



Reconciliation Action Plan 2016–2018

Acknowledgement

RMIT University acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners of the land on which the University stands.

The University respectfully recognises Elders both past and present.

RMIT also acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of lands across Australia where it conducts its business, their Elders, Ancestors, cultures and heritage.

“We want to walk with you, we don’t want to walk alone”.

Pastor Sir Douglas Nicholls KSCO OBE
Prominent Aboriginal Australian

RMIT would like to acknowledge and thank staff, students and the wider community for “walking with us” and reflecting on reconciliation and what that means for our University.

We appreciate your contribution and support in developing our first Reconciliation Action Plan.

Reconciliation Action Plan Vice-Chancellor's Foreword

I am proud to introduce the RMIT University Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

We first expressed our vision for reconciliation in our 2009 Reconciliation Statement. This RAP updates our vision and is an aspirational document that has practical actions with targets, against which we will measure our progress, to make a real difference across the University.

In preparing our RAP we asked ourselves some big questions about what reconciliation really means and how each of us can make a personal contribution, starting with me as Vice-Chancellor and extending right through to our first-year students.

As a leading educational institution, home to more than 83,000 students and 5,000 staff, we recognise the importance of building better relationships between the wider Australian community and Australia's First Nation people for the benefit of all Australians. Mutual respect and understanding are essential as we work to right the wrongs.

Our RAP recognises the value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff bring to our community. It commits to improving the levels of access, participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We are committed to creating an inclusive community of learners and thinkers free from prejudice and discrimination, while supporting the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determine their identities and futures.

We will ensure all staff and students are treated with dignity and respect.

We will further develop a learning environment that values and incorporates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, cultures and diversity.

Every part of our University will be encouraged to meaningfully engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to help us achieve our objectives.

I am confident that our RAP, with the support of each member of our community, will build positive change at RMIT.

I hope you'll join me in working to achieve the goals set out in this important document.



Martin Bean CBE
Vice-Chancellor and President
RMIT University



Since joining RMIT, I've worked alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and students who have been so generous in discussing and demonstrating how individuals can do their bit towards reconciliation every day.

The RAP is an opportunity for us to walk the talk as an organisation.

We've come to it later than some other universities, but we're in this for the long haul. Not just the targets but the way RMIT is developing the plan already show our community's commitment to values we can all get behind.

It's the action still ahead that's really exciting and that will bring to life those aspirations as we implement the plan's actions, and maybe even more. I'm looking forward to sharing in that journey together.

Kirsten Macleod
Senior Advisor
Student Experience Projects

Our business

Reconciliation is essential to RMIT's future

Reconciliation is an essential part of RMIT's new era of transformational change.

In 2015 RMIT began a project to reshape itself, culminating in the adoption of a new strategic plan – *Ready for Life and Work*. Its vision is to become a global University of technology, design and enterprise; with a mission to empower students to succeed in a world that is being transformed by technology and social change, and to shape the world through the creation and dissemination of diverse forms of knowledge. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination and reconciliation are essential to this vision and mission. The RMIT Strategic Plan explicitly states that the University has “a responsibility to lead on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students”. The inspiration for RMIT's reshaping comes from its beginnings—as a meeting place for the mixing of cultures, knowledges and skills on land traditionally owned by the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations. The University remains a cultural meeting place today, welcoming students and staff from all over the world, including growing numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

RMIT views its history and geography as major assets that give the University access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge's, as well as a profound responsibility to use education, skills training and indeed all the University's resources to advance the interests of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. RMIT will therefore play a leadership role in the reconciliation process in the very best ways a higher education institution can: by disseminating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge throughout the community, by assisting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to gain the education and skills they need to succeed in our rapidly-changing economy, by becoming an employer

of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics and staff, and by showing strong community leadership.

Solid strides forward have already been made.

In 2015, RMIT had 304 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (144 in Vocational Education and 160 in Higher Education¹) studying for qualifications across many disciplines: in apprenticeship areas such as building trades; in services such as health, welfare and education; in the arts including photography; and in areas associated with the new economy like biomedicine, engineering, information technology, architecture, business and the law. The seeds of economic empowerment and independence are being planted. Enrolment numbers have been growing strongly in recent years. In 2015, a total of 262 scholarships were awarded to 119 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at RMIT.²

There are currently nine undergraduate and four postgraduate Indigenous Specialisation courses that are open to all RMIT students. These are Indigenous-themed elective courses designed to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues into existing programs of study to provide students with an understanding of the cultural, historical and contemporary frameworks that have shaped the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and globally. A total of 884 students studied these courses in 2014.³ It is the intent of the University to increase the amount of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander curriculum content across its schools and colleges, under Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guidance.

