



ELREC Newsletter

Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council

Promoting Equality • Fighting Discrimination • Fostering Good Relations

ISSUE 49: December 2016

From the Chair



Hello and welcome to our December newsletter.

In the past three months ELREC has organised two big events, the Equality Champions Award 2016 and Gala Dinner on 20th November and the Refugees Voice Event on 6th December. I am happy and proud to say that both events have been very successful, as they have both attracted the attention and interest of the public, our partner organisations and policy makers.

I would like to thank everyone who came along for showing their support and appreciation to the work we do. My special thanks go to Jodie Hannan, Headteacher at Drummond Community High School, for being our partner in the Refugees Voice event, for offering the school as a venue and for all her support.

In the following pages you can read more about the events and see the pictures.

I am pleased to confirm that all our projects are going strong and keep making a difference in the community they serve. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all ELREC staff and volunteers for their hard work and for ensuring that our projects are successful.

I am also happy to say that, thanks to the people of Leith who voted for ELREC, our Hate Crime Campaign project has been awarded a grant from the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership. Unfortunately hate crime is still a problem in Leith area, but the residents have put their trust on ELREC to fight discrimination and promote equality and cohesion among the different communities. The project will start in January 2017 and will last 6 months only, but I am sure it will provide an important contribution to the people in Leith.

I am also proud to say that ELREC's Community for Conservation project has been awarded the CEMVO Environmental Award during the Ethnic Minority Impact Award 2016 in Glasgow on 12th November 2016. The award is a recognition for the important work that Communities for Conservation project is doing to provide energy advice and encourage equality and community cohesion. I would like to congratulate the whole team – Jean-Matthieu Gaunand, Ewelina Lukaszek, Parveen Ishaq, Asma Kassim, Adil Ibrahim, Dina Ahmed, David Tai and Mariana Diaz – for their successful project and the award.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to ELREC Board, staff and volunteers for the hard work, commitment and dedication that they have put throughout the year to promote ELREC work towards equality across Edinburgh and the Lothians.

I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Foysoil Choudhury MBE

OUR FUNDERS



Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC), founded in 1971, is a voluntary body and charitable company made up of individual members and representatives from a wide range of organisations. ELREC has a remit to work across the areas of City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian Councils.

Our Objectives

- to work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination
- to reduce inequality and promote a culture of human rights
- to promote good relations between persons of different groups without distinction

We pursue our aims through:

- Engagement with communities of protected characteristics
- Complainant aid for victims of discrimination and harassment.



Edinburgh & Lothians Regional Equality Council (ELREC)

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From the Honorary President—Prof Sir Geoff Palmer DSc OBE



From The Herald, 19 Dec 2016, Phil Miller Arts Correspondent

APPLIANCE OF SCIENCE: Professor Geoff Palmer said whisky was in Scottish culture. ‘When somebody asks you to take a drink with them that is an act of kindness...’

LUMINARIES who have excelled in their chosen professions have posed for a photographic exhibition showcasing the immense contribution of migrants to Scotland.

The collection, captured by photographer Karen Gordon, is being unveiled at Glasgow Caledonian University to mark International Migrants Day.

Entitled “Engaging Pictures”, they chart the life stories of leading academics, company directors, sports coaches and carers who have settled in Scotland.

One of those featured is Jamaican expat Geoff Palmer, a retired professor of grain science, who left his homeland in 1955 aged 14.

“My mother had eight or nine sisters; I can never remember how many they are,” he reveals. “They all lived in the same house, managed by my grand-aunt. One day in 1948 I was told that my mother was going to London and I was to live with my aunts.

“In 1955, my mother sent for me. The idea of going to London on my own at 14 years worried me a little bit, but I had to go because my mother wanted me to come to live with her.

“So my aunts got my passport, a ticket to travel, a suit, and a small suitcase, which I still have. “Before I left for the plane, my grand-aunt wrapped me in newspaper because she said London was cold.”

Mr Palmer retired in 2005 from his work in grain science in the International Centre for Brewing and Distilling at Heriot-Watt University.

On the subject of distilling, he said: "Whisky in Scottish culture is just like Russian vodka, or American bourbon, or French wine. When somebody asks you to take a drink with them that is an act of kindness... this drink of kindness does not have to be alcoholic. But how many migrants have been asked to join in such a drink?"

"If somebody is not prepared to eat or drink with you, then you're not part of the system. I think you get that relationship of kindness in a society if somebody sees you as equal."

The images were taken in 2014 and the exhibition has been produced in partnership with Migrant Voice.

Other subjects featured in the exhibition include Hing Fung Teh, a Tai Chi Instructor of Chinese ancestry who settled in Kirkintilloch after arriving to the UK from Malaysia in 1973; Australian Louise Falconer, the principal policy officer at Glasgow City Council; Bulgarian Ivan Petrov, a home support worker in Glasgow and Robyn Marsack, the former director of the Scottish Poetry Library in Edinburgh who emigrated from New Zealand, among others.

The images are being shown in the foyer of the Centre for Executive Education.

It comes as Minister for International Development Alasdair Allan met EU nationals, refugee groups, migrants and asylum seekers in Glasgow yesterday to mark the UN International Migrants Day.

From the Vice Chair



Dear all,

Welcome to our December's newsletter. It is a pleasure for me to write here.

In the past three months there have been a few changes in staff. Unfortunately after so many years of working with us, Adil Ibrahim, Alice Musamba and Parveen Ishaq have left ELREC. We are very grateful to them for all their hard work and we wish them all the best for their future. We have hired two other people to take over Adil and Alice: Dina Ahmed is the new African Community Link Officer and Martin Krumins

is the new Caseworker for the Support and Advice Service. Asma Kassim, who has been the maternity cover for Parveen since the beginning of the project in April, will continue to work as South Asian Community Link Officer. We are happy that Nicole Currie has returned to work for Bright Choices project at the end of October after the end of her maternity leave.

More details on all the projects and the work that staff and volunteers do will be found in the next pages of the newsletter. I hope you enjoy reading it.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their hard work, particularly towards the Equality Champions Gala Dinner and the Refugees Voice event. Their commitment has been crucial for the success of these two events.

Finally, I would like to wish Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone in ELREC.

Shami Khan DL

Vice Chair and Convenor of the Personnel Subcommittee

NEWS

BE PART OF SOMETHING GREAT !

