

INNOVATE

Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) template

Innovate RAP:

An Innovate RAP is used to develop, test and establish the best approach for advancing reconciliation in your workplace. An Innovate RAP is a public commitment published on [Reconciliation Australia's website](#). It should take approximately 3 - 6 months to develop an Innovate RAP and 2 years to implement.

Before you start:

Before you commit to developing a RAP, it is important that you read and understand the [RAP framework](#), consisting of the three core pillars (Relationships, Respect and Opportunities), [four RAP types](#) (Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate) and [mandatory actions and deliverables](#) that guide the development of RAPs. It is also important to read and understand the [RAP development, review and endorsement process](#), starting with assessing [whether a RAP is right for your organisation](#).

How to use this RAP template:

The Innovate RAP template is designed to encourage workplaces to think strategically about the actions and deliverables that will achieve their unique [vision for reconciliation](#) within their [sphere of influence](#). It is also designed to guide the RAP development process through the establishment of a [RAP Working Group](#).

The Innovate RAP template outlines the mandatory actions and deliverables that your workplace needs to develop commitments in line with in order to receive Reconciliation Australia's endorsement. In addition, your workplace is expected to demonstrate strategic thinking by including additional actions and deliverables tailored to your core business and sphere of influence. Please complete the template by addressing the questions outlined in the 'Our Vision', 'Our Business' and 'Our RAP' sections, outlining your workplace's unique additional actions and deliverables, and assigning a responsibility and timeline to deliverables

Throughout this template, all *italicised* font is instructional only, whilst regular font indicates fixed text you need to include in your RAP. Please review the following resources for good practice guidance on completing RAP templates.

- [Developing a S.M.A.R.T. RAP](#).
- [Demonstrating inclusive and respectful language](#).

RAP review and endorsement process:

Once you have completed your first draft RAP, please [submit for review](#) to Reconciliation Australia's website. A RAP team member will be in touch to provide feedback and tailored assistance within three weeks. Once Reconciliation Australia is satisfied your RAP meets requirements for endorsement, you will be provided endorsement in two stages.

- 1. Conditional Endorsement** – Reconciliation Australia will provide in-principle endorsement of your RAP (content only) allowing you to seek internal sign-off from your senior leadership with confidence. Reconciliation Australia will also provide you with the RAP logo and branding to include in final design of your RAP.
NB: RAP logos are trademarked through IP Australia, and must not be used publically until you have received Reconciliation Australia's final endorsement.
- 2. Final Endorsement** – Reconciliation Australia will check your final designed document includes the conditionally endorsed content and the RAP logo and branding before providing final endorsement.

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan November 2020 – November 2022

Our vision for reconciliation

Reconciliation is about unity and respect between Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. It is about respect for Aboriginal heritage and valuing justice and equity for all Australians. With this new Innovate RAP WHFS re-confirms its commitment and ongoing efforts to offer services that are culturally sensitive and appropriate.

Our Aboriginal Family Support Service has been delivering Aboriginal specific programs for more than twelve years. As an Aboriginal staffed and led support program within a health service, the service seeks to address the difficulty Aboriginal people can experience in building trusting relationships due to institutional generational and historical trauma. Our focus has been on building pathways for families to access specialised services as well as building the capacity of WHFS to deliver services within a culturally secure and safe environment.

Specific programmes and services such as GOSO (Alcohol and other Drugs Relapse Prevention group, Aboriginal Grandparents and Family Support Service, and Women only Arts and Crafts are designed with special consideration for the specific needs of the Aboriginal Community. WHFS workers provide practical help for Aboriginal families from supporting discussions with government departments about housing, child protection and Centrelink. We also offer a Playgroup for parents, grandparents, and carers with children 0-4 years to come and play, sing, and meet new friends.

During 2020 Aboriginal Family Support Services worked with 260 Aboriginal families, providing counselling, family support, advocacy, and referrals, as well as group activities, peer support groups, early years playgroup, Circle of Security parenting program, GOSO and holiday programs. Improving Aboriginal health is not just about improving the physical wellbeing of an individual. It is about working toward the social, emotional, and cultural wellbeing of the whole community in which each individual is able to achieve their full potential.

Our business

Women's Health & Family Services is a not-for-profit organisation that specialises in women's health issues. Our purpose is to provide excellent, connected, health and support to all women across their life cycles. Our service footprint includes sexual and reproductive health services, mental health, alcohol and other drugs, domestic violence advocacy and specialist multicultural domestic violence advocacy services, parenting support, specialist support for children impacted by parental substance use and Aboriginal family support services to women and their families.

We currently employ 94 staff and at December 2020, 5% of our staff were Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We predominantly work in the Perth Metropolitan region however our clients reside across Western Australia.

WHFS have on average 16,000 direct contacts per year with women and families from diverse backgrounds with many experiencing significant disadvantage and marginalization. Collaborative partnerships are fundamental to the community-based focus of the organisation. These partnerships enhance the depth and diversity of the services provided and assists in providing services across a continuum.

