

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

December 2023 - December 2025



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE

qcooss



Acknowledgement

QCOSS is committed to reconciliation and self-determination of First Nations Peoples.
We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of
Australia and recognise the many unique cultures as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians.
We pay our respect to the Elders of these lands; past and present.



About the Artwork

NGAPI DAGIL (Many Strong/Strengths)

This work was guided by the age-old practices of strength and safety in numbers. When we lead forward together, side by side (rather than from the top) we have better outcomes. The artwork reflects this as communities come together from many different backgrounds through many different pathways. We come together to yarn, share, learn and navigate change together. We move respectfully forward with strength and optimism. Our focus is without distraction and doubts out of focus. The cassowary tracks show our strength and uniqueness, and the waterholes represent our optimism to make good change.

About the Artist

Bernard Lee Singleton

"I paint, craft and make artefacts to ground myself. Through the process of making a spear or shaping the figure of a spirit, I connect with my ancestors and they help bring my work to life. My work is a way for me to acknowledge and remember the times of my great-grandmothers and great-grandfathers. My designs are inspired by the laws of nature and the forms found in the creation stories around me. Using these basic forms or designs, I work to represent the bond of art and the continuation of culture." Bernard Lee Singleton is an accomplished craftsman, curator and designer, born and living in Cairns. Singleton grew up in Coen, Cape York. His mother is a Djabuguy woman born in Mona Mona mission near Kuranda and his father is an Umpila (east coast Cape York)/Yirrkandjiman from Yarrabah mission.



Contents Page

- Message from the Chair 5
- Message from Reconciliation Australia..... 7
- Our Commitment and Vision for Reconciliation 8
- Our business..... 8
- Our strategic goals (1 July 2023 – 30 June 2028) 9
- Our people – our greatest asset..... 10
- Our values..... 11
- Our Reconciliation Action Plan 12
- Our Reconciliation Action Plan Achievements/Progress 14
- Our Reconciliation Journey 15
- Relationships..... 16
- Respect 20
- Opportunities 27
- Governance 34

Message from the Chair



I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work, the Jagera and Turrbal people, and pay my respects to Elders past and present. I extend my respects to the Traditional Owners of the lands across Queensland where our members live and work.

QCOS' third Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is being released in a year where the importance of meaningful, practical, real reconciliation cannot be overstated. In the wake of the Voice referendum outcome, and the racism that has been experienced as a result, it has never been clearer that our state and nation must work, extremely hard, to address the truth and crimes of our colonial past and the present-day realities of systemic racism.

The QCOS Board supports the Uluru Statement from the Heart and its calls for Treaty and Truth. At this time, we reiterate our support for the Path to Treaty, it will provide Queensland with a way forward.

The QCOS RAP provides practical actions to progress our organisation's commitment to self-determination. A commitment that is clearly stated in our organisation's new strategic plan. Through implementation of our RAP QCOS will elevate the voices of First Nations People, promote diversity and inclusion within our organisation and further our path towards reconciliation.

As the peak body for the social service sector in Queensland, QCOS must lead the way in placing self-determination for First Nations People and reconciliation at the centre of our work. This is a key theme of our strategic plan and a guiding principle of our cultural capability framework. Our Innovate RAP, the culmination of 18 months' work, will be a powerful tool for making this vision a reality.

Thank you to Reconciliation Australia and BlackCard for your support in creating our third RAP.

Matt Gardiner
QCOS Chair

Message from the CEO



I acknowledge the Traditional Owner of the lands on which we work, the Jagera and Turrbal people, and pay my respects to Elders past and present. I extend my respects to the Traditional Owners of the lands across Queensland where our members live and work.

QCOSS is based in Kurilpa (West End) on the banks of Maiwar (the Brisbane River). Just over 200 years ago this area was a food hunting ground known for its black bean trees, native plum trees, and thousands of water lilies. As we observe our much changed physical environment, colonisation's changes are tangible.

In 2023, the year of the failed Voice referendum, it is urgent that we face up to the truth of our colonial legacy and work even harder to dismantle its entrenched racist systems. Our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) provides QCOSS with the opportunity to self-reflect on how we do this as an organisation, internally and externally.

