



**REFLECT  
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN**

January 2022 - January 2023

**COLLARTS**





## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS

Collarts respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our campuses are located. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.

Collarts is committed to our reconciliation journey and recognises our connection to Wurundjeri Country through these locations. We also acknowledge our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, students, alumni, partners and visitors.

## ABOUT THE ARTIST AND ARTWORK

### THE ARTIST

Nakia Cadd is a Gunditjmara, Yorta Yorta, Dja Dja Wurrung, Bunitj, Boon Wurrung woman who grew up in the Northern suburbs of Melbourne.

Nakia's work has strong design elements of line work that connect with her family lines and landscapes of her Countries.

Her artwork is also inspired by her motherhood journey, family and Country. She likes to use art opportunities and platforms to creatively honour and retell her family's stories, that symbolise immense strength and resilience.

### THE ARTWORK

This artwork features different elements of art; mediums, tools and knowledge.

Whilst also reflecting the importance of connection and caring for Country.

The brown stones with white patterns depict the Country and where ochre came from, a medium that was used to paint for many years.

The clap sticks and music notes portray both song and dance.

The palette is central as are the people morphing out of the paint to represent community of all shapes, sizes and colours.

Whilst the palette is a contemporary art tool, it's still used to tell stories and share knowledge. The gathering circles with the pink connections represent knowledge being passed on through many communities.

The patterns above depict empowering those communities through growth and opportunities. Footprints are embedded at the bottom to reflect the songlines of the Country and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout the Nation.





# FOREWORD FROM DR BEN O'HARA MANAGING DIRECTOR COLLARTS

**On behalf of Collarts I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people, on which our campuses are located.**

Collarts have a deep level of respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, knowledge and culture. We embrace this culture in our organisation in many ways. Our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) signifies an important next step for us to integrate reconciliation into our organisation and operations.

We recognise the inequity which exists in our society, especially related to education. As a creative industries education provider we have a particular responsibility to acknowledge the creative work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and their contribution to the arts through their culture. We want to integrate this creativity into our programs and courses.

Collarts is committed to working with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Our Reflect RAP will guide us to establish new relationships, and create pathways to development and employment opportunities for this community.

I look forward to working with Collarts staff and students, the local community and our RAP Working Group to deliver on the actions in our Reflect RAP, as we continue our ongoing reconciliation journey.

**DR BEN O'HARA**  
Managing Director



# REFLECT RAP CEO STATEMENT

**Reconciliation Australia welcomes Australian College of the Arts (Collarts) to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.**

Australian College of the Arts (Collarts) joins a network of more than 1,100 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 Australian College of the Arts (Collarts) 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 Australian College of the Arts (Collarts), 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

**Australian College of the Arts Pty Ltd (Collarts) is a dynamic independent tertiary education college based on Wurundjeri Country in Naarm.**

We focus on creating real career pathways into the creative sector for students, delivering industry-based learning coupled with strong personal and professional development.

Throughout its 30-year history as an education provider, Collarts (formerly AusMusic) has gained a reputation for delivering high quality tertiary education, with a distinct ability to always be at the forefront of contemporary culture. Our commitment to industry connection, agility, and cultural relevance makes it a popular choice for students wanting the best start to a real career in the creative industry.

Collarts offers fully accredited Bachelor Degrees and Diplomas across our three schools; Design, Entertainment and Communication.

Through our extensive industry networks, we offer tailored opportunities for students to work in the entertainment and arts industry whilst they are still studying.

