



# Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria  
November 2021 – November 2022



Royal  
Botanic  
Gardens  
Victoria



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

## Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection to it. We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of cultures and traditional practices.

We are genuinely committed to partnering and meaningfully engaging with Victoria's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal communities to support the protection of Country, the maintenance of spiritual and cultural practices and their broader aspirations in the 21st century and beyond.

## About the Artist and Artwork



**The Artist:** Steve Ulula Parker, is a proud descendent of the Boonwurrung, Yorta Yorta, Erub Torres Strait Island and an employee of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learning Facilitator. Millowl Dreaming Steve Parker Design (MDSPD)©

**Title:** Journey of the Boonwurrung Seasons

**Artwork Meaning:** Boonwurrung Kulin Nations have up to seven to eight seasons and this painting is the journey of those seasons overlaid on the Coastal map of Boonwurrung *Biik* (land) *Warreeny* (ocean).

**Design:** Little Rocket Pty. Ltd. Strategic. Creative. Marketing, Melbourne, Victoria. A Supply Nation and Kinway Certified Business.

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# Foreword

## A message from the Board Chairperson and the Director and Chief Executive

We are proud to share Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Discrimination and injustice towards First Peoples has a long history in Australia, and we recognise that these injustices continue today. This *Reflect RAP 2021-2022* demonstrates the Garden's commitment to, and active support for, reconciliation.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria (RBGV) acknowledges the extraordinary contribution First Peoples have and continue to make to modern Australia's knowledge, culture, and economy. We appreciate that strong relationships and understanding between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people benefits all people. We regard this plan as an important step in doing our part to advocate for reconciliation and to build our organisation's identity and way of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As an organisation supporting plant conservation, research, and learning, we will continue to support and strengthen First Peoples-led plant knowledge and management systems.

We will continue to strengthen the role we play in making reconciliation a reality, as individuals and as an organisation. This RAP serves as a guide to the tangible steps we will take on this journey.

### **Chris Trotman**

Chairperson  
Royal Botanic Gardens Board

### **Tim Entwisle**

Director and Chief Executive  
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

## A message from our RAP Champion

In 2021, we still live in a time when we need to work together to eradicate racism and discrimination and strive for harmony and equity. A time where all of us, individually and collectively, need to face and honour the injustices of our national colonial history and wrong doings. To walk in solidarity and work side by side with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards greater equality, respect, recognition and increased opportunities.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's Reflect RAP focuses on removing barriers to inclusivity in the workplace and fostering a work environment that promotes respect and an appreciation of the rich culture of Australia's First Peoples. With a key aim of enhancing our reputation as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, this RAP looks to strengthen internal processes, guidelines, and educational initiatives across the Gardens to build a firm foundation for our reconciliation journey.

This RAP was developed by the Gardens' first RAP Working Group (RWG), which is comprised of six Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and six non-Indigenous staff. I want to thank this group for being so passionate and committed to bringing the RAP into existence. In particular, I want to acknowledge and thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members of the RWG who have given their time and expertise to support the development of our first RAP.

I am proud and privileged to be the Gardens' first Executive RAP Champion and I encourage all staff to get involved in the RAP and support Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria as we begin our reconciliation journey.

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**Fiona MacLaughlin**

Executive Director, Corporate Services  
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

## Our Vision for Reconciliation

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is committed to a long-lasting reconciliation journey by supporting and celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and peoples. We acknowledge, respect, and strive to strengthen partnerships with Traditional Owners and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We honour all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their ongoing connection to the lands our Melbourne and Cranbourne sites are situated on and the plants therein. We also honour all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' and their countries that much of our conservation, research and education plant work extends to.

We embark on our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) to formalise and strengthen this commitment.

Our vision for reconciliation is to promote understanding, respect and unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other community members. In the context of our organisation, we look to engage with the Traditional Owners of the lands our two sites are situated on, the Boonwurrung and Woi Wurrung language groups, as well as with the numerous First Peoples across Victoria and wider Australia where we also work. Through this we hope to help build a greater understanding, respect, promotion and value of First Peoples' rich plant knowledge, histories, connections and stories.