NOMINATION OPENS FOR 3 COMMUNITY COUNCILS IN EDINBURGH

Do you live in: *Craigmillar , Drylaw / Telford & Old Town*

Make a difference to your neighbourhood, help improve your community and meet new people and learn skills.

This Nomination form must be completed and returned to the Returning Officer by 30 January 2017, Monday 4pm. If there are more candidates than places on the community council, an election will be held in that area on Thursday 23 February 2017.

For more information and nomination forms please visit:

<https://diversityinpubliclife.wordpress.com/community-council>

ELREC- Diversity in Public Life project is happy to provide any kind of support in nominations to BME individual lived around these area. Contact: mrahman@elrec.org.uk



ONLINE SURVEY

Diversity in Lothian's Community Councils

Survey link: www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/A88LU

Deadline: **20 February 2017**

Community Councillors in *East Lothian, West Lothian, Midlothian and City of Edinburgh Council* are invited to take part on this survey.

The survey is conducting jointly by the Improvement Service Community Council Project and ELREC (Edinburgh and Lothians Regional Equality Council) Diversity in Public Life project.

For more information: www.diversityinpubliclife.wordpress.com/ccsurvey
or www.communitycouncils.scot

Contact: research@improvementservice.org.uk or publiclife@elrec.org.uk

Hate Crime Community Campaign

We are delighted to announce the kick off in January 2017 of our new project at ELREC which is funded by Leith Neighbourhood Partnership through a Community Grant. The project is hate crime community campaign called 'No Hate Here!'



No Hate Here! will promote an informative campaign on hate crime incidents in Leith area. We aim to raise awareness on the level of hate crime in Edinburgh North, and Leith specifically, since this area has registered the highest levels of hate crime incidents in the whole Edinburgh. Through its projects and services, ELREC is already working to tackle hate crime and to offer support and advice to victims who have experienced these types of incidents. No Hate Here! will run for six months, until end of June, and will have strong collaboration with other organisations and institutions which also work in the area to further promote the campaign and will organise workshops on hate crime and equality open to the public for free.

ELREC is a third party reporting centre, which means we work as intermediary between the public and the police by providing a safe space where people can report hate crime to trained staff without talking directly to the police. To deliver this project as effectively as possible, we would like to liaise with other third party reporting organisations in Leith in order to exchange good practice, discuss ideas for further and more efficient support and for joint workshops open to the public to explain the role of third party reporting organisations and their importance for the community.

If you are interested to get involved at any capacity or to volunteer with us, please get in touch with the project coordinator, Mitra Rostami at mrostami@elrec.org.uk.

Calling for new members at ELREC!!

ELREC strives to embody the principles of transparency; integrity; equity; mutual co-operation; and participatory democracy.

ELREC welcomes all individuals and organisations who share our aims, visions, and values to join us as members. As a member you will have the opportunity to shape ELREC policy direction; participate in ELREC's annual Management Board election; and attend ELREC events and lectures. Our members also act as links to various communities. You will receive a copy of the ELREC Quarterly Community Newsletter and receive information on equality related events.

We welcome membership from individuals from diverse groups as this results in the better representation of all protected characteristics. We would be much obliged if you would consider joining us, as well as helping us by encouraging individuals and organisations known to you to join ELREC.

More information regarding membership, application forms as well as full copies of ELREC's Memorandum and Articles of Association, can be viewed by visiting our membership webpage or contacting our office:

www.elrec.org.uk/member.htm

From the Headteacher of Drummond Community High School

Foysol Choudhury, the Chairman of ELREC (Edinburgh and Lothian Regional Equality Council) is a former pupil of Drummond Community High School, and we were honoured to be asked to partner the Refugees' Voices event in early December which aimed to support refugees in Edinburgh.



Drummond is in the heart of the city and is one of the most vibrantly multi cultural secondary schools in Edinburgh with over 24 different languages spoken and where diversity is celebrated. Foysol spoke passionately about his education at Drummond and the opportunities it gave him. The Lord Provost then spoke, referencing his career as a teacher, so it was therefore very fitting that our school was the venue for this event.

The refugee situation across Europe and North Africa is in the news a great deal, and at its heart wrenching core is the issue of humanity. With this event ELREC and Drummond sought to bridge the gap between refugees and the community. Many organisations, including third sector, offered practical advice and support on a variety of topics such as education, housing and healthcare, and the event was very well attended.

Mike Russell MSP and Ben McPherson MSP were guest speakers, along with Nick Gardner, Councillor, and Cammy Day, Councillor, all of whom welcomed refugees to Edinburgh. Majid from Iran and Abdulrahman Hassan from Egypt spoke poignantly and eloquently about their personal experience of seeking refuge in the city and how important events like this are to support those who need it most.

Drummond Senior Prefects were on hand to help organise the event and two groups of S2 and S3 pupils performed fabulous musical pieces to welcome all our guests. All in all it was a very successful evening, raising the vital issue of support for refugees, as well as the opportunity for them to access the services they need in Edinburgh.

Jodie Hannan

Headteacher of Drummond Community High School

@drummond_CHS

@DrummondHT



From the Project Lead Officer and Fundraiser



Dear all,

Welcome to our December newsletter!

This has been a very busy autumn at ELREC, with two big events in November and December that have successfully promoted ELREC and its work among partner organisations, the public and policy makers.

On 20th November we held our second Equality Champions Gala Dinner, to celebrate the amazing work that a number of people have done for the community and also to celebrate ELREC efforts towards equality and social justice. Over 200 people attended the event. You can find more details and the pictures of the event in the following pages of this newsletter.

On 6th December we organised the Refugees Voice event in partnership with Drummond Community High School. The event aimed to bring together refugees living in Edinburgh and the Lothians and service providers, so that the refugees could discuss with them about their needs. Again, in the following pages you can read more in details about it.

Besides these events, we have continued to apply to more funding. Our application for a project on tackling hate crime in Leith has been awarded a small grant by the Leith Neighbourhood Partnership, starting in January 2017. We are very proud of this small grant because it has received the award after being voted by the people who live in Leith, which highlights how important it is for Leith residents to promote equality and to fight hate crime and discrimination. We have other pending applications, mostly regarding tackling hate crime in different areas of Edinburgh, and we look forward to find out the outcomes next January.

