

# FINACT ANNUAL REPORT



ANNUAL  
GENERAL  
MEETING

30 JULY  
2023



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Serena Williams @FINACT Australia Day 26 Jan 2023

Federation of Indian Associations of ACT Inc acknowledges the traditional custodians of Canberra and surrounding areas, the Ngunnawal people. We respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and the region.

# OUR PROFILE

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The Federation of Indian Associations of the ACT Inc (FINACT) was officially launched on 31 July 2011.

The unified voice and inclusive approach of FINACT is reflected in our mantra - Coordination: Cooperation: Collaboration. FINACT develops and nurtures productive working relationship with government and non-government stakeholders and other key community service organisations in the ACT community.

# OUR OBJECTIVES

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Provide a unified voice for member associations and the people of Indian origin in the Canberra region. Represent community interests to the Federal & ACT governments on welfare, social and economic matters. Cultivate mutual respect through increased social & cultural interaction, sport and recreation. Establish “India Centre” for the benefit of member organisations and the community.

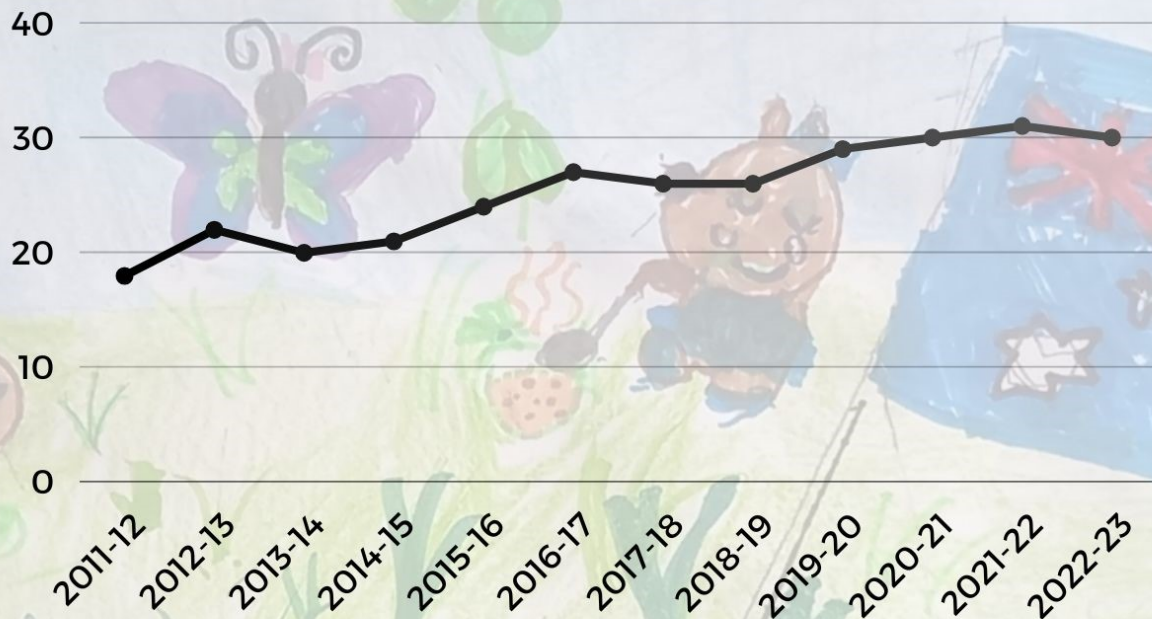


Sivaram N @FINACT Australia  
Day 26 Jan 2023



# OUR MEMBERS

FINACT welcomes all Indian associations to be part of this federation, join hands to achieve our shared goal. Steadily increasing number of associations is a testimony to our collaborative, cooperative approach and dedication to make a positive difference.



# TEAM FINACT



# FINACT EC 2022-23

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Dr Shanti Swarup Reddy	President
Ms Divya Ravikumar	Vice-President
Mr Praneeth Galla	Secretary
Mr Vaibhav Mathur	Treasurer
Mr Joshua Singla	Youth Rep
Dr Dipti Talaulikar	Women's Rep
Ms Manasi Ahuja	Cultural Rep
Ms Ammu Suresh	Community Rep
Mr Ravi Krishnamurthy	Public Officer



## OUR AMBITION & INTENT

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FINACT values and stands for

- **F**raternity
- **I**nclusiveness
- **N**etworking
- **A**ssistance
- **C**ooperation
- **T**eamwork.



# MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS

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FINACT henna workshop  
@ NMF Feb 2023

ACT Telangana Association  
Australian Anglo-Indian Association of Canberra  
Australian Multicultural Action Network  
Australian Tamil Cultural Society of ACT  
Bengali Cultural Association of Canberra  
Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia & New Zealand  
Canberra Hindu Mandir  
Canberra Jain Mandal  
Canberra Malayalees Association  
Canberra Punjabi Sports & Cultural Association  
Canberra Telugu League  
Gujarati Samaj of ACT  
India Australia Multicultural Sports Association  
Indian Australian Association of Health and Well-being  
Indian Students Association ANU  
Initiatives for Women in Needs  
Integrated Cultures ACT  
Indian Senior Citizens Association  
Karnataka Association of Canberra  
Madhya Pradesh Association of Australia  
Mandir School of Music  
Mehak Punjab Di Radio  
Navya Andhra Telugu Association  
Oriya Association (OriOz)  
Pink Umbrella Inc  
Rajasthan Sabha of Australia and New Zealand  
Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra  
Sprintz Inc  
Telugu Association of Canberra  
UC Indian Association

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# 1. Acknowledgements

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We extend our sincere thanks to the following leaders for their help, ongoing support, and encouragement to FINACT.

## Elected Representatives

### Federal

Senator the Hon Katy Gallagher, Minister for Finance, Minister for Women, Minister for the Public Service

Senator David Pocock

Hon Andrew Leigh MP, Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury

Mr David Smith MP

Ms Alicia Payne MP

### ACT Legislative Assembly

Mr Andrew Barr MLA, Chief Minister ACT

Ms Tara Cheyne MLA, Patron of FINACT, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, ACT

Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA, Leader of Greens; Attorney General ACT

Ms Elizabeth Lee MLA, Leader of the Opposition ACT

Ms Suzanne Orr MLA

Mr Peter Cain MLA

Ms Elizabeth Kikkert MLA

Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Ms Nicole Lawder MLA

Mr Mark Parton MLA

Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Mr James Milligan MLA

### High Commission of India

HE Mr Manpreet Vohra, High Commissioner of India Canberra

Mr Suneet Mehta, Deputy High Commissioner of India Canberra

Mrs Ruchika Jain, First Assistant Secretary

Mr Narendra Rana, Counsellor



## Government Officials

Ms Christine Murray, Executive Group Manager ACT Community Services Directorate

Ms Jayne Simon, Director National Multicultural Festival

Ms Jenny Wells, Director ACT Community Services Directorate

Ms Naheed Hafiz, Community Engagement Officer Department of Home Affairs

## FINACT Past Presidents

Dr Shanti Reddy (2021-22)

Dr Sunita S Dhindsa (2019-20, 2020-21)

Dr Krishna Nadimpalli (2017-18, 2018-19)

Mr Amardeep Singh (2015-16, 2016-17)

Dr Krishna Nadimpalli (2014-15)

Mr Amardeep Singh (2013-2014)

Mrs Jayanti Gupta (2012-13)

Mr Jacob Vadakkedathu (2011-12)

## Australia Day 2023 volunteers

Special thanks to Nikita Nair, Sushmita, Daisy Rue, Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Manasi Ahuja, Pradeep Sornaraj, Sohail Khan, Sandy Mitra, Anita Patil, Alan, Sharon, Raj Reddy, Shekar Jakilet, Chandra Reddy, Vijay, Sri Kotha and all other volunteers for supporting the Australia Day event.

## FINACT Financial Report

Special thanks to Venu Palle, a qualified accountant, for providing voluntary service in auditing the FINACT financial reports both this year and last financial year.



## 1. President's Message

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The past twelve months have been very busy for FINACT through organising or participating in numerous events. I'm grateful to the FINACT Executive Committee, FINACT Members and stakeholders for their support that made this journey terrific as I continue to look forward to serving the community. Through the events highlighted in this report, I'm immensely appreciative of the active participation and gathering of the community to these events, making each one of them a successful one.



As a president of FINACT for the past two years, I had the wonderful opportunity to lead our community, make new connections, lasting friendships, meeting some interesting people and encountering the generosity of our community. As an example, it is estimated that approximately 290 volunteers among FINACT and 30 member organisations contributed around 14,605 hours, equating to nearly \$730,250 of economic activity, providing valuable cultural services. I also had the best opportunity to witness the magnanimity of the Indian culture on display in this country, I call home. The two drawing competitions we hosted this year for kids is close to my heart. Happy to meet so many inspiring, creative and talented kids in the community!

