

Effectively engaging and communicating with CALD* communities

AusNet & RMIT University

* CALD: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse



Acknowledgement of Country

AusNet acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. We pay respects to Elders past and present and celebrate their continuing connection to Country.





Please submit your questions in the Q&A chat

Presenters will address them live or respond in the chat

(All participants can view the questions and answers.)

Welcome

AusNet

Amanda Robertson, EGM Compliance, Risk & Corporate Affairs

2025 Vulnerability Research Grant awardee

RMIT University 3C

What we share today



Key insights
Voices from CALD communities



AusNet's Commitment
Turning insights into action



Finding outcomes for customers
AusNet HOME Grant opportunity



Communicating to CALD communities about energy

Best practice engagement to connect with digitally excluded groups

RMIT University

Dr Xiufang (Leah) Li, Dr David Micallef, Associate Professor Diana Bossio, Associate Professor Lukas Parker

RMIT School of Media and Communication



Dr Xiufang (Leah) Li



Assoc. Prof. Lukas Parker



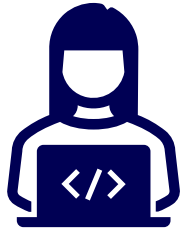
Dr David Micallef



Francisca Diaz De Valdes



Assoc. Prof. Diana Bossio



Make comments and ask questions in the Q&A chat



We will address questions at the end of the presentation.

The Problem

Growing concern that shifts toward digital communication leaves CALD communities, especially newly arrived migrants and older people, behind in the ongoing energy transition.

We conducted interviews with representatives from Victorian multicultural and ethnic community groups to understand how to better engage CALD communities in communication about Australia's complex energy market.

Insight 1: A foundational knowledge gap impacts interaction with the Australian energy market



New migrants do not receive information about Australia's privatised energy market or have preconceptions about energy usage, which impact choices they make about energy.

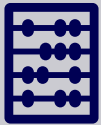


Targeted education in CALD communities can help raise the level of foundational knowledge within these communities.

“...there are a lot of misconceptions around using electricity or electrifying your home in Australia because this (power cuts) happens a lot in the Middle East. In the Middle East, you can have the power off for hours and hours, and you're not able to use anything that depends on electricity. While here in Australia, this rarely happens...”

- Participant 2

Insight 2: Intersecting barriers create compounded disadvantage



Multiple barriers work together to exclude CALD communities, including language difficulty, digital exclusion and poor accessibility. Decreasing levels of trust due to energy scams are further increasing exclusion.



Increased direct engagement, cultural awareness training, and use of trusted networks with simple, translated resources can support increased overall engagement.

“Related to energy supply offers, there are many challenges. First, language barriers. Second, digital literacy issues. Third, maybe they don’t know they can get the information, or where to find it—basically, a lack of knowledge on how to access and obtain information.”

- Participant 4

Insight 3: Cultural and gender dimensions significantly impact energy engagement



Cultural and gender factors impact the way that CALD families engage with the energy market. It impacts usage and energy type preference, as well as perceptions of different energy types (such as gas being more reliable and better for cooking).



Whole family engagement, the use of workshops, including workshops related to food, can support families in engaging with energy information and dispel myths.

“I will say gas cooking is something Chinese migrants love. And women cook more generally. If they do stir fry, they think gas cooking might create more flavour. It’s more natural, and it’s not pretty easy for us to educate them why it is important to upgrade to induction cooktops. You know, sometimes people just want to stick to what they used to have.”
- Participant 7

Insight 4: Trusted networks and face-to-face communication are essential



CALD communities prefer receiving information through trusted intermediaries, such as community leaders, ethnic media, religious figures, and peers, rather than government sources.



Face-to-face communication that enables immediate interaction consistently outperforms digital channels for building trust and understanding.

“When talking about communicating with this community, I would say that face-to-face communication is important. Going into those communities and having conversations—you know, going to community groups—that will make a big difference.”

- Participant 7

Insight 5: Energy transition narrative needs to be simple, practical and relatable



The energy market can be complex, even in one's own language and energy transition language can add a further level of complexity.



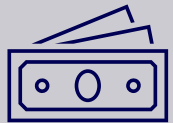
To gain traction, energy-saving, sustainability, and energy transition concepts need to demonstrate cultural and practical relevance rather than relying on abstract environmental messaging.

