

Bayala Gurawa

Voices in the wind

Reconciliation Action Plan
February 2023 - February 2024



**Story
FACTORY**

Acknowledgement

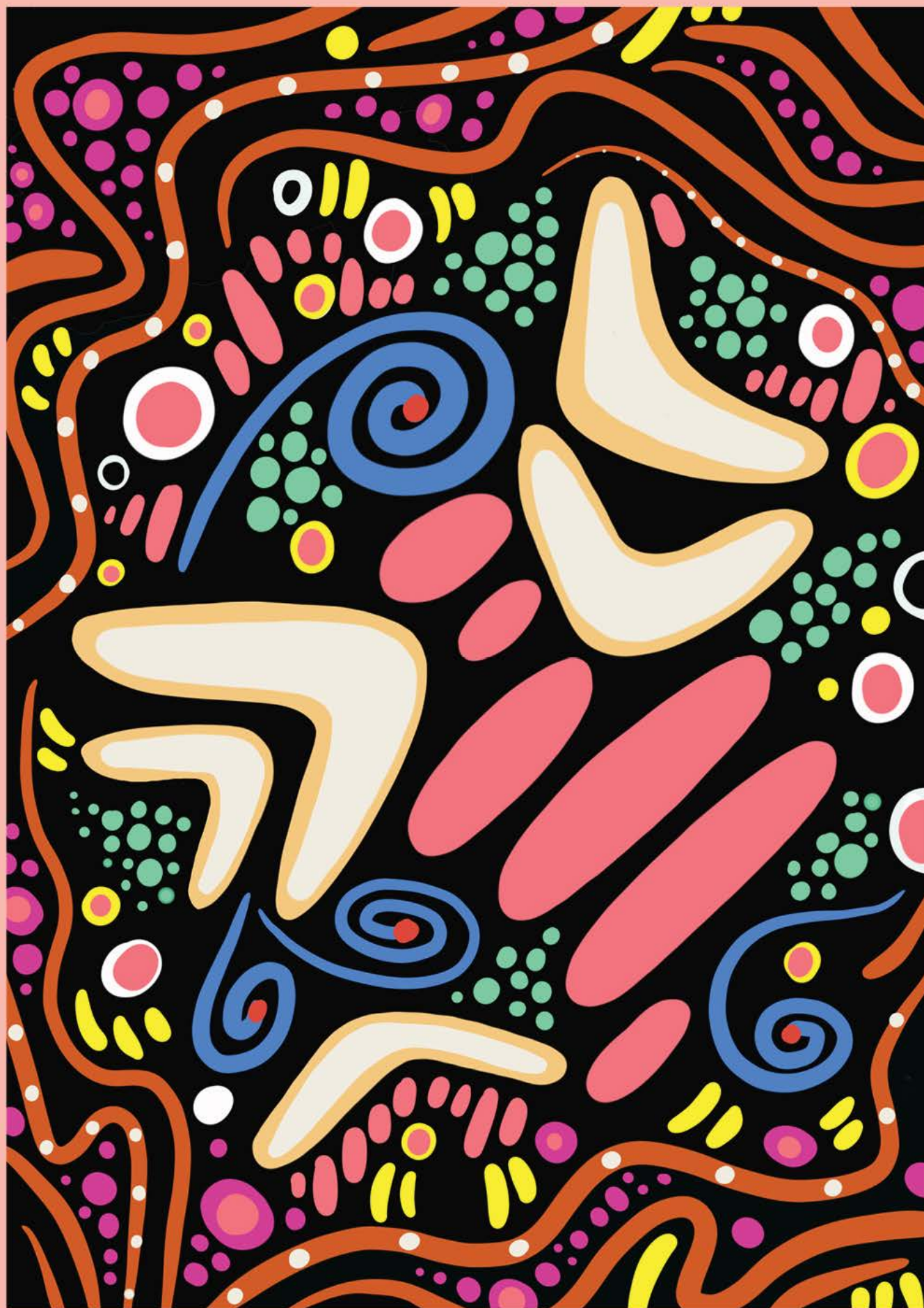
Story Factory acknowledges the Lands on which our centres are based, the Lands of the Gadigal and Burramattagal Peoples. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of these areas and recognise their custodial responsibilities and deep connections to the land, people and culture.

