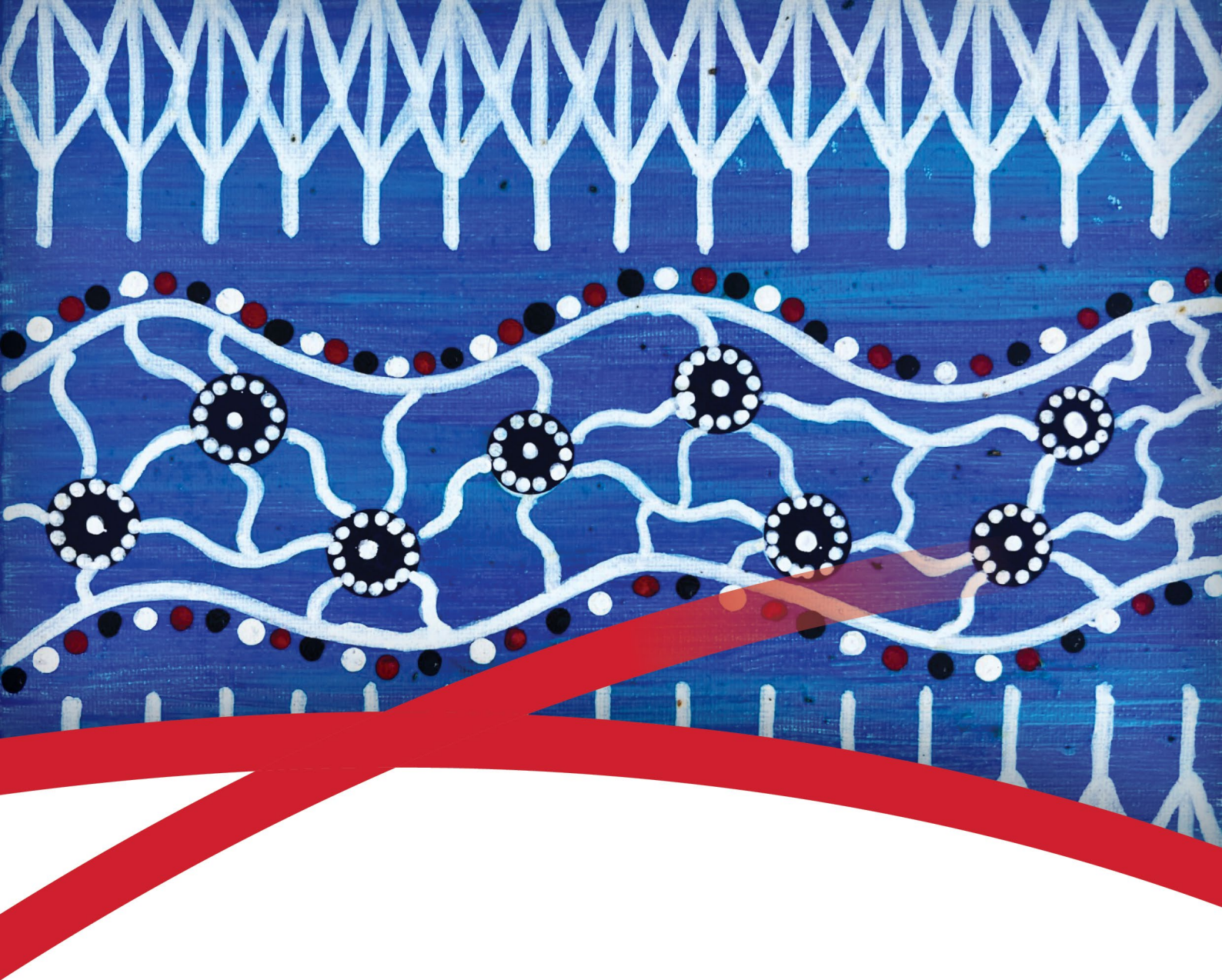




Innovate **Reconciliation** **Action Plan**



July 2026 – June 2028



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Artwork details

Gadigal Country By Graham Toomey

About the Artist and Artwork:

