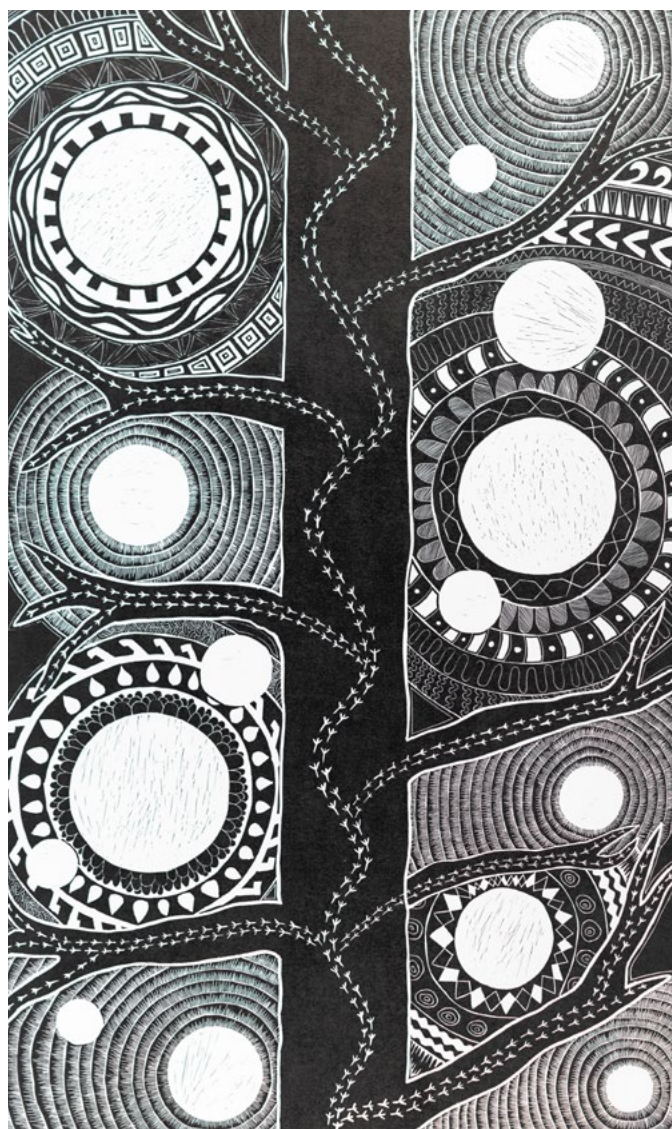


Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

Youth Law Australia

February 2021 - February 2022





Artwork and Artist

Fourth Connection by Kianah Davis

“So, I believe that art creates and connects us to our culture.

This piece represents my connection to my Aboriginal heritage and country, that feeling deep within you that you experience a sense of place and belonging. I am of Gumbaynggirr and Bundjalung descent which is in Northern NSW.

This artwork has many different styles and components that all simultaneously come together to create “Fourth Connection”. The tree is my connectiveness with the land, it helps me stay grounded in this whirl wind of a world we live in today. The footsteps represent my ancestors who have walked the land before me. Through their guidance and wisdom my journey begins.

The circles in my piece represent the ring of river stones from which my family has a smoking ceremony. This is when we burn eucalyptus leaves at the centre of the ring to create a small plume of smoke, in which we walk through the smoke and let it flow over our bodies washing away the bad. We do this every year at Lionsville, NSW.

As you can see each ring around the circle has a different pattern, this is because they each represent the four elements earth, wind, fire and water. We use these elements in our ceremonies to bring us closer to each other. To feel each other’s energies flowing through the land that we walk on.”

Thank you to our supporters

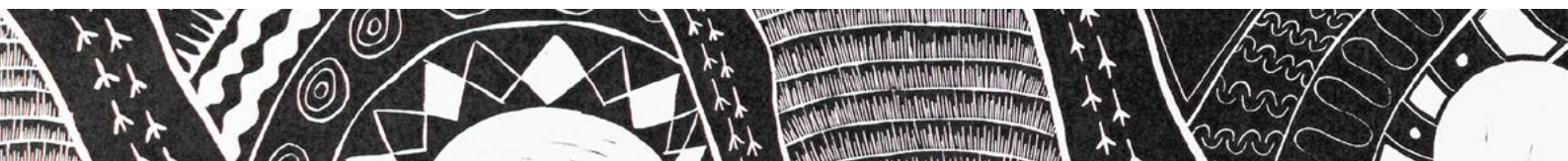
Youth Law Australia would like to thank our supporters who contribute to our operations through financial and in-kind assistance. We thank the Australian Attorney-General’s Department, King & Wood Mallesons, University of New South Wales Law & Justice, the Fair Work Ombudsman and the Queensland, New South Wales, South Australian and Tasmanian Attorney-General’s Departments for their generous support. Youth Law Australia would also like to thank Community Legal Centres NSW, and in particular, Zachary Armytage, for his constant support and guidance throughout the RAP development process.