This RAP, which sits with our Cultural Capability Framework and new Strategic Plan as guiding documents for our organisation in the coming years, seeks to position QCOSS as a culturally competent organisation that includes First Nations Peoples at all levels, and consistently demonstrates our respect and understanding for First Nations leaders and people in our sector and community.

It has been developed with the support of BlackCard, a specialist First Nations consultancy and training provider that works with a range of stakeholders to achieve culturally inclusive workplaces. In November 2022, BlackCard undertook an independent review of QCOSS' cultural capability and developed, in conjunction with QCOSS leadership, a tailored, fit for purpose Cultural Capability Framework. This framework, which underpins our Strategic Plan, also informed the RAP. It sets the roadmap for how QCOSS will create environments that are open, respectful and elevate the voices of First Nations People.

As the peak body for social services in Queensland, QCOSS works closely with Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSCIPP), Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland (ATSIHR) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Legal Service (ATSILS). We have thirteen community-controlled member organisations and deeply value their commitment and contribution to our social justice movement.

We can do more though. QCOSS' goal is equality, opportunity and wellbeing for Queenslanders. This means a society that works for all of us, not some of us.

As a peak, QCOSS has a responsibility to use our leadership role to demonstrate an ongoing commitment to reconciliation, recognition, human rights, truth and self-determination by and for Australia's First Nations Peoples. Our RAP is a key part of this.

Aimee McVeigh
Chief Executive Officer

Message from Reconciliation Australia CEO



Reconciliation Australia commends Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) on the formal endorsement of its 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 QCOSS 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, QCOSS 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 close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. QCOSS is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals QCOSS' 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 QCOSS on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Our Commitment and Vision for Reconciliation

Our vision is to achieve equality, opportunity and wellbeing for every person, in every community across Queensland. QCOSS acknowledges the historical injustice of colonisation and dispossession on First Nations Peoples and its ongoing impact and legacies.

We are committed to reconciliation, self-determination, and opportunity for First Nations Peoples as integral steps in achieving equality, opportunity and well-being for all Queenslanders.

QCOSS commits to walk and work alongside First Nations Peoples in our shared journey to foster stronger partnerships and relationships, understanding, and recognition of histories, cultures and diversity achieving meaningful outcomes meeting identified needs. We will use our leadership role to demonstrate and foster ongoing commitment to reconciliation, recognition, human rights, and self-determination by and for Australia's First Nations Peoples.

We will utilise our unique position as the peak body for social services in Queensland to set an example and benchmark of becoming a culturally competent organisation that includes First Nations Peoples in all levels of our organisation and consistently demonstrate our authentic respect and understanding for First Nations leaders and people in our sector and community. We will seek opportunities to use our network and influence to support the aspirations of community-controlled organisations and other initiatives that give life to the right to self-determination.

Our business

Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) is Queensland's peak body for the social service sector. For more than 60 years, we have brought people together to help solve the big social issues faced by communities in Queensland. QCOSS has one office, which is in West End, Brisbane Queensland. QCOSS is a conduit for social change. Our advocacy and policy development, capacity building work and engagement with the social service sector and the community is designed to achieve positive social change for all Queenslanders. To achieve our vision, we work hard to connect and engage communities, our members, the sector, other peak bodies, government and business. By working together, we amplify our collective voice and achieve the results our community needs.

We have approximately 500 members, including service providers and community organisations, advocacy and consumer groups and peak bodies, as well as individuals working in the community service sector. Associate members include organisations that support our vision. As of October 2022, 13 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations were QCOSS members.

A further two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander legal services were members. QCOSS seeks to work closely with community-controlled peaks including the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Council, the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak and Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland. QCOSS is part of the national network of Councils of Social Service.

Our strategic goals (1 July 2023 – 30 June 2028)

1 Influence: Actively participate in making change happen

- Build the density, diversity and connectedness of our organisational membership, using this strength to achieve change
- Solidify QCOSS' reputation as the independent advocate for a fair and just Queensland
- Create change that benefits people who are otherwise disadvantaged and ensure government policies, laws and investment do not cause or perpetuate disadvantage
- Support the full realisation of the right of First Nations People to self-determination.

2 Excellence: Strive for excellence as a sector

- Build a deep understanding of the entire community services sector in Queensland
- Strive for excellence with the community services sector in Queensland
- Partner to build the workforce the sector needs now and in the future
- Transform funding for community services in Queensland.