In the past few months we have had a few changes in staff. Unfortunately we said goodbye to Adil and Alice, who have decided to leave ELREC. We all miss them and we wish them all the best for the future. We then have hired Dina Ahmed as the new African Community Link Officer and Martin Krumins as the new Caseworker for the Support and Advice Service. They are both doing a great job.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank ELREC staff, Board members and volunteers for their hard work, support and dedication, and to wish them Merry Christmas and a beautiful New Year.

Dr. Elisabetta Spano

From the Administrator

Hello everyone,

ELREC has hosted and been involved with a number of events since September. Our Equality Champions' Dinner in November and Refugees' Voices event in December were well-attended. It was great to meet people from different communities and we received very positive feedback.

We have also run a number of in house training sessions and workshops, topics ranging from deep democracy to social media training.

On Dec 8th we enjoyed our end year celebration with staff and volunteers.

I look forward to the New Year and continuing to work with all of our staff and volunteers for the ongoing and new projects.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to all.

Didem Kaner Ural

didem.kaner@elrec.org.uk



ELREC's Support and Advice Service

If you've been discriminated against; need assistance or are looking for housing and benefits advice, we're here to help. We offer free and impartial advice for individuals who have suffered discrimination, need to report hate crimes or need assistance in working with public bodies. If we're unable to help, we'll help you take your case to an appropriate organisation who can.

If you would like to come and see us, please call and book an appointment first, and also write down details of the incident, paying particular attention to dates. We'll listen to your case and make an assessment, helping you to identify your options and decide on the best course of action.

To report an incident or get more information contact us at: ELREC, 14 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH. (T) 0131 556 0441 (F) 0131 556 8577(E) admin@elrec.org.uk (W) www.elrec.org.uk

Information on how to report online can be found here:
<https://www.scotland.police.uk/secureforms/hate-crime/>

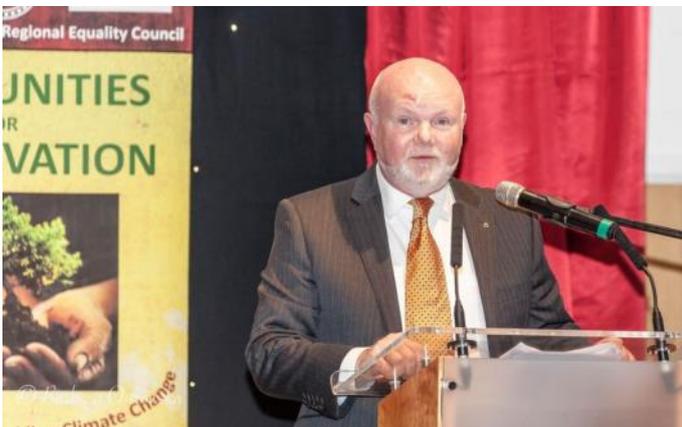
Equality Champions' Gala Dinner 2016

ELREC's second Equality Champions' Awards and Gala Dinner was held on 20th November 2016 at the James Watt Centre, Heriot Watt University. Over 250 people attended from diverse communities and organisations. ELREC will continue to recognize and celebrate the excellence of achievement of those individuals who have worked hard to contribute to equality in our society and to promote equality and human rights across the Lothians.



The dinner opened with a number of speeches from ELREC's Chair, Mr. Foysoyl Choudhury Mbe; Cllr for Leith Walk ward in Edinburgh also representing the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Bailie Angela Blacklock; MP for Edinburgh South West and SNP Justice and Home Affairs spokesperson in the House of Commons, Joanna Cherry MP QC; Councillor of Portobello/Craigmillar Ward, Maureen Child; ELREC's Vice Chair Shami Khan DL; MSP for Midlothian North and Musselburgh, Colin Beattie MSP; Scottish Conservative and Unionist MSP for the Lothian region, Miles Briggs MSP, ELREC's President Prof. Sir Geoff Palmer; and CBS Chairman Dr Wali Tasar Uddin Mbe.

Congratulation to the ELREC Equality Champions of the year: Jane Drysdale, Naina Minhas, Khalid Mir,



Manjari Singh, Jessica Yang, Zarina Ahmad, Ghazala Farooq, Indumati Pandya, Kamrun Nahar Malik, Aileen Orr, Mahendra Kumar Agarwal, Humayun Kabir, Humza Yousaf MSP, Tom Halpin, and Bryan Pottinger



The ceremony was compered by two of ELREC's project coordinators Neil Ogilvy and Jean-matthieu Gaunand and our volunteers Arati Chavan and Ruhaly Uddin. The event offered a delicious dinner from South Asian cuisine by Saffron Events UK, entertainment from Indian dance groups Dance Ihayami and Move Your Body and a raffle with surprising prizes. We would like to thank all those who participated and contributed in the preparation of such a successful event. Thanks to Mr. Rajnish Singh, ELREC's secretary who provided the vote of thanks at the end. Our appreciation also extends to all organisations for attending this event. Our partnerships with you mean a lot to us. We would also like to thank Barbara Ostrowska for the pictures and Channel i Arran Imrie for the films. Last but not least, a huge thanks to all ELREC staff who worked hard for putting this event together. We look forward to ELREC's third Equality Champions' Award & Gala Dinner in 2017. #ELRECECAwards.







Refugees' Voices

On Tuesday 6th December 2016 ELREC, in partnership with Drummond Community High School, organised an event in support of the refugee community in Edinburgh and the Lothians. The event aimed to facilitate a discussion between service providers in public and third sector, and asylum seekers and refugees in order to hear from the refugees first-hand about their circumstances and needs, and link them with suitable services.



The event was successful, receiving support from policy makers as well as a number of organisations, most of which had stalls where they presented their services to the refugees and asylum seekers. These organisations were: Multicultural Family Base, Council of British Pakistani, Scottish Refugee Council, One Refugee Support Group, Churches of Scotland, Edinburgh City of Sanctuary, Edinburgh Direct Aid, Fresh Start, Shakti Women's Aid, Council of Bangladeshi's in Scotland, Edinburgh College, Ethnic Minority Law Centre, Skills Development Scotland, Refugee Survival Trust, Edinburgh Central Mosque, RNIB Scotland, Community Learning Development, MEHIS, Equal Scotland, Saheliya, Fresh Look and

the University of Edinburgh.

