



PROGRAM BOOKLET

2017 Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference

Sunday, 12th of November 2017



@ Ulumbarra Theatre, 10 Gaol Road, Bendigo

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:



CITY OF GREATER
BENDIGO

Faith 
Communities
COUNCIL OF VICTORIA



conference

WELCOME



Welcome to the 2017 Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference, proudly hosted by Bendigo Interfaith Council & the City of Greater Bendigo, in association with the Faith Communities Council of Victoria.

This annual conference aims to help build the capacity and sustainability of existing multifaith and interfaith networks, bring people up-to-date with current matters, provide networking opportunities, and assist the hosting council and network to promote its work to the local community.

This year's conference keynote speech will be on **Religious Freedom in a 21st Century Pluralist Society**. Religious liberty is fundamental to the Australian way of life and liberal democratic values. It is enshrined in the Australian Constitution. But it is not the only freedom that matters.

There is a rising tension between accommodating differing freedoms in 21st century Australia. The changing face of Australia continues to raise challenges about the limits of secularism while creating a society that celebrates diversity. It also creates challenges for the place of religion in the public square.

The challenge facing people of faith is how they should react and respond to the increasing diversification of society and the place of faith in contemporary Australia.

We would like to thank all the individuals, volunteers and organisations who helped organise this event, in particular the Bendigo Interfaith Council, and our main sponsors the Victorian Multicultural Commission and the City of Greater Bendigo.

We also like to thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,
Sandy Kouroupidis
Multifaith Officer | Faith Communities Council of Victoria



SCHEDULE

12:00PM-1:25PM: REGISTRATION, NETWORKING & STANDS

Registration opens, networking opportunities, faith and community stands open for viewing (see pages 10-13). Food available for purchase at Ulumbarra Cafeteria.

1:30PM-2:20PM: WELCOME & KEYNOTE SPEECH

Welcome to Country. Welcome from the City of Greater Bendigo, Bendigo Interfaith Council, Faith Communities Council of Victoria, and Victorian Multicultural Commission. Keynote Speech on:
Religious Freedom in a 21st Century Pluralist Society by **Daniel Nellor**
Advisor to the Australian Humans Rights Commissioner on Freedom of Religion (Mr Edward Santow)

2:25PM-3:50PM: WORKSHOPS & PLENARY SESSIONS

1. Religious Freedom and Social Cohesion
 2. Educational Program for Schools - Understanding Religious Diversity
 3. Active bystander training to prevent violence against women
 4. Introductory Training Workshop for Emergency Ministry
- See pages 4-5 for more information on each workshop

4:00PM-4:20PM: CLOSING SESSION

Summary and concluding remarks.

4:30PM-6:30PM: WE ARE THE WORLD! BRING A BELL! CONCERT

A magnificent blend of traditional, classical and sacred music and dance, presented by over 160 performers, ending with Federation bells and audience bells, joining in unity.

Please Note: Entry to Concert is free for Conference participants. Non-participants can purchase tickets at Ulumbarra's Box Office.

FOOD & DRINKS - ULUMBARRA CAFETERIA

Food & Drinks can be purchased at Ulumbarra Cafeteria from 11:30am.
All food is Halal certified. Kosher sandwiches available on request.

WORKSHOPS & PLENARY SESSIONS

Workshop 1 – Religious Freedom and Social Cohesion

Religious freedom is fundamental to the Australian way of life and liberal democratic values. But the challenge of respecting religious freedom in a 21st century pluralistic, secular, multifaith society is becoming more complex.

In Australia in 2017, a Sikh student with religious headwear has been excluded from a school on the grounds of maintaining a 'level playing field'; the construction of a Mosque in Bendigo has created upheaval in the community; A local council has banned the construction of a Jewish synagogue in Bondi because it could be a terrorist target; Islamic women wearing head coverings are abused and intimidated and violent criminal acts done in the name of religion result in pressure being applied to Muslim leaders to re-state their commitment to peace.

Is there a zero-sum relationship between religious freedom and social cohesion? Does maintaining peace mean pushing religion into the private sphere? Does promoting harmony mean rejecting diversity? How can religious freedom be advanced in contemporary Australia while recognising the pluralistic nature of Australian society.

This workshop will examine the complex relations between freedom of religion and social cohesion in Australia and the world today.