3 Performance: Cultivate a culture of high performance and accountability

- Cultivate a culture that supports highly valued and engaged staff to deliver excellent, impactful work
- Maintain systems that ensure we have the capability and resources to work together, collect data, develop evidence, engage effectively and deliver on projects
- Ensure we have the resources to be influential, powerful and high performing, including increasing revenue from non-government sources.

Our people – our greatest asset

Our office is located in West End, Brisbane, and our team advocate for and deliver projects with communities based across Queensland. QCOSS's employees are our greatest asset and the key to our success. QCOSS currently has 30 employees and is committed to diversity both on the Board and employees, at this stage there are no employees who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. One (1) of the QCOSS Board Directors identifies as a First Nations person. Recruitment to our Board and our employment practices aim to ensure our Board and workforce is reflective of the communities that we work alongside and within.

QCOSS' Human Resources Strategy has a range of key actions to ensure that QCOSS' workforce reflects and represents the diversity of our community, including culture, gender, age, and ability. What we have and will continue to do is ensure our recruitment processes are inclusive and targeted so that First Nations People are employed across the organisation including in leadership roles.



Our values

QCOSS' current values, and the description of each value is as follows:

1 Strength

We are a peak body for community organisations in Queensland.
We strive to work with our members to achieve our vision.
The community services industry forms part of the largest employer group in Queensland. Collectively, our work is motivated by wanting to make the world a better place. QCOSS has the potential to harness this power and use it to create change.

2 Optimism

Our vision of “equality, opportunity and wellbeing for every person, in every community” is long-term, ambitious and positive.
To achieve this long-term vision, we need to be independent, focused on our vision and pragmatic. We're not ideological, and we're not connected to any political party.

3 Respect

We respect all people, our sector, stakeholders, each other, and our environment. We respect the QCOSS movement and are committed to its longevity. We are financially sustainable and focused on ensuring we have reliable revenue sources and that we deliver high quality work efficiently.

We strive to have a high performing culture. This includes providing a good physical work environment, the tools employees need to do their jobs, opportunities to grow and learn, and the flexibility needed to ensure we can take care of ourselves and others.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Our Innovate RAP 2023-2025 is the third (3rd) Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) prepared and implemented by QCOSS. The RAP has been developed in partnership with BlackCard. BlackCard is a 100% owned business certified with Supply Nation. Additional guidance had also been provided through Reconciliation Queensland.

Further to the development of the RAP, the QCOSS Strategic Plan (2023-2028) has been underpinned by the RAP to support the full realisation of the right of First Nations People to self-determination.

Our RAP commits us to a deliberate journey of concrete actions to further reconciliation within our organisation, our sector and our work. It is endorsed by our Board and championed by the CEO.

In 2019, Queensland's *Human Rights Act* was introduced. The campaign that led to the introduction of the Act was significantly supported by QCOSS in a range of ways. The Act introduced new legal protections for the distinct cultural rights of First Nations Peoples. Queensland is the first Australian jurisdiction to specifically list this right in legislation. QCOSS is committed to supporting the proper implementation of the Act and ensuring that a human rights respecting culture develops in Queensland.

Our RAP was developed through the partnership with BlackCard in addition to guidance by Reconciliation Queensland and a RAP Committee. The RAP Committee has included the Executive Director Operations, Director Sector and Community, Senior Capacity Officer, Community Engagement Officer, Finance and HR Officer, and the Administration and Project Officer. Participation on the RAP Committee, and input into the RAP was open to all employees and included four (4) First Nations employees over the course of its development. The RAP was guided by early engagement with Reconciliation Australia.

Prior to finalising the draft, a consultation workshop, facilitated by BlackCard, was held with QCOSS' Australian Community Controlled (ACCO) members. The workshop aimed to ensure the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices of the social service sector informed the RAP's development. It did this by testing and refining QCOSS' additional commitments, deciding how the RAP could be effectively implemented, and looking at how QCOSS could enhance connection between ACCOs and the broader social services sector.

