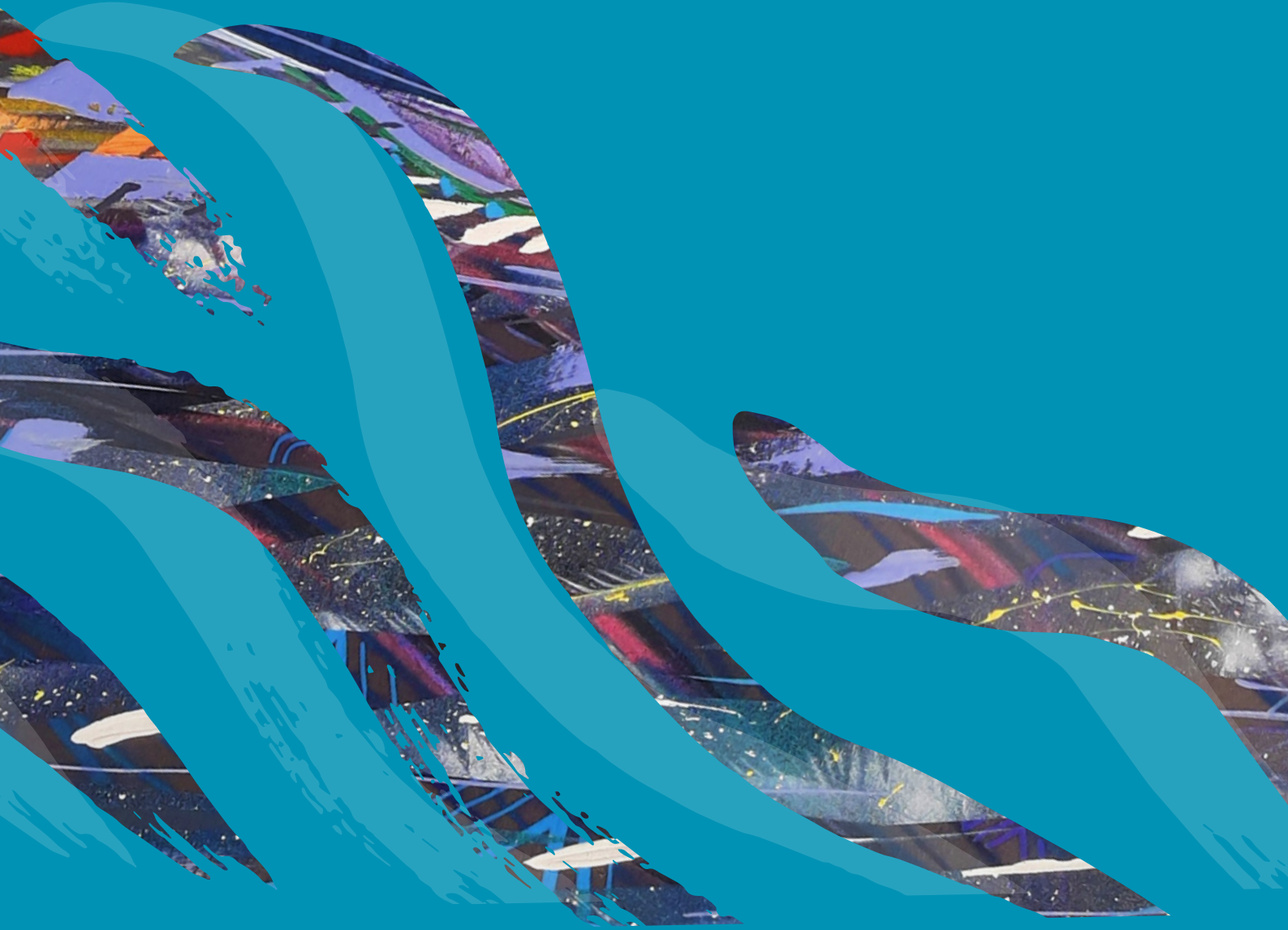


Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2024 - January 2026



The background of the page features several large, overlapping, and textured blue brushstrokes that sweep across the upper half of the image, creating a dynamic and artistic feel.