“The term ‘energy transition’ doesn’t have any direct translation in Arabic. There is a need to unpack terms, making them clearer. I would never mention ‘energy transition’ because this immediately makes them feel like they’re blocked.”
- Participant 2

Insight 6: Affordability and cost of living shape decision-making



High energy prices and cost-of-living pressures drive conservative use, limit switching and dampen interest in clean energy alternatives.



Communication to CALD communities, especially consumers experiencing vulnerability, should focus on addressing cost first, before environmental benefits.

“They don’t have enough money because inflation is higher than what they get from Centrelink.... They do activities there to keep their bills low. They use the community services available to them to charge their phones, to do the things that they don’t have to pay for..”

- Participant 18

Community engagement examples

- Information sessions for seniors
- Cooking with induction library programs / cooking workshops
- Train-the-trainer activities
- Phone messages from community leaders
- Engagement activities at congregation points
- Family-friendly education activities (with food)
- Energy / community organisation partnerships

What's Next?

- Opportunities for further research directly with communities.
- Specific targeted research with community members with vulnerability to understand how they engage with energy.
- Further understand opportunities for engagement and specific barriers being faced by individual communities.

Thank you

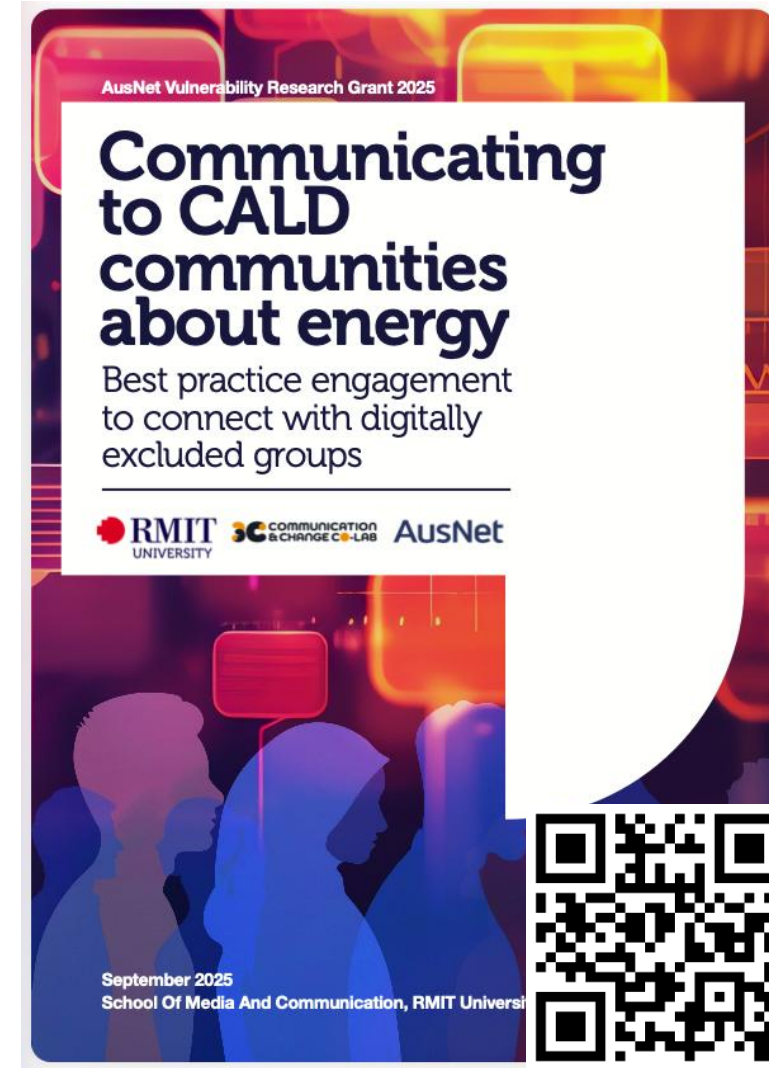
Dr Xiufang (Leah) Li

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AusNet's commitment Turning insights into action

AusNet

Monica Daniel, Senior Communications Specialist

Your AusNet CALD enthusiast

why does it matter so deeply to me?

