



CoAct Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2023 - July 2025





Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the land on which CoAct operates and commit to building a brighter future together.



A message from the CEO and Chair

'CoAct's purpose is to transform the lives of those in need through the power of employment. This purpose drives our vision to see communities where all Australians can reach their potential, which underpins our approach to reconciliation. For our vision to be successful, we seek equality and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, where they can take a place of empowerment and respect. We aspire to be part of the journey that sees all Australians understand, value and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritages as a proud part of our national identity.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan represents the commitment to this journey and will form a blueprint on how CoAct aims to build stronger relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider Australian community to ultimately create employment opportunities.

In 2022, CoAct began this journey as an organisation with a REFLECT RAP, scoping and exploring our Organisation's sphere of influence and developing a specific and relevant vision for reconciliation.

We now move to the next RAP – INNOVATE, where we will build upon the foundation we started in reflection, where we can advance our actions towards achieving our vision for reconciliation.

Our existing values of Leadership, Collaboration, Creativity, Respect and Integrity set a solid foundation for our journey. These values will help guide our approach by having the courage to shape a better future, challenging ourselves to think differently, showing respect and valuing everyone that we work with and the contribution they can make.

We pride ourselves on demonstrating integrity by advocating fairness and an open approach to our reconciliation journey. We actively seek opportunities to learn and acknowledge the true history of Australia and its ongoing impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We believe strongly in contributing to a brighter future for all.

We understand that at the heart of reconciliation is the relationships between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and we will continue to develop relationships based on trust and respect within the communities that we serve.'

Simon Brown CEO, CoAct

Lynn Smart Chair of Board, CoAct

Our vision for reconciliation

CoAct's vision for reconciliation is an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience equity and respect, and where purpose driven organisations work alongside First Nations people towards better future for all Australians.

We aspire to be part of the journey that sees all Australians understand, value and recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of our national identity. Our purpose is to help the most vulnerable in our communities move out of poverty and disadvantage. We work together with job seekers, employers, community services and government to solve employment issues across the nation. CoAct collaborates with our network of service partners to activate communities and empower our customers to achieve exceptional levels of sustained employment.

CoAct helps Aboriginal and Torres Strat Islander job seekers find work through a wide range of specialised services aimed at helping to find and keep meaningful employment sooner. For over a decade, we've partnered with local Indigenous organisations, servicing some of the most remote and in-need communities across Australia.

This drives our vision to see equality and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and underpins our approach to reconciliation.

Our business

CoAct is a not-for-profit that helps people across Australia find sustained, meaningful employment.

We're a membership-based organisation, working with 15 service partners to deliver government-funded employment services. Formed in 1997, our model has remained unique in the employment services sector – a collective of not-for-profits joining forces to amplify their social impact.

CoAct supports local employment and strengthens local communities with 92% of our revenue is reinvested back into the community. Our trading name 'CoAct' (i.e. Community Activation) reflects CoAct's collaborative, community-based model.

CoAct delivers a range of government-funded employment services, including Disability Employment Services, Workforce Australia, Workforce Australia – Transition to Work, and Australian Apprenticeship Support Network. Our national reach with a local focus means that our service partners are empowered to deliver employment services directly within their local communities, leveraging their local knowledge and connections. CoAct provides comprehensive support to service partners, including procurement of new contracts, co-designed service delivery models, robust quality frameworks, and cutting-edge technologies tailored to their needs.

CoAct has two offices in Brisbane QLD and Perth WA with employees scattered throughout Australia working remotely and regionally. CoAct employs 115 employees across Australia, 9 (7.82%) of which identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Our RAP

Our Reconciliation Action Plan is an agreed blueprint on how CoAct aims to build stronger relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the wider Australian community to ultimately create employment opportunities.

Our values of Leadership, Collaboration, Creativity, Respect and Integrity will help guide our approach. This includes having the courage to shape a better future, challenging ourselves to think differently, showing respect and valuing everyone that we work with and the contribution they make. By advocating fairness and being open on our reconciliation journey as well as actively seeking opportunities to learn and acknowledge the true history of Australia and its ongoing impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we hope to contribute to a brighter future for all.