Acknowledgement of Country

Peninsula Community Legal Centre acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country, recognises their continuing connection to land, water, and community and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

Reconciliation Australia

CEO Statement

Reconciliation Australia commends Peninsula Community Legal Centre on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

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

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

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for Peninsula Community Legal Centre to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, Peninsula Community Legal Centre will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Peninsula Community Legal Centre is part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Peninsula Community Legal Centre's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Peninsula Community Legal Centre on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Our vision for reconciliation

The Peninsula Community Legal Centre believes in a fair and inclusive society that promotes and protects human rights and equality before the law for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are restored to a place of equality, dignity, respect, and where they achieve social justice.

We are committed to providing culturally safe, responsive, and welcoming legal services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to building relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.

We are committed to actively contributing to Australia's reconciliation journey, and support and respect the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination.

Our business

PCLC is an independent, not-for-profit organisation that has been providing free legal services to vulnerable and disadvantaged people in Melbourne's outer southeast since 1977. Today, it is one of the largest community legal centres in Australia, spanning a catchment of over 2,600 square kilometres, six local government areas and a population of almost one million people, with larger catchments for some programs. The Centre has five offices with the head office in Frankston and branch offices in Bentleigh East, Cranbourne, Pines (Frankston North) and Rosebud. PCLC also provides visiting outreach services in Chelsea, Clayton South, Clyde South, Pakenham and Hastings and other community venues as required.

As is typical of community legal centres, PCLC provides legal information, advice, ongoing legal assistance, and representation, and undertakes community legal education, community development and public advocacy activities. In addition to its general legal services, the Centre operates programs and services in family law, family violence, fines, private tenancy, rooming house outreach and civil and criminal law. PCLC currently has 56 paid employees and 120 volunteers. PCLC introduced voluntary diversity questions for employees, which includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identification, to date no employee has identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. We hope that this will be addressed with the introduction of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.

We provide clients with free and accessible legal services, particularly the most disadvantaged and marginalised in our community who may otherwise 'fall through the gaps' because they cannot afford private lawyers and would not qualify for legal aid. Our clients are low income earners with 75% on no or low income (less than \$26,000 gross per annum).

PCLC is primarily funded through the Community Legal Services Program of the Australian Attorney General's Department and Victorian Department of Justice and Regulation. It also receives funding from local governments and private foundations.

Our RAP

PCLC is an organisation based within a social justice framework. Our vision is an Australian society where all people are treated fairly and with respect and are considered equal. Much of Australia's history of colonisation has remained untold and in many cases unaccepted. It is important that the impact of colonisation is recognised and addressed. As a legal assistance organisation we have the opportunity to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards social justice. We can play a role in improving the outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through legal assistance, advocacy and law reform with a view to restoring equity, dignity and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, for this to be possible we need to create culturally safe and responsive services, work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations and provide our staff with culturally focussed professional development.

We recognise and honour the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the richness and diversity of their cultures. We wish to formalise our commitment to reconciliation by standing beside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the pursuit of change and recognition in the justice system and, more broadly, society as a whole.

This is the beginning of our organisation's reconciliation journey and this is the first Reconciliation Action Plan developed by the Centre.

This Reconciliation Action Plan is an opportunity to continue to strengthen our capacity to work alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the pursuit of social justice through the development of culturally appropriate policies and programs.

This process is being driven by our RAP Working Group which includes:

Jackie Galloway – CEO
 Kirsten Young – Community Engagement Officer
 Jackie Currie – Project Worker
 Warren Wheeler – Tenancy Advocate

PCLC has invited a prominent local Aboriginal community member to join the RAP Working Group to provide support, advice and the Aboriginal voice to the RAP.

Shirley Slann – Community Adviser

Our Reconciliation Action Plan journey

Our reconciliation action plan has been developed in consultation with and has the full support of our Management Committee, Leadership Team, and PCLC staff. We also consulted with external advisers from the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation and the Bunurong Country Foundation.

Our reconciliation journey to date has been to build relationships with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations, with regular attendance at meetings and events and William Warrain Aboriginal Association and Nairn Marr Djambana Aboriginal Association. We also work together with Djirra and Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service to ensure that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities in our catchment have access to safe and responsive legal assistance services.

