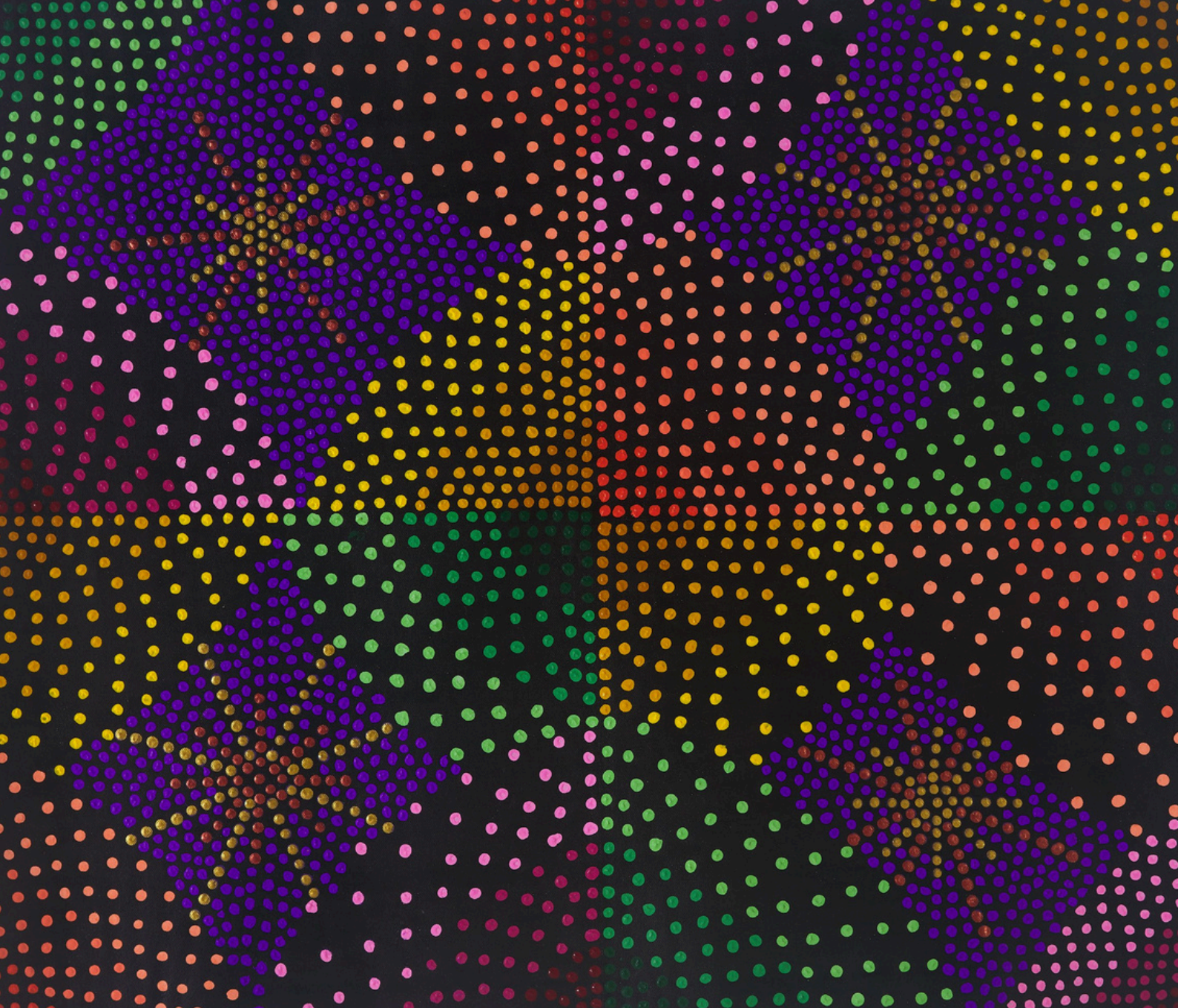




Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2025 – June 2026



Community Information
& Support Victoria



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

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Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic)

CISVic is the peak body for the Community Information and Support sector in Victoria. Member agencies assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral, and support, including emergency relief.

CISVic acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the Land and pays our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Community Information & Support Victoria to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Community Information & Support Victoria 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 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 Community Information & Support Victoria 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 Community Information & Support Victoria, 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 Us

Community Information & Support Victoria (CISVic) is the peak body representing local community information and support services. Our local services assist people experiencing personal and financial difficulties by providing information, referral and support services, including Emergency Relief. We direct people who need help to local centres for services. We liaise with local, state and federal governments on behalf of local centres for funding and support. We undertake research and training. CISVic and its members are committed to volunteering and offer a range of opportunities for people to work with us.

