



REFLECT

Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2024 – July 2025



**PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY
AUSTRALIA**



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

REFLECT

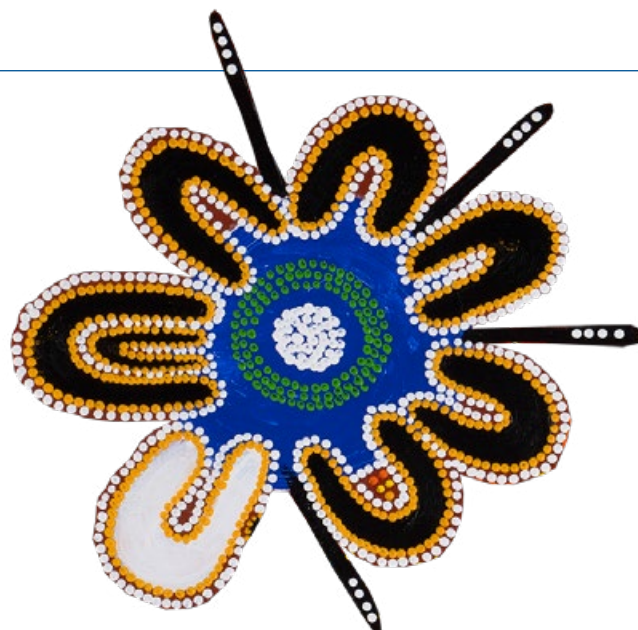


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Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia Inaugural Reflect RAP

Reconciliation Australia welcomes People With Disability Australia (PWDA) to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

PWDA joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

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

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

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

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

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

This Reflect RAP enables PWDA 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 People With Disability Australia, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



About PWDA

People with Disability Australia (PWDA) is a leading disability rights, advocacy, and representative organisation of and for all people with disability. We are the only national, cross-disability organisation — and we represent the interests of people with all kinds of disability. We are a non-profit, non-government organisation. We help individuals by advocating for their interests, and groups through our systemic advocacy efforts.

We also encourage people to engage in self-advocacy.

PWDA's primary membership is made up of people with disability and organisations primarily constituted by people with disability. PWDA also has a large associate membership of other individuals and organisations committed to the disability rights movement. We employ many people with disability.

We have a vision of a socially just, accessible, and inclusive community, in which the human rights, citizenship, contribution, potential and diversity of all people with disability are recognised, respected, and celebrated.

PWDA is committed to human rights and believes human rights are for everyone, regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class, or socio-economic status.

Our organisation was founded in 1981, the International Year of Disabled Persons, to provide people with disability with a voice of our own.

PWDA is a NSW and national peak organisation and founding member of Disabled People's Organisations Australia (DPOA) along with Women With Disabilities Australia (WWDA), First Peoples Disability Network Australia (FPDN), and National Ethnic Disability Alliance (NEDA). DPOs are organisations that are led by, and constituted of, people with disability.



Our business

PWDA is a national cross disability rights and advocacy organisation made up of, and led by, people with disability. We are peak body and not-for-profit non-government organisation that represents the interests of people with all kinds of disability.

We have a vision of a socially just, accessible, and inclusive community in which the human rights and freedoms of all people with disability are recognised, respected, and celebrated.

As at 29 June 2024, PWDA has 68 staff members, located in multiple states and territories across Australia and working alongside people with disability. There are currently two Aboriginal staff members.

PWDA has a primary office in Surry Hills, Sydney as well as regional offices across NSW and QLD.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

PWDA is developing a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) because we believe we can contribute meaningfully to reconciliation in our sphere of influence. A RAP will give PWDA the appropriate direction and guidelines to prioritise this work.

The intersectionality of being an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person with disability can often lead to increased discrimination. We as a DPO (disabled people's organisation) can see the importance of implementing a Reconciliation Action Plan, and we are proud to do so.

PWDA has taken input from all staff members, including Aboriginal staff, as well as seeking external input.

We have developed a realistic and achievable RAP that is relevant to the work we do. We do not want our RAP to act as tokenistic 'lip service', or to be the start and end of our reconciliation journey, rather, we want it to act as a policy that helps guide us forward as an organisation.

Our RAP Champion is Anastasia Symons. The role of the RAP Champion is to drive and champion internal engagement and awareness of the RAP. Passion for meaningful and tangible reconciliation, as well as her experience, will make her a fantastic RAP Champion.

