



**RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN**

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**REFLECT**

July 2025 -  
December 2026





# Acknowledgment

We acknowledge the Bunurong People of the Kulin nation, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Shrine stands and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. As a place of remembrance and storytelling, we honour their deep connection to Country and waterways, shaped by generations of stories and memories.

*First Peoples reading this document should be aware that it includes the names of and references to deceased persons. Where possible family permissions have been granted for this use.*

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# OUR RAP ARTWORK

## Shrine of Remembrance Artwork *Maddi Moser* 2025

This artwork acknowledges the deep and layered history upon which the Shrine of Remembrance stands. It honours the stories of all who have served, the families who have supported them, and the many individuals who visit the Shrine to pay their respects. These collective histories and acts of remembrance are represented in the lower section of the artwork, grounding the piece in reflection, memory and connection.

The work also speaks to the importance of coming together to recognise and honour this history, including initiatives such as the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) process and its implementation. At the top of the artwork, human figures gather around a central sun-like symbol, representing shared purpose, unity and progress. The radiating circular lines surrounding this symbol illustrate the ripple effect created when meaningful reconciliation work is undertaken — how commitment and collaboration can extend outward, influencing community understanding and future generations.

The patterned lines at the base of the artwork evoke the movement of the ocean. This element references the Bunurong people as saltwater people and acknowledges the cultural significance of Country. It also symbolises the journeys undertaken by those who served overseas during times of war, connecting local histories to global experiences.

# STATEMENT FROM CEO OF RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA INAUGURAL REFLECT RAP



Reconciliation Australia welcomes Shrine of Remembrance Melbourne to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Shrine of Remembrance Melbourne 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 over 5.5 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 Shrine of Remembrance Melbourne 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 toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Shrine of Remembrance Melbourne, 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



# MESSAGE FROM SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE LEADERSHIP

We are honoured to present the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan for the Shrine of Remembrance. Our legislated primary role is to be a memorial to honour the service and sacrifice of Victorians and Australians in war, conflict, peacekeeping and peacemaking.

We commenced the development of our first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2024, marking 90 years as Victoria's principal place of commemoration. While this plan is now formally fully endorsed in 2026, the work it represents has been under way across that period. Its progression reflects the care required to engage appropriately with Traditional Owners and advisors, to ensure the actions set out are practical, considered and aligned with the Shrine's purpose. This Reflect RAP therefore marks not a delayed beginning, but a deliberate and informed foundation for ongoing work.

The Shrine stands on Bunurong Country. We acknowledge the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the Shrine stands, and we pay respect to their Elders past and present. We recognise their enduring connection to Country, waterways and community, and the responsibility this places on us as custodians of a significant public place.

The meaning of the Shrine is not fixed. It is shaped over time by those who built it, those who have served, and those who come to it now and in the future. As we look ahead through the 2025–45 Masterplan, we are required to consider more carefully whose histories are present, whose are absent, and how this place continues to hold relevance for a changing community.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, service carries a distinct and complex meaning. It includes military service across Australia's conflicts, often without recognition or equality, and it includes the defence of Country in the face of dispossession. Any account of Australian service that sits within the Shrine must be able to hold both truths with care and respect.

This Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan establishes a foundation for that work. It is not a statement of completion. It is a commitment to listen, to build relationships, and to improve how the Shrine represents, engages with and supports First Peoples' histories and perspectives within its commemorative, educational and public roles.

The development of this RAP has been guided by the Shrine's RAP Working Group, with advice from Wan-Yaari Aboriginal Consultancy and the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation. Their contribution has been measured, practical and necessary.

The Shrine's commitment to respect and inclusion is longstanding. This RAP requires that commitment to be expressed more clearly in practice — through our programs, our interpretation, our partnerships and our internal culture.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and the executive, we endorse this Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan as a structured beginning. It sets expectations for the work ahead and establishes a basis for accountability.

## **Colonel Catherine Carrigan**

*Acting Chair*

Shrine of Remembrance

## **Sue Blake**

*Interim CEO*

Shrine of Remembrance

# MESSAGE FROM RAP CHAMPION AND WORKING GROUP

We have been actively telling stories of First Peoples' service since 2006. The Books of Remembrance in the Ambulatory inside the Sanctuary contain the names of all those who served in the First World War. Each name is a story. Of the 89,100 names, we are aware approximately 80 are First Peoples. It is difficult to identify First Peoples who have served as military authorities did not formally record that information until the 1990s. In each World War, enlistment was initially only open to people 'substantially of European origin or descent', and First Peoples were specifically excluded. Many still enlisted and some, when queried, told authorities they were of partial Indian, Māori or other heritage to circumvent the ban.

Through our work with our touring exhibition, *Indigenous Australians at War* and more recently *For Kin and Country*, we have learnt of more First Peoples who have served. We continue to collaborate with families, researchers and the Australian War Memorial to improve our understanding and knowledge. We will continue to do this work.

