

Jane Lewis

Victorian Equal Opportunity & Human Rights Commission
Senior Adviser, Education



Jane Lewis, a trainer in leadership, critical thinking and human rights for over 20 years, represented the Commission in the design and delivery of anti-racism training for VicHealth's Localities Embracing and Accepting Diversity (LEAD) project. Jane and colleagues also produced train-the-trainer materials for addressing systemic racism towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in federal government service delivery, as part of the Australian Human Rights Commission's National Anti-Racism Strategy. Her Cultural Awareness and Inclusion work continues with local councils, tertiary education institutions and community organisations.

Beyond tolerance! Building Respect Through Inclusive Leadership

Should we be advancing a culture of "tolerance"? In fact, "tolerance" means putting up with something that we don't like. It means holding up a façade of welcome to those who fail to fit the 20th century Anglo-European Australian "norms" of appearance and behaviour. We need to move far beyond tolerance, beyond a limited understanding of multiculturalism as permission by "us" for "others" to maintain their traditions. Social cohesion can only flourish when we move from tolerance to inclusion, through:

- understanding the lasting impact of the displacement of First Australians
- sharing and celebrating the helpful human values behind so many differing traditions, and respectfully exploring the impacts of harmful traditions, wherever they are found.

This presentation will:

- Expose the hidden and/or unintentional forms of racism that continue to manipulate our expectations and reactions
- Explore why "tolerance" is a counter-productive value in reducing discrimination and promoting inclusion
- Identify the key levers for leaders to use to build new norms of acceptance and respect.