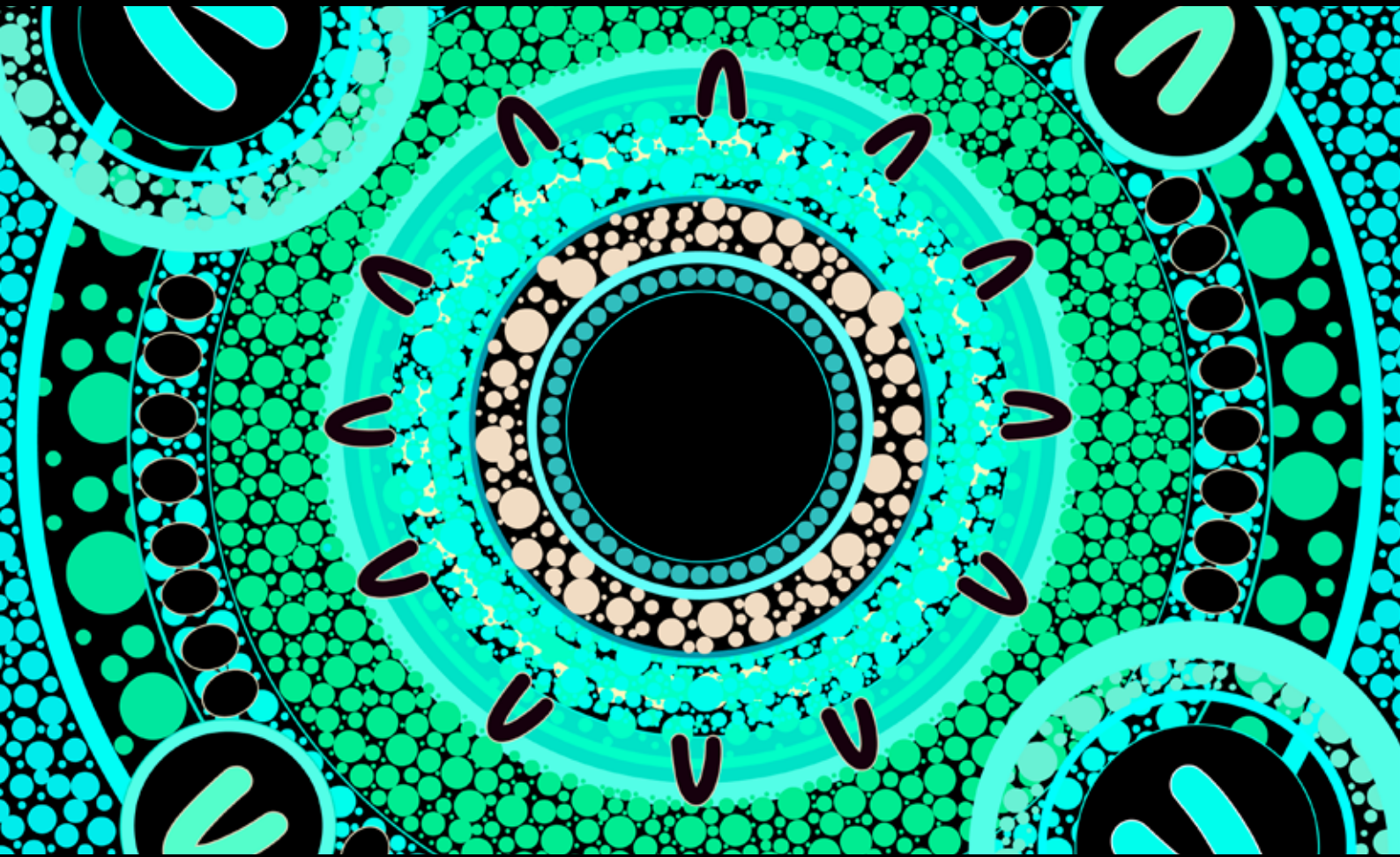
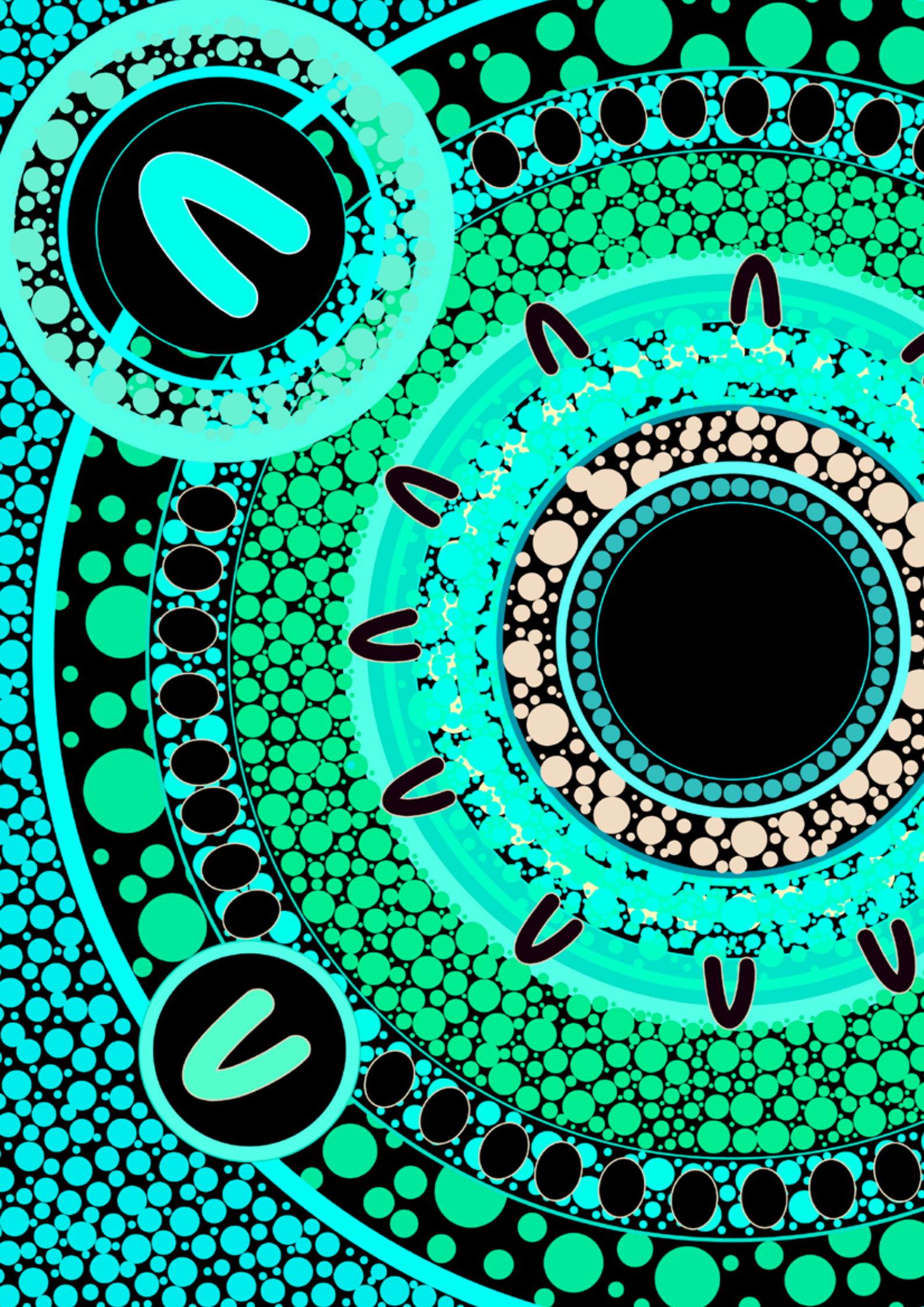
