

## Youth entrepreneurs & leaders speaker series

### *Youth Mental Health with Nicole Gibson in Laos*

*The Youth Entrepreneurs and Leaders Speaker Series*, run as part of Australian public diplomacy program *Australia now*, will be returning to Laos on September 12-13 with world-renowned speaker and mental health advocate Nicole Gibson. Funded by the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and curated by [Social Good Outpost](#), the Speaker Series is being run across a selection of locations from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), having already held events across Laos and Cambodia, and aims to celebrate and showcase youth as well as cement long standing ties between nations. Working closely with the Australian Embassy in Laos, the program will comprise of many events including panel discussions as well as engagements with Lao youth and on-ground organisations.

This leg of the series engages Nicole Gibson, a multi-award winning social entrepreneur impacting over 250 000 people world-wide with her unconventional models of community development and transformation. Nicole is the CEO of the global movement, [Love Out Loud](#), and also the founder of the Rouge and Rouge Foundation and the youngest serving Commonwealth Commissioner, and first in Australia, for Mental Health. An unstoppable advocate for the human potential and exemplar of Australian youth making a difference, Nicole will run her program in Laos focused predominately on youth mental health, taking the lessons learned in Australia to share with Lao community and youth organisations, international schools and radio.

The topic of youth mental health is an important initiative of the *Youth Entrepreneurs and Leaders Speaker Series*, particularly given the pioneering work of young Australians to raise knowledge and awareness on topics of suicide prevention in recent years. The series curators, [Social Good Outpost](#), are thrilled to be able to bring one of Australia's foremost thought-leaders and experts on the topic to Laos for this leg.

"In working across Southeast Asia, it's become clear that issues to do with mental health and well-being, particularly in young people, affect all societies. It's rare to get someone so highly awarded and deeply humble as Nicole to work with our near neighbours. We believe she will be an incredible empowering force in Laos," said Elise Stephenson, Curator of the program and Director of Social Good Outpost.

Working in partnership with the Australian Embassy in Laos, Nicole will collaborate with organisations such as STELLA, the Lao Youth Union, Panyathip International School, the Vientiane Women and Youth Center for Health Development, and the Lao Youth Radio in a whirlwind two-day tour. Topics canvassed will include social entrepreneurship – how to use business for social good – and youth mental health.

She kicks off her program by collaborating with Khouanfa Siriphone, of STELLA on how to make change in societies through social entrepreneurship. Yet, Nicole will also present to audiences in their hundreds, including at OzTalks – an event which provides a platform for Australian ambassadors to communicate their thoughts on a particular social issue – where Nicole will speak on youth mental well-being. Further to this, Nicole will run workshops with the Lao Youth Union and Panyathip International School, and present live-to-air for the Lao Youth Radio on topics ranging from relationship advice, to *what is youth mental health*, to connection and building healthy communities, and to identifying challenges to mental health.

Greater collaboration and partnerships are a strong focus of the program, with the Speaker Series hoping to build strong connections between guest speakers, like Nicole Gibson, and the communities and organisations with whom they work. "Young Australians have long been at the forefront of driving suicide prevention across disparate communities, from urban to rural. I know that Nicole will be an incredible ambassador for tackling youth mental health in Laos, and have no doubt she will spark change in the minds of all she meets," said Elise Stephenson, Curator of the program.

For more information on the program and for all event updates visit:

<https://socialgoodoutpost.com/Australia-now/>

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Social Good Outpost is partnering to present a series of events in the ASEAN region in 2019-2020.

