



western sydney  
community forum

# INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

DEC 2020 / DEC 2022





**TITLE:**  
"TOGETHER"

**ARTISTS:**  
Uncle Greg Simms  
Jie Pittman

**DESCRIPTION:**  
The meeting of North, East, South & West.  
The coming together of Fresh & Salt Water.  
The working together of Black & White Australians.

## Our vision for reconciliation

Western Sydney Community Forum is committed to continued progress of reconciliation in Australia and the positive impacts that this will have on the people of Western Sydney and Australia. We value, respect and acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we live and work. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present, and future. We recognise and celebrate all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples along with their cultures, traditions and heritage as First Nations peoples.

Our vision is for a region that is cohesive and dedicated to developing a just society that values difference, diversity and human rights where people are respected and are empowered to live a meaningful and contributing life. Our organisation will contribute to leading and shaping the way in which the community sector in our region works alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, communities and organisations.

We are dedicated to continuing to develop our existing relationships, growing emerging ones and exploring new possibilities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander friends and colleagues.

We invite all our friends, colleagues and partners to join us on this journey.



  
Dr Andy Marks  
Chair



  
Ms Billie Sankovic  
Chief Executive

## Our Business

We are about community.

At Western Sydney Community Forum, we believe the greatest asset of our region is its people. Ensuring the community is part of the regional conversation is central to its social and economic future. It is this belief that influences our approach to leading and shaping the future of communities in greater Western Sydney.

Western Sydney Community Forum is the regional peak for communities and community organisations in greater Western Sydney. Our team facilitates a voice for communities and the people working with the challenges facing the region.

We work with community groups and organisations and partner with government across all its levels and services. We join with regional and local businesses on many initiatives to collectively make an impact in building a thriving and inclusive region.

The greater Western Sydney region in which we work, includes the local government areas of:

- |                        |               |
|------------------------|---------------|
| • Blacktown            | • Fairfield   |
| • Blue Mountains       | • Hawkesbury  |
| • Camden               | • Liverpool   |
| • Campbelltown         | • Parramatta  |
| • Canterbury-Bankstown | • Penrith     |
| • Cumberland           | • The Hills   |
|                        | • Wollondilly |

Currently, WSCF employs 20 staff including seven primary consultants, and has one office in Parramatta.

Over the years WSCF has continuously committed to providing opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Western Sydney, through the use of government funding. At this point in time WSCF has been unable to offer an identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander position, however we are working with government funding bodies to ensure opportunities are made available in the future. We also do not currently have any staff in non-identified positions who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

## Our RAP

As the regional peak for the community sector in greater Western Sydney, we aim to contribute to leading and shaping the way in which the industry collectively works towards reconciliation. This Reconciliation Action Plan will guide the way in which we collaborate with organisations, communities and individuals to progress as a community.

Western Sydney Community Forum historically had an Action Plan which led to the creation of the organisation's first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan for 2015–2017. Since its creation, there has been an ongoing commitment and allocation of resources to continuing Western Sydney Community Forum's work with the previous Reconciliation Action Plan, the development of this new one as well as the ongoing work with service providers across the region.

Changes such as organisational leadership, the ongoing growth of the region and continuing reforms, have increased our organisations' focus on social policy priorities and opportunities of the region. These opportunities include leveraging partnerships with stakeholders traditionally outside of the sector such as business. This has proved to provide new avenues for the sector and communities in greater Western Sydney.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is a fundamental framework that underpins the work of Western Sydney Community Forum's Board of Directors, Leadership and Staff Team. Any decisions made in relation to our organisation's reconciliation work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Western Sydney must, as a prerequisite, be guided by our long-standing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners. Uncle Greg Simms and Aunty Carol Cooper are ambassadors of Western Sydney Community Forum and make up the WSCF Elders. Our WSCF Elders are consulted bi-monthly on the progress of the initiatives being delivered by the organisation as well as new opportunities that are to be taken up to create change. The Reconciliation Action Plan is championed by Nadiana Albistur and Camille Derriman and members are on page 8.

Collectively as an organisation, we would like to recognise and thank all the devoted individuals and organisations who have been involved in the development of this document including Uncle Greg Simms, Aunty Carol Cooper, Jie Pittman, Budyari Community Health Centre and Gilgai Aboriginal Centre.