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Acknowledgement of Country

Youth Law Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we work, the Bedegal people of the Eora nation. We pay our respects to the Elders, past, present and to the young people who are working towards a brighter tomorrow. Youth Law Australia is a national legal service - we acknowledge the Traditional Owners, Custodians and Elders of lands on which we work across Australia.

Our Vision

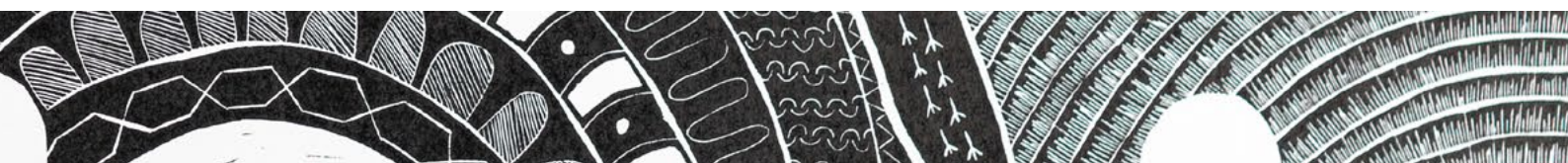
Youth Law Australia acknowledges, and respects that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were the first sovereign nations of Australia and we recognise the traditional laws and customs under which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities possessed the land. We recognise the ownership of sovereignty was never ceded or extinguished and co-exists with the sovereignty of the crown.

Youth Law Australia also acknowledges that First Nations peoples have endured ongoing injustice and dispossession and that this continues to impact children, young people and their families. In many ways the law continues to create this injustice, leading many children to be alienated from their families and communities. We do not accept this injustice. Youth Law Australia supports the call to action contained in the Uluru Statement from the Heart and we are guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We will walk with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to seek a better future for children based on justice, equal access to rights, and self-determination. To do so, Youth Law Australia commits to Makarrata, the coming together after a struggle.

Our vision is for equality and justice for all children, young people and their families. Youth Law Australia supports the vision that every child should have access to every right under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We commit to achieve this by connecting and empowering young Australians and their families with free legal assistance. To achieve this vision, Youth Law Australia commits to listening to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, advocating for constitutional change and reform and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities to have the power over the destiny of their children. We hear the need to come together and to seek for and listen to the truth and advocate for the truth.

Through this vision, we are committed to delivering our legal service to more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, we commit to ongoing collaboration, relationship building and innovation to ensure that our service is accessible no matter where in Australia a young person is living. We seek to support communities to access solutions to legal problems before they escalate and to ensure that children and young people can access the rights they are entitled to.

Our vision will guide us as we monitor and advocate for the rights of young people, we commit to listen and recognise when fundamental rights are being ignored and to advocate when they are abused.



Our Business

Youth Law Australia is a community legal service dedicated to helping children and young people in Australia. Any child or young person (or an adult representing them) can ask us about any legal problem at any time and receive free, confidential advice. Youth Law Australia also monitors and advocates for the rights and best interests of young people in Australia and undertakes legal research, law reform and school-based education to empower young people.

Youth Law Australia is comprised of a small team of 7 including our Director, Principal Solicitor, Solicitor(s) and Admin officers. Youth Law Australia is governed by our Board of Directors and has a number of volunteer law students, practical legal trainees and solicitors who support the children and young people we work with. Youth Law Australia currently does not employ any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.

Youth Law Australia is a national service accessible 24/7 to any child, young person or their advocate living in Australia. Youth Law Australia is based at the University of New South Wales.

Our RAP

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are disproportionality represented in Australia's Out of Home Care and Juvenile Justice Systems and do not have equal access to their rights including health and education and protection from violence. This will not be addressed until there is reconciliation, equality and equity in our community and national support for self-determination.

As a national children's legal centre with a focus on support and prevention, Youth Law Australia is committed to empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families to be aware of their legal rights and to seek remedies and assistance. Currently, 6% of clients who access our service identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We hope that the RAP will provide a framework by which we can listen, learn and collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned and controlled organisations and work together to assist children and young people who are experiencing a legal issue.

Youth Law Australia will establish a RAP working group and strengthen and build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, stakeholders and organisations and continue to provide legal advice and information to young people. Youth Law Australia will nominate Kate Richardson as the RAP Champion and as such, she will be responsible for driving internal engagement and awareness of the RAP. While Youth Law Australia has established working relationships with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, this is the start of Youth Law Australia's reconciliation journey.