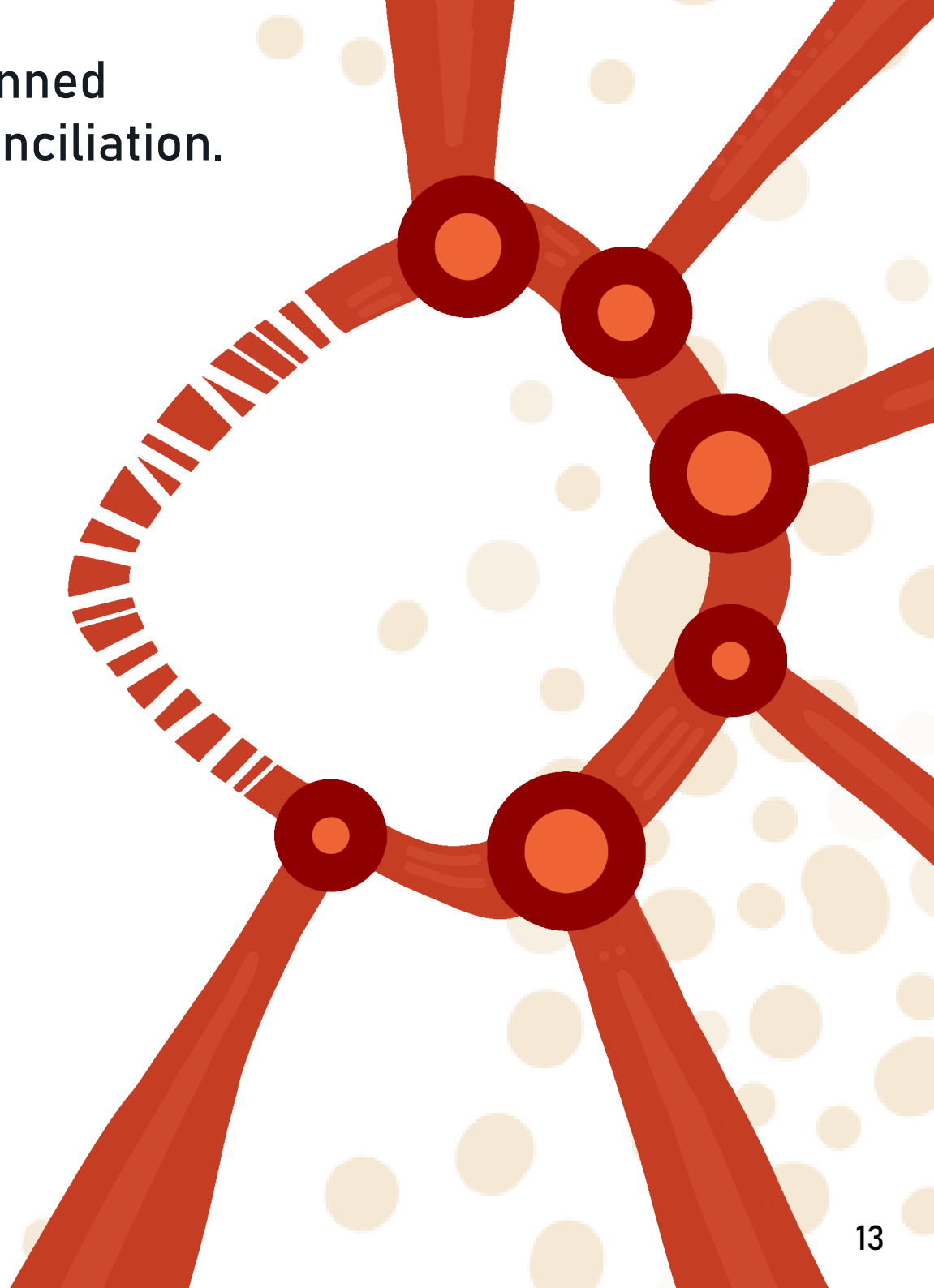


Our RAP is informed and underpinned by the five (5) dimensions of reconciliation.

- 1. Race Relations:** All Australians understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures rights and experiences, which results in stronger relationships based on trust and respect and that are free of racism.
- 2. Equality and Equity:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participate equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised and upheld.
- 3. Institutional Integrity:** The active support of reconciliation by the nation's political, business and community structures.
- 4. Unity:** An Australian society that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared national identity.
- 5. Historical Acceptance:** All Australians understand and accept the wrongs of the past and their impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Australia makes amends for past policies and practices ensuring these wrongs are never repeated.