It also gave me an in-depth understanding of some of the broader issues faced by our community and discover my abilities to resolve them for desired outcomes. The highlight being the opportunity to present the plight of our international students and their struggles with permanent residency pathways at the ACT Jobs and Skills Forum. I am pleased to see positive response from the government, looking into the immigration policies, which is a worthy achievement for FINACT. Exploring the opportunities presented by the India-Australia interim trade agreement for Canberra businesses is another example of our contribution.

Given the economic uncertainty, we continue to face issues as a community. Increased rents and cost of living pressures have resulted in shared accommodation increasingly common in Canberra. Lack of access to affordable community facilities to host large events that can accommodate our growing members continues to pose a problem. While we have raised the issue at every opportunity with the ACT government, I believe there will be solutions to look forward to improving the situation.

It also gave immense happiness to be a part of the 400+ Canberrans who attended Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's public event in Sydney. It was a historic event in many ways, which further cemented the excellent relations between India & Australia.

Special thanks to the FINACT Executive Committee members for the excellent teamwork and support over the last 12 months. It is time to put my pen down & pass the baton to the new team!

**Shanti Reddy**



## 2. About FINACT

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The Federation of Indian Associations of the ACT (FINACT) Inc is an umbrella body that represents the interests of more than 24,000 Indian diaspora in and around ACT. Formed in 2011, FINACT consists of 30 member associations representing a diverse community consisting of regional, linguistic, youth, women, and senior citizens interests.

FINACT provides a unified voice for its member associations in fostering integration and promoting multicultural Australia. FINACT's objectives include promotion of multicultural Australia by sharing Indian culture and heritage, integration with the broader Australian society, cultivating mutual respect through increased social & cultural interaction, sports, and recreation. FINACT works with the Federal and ACT governments by providing constructive feedback and inputs to policy formulation on matters related to welfare, social and economic matters. FINACT's operating principles are – Coordination, Cooperation and Collaboration for the broader good.

## 3. FINACT Activities 2022-23

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### ACT Jobs and Skills Forum

Thanks to [Andrew Leigh MP](#) and [David Smith MP](#) for inviting FINACT to the ACT Jobs and Skills Forum at the Parliament House on 26 August 2022. The discussion resulted in excellent ideas covering three topics - Sustainable productivity and maximising opportunities, participation, skills, training and migration, and boosting job security and lifting wages. These ideas were subsequently tabled at the National Jobs and Skills Summit 1-2 September 2022.



FINACT presented a compelling case to the Commonwealth government, on behalf of Indian students, to provide a pathway for permanent residency on completion of their studies. Additionally, temporary visa residents who have completed studies in Australia to be given priority in granting permanent visas over offshore candidates.

We are pleased to see one of the outcomes of the Summit is a commitment to increase the permanent migration program ceiling to 195,000 in 2022-23 to help ease critical workforce shortages.

## FINACT Australia Day celebrations

FINACT in partnership with Vinnies, Fair Canberra, India Australia Association of Canberra, [successfully celebrated Australia Day](#) at Margaret Hendry School Hall in Taylor, on 26 January.

The event was graced by many dignitaries including H.E. Manpreet Vohra, High Commissioner of India, Professor Jagadish Chennupati AC, Minister Rattenbury, Yerrabi members Suzanne Orr MLA, James Milligan MLA, Leanne Castley MLA and Andrew Braddock MLA, and over 500 community members who participated in the event. Thank you all for making this a memorable event reflecting on the significance of the day. Special thanks to the assistance of the Australian Government through the National Australia Day Council grant.

For immigrants, Australia day is about reflecting on their journey to Australia, becoming part of this great country and nation building. It is about aspirations, hardship and a new beginning for millions of people who come to Australia to build a safe, inclusive and prosperous life. Migrants make this country a world leader in many fields. We honoured one such person Distinguished Professor Jagadish from ANU, who has made both Australia and India very proud through his pioneering work in nanotechnology. We are pleased that his work at global level has been recognised by the Indian government with a Pravasi Bharatiya award, presented by the President of India in January 2023.

Serena Williams, Ngunnawal elder, hosted a wonderful welcome to the country ceremony. You can listen to the beautiful story of Ngunnawal people Serena shared with us on that day through clicking [this link](#). Sivaram Narayanamoorthy performed an amazing piece of fusion music, beat boxing with his didgeridoo. Don't miss watching [his performance here](#). H.E Manpreet Vohra, High Commissioner of India spoke about the importance of the day to both Australia and India. You can listen to his speech [at this link](#).

We are grateful to Prof Jagadish Chennupati AC, for the opportunity to meet and greet him on receiving the highest civilian award given to overseas citizens of India from the President of India on 10 January 2023. You can listen to his inspiring [speech here](#).

Special highlight of the event was 40+ amazing artworks submitted by the kids expressing what Australia Day means to them. Thanks to Tim Hardy from Artists Society of Canberra (ASOC) and Gabrielle Rumble, Content Director ABC Canberra for judging the artworks. The panel had a tough job of shortlisting six winners from nearly 40+ submissions. Please see winners and their [artwork here](#).

# FINACT Australia Day Celebrations 26 Jan 2023





# FINACT Australia Day BBQ





# FINACT Australia Day Drawing Competition





## National Multicultural Festival 2023

This year FINACT organised three workshops and an information stall at the National Multicultural Festival (NMF) on 18-19 Feb 2023. All the three workshops were inclusive, open to all, highly successful and thoroughly enjoyed by participants.

**1. Henna painting workshop** attracted a large number of participants, mostly youngsters, from various cultural backgrounds. It was a huge success with the room full of people learning to apply henna on themselves and others. All participants received free henna cones to have a fun time practicing.

**2. Sari draping demonstration** – this was a women focused event that facilitated community members interaction on cultural diversity and provided an opportunity for networking. As most participants were from non-Indian backgrounds, this activity enabled new cultural experiences and learn about India's traditional wear. A variety of saris from various parts of India were on display to browse through. This also attracted women across age groups, capturing the interest of younger generation in wearing sarees and other Indian accessories.

**3. Live demonstration of handlooms** - a special highlight of the program was a live demonstration of weaving silk sari using a loom imported from India. We invited a national award-winning weaver from India to demonstrate this ancient art which is still being practiced in India and Southeast Asia. Chief Minister Andrew Barr, among many other visitors, enjoyed the live demonstration appreciating the delicate, time-consuming art of making silk saris by hand. This activity was a first of its kind at the NMF and anywhere in the country, providing a rich cultural experience to all those who attended the workshops.

**4. FINACT Information Stall** - an all day event on 19 February 2023, we showcased and promoted the International Year of Millets **IYM 2023**, in collaboration with the [High Commission Of India, Canberra](#)). Visit <https://www.fao.org/millets-2023/en> to learn more about millets.

Thanks to the ACT Govt, the High Commission of India, Subhodayam Smart Wing Travels and Murali Saree Emporium, Hyderabad for supporting the event.

## International Students Meet and Greet

FINACT members [Indian Students' Association - ANU](#) and [UC Indian Association](#) had organised a meet and greet event on 24 February 2023 to welcome newly arrived Indian students studying in Canberra. It was a good opportunity for students to meet with FINACT community leaders and staff from the Indian High Commission. We wish them success and look forward to providing any help we can to support their studies in Canberra.

Thanks to the [India In Australia \(High Commission Of India, Canberra\)](#) and the ACT Government for supporting the event.

# NMF FINACT Workshop 1 Henna Painting





# NMF FINACT Workshop 2 Sari Draping





# NMF FINACT Workshop 3 Handloom Demo





# NMF FINACT Stall - Year of Millets





# International Students Meet & Greet





## International Women's Day

FINACT celebrated the [International Women's Day](#) on 4 March 2023, in collaboration with the [ICSA - Indian Sub-Cont Crisis & Support Agency](#) and the [High Commission Of India, Canberra](#).

Thanks to the three amazing speakers - Kittu Randhawa, CEO of ICSA, Menaka Iyengar Cooke and Lakshmi West, for the thought-provoking case studies, heartfelt poetry and inspiring life journey. Kittu Randhawa conducted a workshop consisting of three case studies where participants were asked to respond to a series of questions to understand the situation and support provided to the women involved. Menaka Cooke recited a poem co-authored with her daughter, summarizing the difficult journey they went through. Lakshmi West presented an inspiring story of her life journey and difficult choices women must make when it comes to career and supporting family. We thank all the speakers and look forward to continued relationships through support groups in Canberra.



## Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit dominated news channels all over the country during the last week of May 2023. About 400 Canberrans were among the 20,000 diaspora members who gathered to welcome the PM at Qudos Arena,







Sydney Olympic Park. It was a historic event in many ways and further cemented the relations shared between India & Australia. Both the Prime Ministers have noted the importance of the Indian diaspora as cultural ambassadors, in advancing

bilateral relations between the two countries. It was an excellent networking opportunity to connect with the Indian diaspora leaders, notably Lord Mayor Sameer Pandey. The City of Parramatta Council elected Councillor Sameer Pandey as its new Lord Mayor on 22 May 2023. Congratulations to Cr Pandey! It is a remarkable and inspiring achievement to many aspiring leaders in the community.

### G20 Clean-up Day

FINACT volunteers participated in a Clean Up drive around Lake Burley Griffin on Sunday the 21 May early morning, organised by [India In Australia \(High Commission Of India, Canberra\)](#), with the support of [Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#), [Clean Up Australia Everyday](#), as part of the G20's vision for healthy and litter free waterways and marine ecosystems. Starting with Australia, [G20 India](#) countries will take turns to hold a clean-up event throughout the day in a collective effort to improve the health of our waterways and generate global awareness about the importance of taking care of our environment. It was a good opportunity to meet with Clean Up Australia Day volunteers and the CEO Jenny Geddes.



## Refugee week

FINACT participated in the [#RefugeeWeek](#) at the Parliament House on 21 June hosted by the [Australian Department of Home Affairs](#) (DHA). We thank the DHA and Minister [Andrew Giles MP](#) for bringing communities together to recognise, inform and celebrate the positive contributions made by refugees to the Australian society. Thirteen people were conferred Australian citizenship at this event and showcased the excellent work by the Adult Migration English Program (AMEP) and the

[Community Refugee Sponsorship Australia](#) in helping migrants and humanitarian entrants to improve their English language skills and settle in Australia.



## Felicitations

The King's Birthday [Honours List 2023](#) recognised six Canberrans who have been conferred with the Order of Australia Medal in the latest round of honours. FINACT hosted a felicitation function to show our appreciation to all six OAM recipients on 2 July at Gungahlin library. A proud moment for FINACT and the Indian diaspora, in celebrating the significant achievement of local heroes at the national level. Thanks to the Official Secretary to the Governor General for providing a written message appreciating their contributions. For further details on their achievement, please [see FINACT special issue](#) dedicated to these six remarkable individuals.

## Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) Day

The Indian community in Canberra paid tributes to the soldiers who have sacrificed their lives in serving the country. This year more than 30,000 Canberrans attended the dawn service at the War Memorial. According to the Distinguished Australian historian [Professor Peter Stanley](#), about 16,000 troops of the Indian Army served as part of the British force involved in the dramatic eight-month Gallipoli campaign in Turkey during World War I. About 1600 Indian troops, one man in 10, died while serving alongside Australian, New Zealand and British



soldiers whose part in the Great War has been extensively documented. Indians have had to wait a century for their story to be told according to the Australian High Commission's [website](#). We also paid tributes to the First Nations Peoples who have served in the defence of Australia.

### FINACT Apna Tiranga Drawing Competition

FINACT organised a drawing competition for kids as part of celebration of India's 75 years of independence. A judging panel consisting of Ruchika Jain, First Secretary, High Commission of India; Gabrielle Rumble, Content Director, ABC Canberra; and Shanti Reddy, FINACT President.

All submissions were of high quality and very impressive. The panel had a difficult task of selecting winners. In addition to the three selected winners, the panel were compelled to select two consolation prizes for their commendable artwork. We also wanted to reward as many participants as possible to encourage the younger generation's participation. Winners were presented their prizes at the Canberra College, during Hindi Diwas celebrations.

### ANZAC Day Celebrations







**Felicitation to OAM 2023 Recipients**



## World Tour on a push bike!

FINACT hosted an incredible person and adventurer from India, Somen Debnath, who is touring the world on his push bike. His mission is "Around the World on Bicycle Tour for HIV / AIDS Awareness and Seminars on Indian Culture". Somen has been riding around the world since May 27, 2004, shortly after acquiring his Bachelor of Science degree in Zoology at the University of Kolkata, India. To date, he has completed over 188,500 km on his push bike, visiting 180 countries. His Australian journey started in late April 2023, from Brisbane, all the way to Canberra. From here he went to Melbourne on 15 June. He intends to circumvent Australia, all the way through Perth, then to Darwin, covering roughly 10,000 km on his push bike. A truly inspiring person and an amazing story! We thank Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP for receiving Somen at the Parliament House on 14 June 2023, despite his busy schedule.



## India's 75 years of independence

Indian community leaders, elected members and many federal ministers including Treasurer the Hon Jim Chalmers, Minister for Immigration the Hon Andrew Giles, Tara Cheyne, ACT Minister for Multicultural Affairs, and other dignitaries were invited to a grand celebration of India's 75 years of independence at the National Museum of Australia on 16 August, hosted by the Australian Government Department of the Foreign Affairs and Trade.

It was an occasion to acknowledge the significant contributions of the Indian diaspora and promote the growing importance of the bilateral relationship between the two countries. In partnership with the High Commission of India, DFAT has arranged the illumination of India's tricolour flag on 40 national monuments across Australia.

### 75th Anniversary of India's Independence



FINACT and community leaders also attended the flag hoisting ceremony organised by the Indian High Commission in Canberra, Australia. Everyone enjoyed the festival like atmosphere and great speech delivered by HE Manpreet Vohra, High Commissioner of India and Mr Justin Hayhurst, Deputy Secretary, DFAT.

### FINACT Chetna

The members of FINACT sub-committee for Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) – Chetna met with Ms Jaya from the IndianCare Inc, a Melbourne based NGO, that has been active since 2014, assisting vulnerable members of the community, particularly women. The meeting held on 9 October provided a good opportunity to learn from the work they have been doing in Victoria over the last eight years. It provided valuable insights in preparing the work plan and type of activities we can take up in the ACT. If you would like to know more about Chetna or you would like to help us, please email us on [dfvcoordinator.finact@gmail.com](mailto:dfvcoordinator.finact@gmail.com).

Following our Women's Day celebration Chetna team has been collaborating with ICSEA to further understand the community needs and cultural gaps in services available for the DFV in an Indian context. Chetna is currently working on mapping available services in Canberra and designing awareness and preventive measures to fill some of these gaps. Chetna will also be liaising with current service providers in Canberra to support with cultural nuances and understanding requirements for referrals to their services. Some members are undertaking further training such as first responder training to better understand the role Chetna can play to support the Indian diaspora in ACT.

### Webinar on Disaster preparedness

FINACT organised a webinar on disaster preparedness session on 30 November 2023, in collaboration with the Multicultural Hub Canberra. As we are experiencing extreme weather conditions, this session was beneficial for the community to attend.

## 4. FINACT Stakeholder Engagement

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### Networking Dinner with Senator David Pocock

FINACT organised a networking dinner with the then newly elected Senator David Pocock. It was a hugely successful meeting attended by nearly all of the FINACT member association delegates. We appreciate community leaders for

their presence at the dinner, at Canberra Club, Narrabundah. Thanks to Senator Pocock and Ms Emma Pocock for taking time to meet with the community leaders. We also thank FINACT past Presidents for gracing the occasion.

### Meeting with the Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP

The FINACT Executive Committee had a productive meeting with Hon Dr Andrew Leigh MP, Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury, on 6 April 2023 at his office in the Parliament House. The team had a



constructive discussion and engagement with the Minister on a range of issues of interest to the Indian community. One such issue being successful pathways for international students to settle in Australia. Despite the tight labour market many temporary visa holders are unable to find suitable jobs in their field of study. We discussed ways this issue can be addressed. Access to community centre to celebrate large community gatherings, voice to the Parliament, gender equality and support to vulnerable women, were some other topics we discussed. We thank Dr Leigh's ongoing support to the Indian community and look forward to working with him on these and other topics.

### Meeting with David Smith MP

Thanks to David Smith MP for joining the FINACT General Council Meeting on 18 June 2023 as a guest speaker. It was an excellent networking opportunity. Mr Smith began by acknowledging the country followed by congratulating all the OAM recipients, noting the recipients of Indian origin and FINACT's achievements in contributing to the achievement in serving the community. Mr Smith gave an introduction and his connection to Canberra where he was born, raised and educated. He noted the changes in the Canberra landscape, community, the growth of Canberra's Indian diaspora and its positive impact on local politics as well as the contribution to Modern Australia. Mr Smith suggested a possibility to host a future FINACT General Council meeting at Parliament house.