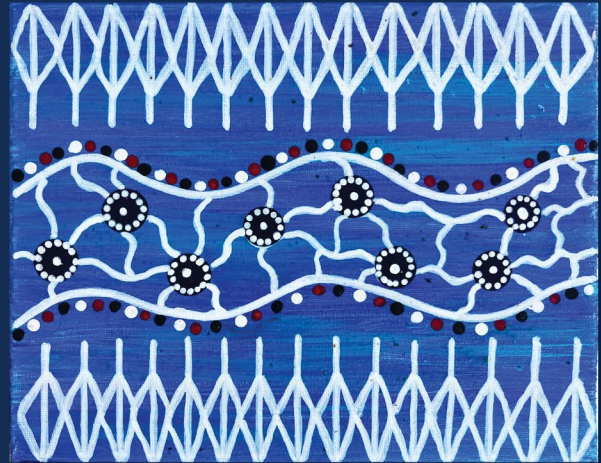
Graham Toomey is a freshwater man from the Wurrumunga Clan of the Wiradjuri Nation and also of the Wongaibon Nation of Western NSW.

"My creative works, captures the living spirit of Country which binds me to my Identity and Culture. Country speaks to me, which I then explore and create new mediums and forms of creativity and art".

The Head Office of The Centre for Volunteering is located on Gadigal Country.

Gadigal Country is both ancient and beautiful and it holds knowledge and stories from long ago. If we listen carefully and respectfully, Country will speak to us and will share those stories and knowledge. Country is a reference of a place long ago and, mystically, it captures the presence of our old peoples. This artwork captures the colors of Gadigal Country, its waterways, both fresh and saltwater along with its traditional campsites and tracks that connect clans to Country and to each other.

At the top and bottom of the artwork are shields, which capture Country protecting and providing for its peoples. While we reflect on this artwork, let us never lose sight that if we care for Country, Country will care for us.



Acknowledgement of Country

The Centre for Volunteering acknowledges the Gadigal of the Eora nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our office stands. We recognise the importance of their connection to place and community on these lands and pay our respects to Elders, both past and present.



Message from the Chair

The Board of The Centre for Volunteering strongly supports The Centre's ongoing commitment to reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations.

The release of The Centre's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan furthers that commitment by recognising, supporting and promoting the work that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples undertake as a part of the NSW Volunteering sector.

Volunteering is about helping, giving and sharing, while building connections across and within communities. Fundamental to this is an acknowledgement of the truths of racism, injustice, and dispossession; the impacts of which persist today for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, and which diminish us all.

Through the Innovate RAP, The Centre seeks to collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to drive meaningful change towards reconciliation within the volunteering sector.

It is incumbent on all within the volunteering sector that reconciliation recognises engagement, genuine partnerships and collaboration as well as a willingness to listen and learn. Partnership that is underscored by respect for each other and each other's forebears.

The actions set out in the Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan contribute to the work of many aspiring towards a fairer and more just society in which opportunity is available and accessible to all.

The Board of The Centre commends the *Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan*.

Ian Bulluss

Board Chair



Message from the CEO

The Centre for Volunteering is proud to share our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2028, shows our continued commitment to reconciliation by recognising, acknowledging and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge, cultures and histories.

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is built on The Centre's values of respect, integrity, excellence, collaboration and inclusivity. The RAP is part of our key strategies which support The Centre's vision – to build strong, diverse and inclusive communities through volunteering.

We are committed to building and strengthening relationships with the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Lands on which we work, volunteer, rest and play.

This RAP builds on lessons learnt from our Reflect RAP, and focuses on embedding reconciliation into our work, and expanding understanding of engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, in a culturally safe way. As we implement our RAP, we aim to enhance opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our sector, and to share strengths-based stories across our platforms.

We all have a role to play in reconciliation.

