

Adama Kamara is an experienced community development practitioner with specialist skills in community engagement, partnership development, grants administration, policy and program development. She has over 15 years' experience working with not for profit, health and local government organisations in Western Sydney.

She has led high performing teams and has 10 years' experience delivering and evaluating place-based capacity building programs. An advocate for meaningful participation, Adama has led co-design projects with young people, people seeking asylum, refugees, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and service providers. One example is the multi-award-winning *Refugee Camp in My Neighbourhood* project, which she initiated and has led since 2014.

Born in Sierra Leone, Adama and her family were in Australia for her father's university study when civil war broke out in her home country. Unable to return, Adama's family sought asylum and became involved in sponsoring and supporting refugees displaced by Sierra Leone's civil war to settle in Australia.

Adama became the Co-Chair of the Sierra Leone Youth Group (SLYG), the first youth-led organisation in the Sierra Leone community in Sydney. SLYG was formed to respond to the settlement needs of young people who had identified challenges settling in a new country as humanitarian entrants. SLYG coordinated social and recreational programs that assisted in building social networks and recovering from the impacts of trauma. Adama later joined the STARTTS team, working as a bicultural counsellor with newly arrived refugees and as a project officer supporting emerging African communities.

Adama joined the RCOA team as Deputy CEO in January 2021.