We also acknowledge that many other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have made Sydney and Greater Western Sydney their home, and we recognise their contributions to the life of this city and this region. As an organisation with national reach, we pay our respect to all Elders and First Nations Peoples across Australia.

Bayala Gurawa

The name of our RAP is 'Bayala Gurawa'. In Dharug language, bayala means 'talking or conversations' and gurawa means 'in the wind'.

We chose Bayala Gurawa because we wanted to capture the voices of our students as expressed in their writing. We believe their voices are a living legacy that, like the wind, can travel around the world.



Artwork by Murrawari and Euahlayi artist, Danielle Mate.

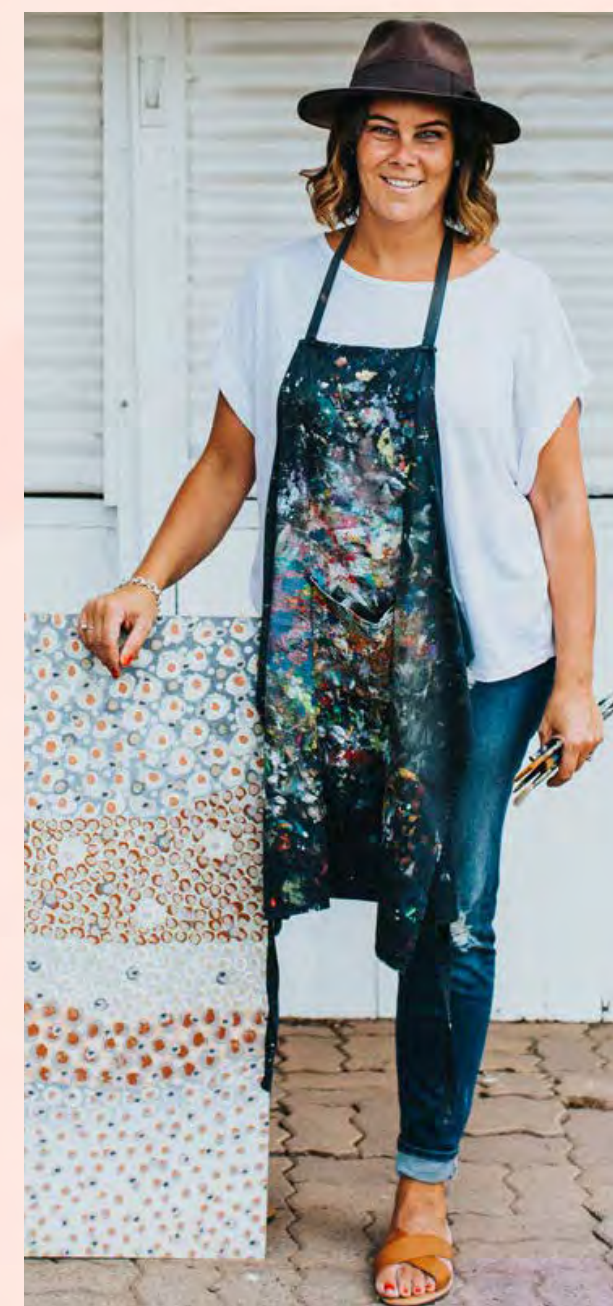
Artwork

The brief we gave to commissioned artist, Danielle Mate, was to capture the voices of Story Factory's students as expressed in their writing.

The pink ovals represent message sticks. The blue swirl represents the wind. The U shapes are boomerangs and the orange lines are lines of communication that are free flowing and different.

