



June 2023 – June 2024

Reconciliation Action Plan

REFLECT



Acknowledgement of Country

Synergy Group acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Australians and recognises their culture, history, diversity, and their deep connection to the land.

We acknowledge that Synergy Group Head Office operates on the land of the Traditional Owners, the Ngunnawal people and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging. We extend that respect to all First Nations peoples across Australia where many of our staff live and work.

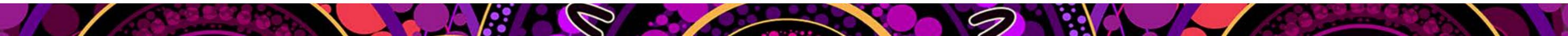
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Reconciliation Australia foreword

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

Synergy Group Australia joins a network of more than 2,200 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 Synergy Group 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 Synergy Group 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*

Artwork meaning – Lynnice Church



Artist Lynnice Church

The artwork represents the reconciliation journey of listening to learn, sharing to understand and building a foundation of trust and respect.

Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Lynnice Church was commissioned to create a visual representation of the start of our RAP journey.

The journey starts with self-reflection and how our own values, beliefs and traditions inform our own world view and interactions with others. Synergy values are aligned to the importance of this journey being built from a foundation of being 'honest to self and all'.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities are diverse and rich in culture, knowledge, and experiences, passed down from many generations and spanning thousands of years practice.

Understanding and valuing the strengths that each person and community bring, supports opportunities for building relationships that are genuine, reciprocal, and meaningful.

Synergy's core value, 'it's personal', recognises that each person brings with them a set of skills, ideals, experiences and knowledge that are unique and contribute to the important work we do together. Building on this we then aim to 'act as one' to develop significant opportunities to 'play with impact' in the communities we operate within.

This is a journey about truth telling, integrity and partnership. It is about understanding that our ways of working and the relationships we create have impact at an individual, organisational, community level and beyond.

Reconciliation is about recognition, acknowledgment of hurts and making right through action. This may start with us, but it continues through walking, listening, learning and taking action together to make positive and lasting change in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.





Yuma (hello),
I am thrilled to
introduce the
Synergy Reflect
Reconciliation
Action Plan
(RAP).

To me, reconciliation requires a clear acknowledgement of equality and an intentional framework to enhance and drive reconciliation through building relationships, establishing respect, and providing opportunities within our organisation and beyond. At Synergy, we embrace a 'Launch to Learn' mindset which means being curious, open, and vulnerable in growth and development.

Synergy has developed a RAP to accelerate our learning and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures and to help create a positive and continual effect on reconciliation. Organisations like ours play a critical role in understanding and leading reconciliation awareness across society, to learn from, partner and unify with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to drive better outcomes.

As the Synergy RAP Champion, I see immense opportunity in this privilege to ensure that our workplace is united on our reconciliation journey now and into the future to help close the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians. Synergy's commitment to developing a RAP has been driven by our desire to see Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the same opportunities as non-Indigenous Australians: to have their voices heard and their traditions preserved and inform our everyday business.

I'm also proud to articulate Synergy's support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart to acknowledge the voice and truth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at all levels, from parliament to the workplace. We accept the invitation extended to the broader Australian community to walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples towards a better future.

Our efforts towards reconciliation would not have been possible without the passion and dedication of Synergy's RAP Ambassadors and the RAP Working Group. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the members for their commitment in bringing together ideas and actions through consultation with our Indigenous Advisor, Kurawali and Mbarbaram man Benny Eggmolese, and Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Lynnice Church.

Our collaborative journey with Benny and Lynnice has been extremely rewarding and insightful. Gaining understanding, developing relationships, fostering trust and respect helps us work towards facilitating a shared national identity.

Reconciliation is not a singular initiative, rather its ongoing continuous learning journey and here at Synergy we are committed to ensuring all our staff are aware and engaged as our first step. Our Cultural Awareness training, and Acknowledgment of Country workshops have had tremendous uptake by our staff which is a true reflection of how our Synergites are embracing reconciliation and our commitment to closing the gap.

