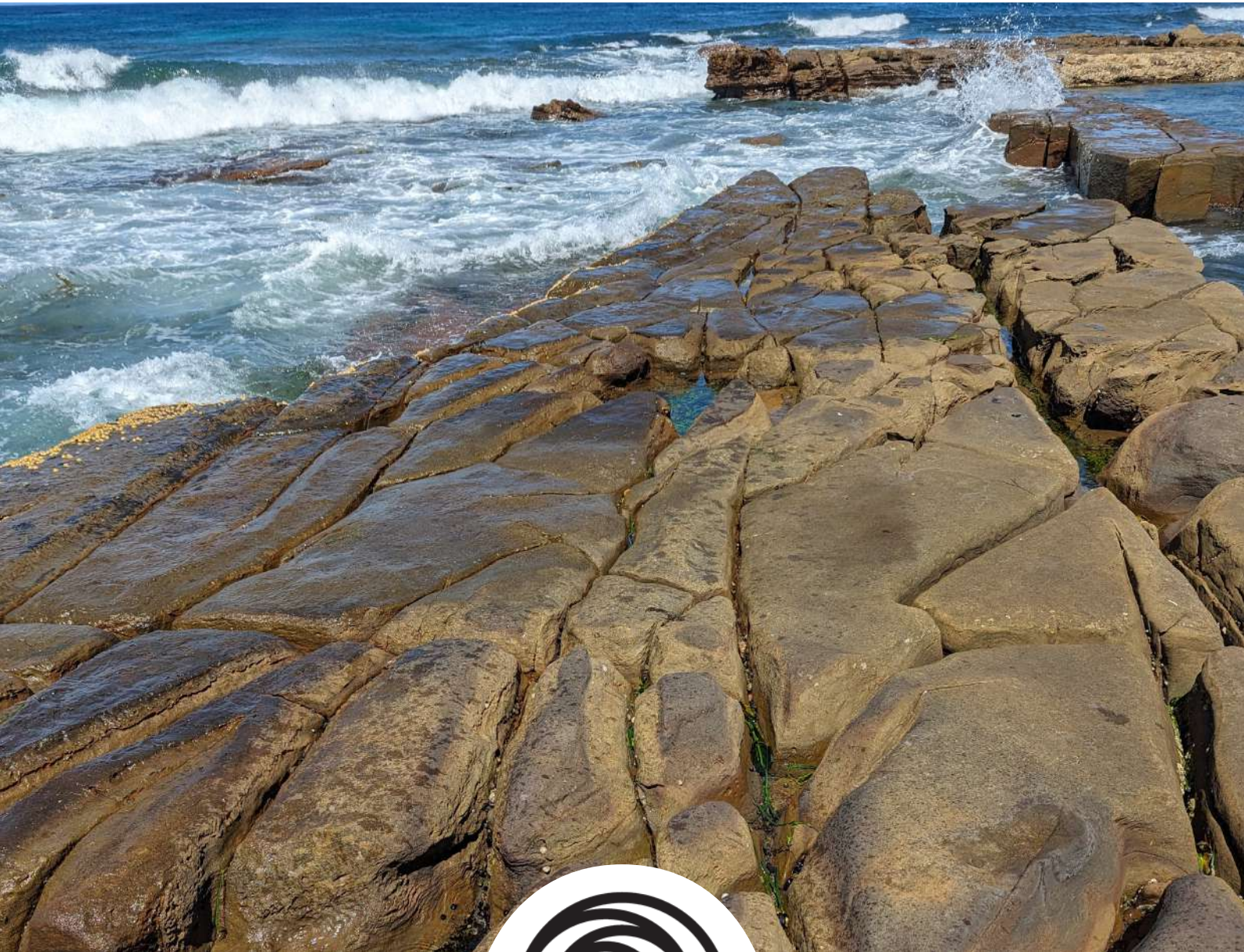




# Reconciliation Action Plan

*Innovate*



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

**INNOVATE**

July 2024 - July 2026





## Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across Australia as the traditional custodians of our shared lands, waters and seas. We recognise their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection with Country. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom will ensure the continuation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.



