



STORIES OF WELCOME

Across the globe, our international movement of welcoming communities is growing. Australia, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and USA are blazing the trail.

Welcoming International is a coalition of initiatives advancing inclusion in localities worldwide. Through a global network of practitioners and with support to create Welcoming Standards, city networks, and multi-sector welcoming plans, our members are fostering social cohesion and institutional inclusion globally.

These stories of welcome are from our international members. They each reflect on the relationships they have built internationally, nationally, and at the local level.

VISIT WELCOMING INTERNATIONAL



WELCOMING
INTERNATIONAL



AUSTRALIA

Welcoming Australia was Welcoming International's first Founding Member. Their Welcoming Cities initiative, supported by the Scanlon Foundation, works on shifting attitudes towards newcomers by supporting regional communities to better identify and understand the process of welcoming people to their communities. Welcoming Cities supports local councils and community leaders through a network built around knowledge sharing, multi-sector partnership facilitation, celebrating success, and a national Welcoming Standard that outlines the policies and practices needed for diversity and inclusion. Throughout their work, they acknowledge the vital role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in welcoming activities, as the First People on Australian soil, and the continuation of their cultural, spiritual, and ceremonial practices, is deeply embedded within Welcoming Cities' culture. The initiative is growing rapidly, working with 50 councils as of mid-2020 and the number of involved cities and councils expected to double within the next year.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT WELCOMING IN AUSTRALIA](#)



“Welcoming Australia’s idea has always been to change the conversation, and to support the receiving community to be much more welcoming; to take ownership of that. Welcoming Australia started with the event called Walk Together where people that lived here for a very long time met and walked alongside people that have just arrived. It was about us being stronger together, and not one against the other.”

—Sebastian Geers and Bel Schenk, Welcoming Cities



GERMANY

Bertelsmann Foundation and PHINEO launched the Weltoffenen Kommunen initiative to ensure that newcomers and long-term residents (including those with migrant backgrounds), feel welcome in Germany. The initiative supports cities and communities across Germany through a self-check tool, support to municipal decision makers, and facilitation of community dialogue to shape local responses and develop inclusive narratives. The self-check tool, inspired by Welcoming Standards from around the world, helps municipalities analyze their current work and further develop their integration practices. In 2020 the project received funding from the German government to support 40 new cities and communities in their welcoming efforts.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT WELCOMING IN GERMANY](#)



“Similarly in Dachau, where one of the former Nazi concentration camps is located, the city wanted to leverage the traumatic history and use it as a reminder to be open-minded and tolerant towards difference.”

—Claudia Walther, Senior Project Manager in the LebensWerte Kommune program at Bertelsmann Foundation



NEW ZEALAND



Since 2017 we have worked with Immigration New Zealand to devise and support its pilot Welcoming Communities program across 10 councils. In 2018, Welcoming Communities became a Founding Member of Welcoming International and created the New Zealand Welcoming Communities Standard, which now informs a comprehensive accreditation system through which a community's inclusion efforts can be awarded formal recognition. New Zealand, which was the first national government to launch a welcoming program, continues to inspire the welcoming ecosystem as it works towards growing the program to more of New Zealand's councils.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT WELCOMING IN NEW ZEALAND](#)



“By 2023 we aim to have an additional 30 councils from around New Zealand as part of the Welcoming Communities network. This will mean that more than half of the country's councils are intentionally welcoming and inclusive. This has a potential to be transformative.”

—June Rout, Immigration New Zealand



UNITED KINGDOM

Inclusive Cities is a knowledge exchange program led by the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity at the University of Oxford. It supports cities in the United Kingdom to facilitate the welcoming, and subsequent integration and inclusion, of newcomers. The program provides the intersection between academic research, peer learning between local cities, and international learning via partnership with Welcoming International.

The first phase of the Inclusive Cities program started with six cities, and as of mid-2020 it includes a total of 12 cities making progress to ensure that the U.K. is welcoming to all. Guiding that process is the Inclusive Cities Framework, which sets out a framework of core principles and priority areas which all municipalities can work towards in becoming inclusive cities.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT WELCOMING IN THE U.K.](#)



“Our aim is to facilitate social change, not just study it. It means that we are stepping outside of the traditional activity of universities, and while everything is grounded in research we are experimenting a little bit, particularly through this idea of knowledge exchange.”

—Jacqui Broadhead, Director of the Global Exchange on Migration and Diversity at COMPAS, University of Oxford