

BACHAR HOULI FOUNDATION

2025 ANNUAL REPORT





BACHAR HOULI FOUNDATION

The Bachar Houli Foundation (BHF) is a community-based organisation that aims to empower young Muslims through sport. The BHF uses sport as a vehicle to engage over 6,000 young Muslims annually across five states.

Committed to empowering young Muslims, the BHF delivers twelve unique programs and initiatives centred around four strategic pillars: Engagement, Employment, Education and Talent. The BHF's vision is to support young people to become 'the best versions of themselves,' and drive social cohesion and leadership within the Muslim community and contribute to a thriving multicultural Australia.



OUR STORY

The BHF launched its inaugural program in 2012 intending to provide young Muslims with the opportunities to engage and participate in organised sport. The BHF's strategic pillars focus on engagement, education, employment, and talent – all being underpinned by twelve cutting-edge programs delivered annually across Australia.

In 2012, the BHF engaged 50 participants in its first Academy program. Now – over ten years later – its programs have now reached over 35,000 participants nationally and counting.

Our programs are strongly supported by our education framework which encompasses the four pillars of mental peak performance, leadership, identity, and physical development; all of which have helped shape our participants into better individuals and community leaders.

The Foundation is proud of how our programs have flourished and positively impacted the lives of many young people. We're passionate about the impactful work, and together with the support of our partners, we are ensuring that the next generation of young Muslims can reach their full potential.

VISION

To contribute to building a culturally safe Australia through the lens of sport, where young Muslims from all backgrounds are empowered to make the most of their opportunities and contribute to a thriving multicultural nation.

MISSION

To foster community harmony and provide development opportunities for young Muslim people through sports.

OUR VALUES



CONNECTION

We show genuine interest in others and share experiences



CARE

We prioritise the well-being of one another and look out for each other



HUMILITY

We appreciate and use our strengths to lift up others



DETERMINATION

We work hard and consistently give our best effort

OUR PILLARS



ENGAGEMENT

Providing a community entry point and programs to support young people in their early development.



EDUCATION

Providing unique learning environments through sports and culturally safe environments for young people to thrive.



EMPLOYMENT

Providing employment and professional development pathways into the sporting industry for young Muslims across Australia.



TALENT

Nurturing the best Muslim talent on and off the field to foster strong role models.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTOR

This year has been one of the most transformative in the history of the Bachar Houli Foundation. As I reflect on the impact we have created together, I am reminded of the responsibility we carry – to inspire the next generation and provide meaningful pathways for young Muslims across the country.

Our growth has been guided by our four strategic pillars: Engagement, Education, Employment and Talent. Driven by our dedicated and passionate programs and high-performance team, we continue to deliver programs that meet young people across the country, and support them in becoming the best versions of themselves. The strength of the Bachar Houli Foundation lies in its community. In 2025 alone, more than 6,500 participants engaged with our programs, representing 55 cultural backgrounds across 57 schools in five states.

This year also marked several significant milestones. Our expansion to have 75 students enrolled at three Islamic College of Sport campuses in Victoria, along with the launch of our NSW campus, represents a major step in shaping a dedicated pathway for young athletes who want to pursue academic and athletic excellence across two states.

We proudly celebrated Adam Sweid and Hussien El Achkar as two AFL draftees out of the Bachar Houli Foundation academies pathway and supported 25 participants in national talent pathways.

Our Employment Program continued to grow nationally, supporting young people in building networks and preparing for careers in the sports industry. In the near future, our support from the Ian Potter Foundation will strengthen and expand this initiative, allowing us to provide even more young people from culturally diverse communities with pathways into sustainable employment and broaden our partnerships with sporting clubs across Australia.

At the same time, the launch of the National Girls Sports Academy stands as one of our most meaningful advancements. Our shift to a multi-sport, high-performance model for Muslim girls has created a stronger, more engaging pathway nationwide. It's been incredible to see over 80 young women embrace the program across three states, and we're proud to be building an environment where they can thrive as athletes, leaders and confident young Muslims.

None of this progress happens without the commitment of our staff, volunteers, supporters and partners. Most importantly, our participants and their families continue to inspire us with their resilience, ambition and eagerness to learn, grow and reach their potential.