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## Innovate RAP CEO Statement

Reconciliation Australia commends Orterra 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 Orterra 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, Orterra 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.

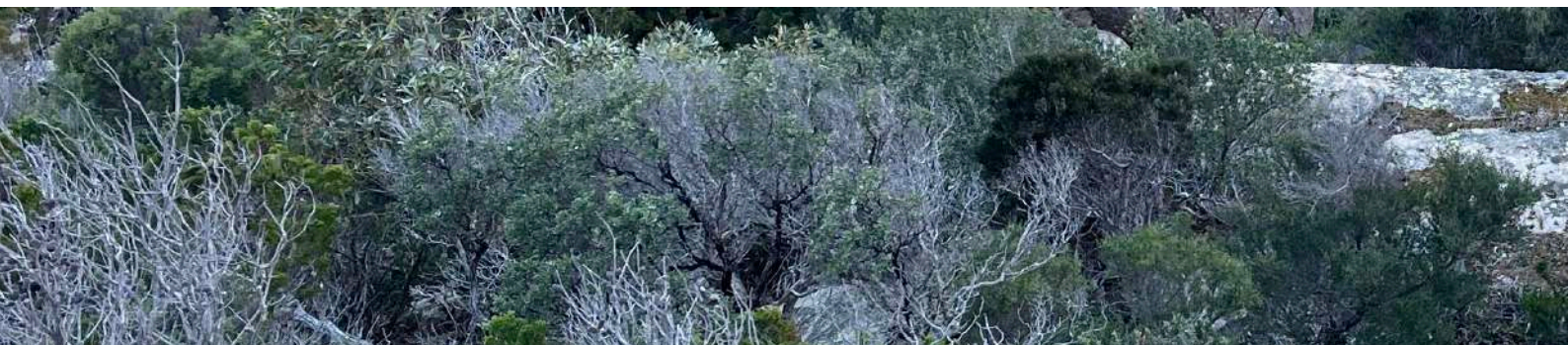
With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Orterra is part of a strong network of more than 2,500 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

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

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia







## Statement from the Director of Orterra

Our company motto Places People Love we use to guide us to create places that our clients and the users of the spaces we design love. We do this through ensuring that all people are acknowledged, respected and heard. We work across Queensland, taking us into many communities and allowing us to meet amazing people. We learn more about our clients, their needs and discover more about Australia and this beautiful place we all call home.

Orterra is not just a company that wants to say the right things, we want to be doing something about it. We understand change is not about just having the policies, it is about living, breathing and designing with them. It is about creating a safe place of understanding. Of accepting that we are limited in our understanding. It is about having open hearts and minds and creating a place of growth, respect and change. Reconciliation to us is a safe place to learn, to understand, to talk

and a place that allows Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people to feel empowered to share their perspectives on reconciliation. We have developed as a company in many ways through the process of writing this Innovative RAP. We have grown and changed and have had a lot of lessons along the way. We are proud of the work we have done and are excited to embark on the next chapter of our reconciliation journey.

We can learn so much from First Nations and Torres Strait Islander People and are excited to be taking this first step into opening our hearts and minds.

We are excited to make our stand and contribute to a better way of working.

Debbie Laporte  
Director  
Orterra Design





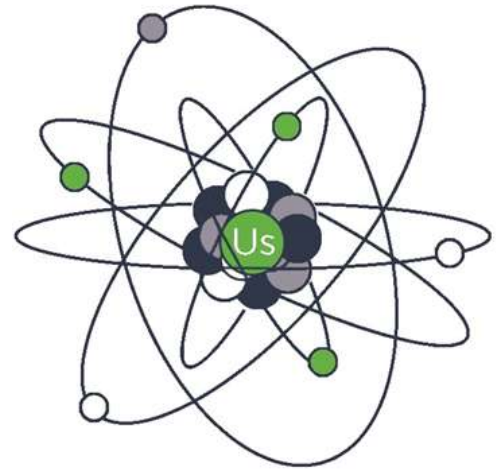
# Our Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation within Australia is the development of an understanding, acceptance and celebration of the history and diversity of our nation, whilst encouraging and enabling all people to thrive. We aim to reflect the histories of the lands in which we work and enable connections for all people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider community. We want people to connect

with the landscapes in which we work and through this absorbing knowledge and understanding of this country. We envision working alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the development and implementation of landscapes in which we work and design, enabling connections for all people throughout the design process and within the final representations of our work.







