**Major milestones in social inclusion for the Jewish community**



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The Jewish Community Council of Victoria (JCCV) Plenum on Monday night had a near record attendance of affiliate organisations, community leaders and interested community members to participate in two milestone events.

In a landmark decision, the JCCV Plenum voted to support the affiliation of Keshet Australia Inc, the JCCV's first LGBT affiliate. Jonathan Barnett, President of Keshet spoke about the mental health and exclusion problems faced by Jews of diverse sexual orientation and gender identity, and Keshet’s role in combatting these.

Jennifer Huppert, JCCV President, stated, “This is the first time that a LGBT organisation has joined a Jewish community roof body in Australia and one of the few around the world.  Rarely has this happened in faith based communities anywhere in the world.”

This is a concrete step in our advancement of full social inclusion for every member of the Jewish community, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.  The discussions within our affiliates before the vote were important, as they raised awareness of the issues faced by some members of our community, and the importance of embracing diversity. The vote was a comprehensive victory for inclusion and a strong statement by the Jewish community against homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and intersex exclusion.”

David Marlow, JCCV Executive Director stated, “This vote may not change the world, but will change the way many in our community feel about the world.”

The JCCV Plenum also voted to support the adoption of the new JCCV Social Inclusion Disability Policy, aimed at reducing stigma and improving inclusion and access to community based services and activities for members of the Jewish community with a disability. The Policy was introduced by JCCV executive member Doron Abramovici, who said that “The JCCV has a proud record of advocating for inclusion all members of our community and today we extend this history with 2 motions”. David Southwick MP, Chair of the [Social Inclusion Leadership Committee](https://www.facebook.com/SocialInclusionLeadershipCommittee) (SILC) was one of a number of people who spoke in support of the policy.

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