`How can I / my organisation respond to COVID-19?

Objectives of this document:
This is a crowdsourced and evolving guide created by people campaigning on issues related to the COVID-19 response. It's intended for organisers and campaigners looking for ways to lead an anti-racist and intersectional response.

The document is split into 3 sections

1. Outline of main campaign areas and the organisations working on them
2. Messaging guide
3. Further in depth explanations of what's wrong with aspects of the response

How to use this guide: feel free to share this doc, keeping in mind it's intended as a tool for campaigning and organising more so than a digestible public facing info sheet.

An adapted, simpler messaging doc can be found HERE(LINK COMING).

If you would like to expand or add to this document, please leave suggested edits or comments. Disagreement/discussion is welcome! Moderators will regularly review, fact check and accept new additions. This is to avoid major changes or accidental misinformation without 'peer review'.

What are the main campaign areas?

This table is incomplete. If you know of an organisation working on a related campaign area, please link in this table.

CAMPAIGN	ORGANISATIONS WORKING ON THIS
Opposing racist reporting by the media	Democracy in Colour #HateIsNotNews https://actionnetwork.org/forms/pledge-hate-is-not-news?fbclid=IwAR1TME_OwZ1T4V214PqTObAOFjWP4SZQDZdlLdAe-5E07X2Wz_FKZMBMJCE Colourcode https://www.colourcode.org.au/campaigns/colour-code/stop-racist-coronavirus-reporting/stop-racist-coronavirus-reporting
Supporting local Asian communities and businesses affected by the ban	GetUp/ Colourcode #Iwilleatwithyou https://www.getup.org.au/campaigns/racial-justice/iwilleatwithyou/iwilleatwithyou?t=4NYYmTX6o
Calling for an end to the travel ban (less relevant now)	Victorian Trades Hall Council, Migrant Workers Centre (MWC,) National Union of Students (NUS), National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) - some local branches. MWC petition https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/end-the-travel-ban
Calling for the government to support those affected by the ban by offering financial assistance, extending visa deadlines, reversing visa expirations while people are trapped overseas.	MWC
Calling on universities to support staff and students affected	NTEU, NUS

Calling on the government to support affected workers	VTHC, unions https://www.megaphone.org.au/petitions/coronovirus-support-paid-sick-leave-for-casual-workers United Workers Union https://www.unitedworkers.org.au/calls-for-urgent-action-to-protect-australian-farm-workers/?fbclid=IwAR0BbQbHDWvlAW0q6Vouc8g8SwwQoEtdQF-6nercz9k2HWjVQABp9lf7Bww
Calling on the government to support undocumented workers - no deportations, no repercussions for seeking medical aid	Migrant Workers Centre United Workers Union https://www.unitedworkers.org.au/calls-for-urgent-action-to-protect-australian-farm-workers/?fbclid=IwAR0BbQbHDWvlAW0q6Vouc8g8SwwQoEtdQF-6nercz9k2HWjVQABp9lf7Bww Democracy in Colour
Changing the media narrative by showing the stories of those impacted	Health Justice Australia https://www.healthjustice.org.au/covid19/
Changing the broader long term political narrative – economy and healthcare	

MESSAGING

Don't	Do

● Don't fixate on or sensationalise the number of Australians who have COVID-19
Why: This is a global pandemic, the focus on national infection rates creates division in our response and sows the seeds of nationalism and xenophobia within our communities. The focus on 'Australians' also dispels our responsibility to the global community. For example, our travel ban essentially encouraged people to go to a third country from China in order to enter Australia, without consideration of how this will affect the health of the global community and potentially spread the virus wider.
	● Do support the campaigns of organisations who are doing work
	   ○ Boost visibility online
	   ○ Talk about it to family and friends
	   ○ Do the 'ask'
	   ○ Share media stories with good framing and messaging
	   ○ Agitate the government for structural change
	
	● Do humanise the people the media is

- Don't say 'if only we treated climate change or *X issue* like the coronavirus.'
  Why: the response to the coronavirus has been increased border control, increased racism, people on temporary visas being targeted and separated from their families, people who are homeless and experiencing social marginalisation facing further hardship, the suspension of civil liberties which could have ongoing impacts.

- Don't sensationalise or blame individual cases, e.g. the GP or hotel worker.
  Why: The spread of the virus is because of a lack of a structural response, precarious work conditions, and an insufficient healthcare response. While we all have our role to play in preventing the spread of COVID-19, a more impactful response would be to demonstrate how this is a structural issue.

