

# Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2017 - December 2018





Reconciliation Australia congratulates **yourtown** on the endorsement of its first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), which will build the foundations for the relationships, respect and opportunities essential to reconciliation.

This Reflect RAP demonstrates **yourtown's** dedication to contribute to reconciliation by developing an effective RAP governance model, and building the case for future commitments to cultural learning, practising cultural protocols, and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.

In its first RAP, **yourtown** has committed to developing and maintaining relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and peoples, as highlighted in its actionable goal to celebrate and promote national reconciliation events such as National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

**yourtown's** commitment to displaying respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures is demonstrated through its aim

to scope and develop a list of Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which the organisation operates, and within its sphere of influence.

**yourtown's** dedication to providing opportunities and employment pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is communicated through its commitment to investigate an internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional mentoring network.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend **yourtown** on its inaugural RAP and look forward to following its reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia

I am proud to launch **yourtown's** Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This plan has been developed by staff from across our organisation who represent our commitment not only to developing the plan, but to weaving reconciliation through all elements of our work.

We see our RAP as a means of advancing all the dimensions of reconciliation by supporting **yourtown** in the continuation and development of relationships and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Importantly, our RAP includes practical actions by which we intend to maximise opportunities, as well as continue our learning of the rich histories which are an important part of this nation's story.

Our RAP is also an embodiment of how we live one of our key values – Brother and Sister to all. Through the RAP we can demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that value is evidenced in how we contribute to improved economic and social wellbeing, and of how we listen to and walk beside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

I acknowledge and thank Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for their support of our organisation, for their involvement and guidance in our RAP, and for their willingness to support our endeavours to progress reconciliation.

Tracy Adams  
Chief Executive Officer  
**yourtown**

# Our business

**We respect** diversity and are inclusive of all people irrespective of their culture, gender, sexuality, values, beliefs and experiences.

**We respect** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' ways of knowing, being and doing.

**We strive** to improve our cultural competence in order to understand, communicate and interact effectively with diverse people.

**yourtown** is a registered charity and public company limited by guarantee providing services young people can access to find jobs, learn skills, become great parents and live safe, happy lives. For over 55 years we've been tackling the issues impacting young people in Australia - like youth unemployment and mental health, and we take on issues like family and domestic violence.

We believe every young person has a right to a brighter future and aim to be part of the solution by delivering services that get results. Offered at a local and national level, our services include Kids Helpline, training and employment services for young people, parent education and specialist accommodation for families. Face-to-face programs are located in communities which have been identified as among the most disadvantaged in Australia. These include Logan, Ipswich and the Moreton Region in Queensland; Greater Western Sydney and the Hunter Region in New South Wales; Northern Adelaide and Port Pirie in South Australia; and Northern and Southern Tasmania. The community, including **yourtown's** Art Unions, funds most of what we do.

We are currently one of the largest not-for-profit providers of youth services in Australia, employing more than 600 staff across four states and dealing with around 250,000 contacts every year. Of these staff, 4% identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people.

**yourtown** has an extensive background in the development and delivery of services for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These services include counselling, school retention and re-engagement programs; culturally appropriate mentoring; support for young offenders; work preparation programs linked to skills-in-demand; paid work and training in social enterprises and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific recruitment, training and placement support; family violence refuge for women and children and homelessness service for young parents with children.

## Key statistics:

- 15% of **yourtown's** face-to-face participants in our regional services are young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- 4% of callers to **yourtown's** Kids Helpline (KHL) service in 2016 were identified as coming from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background



## Many Communities, Many Schools, Many Rivers

This painting is about how the Aboriginal Spirits came from the land and sea to help support families from the coast and inland communities.

The Spirits of Aboriginal Culture cross many rivers and lands to support families and children from all different types of communities.

The Spirits help guide the families and children to education, employment and empowerment.

Jason A. Passfield  
Aboriginal Artist  
© 7/1/2014





## Our RAP

**yourtown** is committed to ensuring that young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equitable access to social and economic opportunities and can participate fully in society.

- In developing our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we are focused on formalising our commitment to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our existing services and programs. We also want to use the RAP process to strengthen our working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to further our support to young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- Our CEO and Senior Managers are leading the development and implementation of the RAP. **yourtown** will be appointing RAP champions across work sites. These local champions will work with managers and staff to review our RAP, identify additional strategies for local implementation and to drive cultural capability.
- People involved in the development of our RAP include CEO, Executive Managers of Client Services, People and Culture, Finance, Marketing and Communications, and Strategy and Research, together with a cross section of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff drawn from across the organisation.



Artist: Gregory Duncan  
(Spiritual Cultural Man)



Beginning of **yourtown** depicts the four elements of life: Water, Land, Fire, Wind and traveling track connecting the three drawings.



The women are invited to **yourtown**, shows them with digging sticks with the men behind the women, depicts respect of women and their relationship to mother earth.



This painting depicts the growth of **yourtown** becoming stronger with a number of men and women within their community.