SECTION 1

Relationships



Youth Law Australia acknowledges the importance of developing strong relationships based on mutual respect and trust. Youth Law Australia recognises that our service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families needs to be informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' values, beliefs and cultures. Youth Law Australia's RAP will support our organisation to build meaningful working relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures to enhance access to justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people and their families.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and introduce YLA to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. e.g. Aboriginal Medical Service, Aboriginal Legal Service, Aboriginal Child, Family and Community Care State Secretariat (NSW) 	Ongoing, review August 2021	Principal Solicitor
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations, share with the RAP working group, Community Legal Centres NSW (CLCNSW). 	Ongoing, review August 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where the opportunity arises, develop funding submissions for delivering services to local communities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and organisations. 	Ongoing – review August 2021, November 2021	Director
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	May, 2021	Admin officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. 	27 May- 3 June, 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YLA to hold an internal event to celebrate National Reconciliation week. 	27 May- 3 June, 2021	Director



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Working Group to participate in an external Reconciliation Week event. • Raise staff awareness of the meaning of National Reconciliation Week e.g., information pack and share with external RAP working group. 	<p>27 May- 3 June, 2021</p> <p>May 2021</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Admin officer</p>
<p>Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff. • Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey e.g. collaborate with our Community Legal Centre RAP working group. • Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. • Publish our RAP on our website and promote it through social media. • Use our Social Media to acknowledge, celebrate and promote NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week to our community, clients, and external stakeholders. • Explore the possibility of creating a First Nations justice page on the YLA website. 	<p>February 2021</p> <p>Ongoing, review August 2021</p> <p>Ongoing, review August 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> <p>NAIDOC week – 5-12 July 2021</p> <p>August 2021</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Project officer</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Principal Solicitor</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Principal Solicitor</p>
<p>Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs. 	<p>Ongoing, review August 2021</p> <p>Ongoing, review August 2021</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Director</p>



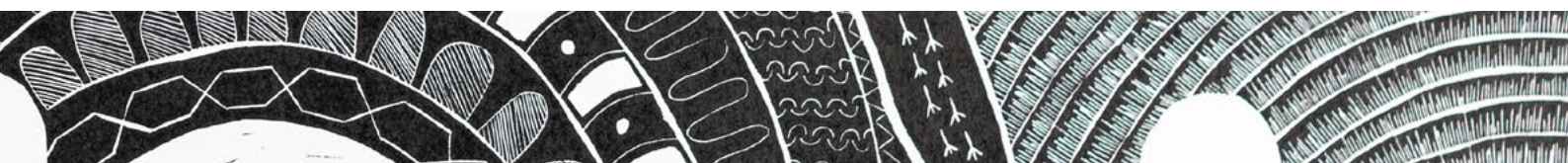
SECTION 2

Respect



Youth Law Australia is committed to respecting and acknowledging the values, perspectives and experiences of staff, volunteers, clients and stakeholders. Youth Law Australia believes that respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, lands and histories is fundamental to create a safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access our services and work with our organisation. Youth Law Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan will support our organisation to ensure our policies and practice reflect these values.

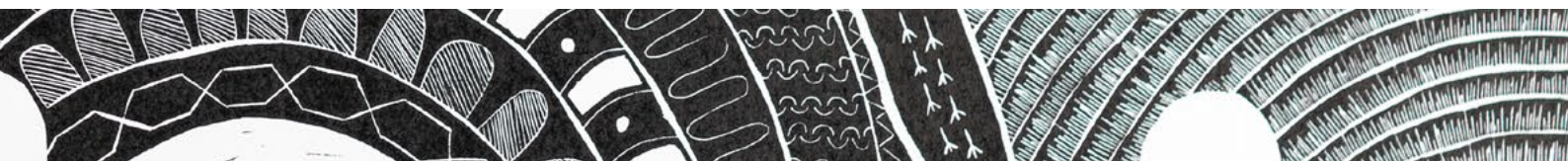
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate our current cultural awareness and review cultural learning needs within YLA. 	March 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board members to participate in Cultural Awareness Training. 	Ongoing – Review August 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete the CLC Cultural Safety Workbook. 	Ongoing, review August 2021	Project officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify cultural competency training <p>https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2017/03/13/cultural-competence--aboriginal-sydney-.html</p> <p>https://felicityryan.com.au/</p>	March 2021	Project officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the Share our Pride tool http://www.shareourpride.org.au/ 	March 2021	Project Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subscribe to relevant information sources and circulate throughout the organisation (include Koori Mail, Career Trackers). YLA already has access to ILB in office. 	March 2021	Admin officer
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively encourage staff to identify and participate in cultural competency training. 	March 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	March 2021	Director