As we look to the future, our focus is to continue strengthening the foundations we have built. We endeavour to shape confident leaders, connected communities and a stronger future for all. Earlier this year, our announcement of the Aspire Sports Centre marked a major step toward that future, and we are excited about the opportunities this new home will create for our young people and the wider community. The facility will provide a culturally safe, purpose-built space for Muslim youth and families to connect, participate and thrive through sport, education and community engagement.

Thank you to everyone who has walked this journey with us. Your support is truly valued, and we look forward to continuing our meaningful relationship into the future.



Ali Fahour
Director, Bachar Houli Foundation

A MESSAGE FROM OUR FOUNDER

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude and pride for what the Bachar Houli Foundation has achieved. When this journey began in 2012, our aim was to empower young Muslims to believe in themselves, stay connected to their values, and contribute confidently to the community around them. This was done through a football academy which reached 50 participants.

Over ten years later, with the ongoing dedication and support of our 33 national staff and 40 volunteers, we have grown to reach over 40,000 participants nationally, and counting. Seeing that vision come to life year after year and the development of our young people remains one of the greatest privileges of my life.

While this year has brought many successes, what matters most to me is the character, leadership and strength of identity we see emerging in our youth. Their willingness to step forward, embrace challenges and support one another shows that our impact extends far beyond sport.

This has also been a year of significant momentum for our long-term vision. The announcement of the Aspire Sports Centre earlier in the year represents a defining moment for the Foundation's future. This state-of-the-art facility will provide a culturally-safe home for Muslim youth and their families for years to come. It will be an environment to learn, grow and connect with the wider community while strengthening the pathways we have worked so hard to build. With the Aspire Sports Centre, we are ensuring that the next generation has the environment it needs to thrive.

What inspires me most is not just what we have delivered, but what lies ahead. Guided by our purpose and a genuine commitment to serving

our community, the Foundation continues to evolve. With the support of our partners, families and young people, I am confident that we will continue to create opportunities that uplift our youth and contribute to a multi-cultural Australia.

Thank you for your continued belief in our mission. I look forward to the journey ahead and to witnessing the bright future our young people are shaping.



Bachar Houli
Founder, Bachar Houli Foundation



YEAR IN REVIEW

OUR PROGRAMS REACH

6,535
Participants



33
Staff

40
Volunteers



14
Programs

57
Schools



55
Cultural Backgrounds

HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS



Expanded to three ICS Vic campuses + launch of ICS NSW



Aspire Sports Centre Announcement



Two draftees (Hussien El Achkar + Adam Sweid)



25 participants featuring in AFL talent pathways



10 Employment Program participants engaged nationally



Launch of the National Girls Sports Academy

BY THE NUMBERS

700+ STUDENTS

from 20 schools took part in our A-Game workshops that introduce participants to physical fitness and leadership development

1,425 GUESTS

attended national Iftar Dinners, in conjunction with SANFL, MCC, GIANTS, AFL NSW/ACT and WA Football

2,970 PARTICIPANTS

nationally competed in the Bachar Houli Cup Programs

24 MUSLIM COACHES

participated in the BHF Coaching Pathways Program

OVER 600

Young Muslims participated in BHF Academies

SOCIAL IMPACT

100%

of Discovering Islam participants agreed the session provided practical insights applicable to the workplace, encouraged open, and respectful discussions

93%

of our female participants felt a sense of belonging and confidence in connecting with their faith and community, with 7% neutral

