



'Parenthood' by Ngarrindjeri artist Z. Wilson

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2026–February 2028



Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) on the formal endorsement of its second, Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With over 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. RLC continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate – allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that RLC will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to RLC using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on *relationships*, *respect*, and *opportunities* gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for RLC to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, RLC will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of RLC's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations RLC on your second Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



‘Parenthood’ by Ngarrindjeri artist Z. Wilson

Artist statement about the work:

This painting represents two goannas about to start a family. They are hunting prey to feed their babies who are about to hatch, and watching over them to make sure they are protected and safe.

This work is copyright. The copyright is owned by the Artist. This artwork may not be reproduced in part, in whole, or in any other form without the permission of the Artist.

Acknowledgment of Country

Redfern Legal Centre is located in Redfern on the land of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation. Redfern is a historical and continued heartland of First Nations activism and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations created by and for First Nations people including the Metropolitan Land Council, the Aboriginal Legal Service ACT/NSW and the Aboriginal Medical Service. Redfern Legal Centre provides services across new South Wales and we acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the lands on which we work as the First People of this country.

Our vision for reconciliation

Redfern Legal Centre's vision for Reconciliation is the realisation of self-determination for First Nations peoples, and equal rights and opportunities for First Nations people. This vision includes equal access to justice for First Nations peoples.

It is for a society that respects, protects and promotes the rights of all. Our vision includes a justice system free from discrimination and bias, and laws, practices and policies which ensure equality and respect for the human rights of First Nations people.

We acknowledge the atrocities of our history, the ongoing harm caused by systemic racism and intergenerational trauma and the importance of reparation. As an organisation working within the legal system, we acknowledge the harm that the legal system has and continues to cause. Our RAP is a commitment to continue a shared journey with First Nations peoples walking towards a better future, one based on truth-telling, equality and trust.

First Nations justice is core to Redfern Legal Centre's vision and work. Redfern Legal Centre is committed to holding itself accountable to our RAP actions and deliverables. We remain committed to Makarrata ('truth-telling') and to the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Our work

Redfern Legal Centre (RLC) is a non-profit community legal centre that provides access to justice. RLC was inspired by the inception of the Aboriginal Legal Service, established in 1970 in Redfern.

RLC was established in 1977 and was the first community legal centre in NSW and the second in Australia. RLC is based in Redfern, on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation. RLC is committed to honouring our inception, legacy and location through an ongoing commitment to supporting and amplifying the work of First Nations organisations and local communities.

We provide free legal advice, legal services and education to people experiencing disadvantages to our local community and statewide. We work to create positive change through policy and law reform work to address inequalities in the legal system, policies and social practices that cause disadvantage. Across all our practice areas, we aim to address historic harm and address discrimination and bias through working with First Nations people in our legal services and law reform work.

We provide effective and integrated free legal services that are client-focused, collaborative, non-discriminatory and responsive to changing community needs. Our specialist legal services focus on tenancy, credit, debt and consumer law, financial abuse, employment law, international students, First Nations justice, police accountability, and we provide outreach services including through our health justice partnership.

Redfern Legal Centre is both a local and a statewide community legal centre. We provide place-based services, through a number of outreaches and partnerships and at our office based in Redfern, to our local catchment, which includes Redfern, Waterloo and Inner Sydney. We also provide some specialised services on a statewide basis.

Redfern Legal Centre employs around 35 staff, and we work with hundreds of volunteer lawyers and students each year to amplify our reach and capacity.

Redfern Legal Centre is governed by a Board of Directors. We currently have two First Nations Directors. The Chair of our Board is a proud Wiradjuri man. We employ four First Nations staff – a First Nations Justice Solicitor, a First Nations Engagement Worker, a First Nations Intake Supervisor and a Financial Counsellor.

Across all our practice areas, we provide a priority service to First Nations clients. RLC's First Nations Justice practice includes a First Nations Engagement Worker and a First Nations Justice Solicitor. The First Nations Justice Practice works in partnership with local First Nations organisations to deliver outreach, strengthen relationships and provide culturally safe and trauma-informed services. These organisations include local First Nations women's domestic violence services, services for survivors of the Stolen Generations and their descendants, food support organisations, health organisations and community centres. The First Nations Justice solicitor provides free legal advice, representation, information and community legal education to First Nations people across a range of legal areas.

