

KALEIDOSCOPE INITIATIVE — NATIONAL AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests) [9.15 am]: I would like to inform the house that the Kaleidoscope Initiative, led by the City of Stirling, has won both the overall National Award for Excellence in Local Government and the Multicultural Australia–Cohesive Communities category of the 2019 National Awards for Excellence in Local Government. This Australian government awards program seeks to recognise and promote innovative and resourceful solutions being driven by local governments and having a positive impact in Australian communities. The Kaleidoscope Initiative is a program that increases the workforce participation of unemployed and underemployed migrants in their areas of qualification, skills and experience. It is well known that many new migrants to Australia find it difficult to gain employment commensurate with their skills and abilities when they first look for work in their new country. The result is that the abilities of many highly skilled Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are under-utilised, and our new citizens are unable to achieve their goals or build fulfilling new lives for themselves and their families. In supporting newly arrived migrants to be job ready, Kaleidoscope is unlocking a wealth of skills and knowledge for Western Australia and building the capacity of employers to reap the rewards of a diverse workforce.

The Kaleidoscope Initiative received funding of \$250 000 through the McGowan government’s Local Projects, Local Jobs program. Additional funding of \$187 574, administered by the Office of Multicultural Interests, is extending the project until the end of 2019. Since I officially launched the Kaleidoscope Initiative on 7 December 2017, its output has been impressive. It has held 18 job-ready workshops for around 350 new migrants; engaged 27 migrant-led associations, with a reach of more than 50 000 individuals; held 13 employer networking and training events with the participation of more than 600 professionals, employers and business leaders; arranged the participation of 14 employer partners and 115 mentors in its mentoring program; and matched 39 new migrants with mentors. When surveyed three months after participating in the program, 62 per cent of pilot mentees indicated that they had become employed in their field.

I would like to congratulate the City of Stirling, Mayor Mark Irwin, the Kaleidoscope team, and all mentors and mentees in winning these prestigious and well-deserved awards.