

Woden Community Service

# Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2017 – December 2018



# Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan for the years January 2017 – December 2018

## Acknowledgement

Woden Community Service acknowledges the Ngunnawal people as the traditional owners of this land and their continuing connection to land and community. We also acknowledge Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people who have come from other nations to live on Ngunnawal land. We pay our respects to their cultures, ancestors and Elders past, present and future.

We acknowledge the hurt, dislocation and disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people as a result of colonisation. Woden Community Service will seek to help redress some of that disadvantage through our services. We also acknowledge the advantages and benefits that can result from reconciliation, and how this can enhance our services.

## Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is a vibrant and connected community that welcomes all its members and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and people.

## Our business

Woden Community Service (WCS) is one of five regional community services within Canberra. WCS is a for-purpose organisation that has been providing community based services since 1969. We deliver services on behalf of the ACT and Australian Governments across the ACT and a range of children's services within the region.

WCS services and programs (some delivered in partnership with other organisations) include:

- services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Community Assistance and Support Program (CASP) and Commonwealth Home Support Program.
- Lollipop Children's Centre and Lyon's Children's Centre, as well as family day care and school aged care and holiday programs.
- child, youth and family services for the Woden/South Canberra/Weston Creek region
- OneLink – the central information and access point for human services for the ACT, including housing and homelessness support and child, youth and family services
- mental health services including Transition to Recovery (TRec), Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) and Partners in Recovery.
- housing services including Supportive Tenancy Service and Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged
- The Big Issue – a fortnightly, independent magazine that is sold on the streets by people who are homeless, marginalised or experiencing disadvantage
- a range of social and capacity building groups
- a range of volunteering and community development activities
- The Little Pantry – emergency food relief.

Our vision is to build and nurture a vibrant and connected community, and our purpose is working together, enriching lives. WCS values hope, community, integrity and responsiveness. We work closely with stakeholders, partners and the local community.

WCS employs over 310 permanent and casual staff and have an active volunteer program with over 80 volunteers. As at 31 July 2016, WCS had five Aboriginal staff.

## Our RAP

This third RAP for WCS was developed by staff throughout the organisation interested in progressing reconciliation in a practical way through the work that we do in the local community. This RAP builds on the experience of WCS's first and second RAPs and continues to ensure that we provide programs that are relevant to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, and that we offer opportunities for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to work at WCS and to share in the life of the community.

The first RAP for WCS was in 2011, and much has been achieved in that time in changing the organisation to have a greater appreciation of the issues faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and how the work of WCS can contribute to reconciliation. Particular achievements have been through increasing the number of Aboriginal staff, introducing an Acknowledgement of Country used in meetings and events and displayed at the main office, in purchasing a number of artworks, which are displayed across all WCS sites, and in activities incorporating Aboriginal culture and Torres Strait Islander culture becoming part of WCS services.

WCS has hosted or co-hosted a range of events to involve all staff. A significant number of staff attended these events. In particular, in 2015, WCS worked with ACT Council of Social Services, YWCA Canberra, Northside Community Service, Karralika and The Smith Family in putting on events for Close the Gap Day and NAIDOC Week. The NAIDOC week event brought together performers, artists and speakers to highlight the theme of 'Land and Learning', and was attended by staff, volunteers, service users and the public.

This RAP comes at a time of change within Woden Community Service, and the community sector more generally. It seeks to build on past experience to extend the range of actions and integrate reconciliation into every aspect of the service.

Preparation of this RAP has engaged staff from across the organisation and has been championed by the Chief Executive Officer.

Our RAP Working Group includes staff from all areas as well as the Chief Executive Officer, and has been led by the Manager, Children Services and Manager, OneLink. The Intake and Administration Coordinator has taken on the role of coordinating the RAP activities.

The RAP Working Group is open to all WCS staff and, as at August 2016, included:

- Three Aboriginal staff members
- Director, Children, Youth and Family
- Team Leader, Youth Engagement Team

- Manager, Communications
- Manager, People and Culture
- Manager, Lollipop Children's Centre
- Staff from Reception and Intake

Development of this RAP also included input from:

- staff of WCS, through discussions in staff and leadership meetings,
- the external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander reference group, which met in August 2016,
- community members who have an interest in WCS, and
- the WCS Board, who endorsed and supported the goals set out in this RAP.

This engagement has been particularly valuable in setting meaningful and measurable actions and targets.

The management, staff and board of Woden Community Service are committed to the implementation of this RAP. There are a wide range of actions set out below to achieve the goals of this RAP. The RAP Working Group Coordinator is listed as being responsible for many, but this reflects responsibility for monitoring and coordinating – the Coordinator will be supported by the RAP Working Group as well as managers and staff across the organisation in implementing these actions.