As a peak body, we provide a range of services to support our member agencies. These services include operational support, advocacy, representation, training and professional development opportunities.

Where we work

Our offices in Glen Huntly and Coburg are on the land of the Boonwurrung/Bunurong and the Wurrundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin Nation.

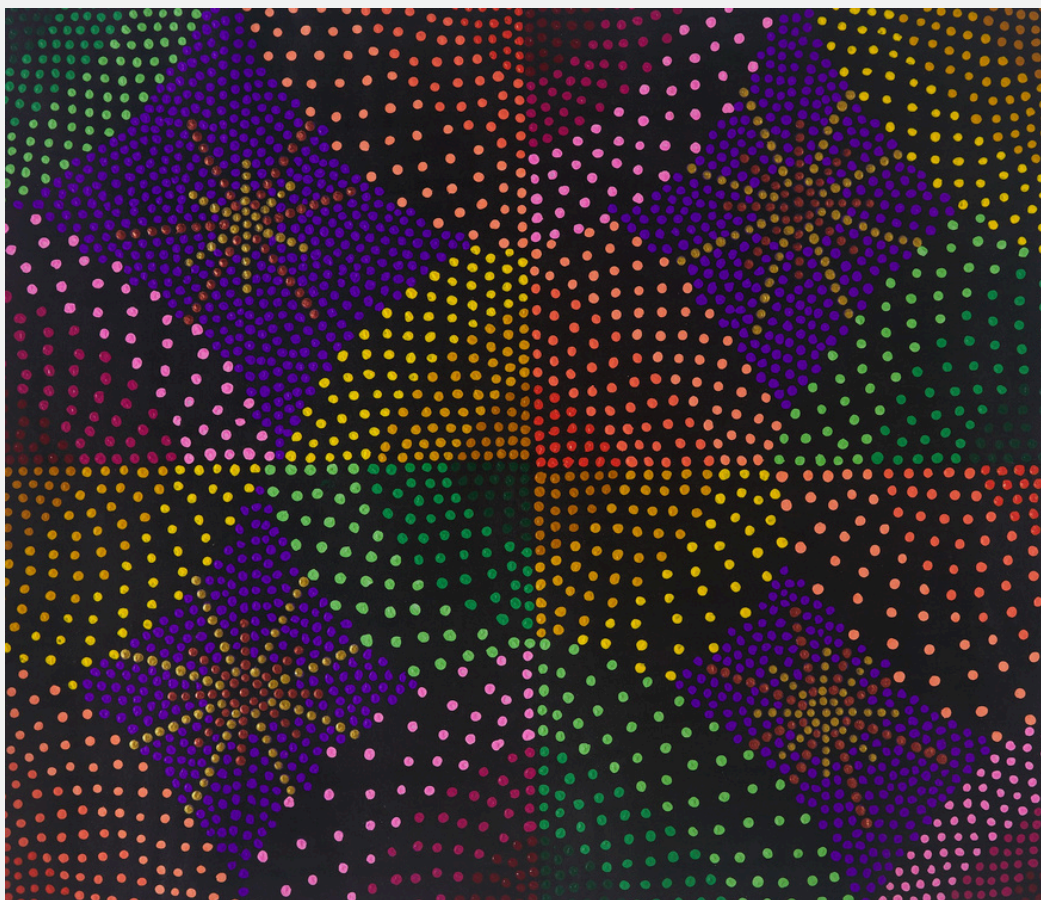
Our Staff

CISVic currently employs 12 staff across two metropolitan sites in Victoria (Coburg and Glen Huntly). Our volunteer workforce is 50-strong.

Currently, our organisation has no known staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We currently have 57 member agencies that employ more than 350 paid staff. Our member agencies rely on thousands of volunteers to assist with service delivery, governance, and administrative support.

About the Artwork



Jara (Darug) 'Together' 2023, acrylic on canvas

Title: Together

Artist: Jara (Cultural Group: Darug)

Image story: All Mobs from different places. All come together as one.

As a peak body of the Victorian community information and support sector, CISVic sought artwork symbolising connections to represent the interconnectedness of our sector and work.

Jara created this artwork through The Torch, a not-for-profit organisation that provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria. The Torch supports the development of self-esteem, confidence and resilience through cultural strengthening and artistic expression.

To learn more about The Torch, explore its programs and participants' artwork, or make a donation, please visit its website via this QR code:



Our RAP

CISVic is committed to actively supporting and promoting reconciliation within our sector to mitigate the enduring impact of colonisation and systemic racism for First Nation peoples.

We commit to ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feel welcomed, safe and respected within our organisation – as both clients and part of our workforce, reducing barriers to service access and enhancing our understanding of their cultures, histories and voices.