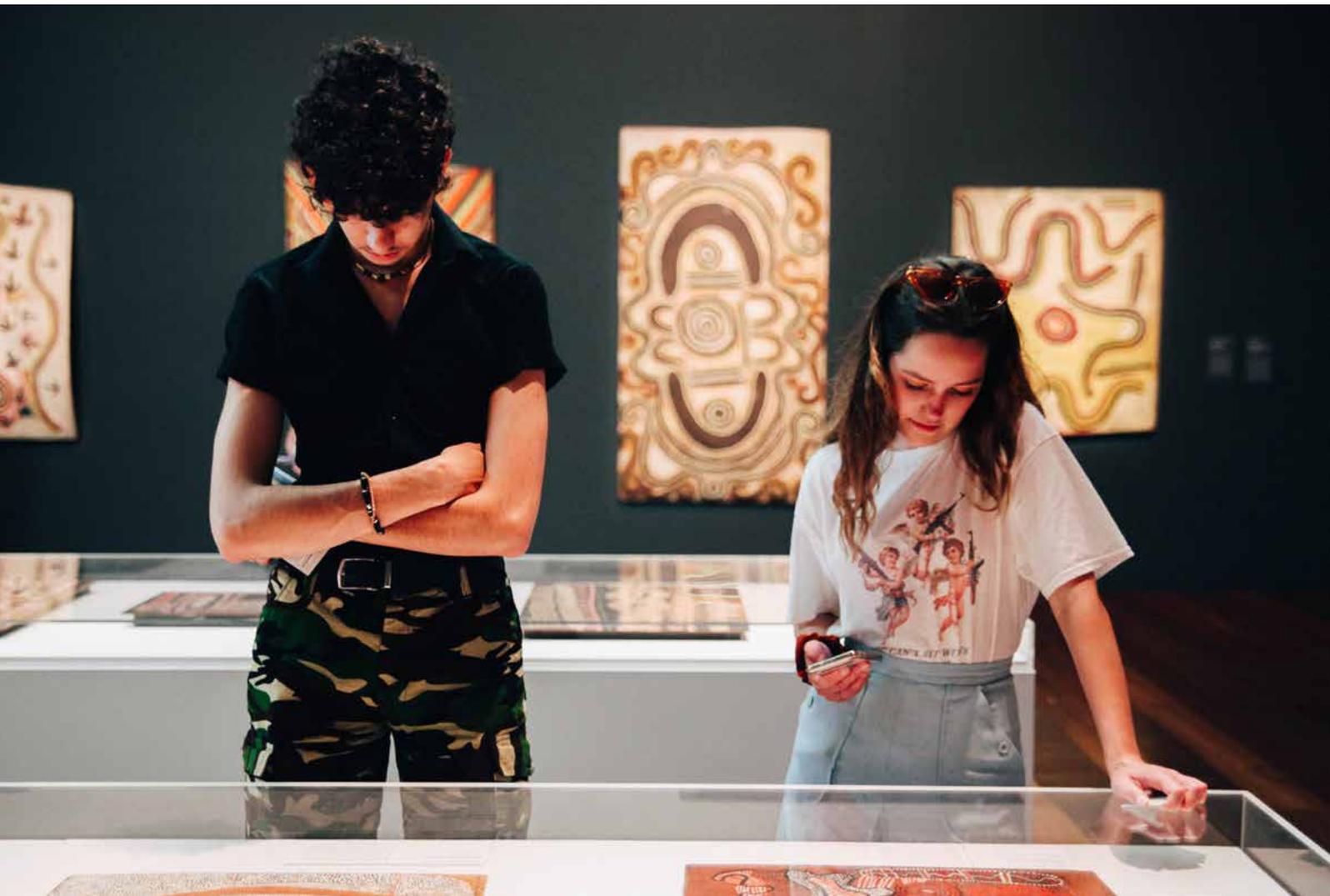
Collarts currently employ 200 staff in permanent and casual positions, and the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed by Collarts is unknown. To date, we have not collected this data as part of our recruitment and employment process.

Collarts offers courses for students who are based nationally, and we offer our Degree courses to international students to enrol in if they wish to study in Australia. We provide flexible and blended study options which allow students to study online from anywhere in Australia or they can tailor their experience with a mix of online and on-campus options.

We also have an international student exchange program for students in our degree courses. Collarts offers the exchange program in conjunction with two partnering universities; Popakademie Baden-Württemberg (University Of Popular Music And Music Business) in Germany and Drexel University in Philadelphia in the USA.

Collarts currently has five campuses located in Melbourne, Victoria. Collarts hosts world-class recording studios, post-production facilities, performance spaces, computer labs and classrooms across all our campuses.





## OUR RAP

**Collarts has a genuine desire to acknowledge and embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, and to embed reconciliation into our business plan and operations.**

We acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people as the Traditional Custodians of the Country on which Collarts is located, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and future.

Developing a Reflect RAP signals our commitment and the desire to develop respectful relationships with, and meaningful opportunities for Wurundjeri people and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

It provides us with an opportunity to expand our knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to educate our staff and students on how to best engage with our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. A RAP will enable us to build new partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and allow us to share our values of respect and equity for all.

As an important first step, we need all staff and students to know and use the correct protocols for an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of a meeting, speech or formal occasion. We want the wording to be clear and consistent across the organisation, and across all our communications including on our email signatures, on our website and on our campus signage. This aligns with Action 6 in our Reflect RAP, and we would see it as an immediate priority, and one we seek guidance from Reconciliation Australia on.