Danny Yoon Weng Cheah

Monica Daniel = Monica Miew Ling Cheah

Daughter to a first generation Australian

Always immensely proud of my cultural diversity

First gens

27.6%

Second gens

48.2%



CALD customer snapshot

A perception shift from minorities



RMIT recommendations and AusNet

RMIT key finding	What must we do?
The energy literacy gap	✓ Recognise this challenge across our entire customer base. ✓ Communication = education, always. ✓ Knowing our role in the customer journey and leading where we can.
Language & digital barriers	✓ Human centered design approach to CALD engagement. ✓ Recognise that not one method suits all.
Industry communication breakdowns (how we translate materials)	✓ Community testing on collateral and content. ✓ Cultural nuance applied and translated by experts. ✓ Translation vs transcreation.
Inclusive communication design	✓ Plain language across all communications ✓ CALD customer mapping & needs assessments ✓ Media strategy framework for campaigns
Take a community-led approach	✓ Stakeholder engagement carries equal importance as the comms itself. ✓ A strategy in train to support our crisis communications.

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01

Roadmap & research

- ✓ Discovery
- ✓ Roadmap creation – current to future state
- ✓ Clear direction to human centered design
- ✓ Applying research evidence

02

Campaigns

- ✓ Gas campaign – Crisis comms - summer
- ✓ Test - learn – refine
- ✓ Extend across other comms

03

Embed

- ✓ Take the time - do it right and listen
- ✓ Build a process for continual improvement
- ✓ Embed across all areas of our business
- ✓ Share our learnings across industry

Gas campaign

creating equal access to information

Focus area

Gas campaign – safety & savings

For who?

- Customer mapping with a needs scale
- **5 key CALD communities** - Arabic, Italian, Mandarin, Punjabi and Vietnamese.

The customer journey?

- **Own landing page** on the website **developed entirely in language**.
- **Gas safety and savings factsheets and videos** to provide valuable information seamlessly in language without the use of a translation plug-in.
- Additionally, all language groups are further supported with **stakeholder packs** distributed through **trusted community touchpoints by community leaders** with influence.

How the RMIT research will further inform this?

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ✓ Energy literacy | ✓ Channel strategy | ✓ Effective translation |
| ✓ Media strategy | ✓ Customer mapping | ✓ Community-led approach |

Arabic

Radio
MPN
Facebook

Italian

Radio
Print

Mandarin

WeChat
MPN
Weibo
Rednote

Punjabi

Radio
MPN
Zee5
Facebook
YouTube

Vietnamese

Radio
MPN
Facebook

Gas campaign

How many creative assets approx?

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Italian: 7
Arabic: 33
Mandarin: 52
Punjabi: 49
Vietnamese: 37
TOTAL: 178



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Preparati al gas

Consigli per risparmiare gas

Ecco alcune semplici cose che puoi fare per risparmiare sulla bolletta del gas

Consigli generali

- ✓ Installazione di guarnizioni antispiffero sulle aperture di finestre e porte esterne per impedire la fuoriuscita di aria calda.
- ✓ Fai controllare gli apparecchi a gas ogni due anni da un installatore autorizzato.
- ✓ Aprire le tende durante il giorno per far entrare la luce del sole e chiuderle prima che faccia buio per trattenere il calore.
- ✓ Utilizza tende o persiane ben montate per trattenere l'aria fredda vicino alla finestra.

Per consigli su come risparmiare gas e usarlo in sicurezza, visita ausnet.com.au/gas-italian



如果无法查看燃气表读数，则无法抄表。
燃气表用于记录用气量，它通常安装在房屋外侧的角落。

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按照准确的读数抄表，即按实际用气量计费，而非估算。✓

估算读数可能导致燃气费用偏高。
为确保按实际读数计费，您可在燃气账单找到下次抄表日。请确保管好所有宠物，以保证当日顺利抄表。

我们的抄表员身着蓝色工作服，背后印有“抄表员 (METER READER)”字样。

如果不方便抄表也没关系。可向燃气供应商提交燃气表读数，随后他们将根据您的读数进行计费。

您觉得这个小贴士实用吗？当然！如需关于燃气节省和安全的更多提示，请访问 AusNet。



3分钟前 澳大利亚 仅自己可见

说点什么...



说点什么...



Crisis communications

AusNet

How we can proactively engage our customers during events so they:

1. Know how to prepare for outages

2. Know what to do during an outage

1. Total fire ban days
2. Storms
3. Severe weather – floods, heatwaves, fires
4. The aftermath of a serious weather event

Crisis communications

trigger messaging

Trigger 1 - TFB

A Total Fire Ban has been declared for your area.
Be power prepared.

[Find out how →](#)

AusNet

A graphic for Trigger 1 - TFB. It features a dark blue background with a white paper-like shape on the left containing text. On the right, there is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise over a landscape with trees.

A Total Fire Ban has been declared for your area.
Power outages may occur.