PCLC attends the NAIDOC Dinner organised by Nairn Marr Djambana, we have sponsored a table with seats made available for community members. We have also participated in a range of networks such as the Aboriginal Action Group facilitated by Nairn Marr Djambana, as well as ad hoc consultations on various legal issues organised by Dhelk Dja and the Regional Aboriginal Justice Access Committee. We attend the annual reconciliation walk and flag raising ceremony with Willum Warrain. We have enhanced our relationship with Bunjilwarra – Koori Youth Alcohol and Drug Healing Service, with our StreetLaw visits and look forward to further developing the relationship through our RAP. We accept referrals from Djirra and Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service when their clients are in our catchment.

All staff have participated in cultural awareness training conducted by The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, (VAACA). A number of staff members have also completed the online Cultural Competency Course from the Centre for Cultural Competence Australia. We have Aboriginal Language Maps and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags displayed in all our offices. We commence all meetings with an Acknowledgement of Country and acknowledge that our offices are located on Boon Wurrung and Bunarong lands.



relationships

Building strong and effective relationships based on mutual respect and trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and community organisations is the cornerstone on which our Reconciliation Action Plan is built. It is only through true partnership that we can deliver services that are responsive to the legal needs of those communities because they know what their issues are and what is needed to address them. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' values, beliefs, and cultures need to inform the services we deliver to ensure that our services are culturally safe and appropriate.

ACTION 1

Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	February 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Team
Continue to work with and strengthen our relationship with Willum Warrain, Nairm Marr Djambana and Bunjilwarra.	December 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Team
Continue to support Willum Warrain with an annual organisational membership.	June 2024	Lead: CEO
Establish relationships with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Gathering Places across the South East such as Derrimut Weelam in the City of Kingston and the Casey Aboriginal Gathering Place.	March 2024	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Broaden our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support services which are relevant to legal services such as VACCA and Ngwala Willumbong and strengthen relationships with them.	February 2024	Lead: CEO
Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members, stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	March 2024	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer Support: RAP Working Group

ACTION 2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	April 2024 April 2025	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2024 May 2025	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer Support: RWG
Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May 2024 May 2025	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer Support: RWG
Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2024 May 2025	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer Support: RWG
RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2024 May 2025	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer Support: RWG

ACTION 3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	March 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Officer
Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	June 2024	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly, by having either our RAP or our Vision for Reconciliation on our Website/Annual Report.	March 2024	Director Business & Operations
Explore additional active forms of communicating PCLC's commitment to Reconciliation such as, social media posts, media releases and discussion forums with partner agencies and the wider community.	March 2024	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Identify and establish contacts with key Local Government staff, to share knowledge and resources they have in relation to local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	April 2024	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	May 2024 December 2024 May 2025 December 2025	Lead: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer Support: RWG

ACTION 4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Review and enhance PCLC's resources to educate senior leaders and staff on the effects of racism.	February 2024 February 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Review current anti-discrimination policies, in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander colleagues and/or advisors. Strengthen as identified then implement and communicate policy changes.	June 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	June 2024	Project Worker
Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	July 2024	Project Worker
Implement policy, procedure and service delivery improvements based on the outcomes of the research and review.	August 2024	Project Worker

ACTION 5 Investigate opportunities to strengthen the relationship between PCLC and Aboriginal legal services (VALS and Djirra).

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Explore collaborative partnerships with Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service (VALS) and Djirra Legal Services to establish referral mechanisms to strengthen access to PCLC legal assistance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in our catchment.	June 2024	CEO
Explore collaborative partnerships with VALS and Djirra to establish improved communications regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in our catchment area	June 2024	Lead: CEO



respect

Ensuring that our services are delivered in a culturally sensitive manner is vital to their success. We are committed to formalising cultural learning opportunities and protocols for our staff so that they are better equipped to represent our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in a respectful manner that addresses their needs and provides a positive experience. It will also build staff capacity to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and community organisations in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner.

