
EthnicAbility EMPOWERMENT PROJECT (GRANT No 517g-0607)



March 2008



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EDAC would like to thank the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) for providing the funding that has made the project possible.

Our thanks and appreciation is also extended to Tony Serve, a professional radio broadcaster for delivery of the training and compilation of the trainees' radio program. Many challenges were overcome as a result of Tony's patience, understanding, flexibility and positive attitude.

Of course we acknowledge the trainees, not just for their great enthusiasm and willingness to learn new skills but also for their patience and cooperation in assisting and complementing each other's abilities. Each of the participants contributed immensely to the friendly, fun and positive group dynamics. Thanks particularly to Manuel Castro for interpreting in Spanish for a fellow participant who spoke limited English.

EDAC also thanks 6EBA for the use of their venue and mobile radio console and for making a staff member available for assistance.

Finally, thanks to all of EDAC's staff for their assistance and logistical support.

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APPENDIX I: THE LAUNCH

1. **BACKGROUND**

On July the 25th 2006, EDAC broadcast its first radio program on 6EBA FM, Perth's local ethnic community radio broadcasting station. Entitled *EthnicAbility*, the program explores issues affecting people with a disability who are from a CALD background, and their family/carers, service providers and community.

The EthnicAbility Training project is an initiative of the Ethnic Disability Advocacy Centre (EDAC) and funded by the Office of Multicultural Interests (OMI) to offer opportunities to develop radio program skills for people with disabilities who are from CaLD background.

2. **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of this project is to train and empower people with disabilities from CaLD background by enhancing their confidence and skills development through the basic process of radio production, both technical and practical aspects.

The project training covered public speaking, voice training and projection, interview techniques, researching material, recording and editing, and some experience in radio broadcasting using the station console.

2.1 **Expected Outcomes**

On successful completion of the training, **participants** would:

- have an increased self confidence and self esteem;
- be more confident to speak in public;
- gain basic skills of radio operation and presentation;
- be familiar with the equipment, procedures and practices of a radio studio;
- gain other skills that would be useful in seeking employment and in other aspects of life; and
- meet other people from CaLD backgrounds who have a disability.

EDAC would be:

- enriched by the material broadcast on *EthnicAbility* through the students' participation; and
- gain a pool of trained radio presenters, researchers and producers for future radio activities.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

3.1 Initial Planning

The project commenced with the recruitment (in accordance with the EDAC's Human Resource standard) of a project officer and a professional trainer. Tony Serve, who is a radio presenter for various stations in Perth, including 6PR, was approached to undertake the training. He graciously accepted the challenge and worked closely with the project officer in the delivery of the project. Being of CaLD background himself Tony had the passion, patience and understanding that was required to work with people with disabilities.

The project officer, Zel Iscel is the current presenter of EDAC's *EthnicAbility* radio program. Despite a visual impairment she is an efficient and professional presenter and an excellent role model for the students.

Meetings were held with the community radio station 6EBA to secure support in utilizing some of their facilities and equipment at nominal cost.

A preliminary training guide was developed between the trainer and the project officer with particular focus on the needs of people from diverse cultures and disability types. It was crucial that this project be inclusive of all people with disabilities from CaLD backgrounds who were interested in participating in radio broadcasting including those with severe disability or had limited English comprehension. Their input at whatever levels was valued and encouraged.

3.2 The Launch

The *EthnicAbility Empowerment* project was officially launched together with the *Speak Out* project on the 7th of February by Mr. Graham Giffard MLC representing the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. He presented EDAC with a cheque and conveyed the government's congratulations and best wishes. Motivational presentations were given by Lyn Lepore, an Australian Paralympic cyclist and Boris Turpin, an accomplished artist. Their stories were inspirational and empowering. A demonstration of the radio training was provided by the trainer, Tony Serve and the project officer. People with disabilities were encouraged to sign up for the radio training. With about 100 attendees, including disabled consumers and service providers the launch was a great success.

See Appendix I for the launch program.

3.3 Selection of Participants

As indicated earlier, this was an inclusive program. Therefore the main selection criteria was the willingness and commitment of individual participant to complete a ten week training course and engage in some practical delivery of the radio program commensurate with their abilities and limitations. The project had no obligation or compulsion for any graduate to continue in delivering the EthnicAbility radio program. As indicated earlier the main objective is to empower these disabled students/trainees to gain self confidence through radio training which they otherwise wouldn't have had.

3.3.1 Participant Profiles

Thirteen participants registered: three were female. The total number exceeded the proposed ten participants. Three additional registrations were accepted in case of drop-outs during the training but all registrants remained till the end of the course. This indicated the popularity of the course and the sustained enthusiasm of the participants. People were still inquiring about the radio training months after registrations were closed.