91%

of participants felt a greater sense of confidence in their leadership abilities

100%

of A-Game participants feel that Islamic values were well integrated



PROGRAMS REACH

PARTICIPANTS

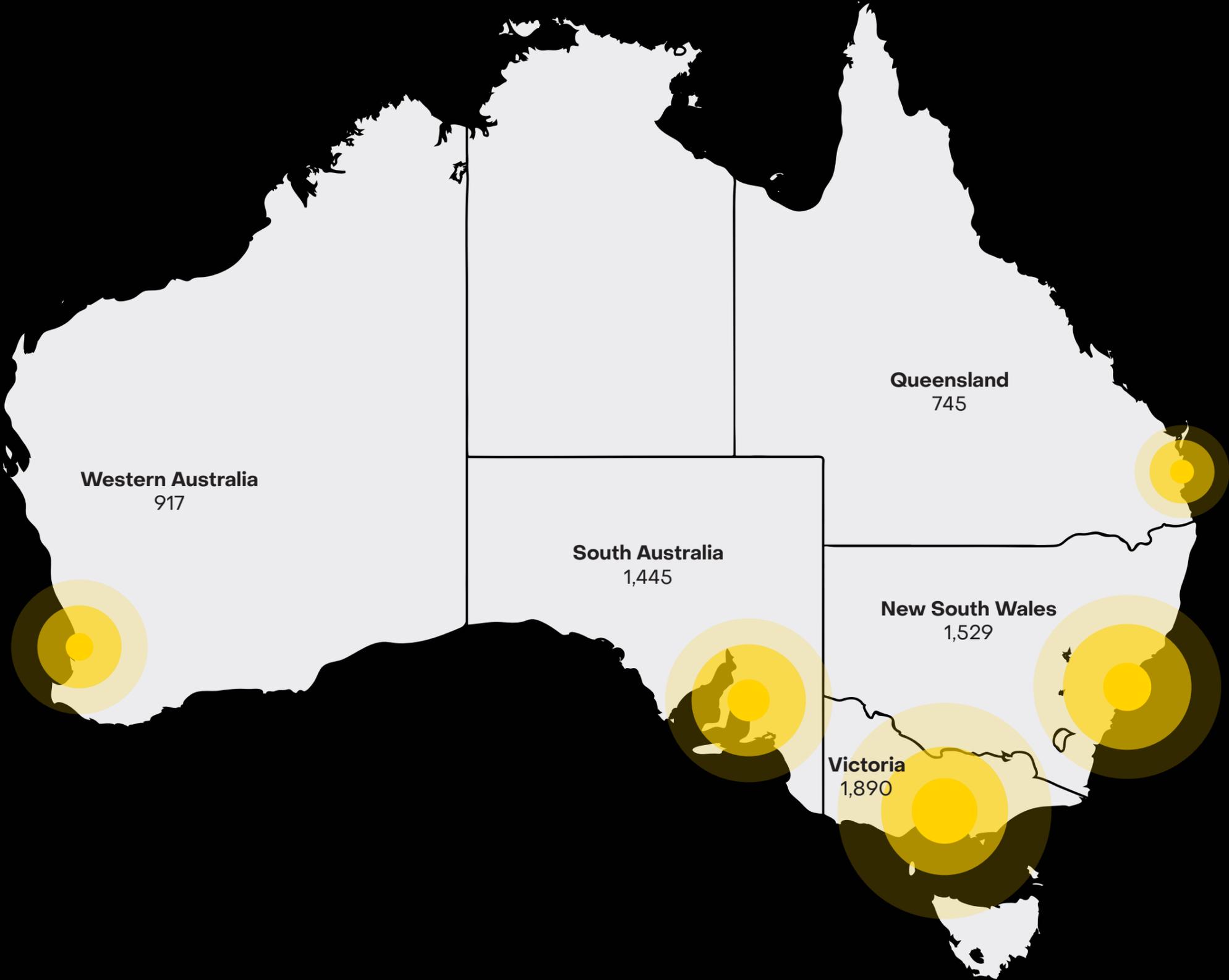
2012 - 50 participants
2025 - 6,535 participants

PROGRAMS

2012 - 1 program
2025 - 14 programs

STAFF

2012 - 3 staff
2025 - 33 staff





BETTS X HOULI CUP UNITES FOR ITS SECOND YEAR

Young footballers from the Eddie Betts and Bachar Houli Foundations showcased their talent for the second year running as a part of the 'Betts X Houli Cup.'

The Betts X Houli Cup represents a shared commitment between the Eddie Betts Foundation (EBF) and Bachar Houli Foundation (BHF) to leverage football as a vehicle to drive social cohesion and community harmony and celebrate cultural diversity in Australia.

Founded in 2023, the EBF exists to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth, promote positive perceptions through educational initiatives and promote equity through sports, similar to the BHF, founded in 2012, which exists to empower young Muslims through programs and initiatives centred around its four key pillars: education, employment, engagement and talent.

The BHF's National Senior Boys Academy provides high-performance training, places a strong emphasis on developing leadership and aims to strengthen the Islamic identity of its 15 to 18-year-old participants.

Similarly, the EBF's Football Academy prioritises personal development, leadership, education, and cultural pride alongside football talent and training for its participants.

Led by experienced staff and mentors, both academies set out to make talent pathways accessible for Islamic and Aboriginal youth, respectively.

The Eddie Betts Foundation's AFL academy faced the Bachar Houli Foundation's National Senior Boys Academy on Friday, September 26 at La Trobe Sports Park in Bundoora.