The First Nations Engagement Worker works across all of RLC to ensure our services are culturally safe and accessible. The First Nations Engagement Worker works alongside other staff to help build meaningful and trusted connections between Redfern Legal Centre and the local First Nations community. The position involves maintaining strong relationships with stakeholder organisations, including through outreach and organising stalls at important First Nations events, and supporting First Nations clients in a holistic manner to ensure Redfern Legal Centre provides a culturally safe service.

Our Police Accountability practice identifies and advocates, in partnership with First Nations organisations, on systemic issues raised in our casework, including on policing practices and policies that disproportionately impact First Nations peoples and communities, including strip searches, stops and searches, mental health first responders and the fines system in NSW. We have drawn attention to and advocated for change on policing issues disproportionately impacting First Nations peoples, including through publication of relevant NSW Police data in reports and in our Police Accountability Dashboard.

We work towards a vision for self-determination through ongoing consultation and responsiveness to local and statewide First Nations organisations in how and where we provide free legal services and outreach, and in the law reform, policy and advocacy work that we do.

Our reconciliation journey

Redfern Legal Centre is located on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, the heartland of significant First Nations activism and First Nations organisations.

Since the establishment of Redfern Legal Centre in 1977, we have been committed, and remain committed, to working in partnership with First Nations peoples and organisations towards equality and self-determination for First Nations peoples, and to achieve access to justice.

RLC commenced its Reconciliation journey in 2015 when we convened an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, made up of key stakeholders from across the organisation and within our local community. Since 2015 we have built on several initiatives to improve access to justice for First Nations peoples.

We launched our first Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan in March 2023. Achievements under our previous RAP include:

- Affirming our commitment to respecting cultural protocols, through meaningful Acknowledgement of Country at meetings and Welcome to Country at significant events, in our office, on our website, emails and submissions.

- Ensuring that commitment to our RAP is embedded across RLC: in position descriptions, featured in our inductions, reviewed as part of staff performance and reported on at staff and Board meetings as a matter of governance.
- Increased participation in and contribution to significant First Nations events.
- Renaming rooms with First Nations names following consultation with First Nations experts and the local community.
- Improvement of cultural leave entitlements in the new RLC Enterprise Agreement, approved in May 2024.
- Increased procurement through First Nations companies and artists, including for artwork, catering, and staff t-shirts.

Challenges have included increasing First Nations student placements and First Nations employment as a community organisation in a competitive recruitment environment. We have done significant work to increase the cultural safety of our premises but have some limited scope in the building we are in, and we aim to address this by increasing our outreaches to local First Nations organisations. As a community legal centre we work within a colonial legal system that is inherently culturally unsafe and we work to continually address this through the way we deliver our services and working with First Nations organisations to identify systemic reform required to address this.

RLC's RAP working Group comprises members from across the organisation, including the:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Operating Officer
- Principal Solicitor
- First Nations Justice Solicitor
- First Nations Engagement Worker
- Media and Communications Manager
- A member of the Inner Sydney Tenants Advocacy and Advice Service
- Financial Counsellor, Financial Abuse Service
- Company and Tax Lawyer, Financial Abuse Service
- Intake Supervisor

This includes all four First Nations current staff members.

Our CEO is the RAP champion and drives internal staff engagement and awareness of our RAP responsibilities.

Relationships



Maintaining strong relationships with First Nations people, organisations and communities is fundamental to RLC's RAP and our work. We know that building these relationships will enhance the quality and value of RLC's work.

We are committed to ongoing work to strengthen relationships with First Nations organisations and communities, and to improving our partnerships with First Nations organisations. We recognise that trust with First Nations peoples is built over time, through presence, reciprocity, and deep listening. As a legal service located on Gadigal land, we honour the leadership of local organisations, Elders and advocates who have shaped this area's proud history of First Nations resistance and justice. Our reconciliation journey is grounded in real, long-term partnerships that are responsive to community needs and led by cultural protocols and respect. We consider participation in Reconciliation and NAIDOC week events, and other significant local events, critical to our ongoing commitment to reconciliation and to strengthening our relationships.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Continue to develop, maintain and strengthen our relationships with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to inform our work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and stakeholders.	March 2026 October 2026 March 2027 September 2027	CEO First Nations Engagement Worker and First Nations Justice Solicitor
	Develop an engagement plan and stronger referral and capacity building relationships with First Nations organisations in RLC's Financial Abuse Service.	March 2026	Managing Lawyer, FAS and Financial Counsellor, FAS
	Review and update an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations across the organisation and in each practice.	April 2026	First Nations Engagement Worker
2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2026 May 2027	CEO Media and Communications Manager
	RLC staff members to contribute through volunteering and material support to a National Reconciliation Week or Sorry Day event run by a local ACCO.	27 May – 3 June, 2026 27 – 3 June, 2027	First Nations Engagement Worker