## Our Business

Orterra is a landscape architectural studio and our mission is to be leaders in the way design consultancy firms work, think, and do, by creating better places for all inhabitants, both human and non-human, to use and live. We aim to enhance the environments where we work, changing how landscapes are viewed and encouraging all people to connect with all the elements of nature. In our aim to enhance the environment, we aim to work with our client's and the connected communities to change how landscape is viewed and encourage all people to connect with nature.

Orterra's vision is to change lifestyles by creating incredible landscapes that respect the environment, enhance biodiversity and make our clients' visions come true. The following are the five key core values in which we work by:

**BIODIVERSITY:** We promote, campaign and defend our environment and improve, rehabilitate and regenerate the biodiversity and the environment of our projects.

**EQUALITY:** We believe all people are equal. We treat our colleagues, clients and consultants with respect. We celebrate our diverse backgrounds and experiences and use them to our advantage to create places for people.

**TRANSPARENCY:** We are clear and open with the decisions we make and are open and honest with our clients to ensure both their and our expectations are met.

**INCLUSION:** We design spaces that allow all users to experience the places we design in the way they need and require.

**DIVERSITY:** We respect and encourage the authentic self of our team, our clients, and consultants and we celebrate our differences. We aim to understand, support, and include our diversity within our designs.

**EMPATHY:** We understand our clients and users of our designs have varied goals, situations, and values. We listen and incorporate these into the design philosophy.

Our workplace currently employs four people, none of whom identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people. Office is located in Springwood, Queensland with the main focus areas of our work presiding within the State of Queensland, with periodical work within other states.

Orterra's sphere of influence is divided primarily between direct and indirect influence. We have a direct influence on each other as staff members and colleagues, our friends and family, our clients (including the children we design for), suppliers, subcontractors, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) members, and those who follow us on our social media. We acknowledge that not every interaction with these individuals will achieve something but instead we try to understand how we are able to influence others through our work.

Our indirect influences include: Local councils and their wider communities, school communities, AILA connections, Nature Play QLD connections, and local council communities (within project areas). We have some external reach through our social media as well as associative connections through our existing network.

We see this sphere of influence as an exponentially expanding network of connections which is continuously growing outward from each individual. We see multiple touch points which cross over and interconnect and we aim to reach out to all who we come in contact with.



## Our Reconciliation Action Plan

We are developing a RAP because as landscape architects we work on many countries across Queensland. We understand that we are not the first people to inhabit this land and there is so much we do not know and understand about where we live, work and play. We would like to understand, engage and form stronger connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We can create places that incorporate and are sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' perspectives and knowledge, and that inform an understanding of the history and significance of each landscape.

We would like to help support the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by joining them in their endeavours to educate the wider community on the histories, cultures, and current affairs experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We endeavour to make places that are empathetic to their needs, making sure they feel safe and included within our designs of landscapes and throughout the public realm.

Our working group involves internally the champion of our RAP, Director and Landscape Architect - Debbie Laporte, our Landscape Architect - Isabel Rundle and our Student Landscape Architect - Danica Vedmar. We have also engaged externally with Des Cloake, a Brisbane Goori with ancestry

from South East Queensland and Director of Des Cloake Landscape Architects, to be our Cultural Ambassador.

When our first RAP was developed Orterra was a smaller business and we were still trying to understand ourselves as well as our reconciliation journey. In the few years since starting to write our first RAP both the business and our understanding of what reconciliation means has grown. We still endeavour to engage respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through each and every project, however, we approach this in a different way depending on the type of project.

We have made some fantastic connections with Aboriginal owned businesses and we are proud to now have representation on our RAP working group. We have come to a better understanding of Aboriginal cultures and realise that while we know more there are still so many things we do not understand.