¹ Statistics and Reporting Unit, February 2016.

² RMIT Coursework Scholarship Office, 8 February 2016.

³ 2014 RMIT Indigenous Education Statement, 31 May 2015, p.3.

Our business

Reconciliation is essential to RMIT's future

As RMIT reshapes its future, it is looking to continue and broaden these efforts towards deeper reconciliation.

Through its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy 2012-2015, RMIT has made a commitment to increase the numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members. The University currently has 16 permanent (ongoing), one fixed-term (contract) and five casual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, totalling 22 or 21.2 FTE staff.⁴ At the end of 2014 there were 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific positions—three academic and eight non-academic.⁵

The University features the Ngarara Willim Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (Ngarara Willim means “gathering place” in the language of the Wurundjeri), which provides support and encouragement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students—including ongoing guidance with study, living and cultural needs—in the manner of “a home away from home”. The Centre also plays a leadership role in advancing reconciliation within the University.

As RMIT reshapes its future, it is looking to continue and broaden these efforts towards deeper reconciliation. Enormous goodwill exists—all it needs is the right guidance to bring about the necessary degree of cultural change. This RAP sets out to provide such guidance. It lists six priority areas: three relating directly to learning, teaching and research; and another three relating to RMIT's organisational structures and internal processes:


1. **Governance, Management and Leadership**
2. **Learning and Teaching**
3. **Ethical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research**
4. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Participation and Success**
5. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Participation and Success**
6. **Community Engagement.**

Taken together, these priority areas seek to increase the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous members of RMIT to advance reconciliation together. The central idea is that advancing reconciliation will benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous members of RMIT alike.

This way of achieving reconciliation—by acknowledging the centrality of RMIT's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and engaging with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous contemporaries to create a better future—is summed up by the artwork of three gum leaves produced by Carly Donovan from the Ngarara Willim Centre, featured on the cover and throughout this plan.

⁴ 2014 RMIT Indigenous Education Statement, 31 May 2015, p.3.

⁵ 2014 RMIT Indigenous Education Statement, 31 May 2015, p.9.



I love working at RMIT and knowing that this organisation, and the people within, are committed to bettering the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through reconciliation and education.

I am proud in my role to be able to inspire other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities

around Victoria to go to University and reclaim that which was fought for by our Ancestors.

Aleryk Fricker
Coordinator Indigenous Participation, I Belong Program

Our Reconciliation Journey

RMIT's current efforts in reconciliation are the culmination of a 25-year journey that the University is determined to continue into the future.

1992

The Koorie Education Unit was set up at RMIT. In 1999, the Koorie Education Unit was renamed the Aboriginal and Torres Islander Support and Liaison Unit.

2006

The Indigenous Access Scheme was established as an alternative entry program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students wanting to study at RMIT. After proving to be a successful program, in 2009 it was formally made an ongoing part of the University's business.

2007

RMIT launches its "Togip Gabaareng" Indigenous employment strategy (revised and renamed in 2012: "RMIT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy").

The strategy builds upon RMIT's success in terms of equity and diversity within employment practices, introducing targeted goals to increase representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in employment at RMIT.

2008

RMIT signs a pledge and makes a commitment to "Close the Gap".

2008

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Support and Liaison Unit was renamed the Ngarara Willim Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The name is derived from "Ngarara Willim", meaning "gathering place" in the Woiwurrung language of the Wurundjeri people, the traditional custodians of the land where RMIT stands.



2008

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Margaret Gardner, responds to the formal apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples made in the Australian Parliament by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

2009

RMIT produces a Reconciliation Statement, which recognises and respects the unique cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2014

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are flown at every RMIT campus.

2015

RMIT increases its financial commitment to the Ngarara Willim Centre in order to improve access, participation and outcomes in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

2009

The Indigenous Specialisation is developed to enable all undergraduate students to take elective courses in the field of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

The elective courses provide students with an understanding of the cultural, historical and contemporary frameworks that have shaped the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia and globally.

Legislative responsibilities


A measure of RMIT's reconciliation journey has been the embedding in the University's Act of Parliament a legislated responsibility to provide educational opportunities to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. This is a mandated requirement the University takes very seriously.

One of the objects of the RMIT Act 2010 is for the University:

- **to use its expertise** and resources to involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Australia in its teaching, learning, research and advancement of knowledge activities and thereby contribute to:
 - **realising** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations; and
 - **the safeguarding** of the ancient and rich Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage.