RAP development

QCOSS wishes to thank all staff members, past and present, who contributed to the development of the RAP.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan Achievements/Progress

QCOSS implemented its first RAP in 2011 and its second in 2015. Since our most recent RAP concluded, QCOSS had a change in management with a renewed focus on the development of a RAP, which also included the preparation of a new strategic plan which is underpinned by a key goal and commitment to self-determination of First Nations people. At QCOSS, our commitment to reconciliation and self-determination informs all our work. This Innovate RAP is the culmination of 18 months' work in realising our new vision and strategic plan. It is an opportunity to embed our commitment to self-determination and to drive further opportunities across our organisation and membership. It places reconciliation and authentic engagement at the centre of our work.

QCOSS achieved many actions outlined in our previous RAPs and is committed to continuing to establish respectful working relations based on mutual trust, respect, and understanding. Since 2011, QCOSS has built successful partnerships and relationships that contribute to advancing policy change and support services that enhance the lives and opportunities for First Nations Peoples and their communities, specifically in the areas of early childhood education and affordable living.

Through our two previous RAPs, we have continued to grow our knowledge and experience of what a successful reconciliation journey entails.



Our Reconciliation Journey

- We progressed a partnership with BlackCard to undertake an internal Cultural Capability assessment to develop a First Nations Cultural Framework. The outcome of the assessment resulted in development of a Framework in addition to over 30 recommendations, which have been embedded into the Innovate RAP and resulted in several amendments to our Enterprise Bargaining Agreement.
- We embedded self-determination and reconciliation as a key goal/priority of our Strategic Plan and core business functions. We strengthened relationships and partnerships with First Nations Community Controlled organisations and First Nations Peoples.
- We implemented sector-wide e-learning modules through Community Door on cultural integrity and capability, which have been used by approximately 7,000 people in support of their ongoing education or employment.
- We have included a Welcome to Country as standard practice at key QCOSS events to recognise and highlight the place of First Nations Peoples as Custodians of this land and formally acknowledge First Nations histories and cultures and their connection to Land.
- We give an Acknowledgement of Country at all QCOSS facilitated internal and external meetings and events.
- We participate in, recognise, and promote National Reconciliation Week, Mabo Day, Sorry Day and NAIDOC Week.
- We provide employees with the opportunity to protest the Australia (Survival Day) public holiday by swapping it for another day.
- We have increased internal understanding of First Nations Peoples histories, traditions, and cultural protocols.
- We have provided cultural awareness training to all staff.
- We have been purposeful in recruiting First Nations Peoples, including by partnering with Indigenous Workstars to strengthen employment pathways and support recruitment processes.
- We have established and maintained a RAP Committee.
- We have ensured that the principles of reconciliation and self-determination of First Nations Peoples is embedded in our business strategy and our day-to-day business operations and practices.
- We have developed and continued to nurture and maintain, external partnerships and relationships.
- We have developed a HR Strategy with the key objectives of ensuring a culturally safe workplace, and increasing and retaining First Nations employees in our workforce.

Testimonial:

When we received a Human Services Quality Framework (HSQF) Corrective Action Plan, I was able to send it to Stacey in QCOSS. She pulled it apart and gave me links to different things – it was great... We want to stay true to our organisation, being Indigenous – staying culturally sensitive. QCOSS was able to help in that regard. I felt like I could just pick up the phone and talk to Stacey.” Aboriginal and Islander Development Recreational Women’s Association

Relationships

Our relationship with First Nations People, organisations and communities is integral to the success of the work that we do and achieving our vision of equality, opportunity, and wellbeing for all Queenslanders. We respectfully recognise that all our work and advocacy with and on behalf of First Nations People must be collaborative and achieved in partnership.

We commit to developing and maintaining respectful and meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations.

Focus area: Self Determination of First Nations People

Priority Area: Act on opportunities to improve and increase the ability of First Nations People to realise their right to self-determination

Objectives:

- Understand, support, and respond to the unique needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations.
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and representation are embedded in our work.

