

Reconciliation Action Plan

June 2024 - December 2025



**Cancer
Council**
Australia



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Custodians of the lands on which we work and live, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



Our business

Cancer Council Australia work across every aspect of every cancer, from prevention through to survivorship or end of life. Every day, we work tirelessly to reduce the impact and incidence of cancer for all Australians.

The Cancer Council Federation is Australia's leading non-government cancer control organisation. Cancer Council Australia, as a member of the Federation, advises the Australian Government and other bodies on practices and policies to help prevent, detect and treat cancer. Cancer Council Australia also supports its members, the state and territory Cancer Councils, to achieve our shared purpose. Collectively we advocate for the rights of people affected by cancer and in particular for best treatment and

supportive care in order to reduce the burden of cancer in the Australian community.

Cancer Council Australia's purpose is to advance and achieve the following goals as a charitable institution operating in Australia: to promote the prevention and control of cancer; to reduce the incidence of preventable cancers; to reduce deaths from cancer; to foster and support high-quality cancer research in Australia; and to improve survival from cancer.

Our national office is based in Sydney's CBD and currently employs 31 staff members engaged in core activities. Cancer Council Australia employs one Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person.



'Circle of Hope' by Rikki Salam



Our history

Cancer Council Australia commenced in 1961 as the Australian Cancer Society, an incorporated association, when the six state Cancer Councils – which then varied in name and brand – agreed to establish a federal body to promote cancer control at the national level. Cancer organisations in the ACT and the Northern Territory were subsequently formed and signed on as members of the Society.

While state and territory Cancer Councils continued to play the predominant role in research, public health, patient support and education programs, the federal body's primary role was to develop independent national cancer control policy – albeit on a comparatively modest scale, in collaboration with our members.

In 1997, the eight jurisdictional members agreed to expand the Society, adopting the trading name of The Cancer Council Australia and appointing an expert Chief Executive Officer, Professor Alan Coates, to lead the push for improved national cancer control policy and build the Cancer Council brand and profile. Specialist staff in communications, advocacy, business management, marketing and other professional roles were recruited to promote the organisation's mission.

Over the ensuing decade, state and territory members uniformly adopted the name Cancer Council and together took on the image of the daffodil, a global symbol of hope, as our common logo.

In 2008, the organisation migrated from being registered as an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee and formalised its registered name as Cancer Council Australia.

Cancer Council Australia is also allied with the Clinical Oncology Society of Australia, which provides advice on medical and scientific issues and is a member of the Australian Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance, as well as of global collaborations such as the Union for International Cancer Control.

Over its 62-year history, Cancer Council Australia has transformed from a small secretariat to a strong federal body that has become Australia's leading independent authority on cancer control.

Cancer Council Australia seeks to engage all Australians in our work to reduce the impact of cancer in Australia through advocacy, research, prevention and support.



“ Together with our partner organisations, Cancer Council Australia is working to improve cancer-related outcomes with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.”

Photo: Gubi Gubi doctor, Joel Wenitong and Wiradjuri woman Simone Jordan



Cancer Council Australia CEO statement

Cancer Council Australia’s purpose is to reduce the incidence and impact of cancer for all Australians. While Australia has some of the best cancer outcomes in the world, those world-class outcomes are not experienced equally. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are less likely to participate in the national cancer screening programs, are more likely to be diagnosed with and die from cancer than non-Indigenous Australians and have lower survival rates compared to non-Indigenous Australians. There are a range of reasons for this gap in cancer outcomes including, but not limited to; social disadvantage, smoking rates and lack of access to culturally-safe health services. This unacceptable inequity highlights the important work needed to ensure services, information and support are designed with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Cancer Council Australia is committed to advancing reconciliation and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and in pursuing this commitment we have developed this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) which details our pledge to nurture and build culturally safe relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander organisations; increase our awareness and educate ourselves about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Cancer Council Australia works across every area of every cancer from research to prevention and support. Our vision of a cancer-free future is intrinsically linked to the ongoing journey of reconciliation. We are committed to increasing our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to working with the existing structures for health and wellbeing established to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. Together with our partner organisations, Cancer Council Australia is working to improve cancer-related outcomes with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

