



Manawatu
Multicultural Council

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Manawatu Multicultural Council (MMC) is a registered charity whose mission is to ‘celebrate, support and connect the multicultural communities of Manawatu’.

For over 27 years MMC has been an essential point of contact for new migrants, refugees and newcomers looking to put down new roots in the Manawatu region.

The MMC’s Multicultural Centre in Palmerston North is a central meeting hub and for many newcomers it’s their first stop. The centre is where people can get advice, support and information about living in New Zealand. The staff there are able to answer questions about housing, employment, safety, health care, and New Zealand law and customs.

Christine Mukabalinda, manager of the centre says, “whatever your needs are, we have the information to help and support you, or we know the people who can”.

The centre also has a regular programme of English language classes and social activities including cooking classes, potluck dinners, and workshops dedicated to supporting women’s health and wellbeing.

Many of MMC’s services are run by volunteers – most of whom have at some point been new to the Manawatu region, so they understand the difficulties that people can face with relocation and settlement.

“We want to help migrant groups and individuals connect with each other and the wider community. The strength of our society is our pastoral care to migrants and refugees who come and use the services available.”

In addition to their support services and workshop activities, MMC also organises several cultural extraganza events that draw huge crowds to Palmerston North. These include their award winning ‘Festival of Culture’ and ‘World on Stage’. This year, World on Stage featured 196 performers originating from all over the world. Both events celebrate the rich tapestry of cultures through music, story-telling, dance and songs.

Artistic director and MMC secretary, Tania Kopytko, says “it’s important for migrant and refugee communities to express themselves, share their heritage, and feel a sense of belonging – it is a way to break down barriers, learn something new, and showcase the beauty of a range of cultures”.

To find out more about Manawatu Multicultural Council (CC31379) and the work they do to empower the multicultural community of Manawatu, check out their [website](#), [Facebook page](#) and the [Charities Register](#).