There is so much more we can and will do through Synergy's first RAP. We are committed to do so to advance reconciliation within our Canberra (Ngunnawal) community and beyond.

I thank each and every one of you for your intentional commitment to this journey and trust that you will gain great benefit and a deeper understanding of reconciliation by implementing this plan.

Dhjan yimaba (thank you),

**DHJAN
YIMABA**

Rob Kennedy

Synergy Group CEO and RAP Champion

Our business

Starting with two people, Synergy has flourished over twenty years into a workforce of 517 employees. While our home is based in Canberra, we have many Synergy employees ('Synergites') working remotely across Australia.

Synergy provides a wide range of professional services across Australia to support our clients in anticipating and responding to the complexities and challenges of the modern workforce. As we continue to grow and expand across Australia and different industries, we recognise the many opportunities to employ and partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our values drive who we are. Grounded yet evolving, we are constantly fine-tuning our behaviours that make us modern, dynamic, and leading. We are potential personified – seeing and maximising our shared potential to learn, grow and make an impact.

Our growth over the years has allowed us to create a vibrant organisational culture, which values diversity and the inclusion of every Synergite.

However, we currently lack representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees is not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand and rectify this.

Challengers at heart, we are pragmatic explorers seeking to uncover what could be, so it can be.



Our values

Our values are the heartbeat of our organisation. They drive the way we engage with clients and each other, and shape our behaviours, holding us accountable by constructing an agile, driven culture.



Honest to self and all

We are committed to delivering the RAP actions and have the self-awareness to know when we need to act further and hold ourselves accountable.



Abundance mentality

We embrace partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to share success and are open to learning, while being generous in sharing our knowledge.



It's personal

We seek the diversity of thought, experience and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, along with their individual journeys, and see this as a source of strength.



Act as one

We are united in fostering a culture that is committed to delivering the RAP actions, to create an environment where we collaborate for impact with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Positively charged

We are assured in our trajectory and are optimistic in our ability to recognise our areas of growth and need for continuous learning.



Play with impact

We bring our knowledge together with that of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to anticipate and respond to challenges in innovative ways previously unknown to us.

Our promise

As our collective voice has grown, we recognise the importance of playing our part in reconciliation through the development and implementation of this RAP. We need to purposefully engage and stand alongside our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Their voices are critical to us living up to our values, providing us learning and growth opportunities and genuinely embracing diversity of thought, experience, and perspective. Whilst we have not been as quick as we have wanted to be in adopting actions to address reconciliation, we are determined to progress action now to help improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



The goal of this Reflect RAP is to establish connections and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and businesses. We want to define our vision for reconciliation and explore our sphere of influence to build a strong foundation for the development and successful implementation of all future RAPs at Synergy. We are committed to ensuring a culturally aware and safe workplace and we understand the importance of having the right foundations in place to engage and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to thrive when working at, and with, Synergy.

As such, our first step is one of curiosity. Free of all assumptions, we seek to listen and deeply understand, honour knowledge and experience, and collaborate towards taking real, deliberate action towards real impact. We are determined to make meaningful connections, continue to nurture our existing relationships, whilst establishing other relationships.

As a Canberra business, that is now expanding across Australia, we have greatly benefited from the support of our community and clients. This support has enabled us to create impact and become influential. With this privilege, we have a responsibility to use our position of influence to create positive change and actively support and drive reconciliation. Through our RAP we will own our part and turn our good intentions into measurable actions that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve equity and equality across key social determinants – a goal which benefits all Australians.

Our RAP Ambassadors and Working Group

The development of the RAP was driven by a collective of enthusiastic Synergites who are passionate about seeing tangible change. The RAP Ambassadors worked closely with Indigenous Advisor, Benny Eggmolesse, from AAK-ITHER Group.

Benny is a proud Kurawali and Mbarbaram man from the Diamantina River and the Atherton Tablelands. Benny supported the RAP Ambassadors in the drafting of the RAP and development of associated initiatives to bring all Synergites on our reconciliation journey. Benny provided training to help Synergites understand the context of reconciliation, guidance on establishing cultural safety in the workplace, and advice on building effective community and business relationships.