FROM BHF, ADAM SWEID AND HUSSIEN EL ACHKAR REALISE AFL DREAMS

Adam Sweid and Hussien El Achkar were both selected during the 2025 National Draft, becoming the seventh and eighth Muslims to reach the top flight of AFL.

Out of the Bachar Houli Foundation (BHF), Sweid and El Achkar became the second and third academy graduates to be drafted after Saad El-Hawli was taken by the Bombers with pick No. 13 in the 2024 AFL Mid-Season Rookie Draft.

Sweid and El Achkar have been participants of BHF academies since the age of 12, progressing all the way through to the age of 18.

Both have been Bachar Houli Medallists in the past and participants of the Foundation's international Elite Performance Academy in the United Arab Emirates on multiple occasions.

Sweid acknowledged the BHF in his development, saying "They've had the most impact of anyone by far."

"Bachar Houli, Ali Fahour and Ahmed Saad – they've done so much for me, and their program has been absolutely wonderful," he said.

Head of BHF Programs & High-Performance Ahmed Saad said "Adam and his family deserve so much credit. I've known him since he was 12 when he first came into our academies and even back then he was mature, committed and always

willing to learn. Seeing how far he's come makes all of us proud."

Working closely with El Achkar across the last three years, BHF High-Performance Lead Michael Chiovitti said El Achkar always conducted himself with professionalism.

"He really took ownership of his own development, and always took an elite approach since I arrived at the BHF," Chiovitti said.

Chiovitti reflected on El Achkar's resilience throughout 2025.

"At times this year, 'Huss' was tested mentally and physically."

"He had to keep grinding. Even after an ankle injury that sidelined him for a month which caused him to miss important footy, including Vic Metro duties at a critical time, this ultimately led to his draft ranking slipping."

"He came to [Ahmed] 'Saady' and me with a clear plan for what he wanted to improve... whether it was speed or agility, he kept showing up and doing the work, so it's a credit to him," Chiovitti said.



TESTIMONIALS

“

Being part of the program allowed me to build relationships with people I didn't think I would build relationships with, so I feel like expanding your network really helps build your career.

— Leila Mahic, 2025 Employment Program Participant, Collingwood Football Club

“

My favourite part of the academy is that I get to meet new girls and socialise with more people other than being at home.

— Asiyah, 2025 Junior Girls Sports Academy, Victoria

“

I've learned how to be a better leader, and what it actually means to be a leader. Taking accountability, and putting everyone before yourself.

— Noah, 2025 Junior Boys Academy, Victoria

“

One thing I've learned so far is that in order to win in a group setting is that you have to apply your values and have high expectations for your group.

— Fadiyah, 2025 Senior Girls Sports Academy, Victoria

“

It's been amazing to build strong connections with other coaches through the program over the past few years. I have been able to implement fundamentals to bring back to local level, and it has been great to work AFL mentors who have been at the elite level.

— Mohammed Kaakour, BHF Coaching Pathways Program Participant



THE ICS STORY

The Islamic College of Sport is an independent senior secondary school, established by the Bachar Houli Foundation to offer young Muslim students an environment where they can explore their faith and sense of identity while completing a holistic and applied education that is connected to genuine sports industry and community experiences.

Students at the College study and receive the Victorian Certificate of Education – Vocational Major. The Islamic College of Sport was founded as an opportunity to support young people through education that is connected to the sporting industry and community experiences.

VISION

We want to be:

THE SCHOOL OF CHOICE

For young Muslim students seeking an education experience that is applied and connected to industry.

TRUSTED

A highly regarded and trusted school within the Islamic school and wider Islamic community.

MISSION

The College exists to provide an environment where young Muslim students can explore their faith and sense of identity, while completing a holistic and applied education that is connected to genuine industry and community experiences.