## Relationships

*Building a vibrant and resilient community in which Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are welcomed and their talents and contributions are recognised and celebrated.*

**Focus area:** Establish and maintain a dialogue and mutually beneficial relationship with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations in the ACT.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. RAP Working Group (RWG) actively monitors RAP development and implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.</li> </ul>	Week of December 12th 2016.	RWG Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people are represented on the RWG.</li> </ul>	Review every February	RWG Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.</li> </ul>	Meet every March and September	RWG Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and maintain Terms of Reference for the RWG, and ensure they are being adhered to.</li> </ul>	Review every February	RWG Coordinator
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Convene an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group that includes representation from united Ngunnawal Elders Council to provide cultural advice and guidance.</li> </ul>	Every March and September	RWG Coordinator
	Feature staff profiles in WCS newsletters, including cultural backgrounds and personal stories.	March, June, September, December	

		each year	
2. Celebrate and participate in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities to build and maintain relationships between Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organise at least one internal event for NRW each year.</li> <li>Register our NRW event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.</li> <li>Support an external NRW event.</li> <li>Ensure RAP Working Group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> <li>Extend an invitation to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to share their reconciliation experiences or stories.</li> <li>Encourage staff to participate in external events to recognise and celebrate NRW.</li> <li>Download Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and circulate to staff.</li> </ul>	27 May- 3 June, annually	RWG Coordinator
9. Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.</li> <li>Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</li> <li>Use and promote the protocols for working with Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander</li> </ul>	Plan every February  Plan every February  Review use	RWG Coordinator  RWG Coordinator with RWG and managers in Social Inclusion and Community Development  RWG Coordinator



	<p>people, developed by the Aboriginal and Torres Straite Islander Elected Body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop guide for managers on how spaces can be made inclusive</li> <li>• Develop culturally inclusive spaces within our services.</li> <li>• Review how WCS information is presented and disseminated, to ensure that it is accessible and culturally appropriate.</li> </ul>	<p>every August</p> <p>February 2018</p> <p>December 2017</p> <p>February 2018</p>	<p>with RWG and Manger, Communications</p> <p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>Manager, Communications</p>
<p>10. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement and review a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders. This can include</li> <li>• Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.</li> <li>• Provide RAP updates at monthly All Staff meeting</li> <li>• Use WCS facebook page, website and twitter to promote our RAP</li> </ul>	<p>Develop December 16</p> <p>Review February</p> <p>Review every September</p> <p>January-December 2017</p> <p>December 2017</p>	<p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>RWG Coordinator with RWG and all managers</p> <p>RWG Coordinator</p> <p>Marketing and Communications team</p>

## Respect

*Understanding and awareness of the experiences, beliefs and practices of all people, including Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people within our community enables the development of stronger relationships, appropriate services and active engagement in practical reconciliation.*

**Focus area:** Building our practice of reconciliation through understanding, celebrating and respecting Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people and their cultures.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Engage employees and service users in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement a cultural awareness training strategy for our staff which defines cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of our business and considers various ways cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops or cultural immersion).</li> <li>Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners, The Ngunnawal People, through the United Ngunnawal Council to develop cultural awareness training that would include working directly with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.</li> <li>Promote the Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online tool to all</li> </ul>	December 2016	Manager, People and Culture
		December 2016	Manager, People and Culture
			Manager, People and Culture
			RWG Coordinator with RWG and all managers
		Plan every February	Manager, People and Culture
		Plan every February	RWG Coordinator with RWG and all managers
		Plan every February	RWG Coordinator with RWG and all managers of service areas
Plan every Feb, review Aug	Chief Executive Officer		
Plan every Feb, review	Manager CS		

	<p>staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively promote local cultural experiences and immersion opportunities – create opportunities and managers encourage staff to participate.</li> <li>Include cultural awareness training as mandatory training for all staff.</li> <li>Each team review what cultural awareness means for their service and practice.</li> <li>Promote reconciliation by including opportunities for service users to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history – eg. Through an Aboriginal art group, movie screenings, tours of the region with a focus on Aboriginal heritage or providing access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media (books, music, TV and films).</li> <li>Encourage engagement with schools with resources from the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG)</li> </ul>	<p>Aug</p> <p>October 2017</p>	
6. Engage employees in understanding the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a</li> </ul>	Plan every Feb, review	Manager, Communications

<p>significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning</p>	<p>Welcome to Country at at least 1 major event/s and ensure staff provide an Acknowledgement of Country at all other major events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure staff provide an Acknowledgement of Country at all key meetings</li> <li>• Use the ACT Government list of Ngunnawal Elders for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful partnerships.</li> <li>• Display Acknowledgement of Country on all sites, meetings rooms and gathering places within WCS.</li> <li>• Acknowledgement of Country written by children in Children's Centres to make it meaningful to them.</li> <li>• Develop and implement a cultural protocols document in consultation with our reference group.</li> </ul>	<p>Aug</p> <p>Review Aug</p> <p>December 2017</p> <p>Plan every Feb, review Aug</p> <p>August 2018</p>	<p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>Manager, Children's Services</p>
<p>7. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with their culture and communities by celebrating NAIDOC Week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and</li> </ul>	<p>February 2017</p> <p>First week of July, annually</p>	<p>Manager, People and Culture</p> <p>Manager, People and Culture</p> <p>RWG Coordinator with</p>