We recognise that, despite a raft of strategies by various stakeholders over many years, First Nations peoples still experience high and unacceptable levels of disadvantage, particularly concerning life expectancy, health, employment, mortality rates, incarceration, and out-of-home care. We recognise that inter-generational trauma continues to be a factor, and effective solutions must be introduced and reinforced – namely, truth-telling and self-determination. In addition to this, reconciliation requires building and maintaining strong relationships between all groups in the community.

Our own Reconciliation Action Plan is the first step in taking positive action in this area, and purposefully engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. It will inform how CISVic will assist in this and includes a range of locally based activities or processes that will help our stakeholders and the broader community to recognise the persistent injustices and redress past wrongs.

The RAP will be built into our operational plan, and most of our small team will be assigned tasks to facilitate awareness and ownership at all levels. We will report on the progress of this plan to our Board at their bi-monthly meetings.

As a peak body, we will lead by example and promote reconciliation across our membership. We will do this by sharing our plan and progress and offering one-on-one support to agencies needing assistance to develop their own. We will actively participate in First Nation truth-telling, self-determination, and strong relationships between all relevant parties to our 57-member agencies; their governing bodies, paid staff, and volunteers. We will seek extensive guidance from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders about their wishes and the most appropriate way to proceed safely.

This is a process staff have been particularly eager to commence to enhance the organisation's position on reconciliation and their own values alignment.

Where we are at

We are at the preliminary stages of engagement in our reconciliation process. The information below outlines the key activities we have already undertaken.

Acknowledgements

- We invite Elders to do a Welcome to Country for conferences.
- We display signage acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land at each of our sites.
- We acknowledge the Traditional Owners at all internal and external meetings, events, forums and training sessions.
- We include written acknowledgement in written communications and publications (including email footers and reports).

New policies

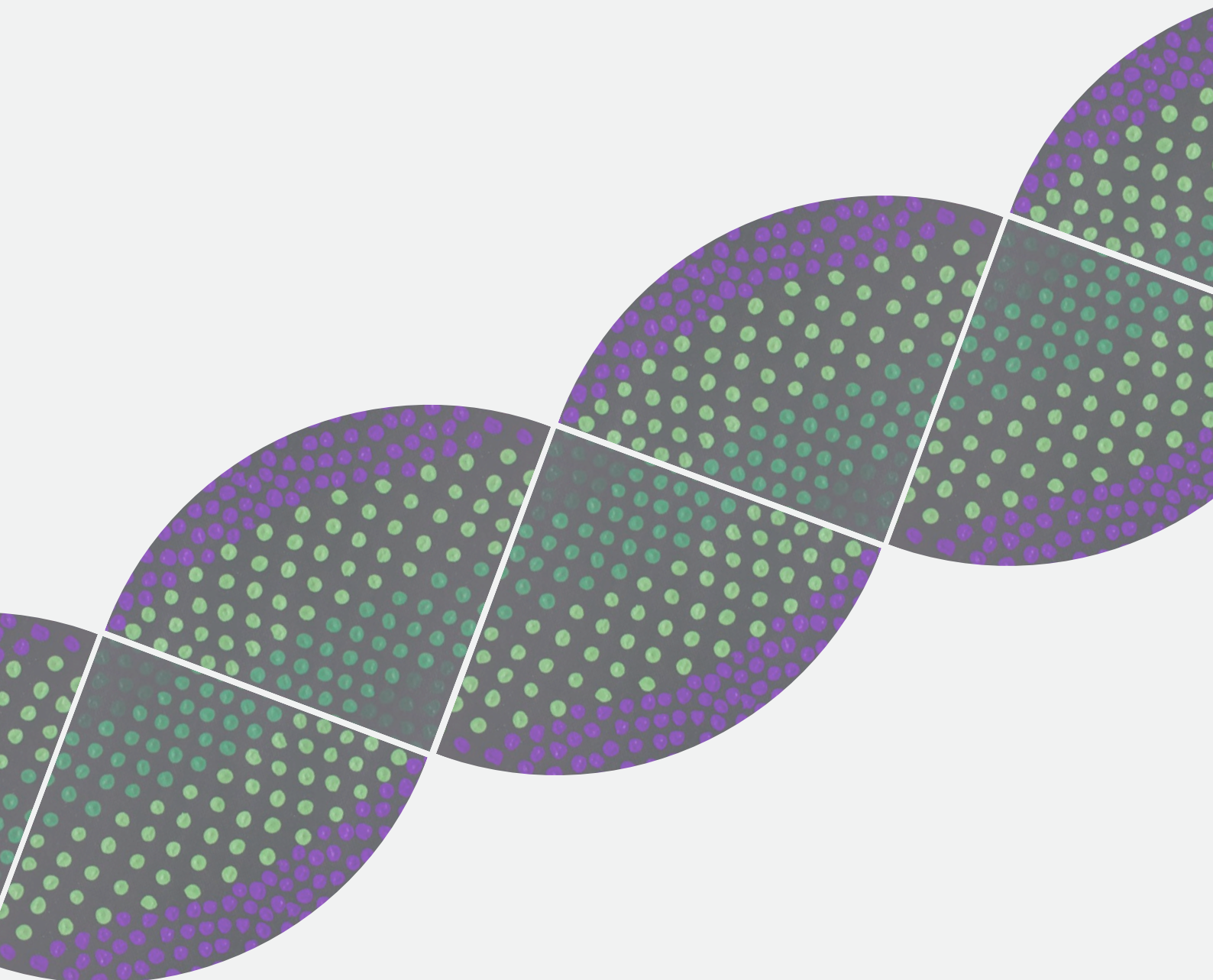
- In January 2023, we introduced the policy to allow employees to take the 'Australia Day' holiday (26th Jan) in lieu of another date. Staff had been asking for this, and it was a welcome introduction.

