



BUILDING
A HEALTHY
AUSTRALIA



NHMRC Innovate

Reconciliation Action Plan

MAY 2026 - MAY 2028



Yulang

The artwork reflects National Health and Medical Research Council's (NHMRC) mission of *Building a Healthy Australia*, particularly in the knowledge, research and community connection to improve health outcomes. It has strong parallels between Aboriginal ways of knowing and the work.

Yulang, meaning ripple in Wiradjuri language, represents the flow of knowledge, connection and progress. Like ripples moving across water, the artwork reflects how research, collaboration and shared understanding can create lasting impact across communities, generations and Country.

At the centre of the artwork is a meeting place, symbolising people coming together to share knowledge, learn from one another and strengthen community wellbeing.

The flowing pathways throughout the piece represent connection, movement and the sharing of ideas. They reflect how knowledge, care and innovation move through communities – connecting people, systems and Country and driving positive change.

The ripples woven throughout the artwork represent the ongoing impact that one action, one voice or one breakthrough can have on future generations. The layered colours of deep blues, purples, greens and muted reds represent strength, healing, growth, balance and connection to Country.

Yulang's palette was carefully developed to feel both contemporary and grounded, creating a strong visual identity that reflects NHMRC's commitment to health, research, collaboration and reconciliation, while recognising the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, community and connection in creating meaningful change.



Amy Kilby, artist



Amy Kilby is a proud Wiradjuri woman from the Riverina, New South Wales. Her passion for art began in childhood through painting and drawing and has continued to grow throughout her life.

As a young adult, Amy has expanded her practice into graphic design and digital mediums. She specialises in the digital adaptation of traditional Aboriginal art, thoughtfully blending cultural storytelling with contemporary techniques.

Amy's artwork explores the relationship between people, Country and shared knowledge, visually representing how communities come together to support one another, grow stronger and create positive features. She creates impactful and meaningful artworks that celebrate her Aboriginal identity, heritage and connection to Country, while bringing traditional narratives into a modern context.

Symbol meanings

There is no one correct meaning to any symbol as it varies depending of the person or tribe. These are Amy's personal interpretations:



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Reconciliation Australia CEO statement



Reconciliation Australia commends National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) on the formal endorsement of its third, 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. NHMRC 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 NHMRC will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

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

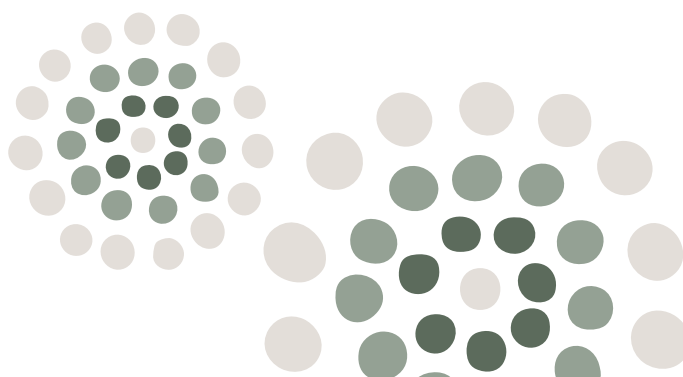
The RAP program's emphasis on *relationships*, *respect* and *opportunities* gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for NHMRC 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, NHMRC will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long term.

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

Congratulations NHMRC on your third Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



CEO foreword

At NHMRC, reconciliation is central to how we work and how we contribute to a healthier Australia. As Australia's leading expert body in health and medical research, NHMRC has a responsibility to support better health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. That responsibility is reflected across the full breadth of our work, from the research we fund, to the advice we provide, to the role we play in supporting high-quality research delivered ethically and with integrity.



Our vision for reconciliation is grounded in our broader vision for a health and medical research sector that is equitable, gender inclusive and enriched by diversity. We know that greater cultural understanding within NHMRC strengthens our ability to contribute to research that responds to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community priorities and helps address ongoing health inequities.

This RAP builds on the work NHMRC has already undertaken through its earlier RAPs and reflects our ongoing commitment to embedding reconciliation in our culture, systems and everyday work. It also reflects the important role NHMRC plays in supporting Indigenous-led research, funding priority health research, increasing participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and contributing to the broader national effort to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our achievements in recent years have included increasing investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research, exceeding our annual target for grants led by Indigenous chief investigators and strengthening support for Indigenous researchers across the sector. In 2024-25, 4.4% of awarded grants were led by Indigenous chief investigators and 8.3% (\$78,450,983) of the Medical Research Endowment Account (MREA) was spent on Indigenous health. We have also worked closely with our Indigenous Advisory Group to deliver priority activities, including implementation of the Indigenous Research Excellence Criteria, increasing the pool of Indigenous peer reviewers and identifying health priority areas for Targeted Calls for Research. Initiatives such as the Indigenous Virtual Internship Program and NHMRC's InFocus stories have also helped strengthen pathways and visibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and research.

This RAP recognises that meaningful progress takes sustained effort. It requires us to keep strengthening relationships, deepening cultural capability, creating opportunities and being accountable for the commitments we make. Through this RAP, NHMRC will continue working to build a culturally aware organisation and to ensure our policies, programs and partnerships support better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

I would like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, advisers, researchers, communities and partners whose knowledge, experience and leadership continue to guide this work. I also thank the RAP Working Group and all staff who contributed to the development of this plan.