ACTION 6

Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Provide Cultural Awareness Training to all Staff and explore opportunities for staff cultural immersion sessions with our local gathering place Willum Warrain.	February 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	June 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	August 2024	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	June 2024	Lead: CEO Support: RWG
Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	June 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker

ACTION 7

Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	February 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	June 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events.	Where possible	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Build on our existing acknowledgements to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols on our communication channels, ie website, social media, sharepoint and ELMO.	May 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Director of Business & Operations, Business & Operations Co-ordinator
Review our email sign off with identification of the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our offices are located.	May 2024	Director of Business & Operations, Business & Operations Co-ordinator
Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	June 2025	CEO

ACTION 8

Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2024 July 2025	Lead: CEO Support: RWG
Promote and encourage staff participation in external NAIDOC events.	July 2024 July 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Continue to participate in the annual Frankston/ Mornington Peninsula NAIDOC Dinner.	July 2024 July 2025	CEO
Continue to provide a sponsorship of a NAIDOC Award at the annual NAIDOC Dinner.	July 2024 July 2025	CEO
Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	May 2024 May 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker

ACTION 9

Explore opportunities to create a culturally welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and staff.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Purchase or commission local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artwork to be displayed in our offices.	April 2024	Lead: CEO Support: RWG
Continue to display Aboriginal Language Map & Flags in all our offices.	April 2024	Lead: CEO, Support: Director of Business Operations
Review and update current local Aboriginal controlled community organisations service brochures and/or posters in all our offices.	February 2024	Director of Business & Operations



opportunities

We recognise that the knowledge and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can contribute significantly to our work to improve access to justice. We are therefore committed to building our capacity to strengthen employment, referral and training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations. We wish to create a more inclusive and culturally appropriate environment that will ultimately increase the quality and cultural safety of legal and non-legal services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

ACTION 10 **Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.**

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Work towards increasing the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed or volunteering in our workforce.	January 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	January 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	January 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Advertise job vacancies to more effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	January 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to identify and remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	January 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker

ACTION 11

Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop a strategy document outlining the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	June 2025	Lead: Director of Business and Operations Support: RWG
Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	June 2025	Lead: Director of Business and Operations Support: RWG
Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2025	Lead: Director of Business and Operations Support: RWG
Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2025	Lead: Director of Business and Operations Support: RWG

ACTION 12 Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to consider a career with the Legal Assistance Sector.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Explore opportunities to establish work placements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students, such as internships or secondments, for legal and non-legal roles at PCLC.	January 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Explore opportunities to establish positions for graduate law student placements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students, through contacts with Deakin's Kiteri Institute, Chisholm TAFE Indigenous Engagement Units, Law Schools or participation in secondment programs such as King & Wood Malleson's Waiwa Mudena program.	January 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer

ACTION 13 Establish partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to increase access to legal services.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop referral pathways in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services.	February 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Develop referral pathways with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations.	February 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Identify potential opportunities for PCLC to provide training opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations/services staff on legal issues and legal referrals.	February 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services and communities to understand current gaps in legal services.	February 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Services and communities to explore ways of addressing any identified gaps in legal services.	February 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Review all internal referral guides and documents identifying external referral organisations, to ensure they include options for referral to specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support services.	February 2025	Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer



governance

ACTION 14

Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Review and Update the Terms of Reference for the RWG.	February 2024	Lead: CEO Support: RWG
Distribute the Terms of Reference of the RWG to all staff through our internal learning channels ie ELMO.	February 2024	Project Worker
Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation in February, May, August and November.	February 2024 May 2024 August 2024 November 2024	CEO
Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP working group, either through member participation or advisor participation.	February 2024 May 2024 August 2024 November 2024	CEO

ACTION 15

Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	January 2024	CEO
Include the RAP commitments as a running agenda item for the Executive & Leadership Team meetings.	January 2024	CEO
Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Review the internal RAP Champion from senior management.	June 2024	CEO

ACTION 16 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2024 September 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
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 2024 June 2025	CEO
Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2024 August 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Project Worker
Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2025	Project Worker
Include a report on RAP progress on the Agenda for Leadership, Staff and Team Meetings.	April 2024 July 2024 October 2024 January 2025	CEO
Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings in Law Wise, Annual Report.	October 2024 October 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Community Engagement, Education and Legal Policy Officer
Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	January 2026	CEO

ACTION 17 Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.