Gemma Rygate

Chief Executive Officer



Statement from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia

First Innovate RAP

Reconciliation Australia commends The Centre for Volunteering on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for The Centre for Volunteering to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, The Centre for Volunteering will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With over 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. The Centre for Volunteering is part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals The Centre for Volunteering's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations to The Centre for Volunteering on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Our vision for reconciliation

Volunteering is the concept of giving time freely to help others. There is much to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across New South Wales about traditional ways of giving within family and kinship groups. We recognise that the term “volunteering” reflects a Western perspective on ways of caring for one’s community, and that the significant contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in both formal and informal volunteering both historically and today, have not been recognised. As the peak body for Volunteering in NSW, we have the privilege and responsibility to make volunteering, in all its forms, more accessible and inclusive.

Our vision for reconciliation is a world where all people can make a difference in their communities. The Centre for Volunteering (The Centre) strives to create an environment where volunteers, staff, and the communities we serve can build relationships founded in trust, compassion, and respect.

True progress comes from listening to and learning from each other. We are committed to amplifying the voices and stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteer involving organisations and volunteers.

Through our reconciliation journey, we will help the volunteering sector to acknowledge, value and celebrate the significant value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples bring to both formal and informal volunteer involving organisations. Inclusion will help to advance reconciliation and ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are empowered to participate in the sector, in a culturally safe manner.

Our business

The Centre is the peak body for volunteering in New South Wales, with a proud history of more than 50 years.

The Centre's mission is to promote and support volunteering in the NSW community through advocacy, policy development, leadership, engagement, sector training and development, recognition, and promotion.

The Centre works in partnership with community, corporate, educational and government organisations, advocating for the more than 4.9 million volunteers and organisations they support. As the leading voice for volunteers and volunteer involving organisations, we work to strengthen the sector, providing support to volunteers and organisations, to enhance volunteering, to benefit individual volunteers, and to build strong, resilient, connected communities through volunteering.

The Centre's services include:

- Research, advocacy and policy to lead and advance volunteering
- Training and advice for volunteers and volunteer managers
- Referral services linking volunteers to local community organisations
- Celebrating the culture of volunteering and contribution of volunteers across NSW
- Hosting networks to promote best practice and collaboration across the sector.

With a head office in Sydney, The Centre supports organisations across NSW, both member and non-member organisations, serving their local communities, through training, advice and support.

We employ 19 people and are supported by 10 Board members and 11 volunteers. The Centre is not aware of any staff, Board members or volunteers who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

Our office is located on lands of the Gadigal of the Eora Nation, in The Rocks, Sydney, NSW.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan Journey

The Centre began its reconciliation journey by developing our Reflect RAP across 2022-2024.

The Centre's Innovate RAP builds on and strengthens our commitment to advancing Reconciliation as demonstrated in our Reflect RAP.

Our Reflect RAP supported The Centre to:

- better understand how volunteering is understood in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- Partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts and organisations to develop resources and training for volunteer managers, and share the stories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers;
- incorporate a Welcome to Country for all major events;
- build staff cultural awareness through training;
- support volunteer managers and the wider volunteering sector through fully funded delivery of cultural awareness training;
- support staff participation in National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week activities; and
- introduce an 'Acknowledgement of Country' as a standing item to relevant online and in person meetings.

The next stage in our reconciliation journey reaffirms our commitment to deepen relationships with the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we work, rest and play. Activities implemented as part of our Reflect RAP will be continued and strengthened, whilst learnings from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers and volunteer managers will be enhanced through targeted activities. As the peak body for volunteering in NSW, we have the privilege and responsibility to continue to understand, recognise, support, and promote the work that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples do as part of the NSW volunteering sector, and make volunteering in all its forms more accessible and inclusive.