Also relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, is the requirement that the University is:

- **to provide programs and services** in a way that reflects principles of equity and social justice.



I am truly privileged to have worked for many years in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education at RMIT, and this is something as non-Indigenous people we need to always remember –

it is a privilege to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and communities,

and with privilege comes responsibilities. Key among these is to put aside personal agendas and to prioritise contributing to the work as directed by and required by “community”. We must also disregard any deficit thinking in order to celebrate and prosper from the fact that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, communities, cultures and knowledges enrich our own learning and the uniqueness and standing of our University. This, to me, is active reconciliation.

Milton Nomikoudis
Senior Advisor, Learning and Teaching, Education Portfolio

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

In 2009 RMIT endorsed a Reconciliation Statement as a commitment to improving access, participation and outcomes in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

It was a natural extension to develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan to build on that commitment, and ensure that actions and targets were set in order for our University to reach these goals.

To create positive change we needed more people talking about these issues and committing to actions and setting targets that make a difference.


So, in December 2014, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education and Research Advisory Group

supported the development and implementation of a RAP at RMIT University, with a recommendation that our RAP Champion be the Vice-Chancellor.

We took our cue from the Behrendt Report (Review of Higher Education Access and Outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, July 2012) that noted the importance of having executive-level, senior management and whole of University support to ensure the success and sustainability of our RAP.

Our RAP working group included:

1. **executive support in the form of a RAP Champion – the Vice-Chancellor**
2. **the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Professor of Indigenous Studies as co-chairs**
3. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other staff representatives**
4. **an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory panel made up of Elders and community representatives**
5. **a range of staff from different parts of our organisation (businesses and divisions) that are involved in, and will take responsibility for, delivering RAP actions.**



From the working group a smaller group was formed to draft the plan and report on its progress. The working group met four times throughout the development of the plan and brought guests, from industries and other universities that had current plans in place, to share their learning, challenges and achievements.

We also engaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community representatives who were generous with their time, support and guidance.

As our RAP Champion, Vice-Chancellor Martin Bean CBE encouraged the RMIT community to contribute to the discussion and shaping of our plan through online discussions at #ShapeRMIT, and to complete a RAP survey that was made available to RMIT staff and students and the broader community. Participants were asked to nominate and rank, from a list of proposed actions, their top five preferences. Over 300 people completed the survey and took up the offer to provide further comment to assist the working group make its decisions about what was to be included.

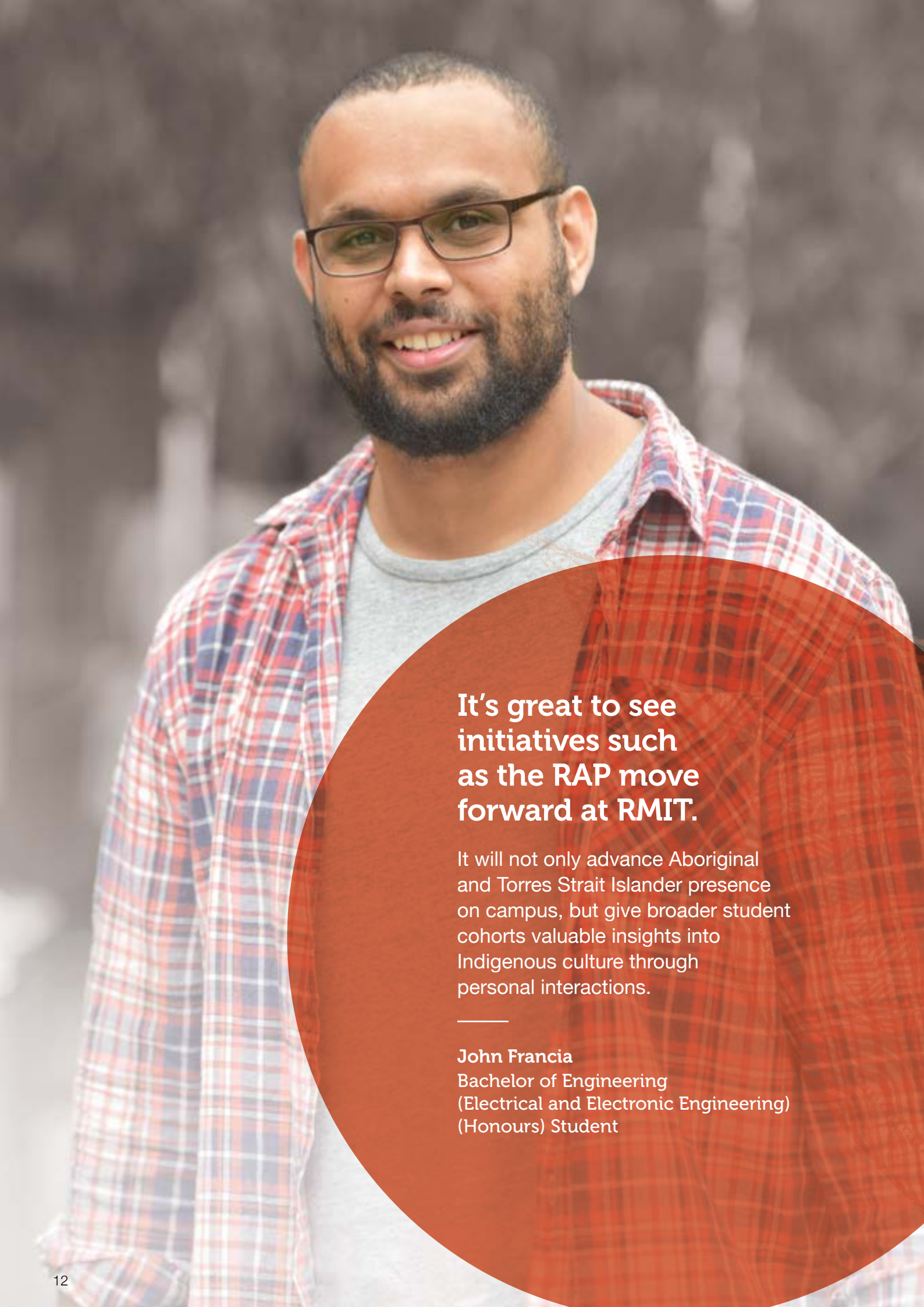
A reconciliation webpage was created with resources and information to keep the RMIT community updated on the progress of the RAP and activities related to reconciliation.