The meeting discussed lack of facilities in Canberra to host large cultural events in the ACT and need for Federal Government intervention in this regard. There are examples of federal funding supporting Indian community facilities in other but not in Canberra. Mr Smith invited FINACT to continue to be in touch with his office to further discuss opportunities.

### Networking Dinner with Senator David Pocock



### Consultation with Temporary Visa holders

FINACT received several requests from international students of Indian and South Asian origin seeking help from FINACT to convey their concerns to the Federal

Government. In response to this, we organised a consultation session on 30th June 2022 in Canberra. Several students from other parts of Australia also joined the session virtually.



Apparently, there are thousands of students currently on temporary resident and/or student visas facing an uncertain future due to the complexity and frequent changes to immigration rules. Although some of these rules are state and territory specific, the students largely believe they are being overlooked in favour of overseas candidates in obtaining permanent migration visas and selection for job opportunities. We identified four issues in this session, which were communicated to the Federal Minister for Immigration and Multicultural Affairs in a letter dated 13 August 2022.

1. Investing and studying in Australia did not give them any advantage while applying for permanent residency.
2. Despite studying and investing in Australia, they are being overlooked in favour of overseas candidates when applying for permanent resident visas. In some cases, it is easier to obtain permanent residency from offshore than applying after being a temporary visa holder in Australia for several years.
3. It is incredibly difficult to secure jobs in their field of study being temporary visa holders despite historically low unemployment rate.
4. The Australian immigration system has become very complex and constant changes to rules makes it arduous to track and plan for their future, causing anxiety to temporary visa holders.

The Department of Home Affairs provided a response on 4 January 2023 noting that “while there is no guaranteed pathway to permanent residence for international students, there are a range of opportunities for those talented students seeking to remain in Australia at the conclusion of their studies, should they meet the requirements to be granted permanent residency. On September 2022, the Minister for Home Affairs, the Hon Clare O’Neil MP, announced a comprehensive review of Australia’s migration system to ensure It better meets existing challenges and set a clear direction for the coming decades.”

### Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism

In February 2023, the *Multiculturalism Act 2023* became a law in the ACT. It celebrates the Territory’s cultural diversity and inclusivity. The Act requires a new



Ministerial Advisory Council to be established by September 2023. In response to the ACT Government's public consultation seeking feedback, FINACT provided a written submission on the Terms of Reference for the Ministerial Advisory Council for Multiculturalism. Our response addressed the key points of consultation - who should be included on the advisory Council; how the Council should engage with the community; and how the Council should report back to the community. Thanks to the FINACT members who have provided inputs to this important initiative. Last year FINACT provided feedback on the draft Bill.

## Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki

FINACT attended a community event hosted by the Rotary Club of Canberra Burley Griffin Chapter, to remember the events in Hiroshima and Nagasaki from 1945. In a message, read by the Tibetan community member, the Dalai Lama said "I take the opportunity to urge governments, organisations and individuals to rededicate themselves to making the achievement of peace the centrepiece of our lives", which aptly summarises the significance of this event for all of us. Let us hope this never happens again.

## Unpacking Australia-India Free Trade Agreement - what it means for Canberra businesses.

FINACT has teamed up with the Canberra Business Chamber (CBC), supported by the ACT Government, DFAT and Austrade to organise a networking event on 29 September 2022 at 224 Bunda Street, Canberra City.

Thanks to Ambassador Wadhwa, Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation, Cassandra Oaten from DFAT, Gitesh Agarwal, Director Corporate Affairs HCL Tech and Gregory Harvey, Manager, South Asia, Southeast Asia Section, Austrade who moderated the panel discussion on Australia India Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA).

Brendan Smyth, Commissioner International Engagement, ACT Govt, Graham Catt, CEO, Canberra Business Chamber and Suneet Mehta, Deputy High



Commissioner of India, highlighted potential opportunities to expand trade between the two countries. With 1.35 billion people India is a huge market for Australian businesses including Australian universities to open campuses in India. Huge opportunity for younger generation through increased mobility and exchange programs. This is a new age, forward looking agreement that will benefit both countries.

### Legal Aid seminar

FINACT teamed up with Legal Aid ACT to deliver a webinar on legal education/training session to community members on 15 November 2022. The aim of this session was to equip the Indian diaspora living in the ACT with the understanding of various laws and legal processes and how our members, volunteers and the Indian community in the ACT can access free legal help through Legal Aid ACT. This enabled members and volunteers to quickly identify when a member of the community may be experiencing a legal issue and support them to access legal help.

### University of Canberra Indian Association

FINACT EC participated in an interactive session with UC students as part of cross-cultural week at UC campus. Glad to connect with international students after a long gap. Thanks to the [UC Indian Association](#) for organising the workshop. One issue students raised is they are unable to secure part time jobs to support them, despite tight labour market. Please reach out to [UC Indian Association](#) if you're are looking for employees or aware of vacancies.



### Aged care support

FINACT delegate attended a workshop on Aged Care services available to citizens over 65 years of age, organised by the Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra (MCCI) on 26 April. There are several services senior citizens can avail, such as domestic assistance, personal care, social groups, free transport, shopping bus, etc. It is also possible to establish an interest group to tailor services



to suit your cultural needs. Subsequently we passed on relevant information from this workshop to senior citizens and offered support to set up an interest group, should there be an expressed interest.

## FINACT T20 Tournament

On popular demand, FINACT rejuvenated T20 Cricket Tournament in July 2023, after a three-year gap. Four teams - CTL Lions, Canberra Masters XI, Kerala Strikers and Rising Stars – competing in this year's Tournament, which will conclude on 12 August 2023.





## Sakhi Women's Network

Sakhi is a social initiative created within FINACT to create a safe space for Indian women to connect, build friendships and share stories. We hope this initiative provides women with a platform to build network, connections and lasting friendships. The inaugural event was held on 23 July 2023 at Hughes Community Hall. Mrs Vohra was the chief guest.

### FINACT Sakhi Initiative July 2023





## 5. FINACT General Council Meetings

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### First GC Meeting October 2022

FINACT first General Council Meeting was held on 10 October 2022 at Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre. It was in-person and virtual meeting. Ms Karen Toohey, Discrimination, Health Services, Disability & Community Services Commissioner, ACT Human Rights Commission, attended the meeting as a special guest. Ms Toohey explained the role of ACT Human Rights Commission, as a single point of contact to address a wide range of concerns and complaints related to discrimination, vilification, sexual harassment, health services including dental services, occupancy disputes, services for children and young people, older people including aged care and retirement villages, etc. They received about 300 complaints this year, the majority of them related to employment. Members took the opportunity to ask several questions to clarify the role of the Commission, what sort of help we can expect. ACT Human Rights Commission can be contacted on 6205 2222 or via email [hrcintake@act.gov.au](mailto:hrcintake@act.gov.au)

### Second GC Meeting February 2023

FINACT second General Council Meeting was held on 26 February 2023 at Aao Jee restaurant in Amaroo. 30 participants from 25 FINACT member organisations discussed key activities and achievements of members in the past three months and also upcoming events including key priorities for the next quarter.

### Third GC Meeting June 2023

FINACT held its third General Council meeting on Sunday the 18 June 2023 at [Darbar Indian restaurant Braddon](#). Thanks to [David Smith MP](#) for speaking at this event, meeting with the Indian community leaders and FINACT delegates. It was an excellent networking opportunity for the old and new delegates. It was good to see many new faces as well. We welcome them to continue the good work of FINACT.

## FINACT First GC Meeting, October 2022





## FINACT Second GC Meeting, February 2023





## FINACT Third GC Meeting, June 2023





## 6. FINACT - Other Activities

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### Voice to the Parliament

In late 2023 Australians will be asked if there should be constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We encourage members to read and make informed choice on this significant national issue.

[The case for yes](#)

[The case for no](#)

For further information at <https://voice.gov.au/>

<https://www.aec.gov.au/referendums/2023-referendum.htm>.

This is a high priority for the current Albanese Government. Most people are unable to comprehend the issues to either support the “yes” and “no” options, media outlets have not necessarily helped make an informed decision. FINACT has been actively gathering and sharing information with the community informing them about the upcoming historic referendum - Voice to Parliament. FINACT has been actively engaging with various forums to understand the debate. For example, the session organised by the [Canberra Multicultural Community Forum \(CMCF\) Inc](#) on ‘what is a Voice to Parliament’ was very useful in hearing from the experts such as Prof Tom Calma AO.



Thanks to the panel - Prof Tom Calma AO, Katrina Fanning AO PSM, Dr Paul Collis for clarifying the issue and next steps.

Here are some more useful links to inform and prepare the community for participating in the referendum.