Facilitator: Daniel Nellor | Advisor to the Australian Humans Rights Commissioner on Freedom of Religion (Mr Edward Santow)

Workshop 2 – Understanding Religious Diversity

Three presenters of Jewish, Christian and Muslim faiths will deliver a 90 minute interactive workshop that will challenge some of the typical stereotypes people may hold and demonstrates friendship and respect between people of different faiths and cultures. In particular, the workshop will include:

- Comparing different faith traditions, the commonalities and differences
- Sharing of personal life experiences, beliefs and common values
- Linking issues of diversity and faith to belonging and community identity
- An interactive Question and Answer session

If you are a teacher, parent, student or community member who would like to see a multifaith educational program run at your school, this workshop is for you.

Facilitator: Ginette Everest | Executive Officer of *Jewish Christian Muslim Association of Australia (JCMA)*

Jewish Christian Muslim Association of Australia (JCMA) have been running school education programs since 2007. There are a number of school programs to select from, or contact JCMA for a tailor made solution to your requirements. For more information see: www.jcma.org.au

Location: Drama (Strategem) Studio, Ground Floor **Time:** 2:30- 3:50pm



Workshop 3 – Bystander training to prevent Violence Against Women

This workshop will show you how to safely intervene as an active bystander to prevent violence against women. In particular, the workshop will:

- Raise awareness of participants about the level of violence against women in our culture
- Challenge thinking by countering mainstream messages about gender, sex and violence
- Open dialogue by creating a safe environment for men and women to share their opinions and experiences about these issues
- Inspire leadership by empowering participants with concrete options to safely confront and interrupt abusive situations

This is a highly interactive facilitated workshop, not a lecture. Awareness raising is utilised to develop concrete options for participants to employ during a range of work or social situations – ranging from inappropriate comments to physical abuse.

Participants who complete the introductory workshop will be invited to participate in a full-day Active Bystander Training workshop.

Facilitator: Dr Ree Bodde | Program Director, *Think Prevent*

Think Prevent is a community leader in violence prevention. Think Prevent conducts training sessions with a wide-range of groups, and utilises an active bystander approach to prevention. For more information see: www.thinkprevent.com

Location: Dance Studio **Time:** 2:30- 3:50pm

Workshop 4 – Introductory Training for Emergencies Ministry

The Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry is a multifaith, multicultural program seeking volunteers from various faith communities.

Volunteers do not need to be councillors, clergy or social workers – rather ordinary people with compassion and good listening skills who can offer emotional and psychological care with people affected by emergencies such as bushfires and floods.

Participants who complete the introductory workshop will be invited to participate in a full-day Emergencies Ministry Training workshop.

Facilitator: Michael Downing | Regional Support Officer, *Victorian Council of Churches Emergencies Ministry*

The *Victorian Council of Churches* has responded to most State disasters and many local emergency events since 1977. Today, its *Emergencies Ministry* department provides outreach, psychological first aid, personal support and emotional spiritual care across the State of Victoria, and is part of the Victorian Government's emergency response plan. For more information see: www.vccem.org.au

Location: Music Room (or First Floor Foyer) **Time:** 2:30- 3:50pm





BENDIGO ULUMBARRA THEATRE
SUNDAY 12TH NOVEMBER 4.30 pm
(please be seated by 4.25 pm)

*A concert presenting a magnificent blend of
traditional music styles and dance,
ending with Federation and audience bells,
160 performers and audience celebrating unity...*

PATRON AND MUSICAL ADVISOR: ANDREW WAILES

DIRECTOR: M. BALAN **MUSICAL AND ARTISTIC DIRECTORS: S. SEKHAR,**
A. HABIBI, RABBI D. RUBINFELD, E. VARSHAVSKAYA, L. DUTOVA
PERFORMANCE STANDARDS ADVISORS: RABBI S. CAPLAN, SHEIKH A. WELI
CULTURAL CO-ORDINATORS: D. WEBSTER, A. BUX

PROGRAM - PRESENTED AS ONE MUSIC
(Please hold your applause for the end, thank you)



ShepBeats

- Malayalee Kerala Chendamelam - Indian Drumming Ceremony



The Karen Culture and Social Support Foundation Inc.