Our RAP has been endorsed by Academic Board, University Executive and the University Council.

Over the next five years our RAP will be championed internally by our Reconciliation Implementation Committee (RIC). The RIC will function as the RAP Steering Committee and will oversee its implementation.

Members of the RIC are:

- **RAP Champion – Vice-Chancellor**
- **Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education**
- **Professor – Indigenous Studies**
- **Manager Ngarara Willim Centre**
- **Vice-President Strategy and Governance**
- **Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation**
- **Chief Operating Officer and Vice-President Resources**
- **RUSU Student President.**



It's great to see initiatives such as the RAP move forward at RMIT.

It will not only advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander presence on campus, but give broader student cohorts valuable insights into Indigenous culture through personal interactions.

John Francia
Bachelor of Engineering
(Electrical and Electronic Engineering)
(Honours) Student

RMIT's Vision for Reconciliation

RMIT aspires to be an organisation whose community recognises the inherent value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditions, heritage, knowledges and perspectives to the University. We seek to learn and embrace the opportunities that this presents to enrich and benefit all staff and students. We aim to position ourselves as both an employer of choice and preferred place to study for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our aspiration is to lead in the areas of reconciliation by:

- **Committing** our University to the goal of creating an Australia that provides equal life chances for all
- **Ensuring** all staff and students are treated with dignity and respect
- **Engaging** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples meaningfully to work towards a collaborative approach
- **Promoting** a learning and research environment that engages partnerships and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, cultures and diversity
- **Increasing** the numbers of students from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds obtaining post-school educational qualifications, as a means of obtaining economic empowerment and independence.

RMIT has a proud history of showing leadership in the reconciliation movement, which was demonstrated by the University's response to the apology by the Australian Parliament to the Stolen Generations in 2008, and the adoption of the University's own Reconciliation Statement in 2009.

On saying Sorry –

RMIT statement in response to the apology
by Parliament to the Stolen Generations

The Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations are the custodians of the land on which RMIT University stands and we pay our respects to their elders, past and present.

On this day, 13 February, 2008, the 42nd Australian Parliament will open with an apology to Australia's Indigenous people that recognises the injustices, the discrimination, the displacement and the hurt that followed European settlement.

At RMIT we pause on this day to add our support to that apology. We recognise that there is much that has been done that cannot be undone.

We also recognise that there is much to be done to make a better future for Indigenous people. And that RMIT has a part to play in speaking to the past and contributing to that better future.

To say sorry will not erase the past experience of Indigenous people. Nor will it erase all injustice, discrimination and hurt that occurs after this day. Saying sorry is the way we take responsibility for our past and future actions.