- Don't be flippant about who is at risk, e.g. "it's just old people who are going to die".

- Don't *prioritise* the damage to the climate movement and/or other campaigns. Climate change is an urgent issue but this is not the moment to be prioritising the impact on climate organising when there are people whose lives are being affected by COVID-19 and the racialised response. Don't make assumptions about this being a moment of demobilisation.

- Don't draw on these values
  - Self interest.
  - Security.
  - Belief in 'Market' , and the 'Economy' as a priority.
  - Racism, Xenophobia.
  - Scarcity mentality
  - Tradition/conformity

- Don't 'celebrate' the 'positive' environmental impacts of COVID-19., e.g. "the earth is recovering, humans are the virus, this is mother nature"
  Why: Blaming humans rather than our social structures - neoliberalism, capitalism -

dehumanising. Instead of saying, *international students, foreigners, foreign passport holders, non-citizens*
DO say *people on temporary visas, workers on temporary visas, workers, people in our community, families, our neighbours*

- Do stick to health based language
- HateIsNowNews campaign
- Do emphasise these values
  - Universalism.
  - Cooperation.
  - Community.
  - Care.
  - Respect for expertise. (Not necessarily authority)
  - "We will get through this together".

- Do talk about the workers impacted including casual workers and undocumented workers

- Do reorient the focus away from border control and the government regulation of bodies/individuals to healthcare measures.

- When calling out racism, frame it around the highest standard and not the lowest E.g. instead of saying, *why hasn't the government banned X country too?* Say, *why are X people being targeted?*

- Do draw attention to the uneven distribution of resources/ aid E.g. people who don't have the means to stock up on supplies, people living in regional areas who don't have local testing facilities.

- Do learn from organisers and activists overseas.
  - Talk about and talk to the Chinese activists who organised while in lockdown, from hosting social events to connecting while online.
  - Research how other countries are supporting undocument workers.
  - Research how the far right in Europe are scapegoating migrants and refugees and how activists there have combatted this. We can learn from them.

ignores all the people who are most vulnerable and will suffer the worst consequences of COVID-19. It blames communities in the global south and Indigenous communities for the destruction of the climate.	● [Do be critical of distraction and shock doctrine](#) (from reMakers)
	   ○ Watch for punitive measures that unduly impact people without job security/on low and modest incomes – such as heavy fines and possible jail time for those who do not self-quarantine.
	   ○ While we may be prepared to accept laws to forcibly shut down public venues or quarantine people, we should be asking for safeguards and sunset clauses to ensure these aren't abused now or down the track.

Other messaging resources
- [COVID-19 messaging guide developed by Anat Shenker-Osorio and Race-Class Narrative](#) (US context)
- [reMakers resource](#)

Further in depth explanations of what's wrong with part of the response

Note: this section especially is in flux and intended to be an ongoing dialogue unpacking different dimensions of the response. If adding commentary, please try to link to credible sources.

- Why was the travel ban bad?
    - This was initially implemented against the advice of the World Health Organisation. (to fact check: what is the WHO's current stance?)
    - It was implemented unevenly, discriminating against people based on visa status rather than likelihood of being sick.
    - It was also implemented without other healthcare measures, nor did the government use the time to put in place better screening methods.
    - When further bans were implemented, they were applied inconsistently. (e.g. South Korea and Iran, then Italy was the last country to receive a travel ban).
    - Many of the people affected by the travel ban are people who have lived in our communities for years, work here, study here, have family, partners and

lives here. Who as a result of the ban, have lost jobs, lost visas, are left without income away from home.

- The impact on temporary visa holders exacerbates the already racist migration system where permanent residency is much more attainable for white people and people from Western European countries, whereas longer term temporary visa holders are much more likely to be PoC. Take for example two people who have lived in Australia for 5 years who are both in the same affected country. Person A is unable to return, loses their job which their visa is dependent on and as a result cannot return indefinitely leaving behind an apartment they are unable to pay rent on and face uncertainty as to when they will see their partner again. Person B arrives in Australia and is told to go home and quarantine with no measures to make sure they complied.
- The impact on working holiday makers is drastic with people losing visas forever. The impact extends beyond our tourism industry, working holiday makers support our food supply chains, fill so many important areas of our service industries which our society rely on.