Danielle Mate

Danielle is a descendant of the Murrawari people through her mother's maternal side, and Euahlayi people through her mother's paternal grandmother. Danielle is a Sydney-based artist working in large-scale mural design and public art, and has worked with a number of iconic Australian brands aligning herself with their reconciliation action plans. Danielle's community work moves further than just her art. She has been responsible for running a selection of workshops helping to educate, involve, and collaborate with Indigenous children through the medium of art.



Foreword

Language and storytelling are central to who we are as Indigenous peoples. Through them, we keep our culture alive, we educate new generations about our past, we connect to the environment and our ancestors in the spirit world, and we learn of our place in this world, including our roles and responsibilities.

That is why the work that Story Factory does is vital for all children, but especially Indigenous children. The art and expression of storytelling is an extension of our culture, of who we are. We grow and learn through storytelling.

Story Factory provides a space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to express themselves through storytelling – which also gives them the best chance of connecting to their education. Their stories create connections, building capabilities and fostering relationships that reach across backgrounds, from the inner suburbs of Sydney to Western Sydney and beyond.

Through the launch of this Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), Story Factory aims to strengthen and reinforce its collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and students that it has worked with over the last 10 years.

Having worked with the Story Factory since 2014, first as a staff member, then as a board member from 2018, I have personally seen how the development of this RAP has come from years of internal learning, growth and development. It is the product of Story Factory's ambition to do more to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and children by working through, and in alignment with, the recommendations of Reconciliation Australia.

This process has reinforced Story Factory's own ethical and moral foundations of relationships, respect and opportunities, which are the core pillars of every RAP. Since its launch in 2012, Story Factory has had Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the heart of its organisation.

It has always been ambitious to open up new opportunities by supporting them to tell and share their stories.

From our volunteers to our board, we launch this RAP to ensure Story Factory continues in its journey to provide meaningful action and change through its work to advance Reconciliation strategically and sustainably.

Mandang guwu! (Thank you – Wiradjuri)



Garigarra Mundine, Wiradjuri/Bundjulang/Kamilaroi and Yuin woman.

Message from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Story Factory to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Story Factory joins a network of more than 2,200 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 Story Factory 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 Story Factory, 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

Introduction

I am so proud to present Story Factory's second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). It comes at a hopeful time. Five years after the signing of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, our government has promised a referendum on the Statement's central tenet: enshrining an Indigenous Voice to parliament in our constitution.

With this historic goal in view, it is more important than ever that non-Indigenous Australians link arms with our Indigenous brothers and sisters so we might, at last, create a reconciled country. The young Indigenous people we work with are the inheritors of the world's longest continuous culture and so, also, of the world's longest unbroken storytelling tradition.

These stories, told over millennia, are central to this land on which we live. Amplifying the stories and voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples has never been more important.

At Story Factory, we hope to contribute to this by, in particular, supporting the extraordinary young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we work with to tell the stories that matter to them. This RAP lays the foundations for that work.

I would like to thank our RAP committee for working with such open-hearted purpose on this plan: Russ Smith,

Vanessa Andres, Tommie Clark, Thuy Giang, Tony Britten, Helen Coolican, Natalie Goodes and, in particular, our indefatigable Operations Manager, Craig New. Extra special thanks to our Aboriginal Engagement Manager Raylene Hassall, who led the process, holding the space to make this work possible and quietly urging us to do more.

There is so much more work to do to ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are born with the same opportunities as other Australians. But the great thing about working with young people is that you can't sit with them and hear their stories without feeling a ripple of hope for what they will make possible.



Dr Catherine Keenan AM
Executive Director, Story Factory

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is to see an Australia where all Australians can work together in respectful and listening ways. To us, reconciliation means acknowledging a wrong at the heart of Australian culture and understanding how this has affected First Nations peoples and our society as a whole. It necessitates an unbreakable commitment to working with First Nations peoples so we can pursue culturally appropriate pathways and practices across our organisation. We are committed to employing Indigenous staff and letting their voices and needs guide our work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander school communities, communities and organisations. Reconciliation means all Australians learning to understand and celebrate the richness of First Nations cultures. Together we can walk into a better future.