## Achievements, challenges and lessons from our previous RAP

Through continuous mutual partnerships with our valued Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants, WSCF has built long-lasting relationships that have allowed us to create and achieve common goals towards reconciliation. Since our first Reconciliation Action Plan launched in 2015, our organisation has supported, resourced and contributed towards a number of programs and interagencies.



One of the other key milestones that WSCF has met was the development of a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols to ensure cultural sensitivities and needs are not only met but exceeded. Another achievement was the development and publication of a reflective practice guide for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, called "We Are Working As One", written by our previous Aboriginal Organisational Capacity Building project worker Shirley Blacklaws. This document was the result of three years of thinking about how best to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander workers in non-Aboriginal managed organisations.

Through organisational self-reflection, WSCF also now strongly encourages the integration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, needs and goals into the workload of every staff member, even those not in the Reconciliation Working Group. This increase in internal awareness, engagement and consideration will make way for further achievements in the future.



Uncle Greg Simms / Aunty Carol Cooper / Aunty Jacinta Tobin / Jie Pittman • Consultants



Ms Billie Sankovic • Chief Executive / Tom Nance • Manager Policy & Programs / Anita Hanna • Manager Policy & Programs

Stephanie Adam • Senior Policy & Programs / David Hill • Senior Policy & Programs / Nadiana Albistur • Senior Policy & Programs / Charlton Wun • Senior Policy & Programs / Anukina Warda • Senior Policy & Programs / Hasret Mehmedali • Policy & Programs / Camille Derriman • Policy & Programs / Catherine Madziva • Policy & Programs Assistant / Blake Morris • Digital & Design / Jishita Sathyanarayanan • Business Administration



## Relationships

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Western Sydney is home to over 42,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which is around 60 per cent of Greater Sydney's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. As the regional peak for this region, Western Sydney Community Forum acknowledges the significance of developing and maintaining collaborative partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to ensure we work together towards a better future for everyone involved.

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# Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations and with shared strategic priorities.</p> 	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	December 2020	Policy & Programs Officer
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2021	Policy & Programs Officer
	Establish relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, groups and individuals in South Western Sydney.	June 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations to address the recommendations made in our Build Beyond Bricks topic paper (one of 10 topic papers addressing the issues and needs of different groups in Western Sydney along with recommendations for change).	September 2021	Senior Policy & Programs Officer
	Represent the organisation at the Parramatta Koori Interagency	June 2022	Policy & Programs Officer

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Build and nurture relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff including email signature banner.	April 2021 & 2022	RAP Champions
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	May 2021 & 2022	RAP Champions
	Create and circulate a list of NRW events in Western Sydney to our staff, and encourage them to attend and support these events where possible.	May 2021 & 2022	RAP Champions
	Organise at least one NRW event each year for the Western Sydney region.	27 May – 3 June 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2021 & 2022	RAP Champions
	Incorporate the process of rapport building, development and coordination of a National Reconciliation Week event into all staff work plans.	May 2021 & 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Encourage all Western Sydney organisations who are hosting a National Reconciliation Week event to register it on Reconciliation Australia's website, through platforms such as email, website, social media and other forums.	April 2021 & 2022	RAP Champions





## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation.	October 2021	RAP Champions
	Formally invite key stakeholders to the launch of our RAP including (but not limited to) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations such as those who have been involved with the document through consultation.	December 2020	RAP Champions
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	February 2021	RAP Champions
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	December 2021	RAP Champions
	Collaborate with RAP Partners and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	June 2021	RAP Champions
	Launch the Reconciliation Action Plan once endorsed by Reconciliation Australia.	December 2020	RAP Champions
	Ensure all staff consider and/or integrate the priorities outlined in the Reconciliation Action Plan at the initial planning stage of all their projects and events.	June 2022	RAP Champions
	Inform our members and the sector about WSCF's commitment to reconciliation via email and social media.	June 2022	RAP Champions

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	February 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	June 2021	RAP Champions
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	November 2021	Senior Policy & Programs Officer
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	February 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
5. Explore avenues to support and resource Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and interagencies.	Explore potential involvement and participation with Aboriginal led interagencies across other Western Sydney Local Government Areas.	March 2021	RAP Champions
	Provide Aboriginal led groups with a meeting space as required.	June 2022	Business Administration Officer
	Consult with Baabayn Aboriginal Corporation for feedback on past collaborations and possible future directions.	August 2021	RAP Champions





## Respect

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Western Sydney Community Forum celebrates diversity in cultures across Western Sydney, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, land and histories. We will promote the understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' lands and history among our internal staff team and to our many stakeholders to showcase the significance of these histories.