[Check or report outages →](#)

AusNet

A graphic for Trigger 1 - TFB. It features a dark blue background with a white paper-like shape on the left containing text. On the right, there is a photograph of a sunset or sunrise over a landscape with trees.

Trigger 2 - Storms

There are storms forecast for your area.
Be power prepared.

[Find out how →](#)

AusNet

A graphic for Trigger 2 - Storms. It features a dark blue background with a white paper-like shape on the left containing text. On the right, there is a photograph of a lightning storm over a landscape.

There are storms forecast for your area.
Power outages may occur.

[Check or report outages →](#)

AusNet

A graphic for Trigger 2 - Storms. It features a dark blue background with a white paper-like shape on the left containing text. On the right, there is a photograph of a lightning storm over a landscape.

Trigger 3 – Severe Weather floods & bushfires

Severe weather is forecast for your area.
Be power prepared.

[Find out how →](#)

AusNet

A graphic for Trigger 3 – Severe Weather floods & bushfires. It features a dark blue background with a white paper-like shape on the left containing text. On the right, there is a photograph of a flooded area with power lines.

Severe weather is in your area.
Power outages may occur.

[Check or report outages →](#)

AusNet

A graphic for Trigger 3 – Severe Weather floods & bushfires. It features a dark blue background with a white paper-like shape on the left containing text. On the right, there is a photograph of a flooded area with power lines.

Severe weather is forecast for your area.
Be power prepared.

[Find out how →](#)

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Severe weather is in your area.
Power outages may occur.

[Check or report outages →](#)

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Trigger 4 –

post event



Recent severe weather has impacted the electricity network.

[Check or report outages →](#)

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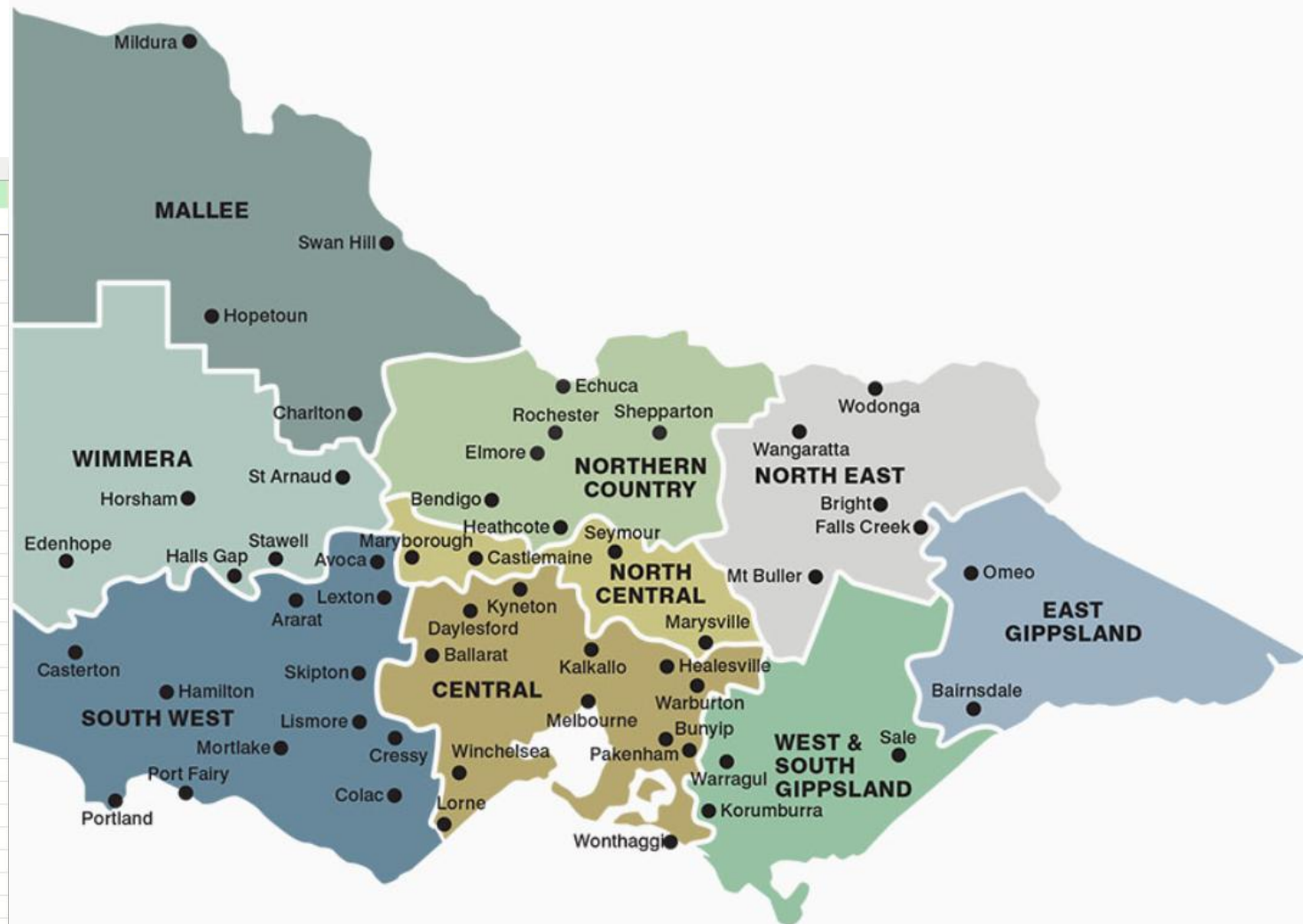
Crisis communications