I am pleased to endorse NHMRC's Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2026-2028 and the commitments it contains.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Wesselingh', written over a light blue grid background.

Professor Steve Wesselingh
Chief Executive Officer

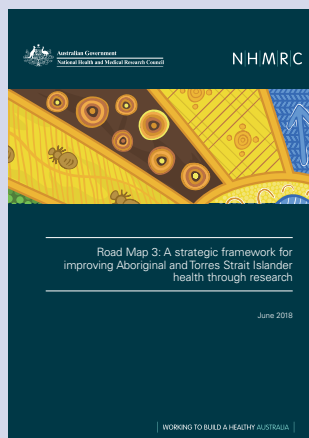
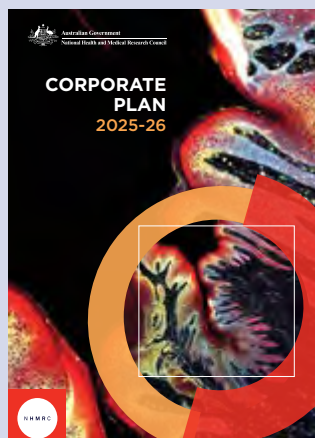
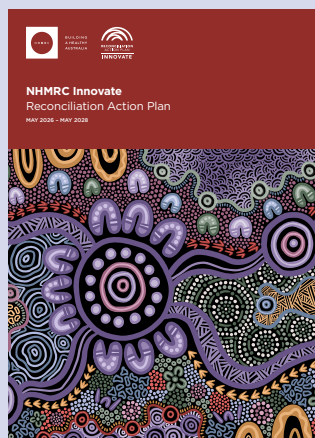
NHMRC's vision

Our vision for reconciliation is an Australia in which all people are able to live happy and healthy lives.

The vision of NHMRC is a health and medical research sector that is equitable, gender inclusive and enriched by diversity – where research design, participation and workforce reflect and respond to the full spectrum of lived experiences and talents needed to build a healthy Australia. To support this vision, we will continue to build an organisation that is culturally aware and committed to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, experiences and rights.

Greater cultural understanding within NHMRC will ensure we can improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through research that addresses health inequities.

Our vision is supported by our [RAP](#), our [Corporate Plan](#), [NHMRC's Road Map 3](#) (our 10-year strategic framework to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples) and our [Workforce Strategy](#). The development of our new RAP has been a priority for NHMRC, to ensure our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health is embedded in our culture.



Our business

NHMRC is building a healthier Australia by:



Investing in high-quality health and medical **research**.



Supporting the **translation** of research into policy, practice and better health outcomes.



Promoting the highest standards of ethics and **integrity** in research.

Our history

NHMRC is Australia's leading body for supporting health and medical research, setting standards for research ethics and advising on health issues. Established in 1936, NHMRC has played a pivotal role in shaping the nation's health landscape. Initially formed to coordinate medical research efforts and inform public health policy, NHMRC has evolved over the decades, expanding its remit to include funding exceptional research, developing national guidelines and providing evidence-based advice to build a healthy Australia.

Within this broader role, NHMRC is strongly committed to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – supporting Indigenous led research, funding priority health projects and working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to ensure that research is culturally respectful, impactful and contributes to social and emotional wellbeing. Our key achievements are outlined in the following pages.

Our commitment to evidence-based practice and innovation continues to shape Australia's response to contemporary health challenges, making NHMRC a cornerstone of the health and medical research landscape both nationally and globally.

Our commitment to reconciliation

The work of NHMRC aligns with the Closing the Gap targets, specifically target **1** everyone enjoys long and healthy lives.

NHMRC also contributes to the following targets:

- 2** children are born healthy and strong
- 4** children thrive in their early years
- 14** people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing.



The *NHMRC Road Map 3: A strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health* through research is a 10-year plan to improve the health of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Road Map 3 has a focus on three priority areas: strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researcher workforce; engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; and support research in high priority areas.

NHMRC is committed to:

- strengthening cultural competence. This is more than cultural awareness. It is the set of behaviours, attitudes and policies that will enable us to work effectively in cross-cultural situations
- further strengthening our procurement policies, to maximise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and supplier opportunities
- raise internal and external awareness of our RAP, including communicating regularly with staff on updates about and progress with the RAP
- strengthening existing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, identify gaps and encourage relationship development in those areas
- raise the agency's profile and visibility to attract, retain and foster Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, interns, researchers and recipients of research grants.

NHMRC is also committed to embedding equity in health research, with the aim to address systemic barriers that drive health inequity. We will continue to apply an equity lens across our grant program and policies, and focus on developing an initiative to support research that promotes health equity for rural, regional and remote communities. We also continue to apply initiatives to achieve gender equity in grant funding and to drive equitable outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and communities.

Our location and workforce

NHMRC is a national organisation, with offices in Canberra and Melbourne, on the lands of the Ngunnawal people and the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. NHMRC consists of the Chief Executive Officer, the Council, the Principal Committees, working committees and staff.

NHMRC and Health and Medical Research Office (HMRO), Department of Health, Disability and Ageing has established an advisory committee to seek advice on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and health research issues – the Indigenous Advisory Group (IAG). This committee is comprised of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives on NHMRC Council and Principal Committees and early career researchers. The committee is chaired by Professor Yvette Roe for the 2024–2027 triennium.