Embarking on a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) made sense, as we seek to deepen our connection to First Peoples communities. The RAP Working Group (RWG) group was formed in early 2023 with representatives from each Directorate: we are taking this journey together. At the formation of the group, we did not have any First Peoples staff members or volunteers, so we enlisted the support of Wanyaari Aboriginal Consultancy Services (Wanyaari) on the recommendation of Bunurong Land Council. We connected with Ricky Kildea

who introduced us to Kaley Nicholson. Kaley has provided guidance, support and training as we move through our Reflect RAP.

I would like to publicly acknowledge and thank Ricky Kildea, Kaley Nicholson and the team at Wanyaari, for their support and good humor in working with us on this journey.

Finally, thank you to all the Shrine team who have engaged positively in the process and continue to seek ways each day to tell the stories of First Peoples' service. We have enjoyed working on our Reflect RAP and look forward to what is to come.

## ***RAP Working Group***

Sue Burgess	Director Public Programs (RAP Champion)
Katrina Nicolson	Exhibitions Coordinator
Harrison Lambooy	Education Officer
Adrian Threlfall	Education Officer
Melissah Crumpton	Business Support Officer
Soo Mei Leong	Finance Officer
Genevieve Maguire	People and Culture Manager
Clare O'Connor	Marketing Coordinator
Ryan Johnston	Director Visitor Experience

NB as a small organization we have combined the RAP Champion and Working Group Chair roles, with the position held on our Leadership team.

# OUR ORGANISATION

The Shrine of Remembrance was founded in 1927 and dedicated in 1934 as the National War Memorial of Victoria. It was built to provide a place to grieve and remember Victorians killed in the First World War (1914–18). Its purpose was then extended to recognise all Australian service. We are managed by a Board of Trustees who are responsible for the care and activation of the Shrine monument, the Shrine Reserve and museum.

The Shrine is in Kings Domain in Melbourne. We are bounded by St Kilda Road, Birdwood Avenue, Anzac Avenue and Domain Road.

In our most recent Annual Report for the financial year 2023–24, we recorded 1.7 million visitor engagements. This consisted of 542,347 onsite visits and 1,098,463 digital engagements, through social media, podcasts and online content. On Anzac Day we had 40,000 attend the service and across the year we had another 76,422 attend our 192 services. We also hosted 49,061 students for onsite visits.

The Shrine is a place of national, state, and cultural significance. Our enduring purpose is to be a memorial honouring the service and sacrifice of Victorians and Australians in war, conflict, peacemaking, and peacekeeping. Our purpose, vision, mission and people are at the heart of everything we do.

***In developing the 2025–30 Strategic Plan, Trustees determined the Shrine’s vision:***

To be the most special place at which to reflect on the way of life we value, defended by the service of so many.

***We pursue this vision through our mission:***

We will memorialise those who have served in war, peacemaking and peacekeeping; engaging through education and storytelling. We will be acknowledged for our leadership and cultural significance.

***The Shrine adheres to and will be known for the values of:***

- Respect - For people and their stories
- Inclusion - Provide a welcoming place for all
- Integrity - In our actions and relationships
- Loyalty - To our purpose
- Service - To our community

We are funded by a combination of Victorian Government funding, in kind support from the City of Melbourne, commercial activities, grants and donations from companies and supporters.

## ***Staff***

We employ 43 staff across a seven days a week operation. Supporting the staff we have 81 volunteers, including ten Young Ambassadors and 14 Life Governors and Governors. Currently none of our team identify as an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. Our objective is to attract and employ First Peoples staff. Our People and Culture strategy will address this issue.

***We are divided into five main areas of responsibility-***

- Corporate Services - facilities, compliance and finance
- Visitor Experience - all front of house operations
- Public Programs - curatorial, programming, education and volunteer program
- Marketing - advertising, promotion, public relations and media liaison
- The Office of the CEO - people and culture and administration

The RAP working Group is made up of representatives from these directorates.

# OUR RAP

In July 2021, First Peoples State Relations made a significant announcement, clarifying the boundary between the Wurundjeri Land Council and Bunurong Land Council, and subsequently, that the Shrine was situated on Bunurong land. Previously, the Shrine existed in an area not designated to either council. This announcement provided impetus for us to initiate the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan.

As we move through this process, our focus will be on consulting First Peoples communities and working together on agreed outcomes.

Developing a RAP enables us to continue to tell these stories and pay respect in a more cohesive and coordinated way, engaging these communities in the process. Whilst we are located on Bunurong land, our visitors and collaborators come from many different places. A RAP will provide us with a structured framework to guide our communications and interactions with First Peoples communities now and into the future.

## OUR RECONCILIATION JOURNEY SO FAR

Since 2006 we have been telling the stories of First Peoples communities through ceremonies or exhibitions. Our initial consultations at that time were conducted with Koorie Heritage Trust, Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee and Aboriginal Victoria now First Peoples State Relations. We also consulted with First Peoples community members and family members. We now continue to consult with these groups along with the Australian War Memorials Indigenous Liaison Officers and Australian Defence Force Indigenous Liaison Officers.