When we pause on this day at RMIT, we recognise our responsibility to bring the best learning and work experiences and opportunities to Indigenous people, students and staff.

We recognise that our Indigenous staff and students have had experiences themselves, or through their families and communities, that require the apology given this day.

We hope and believe that at RMIT, with the rest of Australia, we can build respect and understanding and assist in achieving justice and equity for Indigenous people.

In Australia we have waited too many years for this day, just as we waited too long before the 1967 referendum, before reconciliation and before Mabo.

Today is a day when we all apologise to the Indigenous people of Australia and resolve to make that apology mean a new beginning.

Professor Margaret Gardner AO
Former Vice-Chancellor and President
RMIT University
13 February, 2008

RMIT's Reconciliation Statement

RMIT University acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nations, the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which it sits. The University acknowledges and respects Elders, past and present.

The RMIT community recognises and respects the unique culture and contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The University values cultural diversity, believes all staff and students should be treated with dignity and respect and seeks to contribute to creating a nation that provides equal life chances for all.

RMIT is therefore committed to an educational environment where contact between different cultures is seen as a key asset in broadening our knowledge of the world and in promoting personal development, celebrating a common humanity and acquiring the attributes for living and working in a globalised world.

RMIT is enriched by the diversity of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and through engagement with the world's indigenous peoples.

It acknowledges injustices against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the impacts on their association with the land, their languages, their cultural traditions and their futures.

RMIT commits itself to:

- **improving** levels of access and participation and outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- **providing** specific education and training for and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- **embedding** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and expertise in education, training and research
- **establishing** relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that lead to negotiated partnerships relevant to the purposes of the University
- **creating** an inclusive community of learners and thinkers free from prejudice and discrimination
- **promoting** and supporting the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to self-determine their identities and futures.

Response from Wurundjeri Elder

Congratulations, RMIT. Your vision and leadership in building respectful relationships with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community has guided the development and contributed to the strength of your Reconciliation Action Plan.

Your commitment in ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are provided with the best educational opportunities, in a safe and culturally aware environment, provides a level playing field for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

RMIT is now part of a much broader family on the Reconciliation journey, and through the development of RMIT's Reconciliation Action Plan, RMIT is on target to deliver positive outcomes in the educational journey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Wurundjeri Elder Colin Hunter Jr

Uncle Colin is currently the only Wurundjeri Elder to be employed in local government on Wurundjeri country. He is a strong advocate for social justice, equality and reconciliation activities. As a cultural ambassador, he is often called upon to carry out Welcome to Country and other cultural activities and is generous in sharing, with all, the rich cultural heritage of the Wurundjeri people.





In 1887, RMIT was founded on the principle that education can help all individuals find dignity and prosperity. The Reconciliation Action Plan will commit our University to ensuring this promise is firmly extended to people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

RMIT views itself as being Australia's global University a claim that can only be made real through recognition, understanding and long-term engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australia.

We cannot claim to be global without understanding the local.

This Plan will provide a strategic framework to help this to happen.

Barry Judd
Professor, Indigenous Studies – School of Global, Urban and Social Studies



I'm so proud to be a part of the RMIT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

RMIT is very accommodating to ensure that our mob is comfortable and are able to express our culture in an accepting environment.



It's wonderful to work for an organisation that is always looking to improve upon its relationship with the traditional owners of this land.

Cyan Earnshaw
Student Liaison Officer
Ngarara Willim Centre

Key Action Areas

RMIT will focus on the following key action areas:

1. **Governance, Management and Leadership**
2. **Learning and Teaching**
3. **Ethical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research**
4. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Participation and Success**
5. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Participation and Success**
6. **Community Engagement.**

Guided by:

- RMIT Act 2010
- RMIT's Strategic Plan (to 2020)
- Larissa Behrendt's recommendations (2012)
- Universities Australia's National Best Practice Framework for Indigenous Cultural Competency in Australian Universities paper (October 2011)
- Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies – Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies (2012)
- RMIT's Indigenous Employment Strategy (2012 – 2015)
- The University's Enterprise Agreement (2014)
- RMIT's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan (2011 – 2015).

Key Action Areas

The Action Areas will enable RMIT to demonstrate its commitment to reconciliation and the values set by Reconciliation Australia.

RMIT understands that respectful relationships are a prerequisite for success, and therefore will work towards building positive and effective partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community.

The gum leaf has been used as a symbol for the value Relationships as it is extended during Welcome ceremonies by Elders in Victoria. It is a sign of friendship and welcome and an invitation for the building of relationships.

