

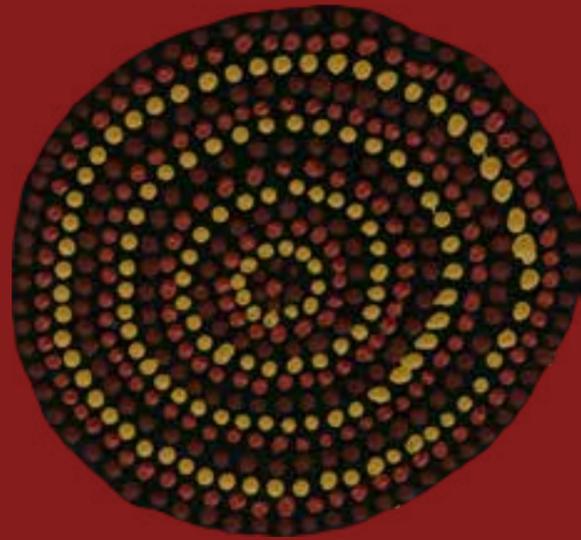


Interact Australia

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

September 2022 – March 2024





Acknowledgement of Country

Interact Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of Australia and recognises these unique cultures as part of the cultural heritage of all Australians. We pay our respect to the Elders of this land; past, present and emerging. Our team is representative of the diversity within our communities and aims to provide opportunity, services and flexible supports that are inclusive, regardless of each person's culture, sexual orientation and ability.



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Paul Constable Calcott

Paul is a Wiradjuri artist living on Karbi Karbi country. He is an Aboriginal Elder who identifies as a proud gay man and uses his art to share stories of his life living with a disability in urban Australia. Paul is dedicated to motivating other First Nations artists living with disability to tell their story of resilience and strength through traditional symbols and styles that have been passed down for thousands of years. As an Elder in the local community, he is honoured to be able to help other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders living with disability to connect to their culture and build resilience through yarning and storytelling.

Paul contracted Polio as a toddler in 1961 and has been involved in the disability sector since 1980. In 2010 he established the Nuunaron Art Group, an art group for First Peoples of Australia living with a disability. Paul has developed a number of resources to assist the community in understanding issues such as the NDIS, how to identify individual support needs and models of service delivery. He also represents the interests of First Nations people with disabilities on multiple committees and advisory boards.

Paul is also a disability advocate, believing that people with disabilities need to be celebrated and included in communities. He believes that disability awareness is important and it is a wonderful way to share different perspectives on life. Paul is a respected Elder immersed into the community and he has met amazing people. He is passionate about understanding people's needs and supporting them to be independent.

Paul's artwork has evolved into a 21st century medium and is very happy he has been entrusted with other people's stories. He hopes that his work will bring joy to people and make them feel connected to the country, with its over 60,000 years of history. He also hopes that it will keep the conversation going and engage people to learn more about the culture. Paul is honored to have the opportunity to use his artwork to tell stories of resilience and strength and he embraces it with passion.

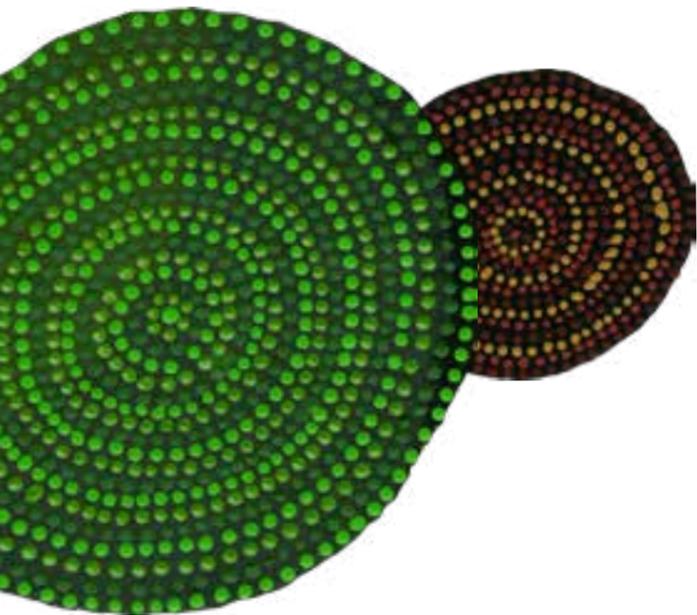


Respectful Interact, 2023

Paul Constable Calcott's artwork, 'Respectful Interact', conveys the experience of a person living with a disability and Interact Australia's commitment to providing support and enabling independent living. On the right side of the painting, the large orange circle embodies Interact and its staff (board, executive managers, support workers, etc.), and its connection to the broader community and nation. Rather than colonial borders, Paul opted to display saltwater country, desert country, rainforest country, and fresh water country to symbolize Interact's ties with communities across Australia.

The painting also conveys the various levels of assistance Interact Australia offers to people living with disabilities. Throughout the journey, Interact's support staff guide and assist them, allowing them to travel autonomously, with various support as necessary. In the top left corner, a person is portrayed as living independently, yet still connected to the community.