The Collarts Reflect RAP sets out clear actions for us to implement in the first 12 months of our RAP journey. We intend to establish a RAP Working Group (RWG) (Action 10) as an initial priority to further engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander peoples and stakeholders, and to work with us during the implementation phase of the plan. We will look to include up to 10 members consisting of staff from across our organisation, and stakeholders from a broad range of industries that align with our courses including representatives from the music, fashion, screen and media industries. We will prioritise engaging with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and Elders (Action 1), and will seek input and representation from the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal Yarra and potentially the First Peoples Direction Circle. A representative from our Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) will also be included on the RWG. Managing Director, Dr Ben O'Hara, will chair the RWG and will be the RAP champion for Collarts.

As an education provider, we would like to increase the participation, retention and success of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples both as students and staff members. Our goal is to review our course content to ensure that it contains studies that engage with the lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as relevant to each course field.

We will continue to implement our RAP as set out in the deliverables and timeline, drawing on expert advice and guidance from our RWG. In 2022, the RWG will also work with us to review our Reflect RAP as we look to develop the next iteration, our Innovate RAP.

## **RECONCILIATION JOURNEY TO DATE**

Collarts engages with a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, including the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and IndigenousX. We have a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students enrolled in our courses, and are always looking at new ways to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and provide meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to reach their full potential.

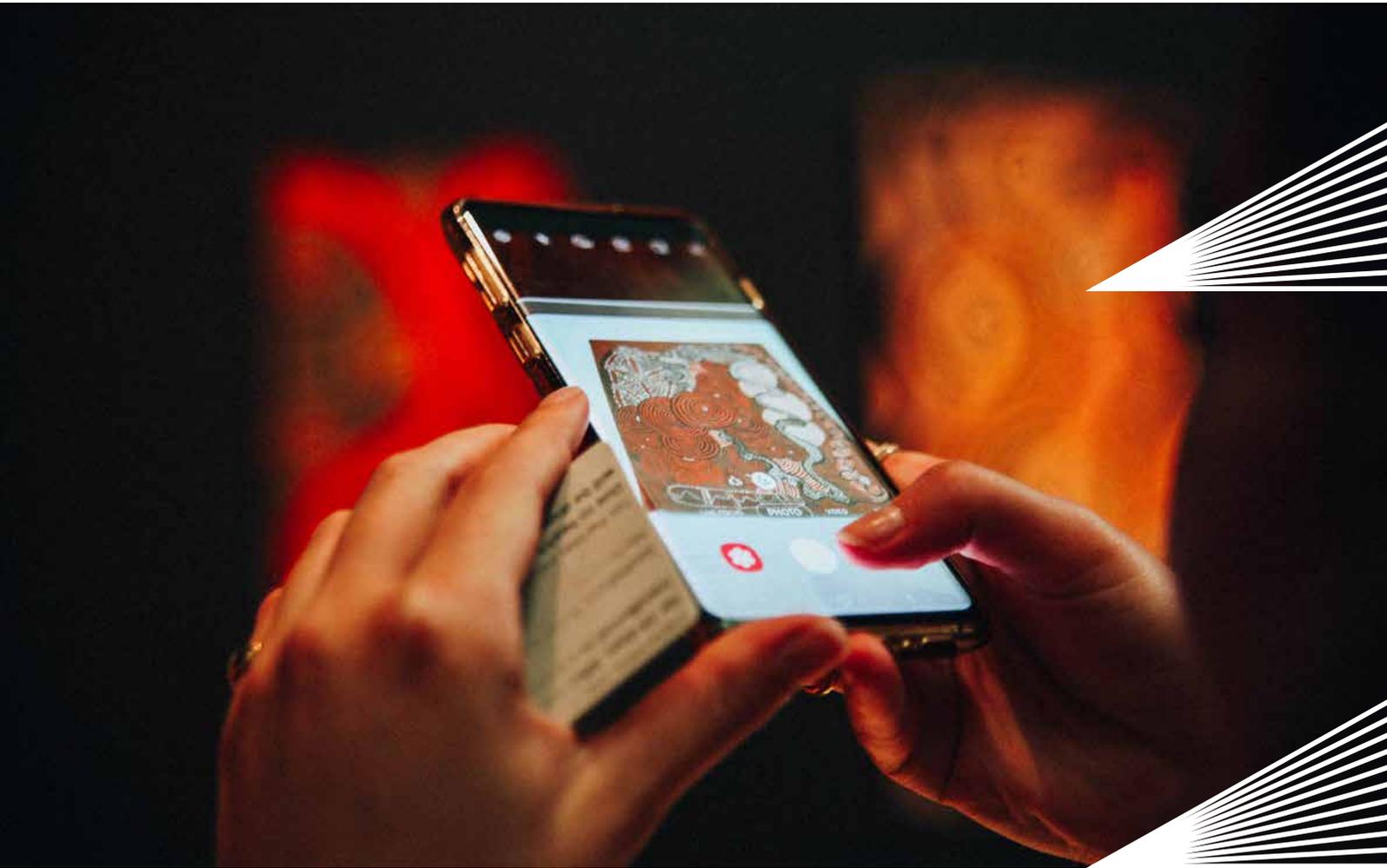
We will build on our foundations, which we have outlined below, and use the RAP as a strategy and tool to continue our commitment to inclusion and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to educate our staff and students on reconciliation.