At RMIT we hope and believe that, with the rest of Australia, we can build respect and understanding and engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples meaningfully to work towards a collaborative approach in achieving justice and equity.

The symbol of an Eagle or “Bunjil” has been used to represent the value Respect. Welcome to Country completed by Elders in the Victorian community will often include a requirement that visitors respect the laws of Bunjil, as followed by Aboriginal people of the local area from time immemorial.

RMIT commits to working together through partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to create opportunities for greater access and participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in all aspects of the University.

The symbol of the Yarra River has been used to represent Opportunity. The Yarra provides life and sustenance for both people and wildlife. Where there is life there are opportunities. Traditional Owners have a symbiotic relationship with the land and waters and this represents the two-way relationships required for reconciliation.

Relationships



Respect







Opportunity



ACTION AREA 1

Governance, Management and Leadership



RMIT University recognises and actively involves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and incorporates relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures at all levels of governance, management and leadership.

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
1. RAP Implementation Committee (RIC) actively monitors RAP development, including implementation of actions, progress and reporting.	RAP Working Group (RWG)		Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.	May 2016
	RWG		Ensure there are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the RWG.	June 2015
			Appoint an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	
	RIC		Establish Terms of Reference for the RWG.	May 2016
			Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.	
2. Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have a wider role in governance and decision-making.	Vice-Chancellor (VC)		Actively seek appropriately qualified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on Council and/or its sub-committees.	May 2016 ongoing May 2018
	RMIT Council			
	Human Resources (HR)		One (1) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander academic nominated by the Chair of Academic Board, after acting on the advice of RMIT's Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander academics.	May 2016 ongoing May 2018
			Provide governance and leadership training for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	May 2016 ongoing May 2018
			Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in discussions as part of the development of Strategic Plans.	May 2016 ongoing May 2018
3. Establish a Senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership role, who attends as a member of the Vice-Chancellor's Executive.	VC		Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership to participate in Vice-Chancellor's strategy days and other leadership forums.	Dec 2017
Include Senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in University leadership forums.				
4. College and Portfolio Unit Plans to incorporate an outline of how they will align with the RAP and contribute to its implementation, including key projects, KPIs and dependencies in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Vice-President Strategy and Governance		Align college and portfolio unit plan objectives, outcomes and targets with the RAP and report annually to RIC.	October 2016 Annually

ACTION AREA 2

Learning and Teaching




RMIT University prepares graduates and staff who are able to demonstrate cultural capability.

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
<p>1. Increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.</p>	<p>HR Strategy and Governance in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics and Ngarara Willim Centre (NWC)</p>		<p>Develop, implement and review a cultural training strategy for staff that defines continuous cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business, and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face-to-face workshops or cultural immersion).</p>	May 2017
			<p>Engage senior staff, including Heads of Schools/ Departments, Deans and Divisional Directors in the training.</p>	May 2017
			<p>By 2018, ensure all RMIT staff members have participated in cultural awareness training session.</p>	May 2018
			<p>Attendance by all staff members who are in executive positions at cultural awareness training specifically designed for RMIT executives.</p>	May 2018
<p>2. Survey all curricula to identify where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives are incorporated.</p> <p>Establish priority areas for including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives in diverse (not just Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific) curricula.</p>	<p>Indigenous Studies Unit Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education (DVCE) Pro Vice-Chancellor's (PVC's) In partnership with NWC</p>		<p>Report findings to RIC.</p>	May 2017
			<p>Develop a strategy and recommendations to embed curricula inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all programs.</p>	May 2018