WHFS has three permanent office locations in Western Australia, two based in Northbridge (main site and Family Domestic Violence Advocacy centre) along with an office in Joondalup. Our staff are also co-located in several sites including Mirrabooka Police Station, Gosnells and Fremantle.

Our RAP

WHFS has been working and engaging with Aboriginal communities and services across the Perth metropolitan area since 1977. Nyoongar cultural practices, language, customs, and ceremonies are encouraged and supported as part of our business operations, when possible. The commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan presents a transparent and accountable means to examine the organisation's progress.

The RAP Working Group is made up of WHFS staff members, both Aboriginal and non-Indigenous Australians, all levels of management as well as endorsement from the Board of Womens Health & Family Services. We are working towards ensuring we have external community representatives. Current membership includes:

- Chief Executive Officer (RAP Chair)
- Aboriginal Client Services Manager (RAP Champion/member)
- HR Coordinator
- Clinical Supervisor
- Health Services Manager
- Executive Manager Medical and Mental Health Services
- Executive Manager Client Services
- Aboriginal Family Support workers
- Accreditation Project Manager

WHFS do not currently have a formal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group however we regularly consult with the members of our GOSO (Getting off and Staying off) group and request feedback during all of our sessions.

We also lead on bringing together local business' and aboriginal workers (from mainstream programs) to discuss current issues, referrals, ideas, and overall service provision for the clients (many of whom access the same services). We aim to hold the meetings quarterly and membership includes Department of Communities, Arche, Headspace, Mort Care and others.

WHFS commenced the development of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2011 following discussion with Aboriginal staff. A Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group was established, Terms of Reference and a Statement of Commitment agreed to in August 2013. WHFS's first Reconciliation action plan was approved by Reconciliation Australia at the Innovate level and ran from 2017-2019.

Summary of the key learnings or most significant changes

- All meetings rooms at WHFS are named after Aboriginal seasons and a formal meeting acknowledgement/welcome to country is undertaken at the start of each meeting. Our recent staff appreciation day was opened by Ingrid Cummings.

- Regular ATSI cultural awareness is mandatory across the organisation with online and face to face training undertaken by staff since 2017.
- Policy and Procedure has been revised to ensure that there are no barriers to staff attending NAIDOC (National Aboriginal Islander Day of Celebration).
- In 2019 we partnered with Jacaranda Community Centre to host a NAIDOC event in Redcliffe which attracted over 500 attendees. Local talents, including traditional dancers, bands and singers, as well as Aboriginal arts/craft displays, activities for children and adults including toy making, traditional foods and a variety of local and metropolitan health, welfare and government service stalls were all part of the event.
- The WHFS Leadership TAFE group made a Nyoongar animal booklet to be given to our Playgroup children at the November 2020 NAIDOC event.
- Aboriginal Art Group and Aboriginal Playgroup was established which also functions as a peer support group for our clients. The group focuses on cultural awareness and connection through art and play such as Storytime, song, and painting rocks. The group is predominantly Aboriginal clients but open to non-indigenous clients too.
- For Sorry Day awareness, Reconciliation week and NAIDOC WHFS works with staff and the community to run events and encourage awareness.
- Connecting to Culture (Ages 5-11) A group that focused on art, language, history and dance.
- Connecting to Culture (ages 11-18) Half-day event (17 participants) that focused on sports, self-esteem, and confidence. The event was run in collaboration with Jacaranda Community Centre. This was a significant event for our community where some family members meet and connected for the first time. This was followed by a networking event to shape what else clients and families would like to discuss and what other events they would like WHFS to hold. Follow up from that was take our deadly thinking program into the schools (begins Term 2, 2021 at Joseph's Banks Secondary College and Butler Community College).
- Deadly Thinking; MH and Suicide prevention workshops. Aboriginal designed program delivered in house and at external locations.
- Aboriginal MOUs with Jacaranda Community Centre to share resources (staff and financial counsellor)
- Increased our Aboriginal employment and utilised revised procurement approach with employment with a seasonal contractor.

Relationships

Since 1977, Womens Health & Family Services has been delivering health related services to Aboriginal peoples, Cultures/histories in the metropolitan area of Perth. Strengthening our relationships with the Aboriginal communities will allow for better collaboration and understanding that will result in the delivery of appropriate and beneficial healthcare.

WHFS commits to meaningful relationships that can only be built on a foundation of mutual respect and as such the employees of the organisation demonstrate respect for Aboriginal people, their cultures, histories, and vision for the future.

The organisation looks forward to strengthening those relationships through its RAP and working together on ways to provide an improved health service that improves the health status, social and cultural wellbeing, and quality of life expectancy of those communities.