NHMRC employs approximately 267 people. Currently we employ 3 self-identified Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff members, and have a Workforce Strategy in place to improve how we attract and retain Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.



Our RAP Our reconciliation journey

NHMRC's commitment to improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people covers all aspects of NHMRC's responsibilities, as well as contributing to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

We support and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health by:

- investing in research that addresses issues of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- providing unique funding opportunities for research into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health
- increasing participation by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers in health and medical research, specifically NHMRC's grant schemes.

It is with our RAP documents that our ideas and actions, as an organisation and as individuals, can contribute to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

We have used the principles of relationships, respect and opportunities to assist us. Our RAP has allowed us to focus on building relationships, both internally and externally, and to raise awareness with our stakeholders to ensure there is shared understanding and ownership of our RAP. To achieve our vision for reconciliation, our future RAPs will continue to be developed in consultation with staff across NHMRC, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and other internal and external stakeholders.

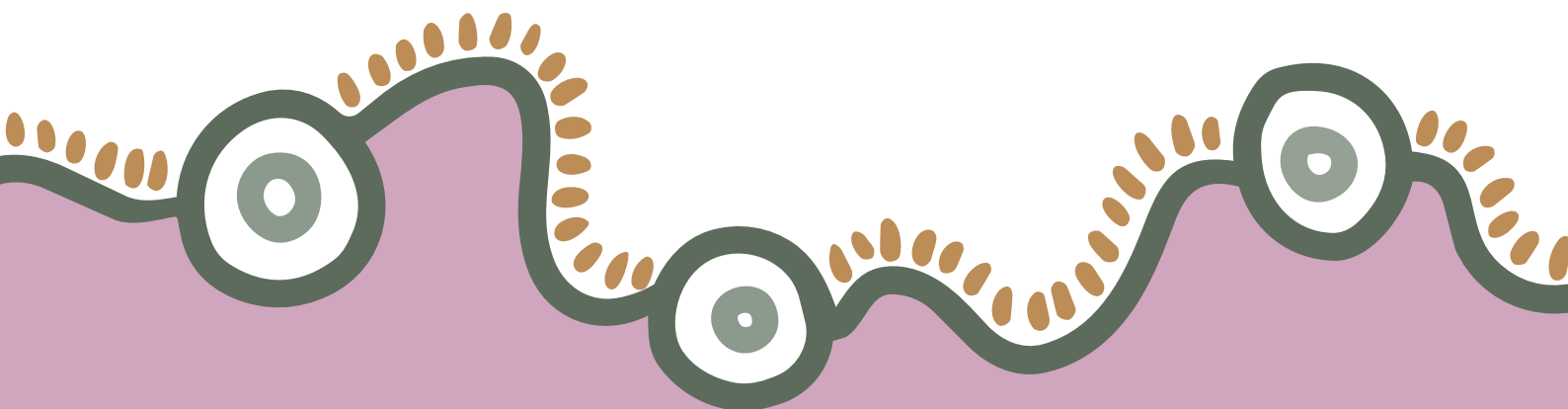
RAP Working Group

The RAP has been developed by our RAP Working Group (RAP WG), which is made up of energetic and passionate staff members from across the agency. Our current membership includes:

- Executive Director, Research Quality and Advice Branch, and RAP Champion
- Director, Indigenous Advice
- Assistant Director, Indigenous Advice
- Senior Project Officer, Indigenous Advice
- Director, Translation Projects and Advice
- Director, People, Property and Security
- Director, Communication, Parliamentary and Events
- Assistant Director, People, Property and Security
- Assistant Operations Manager, Business Services
- Media Officer, Media and Communication
- Senior Project Officer, Priorities and International Engagement
- Assistant Director, Governance, Regulation and Secretariat Support and Social Club representative
- Assistant Director, Guidelines
- Procurement Officer, Corporation Operations and Information
- Senior Project Officer, Strategic Projects and Support
- Senior Project Officer, Research Policy.

The RAP's principal advocate (RAP Champion) within NHMRC is the Executive Director of the Research Quality and Advice Branch. The Champion's role is to cultivate strong and productive relationships within the portfolio, with other government agencies and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations.

Our RAP represents the views, ideas and values of the whole organisation, and ownership of our RAP actions has been embraced by all staff. Our RAP Champion, along with our RAP Working Group, will guide the implementation of our planned actions and the monitoring of our progress.



Our achievements

We are proud of NHMRC's role in working to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through research. We have made considerable progress toward achieving the actions planned in our first and second Innovate RAPs, which are outlined here.

Some of our great successes include:

- our Indigenous Intern program
- increased staff involvement in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Days of Significance and Events
- the InFocus series, highlighting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and research, published on our website
- yarning circles for all staff to engage and ask questions in a safe and inclusive space.

The NHMRC's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander internship program provides:

- opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to gain insight into the work of NHMRC
- enhanced educational experience through practical work experience
- exposure to government processes in relation to funding of health and medical research
- pathways to future meaningful employment
- paid placements (APS3 classification).