OUR VALUES

CONNECTION

We show genuine interest in others and share experiences



CARE

We prioritise the well-being of one another and look out for each other



HUMILITY

We appreciate and use our strengths to lift up others



DETERMINATION

We work hard and consistently give our best effort



A YEAR IN REVIEW

HIGHLIGHTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

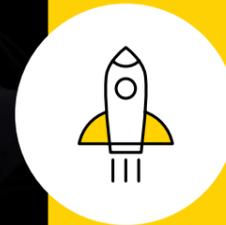
Expanded to three ICS VIC campuses (Coburg, Hoppers Crossing and Endeavour Hills)



ICS establishes new College in the heart of Sydney Olympic Park opening for year 11 students in 2026



Launch of partnership with Liverpool FC International Academy



100% of ICS's student cohort graduated from Year 12 in 2025 (7 choosing direct pathways into university)



OUR PROGRAMS REACH

ICS team were Champions of School Sport Victoria in Soccer and Futsal for the Merri-Bek Division



95% of parents said the High Performance Program helps their child balance their academic and athletic goals





INAUGURAL ICS COHORT GRADUATES AT THE MCG

The ICS proudly celebrated its inaugural 2025 Year 12 graduation at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, marking an inspiring milestone for our school community. It was an eventful and memorable week that brought together students, parents, guardians and staff to honour a significant chapter in our young people's journeys. Earlier in the year, our Year 12 students also completed their Certificate II in Security at the National Security Training Academy in West Footscray, giving them a valuable head start in future employment opportunities.

We applaud the hard work, determination and collective effort that supported their success, and wish every student the very best as they embark on the next chapter of their journey.

ICS LAUNCHES NSW CAMPUS

The Islamic College of Sport (ICS) has announced the establishment of ICS NSW. Located in the heart of Sydney Olympic Park, young Muslims in Greater Western Sydney will have access to the latest facilities and learning environments at the Australian College of Physical Education (ACPE).

The College will combine academic excellence with elite athletic development, boasting a specialised program designed to develop leadership, faith, and high-performance in sport. As part of the newly established ICS campus, Year 12 students from ICS VIC travelled to Sydney in October to take part in an intensive high-performance camp, engaging with elite sporting clubs, facilities and environments.



KHURSAND REPRESENTS AFGHAN WOMEN'S NATIONAL TEAM

Islamic College of Sport student Khursand Azizi was selected for the inaugural Afghan Women's Refugee team, becoming one of the first to represent this groundbreaking initiative on the international stage.

This landmark selection followed a rigorous series of talent identification camps held by FIFA, where players were evaluated on their athletic ability, character, and potential to contribute both on and off the field.

In naming its inaugural 23-player squad, FIFA has sought to create a visible pathway for refugee and displaced women to reengage with international competition and reclaim their sporting voices.

Khursand benefitted from elite-level support including professional training environments, medical and mental health services, and mentorship during the friendly round-robin tournament with Chad, Libya, and the UAE held in Dubai during October.

Khursand's selection not only highlights her individual talent and dedication but also reflects the values of Islamic College of Sport, where education and athletic development work hand in hand to empower the next generation of leaders.



INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

In 2025, the Bachar Houli Foundation made the exciting announcement that it had received \$15 million of Albanese Labor Government funding and \$6 million of Allan Labor Government funding to open a brand-new state-of-the-art facility in the heart of Coburg, the Aspire Sports Centre.

The Aspire Sports Centre will convert the Coburg Moreland Bowls Club site into a \$25 million facility that will serve as the new home for the Bachar Houli Foundation (BHF), and the fast-growing Islamic College of Sport (ICS).

“The Aspire Sports Centre will be a welcoming, safe and supportive space. It will be an inclusive, thriving, active and culturally diverse place where Muslim and non-Muslim communities can connect through sport.”

– Foundation Founder, Bachar Houli.

The project will have a new main school campus including 12 flexible use classrooms, a breakout area for students, staff administrative facilities, and dedicated access to sports facilities such as a high-performance gym, two indoor courts and brand new changerooms.

“Sport is such an integral part of the Australian identity, embracing people from

all backgrounds through shared values of mutual respect and equality. This funding from the Albanese Government will ensure the Bachar Houli Foundation can continue its crucial work to empower young people through sport.”

– Minister for Sport, Anika Wells.

Outside of school hours, the facility will be used by local community and sporting clubs, with a focus on enabling Muslim women and girls’ participation in sport by providing a culturally safe and welcoming space. This will include having dedicated times and spaces for all women’s sport, recreation activities and programs.

“As well as catering to all students, I am particularly excited to learn that the completed facility will be used to increase Muslim women and girls’ participation in sport in a culturally safe space. I look forward to visiting again once the facility has opened.” – Minister for Education, Ben Carroll. The Aspire Sports Centre aims to open its doors in 2028.



Scan the QR Code to Watch Video





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