

**THE
SOCIAL
STUDIO**

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Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Migration
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

April 21st 2011

To the Committee Secretary

The Social Studio writes in support of the submission to the Joint Standing committee on Migration made by R.I.S.E (Refugees, Survivors and Ex-Detainees).

The Social Studio is a non-profit social enterprise working to create educational and employment opportunities for refugee youth, through the operation of a fashion design studio, retail shop and cafe. The organisation was established in 2009 as a direct response to the barriers faced by young newly arrived humanitarian migrants in accessing education and employment. The Social Studio is committed to creating pathways into mainstream systems for young people who experience social isolation. Through fashion design, clothing production and retail, The Social Studio also aims to change public perceptions of the capacity and value of embracing our newly arriving refugee arrivals. We believe that newly arrived migrants have valuable skills, talents and experiences to offer to business in Australia, and The Social Studio is a fantastic showcase of the potential of building on diversity and multiculturalism.

In particular, we support RISE's submissions on the following points:

Current Immigration policy: The mandatory detention regime

- (i) Impacts on mental and physical health
- (ii) Legal equality
- (iii) Societal views of refugees and asylum seekers – 'boat people'

Settlement

- (i) Education
- (ii) Housing
- (iii) Employment

Along with R.I.S.E, The Social Studio encourages the Committee to analyse the systemic barriers to equality that exist in Australia. In particular, we urge the committee to look at the issues facing newly arrived humanitarian migrants and asylum seekers seeking equal access to education and employment opportunities.

Yours sincerely,

Grace McQuilten
Chief Executive Officer