



#### CONTINUITY OF PROTECTION

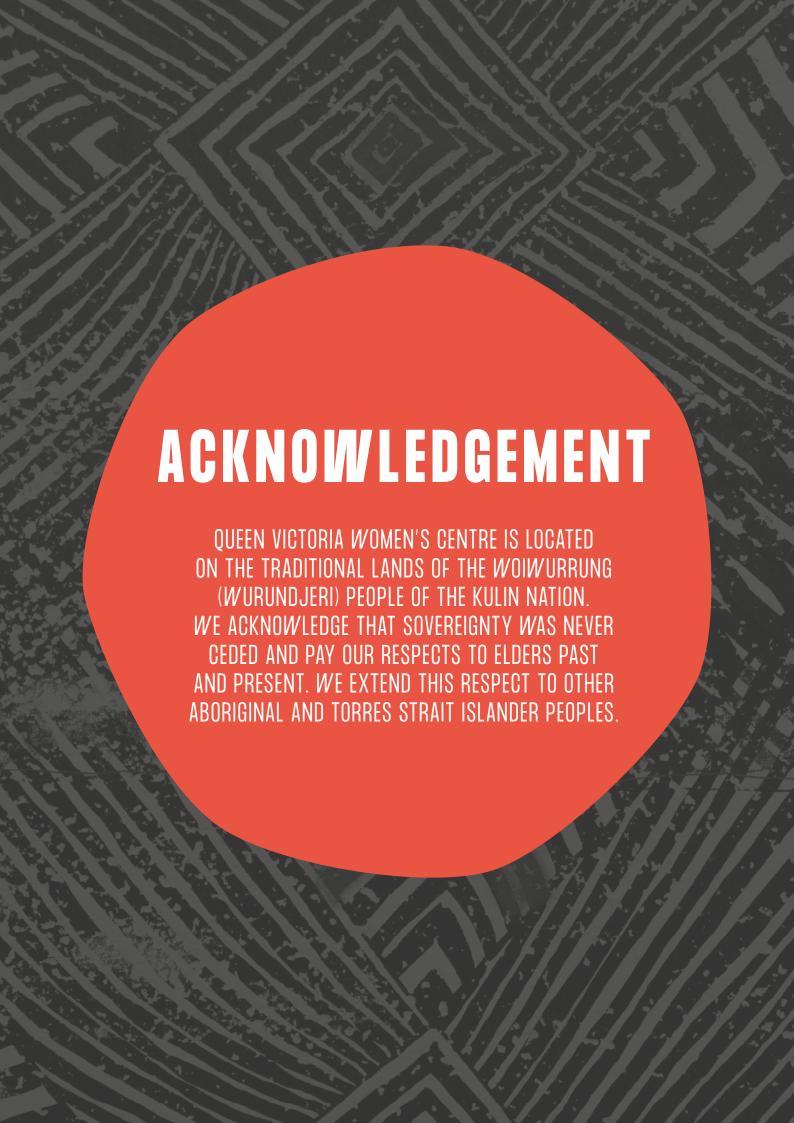
Artist, Lisa Waup

Continuity of Protection originally came from a drawing that I did in my visual diary some years ago. The original ink and pen drawing was titled 'Continuity without Stagnation', a great deal of my work is surrounded by a circular motif –which represents family for me. I recall speaking to my husband one day and he said something to me that still resonates deeply to me even till this day. "Mama why don't you draw a square, it will give you time to rest in the corners, it will give you time to think and reassess where you are going, and what you are doing – as opposed to a circle, that you are always moving and going around in circles, no timae to stop".

The premise of this work is to detail the protective element of a shield, the ultimate of protection. Symbolically it became a protector of my history and in turn a protector of my family.

The screen print and was created at Spacecraft – a printmaking studio in Melbourne. The work was printed on a sample piece of handmade paper, with the final paper created by a group of students in Paraguay in 2015 and their paper constructed was submitted into the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest continuous piece of handmade paper.

The paper measured 14.95mt x 10mt in total.



### CONTINUITY OF PROTECTION, 2019

Medium: Screen print on hand made paper, Ochre, Cotton

Size: 200cm x 100cm



#### THE ARTIST

Lisa Waup is a mixed-race First Nations woman with a multidisciplinary art practice and is also a curator, born in Naarm (Melbourne) and currently a visitor on Boon Wurrung Country. Waup's practice is studio-based, and involves the creation of objects, with a strong connection of symbology through her work and materials which connects her to family, Country, hXstory and story. She works across weaving, printmaking, photography, sculpture, textiles and installation and her work eloquently illustrates her life's journey through discovery and connection. Waup's practice highlighting the importance of tracing lost hXstory, ancestral relationships, Country, motherhood and time which ultimately are woven stories of her past, present and future into contemporary forms.