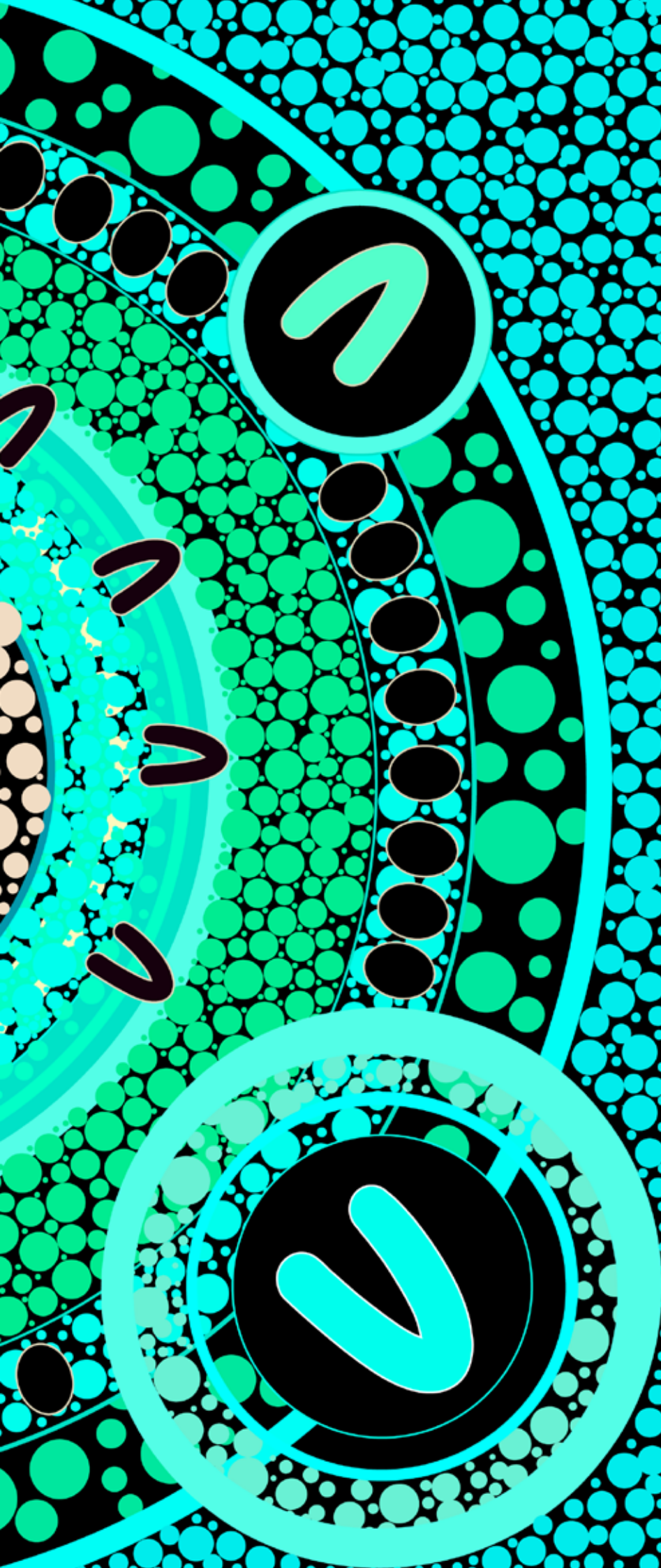


**RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
FEB 2023- FEB 2025**







Northside Community Service acknowledges the Ngunnawal People, the traditional owners of the ACT and region.

We recognise the continuing connection of the Ngunnawal people to the mountains, waterholes, rivers, caves, rock formations, flora, fauna, wind and air since time immemorial.

We recognise that sovereignty was never ceded from Indigenous people and that this continent always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

We extend this acknowledgement to Ngunnawal's neighbouring countries; Gundungurra to the North, Ngarigo to the South, Yuin to the coast and Wiradjuri inland.

We pay our respect to the Ngunnawal Elders and Ancestors past, present and emerging and thank them for their teachings and knowledge passed down through generations.

Artist: Lynnice Church

Lynnice Church is an Aboriginal woman from the Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi people of NSW and the ACT. As a traditional owner, Lynnice has resided in the ACT for most of her life and has dedicated herself to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the region.

A well-known local artist and designer, Lynnice has many artworks across the ACT. Some of the more public artworks include the ACT Reconciliation Day artwork, Gadi Supercomputer at ANU, ACTION buses, Canberra Raiders Indigenous Jersey, ACT Health Cultural Walls, and the artwork designs for Namarag Reserve.

KAREN MUNDINE

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia commends Northside Community Service 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 Northside 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, Northside 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 close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Northside is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Northside'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 Northside Community Service on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.



ANNA WHITTY

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER NORTHSIDE COMMUNITY SERVICE

The development, approval, and implementation of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was an urgent and pressing priority for me when I assumed the role of CEO at Northside.

Developing a RAP should be an expectation for every non-Indigenous organisation. The lands we work on are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands, and reconciliation is a responsibility we all share.

But I feel strongly that at Northside we have a particular obligation to undertake this work as a team.

We work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across many of our different programs. But most importantly, we are invited to work alongside the incredible team at CIT Yurauna as part of Yurauna Early Childhood Centre.

