EXPLORE – Young Researcher Network

Centre of Multicultural Youth

# Terms of Reference 2021

## Background

The [Centre for Multicultural Youth](http://www.cmy.net.au) (CMY) recognises young people as experts in their own lives and aims to ensure that they are understood, accurately represented and influential in Australian society. CMY’s intended outcomes for young people include having access to a range of opportunities to tell their stories and promote their own views and ideas on issues they care about. CMY seeks to provide channels of influence that enable young people to occupy leadership positions, contribute to shared knowledge and promote understanding.

CMY is a partner in a research consortium, the [Centre for Resilient and Inclusive Societies](https://www.crisconsortium.org/) (CRIS). CRIS aims to deliver research programs and inform policies that advance and enrich our local, national and international community cohesion and resilience. CRIS is made up of eight Australian and international academic, community and industry partners.

CMY understands that research is critical to understanding and responding effectively to contemporary issues and challenges. Research findings can influence how people think about a certain issue (attitudes and beliefs) as well as ideas about what can and should be done to address it. Research is therefore a place where young people’s voices and ideas are not only valuable, they are essential. EXPLORE seeks to promote collaboration between researchers and young people from diverse backgrounds in order to place young people in positions where they can actively inform research that impacts their lives.

## Purpose of EXPLORE

EXPLORE is a platform where young people influence and co-design research that is about and for them. EXPLORE will provide young people with the skills and knowledge to take up active roles in research projects, and will support researchers to work in partnership with young people in order to enhance the relevance and responsiveness of research to young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds. The views and ideas of EXPLORE members will also help to inform the research agenda of the broader CRIS project and will influence youth participation in research projects across CRIS. Additionally, CMY aims to support EXPLORE members to develop new skills, build networks and have some fun along the way.

EXPLORE members will learn about CMY, meet other young volunteers and engage in activities and training. During Project Orientation, the EXPLORE members will take part in a series of modules that aim to develop their leadership, facilitation, research and co-design skills and knowledge, and introduce young people to a range of tools that promote youth participation in research. EXPLORE members will then be supported by CMY to take up paid opportunities to engage directly with research projects or other consultancy activities. Regular EXPLORE meetings will provide an opportunity for members to reflect, share knowledge and experiences, develop and refine skills, and further define the project.

## Membership

We are looking for:

* young people aged 16 to 25 years
* from a refugee or migrant background (including young people born in Australia with parents/carers with a refugee/migrant experience)
* who live in the Melbourne area (project is based in Carlton)
* have an interest in research and advocacy.

New members are asked to commit until 31st June 2023, with the possibility to extend. Participants will also be asked to attend a number of required activities (see ‘Frequency’ below for more detail.)

(Note: CMY will aim to recruit new members each year culminating in new and existing members participating each year to ensure consistency, continuity and the transfer of knowledge and information from one year to the next. This will also allow more experienced members to informally mentor the new members.)

Decision Making

Decisions relating to the coordination and facilitation of EXPLORE will sit ultimately with CMY and the CRIS- project partners, implemented via CMY management structures.

Decisions relating to the direct work of the EXPLORE group will be based on consensus, consultative and group decision making processes (e.g. voting) among EXPLORE members. In the process of getting to a full consensus, members are expected to raise and address serious concerns, and work towards and provide alternative options in discussions.

Decisions relating to research projects that EXPLORE members engage in will sit ultimately with the relevant research lead, and CMY where appropriate. EXPLORE members are expected to raise concerns or issues related to research projects they are engaged in with CMY directly in the first instance.

## Frequency

In addition to CMY Youth Volunteer Induction, Project Orientation and the ‘Workshop Series’, EXPLORE members will meet monthly for a project catch up. There is a requirement to attend a minimum of 80% of meetings per year. Meetings will take place over Zoom (with the possibility of face to face meetings in Carlton in the future), for approx. 2 hours from 6.00 – 8.00pm on the third Monday of each month. (EXPLORE members will receive an honorary payment in recognition of their time and contribution to these sessions.)

## Roles and Responsibilities

CMY will provide:

* Opportunities to work alongside researchers investigating contemporary issues and topics influencing the lives of young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in Australia and across the world.
* Opportunities to: build knowledge, skills and networks; engage in decision-making processes; and apply new skills and knowledge in the practical context.
* Access to participate in paid opportunities in research activities
* A staff member to facilitate and coordinate EXPLORE meetings and activities
* Administration support and prompt and regular communication in between meetings and throughout the year
* Honorary payment to recognise the value and contribution members are making and to cover costs incurred as a result of participating in EXPLORE

EXPLORE members are expected to:

* Attend meetings and workshops – including Induction, Orientation, the ‘Workshops Series’ and monthly EXPLORE meetings
* Work collaboratively with fellow EXPLORE members, CMY, CRIS partners to clarify roles and responsibilities, define project goals, and identify and explore challenges and concerns
* Provide feedback and advice to CMY and CRIS partners on matters relating to research agenda implementation, research project design and development, the EXPLORE, youth participation in research and youth issues
* Meet and consult with young people and other stakeholders relevant to research project responsibilities
* Read documents that are provided prior to meetings and contribute to discussions
* Participate where possible in optional extra activities that may include CMY youth activities, stakeholder meetings, state-wide forums, and media opportunities
* Contribute to CMY and CRIS reports and publications where relevant, includes signing up to and contributing to regular updates for the CMY e Newsletter ‘The Mix’ and CRIS e-news outlets
* Encourage young people to get involved in CRIS research projects and activities
* Uphold CMY’s Child Safety Standards including completing a Police Checks and Working with Children’s Check in a timely manner