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Encourage and support staff to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW run by a local ACCO, local organisation or community legal sector organisation such as Coota Girls Sorry Day event.	27 May – 3 June, 2026 27 May – 3 June, 2027	First Nations Engagement Worker
	Organise at least one National Reconciliation Week event each year, with a focus on reconciliation – either just for RLC staff or for RLC staff and external stakeholders and organisations.	27 May – 3 June 2026 27 May – 3 June, 2027	CEO First Nations Engagement Worker and COO
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May – 3 June 2026, 2027	CEO
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	May 2026 May 2027	CEO
3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Ensure staff can participate in the CLCNSW First Nations Justice Working Group, CLCNSW Yarn Up days and CLCNSW Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Networks to drive reconciliation outcomes in the CLC sector.	April 2026 April 2027	CEO
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	27 May – 3 June, 2026 27 May – 3 June, 2027	CEO Media and Communications Manager
	Work with our stakeholders including other community legal centres and pro bono partners to drive reconciliation outcomes.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
	Review staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	May 2026 May 2027	CEO
	Continue our commitment to Makarrata ('truth-telling') and to the Uluru Statement from the Heart through participation in truth telling events and promotion of Makarrata and Uluru Statement from the Heart events.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Regularly review our cultural safety, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination policies.	May 2026 May 2027	CEO
	Ensure all staff participate in cultural awareness and decolonisation training each year, including education on the effects of racism.	October 2026 October 2027	CEO
	Consult with First Nations staff members and RAP working group members on cultural safety, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination policies.	June 2026 June 2027	CEO
	Ensure Management and the Board review and reflect on contemporaneous conversations and research surrounding the effects of racism.	June 2026 June 2027	CEO

Respect



RLC is committed to working with First Nations people, communities and organisations in a respectful manner.

We believe it is crucial that our staff and volunteers are constantly increasing their understanding of and respect for First Nations people, culture and histories. We are committed to listening and understanding to ensure we work together with First Nations people and organisations to acknowledge history and work together for positive change to address inequality and discrimination.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	October 2026 October 2027	Lead: CEO Support: First Nations Engagement Worker
	Consult local Traditional Owners to inform our cultural learning strategy.	September 2026 September 2027	CEO
	Run mandatory training for all staff that includes anti-racism and cultural awareness training to enrich their understanding and engagement with First Nations Peoples.	November 2026 November 2027	CEO
	Develop and deliver a “Reconciliation in Practice” internal learning series for all staff, focused on allyship, anti-racism, and culturally safe legal practice, grounded in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worldviews.	April 2026	First Nations Engagement Worker
	Review the cultural learning strategy for student and lawyer volunteers that includes the history of Redfern, cultural protocols and respectful language, and trauma informed and best practice.	April 2026	CEO Support: First Nations Engagement Worker

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Display an Acknowledgement of Country on website, email footers, publication and onsite locations and ensure staff are aware of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols.	May 2026 May 2027	Media and Communications Officer
	Develop and maintain a Style Guide that includes consistent, respectful and strengths-based language with respect to First Nations people and communities.	April 2026	Media and Communications Manager
	Update Cultural Safety policy to ensure it includes protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	May 2026 May 2027	CEO
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events as they occur.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important meetings including staff meetings, board meetings, and training sessions.	March 2026 March 2027	Chair of meetings
7 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week and Yabun.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, 2026 First week in July, 2027	First Nations Engagement Worker
	Hold at least two stalls in a local NAIDOC week event organised by a local First Nations organisation such as National Centre for Indigenous Excellence (NCIE).	First week in July, 2026 First week in July, 2027	First Nations Engagement Worker
	Hold a stall and promote and encourage staff and volunteer participation at Yabun Festival.	January 2027 January 2028	Lead: First Nations Engagement Worker Support: Media and Communications Manager
	Promote and encourage participation for all staff in external NAIDOC events including through ensuring HR policies and procedures encourage participation.	July 2026 July 2027	CEO

