Final grant report: Tenants’ Rights Factsheets in Languages other than English

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Tenants’ Rights Factsheets in Languages other than English</th>
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<td>Grant recipient</td>
<td>Tenants’ Union of NSW</td>
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<td>Project manager</td>
<td>Jeremy Kerbel</td>
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<td>Position</td>
<td>Resource Development Officer</td>
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<td>Law and Justice Foundation awarded amount</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
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<td>Grant period</td>
<td>February 2015 – October 2015</td>
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<td>Date of this report</td>
<td>26 October 2015</td>
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Description of the project

Describe the project in just enough detail so that anyone can understand it. What was the aim of the project, who was the intended audience and what strategies did you implement to achieve the aim?

1) Update the existing translations of the factsheet ‘Introduction to your rights as a tenant in NSW’ – in Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified, Arabic, Farsi, Korean, Vietnamese and Spanish.

2) Commission two additional translations of the introductory factsheet in Thai and Japanese, which have been identified as the next most needed languages for tenants in NSW.

3) Prepare and commission translations of three additional factsheets: ‘Starting your tenancy’, ‘Repairs and Maintenance’ and ‘Ending your tenancy’. Translations will be in the three most needed languages: Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional and Arabic.

4) Publish the material on tenants.org.au and promote it to relevant community workers and groups via web and print communications.

The project – what happened?

How did the project come about?

Three years ago the TU produced an initial set of translations of the ‘Introduction to your rights as a tenant in NSW’ – in Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified, Arabic, Farsi, Korean, Vietnamese and Spanish. These factsheets have been very popular online: together they are viewed over 5,600 times per year. We have received positive feedback about these factsheets from the Tenants Advice and Advocacy Services (TAAS) network, and from other community organisations. We have received
requests to expand the range of languages represented, and to provide additional factsheets with information that moves beyond an introduction.

**Briefly set out the project stages and what happened in each stage.**

1) We conducted research into the most needed and appropriate languages for renters in NSW who speak languages other than English, using ABS data, reports from TAASs and other sources.

2) We updated the plain English language version of ‘Introduction to your rights as a tenant in NSW’. The update took into account the change from the Consumer Trader and Tenancy Tribunal to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. It also added some extra legal information identified as missing from the previous versions, and clarified a few points.

3) The English language version of ‘Introduction to your rights as a tenant in NSW’ was then used as a basis for updating the seven existing translations (Chinese Traditional, Chinese Simplified, Arabic, Farsi, Korean, Vietnamese and Spanish) and doing two new translations (Japanese and Thai) of the introductory factsheet. We commissioned a professional translation service to undertake this work. We sourced three quotes for this work, and chose the best option.

4) We identified the most useful English language factsheets for additional translations: ‘landlord ends agreement’, ‘bond’, ‘repairs and maintenance’, ‘you want to leave’, ‘access and privacy’, ‘ending tenancy early’, ‘residential tenancies act’, ‘rent increases’, ‘utilities’, ‘rent arrears’, ‘sharehousing’ and ‘mould’. Together, these factsheets are viewed over 400,000 times per year on tenants.org.au. These factsheets were condensed into three new two-page factsheets: ‘Starting your tenancy’, ‘Repairs and Maintenance’ and ‘Ending your tenancy’. These factsheets were then translated into the three most needed community languages: Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional and Arabic.

5) Once the new translations were ready, we published them in HTML and PDF form on tenants.org.au – which receives approximately 200,000 unique visits per year.

6) Promotion of the translated factsheets is ongoing. So far, we have promoted them in a variety of ways:
   a. Mailout of a printed poster and explanatory letter, promoting the factsheets. This mailout went to NSW TAASs, plus over 500 local community organisations in NSW, several hundred libraries, 40 student organisations and 136 Members of Parliament.
   b. Online publicity via Tenants’ Union and TAAS social media (including Facebook and Twitter), Tenants’ Union blog, and e-bulletins.
   c. Online publicity via community sector media, including HSNET.

In future we plan to continue promotion of the factsheets, particularly via Settlement Services International, small community gatherings, English language schools in Sydney, and Arabic and Chinese language radio and print publications in NSW.
If grant materials were produced:

**How were they distributed?**

The factsheets are available via our website, tenants.org.au. We have promoted the factsheets via:

- Mailout of a printed poster and explanatory letter, promoting the factsheets. This mailout went to NSW TAASs, plus over 500 local community organisations in NSW, several hundred libraries, 40 student organisations and 136 Members of Parliament.

- Online publicity via Tenants’ Union and TAAS social media (including Facebook and Twitter), Tenants’ Union blog, and e-bulletins.

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**Evaluation**

*What questions did you ask to evaluate whether you had achieved your aim?*

1)  Do the factsheets present the most relevant information?

2)  Are the factsheets published in an accessible format?

3)  Are the factsheets translated accurately?

*What data did you gather to answer your questions?*

1)  Research on visits to our website and which factsheets are most used by visitors.

2)  Testing of HTML and PDF versions of the factsheets using a range of operating systems and computers.

3)  Testing the factsheets with speakers of the languages in question – staff and volunteers from our network.

*Did you achieve your aim? What did you find out?*

Yes. The factsheets are translated, accessible and available on the website, tenants.org.au. There are a number of technical challenges when publishing material in a range of languages, but they have been overcome.

**Conclusion and recommendations**

*What is your conclusion?*

That the project was successfully completed, if perhaps taking longer than anticipated.

We will monitor usage and use the factsheets to generate relationships with workers and organisations that work with CALD communities.

*What are your recommendations for improvements both for the intended audience of your project, and for the strategy you used to achieve your aim? What would you do differently next time?*

Next time we will utilise the technical skills we have learnt.