- New Year Song



Venerable Ashin Moonieinda

- Loving Kindness - Buddhist chant



Jida Gulpilil, Dja Dja Wurrung and Wemba Wemba Singer

- Bunjil - (Eagle Song) (Dja Dja Wurrung language)
- Yemurraki - (Dreamtime Love Song) (Wemba Wemba language)



Melbourne Chinese Choir

- The Love Song of KangDing
- Jasmine Flower
- Nocturne of Yao's Valley

Bring a bell! Concert



Tamara Vasilevitsky, pianist, solo
• Tarantella Napoletanam Italian Folk song
Unicorns Children's Dance Studio
• Tarantella Napoletana Italian folk dance



Bendigo Filipino Choir:
• Lawiswis Kawayan (Swishing Bambo) - Warray folk song
• Katakataka (Astonished by Love) - Tagalog folk song
• Bahay Kubo (Nipa Hut) - Tagalog folk song



Tamara Vasilevitsky, pianist, solo
• Mazurka, by Leo Delibes
Rousichi Russian Dance Ensemble
• Mazurka Polish folk dance



Geoff Jones, Scottish small pipe player, solo
• Souters of' Selkirk - Scottish folk song
• High Road to Linton - Scottish folk song
• The Stool of Repentance - Scottish folk song



Melbourne Greek Community Dance Group
• Dendritsi (I Had A Small Tree In My Yard) - Greek folk dance
• Heriatikos Trampantistos Zonaradikos (Bouncing Holding Each Other) - Greek folk dance from Trakia



Arman Habibi, santour player, solo
• Radif -- mix of traditional Persian instrumental music
• Chehre be Chehre, Baha'i sacred song



Australian Sufi Music Group
• Makams Hüseyini and Ussak Esma Zikri in Makam Ussak - Turkish Sufi instrumental music in Hüseyini & Ussak style



Abdul Barr, Sufi performer
• 'Sema' - Whirling Dervish Sufi Dance



Mordechai Levin, Chazzan, solo
accompaniment: Arman Habibi, santour player
• Dror Yigra (He Will Proclaim Freedom) - Jewish sacred song



Mordechai Levin, Chazzan, solo
accompaniment: Tamara Vasilevitsky, pianist
• Avinu Malkeinu (Our Father, Our King) - Jewish sacred song



Rob Blum, Baritone, Geoff Jones, Scottish small pipe player solo
accompaniment: Tamara Vasilevitsky, pianist
• Amazing Grace, by John Newton



Bendigo Chorale
• Panis Angelicus (Angel's Bread) by Thomas Aquinas - Italian Christian sacred song
• Tebe Poem (We Praise Thee) by Pavel Grigorievich Chesnokov - Russian Orthodox Christian sacred song



Performers and audience
• Federation bells and audience bells join together: ~ END ~





Statement on the prevention of family violence and violence against women

On the eve of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25) the Faith Communities Council of Victoria has issued the following statement:

As faith community leaders, we oppose family violence and violence against women in all its forms, and call upon people of faith to play a role in its elimination.

In Australia, one woman is killed on average each week by a current or former partner, and one in four children witness their mother being abused. Violence is not just physical, it can be psychological, emotional, sexual, financial or spiritual. The roots are abuse of power and the control of one person over another.

Violence against women takes a profound and long-term toll on women and children's health and wellbeing, on families and communities, and on society as a whole. It is a violation of basic human rights that affects people in all social, economic, racial, religious and ethnic groups.

Across our faith traditions, we declare:

- Sacred texts, scriptures and cultural traditions should not be used as a way to justify or excuse violence against women.
- We commit ourselves to changing community attitudes that accept violence toward women. We undertake a journey together to raise awareness in our communities and to stop violence against women before it occurs.



- We stand against all forms of violence and discrimination. We see preventing family violence and violence against women as a key entry point for addressing all forms of violence and promoting human rights.
- Every human being should be seen as valued, important and equal. To live in a world where our families and communities are free and safe from violence, we must treat all individuals – women, men, girls and boys – with dignity, equality and respect.
- Promoting equality and respect in our communities benefits us all and strengthens our communities. A strong community is one where we can all contribute and participate equally.
- Our faiths affirm that love, respect, equality and living well together are goals to aim for.

In Victoria we have benefitted from the insight of the Royal Commission into Family Violence which tabled its findings with a 1900 page report and 227 recommendations. The report includes a ten-page section on 'Faith Communities', highlighting the important role faith-based communities and organisations can play in the lives of Victorians affected by family violence (recommendations 163-165).

