEASE

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MULTICULTURAL ADVANTAGE GRANTS PROGRAM

A new grants program offering an unprecedented $1.4 million in funding will help NSW tap the strength of cultural diversity by supporting multicultural organisations, services and activities, Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello announced today.

The Multicultural Advantage Grants Program, administered by the Community Relations Commission (CRC), will promote community harmony and provide direct financial support to strengthen the capabilities of grassroots community organisations.

"Investment in community organisations working at the coalface of cultural diversity makes economic sense, as the value is multiplied many times over by the huge amount of unpaid service given by thousands of community members," Mr Dominello said.

"From August 2012, three new categories of grants under the Multicultural Advantage Grants Program will be open to applicants all across NSW.

"‘Multicultural Partnership Grants’ will support partnerships and long-term projects between the CRC and not-for-profit organisations and other groups with an interest in maximising economic participation and the linguistic and cultural assets of the NSW population.

"‘Sponsorship Grants’ will support events and activities that foster community cohesion and promote the benefits of a multicultural society.

"‘Community Inclusion Grants’ will help fund organisations that encourage and assist participation by all residents of NSW in community life, with a particular focus on inter-cultural and inter-faith activities that bring diverse groups of people together," Mr Dominello said.

Mr Dominello said the Multicultural Advantage Grants Program was established following an independent review of the Community Relations Commission’s former grants program, with direct input from community stakeholders.

"As well as ensuring that grants are more closely aligned with aims of the CRC, more effective and more aimed at bringing diverse people together as Australians, the Multicultural Advantage Grants Program boosts the funding pool by $200,000, bringing the total to $1.4 million for the next financial year. This is the first increase in community grants administered by the CRC since the now Foreign Minister reduced them when he was Premier," he said.

"Multiculturalism is one of our greatest assets. This investment shows the NSW Government is serious about reaping the benefits of cultural diversity and promoting our shared values," Mr Dominello said.

Further details of the new grants, including application information, will be released by the CRC closer to August. Visit the website at www.crc.nsw.gov.au.