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	March 2024	CEO
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy
	Build on the Place-Based Guide and Toolkit to develop sector guidance on how to formalise shared decision-making, so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are empowered to share decision-making authority with the social services sector, to accelerate policy and place-based progress on Closing the Gap through formal partnership arrangements.	December 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	27 May- 3 June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	RAP Committee members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May- 3 June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	May 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	June 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	March, June, September and December 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement Communication and Sector Development
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders, in particular our membership to drive collaboration and connectedness in reconciliation outcomes.	March, June, September and December 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Include link to Reconciliation Action Plan in online induction and ensure it is reviewed by all new employees and annually by all existing employees.	January 2024, and 2025	Executive Director Operations
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination and cultural safety strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	June 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	March 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Implement training for all employees including the Exec Leadership Team on the effects of racism.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination and cultural safety strategies.	Coordinate cultural safety training for all employees and embed culturally safe principles and practices in QCOSS.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Identify opportunities to promote the development of culturally safe workplaces and to raise the profile of First Nations leaders in the social services sector.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication, and Sector Development
5. Build relationships and demonstrate a commitment to respectful and authentic relationships with First Nations Peoples and Community Controlled organisations.	Identify relevant state-based peak organisations as key external stakeholders to inform the development of the Cultural Capability resources for out sector.	June 2024	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Include advocacy of special measures within our human rights and First Nations strategic focus areas.	June 2024	CEO
	Consider how we can support, advocate for and influence adoption and full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Bill 2022.	June 2024	CEO
	Develop formal partnership agreements with Queensland peaks of community-controlled sectors.	June 2024	CEO
	Establish and work with a First Nations reference group.	February 2024	CEO

Respect

QCROSS respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and acknowledges the continuing contribution that First Australian Peoples, organisations and communities make towards achieving equality, opportunity, and wellbeing for all Queenslanders. We also believe it is important to understand and acknowledge the right to self-determination for First Australian peoples and move towards reconciliation for all Australians. QCROSS will utilise its unique position as the peak body for social services in Queensland to set an example and benchmark of becoming a culturally competent organisation that includes First Nations Peoples in all levels of our organisation and consistently demonstrate our authentic respect and understanding for First Nations leaders and people in our sector and community.

Focus area: Self Determination of First Nations People

Priority Area: QCROSS will actively seek opportunities to use our network and influence to support the aspirations of First Nations People, community-controlled organisations and other initiatives that give life to the right to self-determination.

Objectives:

- Understand, support, and respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations.
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and representation are embedded in our work.
- Support the Queensland Path to Treaty process.

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. 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.	March 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	July 2024	CEO
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff.	December 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Provide opportunities for RAP Committee members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Ensure that the online induction for all new employees includes modules on cultural integrity.	July 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Review cultural integrity modules annually, which are to be completed annually by all employees.	December 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Provide cultural awareness and safety information and communication to QCOSS members.	July 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Develop and implement a cultural capability framework in partnership with BlackCard for implementation both internally and to support the capacity building of the Community Services Sector.	January 2024, and 2025	Executive Director Engagement and Sector Development

Respect

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.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	July 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	AGM - Nov 2024 and 2025. Other major events on a case-by-case basis	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of all meetings.	Conducted at commencement of all meetings	Chief Executive Officer and all employees
	Host annual training with the Exec Leadership Team and Managers with a focus on cultural capability including ensuring that we apply culturally informed approaches in our day-to-day work, engage effectively, and foster a culture that respects and values First Nations peoples.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	When working on Country, ensure that First Nations leadership structures within First Nations communities are acknowledged.	August 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Committee to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	March 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	July 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Build a culturally competent organisation and social services sector that respects, includes and advocates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Include in all employee Position Descriptions the role, responsibilities and behaviours that employees are to demonstrate including awareness and respect for First Nations Peoples cultures, histories and traditions and social issues that may impact on their ability to engage and participate in programs and services.	July 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Promote days and dates of cultural significance to employees and members to recognise, respect and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples cultures.	March 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Add the following three (3) additional guiding questions to the Development of Position Statements and Submissions Policy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Does the reform infringe upon the unique rights of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples contained in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples? 2. Does the reform disproportionately or adversely impact Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples? 3. Where the reform is likely to infringe upon the unique rights of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, does QCOSS have the capacity to respond within the identified timeframe, incorporating Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation member engagement and/or First Nations subject matter expertise? 	July 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy
	Apply Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Ethical Research Principles to future research involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples.	July 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Build and Demonstrate respect for First Nations Peoples	Undertake analysis and engagement with the sector specifically to address the questions added to the Development of Position Statement Submissions Policy.	July 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy
	Update the sector guidance regarding place-based in the Place-based Guide and Toolkit approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to reflect free, prior and informed consent principles.	July 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy
	<p>QCOSS to formalise a process to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. QCOSS will formalise a process to document that engagement with the Aboriginal Community Controlled Sector has been undertaken; and 2. Ensure any written submission sets out the impact of the proposed reform on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. 	July 2024	Executive Director Research and Policy
	Actively engage and support First Nations Peoples in campaigns and advocacy related to self-determination and justice for First Nations Peoples.	<p>July 2024</p> <p>Ongoing in response to campaign development and delivery</p>	Executive Director Research and Policy