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8 Demonstrate respect for cultural safety for First Nations clients of our services.	Ensure availability of a First Nations staff member for each appointment with a First Nations client where appropriate or requested.	March 2026 March 2027	Principal Solicitor First Nations Justice lawyer
	Provide a priority service to First Nations clients through ensuring that First Nations clients are considered a priority for service for each practice at Redfern Legal Centre.	March 2026 March 2027	Principal Solicitor
	Conduct regular community legal education sessions, in person or online, on topics developed in consultation with First Nations local organisations and communities.	November 2026 November 2027	Lead: First Nations Engagement Worker

Opportunities



RLC is committed to improving employment and professional development opportunities for First Nations people, including law students and staff, and to attraction and retention of First Nations staff.

We believe a more inclusive and equitable workplace will improve our organisation for all staff and for the communities we serve and contribute to improving access to justice and systemic issues for First Nations people and the broader community. Redfern Legal Centre understands that reconciliation is incomplete without the redistribution of opportunity. We are committed to reshaping legal pathways for First Nations people through employment, leadership, and culturally safe environments. Our aim is not just diversity, but structural transformation: ensuring First Nations people are not only included, but are leading, shaping and redefining their future of justice.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Review and update RLC's First Nations Employment Strategy and Recruitment, Selection and Employment Policy.	November 2026	CEO
	Ensure RLC's First Nations Employment Strategy and Recruitment, Selection and Employment Policy remains best practice, including through consideration of CLC Australia's 'Recruiting and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees: A Guide for community legal centres' and 'Gari Yala: speak the Truth' from Jumbunna and Diversity Council.	November 2026	CEO
	Increase opportunities for professional advancement into senior and management roles for First Nations staff.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
	Consult with First Nations staff and stakeholders to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	June 2026 June 2027	CEO

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
	Engage with First Nations staff on the First Nations Employment Strategy and Recruitment, Selection and Employment Policy and their efficacy.	September 2026	CEO
	Ensure that Redfern Legal Centre is a culturally safe workplace for First Nations staff through regular consultation and reflection, as set out in the Recruitment, Selection and Employment Policy.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
	Advertise job and volunteer vacancies to effectively reach First Nations people including through advertising through: - Indigenous Employment Australia. - First Nations education units - Stating that First Nations people are strongly encouraged to apply in all job and volunteer advertisements.	March 2026 March 2027	Media and Communications Manager
	Provide access to a First Nations counsellor for external debriefing support and counselling for First Nations staff as desired.	April 2026 April 2027	COO
	Continue to apply for funding for specific First Nations roles and programs at RLC.	June 2026 June 2027	CEO
	Develop an internship opportunity for a First Nations person to work with RLC's First Nations Engagement Worker including through exploration of opportunities for funding and partnership.	June 2027	First Nations Engagement Worker
10 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Finalise a procurement policy that includes First Nations procurement.	June 2026	CEO
	Continue to consider opportunities for First Nations procurement including artwork, design work, catering and other procurement.	March 2026 March 2027	Lead: CEO Support: Media and Communications Manager
	Increase staff awareness of First Nations procurement opportunities.	November 2026 November 2027	CEO Support: First Nations Engagement Worker



Redfern Legal Centre is grounded in a place of resistance, reform and legal innovation. Our governance is ethical, relational and place based.

As a community legal centre on Gadigal land, we embed truth-telling, accountability and cultural safety into our decision-making, systems and structures. We commit to modelling what it means for a legal organisation to walk the talk of reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11 Ensure First Nations perspectives are included in RLC governance.	Maintain at least one First Nations Board Director.	November 2026 November 2027	CEO
	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	November 2026 November 2027	CEO
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	April, June, August, October, December, 2026, 2027.	CEO
	Review and Maintain a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO
12 Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	April 2026 April 2027	CEO
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	February 2026 February 2027 February 2028	CEO
	Maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January 2027 January 2028	CEO
	Maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	March 2026 March 2027	CEO

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	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 2026 June 2027	CEO
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAPImpactSurvey.	1 August 2026 1 August 2027	CEO
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2026 30 September 2027	CEO
	Report RAP progress to all staff monthly at staff meetings and quarterly to the Board of Directors.	Monthly, quarterly	CEO
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings in our annual report.	November 2026 November 2027	Media and Communications Manager
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2026	CEO
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	February 2027	CEO
14 Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	November 2026	CEO

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