trigger messaging

What's next?

Customer mapping, translation matrix and delivery

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Central Fire District						
2	Non-English speakers, 2021	33%					
15		Year					
16	Language	2011	2016	2021	+/- '11-16	+/- '16-21	
17	Mandarin	79,120	141,186	171,519	78%	21%	
18	Greek	87,156	82,617	80,904	-5%	-2%	
19	Punjabi	19,325	35,255	69,515	82%	97%	
20	Cantonese	53,884	57,888	62,076	7%	7%	
21	Italian	71,213	64,418	53,640	-10%	-17%	
22	Vietnamese	40,063	46,937	53,134	17%	13%	
23	Arabic	33,799	41,084	49,766	22%	21%	
24	Serb/Croat/Bos/Mac	43,822	45,106	45,636	3%	1%	
25	Sinhalese	22,868	30,902	41,226	35%	33%	
26	Hindi	21,394	32,006	40,697	50%	27%	
27	Dari-Hazaraghi	8,963	18,656	28,422	108%	52%	
28	Filipino-Tagalog	14,837	20,533	28,284	38%	38%	
29	Spanish	17,319	20,910	24,966	21%	19%	
30	Tamil	13,907	19,229	24,899	38%	29%	
31	Urdu	5,267	10,134	18,415	92%	82%	
32	Persian (Farsi)	6,546	12,737	18,194	95%	43%	
33	Malayalam	6,756	12,383	18,114	83%	46%	
34	Turkish	14,109	14,268	16,413	1%	15%	
35	Khmer	11,122	13,665	16,299	23%	19%	
36	Russian	14,833	15,562	15,743	5%	1%	
37	Gujarati	6,675	9,726	14,775	46%	52%	
38	Neo-Aramaic (Ass & Ch)	4,518	3,799	13,936	-16%	267%	
39	French	12,686	14,769	13,835	16%	-6%	
40	Korean	7,541	10,205	11,953	35%	17%	
41	Telugu	3,848	6,472	11,778	68%	82%	
42	German	14,398	14,168	11,674	-2%	-18%	
43	Nepali	1,700	4,377	10,856	157%	148%	
44	Indonesian	8,242	9,765	10,530	18%	8%	
45	Polish	11,128	10,241	9,345	-8%	-9%	



Finding outcomes for customers and communities

AusNet's Helping Our Mission for Equity (HOME) Grant 2026

AusNet

Jacob Clifton, GM Public Affairs

Helping Our Mission for Equity (HOME) Grant (Formerly Vulnerability Research Grant)

Bring your idea to life and help us find better outcomes for customers and communities!

- **\$30,000** available for any project or initiative that improves outcomes for customers and communities.
- Open to **everyone!**
- Creative, cross-disciplinary, and innovative approaches welcome!
- Deadline: **5 pm Friday 7 November.**

Your idea. Our support. A better energy future.

Ready to make an impact?

**Submit your proposal (1-3 page) to
research@ausnetservices.com.au**



**Scan this QR code
to learn more about
AusNet's HOME Grant!**



**Know someone with a great
idea? Share this opportunity
with your network!**

Next Steps

The full report is available [here](#).
We will upload the webinar slide deck and the recording here shortly.

Spread the word about HOME Grant
or submit your proposal by 7 November!

If you have any thoughts or feedback about this webinar, please email us at research@ausnetservices.com.au or engagement@ausnetservices.com.au



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Thank you.

Contact us

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