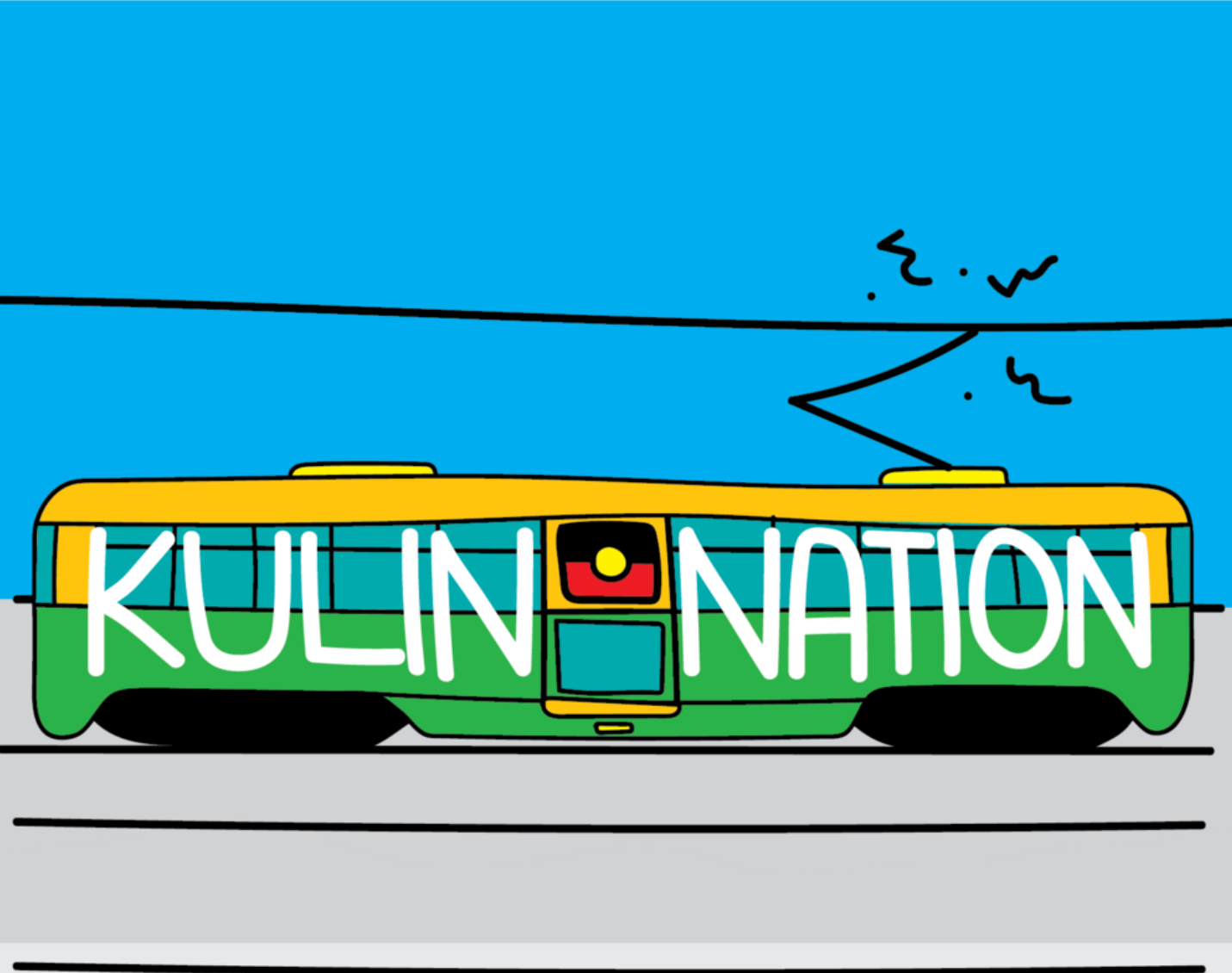


Bicultural Work

In AOD settings



I acknowledge the Traditional custodians of the land on which we are meeting – the land of the Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation. I pay my respect to their Elders, past and present, and extend that to any first nations people who may be here with us today. We acknowledge that we are living on stolen land. Australia Always Was, Always Will Be, Aboriginal Land.

#ALWAYSWILLBE

Nungala Creative

Who are we?



what is a bicultural worker?

A bicultural worker is a person employed to use their cultural knowledge, language skills, lived experience and community connections to work with people who they share a lived experience with and with mainstream organisations. Bicultural workers elevate community voices, advocate for their needs, co-design and deliver programs, share information and facilitate cultural safety.