We welcome this report, and the Victorian Government's prompt and positive response to its recommendations. Our hope is that the implementation of these recommendations brings about positive changes within the Victorian community, and we are pleased to join as faith communities to be part of that change.

Faith Communities Council of Victoria (FCCV) is comprised of the following peak bodies:

Baha'i Community of Victoria, Brahma Kumaris Australia, Buddhist Council of Victoria, Hindu Council of Australia (Vic), Islamic Council of Victoria, Jewish Community Council of Victoria, Sikh Interfaith Council of Victoria and Victorian Council of Churches.

Promoting a Harmonious Multifaith Victoria

Causeway House 4th Floor, 306 Little Collins Street, Melbourne Victoria 3000

P: +61 3 9650 4511 F: + 61 3 9650 8383 E: officer@faithvictoria.org.au W: www.faithvictoria.org.au



Hinduism - Try on a Bindi or a Dhoti

Throughout India, a **bindi** (a small red dot) symbolises the mystic third eye, the central point of the base of creation. When visiting a temple, it is common for the priest to mark men, women and children with a bindi on the forehead. A bindi can also be a social symbol, worn by married women very similar to western wedding bands. Over time, bindis have become popular fashion accessories for girls and women of all ages and come in a variety of styles and colours. The **dhoti** is a traditional men's garment, worn in the Indian subcontinent. It is a rectangular piece of unstitched cloth, wrapped around the waist and the legs and knotted at the waist. The word dhoti is derived from *dhauti* meaning to cleanse or wash. In the context of clothing, it simply refers to the cleansed garment worn during religious sessions. Visit us and try on a bindi or a dhoti.

Judaism - Union of Progressive Judaism

TALLITTOT, CHUMASIM, SIDDURIM, CHANUKUYOT, KIPPOT, SHABBATOT, are words and articles with which you are most probably unfamiliar. To all of the worlds' merely 15 million Jews, they are elements of the experience of being Jewish. We will display and explain them all. Like most other traditions, Judaism too has many strands and there are many ways to be Jewish. Basic Hebrew and Aramaic will be illustrated and their similar structure amplified in terms of history and expression. The Pilgrimage Festivals and High Holy Days will also be explained and the equipment used to fulfil them illustrated. We wish all attendees well and Chag sameach.

Sikhism - Try on a Turban

Sikhism is the only religion in the world which requires its followers to tie a turban. Hence a turban is an article of faith. Turbans can be different colours, styles and types but they are not hats. Sikhs tie their turbans a new each day. Sikh turbans become a part of a Sikh's body and are usually removed only in the privacy of the house. A turban is a sign of royalty, a figure of stoic courage, an emblem of dignity and self-respect, a mark of charity and a figure of purity. Visit our stand and try on a Turban.



Baha'i Faith - Unity in Diversity

The unity of humanity is the central principle of the Baha'i Faith. The diversity of the human family should be the cause of abiding love and harmony, 'as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord.' Humanity may be likened unto the many-coloured flowers of one garden. Each sets off and enhances the other's beauty. The Baha'i stand will include information on the Baha'i Faith and its Prophet-Founder, Baha'u'llah. Information regarding our core activities, which include devotional gatherings, children's classes, the junior youth empowerment programs and study circles, will also be available. These activities are open to everyone.

Islam - Bendigo Islamic Community Centre

The Bendigo Islamic Community Centre will be the most open Islamic facility in Australia, a building the entire Bendigo community will be proud of, and contribute to the image of Bendigo as an icon of mutual respect and inclusiveness. The Centre will provide an innovative, dynamic and collaborative community hub that will offer sustainable programs and services, promoting community participation and inclusion. It will promote humanitarian values that underpin the teachings of Islam - compassion, love and peace - and create increased public awareness of Muslim social and cultural values within Bendigo and Victoria. Visit our stand and take a look at architectural plans of our soon to be built Bendigo Islamic Community Centre.

Buddhism - Bendigo's Buddhist Communities

Bendigo is home to several large Buddhist projects including *The Great Stupa of Universal Compassion*, the largest Buddhist stupa in the Western world; *Atisha Centre*, a meditation centre that has been established for 36 years; *Thubten Shedrup Ling Monastery*, Australia's first monastery in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition; and the *Karen Buddhist Dhamma Monastery*, currently in construction to serve the large Karen Buddhist community in the Bendigo region. Come and visit our stand to learn more about each of these Buddhist communities.