This is such an important privilege that is never taken for granted. Not just to be invited into a space that is culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a non-Indigenous organisation, but to be trusted to support the learning and wellbeing of the youngest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

This work has led to enduring and invaluable partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders Dr Caroline Hughes, Catherine

Law, and others. These incredible women have been patient and generous with me and with Northside as we learn, make mistakes, and keep learning.

Because of this work with the youngest of children, there is always a particular section of the beautiful Uluru Statement from the Heart that resonates with me:

When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

I hope our RAP will be a small part of ensuring that this becomes reality.

A RAP is not just a document, but our public commitment to taking action as an organisation towards true and meaningful reconciliation.

I'd like to acknowledge Mel Crawford as Co-Chair of the RAP Working Group, and everyone who has contributed to the RAP.

I look forward to working with the Northside team and our partners to deliver on the promise of our RAP.

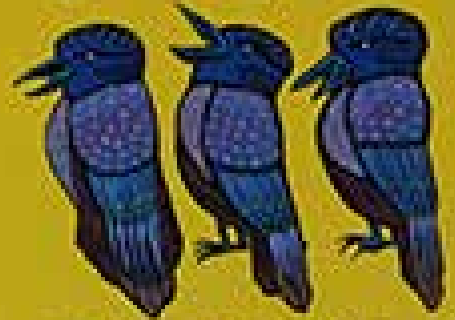






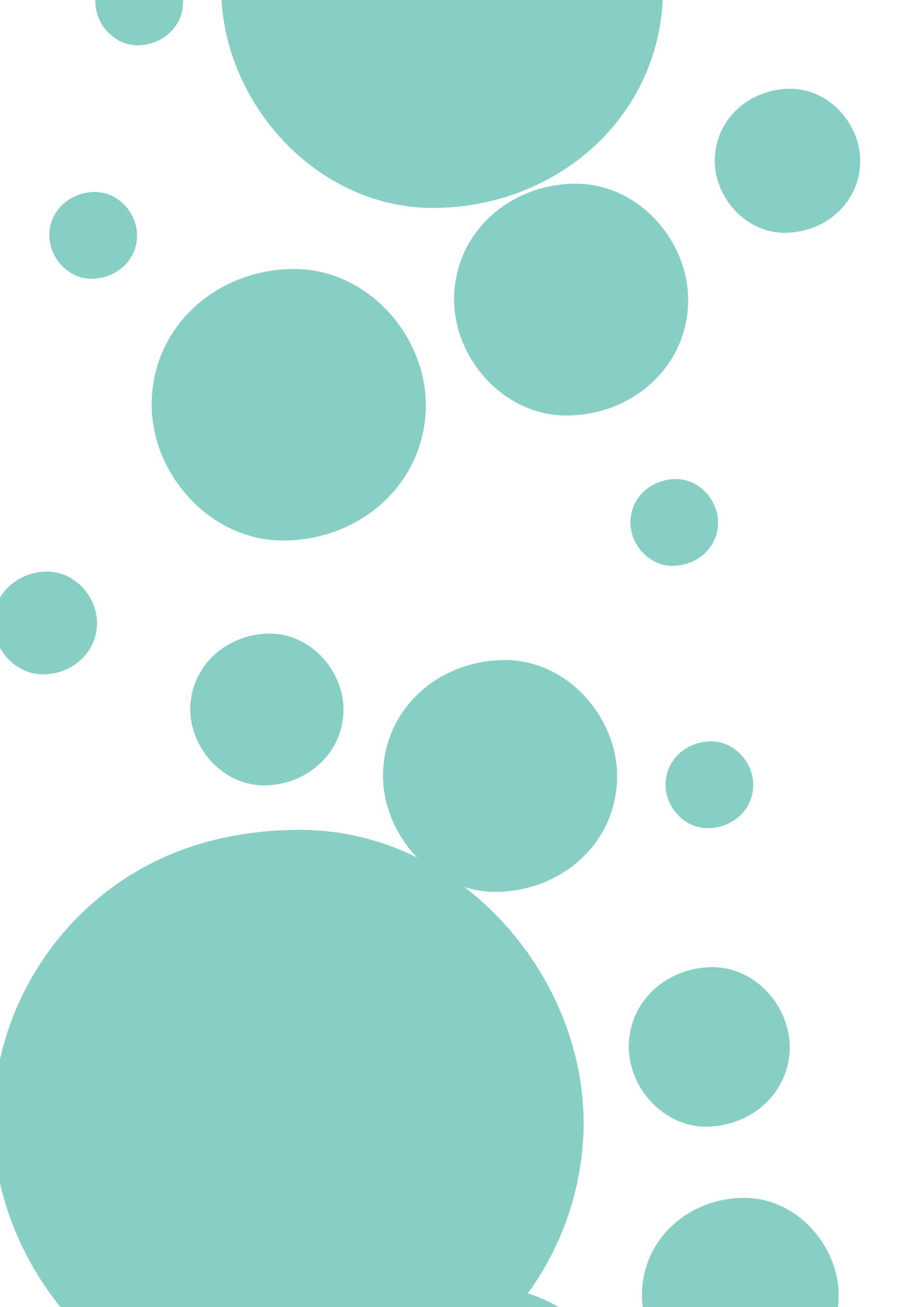
UNIKWYN LANDHOFF

1 2 3



of Australian Animals





OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

A nation which listens to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, is guided by and learns from the oldest continuous cultures on Earth, faces up to the past and the damage of colonisation with honesty and truth, fights for justice and healing in the present, and supports First Nations children to be strong and safe in culture for the future.

ABOUT NORTHSIDE

Northside is a not-for-profit, community-based organisation. We've been supporting our community in North Canberra – and beyond – since 1976. We're a progressive and modern community organisation that embraces diversity, social justice, and advocacy for those in our community whose voices are often unheard.

Northside supports young children through our high-quality early education services, children and young people through our youth programs and family support services, older citizens through our aged care services and support

programs, and the wider community through our housing, community development, outreach, and volunteer programs.

We employ 130 people across our program areas, with 4 employees identifying as Aboriginal people.

As an established not-for-profit organisation in the ACT, our sphere of influence includes our team, the members of the community we work directly alongside, our partners in the community sector, policy makers and decision makers within Government Departments, and the ACT Government.



OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

There are many urgent reasons for Northside to develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan.

Northside's team works on land that always was, and always will be, Ngunnawal land. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded.

We work with children, young people, older citizens, and members of the community who have experienced, or may be experiencing, disadvantage and/or vulnerability. We know that the intergenerational effects of violent colonisation mean that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are over-represented in all measures of disadvantage and vulnerability in the ACT. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are almost 10 times more likely to be in out-of-home care in the ACT, and 5 times more likely to be in youth detention.