The artwork includes symbols that demonstrate Interact's effort to build relationships with Indigenous Elder people and to listen to and allow them to teach Interact staff. Moreover, the Elder representation in the painting expresses Interact's dedication to reconciliation.



Message from the CEO



Catherine Cairns
Chief Executive Officer
Interact Australia

On behalf of the Board, management and staff of Interact Australia, we are honoured to present our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), a Reflect RAP. We are committed to fostering an environment of respect, trust and understanding, and are dedicated to providing equitable access to services, employment and social connectedness for all of the communities we serve.

We recognise the importance of developing and maintaining meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and communities, and of making a positive contribution to the national vision of reconciliation. We are committed to strengthening our existing relationships and creating new ones based on mutual respect and understanding.

Interact Australia acknowledges the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across Australia, and the significance of these cultures, kinships and experiences to the identity and cultural responsibility of these communities. We will continue to be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and communities to help reduce the challenges faced by these communities, and to ensure that this knowledge and diversity is represented in our work.

We understand that we are only at the start of our reconciliation journey, and there is much more that we can do to learn about and understand Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our work, and offer opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This Reflect RAP is a key first step, and we look forward to deepening our ties with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and communities, and making a positive contribution to the national vision of reconciliation.

A message from Reconciliation Australia



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

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

Interact Australia joins a network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types - Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This Reflect RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Interact Australia to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Interact Australia, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



Interact Australia is a values-based, not-for profit organization realizing change for peoples living with disability and disadvantage in the community since 1991. Interact Australia focuses on creating connections to achieve social inclusion, equality and purpose throughout Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory. Currently, Interact Australia currently employ 514 people including 24 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people across a variety of roles, including management, operations and support services.

Born from Kew Cottages Special School, Adult Training and Support Services were established offering employment and recreational services to those living with disability throughout Victoria. Over the years Interact Australia (as it became known in 1996) offered new and innovative services to those living with disability and disadvantage; partnering in pioneering measures such as Arts Therapy, Men's Shed, specialist Registered Training, supported employment, and anti-recidivism projects.

Recently celebrating 30 years of operation in its current form, Interact Australia continues to offer Disability Employment and support services to thousands of peoples across Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania, South Australia and the Northern Territory.



Our vision for reconciliation

Interact Australia is driven to promote access to services, employment and social connectedness for everyone in the communities in which we work, and recognize that reconciliation is embedded in shared experience and mutual respect.

We have invested in the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan to build strong relationships and enhance respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organizations and communities, with the aim to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have access to services and opportunities shared with other Australians.

The development of a RAP will provide our organisation with the time, structure and opportunity to raise awareness and support for this initiative within our business. The development of a RAP will also assist us with establishing inclusive governance models, appropriate training and staff development opportunities and natural alignment with our key measures regarding service access and delivery - leading to a more inclusive and culturally established organisation. With the launch of the RAP, many key deliverables will be managed by Interact Australia CEO or Executive Manager, however as we incorporate more reconciliation principles into our everyday operation, we will see key deliverables being provided by our RAP Working Group and extended staff.

Interact Australia's vision for reconciliation is to create vibrant futures with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities through collaboration, opportunities and choice.

Our Executive Sponsor, Chief Executive Officer Catherine Cairns and our Board have a strong desire for the development of purpose-driven Reconciliation Action Plan and consequential engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We believe this will provide us with new opportunities and is consistent with our corporate values of;

- Honesty & Integrity
- Teamwork & Partnerships
- Respect & Inclusion
- Innovation
- Achievement
- Quality

Action 1

Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Document existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.	September 2023	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Research existing best practice models for engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	December 2022	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our respective communities across Australia.	December 2022	RAP Working Group, led by State Manager (QLD/NT)

Action 2

Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Encourage our staff to attend a NRW event across the communities in which we operate in each state	May, June 2023	CEO, or designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/ Executive
Implement internal communication plan for our staff and include Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources.	May, June 2023	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Ensure the IntoWork Australia Acknowledgement of Country as part of the NRW celebrations.	December 2022 Delivery: May, June 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May, June 2023	RAP Working Group, led by State Manager (QLD/NT)

Action 3

Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Launch our first Reflect RAP.	September 2022	Interact Australia Board, Chairperson and Board
Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff	December 2022	RAP Working Group and CEO
Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	December 2022	RAP Working Group and CEO
Develop a list of RAP organisations and other organisations that we could approach to partner with and learn from on our reconciliation journey	March 2023	RAP Working Group and CEO
Engage with the Executive Team to launch the RAP.	September 2022	State Manager (QLD/NT)

Action 4

Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Research existing best practice models for anti-discrimination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our communities and key business deliverables (supports and employment).	March 2023	RAP Working Group and CEO, or designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Ensure a collaborative review of our Human Resources policies and procedures to ensure the align and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidate and staff outcomes and to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs	December 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/ Executive