- <https://voice.gov.au>
- [ABC Resources on Voice to the Parliament - https://www.abc.net.au/news/voice-to-parliament-referendum](https://www.abc.net.au/news/voice-to-parliament-referendum)
- Rear Vision 2 April 2023 – [Giving a voice to Indigenous Australians – why has it always failed?](#)

- [Interview](#) with Justice Kenneth Hayne on the Law Report 28 March 2023
- [Interview](#) with Ken Wyatt on RN Breakfast on 5 April 2023

## Electrify Canberra

Climate change is a global problem that requires collective action from all countries, all levels of governments and all citizens. We all can make a difference, in a small way but collectively it would make a big impact. Community led initiative, Electrify Canberra, is one such example, to reduce emissions and reduce electricity bills.

The ACT will be trialling a pilot project to demonstrate electrification of an existing suburb. The yet-to-be-chosen Canberra suburb will have its own set of unique challenges and will ideally include multi-occupancy dwellings, social housing and stand-alone residences. Great initiative. You all can contribute to this by completing a short survey -

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/electrifyACT>

## High Commission of India XI Vs FINACT XI Cricket match

Rain didn't dampen the spirit as the friendly match between the HCI XI Vs FINACT XI went ahead at Bonner Neighbourhood Oval on 1 October 2022. It was a fun-filled game between the two friendly teams expressing sportsmanship.

We thank the [India In Australia \(High Commission Of India, Canberra\)](#) staff, Sanjay Sharma, [Independence Day Cup](#) @Indian Australia Multinational Sports Association and Sudheer Madhure, [Canberra Telugu League](#) for their support!



## Homage to Mahatma Gandhi

Indian community leaders gathered at Glebe Park to commemorate Mahatma Gandhi's 153rd birth anniversary on 2 October 2022. H.E. Manpreet Vohra, High Commissioner of India, spoke about the significance of the day.



The International Day of Non-Violence is observed on 2 October, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of non-violence. Emeritus Professor Satendra Nandan recited a poem from his book Gandhianjali. Gandhi ji went from India to South Africa as a young lawyer, returned back to India as a Mahatma, who mobilised millions of people to secure India's independence in 1947.



### The ACT Government Diwali reception

The ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr hosted a Diwali reception on 21 October 2022, attended by Indian community leaders, diplomats from India and several southeast Asian countries, interfaith leaders and ACT officials. Mrs. Ira Patkar mesmerised the audience with a classical dance followed by Indian classical Carnatic music led by Dr Pratibha Nagabhusan.





## Unity Run

The [India In Australia \(High Commission Of India, Canberra\)](#), in collaboration with FINACT, organised the Unity Run at Lake Burley Griffin, to mark the 147th birth anniversary of [Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel](#), former Deputy Prime Minister of India. Thanks to all for participating.



## Diwali Celebrations at Government House

Their Excellencies the Governor-General and Mrs Linda Hurley hosted Indian community leaders at their residence to celebrate the Diwali festival. Thanks to the Hindu Council of Australia for facilitating the event and providing FINACT with an opportunity to participate in the event.



## Diwali at the Australian Parliament House

After a two-year gap, the Hindu Council of Australia resumed its annual Diwali celebrations at the Parliament House, attended by a large number of diaspora members, the Indian High Commissioner and members of the Australian Parliament, including the Hon Richard



Marles, Deputy Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Peter Dutton, Leader of the Opposition among other dignitaries.

### Australian Reconciliation Day 2023

FINACT proudly supported the Reconciliation Day by participating in the events at the National Arboretum Canberra on 29 May 2023. It was a picturesque, perfect autumn day for the ACT community to come together to learn about our shared history and First Nations cultures and achievements. Thanks to the organisers for putting on such a fantastic event. You can read more about the significance of the day including its history [at this link](#).

### The Royal Commonwealth Society

Thanks to the Royal Commonwealth Society for inviting FINACT to attend the RCS Winter Lunch on Sunday 29 August 2022. Chief guest, H.E. Manpreet Vohra, the High Commissioner of India, spoke on the occasion highlighting India's achievements since independence 75 years ago and the significant contribution India has been making to the global good. This was a great opportunity to meet inspiring people who have eminently contributed to the society.

### International Mother Language Walk

FINACT participated in this year's International Mother Language Day walk and celebrations at Lake Burley Griffin. Thanks to Telugu Badi for leading the Telugu language group, supported by Telugu Association of Canberra, ACT Telangana Association, and ACT Community Language Schools Association.

### International Day of Yoga - 17 June 2023

17 June was a delightful day for #Yoga enthusiasts! Thanks to the [High Commission Of India, Canberra](#) for celebrating the



[#InternationalDayofYoga2023](#) today in Canberra. Yoga experts from Yoga Australia & [The Art of Living](#) Canberra conducted sessions of Asanas, breathing & meditation exercises. The event attracted many yoga lovers from the local community. Yoga experts & demonstrators were felicitated by the High Commissioner after the yoga session. It was nice to meet Josh Pryor, CEO, Yoga Australia, peak body representing yoga teachers in Australia.

## CMCF Leaders Reception

Canberra Multicultural Community Forum (CMCF) Inc organised leaders reception at the Albert Hall in November. It was a great turn out of leaders with over 200 people attending representing 64 organisations and government officials and 22 Embassies and High Commissions. It was a wonderful representation of our diverse community, FINACT is grateful to be a part of this event. Mr Chin Tan from the Human Rights Commission spoke about the campaign 'Racism - It Stops with Me'. Also in attendance was Ms Karen Toohey, the ACT Discrimination, Health Services & Disability and Community Services Commissioner. Thanks to the Chair of Canberra Multicultural Community Forum, Mrs Chin Wong and the committee for organising a fantastic event.





## 7. FINACT Member Events

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### ACT Telangana Association Cultural Night

The ACT Telangana Association organised Bathukamma (floral) festival at the Grand Hall, Parliament House 25 September 2022. It was a memorable day for Telangana people all



over Australia as it was celebrated in the Parliament for the first time. Several interstate visitors attended the event. It was streamed live to audiences in India. Great show. Thanks to [Katy Gallagher](#), [Shane Rattenbury](#), [Suzanne Orr MLA](#), [Elizabeth Lee MLA](#) & [Emma Davison MLA](#).



### Australian Anglo-Indian Association of Canberra

The Australian Anglo-Indian Association of Canberra hosted its annual Ball on 29 October at Southern Cross Club, Woden. This association has been around for 29 years serving the community. Congratulations to Joe Bailey and the team for their significant contribution to the community. What a fabulous night, dancing away with local stars!



## Australian Multicultural Action Network (AMAN)

AMAN conducted several events this year including the National Multicultural Festival roadshow, Yoga and Well being session for Seniors and young families newly moved into the ACT. AMAN is assisting the elderly women to become involved in community activities, providing them with monthly recreational opportunities, and offering them technological assistance. AMAN is involved in several community volunteering activities and has climbed the ladder as a young community organisation with the support from ACT Government, patrons and several other well-wishers.



The objectives and goals of AMAN are to create campaigns to increase understanding and foster positive change in the multicultural community, advocate for inclusivity, and provide support to groups to foster intercultural connections. AMAN is very engaged in FINACT with several women specific activities including a full-fledged support for the upcoming Sakhi event.



## Australian Tamil Cultural Society of ACT (ATCS)

ATCS held its Annual General Meeting in late April. FINACT welcomes the new all women executive committee. The new committee organised a fabulous event to celebrate Tamil arts in July 2023, attended by more than 450 people. Congratulations to all for organising an entertaining cultural program.



## Bengali Cultural Association of Canberra (BCA)

The [Bengali Cultural Association of Canberra](#) organised two days of Durga Puja celebrations at the Flynn Community hall on 8th and 9th October. It was a fabulous, colourful and well attended event. Organising events that cater to the community's cultural needs at such a scale requires a lot of effort from organisers and volunteers. It was certainly great work and a job well done by the BCA to organise this year's Durga Puja.





## Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia and New Zealand

Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia and New Zealand (ACT Chapter) held its Holi Milan on Sunday 19 March 2023 at Lennox Gardens. BJSM organises three get togethers every year (last Sunday of March, July and October) uninterrupted since 2006 in Canberra (except Covid break during 2020-22).



## Canberra Hindu Mandir

Canberra Hindu Mandir Inc conducted a successful fundraiser event that was attended by about 600 people, exceeding organisers expectation. Great to see a high level of support and engagement from the community, especially from young volunteers supporting the event. Construction work has commenced and is progressing. Congratulations to CHM and our best wishes.