Our intention for delivering a sustainable and innovative Reconciliation Action Plan is supported by key roles in the business. We have nominated our Executive Management Group to be CoAct RAP Champions to drive awareness and engagement throughout all departments of the organisation. They hold these position titles in the business:

- Chief Executive Officer
- Executive General Manager Data, Governance & Technology
- Executive General Manager People, Projects & Capability
- Executive General Manager Finance, Quality & Assurance
- Executive General Manager Employment & Training
- Executive General Manager Customer & Brand

The CoAct Indigenous Advocate is positioned within a contract we deliver as a Regional Strategy Specialist for Workforce Australia, a program which has the most connection to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the communities we serve. This role is held by someone who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and will be responsible for chairing the RAP Working Group meetings throughout the year.

Our RAP working group is made up of volunteer committee members based remotely across our organisation. Each member of the group will share the responsibility to connect our actions back to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, histories and cultures.

We may also involve additional administration support from each site to run localised events and coordinate employee logistics on the ground. This group will be managed by the People and Projects Coordinator.

We understand that at the heart of reconciliation is the relationship between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We will continue to develop relationships based on trust and respect within the communities where we work. We will adopt a spirit of collaboration and willingness to listen and understand. We will look for opportunities to embed cultural competence, inclusion and diversity into our business and services. We believe that sustained employment transforms lives and our journey towards reconciliation will help us improve our services and help provide better life outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Since developing our first RAP, we have been on a journey towards reconciliation and have made positive progress in some areas. Our approach has been guided by our values of leadership, collaboration, creativity, respect, and integrity, and we have been committed to being courageous, respectful, and open to learning. The Working Group has participated in meaningful and sometimes challenging discussions, as we all learn and grow throughout this process. We have continued to develop relationships based on trust and respect, and have worked towards embedding cultural competence, inclusion, and diversity into our business and services.

A message from CoAct's Indigenous Advocate:

'CoAct launched it's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan in 2021 and the organisation, the Executive team and staff really embraced the journey. Operating in the Employment Services industry provides CoAct with an opportunity to not only build stronger and more effective relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities but allows us to improve the direct services that we deliver in those communities and to individuals receiving support across our national footprint of services.

Some of the key achievements during our RAP journey have included the development of an online cultural competency course that is able to be delivered to CoAct and Service Partner staff to improve awareness and cultural competency across our footprint. Work was also completed on establishing and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations that can support the delivery of Employment Services. For example, we have strengthened connections to ACCOR, VOYAGES, THEE Rail and Compass Group who offer employment opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers.

CoAct have participated in a range of events celebrating National Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day and NAIDOC week. During NAIDOC Week the RAP Working Group communicated daily with CoAct staff sharing awareness and information on a range of relevant topics including and overview of the 2022 Theme "Get Up! Stand Up! Show Up!, encouraging participation in local NAIDOC events, and sharing stories about First Nations people who have been 'Getting up! Standing Up and Showing Up' for generations – stories about First Nations Resistance Fighters, the Freedom Rides in 1965 and a call to action for staff to engage in RAP actions.

We have learnt many valuable lessons during our RAP journey. Understanding the importance of embedding practices into 'business as usual', ensuring that organisational leaders remain engaged in the journey and drive the importance of our RAP journey across the organisation. We also learnt that many hands make light work and will be encouraging more commitment and engagement from CoAct staff for our Innovate RAP. We aim to build on the achievements to date in our Innovate RAP by continuing to share knowledge and awareness, improve our business practices, processes and policies to increase our contribution to First Nations suppliers, improve employment and education opportunities for First Nations peoples that we serve and increase engagement with First Nations communities, organisations and individuals.'

This will be our second RAP for CoAct, as we have progressed through the REFLECT RAP last year. A key priority for last year was communication – raising awareness and sharing information to the business, which becomes a foundation which we can build upon. As we shared about our RAP, we also began the process of reviewing our current situation so that we can then improve and move forward with more positive impacts. We have made significant progress in developing a Cultural Competency training module, which will eventually be dispersed internally to CoAct employees and externally to our network. We've also identified some Service Partners within our own network that are pursuing their own Reconciliation Action Plans, we hope to utilise these connections on our journey.