Northside has operated in the ACT for just over 46 years. Ngunnawal people have lived on this land for tens of thousands of years. We know that we have a significant amount to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all areas of the work we do.

Northside works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders and community leaders are the best, and only, people who can successfully identify and develop culturally safe solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Northside has a position of privilege and responsibility as an established community-service organisation in the ACT. We know that it is not the job of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to support us to improve our approach to reconciliation, healing, and justice, but our own obligation to learn, change, and grow as a supportive partner for First Nations peoples.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is an important part of our journey to do better, to listen and learn more, to take on our role in reconciliation, and to be held accountable for our actions.

Over the course of working on our RAP, and in working under the guidance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and leaders, we have identified a lot of things we need to improve and work

on. We have encountered challenges where our usual approach has not worked with particularly situations faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and we have had to acknowledge this and change our approach. We have learned that being invited into an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander space cannot be taken for granted, and trust and respect must be earned and continuously reinforced.

Our RAP will be driven and championed by the CEO, the RAP Working Group, and all members of the organisation's Senior Leadership Team. Our RAP Working Group includes the following representative roles:

- CEO
- Executive Director
- Director, Compliance and Quality
- Early Childhood Centre Directors
- Case Managers
- Early Childhood Educators
- Community Development Workers
- Project Officers
- Director, Human Resources

The Co-Chair of the RAP Working Group identifies as an Aboriginal person.

Northside's previous RAP was in place from 2013-2015. Since that time, Northside has formed stronger and deeper connections with the local Ngunnawal community, particularly through CIT Yurauna and Ngunnawal Elder Dr Caroline Hughes. We continue to learn from Dr Hughes and the CIT Yurauna team and have also formed connections with local organisation Gugan Gulwan. We have raised the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy through letters to the ACT Government with the permission of local Elders.

We have also identified areas of improvement, such as recruitment and representation of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in our teams, and the need to continuously improve our approach to cultural safety.





RELATIONSHIPS

Reconciliation is not an abstract concept, but a coming-together and honest sharing of knowledge, experiences, and support. This can only be done through real and meaningful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and peoples.

