Problem statement: Democratic legitimacy depends on inclusivity. There are two interrelated factors relating to the engagement of people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds with formal democratic processes. Culturally and linguistically inclusive voting information and services need to be made widely available. In CALD communities, there is a high rate of informal voting, voter turnout is comparatively low and more assistance in electoral processes is often needed.

Strategies: Access

Build trust with CALD communities through stakeholder engagement, the Democracy Ambassador program and developing and providing cultural and linguistically inclusive resources.

Strategies: Community

Engage with CALD communities through the CALD Advisory Group, participation in community and cultural events and empower CALD community leaders in active citizenship.

Strategies: Capacity

Conduct research on electoral participation among CALD people and deliver cultural competency training to all VEC staff.

Strategies: Employment

Update VEC and election recruitment policies and procedures to support the appointment of people with multilingual skills and people from diverse cultures and provide an internship or mentoring program for CALD community members.
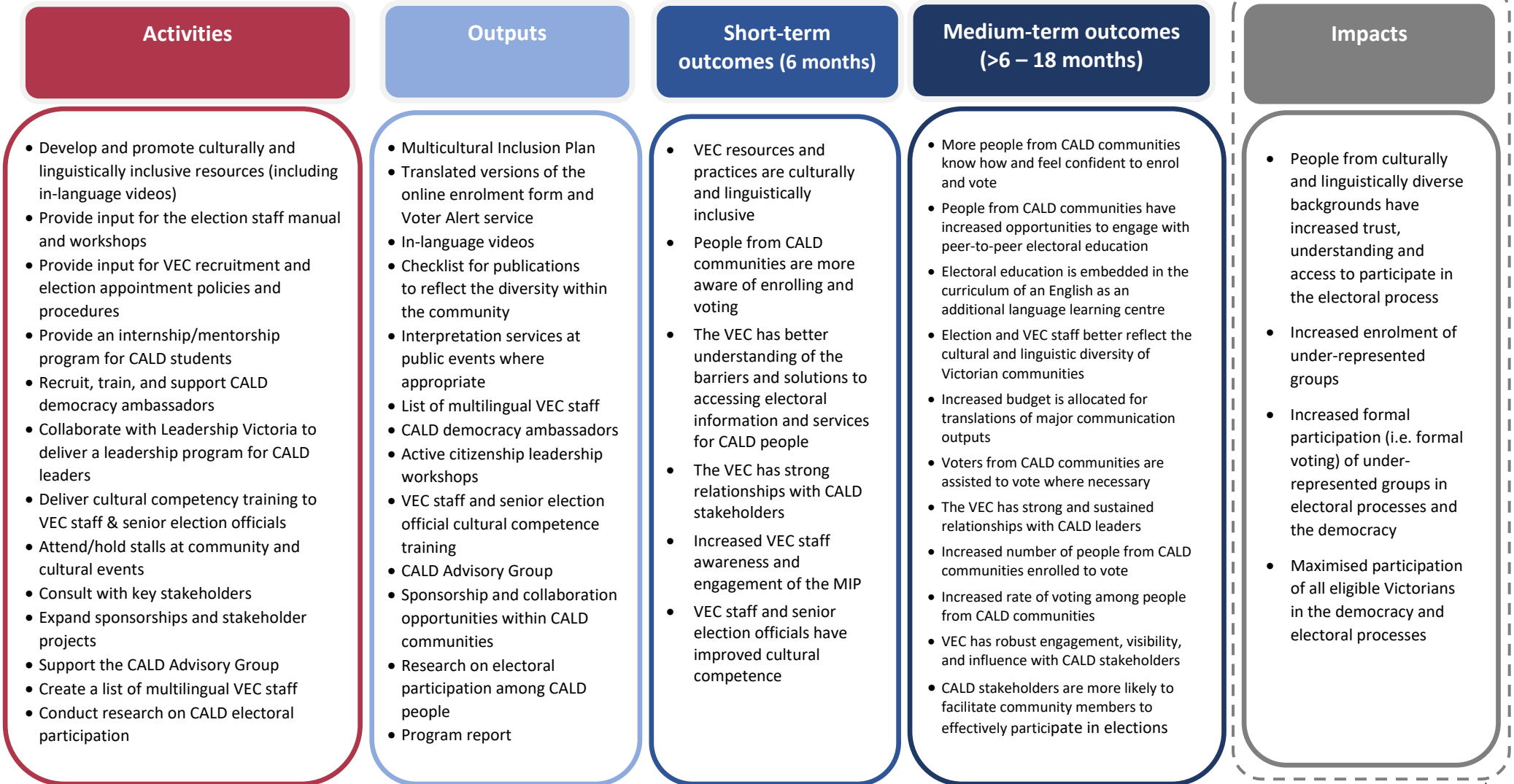
Intended impacts

