



Reflect RAP

November 2025 - October 2026

Arthritis
AUSTRALIA





Acknowledgement of Country

Arthritis Australia acknowledges the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which our office is located and recognise their continuous connection to land, sea, culture and Community. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and extend this respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia.





Breaking Barriers by Wanita Lowe

This piece reflects the pain of arthritis through woven circles and red trails, while healing begins as the outer layers break away. Gathering circles unite community through the healing journey, with native plants—tea tree, eucalyptus, lemon myrtle—offering traditional relief. The eagle and dolphin soar in a vibrant celebration of freedom and renewal.

About Wanita Lowe

Yawayi dungha newayi (hello my name is) Wanita.

I'm a proud Dunghutti and Biripi woman who was raised in the Riverina area, and I'm also accepted in the Wiradjuri community. I feel a deep connection to all three countries Salt water, Fresh water, coastal and rural landscapes.

I am an international exhibiting Artist, exhibiting at the IDAIA Paris 2024 and 2025.

I work for Tafe NSW as a Cultural Arts teacher and Cultural educator in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region (Dharawal/Yuin Country).

I also facilitate weaving and painting workshops for the Blak Markets, National Indigenous Art Fair, Maritime Museum and Corporate events.

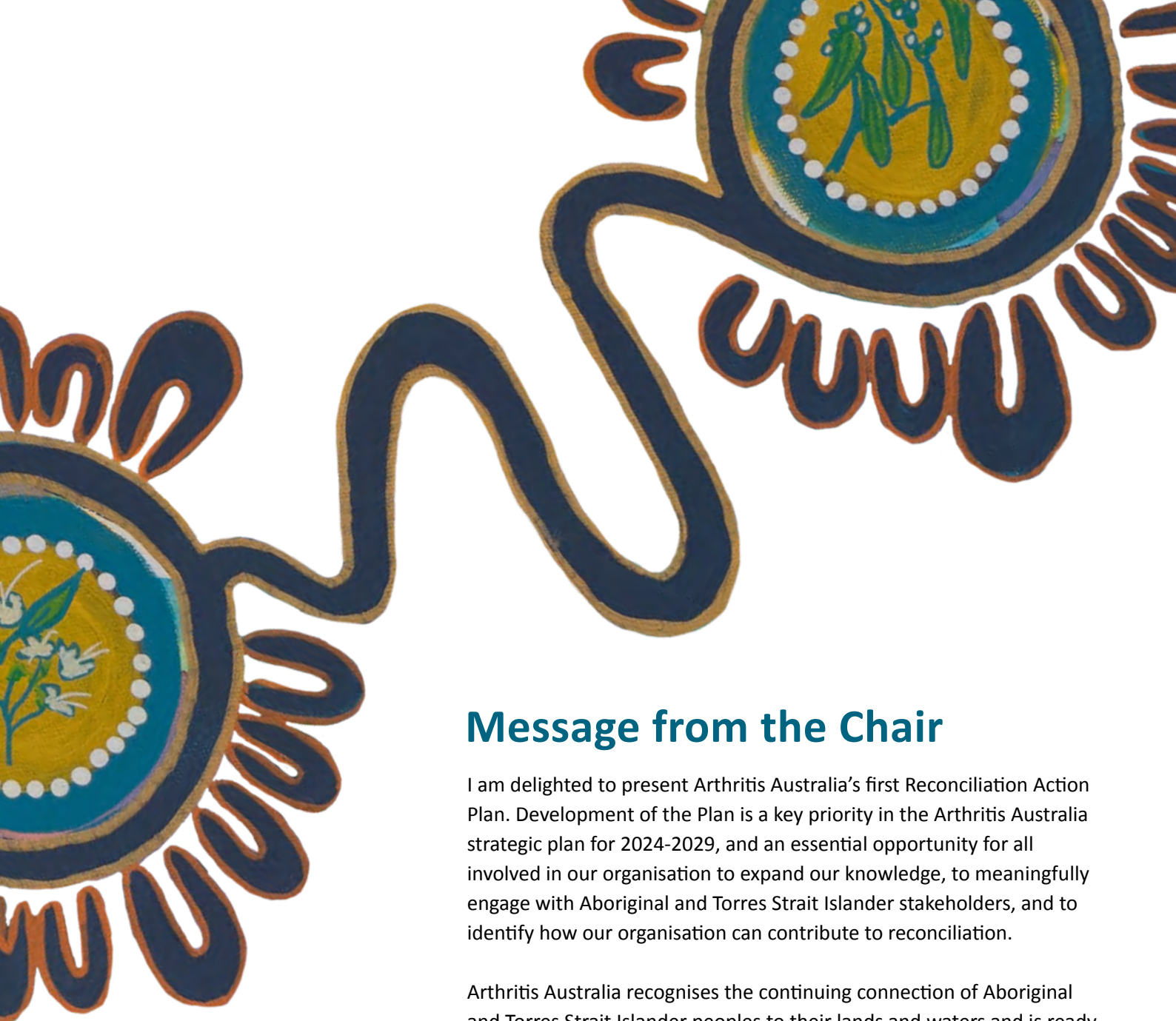
My work spans traditional and contemporary practices from weaving with native grasses and fibre to creating in ceramics, painting, Eco dying, printmaking and exploring with drawing mediums such as ink, pastel and charcoal.