One of the key learnings is that we need to seek more input, commitment and ownership from our senior leadership team. The reason this is so important is that participation in the RAP is voluntary, so involved employees are often competing with the priorities of their roles, which ebbs and flows throughout the year along. We believe that increased involvement from EMG will ensure that each department within our organisation understands the importance of our Reconciliation Action Plan and will be more open to participating in discussions, events and actions.

We acknowledge that we still have much progress to be made in this space, and we look forward to the journey ahead.

Our partnerships and current activities

CoAct encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to apply for all positions.

CoAct looks to further its internal activities and initiatives commenced through our Reflect RAP and expand these within our Innovate RAP through to its wider Service Partner network.

CoAct's national network of for-purpose Service Partners strives to make a difference in the lives of everyday Australians through our employment services contracts and social enterprises. CoAct's partnership model successfully brings together all the specialist knowledge and experience of our partners in one central location to share across the network. This unique model is our competitive advantage and delivers the best of local and national expertise.

CoAct and its Service Partners have relationships with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities. These partnerships have been created to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander customers access holistic supports during their journey to employment. These relationships evolve as the needs of customers evolve. CoAct aim to be responsive to the needs of customers and continually build on these relationships and partnerships.





At CoAct, we believe that building strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is crucial for our organisation and its core business activities.

More generally, we believe that an inclusive and reconciled future is imperative for the success of businesses across Australia. For CoAct, the strength of these relationships will directly impact the success of our programs and the outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our communities. The themes that drive this belief include connecting people, sharing experiences, effective governance, clear communication, meaningful engagement, and fostering partnerships. We understand that the heart of reconciliation is the relationship between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and we are committed to developing relationships based on trust and respect within the communities where we work. This will align with our business strategic objectives of building strategic partner relationships and becoming an employer diversity champion.

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence	October 2023	RAP Working Group
	 Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. 	November 2023	RAP Working Group
	 Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 	January 2024	People & Projects Coordinator
	 Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	February 2024	Organisational Development Advisor
	 Facilitate relationships between employees and First Nations communities within our areas of work. Volunteering in local community events and groups 	July 2025	RAP Working Group

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2024 & 2025	People & Projects Coordinator
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June, 2024 & 2025	RAP Working Group
	 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	May 2024 & 2025	RAP Working Group
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May- 3 June, 2024 & 2025	People & Project Coordinator
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's <u>NRW website</u> .	April 2024 & 2025	People & Project Coordinator
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	 Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce. 	July 2025	Organisational Development Adviso
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	December 2023	People & Project Coordinator
	 Identify other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	February 2024	RAP Working Group
	• Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	August 2024	People & Capability Compliance Officer
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	July 2024	People & Project Coordinator, Organisational Development Adviso



Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through antidiscrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti- discrimination provisions, and future needs.	August 2024	Organisational Development Advisor/ Manager – People & Culture
	• Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	September 2024	Manager – People & Culture
	 Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy. 	March 2025	Manager – People & Culture
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	November 2024	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability
	Educate all staff on the effects of racism.	December 2024	People & Projects Coordinator



Respect

CoAct respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights thus being of importance to our organisation and how we operate our core business activities.

We encourage an understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within the business. We believe that a deep understanding and appreciation of First Nations cultures and histories is crucial for creating a more inclusive and respectful society. By fostering a sense of pride for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories, we hope to help build stronger relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the wider Australian community.

Moreover, acknowledging and learning from the rich knowledge and traditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is essential to our organisation's understanding and connecting. By embracing this learning, we hope to create new opportunities for growth, innovation, and celebration. Our commitment to respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and rights underpins our approach to reconciliation and is a key aspect of our work towards creating a better future for all.