COMMUNITY STANDS

Bendigo Interfaith Council

The Interfaith Council's mission is for Bendigo to be a community in which residents and visitors are free and able to practice their faith with dignity and respect, whilst fostering and promoting mutual understanding, social inclusion and respect. We believe this can be achieved through dialogue and exchanges within the Interfaith Council, respective networks with the public, and by providing a united voice to advocate on issues such as human rights and other social justice issues. See: www.facebook.com/bendigointerfaithcouncil

Aspire Foundation

The Foundation was established to help preserve and protect the heritage of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Bendigo. Constructed in the 19th Century and completed in the late 20th Century, it is one of the world's finest Gothic Revival cathedrals. The Cathedral is an icon of Bendigo and occupies a central place in the community for people of all faiths. It provides opportunities for tourism, the performing arts and many other avenues of community participation. See: www.aspirefoundation.org.au

Daybreak Centre of Spirituality

The foundation of Daybreak is in Christian spirituality, but it is open to people of all faiths or none. Daybreak aims to offer a place for stillness, resting from the pressures of life and finding peace and connection in an often noisy and busy world. Daybreak House has quiet and welcoming spaces for individuals or groups to engage in reflection and meditation as well as programs for self-awareness and spiritual nurture. See: www.daybreak.net.au

Victorian Council of Churches Emergency Ministries (VCCEM)

The Victorian Council of churches emergencies ministry is a state wide relief and recovery partner and is activated following emergency events to provide personal support, psychological first and emotional spiritual care to affected people. We are a multi-faith, non-denominational organisation and have members from a number of religious and cultural groups including Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh and Hindu, trained to respond to all affected persons following emergencies in Victoria. Our mission is to provide Compassion in Times of crisis. See: www.vccem.org.au



Courage to Care *Ordinary People, Extraordinary Acts*

Courage to Care is an Exhibition and Educational Program supported by the Department of Education to travel throughout Victoria to inspire Australians, particularly students, to be Upstanders rather than bystanders. Using the Holocaust as a springboard, Courage to Care explores the dangers of prejudice, racism, stereotyping and bullying, and the consequences of bystander behaviour. By understanding the stories of the Righteous among the Nations, the ordinary people who risked their lives and that of their families to save others, participants see that each person can make a difference. Courage to Care offers workshops for schools and community - www.couragetocare.org.au

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services

Loddon Campaspe Multicultural Services is a not-for-profit organisation supporting migrants and refugees to build new lives in central Victoria. Working in the region for over 15 years, we promote and celebrate our region's rich diversity, multiculturalism and multi-faiths. We are an ethnic communities council and the peak body for migrant and refugee groups in the Loddon Campaspe region, with over 100 individual and organisational members. We are members-run and assist our members to speak out on issues that affect them. Our work sits across two areas: Community Programs and Arts and Events Programs. Our Community Programs involve activities to support the settlement of new arrivals. Our Arts and Events Programs work with the whole community to increase understanding and respect for cultural diversity - www.lcms.org.au

City of Greater Bendigo *building culturally diverse & inclusive communities*

The City of Greater Bendigo is committed to ensuring equitable access, social inclusion and respect for human rights for all people who live and visit our city. The City continues to work towards building an inclusive community where all residents have a sense of belonging regardless of ethnicity, cultural background or religion. Bendigo's rich cultural, Aboriginal and built heritage is one of the reasons it is a great place to live and to visit. While you are in Bendigo, why not enjoy some of what our great city has to offer, like the Golden Dragon Museum, home to Sun Loong, believed to be the world's longest Chinese Imperial Dragon, or the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion, which when complete will be the largest Buddhist temple in the western world.



Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference

About - The Victorian Interfaith Networks Conference (VINC) aims to help build the capacity and sustainability of existing multifaith/interfaith networks, bring people up-to-date with current multifaith/interfaith matters, provide networking opportunities, and assist the hosting interfaith network/council to promote its work to the local community.