### Canberra Jain Mandal

Canberra Jain Mandal hosted a heart warming picnic in January 2023, at Weston Park in Yarralumla that proved to be more than just a casual gathering. Amidst the tranquil surroundings, the event focused on fostering mental well-being by sharing stress coping techniques. Friends and families gathered to partake in the enriching experience, while relishing a delightful array of delicious foods that tantalized taste buds. The spirit of unity and togetherness was further amplified by engaging in lively family games, nurturing community cohesion, and strengthening social capital. Laughter echoed, bonds strengthened, and hearts were uplifted as the picnic left an indelible mark on all who attended.





## Canberra Malayalees Association

The [Canberra Malayalees Association](#)'s annual cultural night on 17 June showcasing the very best of talented Malayalees of Canberra. CMA is known for high quality performance and this year is no different. It was a colourful festival with amazing performances.



In August the Canberra Malayalees Association organised "CMA Ponnonapulari 2022" at Mount Stromlo High School. It was a huge, colourful event with more than 700 members celebrating the South Indian festival of Onam. CMA is one of the biggest and active Indian Diaspora communities in Canberra with around 2000 families. The event showcased various traditional cultural programs and concluded with a vegetarian Sadhya served on banana leaf. Outgoing President, Ammu Suresh, handed over the baton to the incoming President Joby George. Among various other activities, CMA also celebrated Christmas with pomp and show with a plethora of talent displayed by its members through



Christmas Carols to dance and music. A meticulously organised event, FINACT congratulates CMA for organising well planned events for huge turnouts.

### Canberra Punjab Sports & Cultural Association

The Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association (CPSCA) organised its third Canberra Khed Mela (CKM) or Sports Festival in October 2022 at the Hall Showground. It was a free event that showcased traditional



Punjabi sports, language and culture. About 200 people participated in kabbadi, soccer, volleyball and tug of war competitions. Waris brothers enthralled the audience with 'Punjabi Virsa 2022'. About 5000 people from Canberra and interstate enjoyed the fun-filled day of sports, shopping, food & entertainment.



The High commission of India (HCI), Canberra and the Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association (CPSCA) organised a book launch on 2 July 2023. Colonel Harisimran Singh, author of the book 'Deep Singh Shaheed: The Man in



the Legend' narrated his own journey and the story of Baba Deep Singh Shaheed. This book is backed by thorough research over several years, documenting a significant part of Indian history. It was a great opportunity to meet Colonel Singh who gave a very eloquent presentation on the significance of the story and beautiful explanation of Sikhism. The presentation followed a panel discussion led by Prof Peter Stanley from ADFA, a well-known war historian in Australia, supported by Wing Commander Vikram Grewal from the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

## Canberra Telugu League (CTL) Award Ceremony

The Canberra Telugu League (CTL) celebrated its fifth season award ceremony on 30 April 2023 at Albert Hall. Ten participating teams with 225 active members, it is one of the largest community sporting groups dedicated to cricket. No doubt sport is one of the proven ways to look after physical and mental health. Well done to the core team, led by Sudheer Madnure. Congratulations to this year's winners - Challengers Team.



## Indian Australian Multicultural Sports Association

IAMSA has been at the forefront of promoting multiculturalism and fostering community unity through its vibrant sports events. The annual IAMSA event serves as a platform for individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds to come together, showcase their sporting talents, and celebrate the spirit of inclusivity. With a wide range of sports activities, including cricket, soccer, tennis, and more, the IAMSA event has become a highlight on the community calendar. It attracts participants of all ages and backgrounds, creating an atmosphere of camaraderie, friendly competition, and cultural exchange. Beyond the exhilarating matches, the IAMSA event also features cultural performances, food stalls, and interactive activities, providing a holistic experience that reflects the richness and diversity of our community.



### Indian Students Association @ ANU

Indian Students Association at ANU screened four Bollywood Movies in October 2022, at Kambri Cultural Centre, ANU, as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) celebrations. This event was supported by the High Commission of India and FINACT. They have also hosted a few other events

### Indian Senior Citizens Associations



They organise workshops of interest to senior citizens. A recent example - workshop on elderly abuse delivered by the Human Rights Commission.



## Karnataka Association of Canberra

Karnataka Association of Canberra celebrated Deepavali and Rajyothsava festival in November 2022 with a wide array of cultural and musical events, a fun night to celebrate Ugadhi in March 2023 and Disco night in June 2023.



## Mandir School of Music

Mandir School of Music, member of FINACT, organised its annual Carnatic music concert 29 August at Merici College. Congratulations to Ragini Santhanam and the team for organising such a grand showcase - it was a divine and blissful experience! More than 100 singers and nearly 400 participants attended the event - well done all! <https://facebook.com/events/s/madhura-gaanam/824864845185985/> <https://vriksha.org/indian-classical-music/>

## Navya Andhra Telugu Association

The Navya Andhra Telugu Association celebrated Telugu new year (Ugadhi or Yug-Adi) on 29 April at Gungahlin college, attended by a large number of community members and VIP guests. NATA Community Excellence award was given to Prakash Mehta, President, Hindu Council of Australia, and Professional Excellence award to Dr. Krishna Murthy Boyapati. FINACT congratulates Mr Mehta and Dr Boyapati for their contribution.

## Rajasthan Sabha of Australia and New Zealand



## Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra (RMMC) Cultural Night

The Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra (RMMC) organised a grand annual cultural celebration at the Gungahlin college in May 2023. It was a spectacular show by many talented Marathis. Congratulations to the RMMC Committee and volunteers for organising such a great event. It takes a lot of effort and commitment to run events like this, providing opportunities for artists to showcase their talent and share rich Indian culture with community members. Congratulations to the team.





## Telugu Association of Canberra

Telugu Badi (school), started by the Telugu Association of Canberra (TAC), celebrated its 9th anniversary at Harrison school on 29 October 2022. Lovely to see so many kids demonstrating their language skills. Pretty amazing to listen to kids speaking in Telugu with an Aussie accent! Congratulations to the principal Mr H Srinivas and volunteer teachers for an outstanding contribution to the community! Well done all. TAC also organised a fabulous new year (Ugadi) celebrations on 1 May 2023. Apart from fantastic performance, the highlight of the program was awarding of graduate certificates to three young participants who have finished a 6-year Telugu language course on top of their regular studies - really amazing! Also, special on the night was awarding of winners of a popular music competition - Raagam Taanam Pallavi!.



## University of Canberra Indian Association

University of Canberra Indian Association (UCIA) organised a fantastic, well attended Diwali celebration at Students Hub on 11 November. It was a great occasion for students to come together, celebrate the festival and also mark the successful end of semester. The highlight of the evening was a Bollywood dance class demonstration by Nishi from Bollywood Dance school. Thanks to the UCIA team for organising a fabulous and entertaining event.

They also celebrated Onam 2022 with a lot of fanfare, with traditional dance, chenda (traditional drums) and an amazing Onam Sadhya. Congratulations to the team for their efforts to bring the Indian community together in a University setting.





## 8. FINACT 2022 Events Calendar

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A [live calendar showing key events](#) of FINACT and its member organisations is now available. This should help member organisations and community members to see all the upcoming events in one place. This should also allow members to plan better and hopefully avoid scheduling conflicts in planning major events. We encourage members to enter their events in the calendar to ensure it is up to date.

## 9. FINACT Sponsors

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Sincere thanks to our sponsors. Please support them so they can support us!

The High Commission of India

The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Government

## 10. FINACT Member Associations At a glance

### 1. ACT Telangana Association (ACTTA)

ACTTA is a not-for-profit association of likeminded Australians of Indian origin from the Telangana State, South India. Objectives of the ACTTA are



- To provide a platform for Telangana people to promote the rich cultural diversity and traditions of Telangana.
- Celebrate Telangana festivals with fellow citizens.
- To strengthen collaboration between the two countries.
- ACTTA also aims to strengthen community harmony by engaging with the broader ACT community.

Some of the key events conducted are Telangana Formation Day celebrations, Bathukamma festival,

Educational Scholarships in Telangana State, Clean-up Australia, Tree plantations with High Commission of India and ACT Government, participated in Multicultural Festival, Vanabojanalu and Bush fire fund rising, Stall in Diwali festival in Parliament and Donated Groceries for 150 families in Telangana during COVID-19.

#### Contact Details

- Contact Persons – Rajitha Konda, President
- Email : [members@actta.org.au](mailto:members@actta.org.au)
- Website: <http://www.actta.org.au/>

### 2. Australian Anglo-Indian Association of Canberra

The Association is working to cater to the needs of the Anglo-Indian Community in Canberra.

#### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Joe Bailey, President
- Email: [joe.bailey@bigpond.com](mailto:joe.bailey@bigpond.com)



### 3. Australian Tamil Cultural Society (ATCS)

ATCS provides cultural and social functions and helps Tamils and people from India to settle in Australia. Organises debates and educates people in relation to Tamil literature. Classes teaching Tamil for children. Participate in the Multicultural programme at the ACT. Bring

together the Tamil Community. Teach Cultural activities such as Dancing, Singing etc to our community people. Running the Chennai Tamil School to teach Tamil Language to our community. Organize tours etc. Organise cultural programmes. Bring together our community people and mix with the Australian Society.



#### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Sangeetha Raman, President
- Email: [atcs.act@gmail.com](mailto:atcs.act@gmail.com)
- Website: <http://www.atcs.org.au/>

### 4. Bengali Cultural Association of Canberra

Bengali Cultural Association (Canberra) Inc., a not-for-profit organisation serving the Bengali (and Indian) community in and around Canberra, Australia. The Association promotes Bengali culture and community activities, durga puja and food festivals.

#### Contact Details

- Contact Person – Soumya Banerjee, President
- Email: [secretarycanberra.bca@gmail.com](mailto:secretarycanberra.bca@gmail.com)

### 5. Bihar Jharkhand Sabha of Australia and New Zealand (BJSM)

With 'Connecting people abroad' as our objective and acknowledging 'संघे शक्ति कलियुगे' (unity is strength in this age), we organise family get together, celebrate festivals, assist new migrants, share information and cooperate with other community groups across Australia and New Zealand.



The association has been organising 3 Milans (get together) in Canberra uninterrupted for since 2006 - Holi Milan, Sharad Milan, and Diwali Milan on the last Sunday of March, July and October respectively.

### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Sanjay Pandey
- Website: <https://www.bjism.org/>
- FaceBook - @BiharJharkhand
- Twitter - @BJSMAusNZ

## 6. Canberra Hindu Mandir Incorporated (CHM)

The aim of CHM is to provide a platform based on Agama Sastra (traditional temple architecture) in meeting the religious and spiritual needs of those who seek God realisation through His various manifestations, in accordance with traditional Hinduism following the doctrine of Sanatana Dharma.



Some of the key Activities of CHM –

- monthly meets, important festival celebrations including Ram Navami, Guru Poornima Dussehra and Diwali.
- Fundraising events donations to communities at work blood donations Cedric classes and music other activities incidental to the functioning of the temple.
- Activities include fund raising at multicultural festival celebrations of Guru poornima, world curry festival, procured statues from India for the temple in June 2016 and celebrated the anniversary of the statues' reception day.

### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Krishna Nadimpalli OAM, Chairman
- Website – [www.hindumandir.org.au](http://www.hindumandir.org.au)
- Facebook - @canberrahindumandir



## 7. Canberra Jain Mandal (CJM)

CJM is the representative association of the Jain community in Canberra. The aim of the organisation is to promote the principles of Jainism and keep the community members associated with these principles. We aim to achieve it by organising recognised Jain religious events, such as Mahaveer Jayanti, Diwali etc. and social gatherings to discuss the principles of Jainism and its relevance in the present world.



### Contact Details

- President - Praveen Jain, President
- Email: [president.cjm@gmail.com](mailto:president.cjm@gmail.com), [secretary.cjm@gmail.com](mailto:secretary.cjm@gmail.com)

## 8. Canberra Malayalee Association (CMA)

The Canberra Malayalees Association celebrates festivals and organises cultural programs relating to Keralite/Malayalee culture. CMA organises four get-togethers during the year: for Onam, Christmas, Cultural Nite and Malayalee barbecue. Sports activities include cricket (Canberra Malayalee Cricket Club), soccer, basketball, and badminton.



### Contact Details

- President : Joby George
- Email: [president@canberramalayalee.org](mailto:president@canberramalayalee.org)
- Facebook: @CBRMalayalees
- Website: <http://canberramalayalee.org/>

## 9. Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association (CPSCA)

The Canberra Punjabi Sports and Cultural Association promotes Punjabi culture through literature, music, dance, food, traditional knowledge and sports; provides guidance and support to community; and advocates for community issues. CPSCA participates in the ACT multicultural activities and



### Contact Details

- President: Harjinder Dhindsa
- Email: cpsca2014@gmail.com
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cpsca2014/>

## 10. Canberra Telugu League

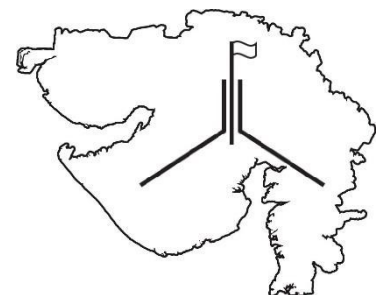
CTL has been formed in 2019, following the ICC Cricket World Cup Format, with 10 Telugu Teams currently participating in the annual competition.

### Contact Details

- Contact Person – Sudheer Madnure
- Facebook: @ Canberra Telugu League

## 11. Gujarati Samaj of ACT

Gujarati Samaj of Canberra organizes many Gujarati cultural events and programs in Canberra. It has organised various events such as Navaratri Celebrations, Gujarati Movie Screenings, Kite Flying festivals, etc. GSA also provides ongoing support to new migrants for settlement in Canberra.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Jay Patel
- Email: [volunteers@gujaratisamajcanberra.com](mailto:volunteers@gujaratisamajcanberra.com)
- Facebook: @Gujarati Samaj of Canberra

## 12. India Australia Multicultural Sports Association

### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Sanjay Sharma
- Email: [sanjay231sharma@yahoo.com](mailto:sanjay231sharma@yahoo.com)
- Web - <https://iamsacanberra.com.au/>



### 13. Indian Australian Association of Health and Well-being Contact Details

- Contact Person - ChittiBabu Divi
- Email: [Divi.Haritha@gmail.com](mailto:Divi.Haritha@gmail.com)

### 14. Indian Senior Citizens Association

Recognising the cultural differences and demands, Indian Senior Citizens Association was formed in Canberra (ACT) caters to the social, welfare and cultural needs of aged persons of Indian cultural background. The Association has the following objectives



- To facilitate the provision of welfare and social services for aged persons
- To act as spokesperson on behalf of aged persons
- To organise cultural and recreational activities for our seniors.

#### Contact Details

- President – Vijay Puri
- Email: [vijaypuri63@hotmail.com](mailto:vijaypuri63@hotmail.com)
- Website: <http://indianseniors.org/>

### 15. Indian Students' Association - ANU (InSA)

Indian Students' Association (INSA) at Australian National University (ANU) is a nodal association for the Indian Students pursuing their studies at ANU. With about 300 members registered with the Association,



it is affiliated to the clubs and societies of the ANU Students Association (ANUSA) and the ANU Postgraduate and Research Students Association (PARSA). The association's key objective is to ensure the common welfare of its members and the student community in general at the ANU. INSA acts as a platform for its members to network with each other as well as other students in the ANU through various social and community building events.

## Contact Details

- Contact Person – Joshua Singla
- Email – [weareinsa@gmail.com](mailto:weareinsa@gmail.com)
- Facebook - @ Indian Students' Association-ANU

## 16. Initiatives for Women in Needs

Initiatives for Women In Need (IWIn) is an Indo-Australian volunteer led organisation based in the Australian Capital Territory, to support and advocate for women and children, particularly coming from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and families experiencing domestic violence and discrimination at home and at work. Established in 2013 by Dr. Madhumita IYENGAR, IWIn also supports activities to elevate wellbeing of under-privileged women and children in India through partnership with NGOs operating at a grassroot level, such as EK PRAYAAS in Kolkata and Pazhassi Raja Tribal School in Wayanad, Kerala.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Dr. Madhumita IYENGAR
- Email: [iwinact@gmail.com](mailto:iwinact@gmail.com)
- Website: <https://www.iwinact.org/>
- Facebook: @ Initiatives For Women In Need – IwIn

## 17. Integrated Cultures ACT

Integrated Cultures ACT Inc. aims to bring different cultures into an interaction that allows them to adjust their personal norms to accommodate others' norms and in the process deal effectively with the tensions of cross cultural interaction and develop a harmony that allows for better understanding., inter-mixing of races and cultures. It allows for expressions of that harmony to occur through the medium of the arts, social engagements, exchange of ideas on issues of common concern and, through a variety of interactions between and amongst the different people that compose Australia.



### Contact Details

- President – Jayanti Gupta
- Email - [iwomensnetwork@gmail.com](mailto:iwomensnetwork@gmail.com)
- Website: <http://www.integratedcultures.org/>



## 18. Karnataka Association of Canberra

Karnataka Association of Canberra, also referred to as KAC is a non-profit organization primarily aimed at networking for Kannadigas in Australian Capital Territory. It is incorporated in Canberra, Australia. KAC was founded in 2004, after Kannada speaking community leaders of the time envisioned a bright future for the Kannadigas of Canberra. By November 2010 KAC is a registered association, where office-bearers were elected. The organization hosts numerous festival events, ceremonies, and excursion throughout the year. KAC has history of celebrating these events with pomp and glamour and dedicated to members of KAC.