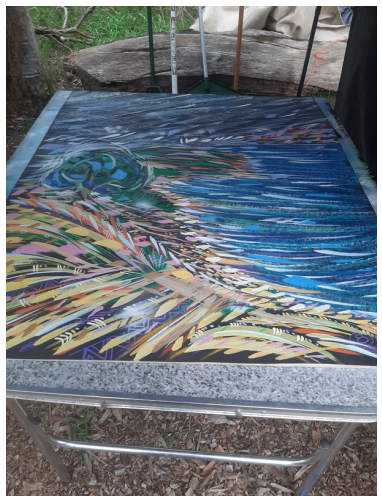
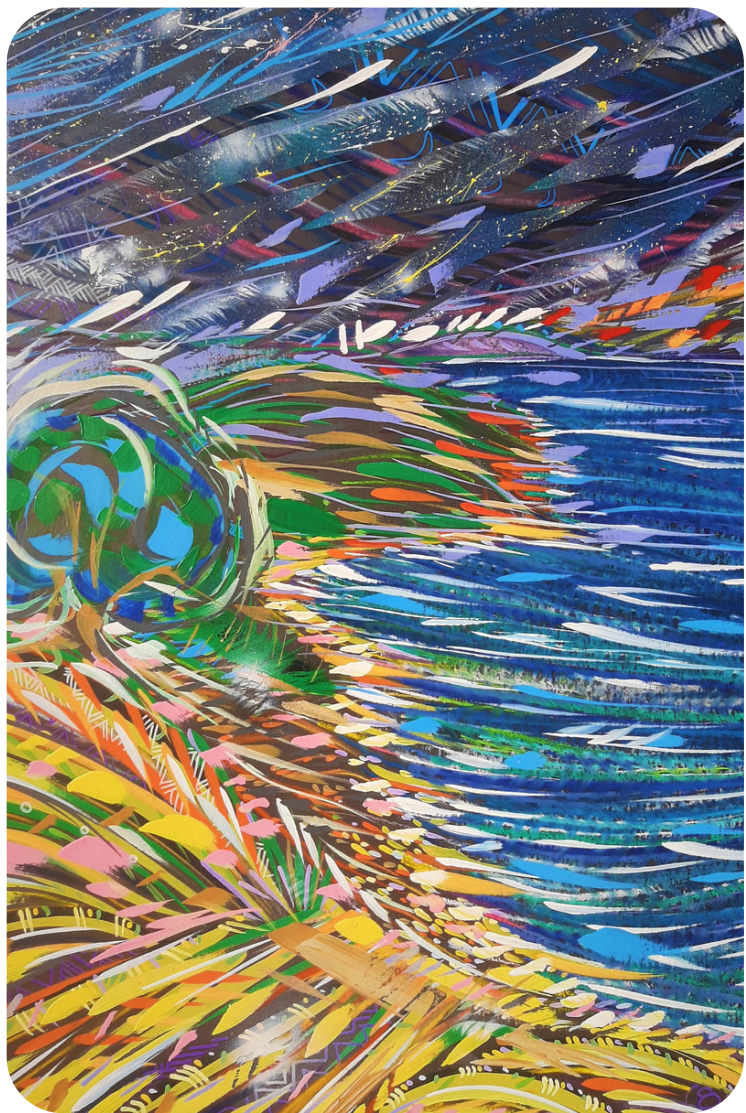
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2026	CEO

Artist: Adam Magennis

Adam Magennis is a Bunurong artist, Indigenous activist, archaeologist and Director of Kaptify Art Consultancy. Adam's professional career in the arts spans over 30 years. He has regular commissions for public art installations and has created various murals and sculptural works for public asset projects.

Kaptify is a Bunurong First Peoples Business, offering a Bunurong Artist in Residency Program, Country Cultural Immersion workshops and Multi Media Visual Art Services. The studio is located in Shoreham on the Mornington Peninsula.

PCLC warmly appreciates this commissioned artwork of Adam Magennis, featured throughout our Reconciliation Action Plan. The piece depicts the beauty of Bunurong Country, where the land meets the sea.



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