



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

Australian Centre for
Disability Law



February 2021 - February 2022

Artwork

'Inner Life'

We all have more inside us than anyone can, or will, ever see. Our inner world is a vibrant and colourful place that can make anyone an ancient warrior. This self-portrait shows my inner life, the swirling colours in my head and rivers that flow through my blood. I am so much more than I appear, at any moment I am walking with my ancestors or travelling through space. This potential for life within life is why no human should ever be discounted, a quiet person may simply be living a very large inner life.

Artist

I am a Darug woman from the Sydney area. I was born and raised on my traditional homelands in the southwest of Sydney and have always had a close connection to my culture and Country.



As an urban Aboriginal Artist, my art takes many forms to reflect my culture. While I often enjoy utilising a dot style of painting, I pair this with bright colours and unusual mediums. I feel this pairing represents myself as an Artist who has a deep traditional spirituality, yet lives a modern lifestyle. My art tells the story of a modern woman with an ancient heritage.

Much of my art practice is a reflection of my journey towards an understanding of healing and hope. It also allows me a way to express my deep connection to my family, their stories, their pain and our anger. Art gives a visual language for stories too complex for words to ever represent.

In 2015 and 2016 I completed my certificate III and IV in Aboriginal Cultural Arts at Eora TAFE. In 2018 I completed a Bachelor of Visual Arts at Sydney College of the Arts. In 2019 I completed my certificate in Aboriginal Mentoring.

In the past year I have conducted a Recycled Weaving workshop, spoke on a NAVA panel about artist led initiatives and exhibited in the Hobiennale at Moonah Arts Centre in Hobart, Tasmania. My artwork 'Three Boys' is currently on a billboard on the M4 as part of an NRMA campaign connecting road signs to Country.

About this document

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Centre for Disability Law is based in Surry Hills, New South Wales and acknowledges and pays its respect to the Elders past, present and emerging of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation on whose land the centre undertakes its work on behalf of all people with disability. We also acknowledge the intersectional discrimination faced by all First Nations people in Australia and we pay our respect to all the Traditional Owners of the lands throughout Australia.

Foreword

This Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) sets out our commitment to advocating for equitable treatment of First Nations people through our legal advocacy and educational work, and with national and international disabled peoples associations, national human rights institutions, governments and international human rights bodies. Central to this process is our commitment to strengthening our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people both in ACDL's local area and throughout NSW.

The RAP will be instrumental in addressing the underrepresented in both the provision of legal services and employment and volunteer opportunities at ACDL. It will also be the basis for working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to promote and protect their rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We are committed to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Rosemary Kayess
Chair

Our Business

The Australian Centre for Disability Law (ACDL) was established in 1994 as a NSW state-wide specialist Community Legal Centre, with the aim of promoting and protecting the human and legal rights of people with disability and their supporters through legal advocacy. We are working towards a world where people with disabilities are able to participate in all aspects of life. We are a New South Wales state-wide service and offer many services, including providing legal advice, taking on selected casework, assisting with referrals, delivery of community legal education, and undertaking law reform and projects.

Through our work we proactively aim for recognition and respect of human and legal rights, remove barriers, eliminate discrimination, empower people with disability, and increase provision of access to justice.

Our vision is of a society in which persons with disability live with dignity, and in which their human rights and fundamental freedoms are recognised, respected, protected and fulfilled. Our purpose is to work towards the realisation of our vision by providing persons with disability and their associates with specialist legal assistance in our designated practice areas, and by undertaking complementary community legal education, continuing legal education and policy and law reform activities.

ACDL is a New South Wales State-wide legal service and is governed by a Management Committee, the majority of which are people with disability. The Centre employs 7 staff and over 50 volunteers to work towards achieving its vision of a just and equal society free from discrimination in all its forms. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are currently not represented on either the Management Committee or in the current staff complement of the Centre. We will continue to work towards providing more opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability to work and volunteer at the centre. We will also

work towards representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the Management Committee.

Our RAP

The Australian Centre for Disability Law's Reconciliation Action Plan is our commitment to realise a vision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to live and prosper in a world free from discrimination in all its forms. We commit to realising this vision by advocating for equitable treatment of First Nations people through our legal advocacy and educational work, and with national and international disabled peoples associations, national human rights institutions, governments and international human rights bodies.

Our reconciliation journey begins with an acknowledgement that 45% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live with a disability and are twice as likely to be living with a disability than other Australians. In developing our first RAP we acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are underrepresented in both the provision of legal services and employment and volunteer opportunities at ACDL. We acknowledge the overwhelming and urgent need to address the legal needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In developing our RAP we are committed to strengthening our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Our journey to date includes an Acknowledgement of Country at all meetings of staff and management committee meetings and encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for employment and volunteer opportunities at ACDL. In 2018 the Management Committee added a standing agenda item "First Peoples Engagement" to reflect its commitment to engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people both in its local area and throughout NSW. We also have a standing subscription to The Koori Mail. Our journey towards achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander peoples is ongoing. We stand firm in our commitment to achieving justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The RAP Champions are the Chairperson and Managing Principal Solicitor.

Our Partnerships/Current Activities

We have a longstanding relationship with First Peoples Disability Network (FPDN). We are currently working with FPDN on a project to build the capability of First People with Disability and their families and communities to assert their rights, speak up to perceived authority and negotiate effectively from a position of strength with schools, employers & service providers.