Our business

Story Factory started with the belief that all children regardless of their circumstances should have access to the power of writing. Operating since 2012, we are a not-for-profit working with young people aged 7 to 17 in under-resourced communities across Sydney, NSW and beyond. Our mission is to enrich their lives through creative writing and storytelling.

We have approximately 25 full-time and part-time staff with 8% identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. We have an ambitious goal to increase this to 17% by the end of 2027. We are committed to deepening our engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and developing programs that are self-determined by First Nations communities in order to hear their voices and share their stories.

Our day-to-day business is to work with young people to help them write their own stories, imagine their own worlds and see themselves as authors who have a voice worth sharing with the world. We operate out of two centres, one on Gadigal land (Redfern) and the other on Burramattagal land (Parramatta). Our business operations reach all of Sydney's metropolitan areas, including Western Sydney; with the occasional extension to regional NSW, and growing national reach with our digital programs.

We believe in the power of writing and we want to see an Australia where all young people have the skills and confidence to tell their stories. We are privileged to work in this space and have witnessed many lives changed through the power of stories.

Our RAP

The purpose of our RAP is to improve our services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and communities. We believe that as an organisation working on unceded lands, we have a direct responsibility to learn all we can and undertake genuine actions to advance reconciliation in our sphere of influence.

We have formed a RAP Working Group with Aboriginal and executive staff representation who are keen to support the process. Our RAP Working Group meets quarterly, with meetings scheduled at the beginning of the year, so that our Action Plans are regularly monitored and reviewed. Our RAP is not seen as an extracurricular activity, but a foundational aspect of our organisation's culture.

Another key purpose of our RAP is an assurance of ongoing cultural conversations across our organisation in order to identify needs for cultural competency courses, and for the personal and professional development of all staff members.

Our RAP also aligns with our 2023-27 Strategy which states that by the end of 2027, Story Factory will be a flourishing not-for-profit organisation with a measurable increase in the participation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to 22% of overall enrolments.

Our progress to date

We have worked with numerous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, such as National Aboriginal Sporting Chance Academy (NASCA), National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE), the Aboriginal unit from University of Sydney, Tranby National Indigenous Adult Education and Training and Kimberwalli. We work with many schools and community organisations with large populations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (approximately 14% of our current student base).

In June 2021 our staff completed the CCCA Cultural Competency training to follow on from other internal Cultural Competency sessions that our staff have run in the past such as Anti-Racism Training and Anti-Bullying and Harassment Training. We shared 2021 NAIDOC Week activities with staff, but a lot of engagement and participation was disrupted due to Covid. Our planned partnership with Kimberwalli at their Cooee Festival, and at the Burramatta NAIDOC Week Day, was cancelled. We then took the opportunity to build an extensive lending library of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander texts, films and resources for all staff members to access. These resources have proven invaluable in the further development of course content and resources for our organisation. During NAIDOC Week 2022, we facilitated workshops with the Glebe NAIDOC Group.

In 2021 we employed our first Aboriginal Engagement Manager who is identifying new partnerships and opportunities so that we can engage in meaningful reconciliation activities within communities. Additionally, the Aboriginal Engagement Manager will work with our Senior Program Manager to oversee cultural appropriateness in the development of our writing programs as well as areas such as marketing and publications. This is an exciting initiative for Story Factory as we aim to become a more culturally responsive organisation.