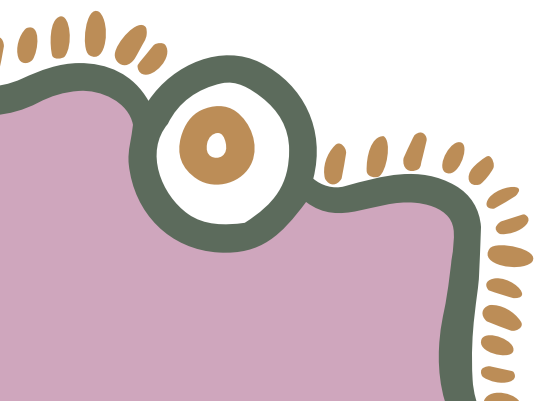
Since the commencement of the program in 2016, 10 interns have completed the program and 2 have continued with meaningful employment with NHMRC.

Another important achievement is increased staff engagement. Staff who were not part of the RAP WG have contributed innovative ideas for future RAPs, indicating that awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues has been heightened. We attribute this to our RAP and to presentations by senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers through our Speaking of Science and InFocus series, including Professor Yvonne Cadet-James, Professor Sean Taylor, Professor Yvette Roe and Ms Cheryl Bridge.

To ensure our work environment is culturally sensitive, cultural awareness workshops have been held. National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week activities also enhance our understanding, increasing respect for the experiences and perspectives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Staff have also acknowledged the importance of Sorry Day for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by joining in the National Sorry Day bridge walk. Yarning circles held in person at Canberra and Melbourne offices were well attended by staff and provided a safe and supportive environment for people to ask questions and learn more about reconciliation.

Staff demonstrated a strong desire to build their cultural knowledge and have requested the continuation of current cultural learning activities. We will extend current resources and include a variety of internal and external cultural learning opportunities.

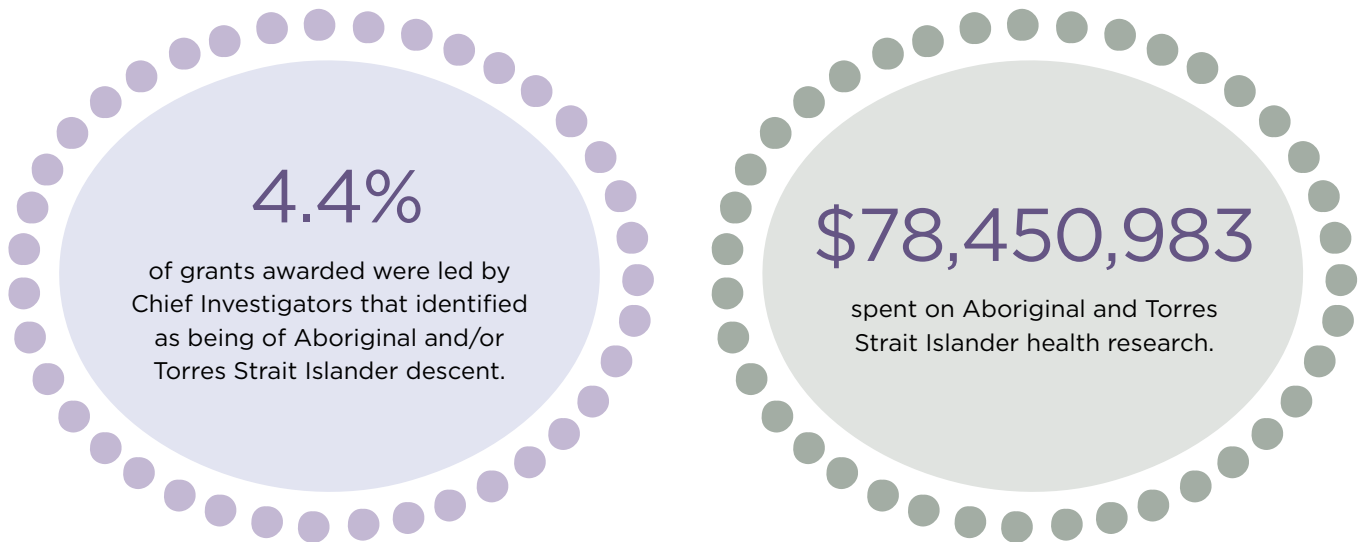


Our support of health research and researchers

NHMRC is proud to be Australia's leading expert body in health and medical research. For nearly a century NHMRC has funded exceptional research. NHMRC has 2 public targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health research and researchers:

1. Spending 5% of our research funds (the Medical Research Endowment Account) on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health annually. This target has been met or exceeded since 2008.
2. Having 3.4% of our grants led by an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person. This target was introduced in 2022 and first met in 2025.

In the 2024-25 financial year:



NHMRC remains committed to supporting the highest quality research that drives improvements in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.

A 2016 public call for research priorities saw NHMRC receive many submissions from individuals and organisations. Of the submissions received, 4 Targeted Calls for Research (TCR) were funded:

- TCR into Social and Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health for Indigenous Peoples from Early Life (2018)
- TCR into Healthy Ageing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (2018)
- TCR into Nutrition in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (2019)
- TCR: Improving Indigenous maternal and child health in the early years (2022).

The 2020-21 public call led to 2 TCRs being funded:

- TCR: Commercial determinants of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health (2024)
- TCR: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health – Addressing Violence for Safer Families and Communities (2025).

In 2025, another public call for research priorities was open for 10 weeks. Seventy-one submissions were received via the Citizen Space portal and many others during workshops held at the AIATSIS National Summit, Darwin, and the Lowitja Institute 4th International Indigenous health and wellbeing conference, Adelaide. With the IAG these will be prioritised and developed into TCRs.