You can learn more about our bicultural worker program at

<https://bit.ly/biculturalprogram>

A dedicated role like peer workers

Multicultural Education Aid, Community liaison officer, bi-lingual worker, community engagement workers, cultural support workers, community connectors, peer workers, Lived experience workers

Bicultural clinician

A Clinician who happens to be bicultural and may use their cultural knowledge, language skills, lived experience and community connections to work with people who they share the experience with and mainstream organisations. Bicultural clinicians may elevate community voices, advocate for their needs to design and deliver programs, share information and facilitate cultural safety.

Cohealth's bi-cultural Program

Bi-cultural Workers

Internship and capacity building

Victorian BCWs Network

Employment support and opportunities

Supervision and Peer support

Grants

Refugee and Asylum Seeker Communities

Community led projects

Facilitated referrals into service

Culturally responsive service provision

Community, Health and Gov Sector

Professional Standards

Training and mentorship

Research and Advocacy

Access to trained BCWs and consultancy model

Supported recruitment

**What do you
mean Bicultural
Workers are
NOT Interpreters?!**





Bicultural Worker Roles at cohealth

- Identify and advocate for community needs
- community engagement and co-design
- Deliver community-led projects
- Review materials, resources and services to assess accessibility and cultural safety
- Assist in recruitment
- Support evaluation, planning and service design
- Share information in relevant language and culturally appropriate ways
- Educate community members about services and facilitate access.
- Remember – BCWs are NOT interpreters!

Activity

What are the benefits of employing bi-cultural workers?

- For organisations?
- For communities?

10 minutes for this activity

Choose one person to feedback your ideas.



Community Benefits

- Organisations are representative of the community
- Community led projects meet community needs
- Improved engagement with hard-to-reach groups
- Increased knowledge of and access to available services
- Increased employment opportunities
- Increased understanding of rights



Organisational Benefits

- Increased trust and improved reputation of organisation
- Increased referrals to services
- Improved cultural safety
- Improved understanding of community needs/priorities



Having a Different Perspective



Understanding that there are different models or ways of explaining experiences of AOD, addiction, mental illness and/or distress



Understanding different family systems and dynamics including generational factors and collectivist systems



Understanding of the role of stigma related to AOD, mental illness and distress



Understanding of lived experience of migration and resettlement and the stressors, impacts and potential traumas related to this

“Diverse workforces have been shown to provide fertile ground for innovation and creativity, particularly in a cross-cultural community services context”

(The Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission).

By increasing diversity in our workforce we provide an opportunity to break down barriers of ‘dependency’/need. CALD communities are not just seen in deficit as ‘clients’, but as workers as well.

(The Centre for Multicultural Youth)

“Having a person of colour
facilitating the internship made me
feel like it was a job I could do – It was
an inspiration to keep going”

co-health Bi-cultural Worker (2018)



“Having people that look like you when you walk into an organisation or join a project makes you feel safe. You know they might understand you or at least what it’s like to be a person of colour in that context”.

Cohealth Bi-cultural Intern (2019)



Having a caseworker from a culturally diverse background has been absolutely vital to the success of the program. She has a unique approach and can communicate with participants in ways that others can't because she comes from a similar experience background."

Service provider, Given the Chance program -Brotherhood of St Laurence (VIC)

Inclusive Recruitment Activity

In your groups discuss recruitment strategies for organisations wanting to engage BCWs

Please consider inclusive recruitment strategies for;