I look forward to sharing our progress as we work to advance respectful, authentic, and long-term relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Megan Varlow

Acting Chief Executive Officer
Cancer Council Australia





Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Cancer Council Australia to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Cancer Council Australia joins a network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

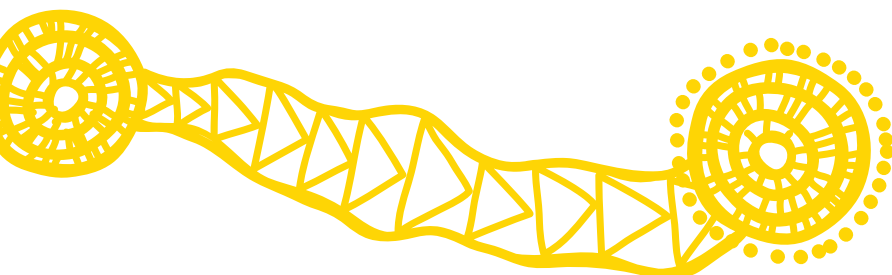
It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Cancer Council Australia to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact on Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Cancer Council Australia, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Our vision for reconciliation

Cancer Council Australia strives to achieve a cancer-free future. As a result of continuing advancements, nearly seven out of ten Australians diagnosed with cancer today will survive more than five years past their diagnosis.¹

While we have seen significant progress overall in Australian cancer survival rates, we acknowledge the work needed to improve the equity of cancer outcomes for all people affected by cancer. This is especially true for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the prevalence of cancers in this population increased between 2001–2019.² Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a higher incidence of fatal, screen-detectable and preventable cancers, that are often diagnosed at more advanced stages, with complex comorbidities.³

The incidence of cancer in among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is 10% higher than the remainder of the population, highlighting the inequities that influence cancer outcomes. Such risk factors include:

- Tobacco smoking: In 2022–23, 20% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples smoked daily. However, this represents a significant decrease from 2010 when 35% smoked daily. This decline can be attributed to an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have never smoked, and a smaller increase in those who had smoked in the past, but have since stopped.⁶
- Risky levels of alcohol use and hepatitis B infection: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a five-year approximate relative survival rate from liver cancer (of 14%, compared to 20% in non-Indigenous Australians).⁴

- In 2019–2020, the participation rate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program for Indigenous Australians aged 50–74 was estimated to be 35%, 11 percentage points lower than non-Indigenous Australians (46%)⁵

In order to improve cancer outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians, Cancer Council Australia will:

- Work in partnership with the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care to increase participation in cancer screening programs (bowel, breast and cervical) by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Conduct and utilise research about the health inequities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and utilise the findings to advocate for appropriate changes to the health system.
- Work with Indigenous communities through our partner organisations to ensure that all cancer information and support we provide to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples are accessible and culturally appropriate.
- Build relationships with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander organisations who can assist in distributing this information directly to communities.

It will remain a priority of Cancer Council Australia to aim to dramatically reducing the impact of cancer on loved ones, families, and