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Relationships

A key goal in our relationships is to provide fun and creative learning environments in our centres, in schools and through digital offerings that allow young people to develop the skills and confidence to find their voice and shape the future. Students put their trust in us when writing and sharing their stories. Creative writing requires a level of vulnerability, boldness, bravery, a sense of fun and safety. In celebration of our 10th anniversary we are now in a position to champion past students who form our alumni, an invaluable inspiration for present and future students. Story Factory is committed

to ensuring that the voices and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students are not only heard, but will help drive the overall priorities and narratives as part of our reconciliation journey and further help in the delivery of workshop content development. To support these priorities, in alignment with our Strategy 2023-27, our aim is to build strong, reciprocal and mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations peoples and communities, acknowledging the strengths of Indigenous cultures.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	1.1 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement	January 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
	1.2 Regularly attend Koori Interagency Meetings in Sydney and Western Sydney	January 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
	1.3 Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Relationship Plan to support engagement with a range of stakeholders, as part of the Story Factory 2023-27 Strategic Documents	February 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager; Manager, Communities & Innovation
	1.4 Annually reflect on activities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and services involved in our work, and identify priority areas where additional efforts to support engagement are required. This will include reviewing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How and when we consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants, organisations and communities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on any advisory groups and working groups Partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations 	July 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager; Communications Manager

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	May 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
	2.2 The RAP Working Group members will participate in an external NRW event each year	27 May - 3 June 2023	Storyteller
	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	27 May - 3 June 2023	Storyteller; Volunteer Manager
	2.4 Storytellers to attend school community reconciliation events during Reconciliation Week, wherever possible	27 May - 3 June 2023	Storyteller; Volunteer Manager
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	3.1 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff ongoing	November 2023	Executive Director
	3.2 Meet and collaborate with external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey	November 2023	Senior Storyteller
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	4.1 Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination	April 2023	Executive Director
	4.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	March 2023	Operations Manager

Respect

At Story Factory, one of our key values is to treat others with respect and dignity at all times. Story Factory recognises that respecting Aboriginal cultural practices of storytelling is central to the way in which Aboriginal students think, learn and operate in the world. Connection to land, culture, community and cultural identity is fundamental to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We openly advocate for the significance of respecting cultural differences and celebrating these differences in our work through our writing programs, and we believe that every person's life is enriched when we can give voice to those students who come from different cultural backgrounds.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	5.1 Create a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation. Explore working with a cultural learning provider to inform a strategy for cultural learning	February 2023	Storyteller
	5.2 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	July 2023	Operations Manager
	5.3 Coordinate Cultural Competency Training with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations at least every two years	July 2023	Executive Director
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	6.1 Develop an understanding of local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational areas	March 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
	6.2 Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	February 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC week	7.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC week	First week in July 2023	Storyteller
	7.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area	First week in July 2023	Volunteer Manager
	7.3 RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	First week in July 2023	Volunteer Manager

Opportunities

We recognise that having people with diverse skills and experiences - and who come from a range of backgrounds - helps to create a healthy culture that reflects the community we work for. At Story Factory we not only respect difference, we embrace and celebrate it, different opinions, thinking and views, different backgrounds, cultures and

genders, and different skills and approaches. We recognise that our connections and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities are crucial to our reconciliation aims.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	8.1 Create a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. Define our strategic goals for employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our organisation	February 2023	Executive Director
	8.2 Liaise and consult with Aboriginal Staff members on how best to recruit Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff	November 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
	8.3 Create and develop a procurement document for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates	November 2023	Aboriginal Engagement Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	9.1 Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-owned businesses	February 2023	Operations Manager
	9.2 Contact local Aboriginal-owned businesses, consultants and enterprises where known and wherever possible	July 2023	Operations Manager
	9.3 Investigate participation at local Indigenous Business Fairs	July 2023	Operations Manager
	9.4 Review and update procurement practice to remove barriers to producing goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	March 2023	Operations Manager; Director of Communities

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	10.1 Review our Terms of Reference for the RWG	February 2023	Executive Director
	10.2 Maintain and review Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG	February 2023	Executive Director
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	11.1 Maintain and review resource needs for RAP implementation	February 2023	Executive Director
	11.2 Continue to engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments	February 2023	Executive Director
	11.3 Maintain and review appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	February 2023	Executive Director
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	12.1 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	30 September 2023	Operations Manager
	12.2 Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence	June 2023	Operations Manager
	12.3 Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire	August 2023	Operations Manager
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	13.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	January 2024	Operations Manager



Contact

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