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KERRY SHINE MP

State Member for Toowoomba North

Suite 2, ABC Building,
297 Margaret Street
Toowoomba, Qld. 4350
www.kerryshinemp.com

Toowoomba celebrates its cultural diversity

Two community organisations in Toowoomba will share in \$22,500 of Bligh Government funding to stage multicultural festivals and projects in 2012.

Multicultural Affairs Minister Anastacia Palaszczuk today announced the 174 successful applications across the state under the Queensland Government's \$1 million Multicultural Queensland Partnerships Program for 2011-12.

"The Multicultural Queensland Partnerships Program provides grants to support events and projects that strengthen multiculturalism, foster harmonious community relations and build community capacity," she said.

"We had a record number of applications receive funding, representing an increase of 37 percent for funded events and projects compared to last year, with \$200,000 of additional funds made available for the grants program this year.

Member for Toowoomba North, Kerry Shine said the Multicultural Queensland Partnerships Program was a key initiative in the Queensland Government's new multicultural policy, *A multicultural future for all of us*.

"This funding helps to bring together Queenslanders from all backgrounds to celebrate our vibrant diversity and strengthen Queensland's multicultural identity."

Toowoomba events and projects that have received funding include:

- Toowoomba Languages & Cultural Festival \$15,000
- Queensland Multicultural Community Relations & Capacity Building Forum 2012 \$7,500

"With almost 18 per cent of Queenslanders born outside of Australia, we have a great opportunity to host events and activities that celebrate the rich cultural diversity that exists in our community," Mr Shine said.

"Many cultures make up Queensland and the Toowoomba International Multicultural Society and University of Southern Queensland should be applauded for promoting multiculturalism."

For further details on the Multicultural Queensland Partnerships Program visit <http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/multicultural>