### **DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION WORKING GROUP (DIWG)**

Collarts established a Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG) in 2019, which includes staff members from across our organisation.

### **INDIGENOUSX**

All staff training sessions were held during 2019 and 2020. Collarts engaged Luke Pearson, Founder and CEO of IndigenousX, to provide training and workshops to staff engaged at Collarts. The training was customised to best meet the needs of our business, and included training across a range of topics including community engagement, anti-racism and corporate responsibility.



## OUR PARTNERSHIPS/ CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

#### **Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation**

Collarts has a long-standing relationship with the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, and engages with them to deliver Cultural Practices Services for our key events including Welcome to Country Ceremonies and Smoking Ceremonies.

#### **Local community radio**

Collarts work with local community radio station Triple R 102.7FM to showcase Aboriginal and Torres Islander peoples music, and the music of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and alumni, through collaborative events during NAIDOC.



## INTERNAL ACTIVITIES/INITIATIVES

### NAIDOC

Collarts participates in, promotes and celebrates National NAIDOC Week annually. We have had an active schedule for NAIDOC Week for the past few years, and have held events that align with our key course offerings. Past activity includes:

- A dedicated communications strategy for NAIDOC Week 2021 to promote the theme of 'Heal Country'.
- Development and promotion of a Collarts NAIDOC Spotify playlist, featuring a range of music from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists.
- Collaboration with local community radio broadcaster Triple R 102.7 FM to deliver an exclusive online event to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians for NAIDOC Week 2020.
- Promotion of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, record labels and social enterprises in our NAIDOC Week 2020 communications campaign.
- Development and promotion of a number of blogs;
  - » 'What does sustainability in Indigenous fashion look like?'
    - Promoting native materials and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designers at the helm of eco-friendly fashion in Australia.
  - » 'Do you know whose land you are on this NAIDOC Week?'
    - Written to educate and engage students, and our local community, to learn about whose country they are living and working on.

### COLLARTS ONLINE O-WEEK PARTY

Engaged emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musician Kee'ahn to headline the Collarts Online O-Week Party in 2021.



### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS

As outlined above, we engaged Luke Pearson, CEO and Founder of IndigenousX, to deliver a range of workshops onsite for all our staff.



### ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

Collarts staff members acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land at events and meetings. However, we need to establish a consistent approach and messaging. We see this as an important and practical way to begin our Reflect RAP journey.

### WELCOME TO COUNTRY

We regularly engage with Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation to deliver Welcome to Country as our annual graduation ceremonies, opening of new campuses and at major events held at Collarts.



# RELATIONSHIPS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.</b>	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	February 2022	Chair of Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (DIWG)
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	February 2022	Chair of DIWG
<b>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</b>	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	March 2022	Managing Director
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June 2022	Chair RWG
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 June 2022	Events Manager
<b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b>	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	January 2022	Managing Director
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2022	Chair of DIWG
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	March 2022	Chair of DIWG
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	July 2022	Quality and Compliance Manager
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	November 2022	Managing Director



ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</b>	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	July 2022	Managing Director
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	September 2022	Managing Director
<b>6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.</b>	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	February 2022	Chair DIWG
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	January 2022	Managing Director
<b>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b>	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	July 2022	Events Manager
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2022	Events Manager
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2022	Events Manager