The implementation of PWDA's Reflect RAP will be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, Communities, and staff. The RAP Working Group is also formed of members from different teams across the organisation, including senior leadership, this will ensure that deliverables are rolled out across the entire organisation. RAP reporting will also occur regularly, both internally and externally. It is the RAP Working Group, RAP Champion and senior leaders who will be primarily responsible for not only implementing the deliverables, but continually raising the profile of the RAP, seeking activities and steps we can take beyond the RAP.

RAP Working Group

PWDA established its first RAP Working Group (RWG) in May 2023. The RWG will be a driving force of the RAP. Meeting, at least, bi-monthly to progress the implementation of RAP deliverables. All RWG members are passionate about working to help PWDA contribute to reconciliation in a meaningful way.

There are two members of the RWG who identify as First Nations people.

Name and Job Title	RWG Position
Janel Manns, Training & Facilitator	RWG Chair
Anastasia Symons, Senior Manager, Media & Communications	RAP Champion
Sebastian Zagarella, CEO	RWG Member
Summah McKinnon, Project Officer	RWG Member
Julian Laurens, Senior Policy Officer	RWG Member
Kylie Rees, Communications & Digital Marketing Specialist	RWG Member



Our partnerships/ current activities

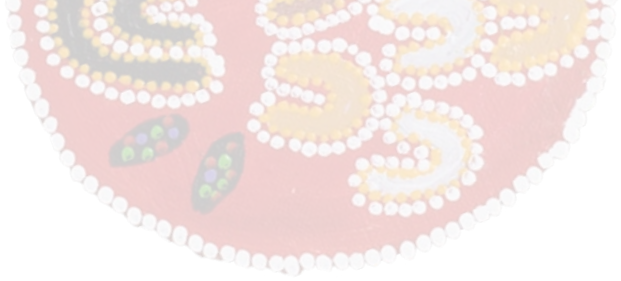
In 2023 all PWDA staff completed Aboriginal Cultural competency workshops. We have plans for annual workshops as part of the organisations ongoing commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s inclusion, and our obligations to the progression of our Reflect RAP.

PWDA has a working relationship with First People’s Disability Network (FPDN). We recently engaged in a joint project with FPDN, working to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability understand their legal rights and help them advocate for themselves. This was done through the creation of educational resources and workshops.

PWDA has run an internal Cultural workshop for fellow PWDA staff members. In this workshop, the facilitator Dianne shared her personal experiences and provided PWDA staff with practical information and tools to help them work appropriately with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

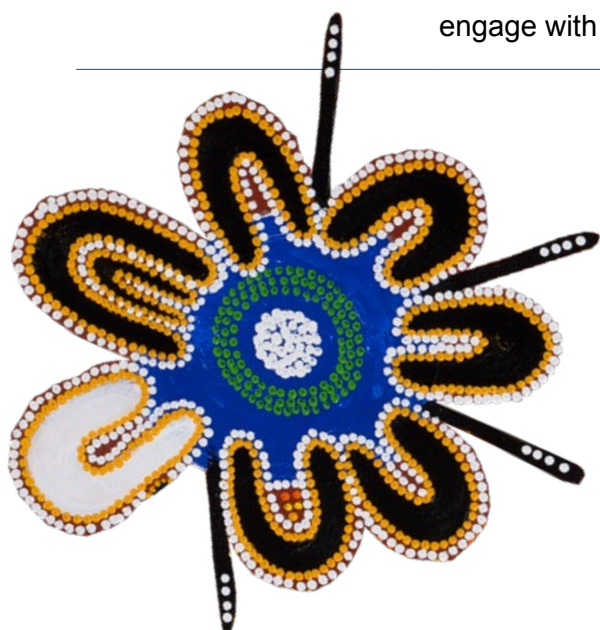
PWDA ran Reconciliation Week events in 2023, including a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony. Dr Michelle Hyde, who was our RAP Chair at that time, led a Yarning Circle, which provided an opportunity for staff to sit together, share stories, connect with each other, and reflect on the importance of reconciliation. PWDA is looking forward to continuing this style of events and activities throughout the year.

Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	July 2024 – June 2025	RAP Chair
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	July 2024 – September 2024	RAP Chair
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff.	May 2025	Communications team
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May 2025 – 3 June 2025	RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May 2025 – 3 June 2025	RAP Champion
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	July 2024, with a review period quarterly	RAP Champion
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	July 2024 – June 2025	RAP Chair
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	July 2024 – June 2025	RAP Chair

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	July 2024 – June 2025	Manager Governance & Compliance
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	July 2024 – December 2024	Director of People and Culture
5. Increase understanding, value, and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through Cultural learning	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value, and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	July 2024 – September 2024	RAP Chair
	Conduct a review of Cultural learning needs within our organisation.	July 2024 – December 2024	Director of People and Culture
	All staff to complete Cultural awareness training.	September 2024 – December 2024, then annually	Director of People and Culture
	Develop a calendar of significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events PWDA will engage with and how.	July 2024	RAP Chair



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing Cultural protocols	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisations.	July 2024 – September 2024	RAP Champion
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind Cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	July 2024 – September 2024	RAP Champion
	Develop Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country reference document.	July 2024 – September 2024	RAP Champion
	Develop a guide for staff members about Culturally appropriate ways to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and when conducting community consultation.	July 2024 – March 2025	National Director of Individual Advocacy
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2025	RAP Champion
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2025	RAP Champion
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2025	RAP Working Group

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Promote collaborative and Culturally safe advocacy work	Strengthen connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations (incl. FPDN and ACCHO's) for joint service delivery.	July 2024 – March 2025	National Director of Individual Advocacy
	Connect with external providers, promoting PWDA's Culturally aware services within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	March 2025 – July 2025	National Director of Individual Advocacy
	Review current advocacy and intake workflows to ensure ease of access to PWDA services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (handled by the appropriate staff, either Identified staff members or experience in working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people).	September 2024 – May 2025	National Director of Individual Advocacy



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	January 2025 – March 2025	Director of People and Culture
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 2025 – March 2025	Director of People and Culture
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	July 2024	RAP Chair
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	July 2024	RAP Chair
10. Improve quality and level of service provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	Audit the services currently provided through a Cultural lens, identify what needs to be changed or improved.	August 2024 – May 2025	National Director of Individual Advocacy
	Find and address any barriers that may prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from accessing our services.	August 2024 – May 2025	National Director of Individual Advocacy

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	July 2024 – July 2025	RAP Chair
	Review and update Terms of Reference for RWG.	January 2025	RAP Chair
	Maintain and strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	July 2024 – July 2025	RAP Chair
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2024	RAP Chair
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2024	RAP Chair
	Continue to engage with our RAP Champion and review their feedback on internal progress.	July 2024 – July 2025	RAP Chair RAP Working Group
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	August 2024	RAP Chair



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	November 2024, then annually	RAP Chair
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August 2024	RAP Chair
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2024	RAP Chair
	Publish RAP on website and social media and physically displayed in the office.	July 2024	RAP Champion Communications Team
	Undertake internal review within 6 months of RAP implementation, to measure progress. Report this review to Board and update staff.	January 2025	RAP Chair RAP Working Group
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	May 2025	RAP Chair





Submission contact:

Name: Anastasia Symons
Position: Senior Manager Media and Communications
Phone: 0491 034 479
Email: anastasias@pwd.org.au



About the artist

Paul Constable Calcott Wiradjuri Elder

Uncle Paul Constable Calcott is a proud descendant of the Wiradjuri peoples from Central NSW. In 1960 he contracted Polio at the age of 18 months which has driven him as an advocate for his community around disability rights.

Today, Uncle Paul is an internationally recognised artist, who runs their own art studio and consultancy business, bringing decades of experience in the disability sector.

Through his work, Uncle Paul has developed numerous resources and artworks that help connect communities to their cultural heritage. He is passionate about empowering other artists with disability to share their stories of resilience and strength, utilising traditional symbols and styles that have been passed down through generations.

In recognition of his significant contributions, Uncle Paul was awarded a National Human Rights Award for Disability Leadership and Rights Activism in 2019.

PWDA is proud to have Paul as a member and valued member of our community. Together, we will continue to champion disability rights and advocacy both in Australia and on the international stage.

People with Disability Australia

Toll Free 1800 422 015
Email pwd@pwd.org.au
Post PO Box 666, Strawberry Hills NSW 2012
Office Suite 10.01, Level 10, Centennial Plaza
300 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills NSW 2010
Website pwd.org.au



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