All these practices incorporate inspiration from my cultural landscapes, stories and my own life experiences to form a contemporary perspective, that has altered and shaped the proud Aboriginal woman I am today.

My artwork reflects a journey of resilience, heritage and a continued fight to preserve Indigenous cultural knowledge by learning and sharing a deep respect for my family, ancestors, and communities that have embraced me.



Photo by Sharon Hickey



Message from the Chair

I am delighted to present Arthritis Australia's first Reconciliation Action Plan. Development of the Plan is a key priority in the Arthritis Australia strategic plan for 2024-2029, and an essential opportunity for all involved in our organisation to expand our knowledge, to meaningfully engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, and to identify how our organisation can contribute to reconciliation.

Arthritis Australia recognises the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to their lands and waters and is ready to play our part in strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.

We are committed to:

- building relationships and partnerships to advance reconciliation, respecting the importance of self-determination;
- demonstrating our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and building our cultural responsiveness;
- identifying opportunities for Arthritis Australia to embed culturally appropriate initiatives in our core business, from consumer support to advocacy and research.

As we take the first steps on our reconciliation journey, we are inspired by the over 3,000 organisations who have come before us. We look forward to delivering on the commitments of our first RAP and expanding and deepening our understanding and partnerships to advance reconciliation.



Kaylene Hubbard

Chair, Arthritis Australia Board

Message from Reconciliation Australia CEO

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

Arthritis Australia joins a network of more than 3,000 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 Arthritis 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 Arthritis Australia, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia





Our business

Arthritis Australia was established in 1949 and is Australia's leading national arthritis charity, working towards our vision of Freedom from Arthritis. We work in collaboration with Affiliated arthritis organisations in the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania and Western Australia to deliver information and support to people living with more than 100 types of arthritis. We also work closely with the Australian Rheumatology Association. As part of our core business:

- We provide information resources to help people live well with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions;
- We are the leading non-government funder of arthritis research in Australia;
- We advocate to the government and industry for policies, programs, and funding initiatives;
- We develop partnerships with national organisations with aligned values to fund and support our activities; and
- We work collaboratively with Affiliated arthritis organisations and peak health organisations to improve the health and wellbeing of people living with arthritis and musculoskeletal conditions.

We also have an Accessible Design Division, dedicated to educating and providing decision-making resources to both industry and government at the design and procurement level, ensuring that the needs and capabilities of the broader community are recognised and understood. The Division offers several testing services as well as Ease of Use Certification for products and Easy to Open Certification for packaging.