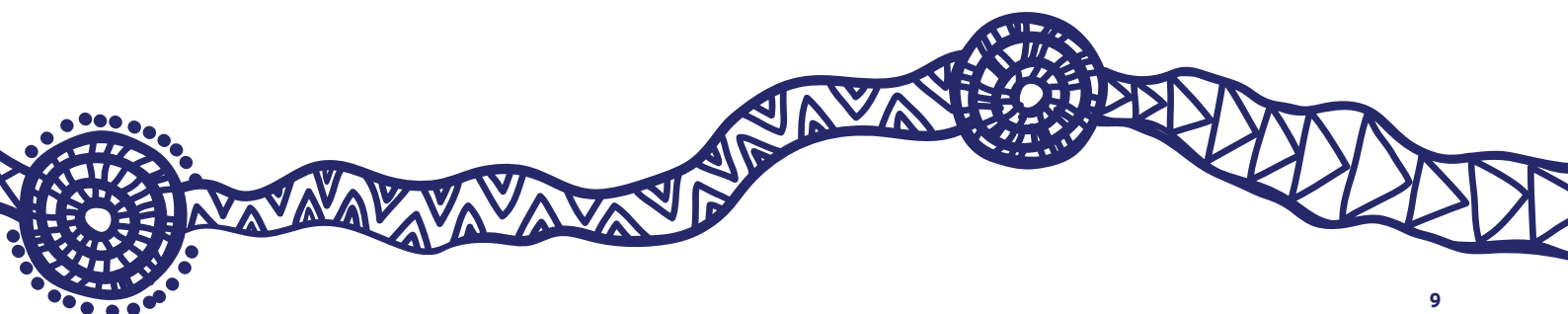


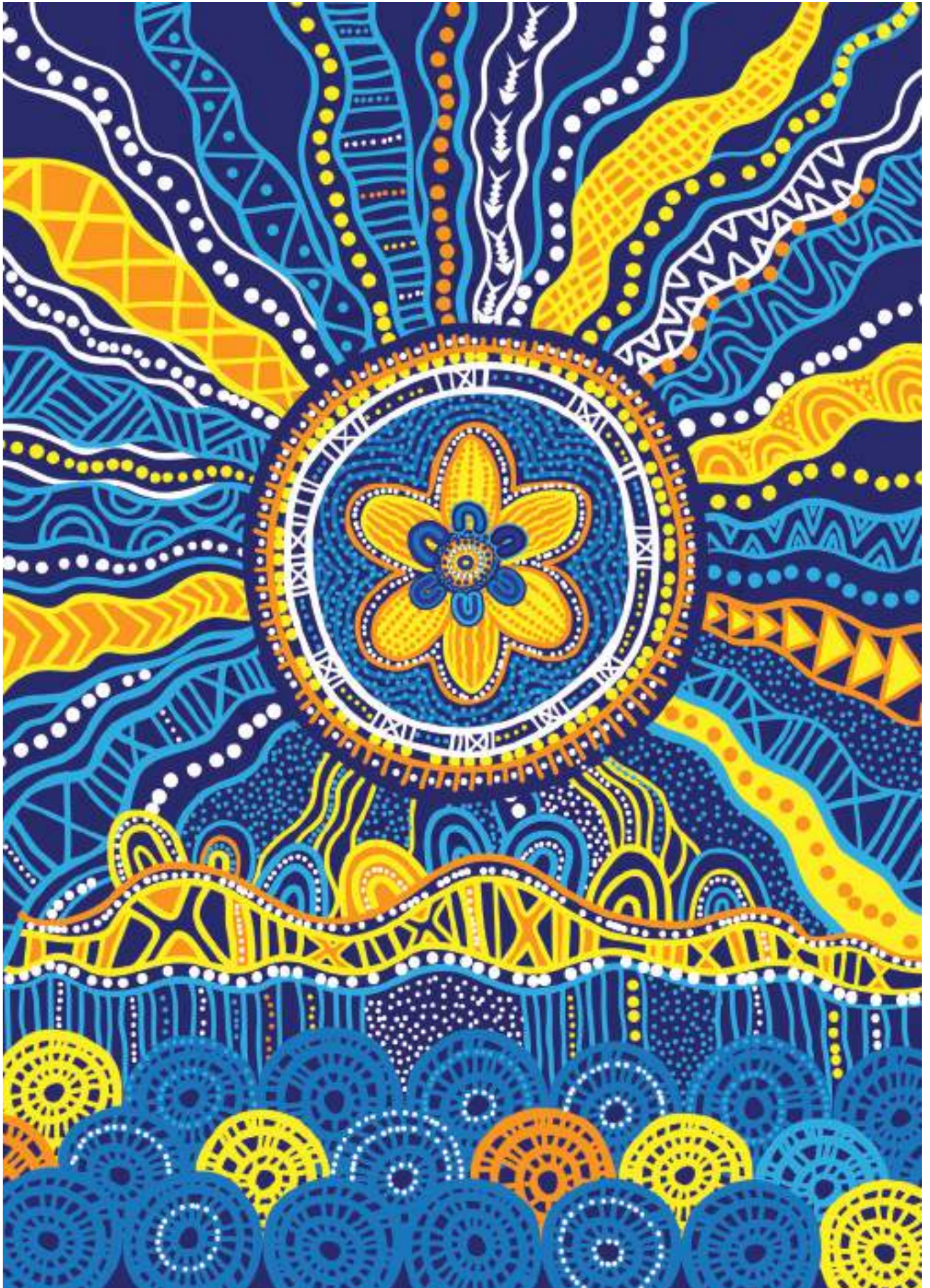
every member of our community. For us to achieve our vision, we recognise the work we need to do as an organisation to ensure we are supporting the National Reconciliation Movement. Our Reconciliation Action Plan has been championed and developed by our RAP Working Group. The RAP Working Group has been supported by Cancer Council's Chief Executive Officer and the Cancer Council executive team.