The development and implementation of our RAP is guided by our internal RAP Working Group, which reports progress to the Board of The Centre. This group draws together staff from all levels of the organisation, including the Chief Executive Officer, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, the Director: Education and Training, the Manager: Stakeholder and Media Communications, and the Sector Development Coordinator. We are also pleased to engage an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member who guided the development of our RAP and is working with us to strengthen our cultural competency. The Centre's RAP Champion is the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.



Relationships



Respect



Opportunities



Governance



Relationships

The Centre's role as peak body means representing all volunteers, volunteer managers, and volunteer-involving organisations in NSW, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers, volunteer managers and organisations. Through the Innovate RAP The Centre aims to understand and partner with these groups from a place of genuine engagement to strengthen collaboration and relationship. The Centre will also support stakeholders to deliver inclusive and culturally aware services.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with The Centre's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander RAP representative and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led member organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	August 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	September 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	April (annually)	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications
	Share Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials through Centre communication channels (social media, edms, website) to Members and stakeholders.	April (annually)	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May-3 June (annually)	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Deputy CEO
	Encourage and support all staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May-3 June (annually)	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Deputy CEO
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May-3 June annually	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Office Manager
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	May (annually)	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	October 2026	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Sector Development Coordinator
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	August 2026	Lead: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications Support: Communications and Marketing Coordinator
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	October 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications
	Reach out to and collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	July 2026	Lead: CEO Support: Deputy CEO
	Build understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteering by sharing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples volunteering stories across Centre communication channels (social media, edms, website).	July 2026	Lead: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications Support: Communications and Marketing Coordinator
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	November 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Office Manager
	Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	March 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Office Manager
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	February 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	March 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Director of Education and Training
5. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in volunteering	Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts to develop and deliver general cultural competence training for volunteer managers on engaging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander volunteers and developing inclusive volunteer programs.	August 2026	Lead: Director: Sector Development and Capability Building. Support: Director of Education and Training



Respect

Community care and mutual aid have long been important activities in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It is important that we recognise, value, and celebrate the history of what we call volunteering in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to underpin the work we do in supporting the whole NSW volunteering sector.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural awareness learning needs within our organisation.	August 2026	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Deputy CEO
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	September 2026	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Deputy CEO
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for all staff.	November 2026	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Deputy CEO
	Continue to provide opportunities for staff to participate in formal and structured cultural awareness and learning.	Review January 2027	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Deputy CEO
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2026	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Deputy CEO
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	August 2026	Lead: Director of Education and Training Support: Deputy CEO
	Continue to invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events.	July 2026	Director: Events and Capacity Building Support: Manager: Events and Capacity Building
	Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	July 2026	Lead: CEO Support: Deputy CEO
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July annually	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Deputy CEO
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	February 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	June annually	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Deputy CEO
	Share NAIDOC Week resources and information with the sector to encourage participation.	July annually	Lead: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications Support: Communications and Marketing Coordinator



Opportunities

The Centre recognises that economic empowerment, employment, education and well-being of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' communities are fundamental rights. The Centre will continue to work on building an inclusive, equitable and culturally supportive workplace that supports recruitment, retention and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Centre will explore opportunities to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to support improved economic and social outcomes.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	March 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	March 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	July 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Office Manager
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	June 2027	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Office Manager
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	September 2026	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Office Manager
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	August 2026	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Office Manager
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	September 2026	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Office Manager
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	August 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Sector Development Coordinator
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses (where practical for our organisation).	September 2027	Lead: Sector Development Coordinator Support: Deputy CEO



Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	July and October 2026, March, June, September and December 2027, March and June 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Review and update the Terms of Reference for the RWG.	December 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Office Manager
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	July, October 2026 March, June, September, December 2027, March, June 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Director of Education and Training
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	August 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Director of Education and Training
	Continue to engage senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2026	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Director of Education and Training
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	July annually	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	July and October 2026 March, June and September, December 2027, March and June 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	June 2027 and June 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: Manager Stakeholder and Media Communications
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	June 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2028	Lead: Deputy CEO Support: CEO



The Centre for
Volunteering

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