During the event, the pupils of the school provided entertainment with two performances. A number of speeches were also part of the programme. The speakers included: the Rt. Hon. Donald Wilson, Lord Provost of the City of Edinburgh; Michael Russell MSP (Minister for UK Negotiations on Scotland's Place in Europe); Foyso Choudhury MBE (ELREC Chair); Jodie Hannan (Drummond CHS Head teacher); Dr. Elisabetta Spano (ELREC's Project Lead Officer); Ben Macpherson (MSP for Leith



and Edinburgh North); Cllrs Cameron Rose and Nick Gardner; Dr. Wali Tasar Uddin MBE and Shami Khan DL (ELREC Vice-Chair). The most heartfelt moment occurred when two refugees, Abdulrahman and Majid, spoke about their plight and their experiences

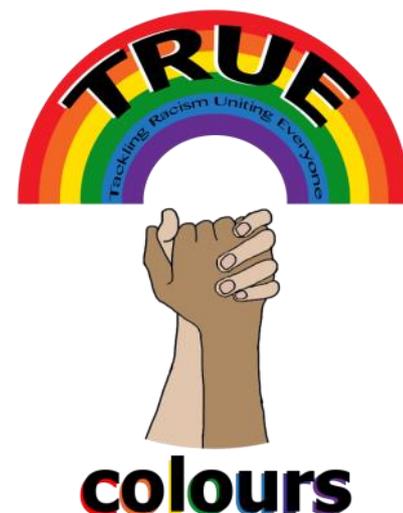




TRUE Colours

Hello all,

TRUE Colours group has been continuing their work on developing new workshops aimed for high school students. The new topics identified by our volunteers are covering LGBT awareness and related bullying behaviours for young people, and we have started working on creative activities for primary school related to raising awareness on bullying and empathy. Additionally, we have been developing a new workshop for teachers and youth workers, with the aim of bringing bullying behaviours to mainstream attention in schools. The decision to start developing this kind of workshop came from our research in the previous term, where teachers expressed interest in knowing more about his subject, and seeking advice on how to react and deal with different situations.



In the previous months we have been working with different organisations in order to promote our work, specifically with Police Scotland's School link officers. We are hoping that this collaboration will be of mutual benefit and help TRUE Colours will have easier access to schools and have a more tailored approach.

In the first week of December, we had a great opportunity to be a part of Unity and Diversity Week at St Augustine's RC High School – a week was dedicated to celebrating the many cultures that make up Scotland today.

Una Dosen
TRUE Colours Project Coordinator
UDosen@elrec.org.uk



Unity and Diversity Week tree, representing different languages spoken in the school

Youth Zone

Hello again from a lively and crowded Youth Zone.

The Youth Zone is getting busier. We had over 60 participants since July this year. No time to get bored! A group of us met several times to work on social media skills, many people came to us to brush up their CVs.



During two training workshops, we also worked on our facilitation skills.

As some of you might remember, ELREC is now Eurodesk UK Partner!

Eurodesk UK is an information and support service to help young people and youth organisations find out about opportunities in Europe.

Facilitation Skills Training: Introductory Workshops in Deep Democracy, 12th and 19th October 2017.



European Opportunities for Youth: Eurodesk Event, 08th November 2016

On the 8th of November we organised our first public information session on Eurodesk and Erasmus+ funding opportunities for youth, but do not worry if you could not participate. You still have a lot of chances! During the Youth Zone drop-in sessions you will also find plenty of information on opportunities for young people at European level!

So do not forget to join us on Wednesdays from 4 to 7 pm. Everyone is welcome. You can have a chat and some fun in a relaxed atmosphere and those who wish can get some support in looking for a job, higher

education or volunteering opportunities.

Follow us on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/youthzoneedin>) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/youthzoneedinburgh)

to keep up to date. There are loads of activities and training opportunities coming up for next months!

Cristiana Nicoletti

Youth Zone Coordinator

cristiana.nicoletti@elrec.org.uk

eurodesk
PARTNER
UK



Volunteer Profiles



I started volunteering for ELREC in June to support the organisation's great cause of promoting equality and fighting discrimination. Since I started I felt so welcome by the lovely multicultural team, I loved how each member is passionate about their projects. I mainly help out with research/ workshops of Young people against hate project, alongside with Nick who has been a pleasure to work with and always kindly gives constructive feedback. I also helped out Cristiana in updating the Youth zone project social media; I particularly appreciate her time in giving me some tips in public speaking. Also participating in the different projects' events gives me the chance to contribute in all projects within ELREC, which I found very rewarding. Overall, I thoroughly enjoy my volunteering with ELREC as it satisfies my passion of making a positive change in society and in the same time gaining a number of benefits; training, meeting new people therefore learning many new things. To everyone in ELREC thank you for everything.

Diline

My name is Hazel Makunku. I joined the communities for conservation volunteering team at ELREC in April 2016. My responsibility since, includes, working on a sustainability guide book on which researched and provided information about sustainable food initiatives, sustainable transport, green energy and recycling. I'm currently working on the recycling section of the guide book which am enjoying.

I have had a wonderful experience volunteering at ELREC. The team at ELREC is fantastic: very nice, kind and supportive. I felt at home the very first time I walked in and have since enjoyed being part of this wonderful family. I have also learnt a lot from the project we are working on, especially that I have not lived in Edinburgh for a long time and had to research on community information here in Edinburgh, which made it even more interesting. This project has enabled me to know a lot about Edinburgh, including, other projects and initiatives working to promote sustainable actions, also different organisations and charities in Edinburgh. Most importantly, this project is in line with my area of research I conducted when I was studying for a master's in Carbon Finance at Edinburgh University, so I'm lucky to carry on looking at how societies can be vital in contributing towards a greener environment.

I hope my time with ELREC is valuable for the organisation too.

Thank you very much to ELREC for this opportunity!!!!!!!!!!!!

Hazel



Young People Against Hate

Hi from all the staff and volunteers involved in the Young People Against Hate (YPAH) project. It has been another eventful year, full of highs and lows. We've met some fantastic young people across Edinburgh and we've been supported by some amazing volunteers. 2016 has also been a year of increasing levels of xenophobia and islamophobia, this year has seen an 83 percent increase in Islamophobia across Scotland, homophobic and disability based hate crime is also on the rise. More than ever projects like the YPAH are necessary.