Action	Deliverables	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.	March 2024	Organisational Development Advisor
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	January 2024 & 2025	RAP Working Group
	• Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff.	July 2024	People & Projects Coordinator
	• Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	February 2025	People & Projects Coordinator
	Facilitating culturally educational talks and workshops to employees and the wider community	July 2025	RAP Working Group

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Build understanding of local Elders for the areas CoAct operates. Review existing collated information to be finalised, approved and published to distribute to staff.	October 2023	People & Capability Compliance Officer
	 Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	April 2024	RAP Working Group
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	April 2024	RAP Working Group
	• Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	July 2024 & 2025	RAP Working Group
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	January 2024	People & Project Coordinator
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2024 & 2025	RAP Working Group
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week events	March 2024	Manager – People & Culture
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July 2024 & 2025	People & Projects Coordinator
	 Encourage sharing and story-telling on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, traditions and histories across the business: Share stories through socials and emails 	October 2024	RAP Champions



Opportunities

At CoAct, we believe that providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities is critical to our success as a company and to the well-being of our communities.

We understand that sustained employment transforms lives and contributes to brighter futures for all. Therefore, we are committed to creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through employment, procurement, professional development, and retention. By enabling access to our systems and processes, we aim to empower our communities and support their growth. Our focus on creating opportunities aligns with our core values of respect, collaboration, and leadership, and is crucial to our goal of building a more inclusive and equitable society.

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	November 2023	Organisational Development Advisor
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	January 2024	Recruitment Specialist
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	March 2024	Recruitment Specialist
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	February 2025	Recruitment Specialis
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	January 2024	People & Capability Compliance Officer

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation	October 2023	Recruitment Specialist / Manager – People & Culture
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	April 2025	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	January 2025	Organisational Development Advisor
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	November 2024	People & Projects Coordinator
	 Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	May 2024	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability
	 Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses. 	October 2024	People & Projects Coordinator
10. Build our capability to be a more culturally responsive workplace	• Educate and set expectations for managers on supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees within their teams	April 2025	Manager – People & Culture
	Gather and take action on employee feedback regarding CoAct's current status regarding workplace cultural safety	November 2023	People & Projects Coordinator
	Develop suitable processes and protocols for reporting and resolving underlying issues and behaviour that contradicts a culturally safe and inclusive work environment	March 2024	People & Capability Compliance Officer

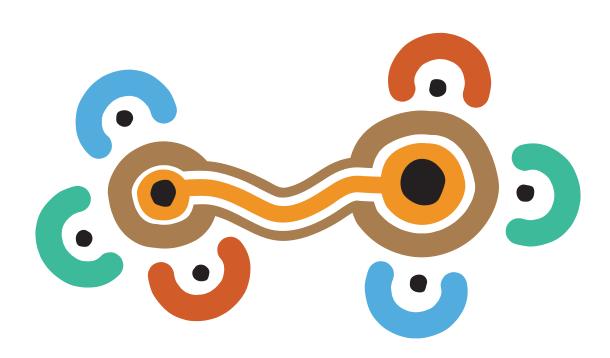
Governance

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September 2023 & 2024	RAP Working Group
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	November 2023	RAP Working Group
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	September, November, January, March, May, July 2024 & 2025	People & Projects Coordinator
	Explore the idea of engaging an external Indigenous Governance committee	June 2025	RAP Working Group
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Explore the idea of engaging an external Indigenous Governance committee	October 2023	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	September 2023	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2024	Manager – People & Culture
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	November 2023 & 2024	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	 Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence. 	August annually	Manager – People & Culture
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August annually	Manager – People & Culture
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	Manager – People & Culture & RAP Working Group
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	November, February, May, August 2023, 2024 & 2025	Organisational Development Advisor
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	October, annually	People & Capability Compliance Officer
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	Executive General Manager – People, Projects & Capability
	• Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	August 2025	Manager – People & Culture
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's <u>website</u> to begin developing our next RAP.	August 2025	Manager – People & Culture

Artwork

The artwork decorating our RAP document is from our CoAct Indigenous logo. It was commissioned from Moogie Down Productions, a 100% Indigenous owned and operated creative agency. It consists of two meeting circles joined by journey lines to represent the journey of our customers, knowledge transfer, learning and growth. The colour palette represents the natural beauty found across Australia.



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