In 2020, NHMRC invested \$10 million to fund a National Network for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health researchers as part of responding to *Road Map 3: A strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research*. Our Collaborations in Health Research (OCHRe) is the result of this initiative. OCHRe is one of the largest cohorts of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers ever assembled in Australia. Its goal is to support and develop the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research leaders and improve the health and wellbeing of Australia's First Nations people. The network is funded by NHMRC and has co-leads (all Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander) situated at the University of Queensland, the Australian National University, the Lowitja Institute and the University of Melbourne.

Working with communities, NHMRC developed the third iteration of our key document for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' health – *Road Map 3: A strategic framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research*. Road Map 3 is the product of an extensive consultation process in which researchers, health workers, government officials and community members came together to advise on future directions for research. In that sense, Road Map 3 belongs to the whole community, which has shared its insights and passions for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes.

NHMRC continues to participate in a tripartite agreement in International Indigenous health with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Health Research Council of New Zealand. Plans are being made to meet in person mid-year 2026.



Key lessons

In assessing NHMRC's actions under our previous RAP, several lessons were identified. These have guided development of the NHMRC Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2026–2028. Some of these lessons are listed below:

- ✓ **A dedicated team (RAP Working Group)** overseeing the implementation of the RAP increases both progress and engagement.
- ✓ Reconciliation is the responsibility of **all staff**.
- ✓ **Senior leaders** play a key role in encouraging our commitment to practical reconciliation.
- ✓ The time taken to **build relationships** is important and is part of the process of reconciliation.
- ✓ Keeping our RAP activities manageable, achievable and realistic maintains **motivation and momentum**.
- ✓ **Persistence and continuing effort** are also required to change culture.
- ✓ **Cultural competency training is essential** professional development and needs to be included in performance agreements for **all staff**.
- ✓ The agency's profile and **visibility** should be raised to **attract, retain and foster** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, interns, researchers and recipients of research grants.



NHMRC – MRFF Indigenous Advisory Group 2024–2027

Back row (left to right): Mr Michael Newman, Dr Jacob Prehn, Professor James Ward, Dr Sarah Bourke, Mr Adam Heterick.

Front row (left to right): Dr Julee McDonagh, A/Professor Michelle Kennedy, Ms Cheryl Bridge, A/Professor Odette Pearson, Professor Yvette Roe, A/Professor Veronica Matthews, Professor Steve Wesselingh.

Absent from group photo: Dr Brooke Conley, A/Professor Tuguy Esgin, Professor Maree Toombs.

NHMRC Indigenous Internship Program

The NHMRC Indigenous Internship Program provides Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with meaningful workplace experience while creating pathways into careers across the Australian Public Service. Through practical, project-based placements, interns contribute to real pieces of work, build professional skills and gain insight into the role health and medical research plays in improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In 2025-26, two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interns completed placements across NHMRC, contributing to projects in communications and research while working alongside staff from across the organisation. Supported by supervisors, workplace buddies and the Indigenous Advice team, interns developed practical skills, built confidence and gained valuable experience in a supportive and culturally safe environment.

Intern feedback reflected the positive impact of the program:

“The team was lovely and they really included me and gave me a good amount of work that made me feel like I was actually part of the team.”

Nava King, Indigenous Intern

“I really enjoyed the work. I think I was well matched with the project given my experience and interests.”

Shenea Tipungwuti, Indigenous Intern

Evaluation feedback highlighted the value of the program for both interns and staff. Supervisors and buddies described the interns as enthusiastic, engaged and eager to learn, recognising the fresh perspectives they brought to their teams. Regular check-ins, mentoring and meaningful project work were consistently identified as strengths of the program.

The evaluation also identified opportunities to continue strengthening future internships, including improved onboarding resources, clearer project planning, additional opportunities for cultural connection and consideration of longer placement periods where possible.

The Indigenous Internship Program continues to strengthen NHMRC's commitment to reconciliation by supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to explore career pathways, build capability and establish professional networks, while enriching the organisation through diverse perspectives and lived experience.



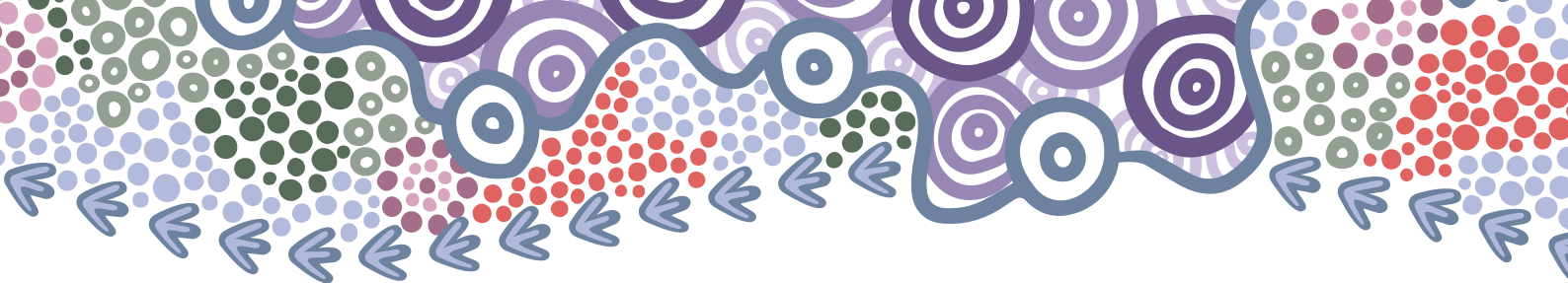


Relationships

NHMRC recognises the importance of building meaningful and respectful relationships to help us to understand, meet the needs and encourage the participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in our work.