Our journey so far encompasses our key areas of commemoration, exhibitions, programming and education. At the beginning of any project involving First Peoples' stories, we undertake to consult with relevant family members and any one of the following groups—Koorie Heritage Trust, Bunurong Land Council or Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service committee. The group consulted will depend on the project. We have also codified consultation to First Peoples in our Interpretation Policy. This policy informs and guides all activities where interpretation of a story or event is at the core of the work.

## COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITY

### ***Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service***

In 2006, well known Yarra Yarra Elder, the late Aunty Dorothy 'Dot' Peters AM (1930–2019) approached Healesville RSL with a proposal in the spirit of Reconciliation to honour First Peoples' military service. Aunty Dot's father, Yorta Yorta man Vincent Peters, died working on the Burma-Thailand Railway as a prisoner of war during the Second World War. President Sam Halim, despite some internal opposition agreed, and the Ode accompanied by a yidaki (didgeridoo) was performed on Anzac Day at Healesville.

Aunty Dot and Sam then approached the RSL, Victorian State Government and the Shrine about holding a service to commemorate First Peoples' service. This took place at the Shrine on 31 May 2006, during Reconciliation Week. This led the way for services in all states in 2007, which continue every year on 31 May. (All people references have been approved by the Peters family)

*Source: [www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au](http://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au)*

### ***Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee***

The Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee (VARC) grew out of that initial movement to commemorate First Peoples' military service in 2006. Comprised of First Peoples and allies with strong connections, through either their own or their family's military service, it continues to work in conjunction with the Shrine and First Peoples State Relations (formerly Aboriginal Victoria) to deliver the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service and advise on and improve commemoration of First Peoples' military service. We consult with them annually in the lead up to the Aboriginal Remembrance Service and through the year as required.

### ***Memorial Plaque and Tree***

A memorial tree was dedicated as the Indigenous Ex-Service Memorial Tree on 31 May 2008, in conjunction with the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service. As is customary, the memorial plaque was placed adjacent to an existing tree, a Monterey Cypress (*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*), which was planted on the Shrine Reserve in 2000.

*The dedication reads:* In blessed memory of Australian Indigenous service men and women who served, fought and died in the defence of Australia.

### ***Remembrance Day Smoking Ceremony***

In a first, to mark the return of public commemorative services at the Shrine in 2021, Remembrance Day featured a Bunurong Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony. We have continued to include a Smoking Ceremony at the commencement of the Remembrance Day service.

# EXHIBITIONS AND PROGRAMMING

## **Performance**

July 2022 Performance in the Shrine Auditorium of *The Mission* by Gunditjmara man Tom Molyneux. The show was written by Tom and dramatises the life story of his great-great-uncle Allan McDonald, one of the earliest of Victoria's First Peoples to enlist in the First World War. The show was toured nationally and the performance at the Shrine was one of the final performances. The Auditorium was at capacity for the show, with 115 people in attendance.

### *Some of the feedback received:*

"I found that 'The Mission' was excellent. Very well done by Tom Molyneux. Congratulations to you / the Shrine for arranging it."

"We attended the Mission last week and found it extraordinary. It was such a quality, educational and informative presentation."

## **Permanent galleries**

Individual displays within the galleries:

### **Boer War – Robert Charles Searle**

Served with the 4th Imperial Bushmen's corps.

### **First World War – Harry Thorpe**

Awarded Military Medal, died of wounds 9 August 1918.

### **First World War – Daniel Cooper killed in action September 1917**

His photo was on display in *For Kin and Country*. It will be rested for time, now the exhibition has closed, but his story will be available via QR code through the 'There's more to this story' digital project.

### **Interwar – William Cooper**

William Cooper (Daniel Cooper's father) prominent Aboriginal activist and led a protest march against Nazi atrocities eg. Kristallnacht, during the 1930s.

### **Second World War – Cubillo Family**

Cubillo family from Darwin, whose patriarch was killed in bombings.

### **Second World War**

*Join Up!* touchscreen terminal with four profiles of Second World War Service Personnel. Lieutenant (later Captain) Reginald Saunders, the first recognised Aboriginal Commissioned Officer in the Australian Army.

## **Current conflicts**

Ricky Morris, uniform, served in East Timor and Afghanistan.

## **Shrine Collection**

We have a small number of items pertaining to First Peoples' service and commemoration in our collection. When the opportunity arises, we would take more items into our collection if it were appropriate to do so.

### **Private Daniel Cooper photographic portrait c 1917**

Private Daniel Cooper was a Yorta Yorta man from Cumeragunja Aboriginal Reserve in NSW. He was working as a labourer when he enlisted for the First World War. He was enrolled in the 24th Battalion, and embarked for France on HMAT Wiltshire on 7 March 1916, as part of the 10th Reinforcements, 2nd Division.

The Australians were drawn into the third Battle of Ypres in September 1917. The preceding month of torrential rain had stifled their chances of success by disabling men, horses and artillery in the mud. On 20 September 1917, Cooper took part in the first element of a three-stage plan for capturing the high ground of the Gheluvelt Plateau, Belgium. They had considerable success against the Germans that day but suffered huge losses. Cooper was among those killed.