Over the last three months the volunteers and the staff have been facilitating conducting research, facilitating workshops and supporting ELREC/YPAH events. We've facilitated 30 workshops since September. I'd like to thank all the organisations which have allowed the YPAH staff and volunteers to come in and speak to young people about Racism, Islamophobia and Xenophobia. I'd also like to thank Edinburgh College for allowing us to come in on multiple occasions to speak to the students. The YPAH has moved away from one off workshops on a chosen subject and tried to focus on a series of workshops which are aimed at developing empathy and awareness. These have gotten really good feedback and we are all looking forward to doing more next year.

In October the YPAH was involved in 3 different events throughout national Hate Crime week and we'd like to thank everyone who attended and got involved in those events. It is really important to keep the topic of hate crime in the public's attention. ELREC was chosen by the people of Leith to conduct a hate crime awareness campaign. We are all looking forward to doing more work in Leith and we would like to thank the people of Leith for voting for the project.

The YPAH has facilitated over 60 workshops since the start of the project back in May 2016. We've worked with nearly 450 young people and support 170 youth practitioners. We get a first-hand look at the effects and the reasons being hate crimes but we also get an opportunity to witness young people engaging and trying to understand more about other cultures and individuals. We have started taking workshop bookings for next year, if you know any youth group who may benefit or who may be interested in learning more about equality issues please feel free to put them in touch.

Last but not most definitely not least; all of the work that the YPAH has done over the past year could not have been possible without the amazing volunteers who give up their free time to help ELREC do the work that they do. Thank you so much. Have a lovely festive period and a happy New year.

Nick Greener

Youth Development Officer

ngreener@elrec.org.uk



Routes to Roots



Hi everyone,

The last few months have been a busy period in the Routes to Roots project. Below is a taste of what has been happening with much more to come in the new year!

Trip to Edinburgh Gurdwara:

In October a group of 12 of us were warmly welcomed at the Edinburgh Gurdwara. We experienced the end of the Bandi Chhor Divas ceremony. We were then given a talk about Sikhism and the Sikh community in Edinburgh and provided lunch. A great educational day was had by all. We will be visiting various faith sites throughout the project.



© photography
Barbara Ostrowska

Wojtek the Hero Bear Family Workshop:

On the 12th of November, Routes to Roots, in partnership with the Polish Cultural Festival Association, hosted a family workshop on Wojtek the soldier bear. The event explored the story of the bear and the connection Wojtek has with the Polish community in Edinburgh and Scotland. The day

had a great turnout with positive feedback from participants.



'The View From Here' Portrait Gallery Exhibition:

At the end of November we visited the National Portrait Gallery to view the exhibition entitled 'The View from Here'. Our group spent time in the exhibition looking at landscape photographs from the last 150 years. We then spent an hour in a workshop discussing how landscape influences heritage and how it is viewed in our various cultures. We will be organising 7 more trips to galleries across Edinburgh during the rest of the project.



Podcasts:

Over the last few months our volunteers and students from Napier University have been working on podcast videos on both the Sikh and Polish communities in Edinburgh to link in with the activities we have done above. The videos are almost ready so head over to our media pages below and keep an eye

out for them!

Neil Ogilvy

Routes to Roots Project Coordinator

nogilvy@elrec.org.uk



ELREC Routes to Roots



@ELREC_Roots



Multicultural Heritage Meetup



ELRECUK

Communities For Conservation

Ethnic minority communities take action in Climate Change

ENERGY ADVICE

So far, the team has conducted over 140 home energy visits which helped people save energy and money. People received the £140 Warm Home Discounts, new central heating systems under the Warmer Home Scotland schemes, and switched to cheaper suppliers using the comparison site www.uswitch.com. In partnership with Home Energy Scotland, our Polish Community Link Officer interviewed a family who received help: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pbnLpg1BPIs>



CYCLING CLUB

We employed some of our volunteers as sessional coordinators to lead on cycling activities. We organized 2 led rides to Corstorphine hill where the Friends of Corstorphine hill guided us into the ecology of the woods. We organized one ride to the Pentland. Most participants were beginner cyclists and had not cycled in 10 years. We also bought 50 bikes that are going to be restored.

In the past months, we screened *Before the Flood*, and *Drying for freedom* with the Green Drying project, delivered eco-workshops to ESOL students, and at language schools, and brought a group to the recycling centre.

WORKSHOPS

Our community gardens have been flourishing over the months. There is plenty to harvest in Autumn! The Greenkeepers and Drumbrae groups participated in the Royal Botanic Garden Harvest festival.



FOOD GROWING

We did a climate change talk for Awaz FM, and interviewed Julian Holbrook as part of our environmental podcast. The video is coming up soon.

Volunteer with us, and join our activities!

cfc@elrec.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/ELRECC4C>

Twitter: @ELREC_CFC



Multicultural Eco Celebration

Thank you to the 200 people who attended our Multicultural Eco Celebration. The event raised awareness of climate change and the environment. Thank you to our outstanding speakers who spoke about climate change and the environment: Green MSP Ms Alison Johnstone, Mr Foyso Choudhury MBE, Ms Agne Milukaite from Cycle.land, Ms Julie Hauck from Friends of The Earth.

A big thanks to the Climate Challenge Fund for funding [#communitiesforconservation](#) and enabling us to change behaviours, and to raise awareness of climate change in the communities.

Thank you to all organizations who had such wonderful stalls and activities: Keep Scotland Beautiful, The Welcoming Edinburgh, Friends of the Earth Scotland, Home Energy Scotland South East, Swap & Reuse HUB "Shrub" Co-operative, Cycle.land, Food Sharing Edinburgh, Southside Food Assembly, Cycling UK Scotland, Vita Coco Coconut Water who offered coconut water, Vegware who donated eco friendly disposables. Thank you to the performers Dance Ihayami Ihayami Scotland and Ceilidh Caleerie who performed beautifully. Thank you to Zarina Ahmad from CEMVO Scotland for conducting a great educational game on recycling. Thank you to the World Kitchen in Leith who sourced organic and local produce and who served delicious food.

Last but not least our gratitude extends to all our volunteers who are doing a fantastic job and without whom such kind of events would not be possible. Zach, Debra, Candi, Madhavi, Pawel, Barbara, Neena, Arati, Rekha, Hannah, Martin, Katerina, Connie, Linda, Susana, Larissa, Johnson, and Diline. A special thanks to Aileas who did a wonderful job at organizing this event.

