City of Port Phillip: Days of Significance Calendar

Version 1, March 2026



City of Port Phillip

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Background

How the calendar was developed

The Days of Significance calendar was developed using two components:

A. Mapping against frameworks and best practice

We reviewed action plans, policies and commitments, and benchmarked with best practice approaches used across government and community organisations. Each date was assessed against criteria to ensure the calendar is meaningful, consistent and achievable:

- Alignment with Council action plans, policies and commitments
- Cultural and religious relevance informed by demographic data
- Long-standing cultural, historical and community traditions
- Awareness days that promote community and workplace wellbeing
- Level of staffing and resourcing required
- Contribution to community needs and service delivery

Note that this mapping was undertaken as part of the internal implementation of Council's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Framework in August 2025, which also included the development of an internal DEI Significant Dates Calendar.

B. Insights from Community Consultation (10 Nov – 14 Dec 2025)

We incorporated feedback from surveys, targeted outreach and co-design with culturally and linguistically diverse and faith communities. Community members identified the observances most important to them and how they prefer these to be acknowledged.

Selection of cultural and religious days was guided by:

- Cultural and religious relevance supported by demographic data
- Frequency of mentions during consultation
- Including the two most significant observances per major faith group

What the Calendar Includes

The calendar includes the following types of cultural, social and community focused dates to ensure broad representation and meaningful connection across Port Phillip:

- Cultural, religious and social observances
- Awareness days, weeks and months that promote diversity, reconciliation, mental health, volunteering, and community wellbeing
- Social and historical traditions (e.g., International Women's Day)
- Long-standing commitments (e.g., Refugee Week through the Refugee Welcome Zone)

Community Feedback – What We Heard About Cultural and Religious Dates

Community feedback highlighted several key considerations that should guide how cultural and religious days are recognised and activated across the municipality:

Learning & Recognition
Community members want more chances to learn about different cultures as well as Australian traditions. People value public acknowledgement that highlights our diversity and helps build shared understanding.

Inclusive Practices
Community feedback was clear that not all dates should be recognised in the same way. Some observances are well suited to open community activities (for example, Eid or Lunar New Year). Others are private, sacred or reflective, and are better marked through quiet, respectful acknowledgement rather than events.

Safety & Accessibility
When recognising cultural or religious dates, people want environments that are culturally safe, welcoming and accessible to everyone.

Education
There is strong interest in simple, accessible explanations of the meaning, history and cultural context behind different observances including well-known ones like Christmas. Schools, libraries and community centres were seen as key places for this.

Visibility & Data Equity
Some communities expressed concern that limited demographic data leads to feelings of invisibility Including culturally significant dates helps ensure fair representation, even where census data is limited or small community groups are not well captured.

Small Community Recognition
Smaller cultural groups such as local Japanese community members said they value acknowledgment even if their population size is small.

Operational Needs
People want:

- practical support such as micro-grants
- accessible promotion
- activities across different neighbourhoods
- clear logistics and planning support for community-led events

Alignment with the Multicultural Strategy

Objective 1: Safe & Cohesive Port Phillip

To proactively address discrimination while fostering a culture of safety, inclusion, and mutual respect for all Port Phillip residents.

Action	Year Commenced
1.2 Develop multicultural inclusion guidelines for Council services, facilities and public space design that ensure spaces are welcoming, safe, accessible and responsive to the cultural and faith-based needs of residents of all ages, including considering important cultural and religious periods and how Council services can be responsive.	Year 2 (Ongoing
1.3 Strengthen intercultural and interfaith connections to build understanding and social cohesion.	Year 1 (Ongoing)

Objective 2: Belonging & Community Connection

To amplify meaningful community connections that foster trust, reduce isolation, and ensure diverse representation in everyday life.