Daniel was the son of William Cooper, a notable First Peoples' activist.

This framed photographic portrait was donated to the Shrine collection by his nephew, Uncle Alfred 'Boydie' Turner in 2015. It has been displayed in the Galleries of Remembrance and in the special exhibition *For Kin and Country*. With Uncle Boydie's permission, the image was also used as the basis for a commemorative silo art project in Shepparton, Victoria.

### **Clapsticks**

A pair of clapsticks were presented to the Shrine at the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service on 31 May 2015. They were presented as a gift in thanks for our support of the service. The clapsticks are engraved with Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place Choir. We will seek further information as to provenance from the choir.

### **Fire stick**

A fire stick presented to the Shrine was used by the Bunurong Land Council at one of the first Smoking and Welcome to Country ceremonies performed during Remembrance Day at the Shrine in 2021.

### **Emu feather wreath**

An emu feather and gumnut wreath made by the Wadawurrung Elders and included in the Shrine's collection with their permission. The wreath was laid by the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation at the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service in 2023.

### **Displaced 2019**

Displaced 2019 by Ben Pullin, First Peoples artist. This artwork is a reflection on his experience serving in Rwanda as a peacekeeper. Purchased by the Shrine for our collection in 2022.

### **Ricky Morris uniform**

Uniform belonging to Gunditjmara man, Ricky Morris. He served in Afghanistan and East Timor. Item acquired in 2015 for the Shrine Collection.

### **Touring exhibition**

In 2010 the Shrine launched *Indigenous Australians at War: from the Boer War to the Present*. This exhibition grew directly from the connections made with community through the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service and Koorie Heritage Trust. We also developed relationships with historians, organisations and local people across Australia and shared previously little-known stories through photographs, artefacts and oral histories. The exhibition was well received by many in the First Peoples' community, who led a campaign for the exhibition to tour Victoria.

With Victorian Government support, the exhibition toured 17 regional venues from 2012–14. In 2012, the Australian Museums and Galleries Association, Victoria, (AMaGA, Vic) recognised the significant work done in connecting with local people at each venue with its 'Best Community Engagement' Award.

The Department of Veterans Affairs collaborated with the Shrine on Primary and Secondary school resources based on the exhibition. This led to them funding a national tour of the exhibition visiting 15 venues across all states and territories from 2015–18. Highlights included: Uluru for Anzac Day and Thursday Island for the Torres Strait Light Infantry Battalion 75th Anniversary commemorations. In total over 150,000 people visited the exhibition.

### **Special exhibition**

In 2022, the Shrine re-curated the Victorian elements of the *Indigenous Australian at War* touring exhibition to form a new exhibition *For Kin and Country: First Peoples in the Australian Defence Force*. This new exhibition reflected the significant research undertaken in the 12 years since the first, resulting in an increased understanding of First Peoples' service. For example: it was originally estimated around 600 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in the First World War, now over one thousand men are identified as enlisted, and the number is growing. Similarly, several First Peoples have now been identified as serving during the Boer War (1899–1902). Importantly, the new exhibition removed the original chronological theming and placed each service person in Country, surrounded by family. The text was completely rewritten to provide more context for what was happening to First Peoples outside their military service.

With the closure of the exhibition in March 2024, some of the stories have been relocated to the Shrine Education centre and pods and some are available in our museum digitally via a QR code. *For Kin and Country* focused on Victorian service people and families or those who have made Victoria their home, the website page connects with further articles and a three-part podcast series. The exhibition was on display for 2 years – the longest static exhibition ever at the Shrine.

### **NAIDOC Week band performance and Last Post Service**

In NAIDOC Week 2022, the Shrine held a Last Post Service commemorating First Peoples' service. Descendants of Boer War serviceman Arthur Wellington, whose paternal grandparents were Jaadwa/Jardwajali, laid a wreath in his memory. This was the first time a First Peoples' Boer War serviceman had been honoured at an Australian war memorial.

On 2 July 2023, the Shrine held a Last Post Service dedicated to remembering and honouring the contribution of First Peoples to Australia's Armed Forces as part of NAIDOC Week celebrations. To complement the afternoon's service, the Australian Airforce band performed in the Western Visitor Centre prior to the service with a focus on music composed by First Peoples musicians and composers. We had Kamilaroi-Yuwaalaraay, Yorta-Yorta and Yuin composer James Henry present and he spoke about his development of music and his instrumental composition *The Emu and the Brolga*. He also played a William Barton composition on the yidaki. Other composers featured were Nardi Simpson, Yuwaalaraay, Brenda Gifford, Yuin, and Christopher Sainsbury, Dharug/Eora.