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Build and Demonstrate respect for First Nations Peoples	<p>Update the 'Grievances, Complaints and Disputes Management' policy to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The inclusion of terms 'culturally safe and appropriate' regarding how issues, enquiries and complaints are raised, investigated, and addressed; ✓ There are provisions for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees to access culturally safe complaints and remediate including, through ensuring cultural competence for personnel involved in the process and in particular determining the outcome; ✓ That Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees and/or complainants are provided with the opportunity to nominate a support person to be present during all parts of the process relating to a workplace complaint or subsequent counselling/disciplinary meeting; and ✓ Where a complaint involves an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee, ensure where possible the investigator is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person or someone who can demonstrate high levels of cultural competence to ensure the process is culturally informed, sensitive, and appropriate. 	April 2024	Executive Director Operations
11. Provide opportunities for First Nations Peoples to engage in Truth Telling to share their cultures, histories and heritage.	Explore, in consultation with the Treaty Commission, our role in terms of supporting a formal truth telling process regarding the impacts of faith-based organisations on First Nations peoples throughout Queensland, both historically and in a contemporary context, given many deliver services within the social services sector.	December 2024	CEO
	Seek opportunities to understand how Truth-telling is being implemented at a local level	December 2025	CEO

Opportunities

By creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through all aspects of our work, QCOSS ensures to leverage off the improved knowledge, relationships and promotion within the Queensland community services sector as our contribution to reconciliation and self-determination. Our efforts focus on improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities. The QCOSS Strategic Plan 2023-2028 and Human Resource Strategy have been developed concurrently with our Innovate RAP to ensure that the work we do to operationalise our commitments to self-determination were captured in our RAP. The RAP provides the framework to transform good intentions into measurable commitments and a deliberate journey of actions that QCOSS will take to demonstrate its dedication to reconciliation.

Focus area: Self Determination of First Nations People

Priority Area: Act on opportunities to improve the ability of First Nations People to realise their right to self-determination

Objectives:

- Understand, support, and respond to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisations.
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and representation are embedded in our work.
- Utilise our resources to support economic participation of First Nations People and First Nations social enterprise.

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Improve employment outcomes throughout the organisation by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	June 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	September 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development strategy.	December 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	April 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Elevate our management and leadership skills to effectively manage and support First Nations employees and colleagues.	August 2024 and August 2025	Executive Director Operations
13. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	March 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	February 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to employees.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Review and update the Procurement policy and practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Engage a First Nations Subject Matter Expert to co-design the development of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement and Contract Management Strategy to identify and provide recommendations regarding removing barriers to existing practices.	July 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Audit contestable spend, and undertake a First Nations market capability assessment aligned to opportunity to inform the development of a target for First Nations procurement spend.	July 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Review our position within the Procurement and Contract Management policy to acquire ownership to use all intellectual property that was created for its use and for which QCOSS has paid, in the context of Indigenous cultural and intellectual property (ICIP) with a view to observing, respecting and protecting the unique rights of First Nations peoples.	December 2024	Executive Director Operations
14. Advocate for new policies, or change to existing policies, to improve the social, health and wellbeing outcomes for First Nations People.	Undertake advocacy, leveraging the leadership and partnerships of QCOSS to meet the needs of First Nations Peoples.	June 2024 and 2025	CEO
	Implement recommendations from BlackCard's Cultural Capability Review of QCOSS.	June 2024 and 2025	CEO
15. Implement projects and activities that contribute to positive social outcomes for First Nations People and which build the capacity of Community Controlled Organisations.	Plan and resource an annual plan of practical actions, to develop the capacity of Community Controlled Organisations, aligned to identified needs.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Ensure the On Country Project Evaluation approach informs the development of resources for the sector, including key learnings and good practice, in consultation with QATSICPP.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Research and Policy

