



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



ASRC

Asylum Seeker
Resource Centre

Reflect

Reconciliation Action Plan

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (ASRC)

January 2022 to December 2022

Reflect RAP

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The ASRC has always stood for an inclusive, compassionate and just Australia.

As a human rights organisation that speaks out against injustice for refugees and people seeking asylum, we join the fight for justice for and with First Nations people.

Our vision is that all Australians, First Nations people and those who have come here seeking asylum, can live safely, sustainably, independently and equally. We imagine a future where the cultures, histories and rights of First Nations people are recognised and valued by every Australian and are a proud part of our shared national identity.

Our RAP is part of our contribution toward reconciliation. We acknowledge First Nations people's unceded sovereignty and recognise and celebrate their continuing connections to land, waters, communities, cultures and customs.

We are deeply committed to ending the institutional racism that prevents people from determining and creating their own future. We envision our RAP to be embedded within our organisation, both in spirit and in practice, across all policies and procedures. We commit to removing any barriers within our organisation, conscious or unconscious, that discriminate against First Nations people.

We seek opportunities to partner with First Nations communities and participate in a wide range of initiatives, led by First Nations people, as an ally to support self determination. Our aim is to develop strong relationships with First Nations people and First Nations-owned organisations based on mutual respect, understanding and affirmative action.

We also believe it is paramount that First Nations people have a constitutionally enshrined voice to empower their communities to self determine their futures.

Statement from our CEO

At the ASRC, we are fighting for a welcoming and just Australia for all people seeking asylum as our newest Australians. A place of equity, equal rights, respect for cultural differences and for a voice that is heard at all levels of society.

We believe that we cannot demand justice and equality for refugees and people seeking asylum, without standing in solidarity with First Nations people and demanding that on their own land and in their own country as its first inhabitants and as the Custodians of the longest living cultures on earth, that they must have justice, self-determination, equality on their terms and control of their future, with a voice at all levels of society that is not just listened to, but followed.

Kon Karapanagiotidis

Chief Executive Officer and Founder
Asylum Seeker Resource Centre



Our Business

Founded in 2001, the ASRC is Australia's largest independent human rights organisation providing support to people seeking asylum.

We are a not-for-profit organisation whose programs support and empower people seeking asylum to maximise their own physical, mental and social well being. We champion the rights of people seeking asylum and mobilise a community of compassion to create lasting social and policy change. We prioritise and embed the voice and rights of people seeking asylum and refugees in our work.

The ASRC movement is proudly supported by over one hundred paid employees, over a thousand volunteers and a whole community of compassionate supporters.

The ASRC is based in Footscray and Dandenong, in Melbourne on the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri and the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nations. We also have smaller operations in Sydney on the land of the Gadigal people of the Euroa Nation and in Brisbane on the Meeanjin land of the Turrbul and Jagera nations.

Backed by our community of compassion the ASRC is proud to support and empower more than 7,000 people seeking asylum each year, providing legal assistance, food and material aid, housing support, access to healthcare, casework and access to education and employment programs. In addition, our campaign and advocacy work takes place on the national stage and the ASRC is seeking to build knowledge and relationships into the Asia Pacific region.

Currently our organisation has no known staff that identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is currently not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand this

Our RAP

In committing to a Reconciliation Action Plan, the ASRC understands the role we must play in promoting and supporting meaningful reconciliation that empowers First Nations people and enables their advancement in Australia. Our commitment sits at the highest level including CEO and representatives of our Leadership Team. The ASRC's General Manager is chair of our RAP Working Group.

Our RAP Working Group includes participation from our staff, including

- CEO
- General Manager
- Director, Advocacy and Campaigns
- Director, Humanitarian Services Operations
- Executive Assistant to the CEO
- Brand and Marketing Manager
- Senior Solicitor
- Education Program Manager
- Capability Framework Coordinator
- Volunteer Manager

A key priority for our RAP Working Group is to establish representation from First Nations people. First Nations people have presented to our RAP Working Group and were consulted as part of the process of developing our RAP. We consulted with local organisations who have completed a RAP and interviewed them to see what their advice was, looking back on their RAP journey.

- We drafted a list of interview questions and allocated RAP WG members to interview different organisations with completed RAPs.
- We compiled the notes that we took in those interviews and shared them with the group.
- We reflected on these interviews and our key learnings in our group meeting.

Our aim is to have an ongoing relationship with and representation of First Nations people on our RAP Working Group.

We aim to provide a strong example to our sector and community by demonstrating our commitment to reconciliation in all of our work. Our RAP is designed to promote reconciliation and cultural understanding within our network of staff, volunteers, members and wider stakeholders and community. We intend to implement our RAP by building on the foundations of reconciliation that already exist throughout our organisation. We intend to implement our RAP through staff, volunteer and member engagement as well as through our social media channels.

Our reconciliation journey has included integrating an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of every meeting and volunteer briefing as standard practice. We respectfully facilitate First Nations Elders to attend events and to provide Welcome to Country and we compensate them for their time and service. Our First Nations staff members have access to an additional week of ceremonial leave. Signage across our organisation and in organisational email signatures acknowledge that we are on stolen, Aboriginal land and pay respects to Traditional Owners.

Over the years the ASRC has joined community development projects with First Nations organisations as well as hosting events for the Close the Gap movement. The ASRC has publicly announced its ongoing support of the Uluru Statement of the Heart and self determination for First Nations people. The ASRC has used its social media platforms consistently for over five years to promote First Nations activism including supporting the 'Change the Date' campaign and promoting NAIDOC Week. Such advocacy is a permanent fixture on Marketing and Communication Team's Annual plans.

