



Purpose Statement

Reconciliation Practices at ASRC

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Introduction

As a human rights organisation that speaks out against injustice for refugees and people seeking asylum, the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre joins 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.

We are committed to promoting and supporting meaningful reconciliation that empowers First Nations people and enables their advancement in Australia and we seek to embed the following reconciliation practices into the foundations of our organisation:

- Acknowledgment of Country (see Purpose Statement: Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country)
- Welcome to Country (see Purpose Statement: Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country)
- Reconciliation Action Plan
- 'Change the Date'
- Uluru Statement of the Heart

Reconciliation Action Plan

What is a Reconciliation Action Plan?

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a formal statement of commitment to reconciliation. It has enabled organisations to sustainably and strategically take meaningful action to advance reconciliation. Based around the core pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities, a RAP provides tangible and substantive benefits for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, increasing economic equity and supporting First Nations self-determination.

There are four different types of RAPs - Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate - designed to suit an organisation at different stages of their reconciliation journey.

Why does the ASRC have a RAP?

The ASRC launched our first Reflect RAP in January 2022 as part of our journey and contribution towards reconciliation. We aim to provide a strong example to our sector and community of the role we must play in promoting and supporting meaningful reconciliation that empowers First Nations people and enables their advancement in Australia. We are committed to helping end the exclusion that has been so damaging for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

¹ **Reconciliation Australia** 2022

² As above

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‘Change the Date’ campaign

What is the ‘Change the Date’ campaign?

The campaign to ‘Change the Date’ calls for a change to the date of Australia Day. 26 January marks the landing of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove by Captain Arthur Phillip and the British colonisation of Australia. It is also the beginning of the genocide against and dispossession of First Nations people, the impacts of which are still being felt today.

Why does the ASRC support the ‘Change the Date’ campaign?

We stand in solidarity with First Nations people and recognise that 26 January is a day of sorrow, not celebration. Since 2019, the ASRC has no longer recognised 26 January as a public holiday. We instead observe the public holiday during National Reconciliation Week. As a human rights organisation, we have always stood for an inclusive, compassionate and just Australia and we continue to maintain our support of ‘Change the Date’ on social media platforms each year.

Uluru Statement from the Heart

What is the Uluru Statement from the Heart?

The Uluru Statement from the Heart is an invitation to the Australian people from First Nations Australians. It asks Australians to walk together to build a better future by establishing a First Nations Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Constitution, and the establishment of a Makarrata Commission for the purpose of treaty making and truth-telling.

Why does the ASRC support the Uluru Statement?

The ASRC strongly believes in First Nations Australians’ right to self-determination and right of control over their own affairs and their communities. We cannot in any conscience fight for justice for refugees without ensuring we also have justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Uluru Statement provides one important avenue for Indigenous people to have agency, influence and a voice. This is why the ASRC supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart and also has it displayed on our website and in prominent parts of our buildings.

³ **Uluru Statement**, 2022