

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

A Milestone for Shia Islam in Australia

Every generation of our community has had its part to play. Those who migrated laid the ground. Those who were born here built on it. Those who continue to serve carry it forward. The Ahlul Bayt (peace be upon them) did not only leave us a faith to hold, they left us a path to build; a community rooted in their guidance, contributing to this country and growing in every place and every age.

Ayatollah Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Al-Ansari arrived in Australia carrying that same commitment: to serve, build and ensure that our community would have a real and lasting place in this country. What followed was quiet, persistent and one step at a time; some of which is reflected below:

2003	The first Ashura procession in Sydney was held, opening the door for public Hussein commemerations across the country
2005	The first national gathering of Shia Mosques and centres was convened paving the way for the community across the country to know and collaborate with each other
2010	The Shia denomination received formal recognition by the Governor-General, leading to the independent nomination of Shia marriage celebrants
2014	The NSW based Religious Leaders Forum was co-founded, enduring and bringing together major religions' senior faith leaders and parliamentarians in dialogue
2017	An Arbaeen health research collaboration established with Sydney University leadership and international collaborators paving the way for other multi-disciplinary research
2019	Shia Islamic occasions were recognised for study and work leave purposes
2024	Shia Islam was formally included in the Australian Bureau of Statistics, paving the way for recognition in the 2026 Census

The 2026 Census — Be Part of It

All of this was built so that our community could be seen, heard and served. The 2026 Census (11/08/2026) is where that becomes real, but only if each of us plays our part. We sincerely encourage every member of our community to participate and to record their faith as “Shia Islam”. Doing so keeps you within the broader Muslim count while ensuring that our community is also seen, identified and served for what it is. This is how the work of decades becomes the foundation of decades more. It will enable our community to better understand our own demographics and growth to enable better planning for our mosques, centres, schools and other facilities in the future. Also, without accurate numbers, we remain invisible to the institutions and processes that shape services, support and recognition for our community. None of it counts without being counted.

Important Census Instruction:

To ensure your entry is counted correctly, when the question asks: “**What is your religion?**”, please select the final option, “**Other**”, and type in exactly: “**Shia Islam**”. Please ensure it is written exactly this way, not “Shia”, “Shia Jaafari”, or “Shia Ithnaashari”, as it must match the wording recorded in the ABS registry.



24 What is the person's religion?

- Answering this question is **OPTIONAL**.
- Use 'Other (specify)' to provide a religion or a level of detail not included in the list.
- For example: MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX, LUTHERAN, SALVATION ARMY, JUDAISM, SIKHISM, TAOISM.
- Mark one box, like this: ☒

☐ No religion
☐ Catholic
☐ Anglican (Church of England)
☐ Islam
☐ Hinduism
☐ Uniting Church
☐ Buddhism
☐ Presbyterian
☐ Greek Orthodox
☐ Baptist
Other (specify)
☒ S ☒ H ☒ I ☒ A ☒ I ☒ S ☒ L ☒ A ☒ M