Action	Year Commenced
2.1. Build community awareness of Port Phillip's Traditional Owners and provide opportunities for First Nations education.	Years 1 (Ongoing)
2.3 Reduce social isolation by supporting community-led support networks that build belonging and community care, ensuring people of all ages and cultural backgrounds including new migrants and older people are supported to stay connected.	Year 2 (Ongoing)

Objective 3: Accessible Information & Trusted Support

To ensure services and connections are barrier free and tailored to the unique needs of Port Phillip.

Action	Year Commenced
3.3 Ensure access to programs that foster connection through a review of Council funded programs, identifying participation gaps, removing barriers and expanding partnerships with community providers	Year 2 (Ongoing)

Objective 4: Empowering Diverse Communities

To celebrate the diverse communities and create connections through inclusive education, events and programs.

Action	Year Commenced

4.1 Facilitate opportunities for community awareness and recognition of significant days of celebrations and shared traditions, including how Council may need to respond in its planning and service provision.	Year 1 (Ongoing)
4.2 Activate public spaces through multicultural programming that celebrates cultural expression.	Year 2 (Ongoing)
4.3 Facilitate opportunities for education and language preservation.	Year 3 (Ongoing)
4.4. Enable a sustainable and resilient multicultural sector through long term partnerships and a multicultural lens applied to Council funding and events.	Year 3 (Ongoing)

Cultural & Religious Days – How They Are Activated

Activations for cultural and religious days follow the approach set out in the **Multicultural Strategy**. They are:

- Community led
- Co-designed where possible
- Supported through small grants and practical assistance
- Delivered in partnership with multicultural and faith organisations
- Enabled through simplified processes that reduce barriers to participation

Below is a consolidated statement that reflects all relevant information from objectives 1, 2 and 4.

How Activations Work

Cultural and religious days in the City of Port Phillip are activated in ways that:

- **Celebrate cultural expression** through music, food, art, dance, storytelling, rituals and community gatherings.
- **Support intercultural and interfaith understanding** by partnering with cultural groups, faith leaders and the Port Phillip Multifaith Network to host learning sessions, conversations and shared activities.
- **Create opportunities for belonging and connection** through small local events, cultural exchange activities, shared meals, intergenerational sessions and neighbourhood programs.
- **Promote education and language preservation** via multilingual Storytimes, cultural learning workshops, heritage language sessions and digital literacy programs.
- **Strengthen community leadership** by enabling cultural, faith, youth and seniors' groups to deliver events that reflect their traditions and community identity.
- **Ensure safety, inclusion and accessibility** with culturally safe practices, gender equitable participation, support for older residents, accessible venues and in language communication where needed.

- **Build a resilient multicultural sector** by supporting organisations through multiyear partnerships, capacity building and year-round collaboration.

What This Looks Like in Practice

Depending on the community and the significance of the day, activations may include:

- Community-led celebrations (e.g., Christmas, Easter, Eid, Diwali, Hannukah, Lunar New Year, Nowruz, Orthodox Easter).
- Interfaith and intercultural conversations, tours, or shared rituals.
- Cultural performances, dance, music and art in public spaces.
- Traditional craft, cooking or storytelling sessions.
- Multilingual Storytimes and language-based activities for children and families.
- Community meals, cultural tasting events and shared gatherings.
- Youth-led cultural programs and identity-based workshops.
- Seniors led cultural knowledge sharing (e.g., craft, music, oral history).
- Cultural exhibitions, displays, market stalls or creative installations.
- Social connection initiatives such as conversation circles, neighbourhood activities or cultural exchange nights.

All activities are designed to be low barrier, welcoming, inclusive and reflective of Port Phillip's cultural and religious diversity.

Important Note on Calendar Scope

The **Days of Significance Calendar** does **not** include every cultural or religious day identified through the consultation process. A wide variety of dates were shared by community members; however, not all have been included in the consolidated calendar.

To ensure fairness, flexibility and representation, community members and organisations are encouraged and supported to activate *any* significant day that matters to them through community-led initiatives, supported by Council's grants and simplified event permitting processes.