On 6 July 2025, we hosted a performance entitled *Reflections of Service* by Gunditjmara playwright, poet and musician Richard J Frankland. It was a performance of his music interspersed with Richard's reflections on his own service and that of his family. His grandfather, Chris Saunders, served in the First World War and his uncles, Reg and Harry Saunders, served in the Second World War. Harry was killed on the Kokoda Track and became the inspiration for one of Richard's early films, *Harry's War*. The performance was held in the Shrine Auditorium and was sold out. The performance was followed by a Last Post Service where Richard laid a wreath honoring the enduring contribution of First Peoples in Australia's military history.

## **EDUCATION PROGRAMMING**

Our Education team has been telling stories of First Peoples' service in their programming since 2013. The Victorian Curriculum has a requirement for students to understand cultures and practices, including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, through the Intercultural Capability strand. Teachers who visit the

Shrine with their students expect we will weave stories of First Peoples' service into our programming. This has been ongoing via the following initiatives:

Story cards, telling First Peoples stories of service, have been available for educators and volunteers to use on tours since 2018. They represent the development of several stories of First Peoples' service in the First World War for the Keepsakes program for Year 9 students. Expectation and requests via booking link that all tours will include a story of First Peoples' service

Our educators and volunteers are encouraged to explain 'the face on the building' (Barak Building at the top of Swanston Street, visible from the Shrine's Second World War Memorial Forecourt), giving a brief explanation about William Barak. He was known as 'Beruk' in the Woiwurrung language of his people. His image serves as a reminder of the earlier history of this place.

Schools are encouraged to attend the annual Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service.

## STAFF TRAINING

Koorie Heritage Trust cultural awareness training conducted in 2021.  
Aboriginal Heritage Walk at the Royal Botanic Gardens in 2021–2022  
The curator of *For Kin and Country* delivered sessions to staff and volunteers on First Peoples' military service with the Australian Defence Forces.

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### **Retail and Front of House**

In our retail shop we have a variety of First Peoples' art themed products available for sale. Currently we source products from Alperstein Designs, an Australian company that works with First Peoples artists. They are members of the Indigenous Art Code and the Aboriginal Art Association of Australia. The changeover of supplier occurred in February 2024. We will continue to review this supplier and look to make improvements as required.

Both Reception areas in our Visitor Centre and our Education Centre display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags for visitors to see on entry.

### **Services**

We host the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service in National Reconciliation Week. This is an annual service to acknowledge the contribution of First Peoples in

the Australian Defence Force. It is held on the Second World War Memorial Forecourt on the northern side of the Shrine. Each year cultural elements like clap sticks, yidaki (didgeridoo) and conch playing are included in recognition that defence personnel served across Australia not just in Victoria.

### **Podcasts**

*Yarns* is a three-part series of interviews with First Peoples veterans. They provide insight and reflections on service and ideas on commemorating First Peoples' service in the future. It was funded in 2022 by the Victorian Veterans Council, to align with the special exhibition *For Kin and Country* and continues to be available on our podcast channel.

### **Permanent Galleries**



A digital overlay of diverse stories called *There's more to this story* was installed in our museum in 2023. In early 2024 we added First Peoples' stories from our past exhibition *For Kin and Country*. These labels are easily identified, as they have an image of Aunty Dot Peters' wreath just above the QR code. Aunty Dot's wreath can be seen with the Acknowledgement of Country as people enter the Shrine. When visitors click through the QR code, in addition to stories of First Peoples' service they find this information regarding the wreath:

The gum leaf wreath artwork by Nina Kelabora is inspired by the late Aunty Dot Peters AM, who laid a gum leaf wreath at the Shrine each year.

The colours of the leaves are the same as those found in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags together with Army khaki and the Navy and Airforce blues. Individual leaves, sitting side by side, proudly represent Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal soldiers who have served and continue to serve as equals in the Australian Defence Force.

This artwork has become synonymous with the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service held annually at the Shrine. More information can be found at: <https://www.firstpeoplesrelations.vic.gov.au/victorian-aboriginal-remembrance-service>

## SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS

### ***Toys, Tales, & Tenacity***

A graphic novel, *Reg Saunders: An Indigenous Hero*, tells the story of Reg Saunders (a First Peoples service person) and has been on display, together with photos of his son and great grandchildren, who were all in cadets. The authors of the graphic novel consulted with the Saunders family in the preparation. Auntie Glenda Hume (Reg Saunders' daughter) also provided support for this exhibition and *For Kin and Country* by sharing her family story and images. (All people references have been approved by the Saunders family) The novel was the Winner, 2015 Educational Publishing Award in the Secondary Student Resource- Junior Category.