People with a range of disability types and cultures were represented. Seven participants had mild intellectual disability and the rests had sensory, mental health, neurological and physical disability. The level of comprehension was relatively high for the majority of the members. Those who had a lower capacity for comprehension still participated and provided valuable input. English language support was provided to one member who spoke Spanish. There was one person of Aboriginal background.

The registration list of the participants and their profiles is available at EDAC.

3.4 Transport and Venue Facility

As all of the participants were in receipt of disability support pensions and some had severe disability, transport became a significant factor in relation to cost and physical access. A limited provision in the project was made for transport but it was extremely stretched. It was vital that transport be organised for most of the participants for the ten training sessions. The project officer had to be resourceful in organizing venues for training and taxi pooling for most of the participants.

Three of the ten training sessions were held at the 6EBA studio in Maylands. Access was a major problem for some participants as the facilities were not adequate to accommodate motorized wheelchairs. The studio in particular had limited space for entry and there was no possibility for immediate modification. As the integral component of the training involved technical aspects of radio broadcasting, a contingency plan had to be made. In response, 6EBA offered to set up their mobile studio in the training room outside the normal studio.

3.5 Equipment

Equipment used to support the training included:

- A laptop where radio interviews were played and participants' interviews were recorded.
- Audio recording devices that participants had available to record their own voices.
- A mobile radio consol/panel.

4. TRAINING COURSE

The 10 week training course consisted of theory and practical aspects of radio broadcasting with emphasis on team work and participation from all students. Tony Serve provided the formal training and lectures whilst the project officer facilitated the small group process e.g. practicing in conducting and recording interviews using the computer.

By the end of the ten week training, all participants had worked on a group project for broadcast on *EthnicAbility* Radio.

The following is an outline of the training program:

Week 1	07/03/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Getting to know each other and what we can expect. ❖ Establishing what resources we have to work with. ❖ Establishing ways to adapt our skills and abilities for common and individual goals.
Week 2	14/03/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Basic recording and microphone/breathing skills. ❖ Discussion of available hardware and software.
Week 3	21/03/07	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Playback and discussion of recordings we've made. ❖ Discuss mainstream and community shows.
Week 4	28/03/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Putting a program together, pre-recorded and live elements. ❖ Standby material and backup plans.
Week 5	04/04/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Broadcast Podcast and other outlets for your work.
Week 6	11/04/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The studio, technical and procedures outline. ❖ Hardware, software and phones.
Week 7	18/04/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Practical use of studio with recorded and improvised material.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interviews. ❖ Community notices.
Week 8	02/05/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ How and why to edit; different tools and skills. ❖ Substance and sound. ❖ Using sound effects and music.
Week 9	09/05/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Beginning of planning for 10 week follow-up program of individual and group projects.
Week 10	16/05/2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Review and open questions to ensure confidence and resourcing. ❖ Details of practical sessions.



Fig 1: The participants with Zel Iscel and Tony Serve

Additional training was provided for individuals on:

- radio console operation
- program presentation
- theory and rules of radio broadcasting
- advanced interview techniques, including preparation.

This additional training was provided by Zel Iscel and Sanya Vuksanovic.

5. **EVALUATION**

5.1 **Achievements and Outcomes**

This project was highly successful in achieving its objectives. Participants reported that they gained confidence and this was demonstrated by their regular attendance and enthusiasm in getting involved at every opportunity. They were not intimidated by the microphone and tape recorder. Some of the comments from participants were:

- "I feel more comfortable talking to people"
- "What I've enjoyed about this course is learning to use the microphone"
- "I enjoyed talking on the microphone and learning breathing techniques"
- "It has helped strengthen my voice and give me more confidence to pursue a career as a DJ"

At the end of the program, a number of participants were beginning to consider work options and/or taken steps to consult professionals about further independent living skills development. Referrals were made for some participants to pursue those further activities. Some registered for other training programs provided by EDAC such as *Open Your Mind/Count Us In*, which taught skills in self-advocacy. One participant is now undertaking a course in childcare at TAFE. One other participant who had an interest in DJ work managed to acquire work in this area and was invited to Queensland to conduct DJ events for people with disabilities.

The willingness of all the participants to assist and compliment each other's skills and abilities was most encouraging and inspiring. All participants indicated that they had gained something valuable from this project. By helping each other they gained a sense of self worth as they contributed to a collective outcome and shared success.

The challenges that emanated from the diversity in the ability of the participants were many and varied. However, the *EthnicAbility Empowerment* project clearly demonstrates that everyone, regardless of their level of disability and/or language skills, can be included and make valuable contributions to the production of a radio program.

5.2 Areas for Improvement

This was the type of innovative project naturally entails a substantial action research' component where the all were expected and prepared to learn-as-we-go. In this case the experience allowed us together to develop awareness of the possibilities and also of the potential areas for improvement regarding disability access to broadcast production.