The implementation of the RAP is being driven by Synergy's Corporate Services and relevant subject matter experts across the organisation. As we progress on our RAP journey, we will ensure we have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation as part of RAP Working Group. The RAP is not a standalone document, it sits at the centre of our business to inform, shape and influence all business strategies. Our RAP Ambassadors will continue to promote and advocate the RAP actions and deliverables to be considered and actioned across Synergy.

RAP AMBASSADORS

Joe Crombie	creativeXpeople
Kerry Markoulli	Program Design and Delivery
Lachlan Jensen	Advisory
Melissa Howell	creativeXpeople
Paul Zomer	Assurance
Rachel Blake	creativeXpeople
Steven Coomber	Assurance
Tim Manton	Defence and National Security
Zoe Winters	creativeXpeople

RAP WORKING GROUP

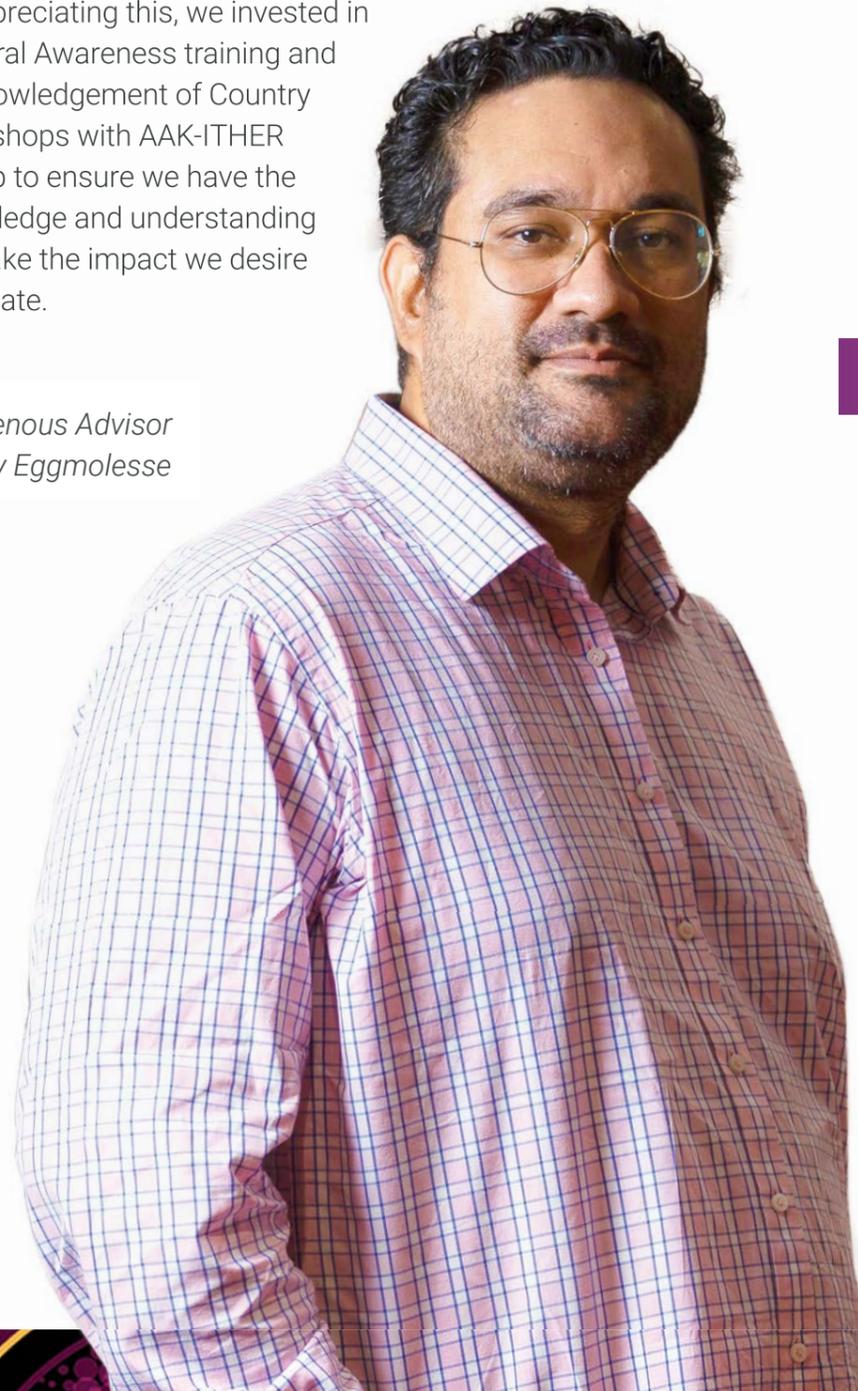
Robert Kennedy	CEO / RAP Champion
Linda Barrie	Co-Chair / Corporate Services Director
Zoe Winters	Co-Chair / Consultant
Lee Rose	Chief Operating Officer
Lucy Agar	Senior Corporate Services Manager
Lisa Robinson	People Director