# Our partnerships/current activities

**yourtown** currently offers the following services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youthful Offenders Project: working with young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men currently in detention with intensive case management support pre-release
- School retention and re-engagement and school-based traineeship programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students
- Responding to over 8,000 contacts per year to Kids Helpline from young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Providing specialist accommodation services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and families with children experiencing domestic violence or homelessness
- Industry-specific work preparation training programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to address skills-in-demand
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, training and mentoring services for individual employers and corporate partners through our Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC)
- Provision of support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentoring services
- Training and employment support through Transition to Work and youth specialist jobactive services
- Community partnerships (services/links with businesses/project work/events contributions eg. NAIDOC/community initiatives CFC)

**yourtown works in partnership with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups, agencies, businesses and services in our diverse locations nationally.**

Examples of activities include:

- Local community capacity building to support vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in Deception Bay (QLD) with Mindle Bygul, focussed on increasing supports for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-12 years and their families
- Logan City (QLD) First Nation Peoples Community Coalition: **yourtown** actively supports the Coalition through local events and mutual consultation
- Parklands Project, Southport (QLD and Northern NSW): **yourtown** sub contracted to Grocon to implement and manage the Indigenous Participation Plan (IPP) during the construction of the Parklands Project
- National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager: current sitting member of the QLD Murri Court
- National NAIDOC and Reconciliation Activities: **yourtown** supports events and activities in diverse locations, including major sponsorship
- Boomerang Training (QLD and NSW): procure training services for our staff groups
- DMAC Personnel Hire (QLD and NSW Labour Hire): exchange of support assisting placement of young people from **yourtown** and the development of DMAC
- Local community referral in each service location (Elizabeth and Port Pirie, SA; NSW: QLD and Tasmania) for specific family support, domestic violence and wellbeing centres responses
- Associate member of SNAICC

## Internal activities/initiatives:

- **yourtown** provides cultural capability development through our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander senior roles (Initiatives Manager and Programs Manager)
- Ongoing advice and support to all staff through dedicated roles
- Source and advise on external cultural awareness training available
- Arts based activities with Traditional Owners, community elders, young people and staff groups (eg. Totem Poles)
- Digital Elders storytelling with Logan elders
- Ongoing recruitment strategies targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers
- Advocacy and research on issues impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people (eg. Evaluation of the Indigenous Participation Plan within the Parklands Project; Help seeking of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people)
- Targeted marketing campaigns for Kids Helpline and Parentline





# Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1. Establish a RAP Working Group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the implementation of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation</li></ul>	Established Oct 2016	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager
<b>2. Build internal and external relationships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey</li><li>Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey</li></ul>	Feb 2017 - Dec 2018	All Senior Managers
<b>3. Participate in and celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event</li><li>Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff</li><li>Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW</li></ul>	Annual (27 May - 3 Jun)	All <b>yourtown</b> Managers (Senior and Service Site) via Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>4. Raise internal awareness of our RAP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments</li><li>Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP</li></ul>	Feb 2017 - Dec 2018	Executive Managers (Heads of all Departments) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager
<b>5. Include other unique relationships actions and targets related to our core business and vision for reconciliation</b>	<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Build partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations</li><li>Engage our senior leaders in the delivery of RAP outcomes</li><li>Raise external awareness of our RAP</li><li>Raise awareness of/explore opportunities to support the Recognise campaign</li><li>Support our state/territory based reconciliation council</li></ul>	Feb 2017 - Dec 2018	All Senior Managers







# Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>6. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning and development</b>	• Develop a business case for increasing awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation	Dec 2018	People and Culture
	• Capture data and measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	Dec 2018	Working Group
	• Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation	Annual (May)	People and Culture
<b>7. Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities</li><li>• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area</li><li>• Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event</li></ul>	Annual (first week in Jul)	All Managers



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>8. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area</li><li>• Scope and develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisations sphere of influence</li><li>• Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols)</li></ul>	Dec 2018	All Managers with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager
		Dec 2018	
		Dec 2018	Working Group
<b>9. Include other unique respect actions related to our core business and vision for reconciliation</b>	<p>Suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Celebrate/recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance</li><li>• Investigate cultural immersion programs</li><li>• Communicate and encourage staff to use Reconciliation Australia's 'Share Our Pride' online tool to all staff</li></ul>	Feb 2017 - Dec 2018	All Senior Managers







# Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>10. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation</li> <li>Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities</li> </ul>	Dec 2018	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager  People and Culture
<b>11. Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses</li> <li>Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses</li> </ul>	Dec 2017  Dec 2018	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager
<b>12. Include other unique opportunities and actions related to our core business and vision for reconciliation</b>	Suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate an internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional mentoring network</li> <li>Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment pathways (eg. traineeships or internships)</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to increase pro bono activities</li> <li>Support scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students</li> <li>Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership</li> </ul>	Dec 2018  Ongoing	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager   People and Culture  Executive Managers







# Governance and Tracking Progress

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
13. Build support for the RAP	• Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation	Dec 2017	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager
	• Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities	Dec 2017	
	• Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia	30 Sep 2018	Executive Managers
14. Review and refresh RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements</li><li>• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review</li><li>• Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement</li></ul>	Sep 2018	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Initiatives Manager







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