Our RAP Working Group members are: Lauren Radford (Campaigns Project Officer), Mark Jackaman (Chief Operating Officer), Vivienne Melish (Head of Licensing) Marissa Coury (Priority Audiences Officer), Brendan Heys (Senior Marketing Manager) and Julia van der Veer (Graphic Designer). One member identifies as a First Nations person.

Cancer Council Australia intends to approach implementing our RAP by reporting regularly on RAP progress and engaging with First Nations stakeholders to seek guidance.

Mark Jackaman (Chief Operating Officer) has been appointed as Cancer Council Australia's RAP Champion.





Journey of Hope - Riki Salam

Creation Spirit guides us across many lands, we travel – ceremony calls us.

The scorching sun bears down on freshwater rocks, clear water cools our skin.

Knowledge flows from one camp to the next, stream opens to river, single file across the rocky ground.

Tortoise swims, lizard drinks, sand between our toes this is a place of rest, a place of healing.

Country provides, we care for the land and the land cares for us, we are woven together as one.

Clap stick, drum beats, ochre is ground celebration begins.

The 'Journey of Hope' artwork explained:

Begins in the centre of the artwork, at the ceremony circle, the yarning circle. The 'U' shaped symbols represent people seated around a campfire preparing for ceremony. The daffodil shape represents Cancer Council Australia and everyone involved in the organisation; from the board, directors, staff, researchers, and representatives – a symbol of hope.

The pathways that lead into the central circle are the pathways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people travel along from all different places and communities across Australia; urban, regional, rural and remote, on their Journey of Hope – and to find the best possible treatment for their particular cancer.

The dots represent the people and their families who travel with them to seek a cure for cancer. The circles below represent woven baskets held by the community to support all people suffering from all forms of cancer. The vertical lines represent all different types of cancer.

The daffodil sits at the centre of the artwork and radiates hope for all people who are affected by cancer both young and old and their family and friends.

About the Artist



Riki Salam, Principal, Creative Director and Artist of We are 27 Creative developed 'Journey of Hope' for Cancer Council Australia's first Reconciliation Action Plan. Riki was born and raised in Cairns on Yidinji land

in 1972 and is a member of and connected to Kala Lagaw Ya - Western Island groups (St. Pauls - Moa Island), Kuku Yalanji peoples on his Father and Grandfather's side and a member of the Ngai Tahu people in the South Island of New Zealand on his Mother's side. Educated in both Cairns and Brisbane he has over 20 years of industry experience as a graphic designer and artist.

Riki has worked on many high-profile projects including the Qantas-painted Boeing 747/800, Yananyi Dreaming, produced artworks for Telstra, Origin, Woolworths, the Healing Foundation and the Australian Human Rights Commission to name a few. Riki also designed the identity for the G20 in 2014. He works in pen, ink and brush, gouache on paper, and with acrylic paints, exploring concepts of traditional culture in a contemporary format.

Our partnerships and reconciliation journey so far

Cancer Council Australia has partnered with some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the early stages of our journey to achieving reconciliation.

For several years, Cancer Council Australia has been a member of our Federation's National Cancer Information Subcommittee. Together, we worked with the Aboriginal Health and Medical Council, Cancer Australia and the Menzies School of Health Research to develop culturally appropriate, cancer information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Between 2022 and 2023, Cancer Council Australia conducted a systematic review of literature on cancer experiences and supportive care needs among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The review was led by two First Nations advisors from The University of Sydney. Two papers were written and submitted for publishing. The second paper was of particular importance, as it appraised the included studies for evidence of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander-led research and authorship. It also examined whether there was appropriate community consultation and whether Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data sovereignty principles were upheld.