Our reconciliation journey

Our formal reconciliation journey started in National Reconciliation Week 2022 with the establishment of the inaugural National Reconciliation Week panel. From here a range of tools and resources were rolled out over the following 6 months to engage and support all Synergites on our reconciliation journey.

As we progressed on our journey, we acknowledged that reconciliation requires recognition. Recognition of the past wrong doings and the generational impact they have had. In appreciating this, we invested in Cultural Awareness training and Acknowledgement of Country workshops with AAK-ITHER Group to ensure we have the knowledge and understanding to make the impact we desire to create.

Indigenous Advisor
Benny Eggmolesse



2022 TIMELINE

<p>HELD THE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK PANEL</p> <p>Facilitated a discussion panel on the Reconciliation Week theme, with three inspirational leaders from across the Australian Public Service; Melina Saunders, proud Wiradjuri and Gunditjmara woman; John Love, proud Bundjalung man; and Michael Howell.</p>	<p>ENGAGED INDIGENOUS ADVISOR AND ARTIST</p> <p>Benny Eggmolesse from AAK-ITHER group and Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Lynnice Church were engaged to support us on our reconciliation journey.</p> <p>LAUNCHED THE WELCOME TO COUNTRY AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY GUIDE</p> <p>A guide that provides an understanding of these important protocols and enable all Synergites to provide an appropriate and meaningful Acknowledgement of Country.</p>	<p>LAUNCHED ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY WORKSHOPS AND CULTURAL MASTERCLASSES WITH AAK-ITHER GROUP</p> <p>Training opportunities for Synergites to uplift their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander protocols, history and culture.</p>
<p>DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAP</p> <p>RAP Ambassadors came together to start the development of the RAP.</p> <p>LAUNCHED THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HISTORY AND CULTURE LEARNING RESOURCES LIBRARY</p> <p>A tool that links to a range of resources to help inform and build knowledge and understanding amongst Synergites of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, businesses, histories, and cultures.</p>	<p>HOSTED SOUNDS OF SPRING WITH ARTIST DAN SULTAN</p> <p>In celebration of our partnership with Floriade and TedX Canberra, we hosted artist Dan Sultan at an intimate show followed by a Q&A to discuss his journey as an artist and his role as a leader in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.</p>	<p>LAUNCHED THE INTERNAL ONLINE RECONCILIATION HUB</p> <p>A place for all Synergites to keep up to date with our reconciliation journey and engage in reconciliation resources.</p>



Artist Dan Sultan speaking at the 2022 Sounds of Spring event

Our current partnerships

We've had the privilege to work closely with Benny Eggmolese from AAK-ITHER Group and Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Lynnice Church to help guide Synergy in developing its first RAP, providing unique insights and guidance that would otherwise be untouchable for us.

Synergy has established a partnership with Kirra Services, a majority owned, and Supply Nation certified Indigenous Information Technology company. Kirra's founder, Brad Nagle is a proud Bundjalung man with cultural connections back to Fingal Head, a small town of Tweed Heads on the far north coast of NSW.

Kirra Services supports the provision of ICT staff for our ICT Managed Services Practice, with a focus on Defence engagements requiring specialist skills. Kirra is assisting by reaching out to their extensive candidate network and providing contract or permanent options within these niche skill sets.