We believe exploring opportunities to work collaboratively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in all areas in NHMRC and across the Australian Government, will ensure our policies, programs and practices deliver effective and appropriate health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through research. We will be better informed and more culturally capable in undertaking our work by building strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national and local organisations, particularly those external bodies that provide strategic policy advice, direction and leadership.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Maintain engagement and meaningful relationships with the Indigenous Advisory Group.	Mar, Jun, Nov 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Host Indigenous Speakers in Speaking of Science webinars and aim to invite 3 speakers per year.	Apr, Jul, Sep, Nov, 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Ensure NHMRC's Stakeholder Engagement Framework is fit-for-purpose for managing relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. This review should consolidate existing documents such as NHMRC's Indigenous Engagement strategy.	Nov 2027	Director, Communications
	Meet with at least 2 local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the health and medical research sector annually and develop guiding principles for future engagement.	Dec 2026, 2027	RAP Champion
	Strengthen networks across the Australian Public Service by actively participating in APS-wide reconciliation initiatives and forums, fostering collaboration to maximise shared reconciliation benefits and outcomes.	Jun 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, People, Property and Security
	Identify opportunities for staff to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders in their business areas by attending committee meetings and working groups, hosting Indigenous interns and engaging in Days of Significance.	Jun 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion



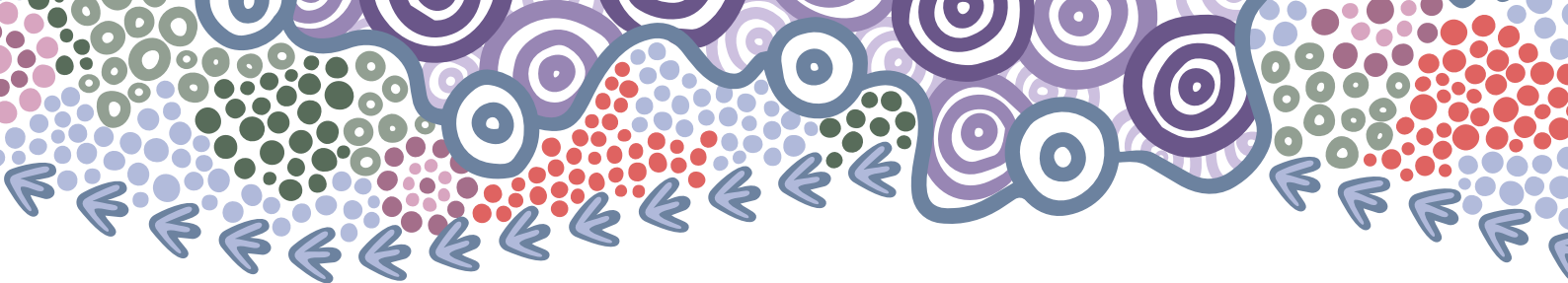
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff through intranet articles and monthly staff newsletter.	May 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Communications
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	May 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff including RAP Working Group members and senior leaders to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 Jun 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
	Host at least one internal NRW event at each office annually.	27 May – 3 June 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	Apr 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Communications
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	May 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion/ Director, Communications
	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce	Jul 2026	Director, Communications
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Oct 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
	Collaborate with other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	Nov 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Invite local Australian Public Service (APS) staff to attend NHMRC's events celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.	Jun 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Communications
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Enhance, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for NHMRC ensuring engagement and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisers.	Oct 2026	Director, People, Property and Security
	Leaders are accountable for, and actively demonstrate and champion, positive race relations and cultural competency.	Jun 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, People, Property and Security
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to strengthen anti-discrimination provisions.	Jun 2027	Director, People, Property and Security



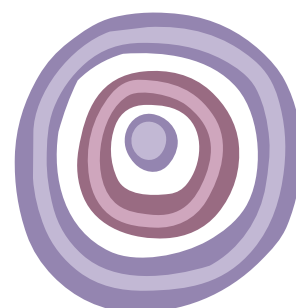
Respect

Our commitment to improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes covers all aspects of NHMRC's principal functions. Road Map 3 is NHMRC's strategic 10-year framework that guides NHMRC to improve health, social and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by ensuring research excellence and integrity. Road Map 3 has a focus on 3 priority areas: strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researcher workforce; engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and support research in high priority areas.