### ***Programs***

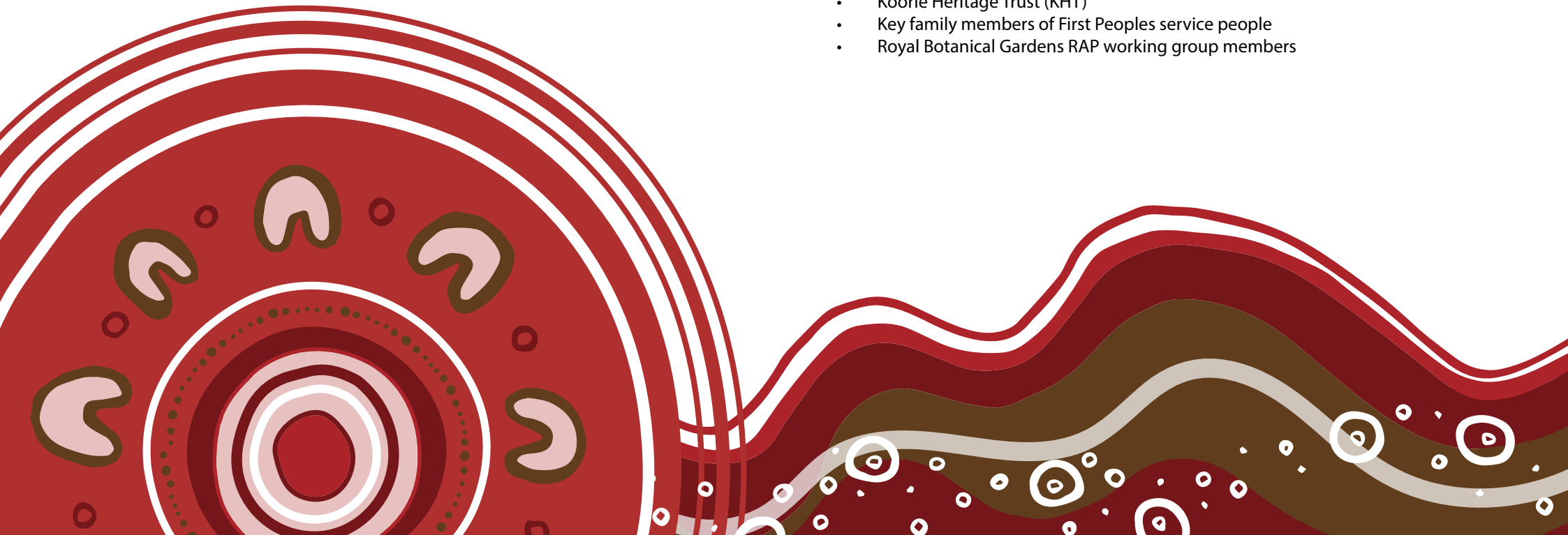
In 2023, we were invited to work with Chris Latham OAM, artist in residence at the Australian War Memorial on a musical venture called Holocaust Memorial Project. It was a broad ranging program of musical composition and lectures reflecting on the Holocaust across venues around Australia. The final performance was held on 31

October 2024 at Hamer Hall. The Shrine was invited to be involved due to the role of First Peoples activist and Yorta Yorta man William Cooper. We tell the story in our Galleries of William Cooper's work in setting up the Australian Aboriginal League and more particularly, his protest about Kristallnacht in Germany in 1938. This was an attack by German Nazis on Jewish people and property over 2 days leaving a trail of damage, including broken glass, in the streets. Kristallnacht translated means 'Night of Broken Glass'. *The William Cooper March* is an original composition created by William Barton in collaboration with Chris Latham. William Barton, a Kalkadunga man, is Australia's best yidaki (didgeridoo) player. William has worked with Chris Latham on other projects over several years, so they are well known to each other. The Cooper family were consulted about the composition and invited to both the World Premiere performance at Hamer Hall in October and the smaller preview at the Shrine. The preview performance on 28 October held in the Shrine Auditorium showcased the original compositions *Kristallnacht* and *The William Cooper March*.

### ***Consultations***

As part of the Reflect RAP process we have undertaken consultations with the following key stakeholders and groups:

- Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Land Council
- Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee (VARC)
- Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT)
- Key family members of First Peoples service people
- Royal Botanical Gardens RAP working group members