Children enjoyed taking part in wide range of climate friendly activities at the kids corner organized by South Asian Community Link Officer: decorating tins and planting seeds, painting stones and sea shells, making windmills, making gift boxes out of magazine papers, photo frames with twigs, cake games and yoga and mindfulness sessions. Everyone appreciated the fun filled day with good learning. "This event is very interesting and my daughter was very happy here" "Colourful, fun, very creative and interesting." "Very inspirational, friendly, kids loved it." "We loved yoga and all crafts. Thank you for organising such a nice day." "It was good fun to make several activities."

"Thank you so much for your invitation to attend the previous event. I had a great time and met lovely people. It definitely helped, as we have a few members coming now and shop locally at Food Assembly." South Side food assembly



ELREC RECEIVES CEMVO'S ENVIRONMENTAL AWARD

Keep Scotland Beautiful recognized ELREC with the Environmental Award from CEMVO Scotland for their Communities for Conservation project as part of the Ethnic Minority Impact Awards.

Mr Foysoyl Choudhury MBE, Chair of ELREC congratulates Jean-Matthieu Gaunand, Project Coordinator, and his team for their hard work and dedication:

"Communities for Conservation has successfully inspired environmental behaviour changes amongst diverse communities. We are honoured to have received this well-deserved award. Our hard-working staff has been dedicated to the cause but lots of work still needs to be done in the communities on this issue. I would like to thank our funders, the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund and all the partners."

ELREC's focus on climate change started in 2014 with the launch of the Communities for Conservation project. Funded by the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund, the project aimed at inspiring minority communities to reduce their carbon footprint through climate change initiatives. To this date, the project has engaged with over 3000 people from BME communities by providing home energy visits, cycling activities, and food growing workshops. Over the last three years the project has helped its users save over £150,000 through helping them qualify for grants to fund energy saving home improvements. The team has empowered over 100 volunteers some of whom have pursued a career in the environment. They have delivered over 70 workshops related to climate change. This Environmental Award is a great achievement for ELREC.

David Gunn, Climate Challenge Fund Manager at Keep Scotland Beautiful presented ELREC with the Environmental Award and commented:

"I was delighted to present ELREC with the Environmental Award, and congratulate them for all they have achieved through their Climate Challenge Fund Project, Communities for Conservation.

"Keep Scotland Beautiful has been pleased to sponsor the CEMVO Scotland Environmental Impact Award for the last three years, and we value the opportunity to recognise the efforts being made by Ethnic Minority communities, such as ELREC, to make their local areas clean, green and more sustainable. "The Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund is empowering Ethnic Minority communities to take local action on climate change. We are proud to manage the Fund on behalf of the Scottish Government and look forward to supporting many more Ethnic Minority Communities to take climate action in the future"

Ms Zarina Ahmad, Climate Change and environment officer at CEMVO Scotland:

"The Impact Awards are given to those who have made huge differences to their community. ELREC's CCF project not only has achieved this but has become an integral part of ELREC's work. Jean-Matthieu has shown great leadership in taking this project forward, providing support and advice to other CCF projects and opening to collaborative work. Communities for Conservation is



an exemplar project and Jean-Matthieu a role model we should all be proud of, truly deserving the CEMVO Environment Impact Award".



PART OF THE
Keep Scotland Beautiful
CHARITY



SCOTLAND

Bright Choices



A warm season's greeting from the Bright Choicers! There has been a lot going on with the Bright Choices over the past few months. First of all, Nicole has been back from maternity leave with full steam and energy! Secondly, we completed the development of "My Life, My Choices" educational pack for youth. 'My life, my choices', is a course which has Human Rights and conflict resolution approach in preventive work with young people and has been designed to be delivered to youth in 8 sessions of 55 minutes as part of Personal and Social Education (PSE) curriculum in secondary schools. A 2 session plan which was an extract of the full course, delivered to nearly 130 S3 pupils in Leith Academy in November. Young people had excellent participation and through group

and individual exercises they explored and learned about the notions around forced marriage and Female Genital Mutilation. The main outcome of the course, which was raising awareness, how to raise concern about those issues and where to refer to in case of being subjected to such abuse was delivered to the young people who participated in the course clearly. The team also provided 5 drop-in sessions to the pupils in Leith Academy over lunch breaks one day a week. A similar drop-in service has been provided to the pupils in Drummond Community High School following a Bright Choices presentation delivered to all the pupils and staff over an assembly session in November.

Bright Choices team have also welcomed Mohammed Hameed who has recently joined us as mediator and restorative justice practitioner.

Mitra Rostami Nicole Currie

Bright Choices Project Workers

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bright
CHOICES

Equalities Engagement

The Equalities Engagement project has spent a busy quarter in conducting many community engagement activities and events after the triennial Community Council (CC) election took place in Edinburgh Council and East Lothian Council, from September to October. The project work, Diversity in Public Life focused on providing support to the BME candidates who wished to be engaged with Community Councils, as well as recruiting new members to the PLC scheme. This year, Black History Month, celebrated in October, coincided with national hate crime awareness week 2016.

Celebrating Black History Months in Midlothian

To celebrate Black History Month 2016 in Midlothian, an event was hosted on 26 October 2016, 6.00pm at Dalkeith Arts Centre in partnership with ELREC Equality Engagement project, Midlothian Peoples Equality Group (MPEG) and Health in Mind.

The community event was inaugurated by Councillor Joe Wallace, Lord Provost of Midlothian. The keynote speaker was Professor Sir Geoff Palmer OBE, who outlined the contribution of the African Caribbean community to Scottish cultural and social life, with local connection in Edinburgh and Lothians. Another speaker was Fatoumata Sidibeh who highlighted the needs of the local African communities and, the importance of their involvement in public life and public sector employment and empowerment of the black community. There was also an amazing musical show hosted by ELREC volunteer Tamsyn Lonsdale-



Smith and Mark. Brilliant thematic African songs were performed by Zoe Zenga, Einstein Hakutambwi and Ketaki Zodgekar. The poem recitation by Izzy Bravo was hugely applauded by the audience. The major attraction of the event was the world famous Jamaican singer Claudius England. He was on his UK tour. The creative artist Mara Menzies told stories and involved children taking them up on the stage. ELREC Diversity in Public Life project publicised information at the event. Erin Cuthbertson, Equality Engagement Officer, Midlothian Council thanked everyone for attending the event. The event was supported by a grant from Voluntary Action Fund in collaboration with Midlothian Council.