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 to assess progress as part of NHMRC's learning needs analysis by June 2027.	Jun 2027	Director, People, Property and Security (PPS)
	Encourage staff to engage with cultural awareness training and/or immersion programs as part of their Professional Development Plan.	Apr 2026, 2027, 2028	PPS
	Ensure appropriate cultural awareness training is available for staff through face to face and online training modules including CORE training and Language training.	Aug 2026, 2027, 2028	PPS
	Investigate local cultural immersion opportunities for staff.	May 2026	Director Indigenous Advice/PPS
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	Apr 2027	Director Indigenous Advice/PPS
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	Aug 2027	Director Indigenous Advice/PPS
	Develop, implement and communicate a strategy that prioritises cultural learning for our staff including: awarenesses of culture learning opportunities, in-person cultural training (e.g. yarning circles), local cultural immersion opportunities, advertise opportunities in newsletter, cultural learning.	Dec 2026, 2027, 2028	PPS
6. 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.	Oct 2026	Director Indigenous Advice/PPS
	Ensure that NHMRC offices are a welcoming space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by maintaining signage, flags, posters and wall quotes.	Oct 2026	PPS
	Review and update cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Jun 2026	Director Indigenous Advice/Director, Communications
	Continue to invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Apr 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
	Ensure that appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terminology, spellings and nomenclature are used.	May 2026	RAP Champion
	Continue to use an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Dec 2027	RAP Champion



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	CEO/Executive communicate their support for staff participation in NAIDOC Week through the staff newsletter, all-staff emails and meetings, and via the intranet.	Second week in Jul 2026 – 2028	RAP Champion
	Engage with local ACT and Victorian NAIDOC committees to promote community events.	Jul 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Hold at least one internal all staff event for NAIDOC week each year.	First week in Jul 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in Jul 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Regularly promote HR policies and procedures prior to NAIDOC week to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week and promote NHMRC's leave arrangements/entitlement.	Jun 2026	Director, People, Property and Security
	Promote and encourage participation in external (and internal) NAIDOC events to all staff.	May 2026, 2027, 2028 Feb 2027, 2028	Director, Communications/ Director, Indigenous Advice
8. Continue to promote and educate the organisation on national and international days of significance to support and empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.	Circulate information to all staff or hold events highlighting the Anniversary of the Government's apology to the Stolen Generations, National Closing the Gap Day, National Sorry Day, Mabo Day, International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples, and/or Indigenous Literacy Day.	Feb, Mar, May, Jun, Aug, Sep 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Communications/ Director, Indigenous Advice





Opportunities

Opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities are essential to our mission of building an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future. They align seamlessly with our organisation's core business activities and values, supporting:

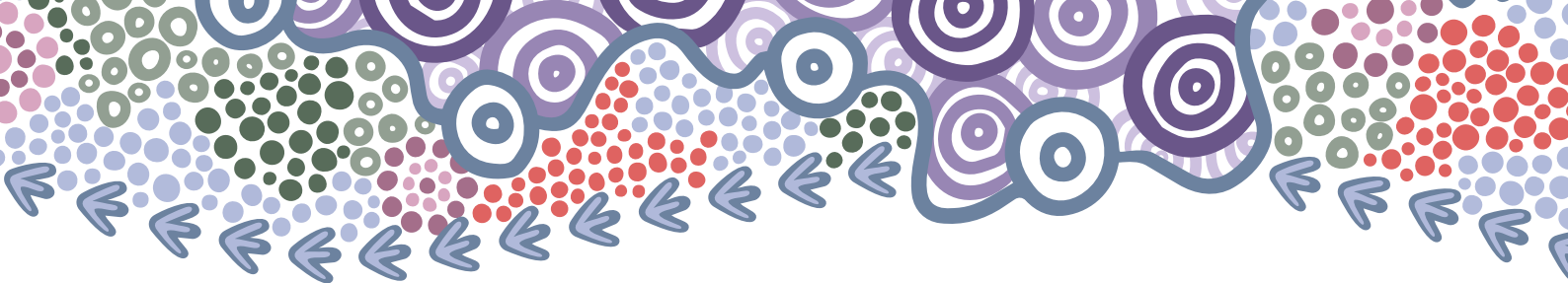
- Inclusive employment practices
- Ethical procurement
- Professional growth and retention
- Equitable access to systems and processes.

By investing in these opportunities, we not only elevate underrepresented voices and talents, but we also strengthen our workplace culture, diversify our supply chains, and deepen our community relationships. It's how we turn intent into impact.

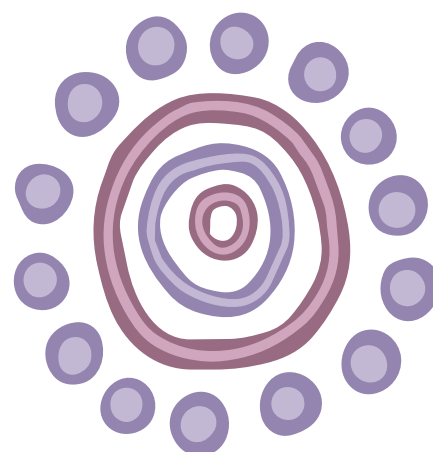
This focus area supports our strategic direction to:

- Champion social equity and inclusion
- Foster community engagement and innovation
- Drive sustainable impact through diverse partnerships.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	• Continue to build an understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities, including an employee value proposition. This should be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and stakeholders, and leverage whole-of-government guidance to support professional development opportunities.	Aug 2027	Director, People, Property and Security
	• Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	Feb 2027	Director, People, Property and Security
	• Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	Oct 2027	Director, People, Property and Security
	• Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Apr, Sep 2026	Director, People, Property and Security
	• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	Sep 2026	Director, People, Property and Security