ACTION AREA 3

Ethical Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research



RMIT University staff and students conduct research in ways which demonstrate cultural capability, encourage collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
<p>1. Undertake, promote and encourage quality Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research activities which will link research outcomes to our teaching curricula.</p> <p>Investigate and undertake research that is driven and requested by the community.</p>	<p>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research and Innovation (DVCR&I)</p>		<p>Create two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Fellowships.</p> <p>Provide one research profile on the RMIT website per semester highlighting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research outcomes from both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous researchers at the University.</p> <p>Develop two community research projects per year.</p>	<p>May 2017</p> <p>May 2017 ongoing May 2018</p> <p>May 2017 annually</p>
<p>2. Build the capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, students and staff, to develop a cultural step change in projects, activities, courses and research related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges, cultures and heritage at RMIT.</p>	<p>DVCR&I</p> <p>In partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Academics and NWC</p>		<p>Undertake a feasibility study on the value and justification of establishing an Indigenous Australian Knowledge Centre (aka, Australian Indigenous Studies Centre) at RMIT.</p> <p>Refer to report compiled and completed by Dr Jakelin Troy.</p>	<p>May 2017</p>
<p>3. Build and support the development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and researchers.</p> <p>Promote, develop and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research.</p>	<p>VC</p> <p>DVCR&I</p> <p>HR</p> <p>PVCs</p>		<p>Appoint at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander to a senior research position.</p> <p>Compile records of all research partnerships between RMIT University, external agencies (e.g. Community Health Services), Indigenous Studies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and disseminate the research findings to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous community annually (or as appropriate).</p> <p>Host at least one annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduate researchers' workshop.</p> <p>Initiate a mentoring program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers.</p> <p>Begin the annual recruitment of a RMIT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Fellow to be funded through a co-investment fund between colleges, industry and government.</p> <p>Establish an enhanced suite of at least four PhD scholarships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates, in partnership with the colleges and the Indigenous Studies Unit.</p>	<p>Dec 2016</p> <p>Dec 2016</p> <p>Dec 2017</p> <p>Dec 2017</p> <p>May 2018</p> <p>Dec 2016</p>

ACTION AREA 4

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff Participation and Success



RMIT University is committed to the appointment, retention, development and support of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and supports all staff to participate in cultural capability training.

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
1. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment and retention.	VC		Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and meet RMIT's targets as outlined in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy.	May 2016 ongoing to May 2018
	HR		Vice-Chancellor to set Key Performance Indicators related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and student targets in Senior Executive workplans.	July 2016 ongoing to May 2018
	RIC		Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.	May 2016 ongoing to May 2018
			Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander targets in workplans of senior staff. Reporting on Senior Executive targets progressed in the workplans included in the Annual Report to Council and the RAP implementation committee (RIC).	July 2016 ongoing to May 2018
2. Enhance career opportunities and career development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.	HR		Widely promote information about current programs that provide employment and enterprise formation opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students/graduates within all elements.	May 2016 ongoing to May 2018
	RIC			
	HR		Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment targets and strategies in strategic/operational plans for each college/portfolio units. This will be informed and guided by RMIT's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy as well as broader activities to support achievement of the University's vision and <i>Ready for Life and Work</i> .	July 2017 ongoing to May 2018
	RIC			
	Marketing and Communications		Feature stories promoting career successes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, cadets and graduates at least once per semester on the RMIT website homepage and other identified media.	May 2016 ongoing to May 2018
	HR		Develop a targeted resource for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff outlining in-house and external training and professional development programs.	Dec 2016 ongoing to May 2018
HR	Early engagement with and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students through:	May 2016 ongoing to May 2018		
DVCE				
Colleges/Schools				
			– the offer of scholarships and traineeships	
			– facilitating pathways from education into work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and	
			– industry/employer engagement to build pathways from study into work.	

ACTION AREA 5

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student Access and Retention

The University is committed to reviewing and promoting strategies to enhance the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and to build, extend and sustain current efforts in order to achieve the goal of population parity in student numbers in 2050.




Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
1. Review admission procedures, requirements and enrolment articulation (including outreach to secondary schools) in view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students' needs.	DVCE		Undertake research on barriers in increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander undergraduates.	Dec 2016
	Academic Registrar's Group (ARG)		Report to RIC on research undertaken.	Dec 2016
	in partnership with NWC		Implement recommendations from report.	Dec 2017
2. Increase visibility of RMIT programs for future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	DVCE		Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student recruitment targets and strategies in college/portfolio unit plans. Plans to be reviewed and endorsed by the RIC.	May 2017
	Dean of Students Group			ongoing to May 2018
	RIC		As part of their equity reporting all elements will report on strategies/research/programs that aim to raise aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adult learners, primary and secondary students and their families and communities.	
			Share at appropriate academic forums good practice examples of strategies that encourage and facilitate applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to professional programs.	
			Develop a proposal for aspiration scholarships for future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to support existing access scholarships.	
			Produce a proposal for promoting Higher Degrees by Research studies to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander alumni and for supporting students' re-entry as appropriate.	

ACTION AREA 6

Community Engagement

RMIT University will strengthen relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by engaging with and seeking to learn from Aboriginal knowledge, experience and perspectives.