Chinese Autumn Lights event in Edinburgh

Edinburgh Chinese Arts Association (ECAA) in partnership with ELREC and Breast Cancer Care Scotland (BCCS) hosted a community engagement and fund raising event on 05 November 2016, Saturday 7.30pm – 10pm, Venue: Central hall, 2 West Tollcross, Edinburgh. The event aimed to promote Chinese culture and heritage to the



mainstream society and to increase community cohesion and celebrate the 4th anniversary of the ECAA. Excellent live performances were the main attraction of the event. ECAA artists performed traditional Chinese dance, music and kung fu. The Edinburgh Chinese Choir, as well as highland dance and Scottish music, were featured at the events.

The event was opened by a welcome speech of Jessica Yang, Chair of ECAA. The guest speakers were Zhang Limin, Deputy Consul General of China and ELREC Chair Foysol Choudhury MBE. ELREC Chair highlighted the importance of getting involved in public life and the democratic process and requested everyone to join ELREC's Diversity in Public Life Project. He also added that the Chinese community is the second largest ethnic group in Scotland but there is no representation of this ethnic community in local public life.

Shadowing opportunity with a MSP

Are you interested to join to a shadowing program with a MSP ? Limited places. For detail contact us E-mail: publiclife@elrec.org.uk

BME Community Councillors appointed in Edinburgh

Community Council elections took place in Edinburgh and East Lothian over Sept – Oct 2016.

With the support from ELREC Diversity in Public Life project, a total 11 candidates from a BME background have submitted their nominations. Further to the formal election procedure, eight candidates have been successful. BME candidates have appointed in the following Community Councils; Gilmerton and Inch, Granton and District, Currie, Leith Links, Leith Central, Craiglockhart, Sighthill/Broomhouse & Parkhead, West Pilton and West Granton. Edinburgh Council hosted a welcoming workshop for the newly elected councillors on 03 December 2016 at the City Chambers, Edinburgh.



Facts and Fears about Islam and Muslim People in Midlothian

To raise awareness about Islam and Muslim people and to increase inclusion, the event Facts and Fears about Islam & Muslim People was hosted jointly by ELREC & Midlothian Peoples Equality Group and Midlothian Council on 12 October 2016, Wednesday, 6.00pm at the Council Chamber, Midlothian House, Dalkeith.



To coincide with the National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2016, the event aimed at; challenging misconceptions about Muslim people, allowing community members to

voice concerns, discussing discrimination towards Muslim women and methods of challenging Islamophobia. The keynote speakers were the engineer Zahid Ali, the advocate Safeena Rashid and Imam Dr Rahael Chohan. They all live/work in Midlothian. ELREC Youth Development Officer Nick Greener discussed the work of ELREC Young People Against Hate Project (YPAH) to combat Islamophobia among Edinburgh's schools and young people in his presentation.

About 40 people attended from Midlothian Council, churches, voluntary and community groups and the public.

Ex Lasswade high school pupil, Zahid Ali highlighted the common misconceptions about the Muslim community and clarified the facts of Islam during his presentation.

Advocate Safeena Rashid, another former pupil of Lasswade high school, shared her personal experience of growing up in Midlothian as a Muslim woman. The audience took part in an interactive Q & A in relation to the management of mosques and defining identity of Muslim people.

DIVERSITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTION 2017

More information : www.localcouncillor.scot

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**Scottish Local
Government
Elections**

4 May 2017

Meeting with Ben Macpherson MSP at ELREC

Ben Macpherson MSP for Edinburgh North & Leith has made a visit to ELREC office on 30 November 2016, 9.00am.

In the meeting, Jean Matthew- Community for conservation, Una Dosen – True Color, Cristiana – Youth Zone, Mitra Rostami – Bright Choices briefed activities of their projects. ELREC Project Lead Elisabetta Spano detailed about ELREC's overall remit and recent progress.

Mizan Rahman, Equality Engagement Officer introduced the PLC (Public Life Champion) members. He mentioned that Diversity in Public Life project is very keen to work in partnership with the MSPs in relation to increasing participation of the BME electorate in Public Life who lived around Edinburgh North and beyond. Support will be needed to facilitate shadowing program and public life

workshops at the Scottish Parliament. To get in touch with Ben Macpherson MSP via

Email : ben.macpherson.msp@parliament.scot.

For more info: www.benmacpherson.com/



Festive Gathering at West Lothian Community Race Forum

WL Community Race Forum Festive Gathering West Lothian Community Race Forum (WLCRF) organised an event, Festive Gathering on 13 December 2016, 6.30pm at the Civic Centre, Livingston. At the event, a discussion



facilitated by Dr David Olwa, Chair of WLCRF, on how to foster engagement with the diverse community lived across the West Lothian.

Mizan Rahman, Equalities Engagement Officer has delivered a presentation on ELREC - Diversity in Public Life project: How BME Community get involved in the Council Election 2017. It was addressed that lack of BME representation in West Lothian's public life and diversity in public life project can provide support to the members of BME community who are interested to get involved.

The event was attended by the members of WLCRF and Milan women groups. To get regular updates:

www.facebook.com/WLCommunityRaceForum

Inclusion Scotland: Access to Politics project for Disabled people

Scotland's advice and support service for disabled people seeking involvement in political life and elected office, working towards the introduction of an Access Fund for politics in Scotland.

In 2015 the Scottish Government commissioned Inclusion Scotland to establish a pilot advice and support service for disabled people and those supporting them to address access barriers for political participation. Initially project is offering non-financial advice and guidance only, this project seeks to proactively reach out to disabled people in Scotland who may wish for greater involvement in

political life (e.g. via a political party, a campaigning organisation, local community council, etc.). If you are a disabled person, interested to become involved, please get in touch using the contact details below. Email: info@inclusionScotland.org

Tel: 0131 281 0860, Inclusion Scotland, 2nd Floor Hayweight House, 23 Lauriston Street, Edinburgh, EH3 9DQ

Find us on: www.facebook.com/InclusionScotland



Human Rights Consortium Scotland (HRCS)

Human Rights Consortium Scotland (HRCS)

**HUMAN RIGHTS
CONSORTIUM
SCOTLAND**

Do you want Scotland to be a country where the rights of every individual are respected and every person is treated with dignity - no matter who they are or where they are from?

This is much easier said than done. That is why the Human Rights Consortium Scotland (HRCS) was set up so that civil society organisations can work *together* to promote a human rights based society in Scotland.