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore information regarding Traditional Owners of the land on which our offices stand and where our staff work. • Include a Welcome to Country at the beginning of all significant internal and external meetings. • Publish an Acknowledgement of Country on our website. • Including an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of all meetings. • Encourage staff to build knowledge of the traditional land you are living on and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and organisations within your own community. 	<p>March 2021</p> <p>Ongoing, review August 2021</p> <p>March 2021 Ongoing, review</p> <p>August 2021 Ongoing, review</p> <p>May 2021</p>	<p>Admin officer</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Principal Solicitor</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Director</p>
<p>Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and circulate a calendar of significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates, with particular attention to local events. • YLA leadership to participate in a NAIDOC week event. • Raise staff awareness of the meaning of NAIDOC Week e.g. information pack and share with external RAP working group. • Encourage participation in external NAIDOC events. • Promote local NAIDOC week events to staff. • RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	<p>March 2021</p> <p>NAIDOC week – 5-12 July 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p> <p>July 2021</p> <p>NAIDOC week – 5-12 July 2021</p>	<p>Admin officer</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Admin officer</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Project officer</p>



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Investigate opportunities to improve cultural safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, maps, painting posters and artworks in the YLA office and where appropriate on the YLA website so that the office and virtual environment positively influences cultural safety to prospective Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and volunteers.	March 2021	Director



SECTION 3

Opportunities

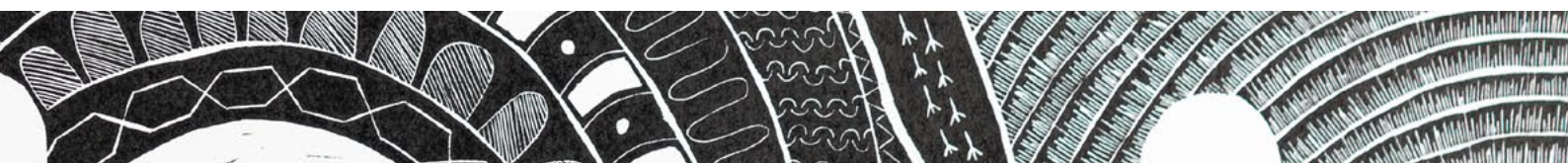


Youth Law Australia recognises and respects the wealth of knowledge and experience that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have, not only as Australia's First Peoples of Australia but also as experts of the children and young people in their families and communities. Youth Law Australia is committed to providing real and meaningful employment, volunteer and pro bono opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all levels of the organisation. Youth Law Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan will support our organisation to investigate opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, law students, communities and organisations and ensure that Youth Law Australia is inclusive and a culturally appropriate organisation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander board members. 	Ongoing – review August 2021 and January 2022	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing and any potential barriers to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	Ongoing – review March 2021 and November 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise 'non-identified' positions in Aboriginal media channels. 	Ongoing – review August 2021 and January 2022	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore an intern or work experience program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and promote internship through networks, including UNSW. E.g. Aurora Program. 	Ongoing – review August 2021	Principal Solicitor



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where YLA needs to engage in procurement, develop a plan for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	Ongoing – review August 2021, November 2021	Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned business that the centres can source products from: office supplies, catering etc. 	Ongoing – Review August 2021	Admin officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	March 2021	Admin officer



SECTION 4

Governance, Tracking Progress and Reporting



Youth Law Australia is committed to tracking the progress of our Reconciliation Action Plan to ensure that it is meaningful and facilitates relationships, respect and opportunities. Youth Law Australia's Reconciliation Action Plan will support our organisation to ensure there is effective governance to facilitate the Reconciliation Action Plan and will provide a mechanism to report key learnings, challenges and achievements.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Form an internal RWG to govern RAP implementation.	February 2021	Director
	• Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2021	Project officer
	• Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	February 2021	Director
	• Send calendar invites to YLA RWG for regular meetings, one per month.	February 2021	Project officer
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2021 Review August 2021	Director
	• Engage YLA board in the delivery of RAP commitments and add RAP deliverables as an agenda at board meetings.	February 2021	Director
	• Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. E.g. Implementation guide	February 2021	Project Officer
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	• Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, 2021	Project Officer
	• Report on progress of our RAP implementation in our Annual Report and in board meetings.	Bimonthly board meetings Review August, 2021	Director



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present at CLCNSW National Reconciliation week. • Once a year – submit report to Off the Record CLC NSW publication. • Update First Nations justice page subject to capacity on our website every 6 months on our RAP achievements and learnings. 	<p>National Reconciliation Week 27 May- 3 June, 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p>	<p>Director</p> <p>Director</p> <p>Principal Solicitor</p>
<p>Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	<p>October 2021</p>	<p>Project officer</p>