Focus area: WHFS Strategic Theme: People and Culture

| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
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| 1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | • Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement. | December 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| | • Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. | December 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| 2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW). | • Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. | 27 May-3 June, 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | • RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. | 27 May-3 June, 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | • Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. | 27 May-3 June, 2021 | CEO |
| | • Organise at least one NRW event each year. | 27 May-3 June, 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | • Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website . | 27 May-3 June, 2021 | RAP Champion |
| 3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence. | • Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation. | April 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| | • Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly. | April 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | • Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes. | April 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| | • Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation. | April 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| | • Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs. | July 2021 | HR Coordinator |

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| 4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation. | December 2021 | HR Coordinator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy. | October 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism. | January 2022 | RAP Champion |
| <i>[Include any additional unique Relationship actions to support your reconciliation journey.]</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the Reconciliation Working Group Ask the working Group for feedback specifically on guiding principles for future engagement. Develop the engagement plan NRW on the Reconciliation Hub page Encourage and support staff to participate in NRW (ensure dates in calendars, encourage wearing respectful colours etc) Networking meetings to continue to work with external stakeholders Develop Anti-discrimination policy Share policy with Advisory Group and Jacaranda Elders Determine what we mean by senior leaders – can we do this in the community and WHFS? Is our cultural awareness training enough? Reflect after we develop anti-discrimination policy Try and develop the relationships with external stakeholders so that we can partner and work with organisations who receive funding for cultural awareness | | |

| Respect | | | |
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| <p>Respectful relationships support all the service delivery and community work Womens Health & Family Services engages in.</p> <p>Womens Health & Family Services acknowledges the cultural heritage of Aboriginal peoples and their connection to land and waters. The organisation values the views of Aboriginal peoples and seeks their advice on all aspects of the work that is relevant to them.</p> | | | |
| Focus area: WHFS Strategic Theme: People and Culture | | | |
| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
| 5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. | March 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy. | June 2021 | RAP Champion & CEO |

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| and rights through cultural learning. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our staff. | February 2021 | RWG |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning. | February 2021 February 2022 | RAP Champion & CEO |
| 6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. | February 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country. | February 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year. | Dec, 2020 Dec, 2021 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings. | Nov 2020 Nov 2021 | CEO and RAP Champion |
| 7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. | July, 2021 July, 2022 | RAP Champion and RWG |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week. | Nov, 2022 | HR Coordinator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff. | July, 2021 July, 2022 | RAP Champion, CEO |
| <i>[Include any additional unique Respect actions to support your reconciliation journey.]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask Advisory Group re: cultural learning strategy. Develop the list of questions to ask external stakeholders. | | |

| Opportunities | | | |
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| Our organisation recognises the value of WHFS Aboriginal employees across all areas of our workplace. Increasing the numbers of Aboriginal staff will assist in strengthening our Reconciliation effort and continuing to build a culturally secure and inclusive work environment. | | | |
| Focus area: <i>Optional: What key strategic direction of your business does Opportunities align to?</i> | | | |
| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |

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| 8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. | May 2022 | HR Coordinator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | May 2022 | HR Coordinator, RAP Champion, CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy. | Jan 2022 | HR Coordinator, RAP Champion, CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. | Feb 2022 | HR Coordinator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace. | Nov 2022 | HR Coordinator |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce. | Nov 2022 | HR Coordinator, RAP Champion, CEO |
| 9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. | Feb 2021 | EMBGS |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. | June 2021 | RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff. | Feb 2021 | CEO, RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. | Feb 2022 | CEO, RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses. | Feb 2022 | CEO, RAP Champion, EMBGS |
| <i>[Include any additional unique Opportunities actions to support your reconciliation journey.]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Dedicate a RAP meeting to discuss Section 8 (May 2021) - asking staff for feedback on current retention strategy.</i> <i>Look into the supply nation membership process.</i> <i>WHFS have ATSI procurement strategy in place and are open to developing relationships with ATSI businesses, however we are restricted by funding and therefore some of these barriers are difficult to remove.</i> <i>We will continue to share resources where possible.</i> | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Stretch target for employment 7% at the end of Dec 2021 and 10% by the year after</i> | | |
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| Governance | | | |
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| Action | Deliverable | Timeline | Responsibility |
| 10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. | Nov 2020 Nov 2021 | RAP Champion, CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG. | Nov 2020 Nov 2021 | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation. | Jan 2021, 2022 March 2021, 2022 June 2021, 2022 Sept 2021, 2022 | CEO |
| 11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define resource needs for RAP implementation. | February, 2021 | CEO |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments. | Jan 2022 | RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. | Jan 2021, 2022 March 2021, 2022 June 2021, 2022 Sept 2021, 2022 | RAP Champion, Accreditation PM |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management. | Nov 2020 Nov 2021 | CEO |

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| 12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. | Jan 2021 | Executive Manager Client Services |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly. | March 2021, 2022 June 2021, 2022 Sept 2021, 2022 Dec 2021, 2022 | RAP Champion |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually. | Add annual report date | Executive Manager Client Services? |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer. | | RAP Champion |
| 13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. | July 2022 | RAP Champion |
| <i>[Include any additional unique Governance actions to support your reconciliation journey.]</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Standing agenda item on the Client Services Team Meeting</i> <i>Quarterly standing agenda item Management Meeting</i> <i>Ensure Annual report is updated.</i> <i>Investigate the Workplace RAP Barometer</i> | | |

Contact details

Name: Averil Scott

Position: Manager Aboriginal Support Services

Phone: (08)63305400

Email: ascott@whfs.org.au