Free tickets for parliamentary debates and committees meetings

Committees meetings:

Members of the public can attend committee meetings. A free ticket is required for a seat in the public gallery of a committee room.

When Parliament is in session committees normally meet on the mornings of Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. During these meetings committees take evidence from witnesses, scrutinise legislation and conduct inquiries.

Parliamentary debates:

Visitors can attend Parliament debates by taking a seat in the public gallery of the Debating Chamber. Visitors require a ticket for a seat and these are free of charge.

When Parliament is in session it normally sits on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. It is possible to turn up and enquire if tickets are available, but to avoid disappointment it is advisable to request tickets in advance of a visit.

First Minister's Question Time:

First Minister's Question Time takes place on Thursdays from 12:00 to 12:45 when Parliament is in session. During this time the First Minister answers questions from opposition party leaders as

HRCS is a network of civil society organisations and individual supporters who are all committed to protecting and promoting human rights in Scotland. Over the next year, HRCS will hold events and training, provide resources and become a hub for human rights information exchange. We will use the strength of our network to ensure that human rights law works in practice to make life better for vulnerable people in Scotland.

You can be a part of promoting human rights in Scotland. Civil society organisations, and individuals as supporters, can join up to the HRCS on our website here: www.hrcscotland.org . Or email Mhairi

at info@hrcscotland.org for more information.

well as other MSPs. It is the most popular session of Parliament and demand for tickets is extremely high.

How to book tickets

Tickets for First Minister's Question Time can only



be booked by telephone on 0131 348 5200 or freephone 0800 092 7600 . Other types of tickets can be booked through your MSP . For online booking and more information visit: www.parliament.scot/visitandlearn/24232.aspx

If you are member of BME communities, Diversity in Public Life project may help you to find more

For more information:

www.diversityinpubliclife.wordpress.com

Like us on:

www.facebook.com/diversityinpubliclife

To register with PLC (Public Life Champion) scheme, contact Mizan Rahman, E-mail: mrahman@elrec.org.uk

Volunteering to Achieve

Hi all,

We have come to the end of another year. I would like to thank all of our fabulous volunteers for all their help and dedication in the last year. To celebrate and express our gratitude we have organised the End of the Year Celebration in December. The event was organised in partnership with Invisible Edinburgh city tours and Social Bite – both organisations are dedicated to help and support people who are, or have in the past, experienced homelessness. Invisible Edinburgh tours are run by guides who have experienced homelessness or social disadvantage which gave a very unique perspective to the tour. We have received a small grant from Voluntary Action Fund to help us organise this event and I would like to thank VAF for enabling this event to go forward.



Additionally, we have been very busy planning and delivering the training programme for our volunteers and staff. In the last few months we have hosted sessions such as social media training, transgender awareness, deep democracy, third party reporting from Police Scotland and human rights training.

Una Dosen

Volunteer Development Coordinator UDosen@elrec.org.uk

Support and Advice

This month here at ELREC support and advice, we have been inspired by a great talk on human rights by Carole Ewart. So much of our clients' issues include a violation of these rights and I am determined to give this a louder voice. My plans going forward are to collate data from our cases with human rights violations and petition the S.H.R.C and the E.H.R.C for better access to remedies.

In our duties we have been dealing with a couple of harassment complaints with deep violations of our client's peaceful enjoyment of their property. We are petitioning the council in order that we can find expedient resolution of these trying situations. We have also been dealing with a case of disability discrimination and a troubling hate crime, both of which are ongoing. I am pleased to report that our clients have reported they felt consoled by the work we do here and we will continue to provide support and strive to deliver desirable outcomes.

Martin Krumins

Case Worker—Support and Advice Service

martin.krumins@elrec.org.uk

ADVERTISING

We welcome organisations to advertise in the ELREC Community Newsletter for:

- **Promoting services**
- **Disseminating flyers**
- **Campaigns**
- **Vacancies**
- **Consultations**
- **General marketing**

This service is available for a contribution of £100 to £250 depending on the size and placement of the advertisement. To find out more, please contact Didem Kaner Ural on 0131 556 0441 or email:

admin@elrec.org.uk

Our newsletter is published every quarter in March, June, September and December of each year.

CONFERENCE ROOM BOOKINGS

You can book our 20-seat meeting room on an hourly basis for £20 per hour (reduced rate for small charities and community groups)

Tea & Coffee £1 per head

Please contact the ELREC office for additional information or to make a booking.

BOARD**Honorary Patron**

Lord Provost of Edinburgh

Rt Hon Donald Wilson

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Prof Sir Geoff Palmer
DSc OBE

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MBE

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Mr Mohamed Amjad Chaudhry

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Nicholas Greener

True Colours Worker

Una Dosen

Volunteer Coordinator

Una Dosen

Youth Zone Coordinator

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Ewelina K Lukaszek

Asma Kassim

Mariana Diaz

Dina Ahmed

Adil Ibrahim

Parveen Ishaq

Community Practitioner and Researcher

Joan Coll

VOLUNTEERS

Adithya Suriyapperuma, Aileas Pringle, Alex Rainbow, Alexander Slowman, Alice Barker, Arati Chavan, Arran Imrie, Barbara Ena Ostrowska, Ceri Strang, Choi Ling Lzung, Christina Hellevik, Christophe Brogliolo, Connie Yeung, David Panton, David Weir, Deborah Nombebe, Diline Abushaban, Duncan Howard, Elle Bain, Emma Buchan, Ewan Logie, Francisco Saura Carillo, Hazel Kapepala Makunku, Henry Omorere, Holli Kerr, Holly Smith, James McDonald, Jenny Scholtysik, Katerina Taliatzi, Kirsty Landale, Larissa Engelmann, Laura Sinclair, Lauren Bradley, Leda Mappouridou, Madhavi Latha, Marilyn de Santos, Marta Gordon, Martina Massoli, Matilda Marshall, Mina Omarchevska, Nagat Hamed, Neena Agarwal, Paolo Cavaliere, Pawel Bladocha, Ratiba Kabli, Rebecca Hutchison, Roisin Bathe, Rong Fu, Russel Marlborough, Ryan Whyte, Sara Fitzimons, Sara Ridolfi, Stephanie Smith, Tamsyn Londale-Smith, Thomas Sutcliffe, Wendy Tsang, Yueyue Fitzgerald. Yuklan Wong, Zach Allan

Larger print newsletter available on request



<https://www.facebook.com/ELREC>