By understanding, protecting, restoring and actively cultivating Australian indigenous and native plants used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we actively promote and act on reconciliation and connection to Country. As a science institution, we strive towards ensuring that we increase and recognise diverse ways of knowing alongside botanical science; being inclusive in our historical and contemporary storytelling; being properly consultative in all the work that we do, and appropriately and respectfully caring for our biocultural collections.

In our Reflect RAP we look to reflect and scope how our workplace can contribute to reconciliation.

- We aim to develop strong foundations for reconciliation activities through internally focused initiatives and learnings.
- We aim to assess and enhance the cultural safety of our current and future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and our employment and procurement pathways, while simultaneously developing our non-Indigenous staff's understanding of, and engagement with, the reconciliation journey.
- We commit to develop a greater understanding of our organisation's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and establishing new, and stronger existing relationships with Traditional Owner groups and the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- We aim to assess our sphere of influences in all areas of our work, to be able to move with confidence, conviction and best practice in advancing our internal and external reconciliation learning, advocacy and action.



The Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio MP with Sam May, (Nyoongar / Gija), Aboriginal Learning Facilitator, Melbourne Gardens.

## Our Organisation

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is one of the world's leading botanic gardens and a centre of excellence for horticulture, science, and learning and engagement. The organisation is dedicated to the conservation, display and enjoyment of plants. It extends over two locations, Melbourne, and Cranbourne, and incorporates the National Herbarium of Victoria.

Our vision is that 'life is sustained and enriched by plants'.

Our mission is to 'safeguard plants for the wellbeing of people and the planet' through engaged communities, vibrant places, shared plant knowledge, and discovery and conservation action.

Our two outstanding botanic gardens: a 38-hectare heritage-listed landscape in the heart of Melbourne that houses over 8,000 plant species from around the world and a contemporary native garden set within a 363-hectare natural bushland reserve at Cranbourne, continue to enable people to connect with nature. These sites are home to exceptional rich display of plant species, innovative public programming, and world-leading plant science, horticultural science, and conservation research.

Beyond their physical beauty, the Gardens also contribute to global and local biodiversity knowledge through research, discovery, protection, cultivation, and restoration of rare and threatened plant species, both ex-situ and in the bushland, and as the insurance policy for the state's unique flora pre- and post-bushfire recovery. Our work contributes to plant knowledge and conservation at a local, state, national and international level via scientific and horticultural field work, research, knowledge exchange, policy influence and organisational memberships.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria employs 249 staff who work across both of our Gardens' sites, with eight of our staff identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. Over 100 volunteers across both sites play a vital role in the Gardens' operations and each site also has their own dedicated Friends groups who provide support through fundraising, grants, and projects.





David-John Jenkins (Kalkadoon), Aboriginal Horticulturalist at Melbourne Gardens' Long Island indigenous plant collection.

## Our Reconciliation Action Plan

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria prides itself on being a leading public plant science, horticultural and learning institution, while recognising that this knowledge has been built on a confronting and exploitative colonial history. The native plants of Australia, along with the plants from other colonised nations that were and continue to be 'discovered' by western science were already intricately known by First Peoples globally for hundreds of generations. Australia's many diverse First Peoples' cultures, with their own unique languages, customs, and knowledge systems, held and continue to hold a deep understanding of and connection to their rich and unique ecosystems, plants and Country. First Peoples' past and present knowledge and use of plants for medicine, food, building, hunting, land management and cultural uses, is only more recently starting to be understood, respected and valued by non-Indigenous people.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has strived to better understand, support, and engage with this long-standing knowledge and connection since the early 1990s. This has mainly been undertaken through public engagement and learning programs via the employment of First Peoples' heritage and learning facilitators, some on-site interpretation and related events, and consultations with certain First Peoples' organisations and individuals.