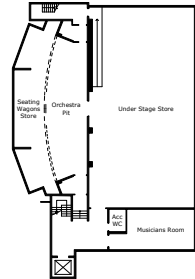
History - In past years, the Victorian Interfaith Networks has been held in the following local government areas in association with local councils and networks:

	2011- City of Port Phillip Sunday, 27th of Nov 2011 @ St. Kilda Town Hall Port Phillip Multifaith Network and City of Port Phillip
	2012 - City of Yarra Sunday, 28th of Oct 2012 @ Fitzroy Town Hall Yarra Interfaith Network and City of Yarra
	2013 - City of Moonee Valley Sunday, 24th of Nov 2013 @ Flemington Community Centre Moonee Valley Interfaith Network and City of Moonee Valley
	2014 - City of Monash Sunday, 23rd of Nov 2014 @ Mulgrave Community Centre Monash Interfaith Gathering and City of Monash
	2015 - City of Kingston Sunday, 22nd of Nov 2015 @ Kingston Town Hall Kingston Interfaith Network and City of Kingston
	2016 - City of Darebin Sunday, 13th of Nov 2016 @ Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre Darebin Interfaith Council and Darebin City Council
	2017 - City of Greater Bendigo Sunday, 12th of Nov 2017 @ Ulumbarra Theatre Bendigo Interfaith Council and City of Greater Bendigo

FLOOR PLAN

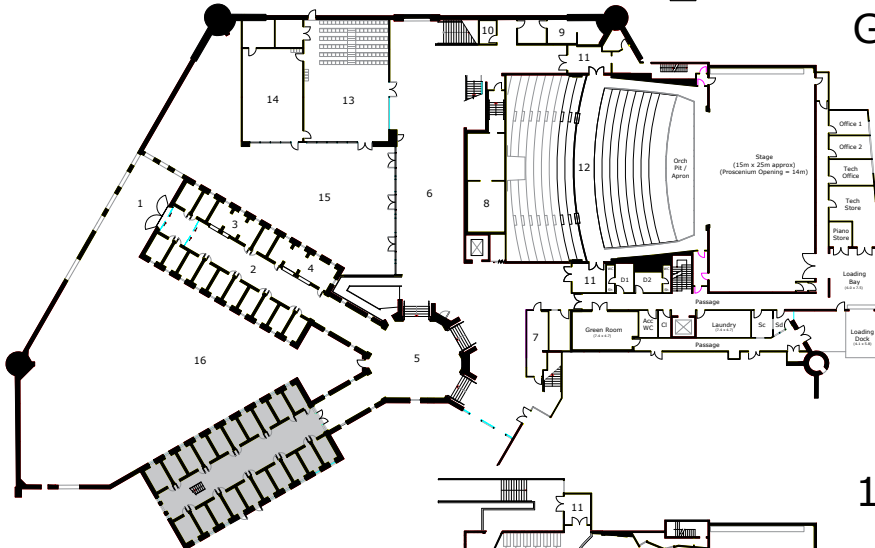
Ulumbarra Theatre

- 1 Entrance
- 2 Entrance Hall
- 3 Cloak Room
- 4 Box Office
- 5 Central Hall
- 6 Ground Floor Foyer
- 7 Bar
- 8 Female Toilet
- 9 Male Toilet
- 10 Accessible Toilet
- 11 Vestibule
- 12 Stalls Seating

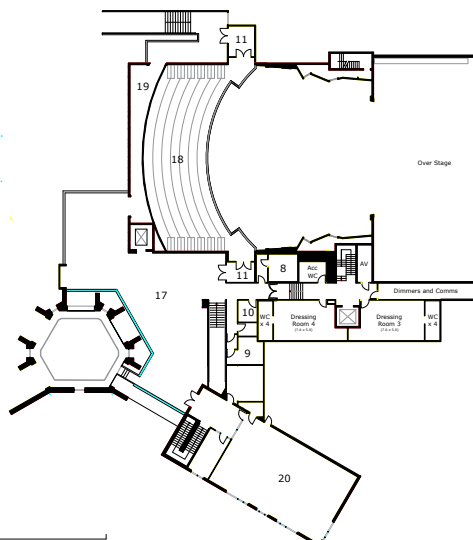


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- 13 Drama Studio
- 14 Dance Studio
- 15 Performance Courtyard
- 16 Sculpture Courtyard
- 17 First Floor Foyer
- 18 Balcony Seating
- 19 Passage
- 20 Multipurpose Room
- ☒ Lift
- D1 Dressing Room 1
- D2 Dressing Room 2
- Sh Shower
- Cl Cleaners Store
- Sc Security
- Sd Stage Door



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PROGRAM BOOKLET
2017 Victorian Interfaith
Networks Conference

Sunday 12 November 2017



Ulumbarra Theatre - 10 Gaol Road, Bendigo

PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY:



conference