Working across all areas of Queensland it is often difficult to understand and identify the Traditional Owners within the landscape that we are working. It can sometimes be disheartening when we cannot find the people and yarns for us to understand the area in more detail, however we persist in the attempt.

While all of our projects require Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander perspectives not all of our







projects require input from the community. We have learnt that we can be discerning in what we can do ourselves and what projects would benefit from community input. We understand the cultural load the local Aboriginal communities has and do not want to overload the resources of the community.

From our discussions with community members, Elders and through our listening and learning we are getting better at understanding what is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and making sure those projects are pushed to get better representation. We see some clients particularly our education clients who struggle with forming connections with their local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities. We assist where we can, however, we have also learnt over the last few years that cultural load, resourcing and understanding within the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities themselves can impact on input and connections.

We actively support businesses we know support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or are run by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We have spent time to educate ourselves to learn and understand as much as we can about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People are cared for. We have also realised over the past

few years that as our company expands, we ensure our new staff are supported in their reconciliation journey. This empowers them through their own journey, thereby becoming a part of our journey. It is important that we are all given opportunities and ensure we do our best for the incredibly rich culture and history of our country.

We are a small business and our reconciliation journey is leadership led. This company has been developed through our core values of inclusivity and cultural appreciation from the leadership down and our employees understand, support and see the benefits to this. We have successfully gathered and employed like-minded people into the business creating a culture of acceptance and collaboration of all peoples in the aim of producing better landscapes for all. We will continue to do this throughout our journey accepting all cultures, groups and individuals we meet along our journey as we push innovation and creativity in our work and designs.

We are learning that as Australians we are part of Country and we have a responsibility to Country. As such this is part of our journey. We are actively seeking guidance from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People through all areas we work to better understand how to contribute and reciprocate.





# Relationships



Our company is built on relationships, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are part of this. Our work can help our clients create stronger connections within their own communities and education and understanding is a key part of this. In our work we aim to provide a greater understanding of the abilities and responsibilities of caring for our environment. We form partnerships across a broad range of groups and communities, including schools, local governments, design firms, construction teams and service providers and how we interact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is part of this relationship network and the network of connections in our sphere of influence.



## Focus area: *Inclusivity*

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, organisations and businesses to establish relationships and develop guiding principles for future engagement.	November, 2024	Director
	• Develop and implement an engagement plan to form connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to expand the companies understandings.	November, 2024	Landscape Architect
	• Develop and implement a policy and process upon which projects are identified early as requiring Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community consultation.	November, 2024	Director
	• Develop project-specific engagement plans as required with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples consultation.	September 2024	Landscape Architect
	• Provide support for local Aboriginal community through the running of the Yuggera Kacka community event.	September 2024	Director
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025, 2026	Admin



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. Make sure to note events may not be on the same week as NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May - 3 June, 2025, 2026	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure events are published to all staff and encourage all staff to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> </ul>	27 May - 3 June, 2025, 2026	Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborate with other RAP organisations and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander groups and companies to support the implementation of an NRW event.</li> </ul>	27 May - 3 June, 2025, 2026	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.</li> </ul>	May 2025, 2026	Admin
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a quarterly meeting to discuss cultural, inclusion and reconciliation issues within our projects or office with staff.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Student Landscape Architect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.</li> </ul>	June, 2024	Landscape Architect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.</li> </ul>	December, 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly either through our external communications or social media.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all staff understand our sphere of influence and explore opportunities to positively influence our sphere.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Director, Landscape Architect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Find and collaborate with other RAP organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.</li> </ul>	November 2024 & November 2025	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite other business who would like to learn more about RAPs and the reconciliation journey to hear about Orterra's reconciliation journey</li> </ul>	December 2025	Director
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.</li> </ul>	June 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and continue to communicate our organisations anti-discrimination policy, both internally and externally where appropriate.</li> </ul>	Annually from June 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisor to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.</li> </ul>	August 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate and discuss the effects of racism and discrimination with all staff members at quarterly meetings</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Director



## Respect

We must respect ourselves, others, our environment, our cultures, our cities and towns and our country. We need to understand and appreciate our surrounding nature and landscapes before we can heal our country. It establishes a basis for true inclusivity and equality of all peoples within our work, enabling greater success of our work and celebrating and acknowledging all aspects of the communities and landscapes within which we design and live. We are part of country and as such we are responsible for Country.