While this RAP will help us continue to nurture and improve our existing partnerships, we are invested in developing relationships more broadly with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to support them in their aspirations and create mutually beneficial outcomes. We are committed to developing better community engagement through the implementation of the Reflect RAP and will strive to improve this before progressing with the development of subsequent RAPs.

Our action plan

Relationships

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1 Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could support or partner with for mutually beneficial opportunities.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Research best practice and principles to develop cultural guidelines and protocols that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to Synergy Staff.	May 2024	Marketing Manager
	RAP Working Group members and RAP Ambassadors to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2024	RAP Champion
	Facilitate a NRW discussion panel with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous panel members to generate meaningful conversation on reconciliation.	May 2024	Corporate Services Director
3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a communication strategy to continually engage Synergy staff on our reconciliation journey.	Nov 2023	Marketing Manager
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Nov 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Identify RAP organisations in the RAP network and / or other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	Feb 2024	People Director
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs for Synergy polices.	Feb 2024	People Director



Respect

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a business case to continue Acknowledgment of Country training for all Synergy Staff.	Nov 2023	People Director
	Develop a business case to continue cultural awareness training for all Synergy Staff.	Nov 2023	People Director
	Maintain and update, through half yearly reviews, the learning resources in Synergy's Reconciliation Hub and direct Synergy staff to the Reconciliation Hub when communicating associated reconciliation activities and initiatives.	Nov 2024	People Director
2 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 Synergy's operational area to inform engagement in accordance with developed cultural protocols and guidelines.	Feb 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Continually promote Synergy's Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country Guide to support staff to engage in these cultural protocols.	May 2024	RAP Champion
	Establish Acknowledgment of Country plaques at all Synergy office locations.	Feb 2024	Marketing Manager
	Include Acknowledgment of Country in email signature blocks and on Synergy website.	Jul 2023	Marketing Manager
3 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.	Jul 2023	Marketing Manager
	Continue to promote NAIDOC Week external events to all Synergy Staff.	Jul 2023	Marketing Manager
	RAP Working Group and RAP Ambassadors to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	Jul 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Hold a culturally immersive experience for Synergy staff to learn about and engage in culture as part of NAIDOC Week.	Jul 2023	People Director
	Investigate opportunities to sponsor local grassroots Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community groups / charities as a part of NAIDOC Week.	Jul 2023	Marketing Manager



Opportunities

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a recruitment strategy to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent	Aug 2023	Recruitment Director
	Review existing career pathway programs at Synergy to identify opportunities to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.	Nov 2023	People Director
2 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop an Indigenous Businesses Procurement Strategy.	Nov 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Become a Supply Nation member.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Procurement team and relevant consultants to attend annual Supply Nation Trade Show.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director



Governance

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain RWG to govern RAP implementation.	May 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Maintain Terms of Reference for the RWG.	May 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	May 2024	People Director
2 Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Explore the opportunity to create a designated position within Synergy to lead Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander initiatives.	Feb 2024	People Director
	Continue to engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	May 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Support RAP Champion to continually advocate and promote RAP initiatives.	May 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
3 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Investigate external platforms, such as the Synergy website, to publicly promote Synergy's RAP Progress.	Aug 2023	Marketing Manager
	CEO to provide internal quarterly updates on the RAP progress to all Synergites.	Jun 2024	Marketing Manager
	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.	Jun 2024	Corporate Services Director
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	1 Aug 2023	Corporate Services Director
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 Sep 2023	Corporate Services Director
4 Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Mar 2024	Corporate Services Director

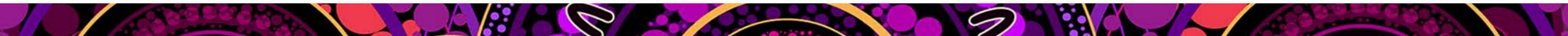
Contact details

Linda Barrie, Corporate Services Director | (02) 6260 7477 | admin@synergygroup.net.au





Synergy Group's 2023–2024 RAP Ambassadors and RAP Working Group members





RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



Synergy