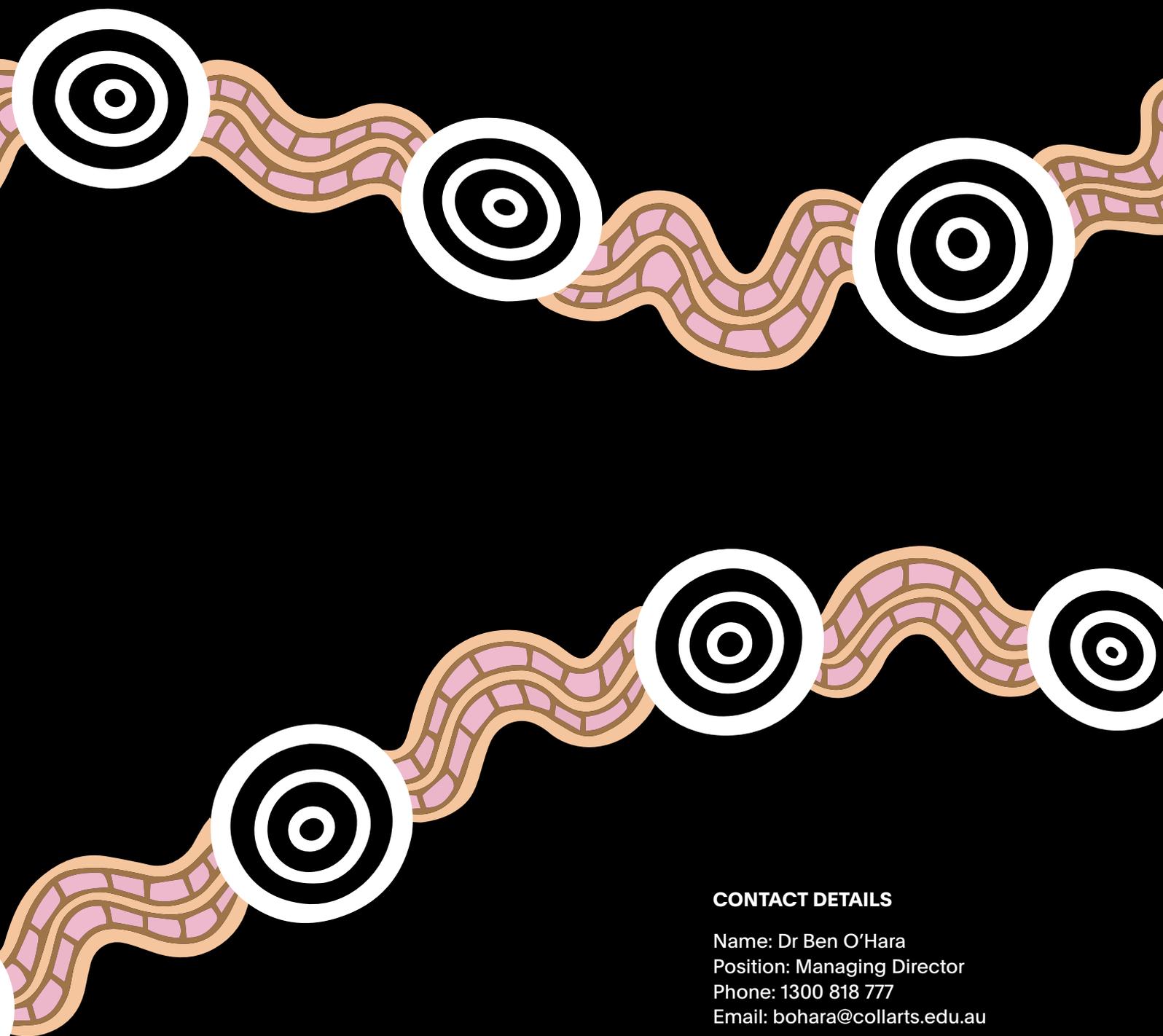
## OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.</b>	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	October 2022	Managing Director
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	February 2022	Managing Director
<b>9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</b>	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	October 2022	Chief Financial Officer
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	October 2022	Chief Financial Officer



## GOVERNANCE

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
<b>10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.</b>	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	March 2022	Managing Director
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	February 2022	Chair DIWG
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	March 2022	Chair DIWG
<b>11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</b>	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	January 2022	Managing Director
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	January 2022	Managing Director
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	February 2022	Managing Director
<b>12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</b>	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 2022	Managing Director
<b>13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.</b>	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	August 2022	Managing Director



**CONTACT DETAILS**

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# **COLLARTS**