This enables:

- Autonomy and cultural expression
- Representation of smaller or emerging communities
- Celebration of cultural traditions that may not be widely known
- A community driven approach rather than Council selecting what is "most important"

Days of Significance Calendar

This calendar provides a high-level overview of the cultural, religious and social days that Council publicly recognises. It highlights major observances marked across the municipality through community events, promotions, cultural activities and other visible forms of acknowledgment.

Month	Date	Significant Day	Description
January	19 Jan – 9 Feb	Midsumma Festival	LGBTQIA+ arts, culture and community celebrations.
January	26 Jan	Australia Day	National Day – a day of celebration for some of our community and day of mourning for others. On our national day we can reflect on our complete and complex history and understand that acknowledging and reconciling our past helps lay a path to a stronger future.
January	27 Jan	International Holocaust Memorial Day	A day to remember people who died in the Holocaust.
January	Varies	Lunar / Chinese New Year	New Year festival with family gatherings, food and lanterns.
March	7–23 March	Cultural Diversity Week	Celebrating many cultures living together with events and activities.
March	8 Mar	International Women's Day	Celebrating women and gender equality.
March	21 Mar	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination / Harmony Day	Standing against racism, celebrating diversity.
March	21 Mar	Nowruz	Persian New Year celebrating spring and new beginnings.
March	31 Mar	Transgender Visibility Day	Celebrating and supporting transgender people.
Mar–Apr	Varies	Easter (Christian and Orthodox)	Two dates: Western churches and Orthodox churches.
Mar–Apr	Varies	Ramadan begins (Islamic)	Month of fasting, prayer and community.
April	25 Apr	ANZAC Day	Remembering people who served in war.
April	26 Apr	Lesbian Visibility Day	Celebrated annually to raise awareness of the specific issues faced by LBTQIA+ women in workplaces, health, and society.
April	Varies	Eid al-Fitr (Islamic)	Celebration marking the end of Ramadan.
April	Varies	Passover (Jewish)	Festival remembering freedom from slavery.
May	17 May	IDAHOBIT	Standing against discrimination of LGBTQIA+ people.
May	19–25 May	National Volunteer Week	Thanking volunteers for helping the community.
May	26 May	National Sorry Day	Remembering harm to Stolen Generations.
May	27 May – 3 Jun	National Reconciliation Week	Respect and understanding with First Nations peoples.
June	15 Jun	Elder Abuse Awareness Day	Standing against abuse of older people.

June	15–21 June	Refugee Week (includes World Refugee Day)	Learning about refugees and welcoming people seeking safety.
June	20 Jun	World Refugee Day	Honouring refugees, safety and belonging.
June	21 June	Homeless Persons' Memorial Day	Observed on winter solstice to honour those who have died while experiencing homelessness.
July	2–9 July	NAIDOC Week	Celebrating First Nations cultures and achievements.
August	29 Aug	Wear It Purple Day	Supporting LGBTQIA+ young people.
September	All month	Youth Fest	Celebrating young people.
September	21 Sep	International Day of Peace	Promoting peace and unity.
October	All month	Seniors Festival	Celebrating older people.
October	Varies	Diwali (Hindu)	Festival of lights celebrating hope and good over evil.
October	12–18 October	National Carers Week	This week celebrates and thanks the 3 million unpaid carers in Australia.
November	20 Nov	Transgender Day of Remembrance	Remembering trans lives lost to violence.
Nov–Dec	Varies	Hanukkah (Jewish)	Festival of lights celebrating resilience and hope.
Nov–Dec	25 Nov – 10 Dec	16 Days of Activism	Campaign to end gender-based violence.
December	1 Dec	World AIDS Day	Awareness and support for people living with HIV.
December	3 Dec	International Day of People with Disabilities	Promoting inclusion and accessibility.
December	18 Dec	International Migrants Day	Celebrating migrants and multicultural communities.
December	25 Dec	Christmas (Christian and Orthodox)	Two dates: Western churches (25 Dec) and Orthodox churches (early Jan).



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