Action 1

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



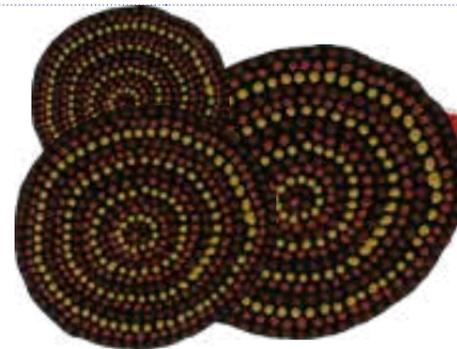
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure reliable and consistent measurement and data encapsulation of our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	December 2022	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Investigate cultural learnings training as part of our Induction and on-boarding process for new staff and as continuous improvement training for our existing team members	December 2022	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive

Action 2

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



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Provide internal understanding of Traditional Lands and Waters in our locations and ensure all locations display Traditional Lands and Waters map.	September 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2022	CEO

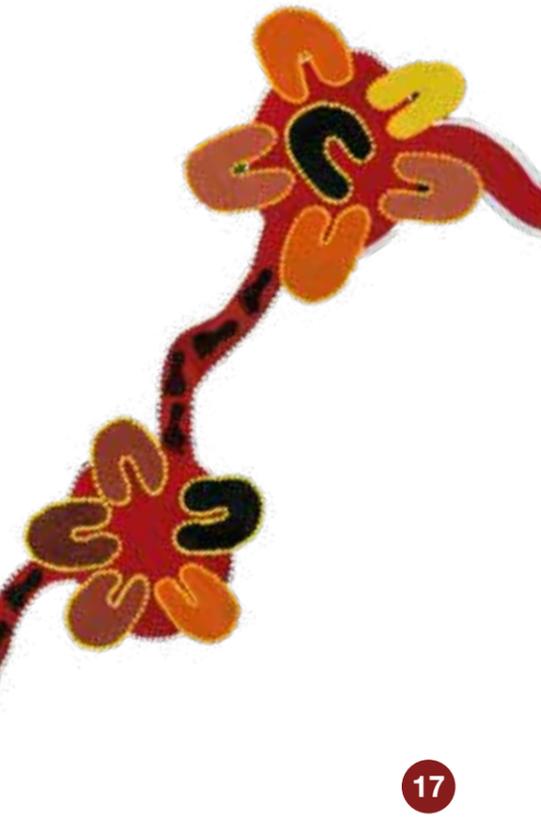


Action 3

Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week and other days of significance.



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Recognise and celebrate additional dates of significance for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on our social media channels and communications to staff and stakeholders – including, National Sorry Day, Harmony Day, and Close the Gap Day	March, May 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information specific to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Lands and Waters in our locations	June 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Continue our communication to staff in regards to NAIDOC Week and promote community events in our local communities.	July 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Ensure our RAP Working Group, Executive and Board participate in at least one external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive





Action 1

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

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organization, including targeted culturally appropriate initiatives aimed at inviting new communities	March 2024 Review progress August 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Build an understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment, advancement, and development opportunities.	March 2024 Review progress March 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive

Action 2

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

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Identify and establish business supplier agreements with 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses, by working with other related businesses and Supply Nation.	May 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Maintain active membership of Supply Nation as part of the IntoWork Australia Group and investigate participation in their JumpStart program	March 2024	CEO

Action 3

Improve our businesses accessibility to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Investigate local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sponsorship and program opportunities that increase participation in support access and delivery across our footprint.	December 2022	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive

Action 1

Develop, maintain and review the RAP Working Group



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
RAP Working Group will meet every quarter to manage and monitor the activities and deliverables detailed in this Reflect RAP and report on its implementation.	December 2022, February, May, August, December 2023 February 2024	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Seek to establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on our RAP Working Group by promoting to and encouraging staff to participate.	September 2022	State Manager (QLD/NT)

Action 2

Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	March 2024	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.	March 2023	CEO
Define the measures, systems and capability needs to track, assess and report on RAP activities.	March 2023	CEO

Action 3

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



Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop and implement a communication plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments and activities and goals.	December 2022	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up-to-date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.	June annually	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 August annually	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Provide periodic, yet regular updates of our RAP journey, including key milestone achievements to our Board	December 2022 December 2023	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive
Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	September annually	State Manager (QLD/NT)
Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP.	December 2022	CEO, with designated Interact Australia Senior Leader/Executive

Action 4

Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.



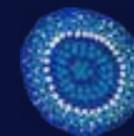
Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Review and refresh RAP based on lessons learnt, challenges and achievements.	December 2022, February, May, August, December 2023 February 2024	RAP Working Group, led by State Manager (QLD/NT)
Register and submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review and endorsement.	Register: January 2024 Submit first Draft: June 2023	CEO





“We are committed to strengthening our existing relationships and creating new ones based on mutual respect and understanding.”

Catherine Cairns
Chief Executive Officer,
Interact Australia





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