RAP Working Group

- We have formed a RAP Working Group and are actively working to recruit participants from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Current members of the RAP Working Group include Kate Wheller, Chief Executive Officer; Meagan Skehill, Sector Development Officer; Jill Wilson, Volunteer Development Manager; Kellie Macnaughtan, Advocacy and Policy Advisor; Tracey Swadling, Executive Assistant; Daniela Markovic, Branch Coordinator.
- Our CEO, Kate Wheller, is our RAP champion and has met with the Bunurong Land Council's Partnership and Engagement Manager as the first step to engaging with the local First Nation community.

Agency name change

We recently changed the name of our Coburg branch from CIS Moreland to CIS Merri-bek. This followed the actions of the local council, who, after having it brought to their attention by Elders from the Traditional Owners community, changed the name to distance it from the being named after a Jamaican slave estate.



RAP Actions: Relationships



Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	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.	Jan 2025	CEO
	Research best practices and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Jan 2025	Sector Development Manager (SDM)
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025	SDM
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2025	CEO
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2025	Lead: CEO Support: SDM
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all member agencies.	Jan 2025	CEO
	Identify external stakeholders our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Jan 2025	CEO
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Jan 2025	Lead: CEO Support: SDM

Relationships

Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	All new and existing paid staff undertake the Your Mob Indigenous Cultural Awareness online training program (or have recently completed something similar).	Mar 2025	Executive Assistant (EA)
	Produce public Positioning Statements on relevant issues of importance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Jan 2025 May 2025 Jul 2025	Board
	Include requirement of Reconciliation Action Plan commencement in sub-contracts for Emergency Relief and Financial Counselling contracts.	Jul 2025	CEO
	Include survey question in Members Annual Profile survey – e.g. CISVic is committed to reconciliation with First Nations peoples, and has commenced development of our own RAP. What is your organisations RAP status? Completed/Commenced/Not started. If answer is 'not started', question will be 'can we send you information and resources?'	Jun 2025	EA
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practices and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	Jan 2025	CEO
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs. E.g., Cultural Leave Policy	Feb 2025	CEO

RAP Actions: Respect



Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	Responsibility
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.	Apr 2025	SDM
	Conduct a review of the cultural learning needs of students and volunteers within our organisation.	Feb 2025	Branch Coordinators
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 organisation's operational area.	Mar 2025	CEO
	Review current policies and increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Mar 2025	CEO
	Referencing the website www.firstpeoplerelations.vic.gov.au, we will add the Country in which all CISVic and member agencies are based on our website and other material.	Jan 2025	CEO
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.	Jun 2025	CEO

Respect

Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	Responsibility
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	Jun 2025	CEO
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Jul 2025	CEO & other representatives

RAP Actions: Opportunities



Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	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.	Mar 2025	CEO
	Understand the make-up of our current whole workforce by asking staff (in a culturally sensitive way) if they identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander to help inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	Mar 2025	CEO
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.	Sept 2025	CEO
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Sept 2025	EA

RAP Actions: Governance



Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation, monitor progress and conduct a mid-point review to progress.	Dec 2024	CEO
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG and review mid-point, adjusting as required.	Dec 2024	CEO
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Dec 2024	CEO
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Jan 2025	CEO
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Dec 2024	CEO
	CEO to champion our RAP internally.	Dec 2024	Lead: CEO & President Support: SDM
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Jan 2025	RWG
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.	June Annually	CEO
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	Aug 2025	CEO

Governance



Actions	Deliverable	Timelines	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	Sept 2025	CEO
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Dec 2025	CEO

For enquiries regarding this Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact:

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Community Information
& Support Victoria

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Helping local communities