Arthritis Australia's office is located on the lands of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, in Glebe, New South Wales. We employ nine people, and at present no employees identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our RAP

Development of our first RAP is a strategic priority for the Arthritis Australia board, in recognition that our organisation has the opportunity and obligation to do more to advance reconciliation.

As we deliver on our Vision of Freedom from Arthritis, it is vital that information, support, research and healthcare is culturally informed and appropriate to meet the needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living with arthritis and other musculoskeletal conditions.

With the launch of the Staying Moving Staying Strong resources in 2023 working with our partners, Arthritis Australia took its first steps towards providing culturally appropriate arthritis care, and we look forward to continuing our journey by embedding reconciliation in all our core activities, from consumer support to advocacy. We are particularly excited by the opportunity to support and foster Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led research.

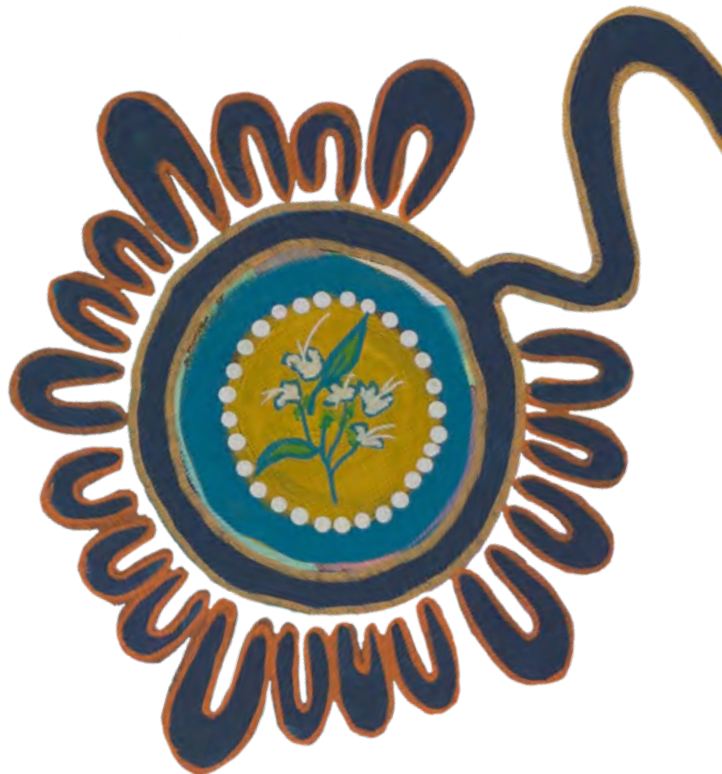
In developing our first RAP, we have engaged with Reconciliation Australia and convened a RAP Working Group, led by our CEO, to guide the development, and oversee its implementation. As a small organisation, all nine employees sit on our RAP Working Group and have completed cultural competence training. We have appointed an Aboriginal

community member and an Aboriginal clinician-researcher to our RAP Working Group.

We recognise that we are in the early stages of our reconciliation journey and are committed to deepening our cultural responsiveness and partnerships as we deliver our first Reflect RAP. We will endeavour to support those in our sphere of influence on their reconciliation journeys and positively influence the wide range of individuals and organisations we interact with.

We would like to acknowledge and thank the members of our RAP Working Group:

- Dr Brooke Conley, (Ngiyampaa, Physiotherapist and Peeneeyt Thanampool Indigenous Postdoctoral Fellow at The University of Melbourne)
- Mr Kevyn Morris, Aboriginal representative and Consumer Advisory Panel member
- Ms Grace Banfield, Project Manager
- Ms Alexandra Brayshaw, Accessible Design Manager
- Ms Courtney Brown, Projects and Program Manager
- Ms Fahima Fouzdeen, Chief Financial Officer
- Ms Louise Hardy, Interim CEO (RAP Champion and RAP Working Group Chair)
- Ms Anu Sawhney, Digital Communications Manager
- Mr Jonathan Smithers, CEO (former CEO and RAP Working Group Chair)
- Ms Krista Sutherland Smith (former Consumer Information Resources Manager)
- Ms Julie Weston, Office Manager
- Ms Cathryn Corcoran, Research and Consumer Engagement Manager
- Ms Sarah Stevens, Philanthropy Manager