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# Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p> 	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	July 2021	RAP Champions
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	June 2021	RAP Champions
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	November 2021	RAP Champions
	Provide opportunities for RWG members, managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning such as organising face-to-face cultural awareness training for internal paid staff.	June 2022	Policy & Programs Officer
	Organise cultural awareness training for community sector organisations in the region through partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander training providers and offering subsidy rates for WSCF members and small/ volunteer organisations	October 2021, 2022	Policy & Programs Officer
	Revisit the "We are Working As One" reflective guide; explore possibilities for further uses and review distribution campaign.	March 2022	RAP Champions

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	November 2021	RAP Champions
	Review, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	November 2021	RAP Champions
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year including our Annual ZEST Awards.	March 2021, 2022	Policy & Programs Officer
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings such as the Western Sydney Regional Community Care Forum, Western Sydney Leaders' Mixer, Generation Community and at all trainings/consultations provided.	June 2022	Policy & Programs Officer





## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RWG to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	June 2021, 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff, with a minimum of 50% of the staff attending an external event.	First week in July 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, hold an internal NAIDOC Week event	First week in July 2021, 2022	RAP Champions

# TOGETHER.

## RELATIONSHIPS RESPECT OPPORTUNITIES GOVERNANCE

Western Sydney Community Forum celebrates diversity in cultures across Western Sydney, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, land and histories. We will promote the understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' lands and history among our internal staff team and to our many stakeholders to showcase the significance of these histories.





## Opportunities

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As Western Sydney Community Forum is a regional peak working towards an equitable and sustainable future for all people in the Western Sydney region, it is important to us that all people including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples benefit from increased access to more opportunities for business, employment, professional or personal purposes, as well as supporting and promoting existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.


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# Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
<p>9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</p> 	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	November 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Advertise job vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media such as Koori Mail and relevant social media to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	June 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	February 2021	Managers Policy & Programs



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	December 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Support organisations across the region and sector in promoting job vacancies and professional development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by sharing information in the NewsDigest.	June 2022	RAP Champions
	Investigate opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professional development such as identified internships.	April 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Investigate membership options with YARPA NSW Indigenous and Employment Hub.	May 2022	RAP Champions



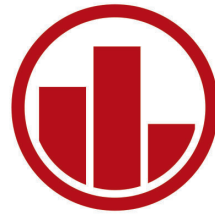
## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Review and analyse our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	February 2021	Managers Policy & Programs
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	June 2022	RAP Champions
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and organisations to staff.	June 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	May 2022	Chief Executive
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	May 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Research procurement opportunities from local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, social enterprises and individuals.	June 2022	Managers Policy & Programs



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in the ZEST Awards.	Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals to be nominated for ZEST Awards.	November 2021 & 2022	Policy & Programs Officer
12. Develop partnerships with other organisations to build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in Western Sydney.	Investigate opportunities to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in Tailored Solutions.	August 2021	Senior Policy & Programs Officer
	Offer secondees from our organisation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in Western Sydney to build capacity.	June 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
13. Work with Government across all levels to influence policy decisions regarding the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Develop a formalised process regarding consultation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the development of our policy submissions, including the possibility of setting up an Advisory Council consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, groups and organisations that we have an existing relationship with as well as new relationships and partnerships that are developed.	February 2021	Chief Executive
	Ensure that all submissions relating to social justice and policy issues include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's perspective.	June 2022	Managers Policy & Programs
	Utilise the recommendations within the First Nations People Build Beyond Bricks paper when working on submissions and other projects.	June 2022	RAP Champions





## Governance



Western Sydney Community Forum continually works towards the best outcomes for the communities of the region and recognises that ongoing review and reflection as well as good governance is key to ensuring that this is met.









# Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group.	June 2022	RAP Champions
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	January 2021	RAP Champions
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation and progress.	January, April, July, October 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of this Reconciliation Action Plan.	December 2020	RAP Champions



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
15. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation including requesting a budget.	January 2021	RAP Champions
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	December 2020	RAP Champions
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	June 2022	RAP Champions
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	February 2021	RAP Champions





## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16. 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.	30 September 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	January, April, July, October, 2021, 2022	RAP Champions
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	November 2021, 2022	Digital & Design Officer
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2022	RAP Champions
	Seek support from Reconciliation Australia, where required.	June 2022	RAP Champions
17. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2022	RAP Champions





#### **CONTACT US**

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