The technical aspect of radio program production, particularly console operation, was naturally inhibited by access and availability of the equipment as well as the time constraints of an operating studio. As participants comprised a majority with severe disabilities and different levels of abilities, it was recognised that more frequent hands-on experience on the radio console/panel would have been necessary to consolidate and progress the significant gains in confidence and knowledge that they made. The ten week course covered general knowledge of broadcasting with opportunity to build confidence, team work and speech development, however there was insufficient time for consolidating the practical hands-on experience. Radio broadcasting is not a once-off training event. It requires continual practice to achieve a level of professionalism that is acceptable to work in radio stations. However the project was clearly a useful and motivating introduction to those skills.

The project experience also highlighted that radio stations themselves could benefit from consideration and allowances for access to people with disabilities, such as those on electric wheelchairs and visual impairments. The project experience also showed that equipment at 6EBA was not suitable for use by many people with disabilities and some modification would be required. 6EBA is probably not different from most other commercial radio stations. They had considered ways to adapt their equipment for someone with visual impairment, however there seemed to be difficulty with insufficient funding and resources. Overall what we learned from this project about disability access and equipment may well indicate potential for improvement generally across the broadcasting sector.

Suggestions for future programs in disability and broadcasting would include:

- Physical access, disabled facilities and equipment be fully explored and availability and suitability for disabled use be confirmed before commencement of the project.
- A memorandum of understanding with the respective radio station be established regarding capability and practicality, as well as co-operation and willingness, to make any necessary changes in readiness for the project.
- Selection criteria of students that consider their range of abilities so that different levels of training can be offered, such as preliminary and intermediate courses and different levels of engagement/skills.

- Small group training with focus on individual needs and levels of ability and performance.
- Transportation and associated equipment costs considered realistically, such as recording equipment for loan to students.

6. **CONCLUSION**

The *EthnicAbility Empowerment* project was successful in encouraging CaLD people with disabilities to speak out about their issues and concerns and be involved through the medium of radio work. Many of them were motivated to proceed to take important steps in their lives, such as pursuing further education, and other work options, to using public transport to travel within the city. Some participants had never been involved in such group activities or learned public speaking. It proved to be a worthwhile exercise, affecting and changing the lives of the thirteen individuals with significant disabilities.

EDAC has also been enriched by participation and will maintain ongoing contact with the various members regarding future opportunities in community radio program development and participation in the promotional and other aspects of other EDAC projects.

The challenges and barriers that were experienced by all were useful in raising awareness of issues for potential industry sector improvement in disability access to broadcasting production.

APPENDIX I: THE LAUNCH

Launch Agenda Speak Out and Ethnicability Empowerment Projects

7th February 2007, 4-5:30pm

MC - Suresh Rajan, EDAC Board Member

1. Welcome
2. Information about the projects, Jenny Au Yeong, Executive Officer of EDAC
3. Graham Gifford MLC, representing the Minister for Multicultural Interests and OMI
4. Tony Serve, 6PR
5. Example of a radio interview, featuring Zel Iscel and Boris Turpin
6. Lyn Lepore, Australian Paralympic Cyclist and gold medalist
7. Meet the Project Officers – Amy and Zel
8. Refreshments and the opportunity to sign up for the projects and/or find out more information

It's time to Speak Out!!

An invitation to
people with disabilities from culturally and linguistically diverse
backgrounds
to attend the launch of two exciting EDAC projects:
the EthnicAbility Radio Empowerment Project and
the Open Your Mind, Count Us In Project.



Office of Multicultural Interests
Government of Western Australia



making a difference

The Speak Out Launch will be taking place on Wednesday 7th February
from 4-5:30pm at the Subiaco Arts Centre,
180 Hamersley Road Subiaco.

The launch will include:

- Motivational presentations by Lyn Lepore, Australian Paralympic cyclist and Boris Turpin, artist and EDAC board member
- Information about the new projects and the chance to sign up to be a part of them
- The opportunity to Speak Out and share your ideas
- Nibbles and tea/coffee

Please RSVP by Monday 5th February to admin@edac.org.au or
9388 7455.

If you are unable to attend the Launch but would like to register your interest for one or both of the projects, please contact EDAC as soon as possible.

About the Projects:

EthnicAbility Radio Empowerment Project

Are you interested in learning how to run a radio program and keen for some hands-on experience? The EthnicAbility Empowerment Project provides you with the training and experiences to operate radio equipment with opportunities to Speak Out on air.

Open Your Mind, Count Us In Project

Have you faced a barrier recently because of your disability that you would like to overcome? Learn from other people and their experiences and develop strategies together to Speak Out for your rights.