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16. Implement QCOSS Policy that contributes to positive employment outcomes for First Nations People.	Clarify expectations and provide instructions to the Executive Leadership Team and Management on the expectations and management of provisions for ceremonial leave in the EBA.	February 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Ensure the provisions for ceremonial leave clarify the definition of family, including specific reference to First Nations Kinship and that the application of Kinship applies to any type of leave, where employees are provided with provisions for family related matters.	December 2023	Executive Director Operations
	Ensure the provision for ceremonial leave clearly outlines eligibility criteria for how this leave is granted.	December 2023	Executive Director Operations
	Update our ceremonial/cultural leave provisions to meet cultural and/or ceremonial leave obligations and uphold and promote First Nation people's unique rights.	December 2023	Executive Director Operations
	Extend paid parental leave entitlements to foster care arrangements for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families known as Kinship Care.	December 2023	Executive Director Operations
	In partnership with a representative leadership group of the Aboriginal Community Controlled social services sector, advocate via formal submission during the next review cycle of the Social, Community, Home Care and Disability Services Industry Award 2010, amendments to reflect ceremonial and other leave provisions.	June 2024 and 2025	CEO
	Review the model of social and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Wellbeing Report which contains seven domains including body; mind and emotions; family and kin; community; culture; country; spirituality and ancestors to consider what additional supports may be required to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	June 2024	CEO
	Appoint a First Nations subject matter expert to participate in each stage of any performance management of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employee, subject to their consent. This should be in addition to the employee's nominated support person.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
16. Implement QCOSS Policy that contributes to positive employment outcomes for First Nations People.	Review and update the 'Managing Underperformance' policy to recognise that perceived underperformance of an employee may be attributable to discrimination and/or lack of cultural safety experienced by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander employee and that Management have the knowledge and ability to determine this as a cause and to address it effectively.	April 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Ensure that the 'Employee Misconduct and Management' policy defines culturally unsafe behaviours and acts or expressions of racism or racial discrimination as misconduct and provides a mechanism for First Nations subject matter expertise to be included in the investigation and subsequent stages of process to address misconduct.	April 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Ensure that the 'Employee Misconduct and Management' policy provides for the appointment of a First Nations subject matter expert to participate in all stages of the process, where the employee is an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee, to ensure procedural fairness.	April 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Review the Australian Human Rights Commission "Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people" on the application of 'special measures' within recruitment and selection processes and decisions, and apply to QCOSS recruitment.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Review the Australian Human Rights Commission "Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people" guidance, and develop supporting advice to the sector on the application of 'special measures'.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement, Communication and Sector Development
	Review recruitment and selection decisions for roles that a) have high touch points with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and/or b) where the function and role could disproportionately or adversely impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations



Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
17. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	March, June, September, and December 2024, and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	Establish June 2024 Review June 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	March, June, September, and December 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
18. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	April 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	June 2024 and 2025	CEO
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Develop a Policy to support payment to First Nations speakers for sharing their cultural expertise.	July 2024	Executive Director Operations
19. 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 Annually	Executive Director Operations
	Contract Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August Annually	Executive Director Operations
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
19. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Report RAP progress to the Board and all staff quarterly.	January, April, July, October 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	Annually November 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Engagement and Sector Development
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2024	Executive Director Operations
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at conclusion of this RAP.	June 2025	Executive Director Operations
20. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2025	Executive Director Operations
21. Continue our reconciliation journey.	Formally engage with Indigenous advisors to assist QCOSS to meet our RAP objectives.	July and December 2024 and July and December 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Engage with Local leaders and/or reps from CCOs to be invited to meet with the RWG twice per annum.	July and December 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations
	Update commitments in our Innovate RAP to ensure First Nations voices inform the development and implementation of key commitments, in particular, where there is required prerequisite cultural knowledge and the need to observe cultural sensitivities.	June 2024 and 2025	Executive Director Operations



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