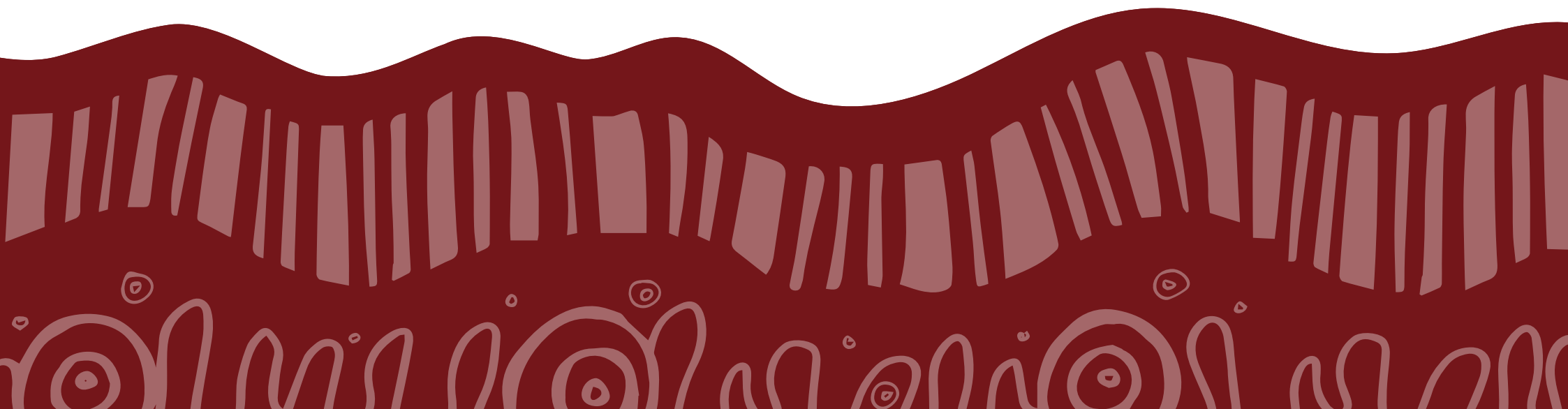




# RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations</b>	1.1	Continue to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	February 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	1.2	Review best practices and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	February 2026	Lead: RWG Member
	1.3	Establish a regular meeting with key Bunurong Land Council team members to work on mutually agreed objectives.	December 2025	Lead: RAP Champion
	1.4	Ensure Wurundjeri Land Council are kept informed of what is happening at the Shrine through our Shrine e-news distribution list.	February 2026	Lead: Marketing Coordinator
	1.5	Work with VARC on embedding cultural elements like a Yidaki player or songs in First Peoples' languages into annual commemorative service.	March 2026	Lead: Ceremonial Program Manager
	1.6	Brief Bunurong Land Council representatives on the 2025-45 Shrine Master Plan.	January 2026	Lead: CEO

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)</b>	2.1	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff.	May 2026	Lead: Director Public Programs
	2.2	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event annually.	27 May- 3 June 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	2.3	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2026	Lead: Director Visitor Experience
	2.4	Encourage staff and volunteers to attend Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance service held at the end of NRW each year on 31 May.	April 2026	Lead: Director Visitor Experience
	2.5	Continue to raise public awareness of NRW through existing channels including website, social media and on onsite education programs.	May, 2026	Lead: Marketing Director



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence</b>	3.1	Our commitment to reconciliation will be communicated to all staff via the development of a dedicated intranet page for our Reflect RAP. This page will be a resource and information hub for our staff including information about Bunurong Land Council, NRW, NAIDOC Week and First Peoples' programs happening at the Shrine.	September 2025	Lead: RWG and RAP Champion
	3.2	Maintain a list of external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	3.3	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	3.4	Shrine Culture Club is a group dedicated to enhancing and improving the culture and social cohesion of the organisation through a range of activities and events. This group will work with First Peoples in the lead up to NAIDOC Week to develop activities for staff that include opportunities for further understanding of reconciliation and its importance.	September 2026	Lead: Chair of Culture Club
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies</b>	4.1	Research into best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination will occur as part of the People and Culture strategy development.	30 June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	4.2	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	30 June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	4.3	Embed annual Culture Capability training that encompasses cultural awareness, cultural competency and unconscious bias through a combination of face-to-face training and our online training provider Safetrac.	30 June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager



# RESPECT

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning</b>	5.1	Develop a proposal for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation within the development of the People and Culture Strategy.	30 June 2026	Lead: People and Culture Manager
	5.2	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	5.3	Enhance ongoing staff communications about our RAP and other activities around reconciliation. This will be achieved through the Shrine staff RAP intranet page.	September 2025	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	5.4	Maintain our key policy documents- Ceremonial Policy and Interpretation Policy which outline our protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	January 2027	Lead: RAP Champion
	5.5	Begin the consultation process with First Peoples' stakeholders on how the Shrine may appropriately understand and communicate information on the Frontier Wars.	September 2026	Lead: RAP working group

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols</b>	6.1	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	December 2025	Lead: RAP working group
	6.2	Consult with Bunurong Land Council contacts on ways to educate staff on the lands and waters and their care and management, including investigation of the offsite program at Shoreham on the Mornington Peninsula.	January 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	6.3	Increase staff and volunteer understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	February 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	6.4	Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country in the introduction of all public programs and education programs onsite and online.	January 2026	Lead: Director Public Programs
	6.5	Continue to include a Welcome to Country at the Anzac Day Dawn Service.	February 2026	Lead: Director Visitor Experience
	6.6	Continue to include a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony performed by Bunurong Elders at the Remembrance Day service.	October 2025	Lead: Director Visitor Experience
	6.7	Encourage staff to consider the inclusion of an Acknowledgement of Country at the start of formal meetings.	January 2026	Lead: Executive team
	6.8	Permanent display of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on new external flagpoles at Anzac Avenue. These flagpoles are at the end of the Second World War Memorial Forecourt and will be at the entrance to the Shrine Reserve.	June 2026	Lead: Director Visitor Experience
	6.9	Consult with First Peoples including VARC and the Bunurong Land Council Cultural Landscape Coordinator about the possibility of moving the current First Peoples' memorial plaque from a non-native tree to a native tree.	June 2026	Lead: Director Visitor Experience

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	7.1	Raise awareness and share information amongst staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. Information will be accessible via the Shrine RAP intranet page.	June 2026	Lead: Culture Club Chair
	7.2	Introduce staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	7.3	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week of July 2026	Lead: RWG member
	7.4	Develop and deliver regular annual NAIDOC week public programming.	January 2026	Lead: Production Coordinator.