In 2018, Staff overwhelmingly agreed that the ASRC will no longer recognise 26 January as a public holiday - our doors remain open on this day and we observe the public holiday during National Reconciliation Week instead.

We are excited to continue to expand and deepen our understanding and commitment to reconciliation in our journey ahead.

Statement from the Reconciliation Australia CEO

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Asylum Seeker Resource Centre to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Asylum Seeker Resource Centre joins a network of more than 1,100 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 Asylum Seeker Resource Centre 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 Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, 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





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.	February 2022	Volunteer Engagement Manager
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	February 2022	Volunteer Engagement Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW), 27 May – 3 June 2022.	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff and volunteers through staff emails and Weekly Volunteer Bulletins.	Commence planning March 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	June 2022	RAP Chair
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	June 2022	RAP Chair
	RAP Working Group members to investigate best options to celebrate National Reconciliation Week, including sharing and promoting external NRW events and initiatives.	June 2022	RAP Chair
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff by sharing quarterly updates to all staff on RAP activities and progress in staff meetings. Updates to all staff on all upcoming events or actions in relation to First Nations engagement/solidarity.	Quarterly updates: January, May, September and June 2022	RAP Chair
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians of the land on our website.	January 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Publish a statement of solidarity with First Nations people on our website.	January 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Website and social media updates on First Nations empowerment actions/events facilitated or supported by the ASRC.	January 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager

<i>continued</i> 3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Feature a local First Nations artist and artwork on our website and RAP to visually support our reconciliation message.	January 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Communicate via our website and social media around ASRC replacing the 'Australia Day' public holiday with a day in National Reconciliation Week.	May 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	January 2022	Volunteer Engagement Manager
	Facilitate 5 members of the RWG including any First Nations RWG members to attend the RAP Conference in 2022.	March 2022	CEO
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2022	Volunteer Engagement Manager
	Identify opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our support of First Nations issues communicated through our social media channels such as promotion of Aboriginal led initiatives and campaigns such as Uluru Statement from the Heart, Treaty, Free the Flag. 	February 2022	RAP Chair
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	February 2022	HR Director
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	February 2022	HR Director

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.	March 2022	General Manager
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	March 2022	General Manager
	Develop a LEX learning module about reconciliation and First Nations histories in consultation with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors.	March 2022	General Manager
	Consider how to engage our members in cultural learning.	March 2022	General Manager
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.	February 2022	CEO
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate protocol at significant events each year.	January 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols by adopting a standard/consistent approved Acknowledgement of Country.	January 2022	General Manager
	Draft a purpose statement that explains the cultural significance behind some of our reconciliation practices, such as the importance of Acknowledgement of Country.	January 2022	General Manager
	Review approved Acknowledgement of Country and purpose statement and ensure consistency across the organisation.	January 2022	General Manager

<i>continued</i> 6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Display approved Acknowledgement of Country and purpose statement in meeting rooms and around the organisation.	January 2022	General Manager
	Display Acknowledgement of Country wording on backs of staff and volunteer lanyards.	February 2022	General Manager
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 2022	RAP Chair
	Develop policy outlining scope of our involvement in annual NAIDOC week events.	March 2022	RAP Chair
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area through presentation at staff meetings and volunteer briefing with an explanation behind observance of key dates and information about external events across Melbourne.	June 2022	RAP Chair
	Promote NAIDOC week amongst people seeking asylum who the ASRC works with.	June 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Organise for ASRC staff, volunteers and members to attend an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2022	RAP Chair
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2022	RAP Chair
	ASRC to promote attendance at the NAIDOC march as a group (staff, volunteers and members) and potentially live stream the march.	June 2022	RAP Chair
8. Demonstrate support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the participation and engagement in key campaigns such as 'Change the Date' and 'Uluru Statement of the Heart' within our sphere of influence	Maintain ASRC's support of 'Change the Date' on social media platforms and have it be a permanent fixture on Marketing communications plan each year.	May 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Continue to no longer recognise 26 January as a public holiday and remain open to the public on that day.	January 2022	CEO
	Continue to offer staff a replacement public holiday for Jan 26 during National Reconciliation Week.	May 2022	CEO

<i>continued</i> 8. Demonstrate support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the participation and engagement in key campaigns such as 'Change the Date' and 'Uluru Statement of the Heart' within our sphere of influence	Display Uluru Statement of the Heart and ASRC's endorsement of it in prominent areas in the building.	January 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Seek learning opportunities for the RAP Working Group to listen to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices on 'Change the Date' and 'Uluru Statement of the Heart' (promotion of webinars, speaking events).	February 2022	RAP Chair

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. 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.	March 2022	ASRC Leadership Team (lead HR Director)
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	February 2022	ASRC Leadership Team (lead HR Director)
	Include self identification question as part of the induction process for all new volunteers and staff members.	January 2022	HR Director
10. 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.	March 2022	ASRC Finance Director
	Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	March 2022	Brand and Marketing Manager
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	January 2022	Office Manager



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation, reviewing half way through ongoing fortnightly RWG meetings.	Quarterly reviews: January, April, August and November 2022	RAP Chair
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	January 2022	RAP Chair
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	February 2022	RAP Chair
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	February 2022	General Manager
	Continue to engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	January 2022	General Manager
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January 2022	General Manager
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.	June 2022 and annually	RAP Chair
	Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2022 and annually	RAP Chair
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2022 and annually	RAP Chair
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP, the Innovate RAP.	July 2022	RAP Chair

**For public enquiries about the ASRC's
Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact:**

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