SECTION 1

RELATIONSHIPS



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|--|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence by locating and utilising a directory of local Aboriginal organisations | June 2021 | Managing Principal Solicitor (“MPS”) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | June 2021 | MPS |
| 2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (“NRW”). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s National Reconciliation Week resources and reconciliation materials to our staff | May 2021 | Solicitor – Advice Line |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group (“RWG”) members to participate in an external NRW event | 27 May- 3 June 2021 | RWG Chair |
| | <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 NRW | 27 May- 3 June 2021 | MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate National Reconciliation Week | 27 May- 3 June 2021 | MPS |



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|---|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (“NRW”).</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a staff morning tea to celebrate NRW, where staff share what reconciliation means to them or share a story from their work or life about how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people or cultures have impacted them | 27 May- 3 June 2021 | Operations Manager |
| <p>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate developing a one page commitment to reconciliation, signed by staff and displayed in the foyer | June 2021 | Solicitor – Advice Line |
| | <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, and invite all staff using outlook calendar | February 2021 | MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey, for example, First Peoples Disability Network and other related services | February 2021 | MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subject to COVID-19 restrictions, collaborate with Community Legal Centres NSW (“CLCNSW”) to hold a stall at the Yabun Festival and roster staff to attend the stall | Yabun Day: 26 January 2022 | MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey, such as Aboriginal Legal Service (“ALS”) and CLCNSW | February 2021 | Chair, MPS |

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
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| <p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish our RAP on our website and promote it through our social media • Include our RAP in staff and volunteer induction • Acknowledge and promote key events, such as National Apology Day Anniversary, NRW, Yabun Festival, and National Sorry Day through our social media. Enter into buffer social posts to go out at every year for events • Seek guidance from the CLCNSW Aboriginal Access Legal Program (ALAP) Coordinator regarding the creation of culturally appropriate imagery to use in the Centre's social media | <p>March 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> <p>Yabun: 26 January 2022</p> <p>National Apology Day Anniversary: 16 February 2021</p> <p>NRW: 27 May – 3 June 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> | <p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Operations Manager</p> |
| <p>4. 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>June 2021</p> <p>March 2021</p> | <p>MPS</p> <p>MPS</p> |

SECTION 2

RESPECT



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | 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 | June 2021 | Chair, MPS |
| | • Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation | June 2021 | MPS |
| | • Maintain and review our Cultural Safety Standard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Clients Policy | May 2021 | MPS |
| | • All staff to participate in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness training once every year, with costs shared with one or more other CLCs where necessary | Dec 2021 | MPS |
| | • Subscribe to relevant information sources and circulate throughout the organisation (include Koori Mail (current subscription), Indigenous Law Bulletin, Career Trackers) | March 2021 | MPS |
| | • Complete the CLCNSW Cultural Safety Workbook | June 2021 | MPS |

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
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| <p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate the “Share our Pride” tool to staff and volunteers and the Decolonising Solidarity website: https://decolonizingsolidarity.org/ | March 2021 | Solicitor – Advice Line |
| <p>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation’s operational area | June 2021 | MPS |
| | <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 | June 2021 | MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an Acknowledgement of Country on our website | February 2021 | Operations Manager |
| <p>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area and encourage staff to attend | July 2021 | RWG Chair |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week | July 2021 | RWG Chair |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event | July 2021 | RWG Chair |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in an external NAIDOC Week event | July 2021 | RWG Chair |



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
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| 8. Demonstrate respect for Mabo Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek legal advice on the proposal to change staff working conditions to observe Mabo Day as a staff public holiday instead of the public holiday held on Australia Day | June 2021 | MPS |

SECTION 3

OPPORTUNITIES



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|-----------|----------------------------|
| 9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation | July 2021 | Chair, MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities | July 2021 | MPS and Operations Manager |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review employment policies to ensure sufficient flexibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, like preferencing experience over formal qualifications | July 2021 | Chair and MPS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Source funding to employ an Aboriginal Liaison Officer | June 2021 | Chair and MPS |

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
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| <p><i>Continued</i></p> <p>9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the application of recruitment processes and encourage the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants, for example, advertise 'non-identified' positions in Aboriginal media channels • Develop and implement policies and procedures which support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members and which create a culturally safe workplace | <p>September 2021</p> <p>September 2021</p> | <p>MPS</p> <p>MPS</p> |
| <p>10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses • Investigate Supply Nation membership | <p>June 2021</p> <p>June 2021</p> | <p>Operations Manager</p> <p>Operations Manager</p> |

SECTION 4

GOVERNANCE



| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|---|---|----------------|--------------------|
| 11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | • Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation | March 2021 | Chair and MPS |
| | • Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG | March 2021 | Chair and MPS |
| | • Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG | May 2021 | Chair and MPS |
| 12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP - commitments. | • Define resource needs for RAP implementation | May 2021 | MPS |
| | • Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments | May 2021 | Chair and MPS |
| | • Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments | May 2021 | RWG Chair |
| 13. 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 | September 2021 | RWG Chair |
| | • Present RAP to CLCNSW National Reconciliation Week event | May 2021 | MPS |
| | • Once a year – submit report to Off the Record CLC NSW publication | December 2021 | Operations Manager |
| | • Report on progress of our RAP implementation in our Annual Report | November 2021 | MPS |

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
|--|--|---------------|--------------------|
| 14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP | October 2021 | Operations Manager |
| 15. Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are involved in the leadership of our Centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When there is a vacancy on the Management Committee, advertise an expression of interest for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community Legal Centre employee to become a member of the Australian Centre for Disability Law and nominate for the Australian Centre for Disability Law Management Committee | November 2021 | Chair and MPS |





RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

Australian Centre for
Disability Law

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