

Syed Moin Iqbal

Developer / Programmer Melbourne, AU

PERSONAL STATEMENT

To Whom It May Concern,

Please read the following in its entirety as it is something very personal and I would sincerely appreciate your patience and understanding. Before proceeding, I'll share my current visa and work status, as that will give you some context for the next bit.

I am an engineer having worked full time for a real-estate company located in Melbourne CBD from September 2019 to December 2020. I actually will start a new permanent role a few days from now on 08/02/2021 for a well-known IT solutions/services company based in [REDACTED] VIC. I currently reside in [REDACTED] with my wife, 13-year-old step-son and our two-year-old Labrador puppy. I completed my Bachelor in Engineering (Honours) from Monash University in July 2019 and I arrived in Melbourne, VIC as an international student back in July 2014. I have gained a two-year Temporary Work Visa in December 2019 (which my family and I are currently holding). The upcoming July 11, 2021 will mark the exact 7-year anniversary of my arrival in Australia and I am tremendously proud of calling myself a Victorian resident. My wife and step-son arrived in Melbourne, VIC in January 2018, and since then, my wife completed her Master Degree in International Relations from Monash University being a Monash International Merit Scholarship recipient graduating with highest honours. My step-son is currently attending the prestigious [REDACTED] and is halfway through Year 7.

The reason I am sharing the aforementioned information with you is because we want you to know that we have worked tremendously hard and paid our dues to get to this point, and we have not taken any aspect of coming, residing and studying/working in Australia for granted. I am writing to you, as our last hope, to seek your advice and support regarding our residency status in Australia. As we are currently holding a Temporary Work Visa (subclass 485), and that I work in a skill-nominated technical field, I am eligible to apply for permanent residency in Australia - given my eligibility, I submitted my Expression of Interest (EOI) for a skilled migrant permanent visa

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(subclass 189) back in 29 October, 2019. Ideally, we would have been invited to apply for the permanent residency visa by now, but due to COVID-19, hardly any invitations have been issued since April 2020. This is highly alarming for us, as we have very limited time remaining on our visa, and if we don't receive our invitations by this year, it will not only jeopardise my ability to continue my permanent role, my wife will have to forfeit her dream of completing her PhD and my step-son won't be able to continue his secondary education from one of Victoria's finest institutions. If we don't receive our invitation by this year, I essentially will have to uproot my family from a country where we are deeply invested, financially and emotionally. What's even more depressing is my wife's father passed away earlier this past month, and we couldn't even visit her family back in our country of birth as all non-Australian citizens won't be allowed entry/re-entry given current circumstances, even though I have a valid working visa now - I don't think there is a higher emotional price that can be paid than this.

You might be thinking at this point that I certainly cannot be the only one on this boat, but believe me when I say this, my (and my family's) situation is quite rare in the sense that *we are already residing in Australia*, as opposed to the tens of thousands off-shore applicants who understandably cannot come to Australia in these circumstances. I am speaking to you now not just for myself and my family, but also for the very small minority of residents who have temporary work rights in Australia AND also work in a skill-nominated technical field.

The state of Victoria and Australia in general have taken great care of me and my family till now, and we are immensely grateful; however, as mentioned earlier, we have studied and worked tirelessly to get to this point and have paid our dues - this brings me to my request, which is as follows: We would like to request that you take a lead in assisting the on-shore skilled migrants like myself by helping them with their permanent residency invitations. Once we get invited, we can apply for a permanent residency visa (e.g. subclass 189) and get a bridging visa issued once my current work visa expires, hence, enabling us to lawfully stay in Australia without overstaying the visa period. The invitation itself is quite subjective and does not require any fees to process. Giving a preference to on-shore applicants will ensure a steady economic growth for Australia in general, while reducing health risks by not inviting off-shore applicants at this stage. I am aware at a time like this, in-person appointments are not ideal, but if you'd like, we are completely willing to visit you at your office at a time of your convenience, and bring in any necessary paperwork that is required of us to verify our position.

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We have great faith in our federal and state representatives and we strongly believe that our representatives work in our best interests, which is why we are reaching out to you for your guidance. I understand that this is an issue that can be quite controversial, which is why I hope you will be able to escape the ongoing politicising of the migration issue and take initiatives that will benefit all currently residing in Victoria (and in extension, Australia).

I apologise for the lengthy email, but I wanted to collect my thoughts and articulate it to you to the best of my ability. I hope this email is well received and I hope to hear back from you soon.

Sincerely,

Syed Moin Iqbal