- **People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have increased trust, understanding and access to participate in the electoral process.**

- **Increased enrolment of under-represented groups.**

- **Increased formal participation (i.e. formal voting) of under-represented groups in electoral processes and democracy.**

- **Decrease in unintentional informality in areas with high proportions of CALD communities.**

- **Maximised participation of all eligible Victorians in democracy and electoral processes.**

Evidence and assumptions

- **Evidence** – Victoria is a multicultural state. Almost half of Victorians were born overseas or have a parent who was born overseas (49%). Around a quarter of Victorians speak a language other than English at home (26%) and 4.5% of Victorians report speaking English "not well" or "not at all" (ABS Census 2016 data).
- **Assumption 1** – People from CALD backgrounds face several barriers. A significant portion have limited or no English-language proficiency (those who came under humanitarian visas can be illiterate in their first language and for some communities, they do not have written proficiency in their first language), there are culturally different learning and communication styles, and past negative experiences with government and/or voting, which can lead to a lack of trust. Settlement activities (such as housing and employment) also take precedence over learning about voting.
- **Assumption 2** – Education and outreach activities improve engagement of CALD people and communities with democratic processes.
- **Assumption 3** – The strategies will lead to intended impacts through activities, outputs and outcomes outlined in the MIP program logic.
- **Assumption 4** – Data will be available to assess outcomes in the short and medium term, particularly improvements in enrolment and voting.

Multicultural Inclusion Plan program logic

Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes (6 months)	Medium-term outcomes (>6 – 18 months)	Impacts
• Develop and promote culturally and linguistically inclusive resources (including in-language videos) • Provide input for the election staff manual and workshops • Provide input for VEC recruitment and election appointment policies and procedures • Provide an internship/mentorship program for CALD students • Recruit, train, and support CALD democracy ambassadors • Collaborate with Leadership Victoria to deliver a leadership program for CALD leaders • Deliver cultural competency training to VEC staff & senior election officials • Attend/hold stalls at community and cultural events • Consult with key stakeholders • Expand sponsorships and stakeholder projects • Support the CALD Advisory Group • Create a list of multilingual VEC staff • Conduct research on CALD electoral participation	• Multicultural Inclusion Plan • Translated versions of the online enrolment form and Voter Alert service • In-language videos • Checklist for publications to reflect the diversity within the community • Interpretation services at public events where appropriate • List of multilingual VEC staff • CALD democracy ambassadors • Active citizenship leadership workshops • VEC staff and senior election official cultural competence training • CALD Advisory Group • Sponsorship and collaboration opportunities within CALD communities • Research on electoral participation among CALD people • Program report	• VEC resources and practices are culturally and linguistically inclusive • People from CALD communities are more aware of enrolling and voting • The VEC has better understanding of the barriers and solutions to accessing electoral information and services for CALD people • The VEC has strong relationships with CALD stakeholders • Increased VEC staff awareness and engagement of the MIP • VEC staff and senior election officials have improved cultural competence	• More people from CALD communities know how and feel confident to enrol and vote • People from CALD communities have increased opportunities to engage with peer-to-peer electoral education • Electoral education is embedded in the curriculum of an English as an additional language learning centre • Election and VEC staff better reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of Victorian communities • Increased budget is allocated for translations of major communication outputs • Voters from CALD communities are assisted to vote where necessary • The VEC has strong and sustained relationships with CALD leaders • Increased number of people from CALD communities enrolled to vote • Increased rate of voting among people from CALD communities • VEC has robust engagement, visibility, and influence with CALD stakeholders • CALD stakeholders are more likely to facilitate community members to effectively participate in elections	• People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have increased trust, understanding and access to participate in the electoral process • Increased enrolment of under-represented groups • Increased formal participation (i.e. formal voting) of under-represented groups in electoral processes and the democracy • Maximised participation of all eligible Victorians in the democracy and electoral processes

Strategic context

- VEC Multicultural Inclusion Plan
- VEC Diversity and Inclusion Framework 2020
- VEC Strategy 2023