

## CASE STUDY: Shout Out

### Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY)



Shout Out is an innovative public speakers program that trains and nurtures young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds to share their experiences and views with a wider audience. Shout Out offers organisations the chance to book a young person to speak at events such as conferences, workshops and meetings, and then provides an appropriate young person for each event.

The program started because CMY was constantly being asked to provide young people to speak at a variety of events. Rather than responding to each request in an ad hoc way, Shout Out was developed to provide suitable structure and support to young people, such as looking after the practical issues, ensuring the safety of the young people, and providing them with ongoing training and support.

Shout Out provides young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds with an opportunity to have a say about issues that affect them. Their voices are often stereotyped, marginalised or invisible in mainstream culture, and this can damage their ability to feel like they belong. Shout Out ensures that they have opportunities to speak about issues that are broader than their refugee or migrant experience or journey, instead covering the whole range of issues that young people are passionate about.

To take part in the program, young people complete an online application. There is a position description that clearly outlines what the role involves, highlighting the responsibilities and expectations that go with the role of being a Shout Out Speaker. Once accepted, young people attend training, as well as regular ongoing opportunities for peer support. This ensures that young people have regular opportunities to provide input and feedback on the program.

CMY has learned a lot from delivering Shout Out. This includes the need to spell out clearly the expectations and boundaries for the young people involved from the beginning. This can mean walking a fine line between being clear about the needs and expectations of the program, whilst still being flexible and understanding of the everyday realities of young people's lives.

Shout Out has been a big success, with lots of young people applying to be speakers, as well as lots of interest from organisations wishing to book a young person to speak. The program has highlighted the importance of dropping preconceived ideas and assumptions about young people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, and of genuinely including young people the planning and delivery of the program, including things like the professional development they receive and how often they meet.

The program has also highlighted the power of story telling in bringing about change, both for the young person sharing their story and for the audience hearing it. Feedback from organisations that have booked a Shout Out speaker has been very positive. Comments have included:

*"We couldn't have been happier with the experience. Both Shout Out speakers were wonderful - reliable, well-prepared, smart, funny and articulate. They made a great contribution to our event!"*

*"The Shout Out speaker's speech was the highlight of the day and we were honoured to hear his story. We greatly appreciated his openness, great sense of humour, passion and ambition. Many people felt inspired by him".*



Image courtesy of CMY