In 2022 and 2023, Cancer Council Australia and The Department of Health and Aged Care worked in partnership to deliver two campaigns designed to increase participation in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP). In order to ensure that we were able to successfully reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples nationally; and that the content developed was culturally appropriate, we partnered with Cultural Perspectives, a specialist multicultural research agency – to conduct formative research. 14 focus

groups and interviews were conducted with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 50-74 nationally to understand their barriers, facilitators and attitudes towards bowel cancer screening through NBCSP.

We engaged 33 Creative – a creative communications agency dedicated to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – to develop and execute a communications campaign to increase program participation among this audience. The insights gained from Cultural Partners' research and 33 Creative's experience were utilised to implement a strengths-based integrated communications campaign with a strong focus on community and stakeholder engagement. In 2023, 33 Creative built upon their initial activity, by working to shift attitudes towards positive participation in the program.

33 Creative have also been engaged to conduct an audit of Cancer Council Australia's content for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to assist us in ensuring all content produced is accessible and culturally appropriate.

Our Licensing department has worked with the GARMA outdoor music festival held in northeast Arnhem Land, with the ambition of providing sun protection in the Top End. In addition, over the last two years, we have worked with the [Tanna Tribe](#) to promote sun protection.

Our partnerships and reconciliation journey so far

Cancer Council Australia is a member of the Close the Gap Alliance focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health equality.

We are a member of Allies for Uluru; supporting the Uluru statement from the heart.

Cancer Council Australia has developed and implemented an Indigenous Procurement Strategy and an Indigenous Participation Plan.

We held an awareness session, for all Cancer Council Australia staff, on issues and landmarks of significance to First Nations people at and around Sydney Botanical Gardens.



Employee Support

Cancer Council Australia actively encourages employees to participate in external activities that contribute directly to First Nations enterprises, initiatives or programs.

Cancer Council Australia's employee activity includes, but is not limited to, board involvement in Indigenous organisations within the roles of:

- Non-Executive Director (NED) and Treasurer at Enterprise Learning Projects

Enterprise Learning Projects (ELP) is a not-for-profit organisation, with a 100% Indigenous board. They focus on empowering remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entrepreneurs to transform their communities by delivering best-practice business support programs.

- Non-Executive Director (NED) and Treasurer at Pilbara Metal Company Recycling

Pilbara Metal Company Recycling (PMCR) is a not-for-profit company created to empower First Nations individuals and enterprises to extract value from scrap metal recycling activities initially in Pilbara, and then to extend to the rest of Australia. This value may be transformational for local communities.

- Chairperson and Director of Minimbah Bundagry Aboriginal Corporation

Minimbah Bundagry Aboriginal Corporation (MBAC) exists to allow Worimi descendants to engage with their history, culture, Elders and foster family connections to keep culture and traditions alive.



Photo: Tanna Tribe

Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	August 2024	<i>Campaigns Project Officer, Head of Licensing</i>
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	August 2024	<i>Head of Licensing</i>
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025	<i>Division Support Officer</i>
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May-3 June, 2025	<i>Campaign Project Officer</i>
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May-3 June, 2025	<i>Campaign Project Officer</i>
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	December 2024	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	December 2024	<i>Senior marketing Manager</i>
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	July 2024	<i>Head of Licensing</i>
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race-relations and anti-discrimination.	July 2024	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	January 2025	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>

Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	January 2025	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	December 2024	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation’s operational area.	July 2024	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>
	Increase staff’s understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	June 2025	<i>Senior Marketing Manager</i>
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2025	<i>Content Creator</i>
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2025	<i>Division Support Officer</i>
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2025	<i>Graphic Designer</i>

Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	February 2025	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	February 2025	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	February 2025	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	July 2024	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>

Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	June 2024	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	July 2024	<i>Head of Licensing</i>
	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	June 2024	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2024	<i>Division Support Officer</i>
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2024	<i>Head of Licensing</i>
	Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	June 2024	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2024	<i>Division Support Officer</i>
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 annually	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August annually	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia’s website to begin developing our next RAP.	September 2025	<i>Campaigns Project Officer</i>

RAP Working Group

The members are:

- Lauren Radford (lead)
- Mark Jackaman
- Vivienne Melish
- Marissa Coury
- Brendan Heys
- Julia van der Veer (creative)

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