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
<p>1. Create an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Events Working Group to organise and plan the celebration of and participation in National Reconciliation Week (NRW), providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other Australians to build and maintain relationships.</p>	<p>HR DVCE Marketing and Communications Events</p> <p>When established responsibility will be for: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Events Working Group</p>		<p>Establish the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Events Working Group.</p> <p>Develop a Communication Plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – organise internal NRW events each year – register RMIT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website and RMIT's Reconciliation website – encourage staff and senior leaders to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW – invite Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members to our events to connect and share experiences – review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week – provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in local NAIDOC Week events. 	<p>Dec 2016 ongoing to May 2018</p>
<p>2. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	<p>HR DVCE Marketing and Communications Events</p>		<p>Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.</p> <p>Create opportunities for all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week activities.</p> <p>Hold an internal or external NAIDOC Week event.</p> <p>Contact our local NAIDOC Week Committee to discover events in our community.</p>	<p>May 2017</p> <p>July 2016</p>
<p>3. Maintain and leverage mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes.</p>	<p>VC Events Chancellery PVCs DVCs</p>		<p>Implement and review an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</p> <p>Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.</p> <p>Commit to establishing formal two-way partnerships to build capacity in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and/or communities relevant to our sphere of influence.</p>	<p>Dec 2016</p>

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector.	RIC		Implement and review a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders.	May 2016
	VC Marketing and Communications Events		Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.	May 2016 ongoing to May 2018
5. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities by embedding cultural protocols as part of the way our organisation functions.	Governance and Strategy		Implement and communicate a cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2017
	VC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic in partnership with NWC		<p>Invite a local Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country, at significant events.</p> <p>All staff and senior leadership to provide an Acknowledgement of Country at all public events.</p> <p>Maintain and review a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country.</p> <p>Include Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important internal meetings.</p> <p>Create and display an Acknowledgment of Country plaque in our University buildings.</p> <p>Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols within a protocol document relevant to State and/or Territory and specific local communities.</p>	
6. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity.	VC Chief Operating Officer (COO)		<p>Implement, review and update an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.</p> <p>Set procurement target for goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.</p> <p>Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Chambers of Commerce.</p> <p>Become a member of Supply Nation.</p>	May 2017

Leading Change

For maximum impact and a true commitment to reconciliation, the actions and targets need to be reflected in all parts of RMIT business in order to achieve the change we desire.

Implementing the changes required is reliant upon both an individual and organisational process.

The University's Strategic Plan to 2020 prioritises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' collaboration and sets ambitious goals for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student and staff participation. Therefore, responsibility for achieving these outcomes is shared across the institution, with all areas required to incorporate them into their own internal planning and reporting processes.

RMIT's Strategic Plan and the RAP will inform all other plans that drive and align organisational strategies and targets. This will inform and link activities across the University, which will allow us to achieve our commitments.






The RAP firmly puts cultural change and mutual respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-indigenous stakeholders on the radar at RMIT.

It is designed to prompt actions that, in turn, mark a step-change improvement in cross-cultural dialogue, fluency and familiarity, and a building of trust and respect for cross-cultural knowledge.

Ralph Horne
Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor,
Research and Innovation

Governance, management, resources and reporting

Action	Responsibility	Value	Target	Timeline
<p>1. Report RAP:</p> <p>A. achievements</p> <p>B. challenges and</p> <p>C. learnings</p> <p>Internally and externally to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the RAP Impact Measurement Report.</p>	RIC		<p>Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</p> <p>Investigate participation in the RAP Barometer.</p> <p>Develop and implement systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.</p> <p>RMIT will publicly report its RAP achievements, challenges and learnings in its Annual Report and will provide Reconciliation Australia with this information to post on its website. This report will also be made available to the Vice-Chancellor to be presented at an Executive meeting.</p> <p>A brief report or highlight on RAP progress will be placed on RMIT's Reconciliation website.</p>	30 September annually
2. Review, refresh and update RAP	RIC RWG		Review, refresh and update the RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	May 2018
3. Resourcing	COO VC		Establish an allocation in the Vice-Chancellor's Development Fund or from another appropriate source.	May 2017 ongoing to May 2018

Contact Details:

To find out more online:
bit.ly/RMITreconciliation

For information about RMIT's Reconciliation Action Plan please contact:


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Reconciliation Action Plans (RAPs) provide a framework for organisations to realise their vision for reconciliation.

RAPs are practical plans of action built on relationships, respect and opportunities.

www.reconciliation.org.au

From the artist

A portrait of Carly Michelle Donovan, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a dark grey blazer over a white top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred, light-colored pattern. A large, semi-transparent orange circle is overlaid on the bottom left of the image, containing text.

The three Gum leaves honour our elders who kept our culture strong, our mob who've persevered, and the wider community who are ready and willing to walk with us on this journey of reconciliation.

Carly Michelle Donovan –
Wiradjuri and Dunghutti



#RMITreconciliation