

How I Celebrate

UTS Multicultural Women's Network

2023





The UTS Multicultural Women's Network acknowledge the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation, the Boorooberongal people of the Dharug Nation, the Bidiagal people and the Gamaygal people upon whose ancestral lands the UTS campus stand. We pay respect to Elders past and present, acknowledging them as the traditional custodians of knowledge for these lands and recognising their continuing connection to land, waters, country, and community. We acknowledge the historical oppression of land, language, and culture of First Nations People and commit to the decolonising journey we all share.



Multicultural
Women's Network

WHAT?

The Multicultural Women's Network aims to showcase significant cultural events through our e-booklets.

WHY?

To acknowledge the cultural diversity of UTS. Using an assets-based approach of amplifying how people celebrate, this project aims to empower people to feel proud of their cultural backgrounds, as well as to celebrate the cultural diversity of our UTS community.

WHO?

This is for UTS staff, students and anyone else you think would benefit from learning more about cultural events.



This month, we're spotlighting

**Nowruz
(Persian
New Year)**





Nowruz (*Novruz,*
Navruz, Nooruz,
Nevruz, Nauryz)

means
'new day'

and celebrates the
first day of Spring
(Northern
Hemisphere).

What is Nowruz?

“Nowruz has been celebrated in Iran and the Persian diaspora for more than 3,000 years. Its roots are as a feast day in Zoroastrianism, a religion practiced in ancient Persia that viewed the arrival of spring as a victory over darkness.”

While the roots of Nowruz are from Iran, “it is celebrated by 300 million people all around the world and has been celebrated for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions.”



For more information:
<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/article/nowruz-ancient-festival-celebration-springtime-new-year>

And

<https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-nowruz-day>





**Stories
from our
UTS
community**

A time you were at your happiest celebrating Nowruz...



“...when I was a kid and I would get new clothes and gifts when we visited relatives during Nowruz. Gift-giving and visiting relatives are important pillars of Nowruz...as I kid this meant holidays, time with cousins, playing, grandparents' home, lots of sweets, colourful eggs and gifts, and of course the Haft-Sin Spread.”

“The best Nowruz in Australia was when my parents' visit coincided with the Iranian New Year and I had that sense of being with family during Nowruz which was precious... in Australia, it is harder to maintain that sense of belonging because we do not have a family to share the good moments with. It is also because here in the Southern hemisphere we need to celebrate the start of spring in autumn, which is sort of weird!”

Ellie Nik, Student Equity Research Lead
Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion

Ellie Nik shares a photo of her Haft-Sin spread

Haft-Sin or Haft-seen, involves putting seven symbolic objects together whose names commence with S. Other symbolic items accompany these seven objects and together, they create a Haft-sin.

Sabzeh (wheat, barley, or lentil sprouts): Symbolizing rebirth and growth.

Samanu (sweet pudding made from wheat germ): Symbolizing sweetness and fertility.

Senjed (dried oleaster fruit): Symbolizing love.



Seer (garlic): Symbolizing medicine and health

Serkeh (vinegar): Symbolizing age and patience.

Seeb (apple): Symbolizing beauty and health.

Somagh (sumac): Symbolizing the sunrise and new beginnings.

Women in Engineering and IT hosted a celebration of Nowruz, featuring their Haft-Sin.



A time you were at your happiest celebrating Nowruz...

“My favourite time about Nowruz is the new outfits! Growing up, the night before Nowruz we would hang our clothes ready to be worn the next day. We would visit family and friends to wish them a happy Nowruz.”



“I remember one Nowruz, I was helping mum clean all the dishes, being a family of 10, these dishes sure do pile up. Then a family friend of ours said to me, ‘Neda, don’t start your year washing dishes, it’s a bad omen, you will end up washing dishes for the rest of the year’.

So there is this tradition or understanding that the first thing you do in Nowruz will be what you will do for the rest of the year, so you better choose wisely!”

Neda Dowling
Institute Coordinator at the UTS Human
Technology Institute | Communications (Social
and Political Sciences) graduate

Most important things about Nowruz

Welcoming
new
beginnings

Family

Offering
sweets to
the visitors

Haft-Sin

Visiting relatives
starting with the
more senior
members of family

Community

Dancing and
celebrating
the new
year

It is the celebration of **new beginnings** as nature wakes from its hibernation, as trees and flowers blossom, so do we as humans by cleaning our houses and ourselves, by wearing new clothes and burying the grudges, by inviting people to our houses to celebrate together and be happy together.

Giving gifts to
children
including
coloured eggs

Wearing new
or clean,
presentable
clothes

Ellie Nik

UN Secretary-General António Guterres's message for 2023

Nowruz marks new beginnings.

A 'new day'.

A new year.

The arrival of spring and rebirth of nature.

For more than 300 million people around the world, it is a time for family and friends to come together, reflect on the past and look forward to a brighter future.

Nowruz is also a celebration of humanity's rich cultural heritage and diversity. And a chance – for all of us – to be guided by its values of peace, dialogue and solidarity:

To reaffirm our commitment to human rights and dignity;

To promote mutual respect and reconciliation;

To protect the planet and live in harmony with nature.

As we celebrate Nowruz, let us choose hope and compassion, embrace the opportunities that lie ahead, and work together to building a more peaceful, more sustainable and more inclusive world for all.

May this Nowruz bring you joy, good health and prosperity.



**Happy
Nowruz!**



Multicultural
Women's Network



JOIN US!

Supporting women at UTS to
reach their full potential



For more information,
email:
mwn@uts.edu.au

**This booklet
was created
by Dr. Elaine
Laforteza**

A big thanks to the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion for their support and to everyone who shared their stories.



Multicultural Women's Network