However, these initiatives and relationships have not always been consistent, holistic, or applied across the whole organisation, with no clear objectives or specific First Peoples engagement framework or guidelines. The organisation has increased the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and learning programs over time, particularly in school-focused cultural education programs, but the organisation recognises it needs to work towards extending its support, recognition, best-practice guidelines, and standards in this area. It also seeks to develop a more extensive and in-depth collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their knowledge systems.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has a deeply embedded colonial history: the National Herbarium of Victoria holds one of the largest collections of colonial plant specimens in the southern hemisphere; Melbourne Gardens was established on First Peoples' lands early in the colony; and we have contributed to the modification of Australia's native plant landscapes through the planting of non-native species. Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria seeks to better acknowledge, understand and reconcile the past and present. We believe that the RAP process will help achieve this and serve as a driver in shaping a new joint vision and plan of action to move towards a more just, equitable and reconciled future.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria sees the RAP process as one that belongs to everyone within the organisation at all levels and is everyone's responsibility. To ensure RAP actions are implemented, the organisation has:

- appointed a senior RAP Champion, Executive Director of Corporate Services, Fiona McLaughlin, who will ensure that all areas of our organisation will commit to the development and understanding of the plan
- recently formed a RWG made up of 50% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and 50% non-Indigenous staff from across various divisions and levels
- established regular reporting updates on RAP progress within the reporting framework to the Executive, Board and all-staff meetings and communications
- budgeted appropriately for time and resources to ensure actions within the RAP are prioritised and implemented on time
- committed to reporting RAP progress in the Gardens' Annual Report, on the website, to donors and to the public.



Janine Richardson (Dja Dja Wurrung), Aboriginal Learning Facilitator, Cranbourne Gardens.

## Our Reconciliation Journey

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is engaged with numerous reconciliation initiatives across both sites. The longest and most notable of these is the First Peoples–developed and led '*Aboriginal Heritage Walk*' public tour. Developed in the early 1990s by Melbourne Gardens' first Aboriginal Heritage Guide, the *Aboriginal Heritage Walk* has continued to grow in popularity, with thousands of Australian and international visitors partaking in this iconic cultural education tour over the years. Every staff member that starts working at the Gardens' is also required to undertake the *Aboriginal Heritage Walk* as part of their induction.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has recently developed a more targeted approach to our reconciliation journey through the engagement of a First Peoples Consultant, Eddie Moore, Nyuka Wara Consulting. Eddie developed an all–staff survey focussing on reconciliation and the RAP process and facilitated introductory workshops

and targeted meetings to openly assess where our organisation currently sees itself in the reconciliation journey, and to identify areas for improvement. A similar workshop was undertaken by the Board and Executive Team.

These initiatives led to the formation of the Gardens' first RWG, made up of an even number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and non–Indigenous staff across various divisions and levels. To date the RWG has led the development of this first Reflect RAP and initiated National Reconciliation Week 2021 activities to raise organisational awareness and understanding of reconciliation.

## Our Partnerships and Current Activities

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has numerous partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals. Some of the most longstanding partnerships are based on the organisation having received advice and engagement in cultural heritage related initiatives, such as with the three key Traditional Owner groups who have connections to the Gardens' sites: the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (Registered Aboriginal Party for Cranbourne Gardens and part of Melbourne Gardens site), the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (Registered Aboriginal Party for part of Melbourne Gardens site) and the Boon Wurrung Foundation / Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council. Advice received has extended to living cultural programs and initiatives, such as the Gardens' First Peoples public visitor programs and events and Learning and Engagement programs, and interpretation. Various Victorian First Peoples organisations and consultants, such as Victorian Aboriginal Corporation of Languages (VACL) and Koori Heritage Trust, continue to work with the Gardens in providing guidance and input on the development of these initiatives.

Under the guidance of a steering committee made up of both First Peoples and non-Indigenous people, Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria has been programming public NAIDOC events at Cranbourne Gardens annually since 2013. During this time the organisation engaged with numerous local First Peoples organisations, artists, educators, leaders, and businesses. The event has grown in popularity and size, attracting up to 3,000 local First Peoples and non-Indigenous community members.