	<p>Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their cultures and communities during NAIDOC Week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week activities.</li> <li>• Hold an internal or external NAIDOC Week event</li> <li>• Support an external NAIDOC Week community event.</li> <li>• Contact ACT NAIDOC Committee to discover events in our community and promote these events amongst WCS staff &amp; clients.</li> <li>• Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to be provided with cultural leave to attend celebrations.</li> </ul>	<p>First week of July, annually</p> <p>First week of July, annually</p> <p>First week of July, annually</p> <p>First week of July, annually</p> <p>First week of July, annually</p>	<p>RWG and all managers</p> <p>RWG Coordinator</p> <p>RWG Coordinator</p> <p>RWG Coordinator</p> <p>Manager, People and Culture</p>
<p>8. Engage employees in marking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance.</li> <li>• Develop strategy for communicating with WCS staff about dates of significance, events in the community and WCS RAP activities.</li> </ul>	<p>Plan every February</p> <p>February 2017</p> <p>Plan every Feb and review Aug</p> <p>Plan every</p>	<p>RWG Coordinator</p> <p>RWG Coordinator and Manager, Communications</p> <p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>RWG Coordinator</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recognise dates and promote activities through communications to staff.</li><li>• Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events for meaning/significance of cultural events.</li></ul>	February	
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## Opportunities

Our vision of supporting, developing and celebrating community strength is underpinned by our ability to develop the skills and experiences of the people involved in our organisation as staff, volunteers and community members.

**Focus area:** Actively build the capacity of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people through recruitment, training, governance and business opportunities.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collect information on our current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment opportunities</li> </ul>	April 2017	Manager, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and retention strategy.</li> </ul>	June 2017	Manager, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.</li> </ul>	February 2017	Manager, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with Gulanga program at ACTCOSS to advise on recruitment, employment and retention strategies, including professional development.</li> </ul>	Review every August	Manager, People and Culture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All vacancies</li> </ul>	Review every August	Manager, People and Culture
		Plan every February	Manager, People and Culture, with all Managers
		April 2017	Manager, People and Culture
	April 2017	Manager, People and Culture and	

	<p>advertised externally are promoted to the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, including through Habitat and the ACT Indigenous email network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to include in all job advertisements, 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply.'</li> <li>• Work with Yurana Centre (CIT) and Habitat to offer opportunities for student visits, traineeships and placements with WCS.</li> <li>• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace.</li> <li>• Review all policies and procedures for external audiences (particularly around recruitment) to ensure that the language and content are inclusive.</li> <li>• Support attendance at the ACTCOSS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers in</li> </ul>	<p>Review every August</p> <p>Plan every February</p> <p>Plan every February</p> <p>March 2017</p>	<p>Manager, Communications</p> <p>Manager, People and Culture, and all Managers</p> <p>Manager, Child, Youth and Family</p> <p>Manager, Mental Health Recovery and NDIS Services</p>
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	<p>the community sector network for relevant staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with schools (through WCS youth services) to promote work experience opportunities with WCS.</li> <li>• Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to offer opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to become part of the the WCS workforce.</li> </ul> <p>Seek to have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representation on the WCS Board.</p>		
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<p>10. Investigate opportunities to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within our organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review procurement policies and procedures to identify barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to supply our organisation with goods and services.</li> <li>• Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.</li> <li>• Develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.</li> <li>• Investigate Supply Nation membership.</li> <li>• Review ACT Government supplier list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses for potential providers</li> </ul>	<p>April 2017</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>April 2017</p> <p>April 2018 April 2017</p>	<p>Manager, Finance</p> <p>Manager, Finance</p> <p>Manager, Finance</p> <p>Manager, Finance Manager, Finance</p>
<p>11. Establish WCS financial sponsorships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lead events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a sponsorship strategy</li> <li>• Provide supportship to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and programs where possible. This can include financial sponsorship, promoting events and lending equipment.</li> </ul>	<p>May 2018</p> <p>May 2018</p>	<p>Finance manager, CEO, RWG Coordinator</p> <p>Finance manager, CEO, RWG Coordinator</p>

## Tracking progress and reporting

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.</li> </ul> <p>Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer.</p>	<p>30 September, annually</p> <p>July 2018</p>	RWG Coordinator
13. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.</li> </ul>	Annually – in the WCS annual report	RWG Coordinator and Manager, Communications
14. Review, refresh and update RAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liase with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.</li> <li>Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback and endorsement.</li> </ul>	<p>July 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p>	<p>RWG Coordinator</p> <p>RWG Coordinator</p>

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