Our partnerships/ current activities

We have several relevant partnerships and activities which we hope to build on, including:

- The appointment of an Aboriginal Community member to our Consumer Advisory Panel and RAP Working Group;
- The appointment of an Aboriginal clinician-researcher to our RAP Working Group;
- Working with the 'Staying Moving, Staying Strong' team, a national interprofessional team of Aboriginal and non-Indigenous health professionals, health service staff, and research leaders;
- Developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources as part of our membership of the Quality Use of Medicines Alliance, which includes representatives of the National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners (NAATSIHWP);
- The inclusion of a Welcome to Country at our 2024 Parliamentary Summit and attendance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants; and
- Partnering with Johnson & Johnson to offer a grant for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arthritis research.



Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	November, 2025	Interim CEO
	Research and implement best practice principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	July, 2026	Director, Policy & Advocacy
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	May, 2026	Digital Communications Manager
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May-3 June, 2026	Office Manager
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May-3 June, 2026	CEO
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff, committees and Board.	November, 2025	CEO
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	April, 2026	Director, Policy & Advocacy
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	May, 2026	Director, Policy & Advocacy
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly through including our Acknowledgement of Country on our websites developed in consultation with and approved by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'.	November, 2025	Digital Comms Manager
	Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander activities and/or events that are supported by Arthritis Australia via our social media channels and newsletter.	September, 2026	Digital Comms Manager
	Feature a local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artist and their artwork in our RAP and on our website to visually support our reconciliation message.	November, 2025	Project Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	October, 2026	CEO
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	October, 2026	CEO

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledges and rights within our organisation.	April, 2026	Project Manager
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation and develop a cultural learning strategy.	January, 2026	Project Manager
	Update employee induction process to include cultural competency training.	November, 2025	Project Manager
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area, with the support of our Affiliates.	February, 2026	Accessible Design Manager
	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	November, 2025	Project Manager
	Display approved Acknowledgement of Country and purpose statement in meeting rooms and around the organisation.	November, 2025	Office Manager
	Provide an Acknowledgement of Country at formal staff, committee and external stakeholder meetings.	November, 2025	Office Manager
	Invite a local Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country and/or other appropriate protocol(s) at all significant events each year.	November, 2025	Director, Policy and Advocacy
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June, 2026	Office Manager
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June, 2026	Office Manager
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2026	Office Manager

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	• Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	April, 2026	Project Manager
	• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	April, 2026	Project Manager
	• Review our recruitment and human resources processes to actively support and encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants and support and retain future employees.	April, 2026	CEO
	• Develop a business case outlining how the National Research Program can support and foster Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander led research, and research addressing the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Communities.	November, 2025	Research and consumer engagement manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	• Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	April 2026	Chief Financial Officer
	• Investigate Supply Nation membership.	April 2026	Chief Financial Officer

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	• Maintain a RAP Working Group to govern RAP implementation.	October, 2026	Project Manager
	• Maintain and review a Terms of Reference for the RAP Working Group.	February, 2026	Project Manager
	• Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group.	October, 2026	Project Manager
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	• Define resource needs for RAP implementation	November, 2025	Project and Programs Manager
	• Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	November, 2025	CEO
	• Maintain and support a senior leader to champion our RAP internally.	October, 2026	CEO
	• Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	January, 2026	Project and Programs Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. 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.	June, annually	Project Manager
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	1 August, annually	Project Manager
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September, annually	Project Manager
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	August, 2026	Project Manager

Contact details

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