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. 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.	Aug 2026	Chief Financial Officer
	• Continue Supply Nation membership.	Feb 2026, 2027, 2028	Chief Financial Officer
	• Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Mar 2026, 2027, 2028	Chief Financial Officer
	• Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Apr, Sep 2026	Chief Financial Officer
	• Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Mar 2027	Chief Financial Officer
11. Investigate and provide pipeline opportunities of experience, mentoring, connection and employment with NHMRC and its work.	• Integrate cultural capability into all leadership programs.	Jun 2026, 2027	Director, People, Property and Security
	• Create a peer-supported community to champion belonging, share lived experiences and co-create internal initiatives.	Mar 2027	Director, People, Property and Security
	• Ensure NHMRC internal and external projects support reconciliation through creativity, social impact, or cultural celebration.	Mar 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, IT Management and Strategy
	• Work to eliminate barriers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in engaging with our systems and technology.	Sep 2027	Director, IT Management and Strategy

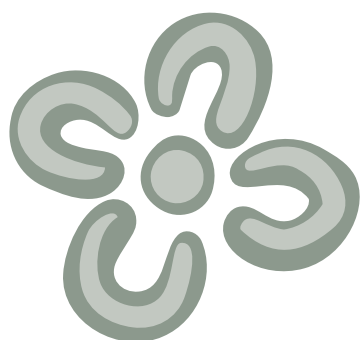


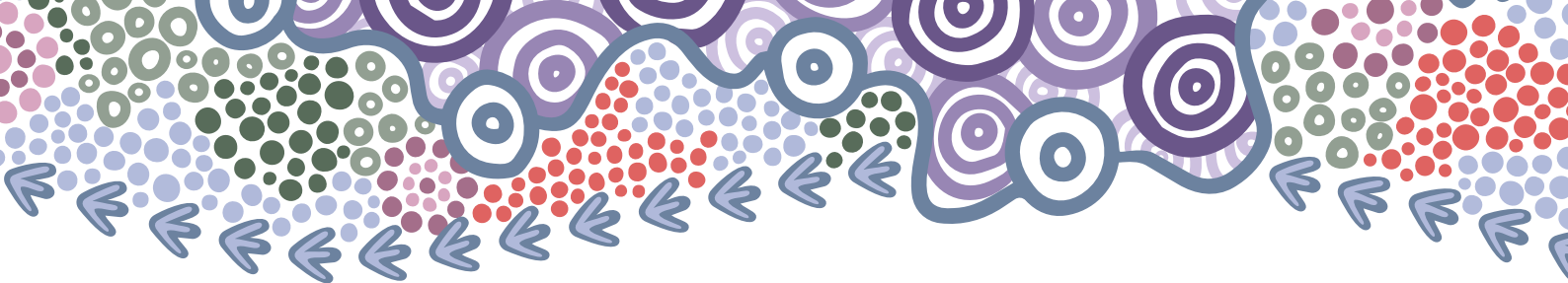


Governance

NHMRC will track and report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally through our Reconciliation Working Group, Annual Report and to Reconciliation Australia.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RAP WG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are represented on the RAP Working Group. Where possible, include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interns and graduates (where applicable) and ensure meetings are held during their placement.	Feb 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Maintain the Terms of Reference for the RAP WG to keep them current and relevant.	Feb 2027, 2028	RAP Champion/ Director, Indigenous Advice
	Review and refresh RAP WG membership to ensure diversity of membership including representatives from all branches.	Feb 2027, 2028	RAP Champion/ Director, Indigenous Advice
	RAP WG meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	May, Sep, Dec 2026, Feb, May, Sep, Dec 2027, 2028	RAP Champion/ Director, Indigenous Advice
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	RAP WG members to include their committee role as part of their Professional Development Plan (Workplace Conversations).	Apr 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion/ Director, Indigenous Advice
	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Apr 2026	RAP Champion
	Engage our senior leaders and staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Apr 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Apr 2026, 2027, 2028	RAP Champion/ Director, Indigenous Advice
	Maintain appointment of a RAP Champion from senior management.	Jun 2026	Chief Executive Officer





Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14. Build accountability and transparency by reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Meet with Reconciliation Australia a minimum of twice a year to share progress on RAP implementation.	Jun, Nov 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 Aug 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sep 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Provide regular reports to Indigenous Advisory Group and Executive Board.	Jun, Oct 2026, Mar, Jun, Dec 2027, Mar, Jun, Dec 2028	RAP Champion
	Ensure senior leaders are updating staff at relevant meetings.	Jun, Oct 2026, Mar, Jun, Dec 2027, Mar, Jun, Dec 2028	RAP Champion
	Provide regular reports to NHMRC by Staff Consultative Forum (SCF).	Jun, Dec 2026, Mar, Jun, Dec 2027, Mar, Jun, Dec 2028	Director, People, Property and Security
	Complete Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace Reconciliation Barometer.	May 2026, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Share our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings on NHMRC website and in NHMRC Annual Report.	Sep 2026, 2027, 2028	Director, Indigenous Advice
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	May 2027	Director, Indigenous Advice
15. Complete a full review of all RAP deliverables annually.	Appoint a subgroup each year to conduct the annual review of the RAP.	Apr 2026, 2027	RAP Champion
	Present the annual review to NHMRC Staff and the Indigenous Advisory Group.	Apr 2027, 2028	RAP Champion
16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Feb 2028	Director, People, Property and Security
	Consult widely across NHMRC and our external networks and liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.	Feb 2028	RAP Champion



Australian Government

National Health and Medical Research Council

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