Partnerships developed through this event include the Dandenong and District Aboriginal Consultative Committee (DDACL), Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA), Niarm Marr Djambana and Willum Warrain Hastings Gathering Places, and various cultural educators, performers and businesses such as Aunty Fay Stewart-Muir (*Boon Wurrung / Wemba Wemba*), Uncle Ron Murray (*Wemba Wemba*), Dja Dja Wurrung Dancers (*Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung*) and Little Rocket 100% First Nations' owned business.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria also regularly programs and hosts various Aboriginal-focused events, exhibitions, and experiences, in partnership with Aboriginal artists and organisations at our Melbourne site. A recent highlight has been the commissioned public program '*SEASONS in Blak Box*' by Urban Theatre Projects, which featured as part of Melbourne's Yirramboi First Nations Festival and RISING. Urban Theatre Projects is an entirely First Peoples artistic company that worked in close partnerships with Traditional Owners and local Victorian Aboriginal artists to create this site specific work, '*SEASONS in Black Box*' at Melbourne Gardens.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria is proud of its commitment to employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff. The majority of the organisation's eight (two full-time and six part-time) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff focus on facilitating a variety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural education programs for schools, tertiary students, tour groups and public. Apart from the *Aboriginal Heritage Walk* that attracts some 7,500 participants



Jakobi (Djap Wurrung/Gunditjmara), Aboriginal Programs Officer, Melbourne Gardens.

per year (pre-COVID-19) at Melbourne Gardens. Other programs developed and led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff include: the *'Bushfood Experience'* public tour run in partnership with Charcoal Lane Social Enterprise Restaurant and their First Peoples chef interns; a *'First Nations Climate Justice Walk'*; the popular *'Connecting to Country'* middle school education program that attracts some 7,200 students per year; and *'You and Me Murrawee'* early years education program that attracts close to 2,000 participants annually across both sites.

At the Cranbourne Gardens, regular First Peoples' early and mid-year school programs include *'Shared Country'* which attracts 2,300 participants per year, *'On the Edge of Creation'* and *'Baby Bilby'*, as well as specific school holiday programs focussed on seasons of the Kulin Nation and occasional *'Bush Food'* public tours.

One of Cranbourne Gardens' Aboriginal Learning Facilitators has also established a weekly *'Balee Koolin Bubup Bush Playgroup'* for kinder-aged local First Peoples children and their families. This playgroup has been running since 2014 with regular input from key Aboriginal cultural educators. Since 2015, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learning Facilitators regularly run First Peoples early teens programs with DDACL, *Girls on the Bounce* and *Boys on the Go*, as well as undertake educational cultural activities at the annual DDACL *No Tobacco Fun Run*.

Both sites have undertaken work on site-specific and digital First Peoples interpretation with some of the Traditional Owners groups and VACL. The most comprehensive First Peoples cultural work undertaken in partnership with the three Traditional Owner groups is the *'Aboriginal Heritage Values Report 2017'*, that informed the development of the 20-year Master Plan for the Melbourne Gardens.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria Facebook and Instagram feeds highlight the importance of significant dates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, such as *National Reconciliation Week* and *the UN International Day of Indigenous People*. The Gardens' email signature and website contain an Acknowledgement of Country, and a verbal Acknowledgement of Country is undertaken at all large staff meetings, Board and Committee meetings, and external group meetings and events. Both onsite shops have started to stock ethical and fair-trade products made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and artists, with priority given to Victorian Koori artists and businesses wherever possible.

Melbourne Gardens currently holds public signage acknowledging First Peoples' histories and plant knowledge, including: a plaque recognising the location of a First Peoples' mission prior to the Gardens being established. There is also some interpretive signage in an indigenous plant area of the Gardens referencing



pre-colonial land and river system layout; and First Peoples' plant uses information on several native Australian plant labels. At Cranbourne Gardens there is a local Kulin Seasons calendar sculpture, as well as some interpretation signage referencing local creation stories and peoples. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and welcome signs in the local Boonwurrung and Woi Wurrung languages are displayed at both sites' Visitor Centres. However, a more comprehensive, co-developed First Peoples Placemaking and Interpretation Plan has been identified as a priority for both sites.

The Science Division, together with First Peoples' groups, have conducted some preliminary research and rehabilitation work, primarily on rare and threatened native plant species across priority regions in Victoria and beyond. The National Herbarium of

Victoria has also contributed historical plant specimens from early colonial expeditions towards projects linked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and knowledge systems, such as *'Australian Plants Revealed: 65,000 years of traditional knowledge and 250 years of science'* exhibition, in partnership with the Australian Plant Society, and is contributing to a project on Berlin's Australian early plant specimen archives towards a *'German Foundation of Lost Art'* international project.



## Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>1.</b> Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</p>	<p><b>1.1</b> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.</p>	<p>May 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RAP Working Group (RWG)</p>
	<p><b>1.2</b> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>1.3</b> Capture data on how the organisation's divisions currently engage with Traditional Owners and First Peoples organisations to support the development of a whole of organisation process to record partnerships and relationships developed across divisions.</p>	<p>November 2021 / Ongoing</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: Senior Leadership Group (SLG) &amp; Executive Team (ET)</p>
<p><b>2.</b> Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</p>	<p><b>2.1</b> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week (NRW) resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.</p>	<p>May 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, Communication &amp; Media Advisor</p>
	<p><b>2.2</b> RWG members to participate in an external NRW event.</p>	<p>May – June 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>2.3</b> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.</p>	<p>May – June 2022</p>	<p>Lead: RAP Champion Support: RWG, Senior Leadership Group (SLG)</p>
	<p><b>2.4</b> Organise at least one internal NRW event for staff and encourage staff to attend.</p>	<p>May – June 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, SLG, DMC</p>
	<p><b>2.5</b> Raise public awareness about NRW through existing RBGV public education and promotional platforms.</p>	<p>May – June 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, Communication &amp; Media Advisor, Head Programming &amp; Audience Development (PAD)</p>

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>3.</b> Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.</p>	<p>November 2021 February 2022 May 2022 August 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Director and Chief Executive (DCE) Support: RAP Champion, RWG, ET, Communications &amp; Media Advisor</p>
	<p><b>3.2</b> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.</p>	<p>May 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, SLG where relevant</p>
	<p><b>3.3</b> Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>3.4</b> Develop a respectful way for all staff to have a visual recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' connection to Country, such as a symbol on staff uniforms.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>3.5</b> Board to meet with RWG and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on Country to gain a greater understanding of RWG priorities to help promote and influence reconciliation through their sphere of influence.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG RAP Champion, Senior Advisor Governance</p>
	<p><b>3.6</b> Approach Victorian schools that have a large First Peoples student intake and programs e.g., Clontarf Academy, with the aim to form partnerships that link to existing Gardens' Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs, initiatives, and staff.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Creative Producer – Learning &amp; Participation Support: RWG</p>
<p><b>4.</b> Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</p>	<p><b>4.1</b> Conduct a review of People and Culture policies and procedures to identify any gaps in RBGV's existing anti-discrimination provisions and what improvements can be made.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Head of People and Culture (P&amp;C) Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>4.1</b> Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Lead: RAP Champion Support: RWG, Head of P &amp; C</p>

# Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>5.</b> Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p>	<p><b>5.1</b> Develop a proposal for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.</p>	November 2021	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: Head of PAD, RWG</p>
	<p><b>5.2</b> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation towards the implementation of organisation wide cultural competency training.</p>	May 2022	<p>Lead: Head of P&amp;C Support: RWG</p>
<p><b>6.</b> Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols and perspectives.</p>	<p><b>6.1</b> Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation’s operational area.</p>	November 2022	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RAP Champion, DCE, RWG</p>
	<p><b>6.2</b> Increase staff and volunteers’ understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.</p>	November 2022	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, RAP Champion &amp; Communications &amp; Media Advisor</p>
	<p><b>6.3</b> Encourage Acknowledgement of Country and cultural protocols to be embedded in staff and volunteers’ everyday practice.</p>	September 2022	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: ET, SLG, RWG, Head of P &amp; C</p>
	<p><b>6.4</b> Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.</p>	November 2021 / Ongoing	<p>Lead: RAP Champion Support: ET, RWG, SLG</p>
	<p><b>6.5</b> Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	November 2021 / Ongoing	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: SLG, Communication and Media Advisor</p>



Steve Ulula Parker (Boonwurrung/Yort Yorta/Erub Torres Strait Island), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Learning Facilitator, Cranbourne Gardens.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	<p><b>6.6</b> Collate a 'live' list of any projects and proposals that require an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lens for review and regularly present for feedback to RWG meetings.</p>	<p>February 2022 / Ongoing</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, SLG</p>
<p><b>7.</b> Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	<p><b>7.1</b> Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week and promote external NAIDOC events in our local area.</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, SLG, DMC</p>
	<p><b>7.2</b> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in RBGV's NAIDOC event.</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG, SLG</p>
	<p><b>7.3</b> RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>



Lenka Vanderboom, Aboriginal Learning Facilitator, Melbourne Gardens.



## Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>8.</b> Identify and remove barriers to improve employment outcomes and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</p>	<p><b>8.1</b> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities, including internship and work experience programs.</p>	<p>October 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Head of P&amp;C Support: Advisor Governance, RWG, SLG</p>
	<p><b>8.2</b> Develop a proposal for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, retention and professional development across all organisational operations, utilising learning from deliverable 8.1.</p>	<p>October 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: Head of P&amp;C, RWG, SLG</p>
	<p><b>8.3</b> Assess the Gardens' current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff's cultural safety and needs and formulate priority response actions and guidelines.</p>	<p>August 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance, Support: Head of P&amp;C, RWG</p>
<p><b>9.</b> Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</p>	<p><b>9.1</b> Develop a proposal for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples owned businesses.</p>	<p>September 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RAP Champion</p>
	<p><b>9.2</b> Investigate Supply Nation membership.</p>	<p>November 2022</p>	<p>Advisor Governance</p>



# Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<p><b>10.</b> Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</p>	<p><b>10.1</b> RWG meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.</p>	<p>November 2021 February 2022 May 2022 August 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RAP Champion</p>
	<p><b>10.2</b> Apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.</p>	<p>November 2021 / Ongoing</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>10.3</b> Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.</p>	<p>May 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
<p><b>11.</b> Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</p>	<p><b>11.1</b> Define resource needs for RAP implementation.</p>	<p>November 2021</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance</p>
	<p><b>11.2</b> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.</p>	<p>November 2021</p>	<p>Lead: RAP Champion Support: RWG, SLG</p>
	<p><b>11.3</b> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.</p>	<p>November 2021</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance</p>
	<p><b>11.4</b> Initiate a process towards the formation of a First Peoples Advisory Group.</p>	<p>March 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG RAP Champion, ET, Board</p>
<p><b>12.</b> Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</p>	<p><b>12.1</b> Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contacts are up to date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.</p>	<p>June 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>12.2</b> Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.</p>	<p>August 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
	<p><b>12.3</b> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.</p>	<p>September 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance Support: RWG</p>
<p><b>13.</b> Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</p>	<p><b>13.1</b> Register via Reconciliation Australia's <b>website</b> to begin developing our next RAP.</p>	<p>July 2022</p>	<p>Lead: Advisor Governance</p>

## The Lucky Country

A Poem by **Dennis Fisher**

Aboriginal Heritage Guide  
Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria

Who owns this country?  
Where do they come from?  
Are they Australians?  
Are they Poms?  
What did they bring here?  
What do they speak?  
Do they speak English?  
Do they speak Greek?  
They bring trouble  
They bring guns  
Shoot you dead  
You're nothing but a bum  
They say you're a no hoper  
You're no good  
You're just nothing  
You're just a boong  
Where can we go?  
Where can we stay?  
Stand up and fight  
Kneel down and pray  
We have to do something  
We have to together  
We can't do it alone  
We can make it better  
So, come on you people  
Let's come as one  
Bring your family  
Children, Dad and Mum  
Bring all your friends  
Bring all your relations  
This is what we call!  
Reconciliation.

'Uncle Den' is Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria's longest serving Aboriginal Heritage Guide of 12 years. During this time Den has educated and touched the hearts of an estimated 35,000+ visitors and hundreds of staff, as he shares his personal stories and knowledge about First People's heritage, culture, and plant knowledge. We thank Den as we do all our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, past and present, for their ongoing contribution and long-standing commitment to reconciliation.

## Contact Details

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Uncle Dennis Fisher (Waka Waka), Aboriginal Heritage Guide, Melbourne Gardens.



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