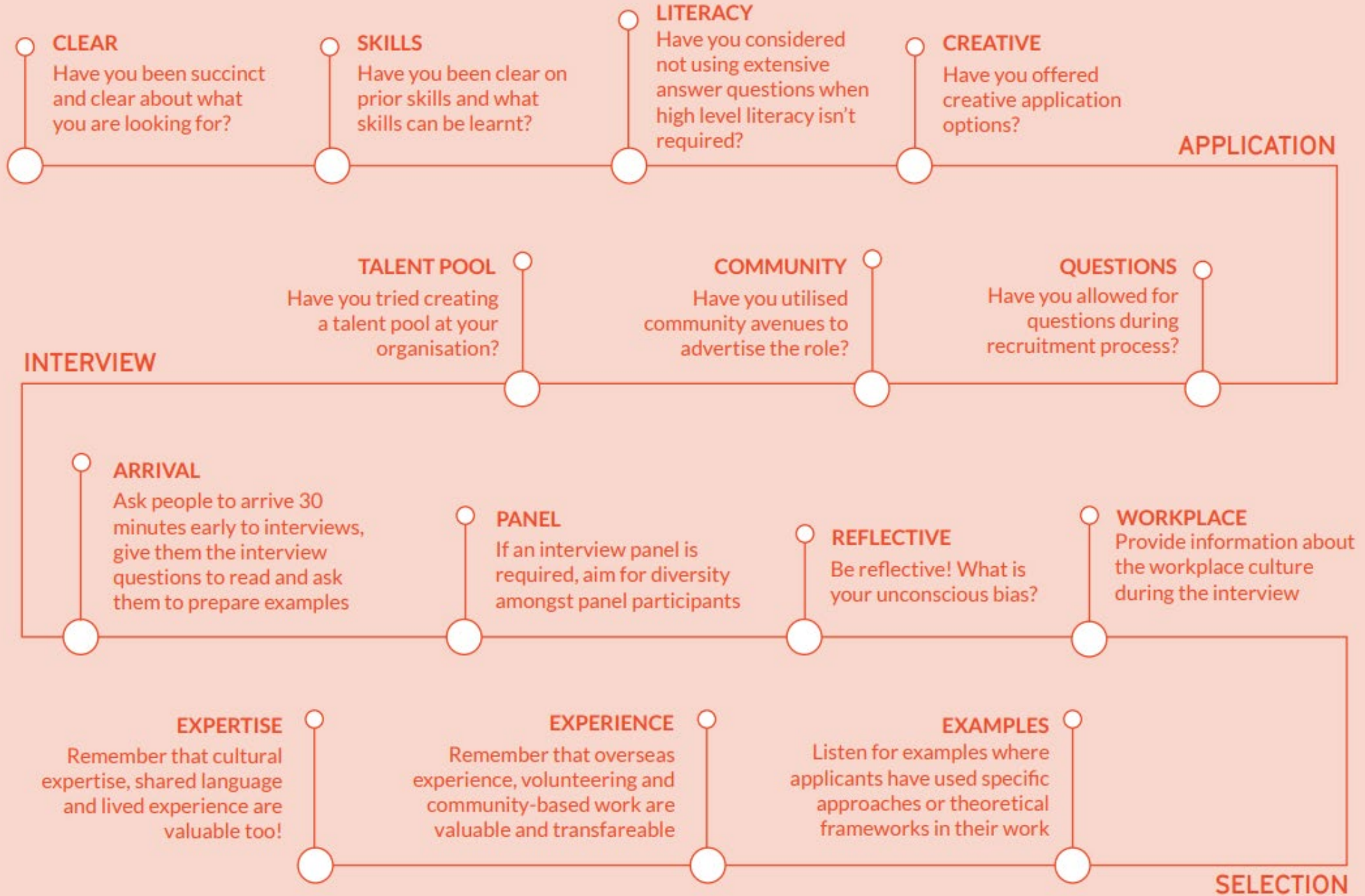
- Advertising
- Application
- Interviewing

15 minutes for this activity

Choose one person to feedback your ideas /thoughts.



INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT



Key challenges

Unclear roles and expectations

Limited targeted capacity building

Culture of volunteerism

Lack of career progression

Short term contracts & limited funding

Lack of cultural safety

Privileging western ways of knowing

Tokenistic engagement

Triggering - due to shared lived experience

Professional boundary setting clash with cultural norms

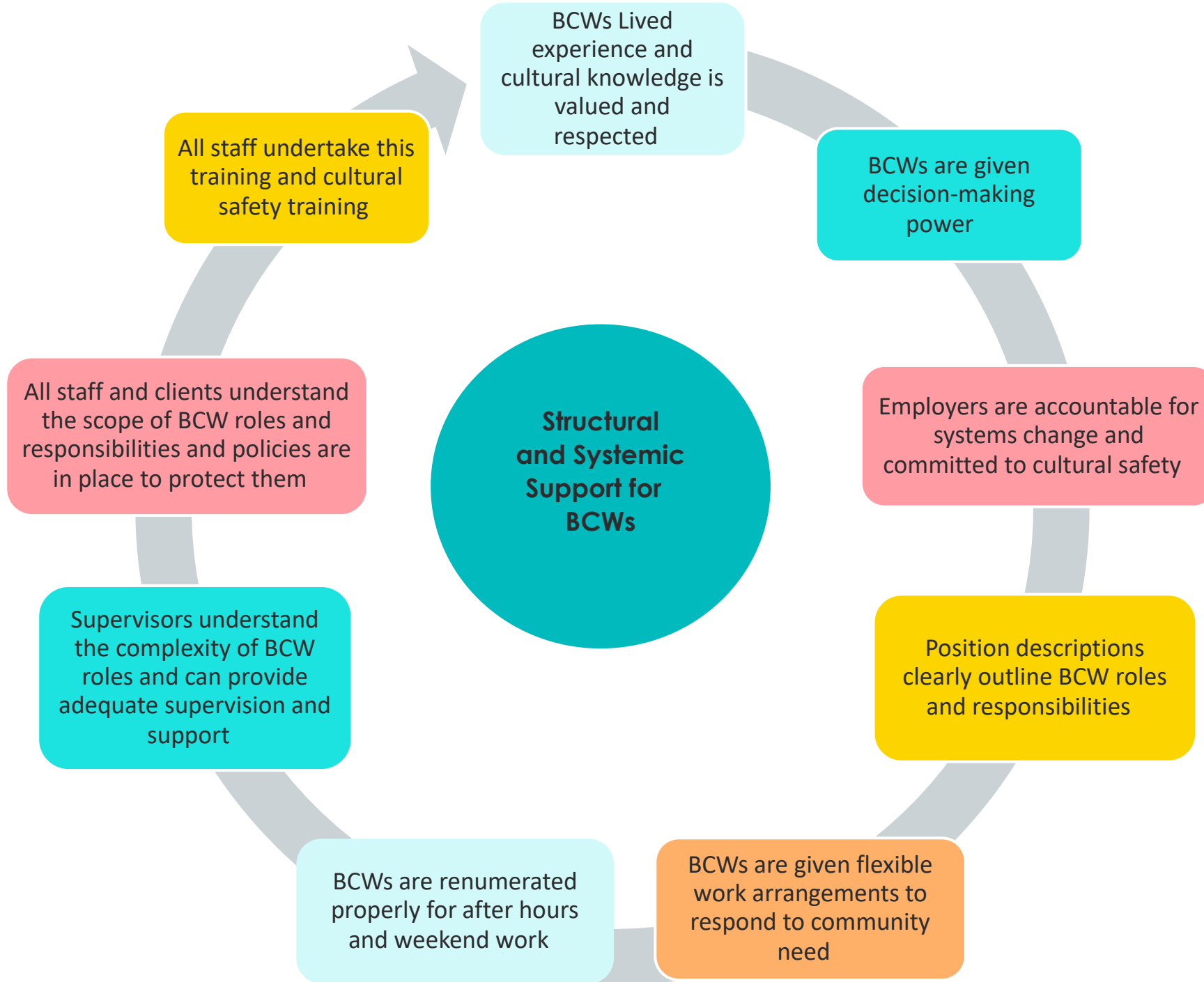
Professional actions can have negative impact on personal life

High level of community expectation

Role Bleed - Expectation to Interpret etc.

Subject matter expertise expected by employer and community

Use of personal phones/cars etc



Deliver Cultural safety training across the whole organisation



Teach Australian workplace expectations during the orientation process



Practice self-reflection; acknowledge that unconscious bias, beliefs and assumptions influence how we work



Embrace different world views, ways of knowing, thinking and doing.



Encourage people to use language that identifies when something is a subjective experience or belief



Build trust and relationships among participants that allows them to feel safe in challenging each other and expressing their needs



Recognise how power, privilege or disadvantage influences people's decision making and outcomes



Zero tolerance for racism and culture-based bullying



Ask your staff/colleagues what best suits them. Learning and ways of gaining knowledge are intrinsically cultural and laden with norms and expectations



Respect a person's lived experience. Bi-cultural workers know their community and their needs



Respect cultural norms and protocols. Social, gender and age norms will influence the expectations and experiences of community engagement



Offer flexible working arrangements to allow for prayer times and other cultural/religious practices



Challenge paternalism; commit to sharing power. Step back and let communities take the lead. Prioritise their voices, interests and needs - Be advocates for this!



Everyone's knowledge and skills are valued



Be creative and flexible! things change and grow to respond to communities' needs



Bi-cultural staff may feel isolated due to a lack of diversity in the organisation - encourage the establishment of networks or buddy systems to support people of colour in the workplace



Diversify your workforce at all levels; prioritise cultural expertise and lived experience.

Reflection

Reflecting on today's presentation, how are your organisations going with workforce diversity and cultural safety?

How could they improve?



Cohealth's Professional Standards for BCW

<https://www.cohealth.org.au/get-involved/bi-cultural-work-program/>

Victorian Bicultural Workers Network



Any Questions or Comments?



Links

Freely available on our website

<https://www.cohealth.org.au/get-involved/bi-cultural-work-program/>

Upcoming online training

<https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/744754961137?aff=oddtatcreator>

Are you a BCW from Victoria? Join our network

<https://forms.office.com/r/DRmDPqfjPp>

Engage BCWs from the Victorian BCWs Network as consultants

Email: Jasmine.Phillips@cohealth.org.au

Other Resources

Culture Plus, Check List:

<https://cultureplusconsulting.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/TipSheet-Inclusive-Recruitment-6.pdf>

Health West, Workforce Mutuality Standards:

<http://healthwest.org.au/projects/workforce-mutuality/>

Australian Public Service, Recommendations:

https://www.apsc.gov.au/sites/default/files/dismantling_barriers_-_inclusive_recruitment_quick_reference_guide_6.pdf

Cohealth bi-cultural program:

<https://www.cohealth.org.au/bi-cultural-worker-hub/>



thank you



everyone is welcome at **cohealth**