**Focus area:** *Learning and Understanding*

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation all staff to identify needs as part of the companies continued professional development training each year. Director to oversee and recommend further training required.</li> </ul>	July 2024, July 2025	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.</li> </ul>	July 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff to be reviewed at quarterly meetings.</li> </ul>	November 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural training initiatives and resources for implementation of staff training.</li> </ul>	June 2024	Landscape Architect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide opportunities for staff to participate in both formal and informal cultural learning opportunities, such as a visitation to Beenleigh Cultural Centre.</li> </ul>	Annually from November, 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and develop a resource library, including both analogue and digital resources, which can be accessed internally to encourage further cultural learning.</li> </ul>	November, 2024	Landscape Architect
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</li> </ul>	September 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communicate AILA's cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country to staff and ensure they understand the correct protocols.</li> </ul>	July 2024	Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage staff and clients to observe cultural protocols including inviting local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events.</li> </ul>	Monthly from June 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country in all external communications where appropriate.</li> </ul>	Monthly from June 2024	Director
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event</li> </ul>	First week in July 2024 & 2025	Director, Landscape Architect, Student Landscape Architect, Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.</li> </ul>	July 2024	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.</li> </ul>	First week in July 2024 & 2025	Director
8. Increase respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, through our design practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek opportunities to communicate respect and recognition of Traditional Owners to our stakeholders within our daily practice (i.e reports and drawings to clients or information and links on our website).</li> </ul>	June 2024 and monthly to 2026	Director, Landscape Architect, Student Landscape Architect, Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share locations and opportunities for cultural learning to our sphere of influence.</li> </ul>	Bi-monthly from June 2024	Admin







# Opportunities



Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities to feel welcome, included, equitable within our business, our work and our community. We aim to enable equitable opportunities for all people within our work place and throughout the wider communities in which we work. This enables all staff to reach their full potential and provide successful outcomes within our work.

## Focus area: *Education*

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	• Review our hiring processes and office environment to ensure it is inclusive and allows all people to feel welcome and comfortable.	September 2024, 2025	Director
	• Engage with cultural ambassador to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July 2024	Director
	• Ensure our recruitment process is inclusive and non-discriminatory no matter age, race, sex, cultural background to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates from applying	July 2024	Director
	• Ensure recruitment, retention and professional development strategies are in place for inclusivity and non-discrimination.	July 2024	Director
	• Ensure job vacancies are advertised to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Review annually from May 2024	Admin
	• Support AILA's Be a Landscape Architect program and encourage cultural diversity into the profession.	November 2024, 2025	Landscape Architect
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Continue to promote and identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants and suppliers' procurement listing within our existing suppliers listing.	May 2024	Director
	• Investigate Trading Blak and Black Business Finder and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business networks.	May 2024	Director
	• Investigate local Aboriginal chambers of commerce in our area and forge connections	November 2024	Director
	• Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to all staff.	December 2024	Landscape Architect
	• Implement procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	May 2024	Landscape Architect
	• Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	May 2026	Director



# Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.</li> </ul>	September 2024	Landscape Architect
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Landscape Architect
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	November, 2024	Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage all staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track, measure and report on RAP commitments through communication of quarterly meeting report.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Admin
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Director to continue to be internal RAP Champion.</li> </ul>	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Director





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
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	Admin
	• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August annually	Admin
	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	Director, Admin
	• Report RAP progress to all staff quarterly.	Quarterly from 24th May, 23rd August, 22nd November 2024, 21st February, 16th May, 15th August, 21st November 2025, 20th February 2026	Director
	• Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	February and November Annually	Director, Admin
	• Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2026	Director, Admin
	• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	July 2026	Director, Admin
	• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	December 2025	Director, Admin







## Contact Us

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We would like to acknowledge our staff and their contribution of photographs to this document. This is this Country through their eyes