# OPPORTUNITIES

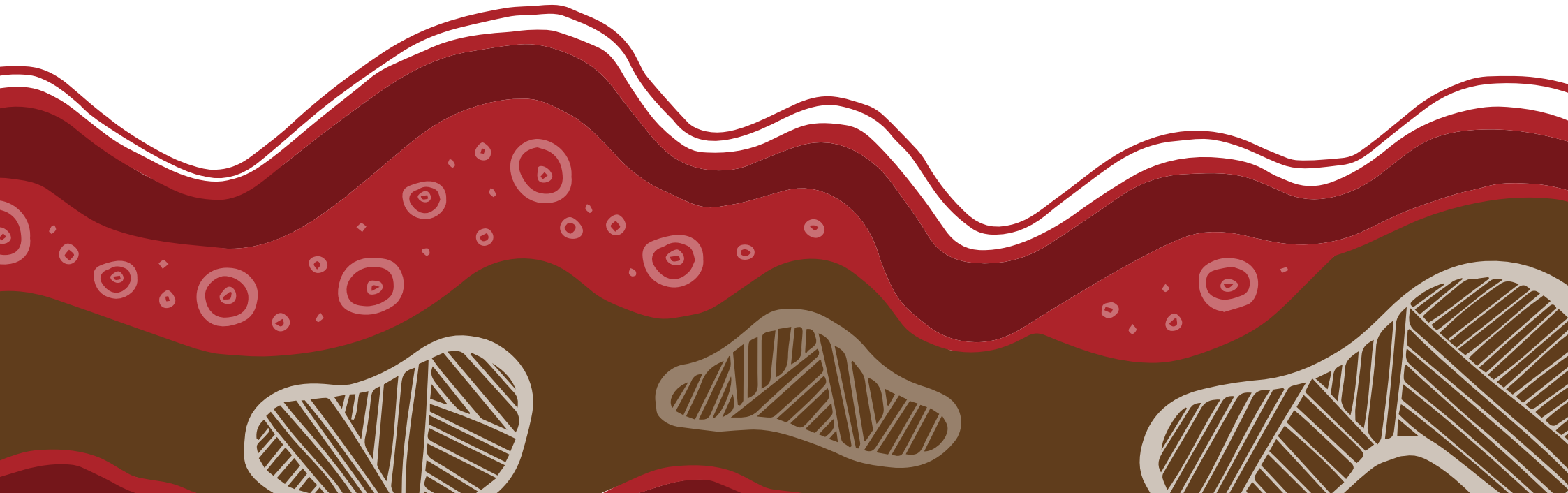
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development</b>	8.1	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment under the People and Culture Strategy, include consideration of paid internships/ traineeships and work experience.	30 June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	8.2	Develop understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety in the workplace as part of the development of the People and Culture Strategy.	30 June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
	8.3	Scope paid secondment opportunities for First Peoples staff in the cultural sector. Utilise our Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) Membership to access appropriate cultural networks.	30 June 2026	Lead: People & Culture Manager
<b>9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes</b>	9.1	Develop and implement and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	August 2026	Lead- Director Corporate Services
	9.2	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	August 2026	Lead: Director Corporate Services
	9.3	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	August 2026	Lead: Director Corporate Services
	9.5	Work with Bunurong Land Council to source local products, including researching the possibility of commissioning a Bunurong artist to develop a product for the Shrine of Remembrance retail shop.	June 2026	Lead: Retail Manager



# GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility	
<b>10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group to drive governance of the RAP</b>	10.1	Maintain the RAP Working group formed in 2023.	September 2025	Lead: RAP Champion
	10.2	Meet bimonthly to drive and monitor implementation.	June 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
	10.3	Review Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group established in preparation for an Innovate RAP.	March 2027	Lead: RAP Champion
	10.4	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	June 2026	Lead: RAP Champion
<b>11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments</b>	11.1	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from executive group.	January annually	Lead: RAP Champion
	11.2	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	September 2025	Lead: RAP Champion
	11.3	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments- including discussion on progress and achievements at the fortnightly Leadership meeting.	September 2025	Lead: RAP Champion
	11.4	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	September 2025	Lead: RAP Champion and Director Corporate Services

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<b>12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally</b>	12.1 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	1 August annually	Lead: RAP Champion
	12.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June annually	Lead: RAP Champion Support: Executive Assistant
	12.3 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August annually	Lead: RAP Champion Support: Executive Assistant
<b>13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP</b>	13.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	October 2026	Lead: RAP Champion





# Contact

For public enquiries about our RAP please contact  
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