Our experience tells us that we must continually demonstrate respectful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, acknowledging that it is our responsibility to undertake our own learning and growth. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the experts in their own lives, their cultures, and their histories.

We acknowledge that building and maintaining strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations takes time and resources, must be built on trust and integrity in how we conduct ourselves, and from a position of listening and learning.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	June 2023	CEO
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2023	Executive Director Communications
	Support the growth and establishment Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and controlled community organisations in the ACT through advocacy, the use of Northside spaces, and investment of organisational time and resources.	June 2024	CEO
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023	RWG Chairs
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May/June 2023 & May/June 2024	RWG Chairs
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May/June 2023 & May/June 2024	RWG Chairs
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May/June 2023 & May/June 2024	RWG Chairs
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	April 2023 & April 2024	Executive Director Communications
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	April 2023	Executive Director Communications
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	March 2023	Executive Director Communications
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	June 2023	Executive Director Communications
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	June 2023	CEO
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.	June 2023	CEO
	Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	June 2023	Director HR
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	June 2023	Director HR
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	December 2023	RWG Chairs



RESPECT

The knowledges, histories, and experiences of the world's longest continuing cultures deserves respect and acknowledgement, and an understanding that we have much to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being.

Respecting and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and approaches means that we have to take meaningful steps as a non-Indigenous organisation to learn more, to listen, and to commit our resources to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and leaders.

Respect is more than one-off acknowledgements. It means forming meaningful and reciprocal relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations, acknowledging our privilege as an established non-Indigenous organisation, and incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in all aspects of what we do. Our vision for reconciliation can only be realised on a basis of respectful partnerships and engagement.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	August 2023	RWG Chairs
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	September 2023	RWG Chairs
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	November 2023	RWG Chairs
	Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	July 2023	RWG Chairs
	Build internal capacity of team members to support First Nations children to be strong and safe in culture, including training with SNAICC – A National Voice for Our Children.	December 2023	Director, Early Education
	Ensure all Early Childhood Centres are signed up with the Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program.	July 2023	Director, Early Education
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	June 2023	RWG Chairs
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	July 2023	Executive Director Communications
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Ongoing, review February 2024	RWG Chairs
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Ongoing, review February 2024	RWG Chairs
7. 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 2023 & July 2024	RWG Chairs
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	April 2023	Director HR
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	June 2023 & June 2024	Executive Director Communications



OPPORTUNITIES

Providing diverse and meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, leaders, and organisations to work with, support, and be supported by Northside is critical to what we do. We are committed to amplifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocacy, including the national movement to accepting the generous gift of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, and we can only do this by listening and learning from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We have a responsibility to ensure that we are improving and growing our organisation to be more welcoming and inclusive. It is not the responsibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to change who they are to work with us.

Fundamentally, ensuring that more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations feel safe to work with us, to share their goals and solutions with us, and to trust us to walk with them makes us a better organisation. An opportunity to be better, to be active in redressing the harm of the past, to be a more complete and functioning organisation, and to contribute to a better future.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	July 2023	Director HR
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	July 2023	Director HR
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	December 2023	Director HR
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	July 2023	Director HR
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	July 2023	Director HR
	Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	December 2023	CEO
9. 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.	July 2024	Executive Director Corporate and Client Services
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	December 2023	Executive Director Corporate and Client Services
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	July 2024	Executive Director Communications
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	December 2023	Executive Director Corporate and Client Services
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	July 2024	Executive Director Corporate and Client Services

GOVERNANCE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. 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.	February 2025	CEO
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	February 2023	RWG Chairs
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Feb, May, Aug, Nov 2023 Feb, May, Aug, Nov 2024	RWG Chairs
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2023	RWG Chairs
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2023	CEO
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	April 2023	Executive Director Communications
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	Review January 2024	CEO
12. 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 2023, 2024 and annually	RWG Chairs
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 Aug 2023, 2024 and annually	RWG Chairs
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sep 2023, 2024 and annually	RWG Chairs
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec 2023 and 2024	Executive Director Communications
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	Nov 2023 & Nov 2024	Executive Director Communications
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	June 2023	RWG Chairs
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	December 2024	RWG Chairs
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2025	RWG Chairs

FOR PUBLIC ENQUIRIES ABOUT OUR RAP

PLEASE CONTACT:

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Melissa Crawford

Centre Director Treehouse in the Park

Early Learning Centre and Co-Chair of RAP

Committee

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BELIEVE
IN SOLIDARITY



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