### Contact Details

- President – Dr Sarita Prasad
- Email - [\\_kac\\_committee@yahoo.com](mailto:_kac_committee@yahoo.com)
- Website: <https://www.kannadaincanberra.com/>

## 19. Madhya Pradesh Association of Australia

It is a newly formed association in 2020, formed to promote Madhya Pradesh amongst the people hailing from Madhya Pradesh in ACT as well as the work with the Indian Community at large.

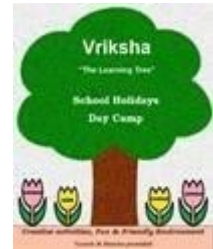
### Contact Details

- President – Vijay Dubey
- Email – [vicdubey@gmail.com](mailto:vicdubey@gmail.com)

## 20. Mandir School of Music

The school operates in the Canberra to enable the members of the Indian community to pursue their passion for carnatic music. The school offers shastriya sangetham classes to students of all age groups as well as shloka classes to children. The school provides an opportunity to the local Indian community to continue to connect and keep alive our rich Indian culture. The students have access to a structured classical

music curriculum and children sit through exams starting with basic to advanced levels. Mandir School of Music conducts annual stage concerts and actively participates at the local events e.g. multicultural festival, Diwali mela. Vriksha is a group of professionals with branches of education, culture, music and mathematical learning for your kids.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person – Ragini Santhanam
- Email - [raginis@iinet.net.au](mailto:raginis@iinet.net.au)
- Website: <http://vriksha.org/>

## 21. Mehak Punjab Di Radio

Mehak Punjab Di Radio aims to engage with the community from the Indian subcontinent through the Punjabi language, catering to all tastes and interests, while promoting Punjabi language, literature, and culture, from both sides of the border. The program provides local and subcontinental news, sports news and weather updates, including information on current activities in the ACT and the region. Also featuring Punjabi music, both old and contemporary. Mehak Punjab Di Radio broadcasts every Saturday from 8am to 9am.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person– Amardeep Singh
- Email - [mehakpunjabdiradio@gmail.com](mailto:mehakpunjabdiradio@gmail.com)



- Website: <https://www.cmsradio.org.au/programs/punjabi-program/>
- Facebook: @ Mehak Punjab Di Radio

## 22. Navya Andhra Telugu Association (NATA)

Representing Andhra Pradesh in Australia NATA is formed in 2014 after Andhra Pradesh evolved as new state with an old name. Our motivation is to support everyone associated with Andhra Pradesh in every possible way. We put our best efforts to integrate culture from our homeland with Australian culture. We strive to help community and other local communities to understand different lifestyles associated and develop harmony within. NATA on its part contribute to help local communities in various aspects.

NATA conducted Yoga Seminars which helps to promote healthy lifestyle. NATA conducts IT Seminar every year where successful Subject Matter Experts from various domains run a workshop with information of emerging technologies & associated career opportunities NATA takes every opportunity to organize cultural & spiritual events.



### Contact Details

- President– Sahithi Paturi
- Email - [president@nata.org.au](mailto:president@nata.org.au)
- Website: <http://content.nata.org.au/>
- Facebook: @ Navya Andhra Telugu Association-Canberra (NATA)

## 23. Oriya Association (OriOz)

OriOz is a collective of residents of Australia who originate from or have connections to the state of Odisha in India. The vision is to sustain an Odia Community in Australia that is engaged, vibrant and inclusive.



We work to build an active, engaged, and inclusive Odia community in Australia. We maintain a community platform so that members can support each other for social and emotional wellbeing. We provide a community infrastructure and facilitate existing and newly arrived Odias to be active members of the local community and the Odia community of Australia.

### Contact Details

- Contact: Rosaline Raut
- Email: [oriozcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:oriozcommunity@gmail.com)
- Website: <https://www.orioz.org.au/>
- Facebook: @ORIOZCommunity

## 24. Pink Umbrella Inc

The Pink Umbrella Inc is a registered public charity established in 2014. It works for the immigrant communities for their physical and social health, awareness of mental health stigma, social issues like domestic abuse prevention, and empowerment of youth and women.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person - Dr Pravati Panigrahi
- Email: [pinkumbrella01@gmail.com](mailto:pinkumbrella01@gmail.com)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pinkumbrella/>

## 25. Rajasthan Sabha of Australia and New Zealand

Rajasthan Sabha of Australia and New Zealand is a group of individuals who originate from the State of Rajasthan and work together to promote the Rajasthani Culture in Australia and New Zealand.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person – Lakhan Sharma
- Email: [isharma.act@gmail.com](mailto:isharma.act@gmail.com)
- Facebook: @ rajasthansabha



## 26. Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra (RMMC)

RMMC was formed to cater to the needs of the local Marathi community of Canberra. RMMC aims to:

- Promote Marathi culture e.g. literature, music, dance, drama, and community activities in general.
- Promote mutual understanding and goodwill between the people of Marathi origin, the Indian sub-continent, and other communities in Australia with interest in Marathi culture.
- Provide and promote social and cultural contact among its members and the broader Australian community in general.
- Function as a non-profit and a non-political organization.



### Contact Details

- Contact Person – Yogesh Mulye, President
- Email: [mmc.can@gmail.com](mailto:mmc.can@gmail.com)
- Facebook: @Rajdhani Marathi Mandal Canberra
- Website: <https://canberramarathi.org/>

## 27. Sprintz Inc

The association carries out various cultural as well as sports activities in Canberra such as weekly Basketball, Basketball Training for kids, Weekly Volleyball.



### Contact Details

- President – Shaji Karattiyattil
- Facebook: @ Sprintz Inc

## 28. Telugu Association of Canberra

Telugu Association of Canberra (TAC) is a cultural and non-profit organisation representing the Telugu speaking people. We promote language, culture, music, dance and drama and our rich heritage among the Telugu and non-Telugu speaking people.



TAC has been working with and for the people to bring everyone together and being there for each other in the hour of need. Telugu Association of Canberra works to reinforce and refine our outreach efforts by bringing people and traditions together.

### Contact Details

- President – Sri Mutyala
- Email: [teluguassociationcanberra@gmail.com](mailto:teluguassociationcanberra@gmail.com)
- Website: <https://tacanberra.org/>
- Facebook: @TACanberra

## 29. UC Indian Association (UCIA)

UCA is a non-profit organization aimed at facilitating a space of sharing for the students of University of Canberra away from their homes. The Association is aimed to supporting the Indian students currently studying at University of Canberra through various social and cultural events.



### Contact Details

- President – Saksham Chawla
- Email: [uc.indianassociation@gmail.com](mailto:uc.indianassociation@gmail.com)
- Facebook: @UCIndiAssoc



### 30. Australian Multicultural Action Network (AMAN)

Australian Multicultural Action Network (AMAN) was created to promote and foster better connections among multicultural community including youth, women and seniors.

AMAN aims to achieve this by:

- providing opportunities to connect, develop and maintain interest based activities;
- developing and promoting friendships with other multicultural groups within the community;
- promoting art, education and cultural of the multicultural community and
- where possible, providing opportunities to learn from each other in a fun environment

#### Contact details

Contact person - Radha Ravi

Email - [president.amanact@gmail.com](mailto:president.amanact@gmail.com)

Facebook - [facebook.com/AmanActCanberra](https://facebook.com/AmanActCanberra)

website - [www.amanact.org.au](http://www.amanact.org.au)(under construction)

# FINACT Apna Tiranga 2022 Drawing Competition

Sanvi, Maya, Nisha, first prize



Jainil Patel, second prize



Canberra Hindi School, third prize



Savya, Sahay, Ayush, Avish, Kian, Kaira, Embar, Anay, Gururaj, Alianth, consolation prize



Lakshmi, consolation prize



Vritee Patel





# FINACT Australia Day 2023 Drawing Competition

Vedanti Patel, first prize

Pranavi Rokkam, second prize



Kashi Soni, third prize

Noah Pradeep, consolation prize



Tejasvi Konda, consolation prize

Tanush Kotha, consolation prize





# Annual Report 2022-23

A Year of Accomplishments



We thank all our sponsors, supporters and partners for their support throughout the year 2022-23 and look forward to their patronage in the coming year.



**Federation of Indian Associations of ACT**

Coordination :: Cooperation :: Collaboration

[www.finact.net.au](http://www.finact.net.au) | [www.facebook.com/finact11](https://www.facebook.com/finact11) | [www.twitter.com/finact11](https://www.twitter.com/finact11)