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# FROM THE CHAIR

In 2019 the Queen Victoria Women's Centre Trust (QVWCT) decided to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Since that time we have been reviewing our operations and have particularly used the change in our working environment in 2020 to develop a Reflect RAP. We are committed to fostering an organisational environment that encourages respect, creates opportunity and builds cultural awareness.

As the Chair of the Trust, I would like to thank our staff members, the other members of the Trust and individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have supported our journey so far.

Sincerely,

Van Badham

Chair

# FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

On behalf of my colleagues, who worked together to develop this commitment to reconciliation, I am pleased to present the Queen Victoria Women's Centre Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Together, we take this opportunity to pay respect to the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay respect to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and Elders past and present. We particularly acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land upon which we work.

Our RAP signals the QVWC's public commitment to the reconciliation process. We will be undertaking a Reflect RAP which sets us on a path of creating relationships, examining the history of our building, ensuring respect and identifying opportunities for change throughout our operations and governance.

I would like to thank my colleagues as well as our Trust members and the Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT) for sharing their knowledge and insights with us and look forward to building on these relationships.

Jo Porter

**Chief Executive Officer** 

# INTRODUCTION

### THE QUEEN VICTORIA WOMEN'S CENTRE TRUST

The Queen Victoria Women's Centre is a Melbourne landmark at 210 Lonsdale Street Melbourne. Constructed in 1848 as the original Melbourne Hospital, the building became the Queen Victoria Hospital in 1946 – one of only three hospitals in the world founded, managed and staffed by women. The Queen Victoria Women's Centre Trust Act 1994 was passed by the Victorian Parliament, dedicating the land and building to services and facilities for women including health information services, rest and meeting rooms.

#### OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The Trust, through the Centre, focuses on facilitating wellbeing through social and cultural relationships. We believe that our organisation is well placed to contribute to reconciliation through relationship building, particularly with individuals and organisations seeking to highlight creative and cultural practices and improve the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and non-binary people.

Our vision for reconciliation is that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have equal access and participation in community and society and that all Australians value and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. We are dedicated to working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to collaborate on making connections and collaborating in the future. We will also acknowledge our history as a nation and the history of the building in which the Centre is housed. We intend to reflect on and acknowledge the past experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and women and to walk with them for a better future.



## ABOUT THE QUEEN VICTORIA WOMEN'S CENTRE TRUST

The Trust's Enabling Act requires it to manage the Queen Victoria Women's Centre and also to provide "services & facilities for women including health information services, rest & meeting rooms and other services & facilities". Tenants of the Centre provide specialist services and thus the Centre focuses its initiatives on the benefits of social activity through arts and culture.

#### VISION

To be both iconic destination and women's centre without walls. Our work is to enable, recognise and support the wellbeing and human rights of women from all walks of life by creating and sharing cultural experiences of many kinds.

#### **PURPOSE**

To bring the women and non-binary people of Victoria together by supporting space(s) in which networks and relationships are nurtured for social cohesion and participation.

#### **VALUES**

- · Wellbeing through networks.
- · Fun. Respect through empathy.
- · Courage. Innovation.
- · Inclusion. Accessibility.

#### STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

- · The creation of cultural experiences that nurture networks among women;
- Becoming a women's centre with and without walls. QVWC will always be home
  to organisations that provide services for people who identify as women and
  non-binary, but we'll extend beyond our walls through outreach events and new
  digital offerings;
- Development of a sustainable business model that maximises the use of our building; and
- · Anticipating and planning a 'women's centre of the future'.

In pursuit of these initiatives, the Trust produces events, cultural activities and offers free exhibition space. The Centre also offers several meeting rooms for casual hire and manages QVWC SHOP! – a consignment-based business which sells original artisans' products.

The Centre's communications channels have become especially important during 2020 when social distancing was required. The website for the Centre (www.qvwc.org.au) and QVWC SHOP! (www.shop.qvwc.org.au) are busy platforms hosting interviews, artworks, virtual exhibitions, podcasts and more. The Centre regularly commissions new work for inclusion on the website, which most recently has created opportunities to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women whose artworks and opinions took over the sites during NAIDOC Week 2020. Our social media channels amplify our message, raising awareness about political and social issues while highlighting content on the websites.

#### OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

This, our first RAP, will form the basis of future RAPs. Our aims for it are to:

- Increase our knowledge and understanding and to prepare plans for the future;
- Deepen our understanding and connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and non-binary people throughout Victoria;
- Make a meaningful and genuine contribution to reconciliation within our sphere of influence;
- Create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and non-binary people;
- Promote respect and safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures: and
- Become a vibrant, welcoming space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and to create an environment where history and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are honoured through artworks and other means.

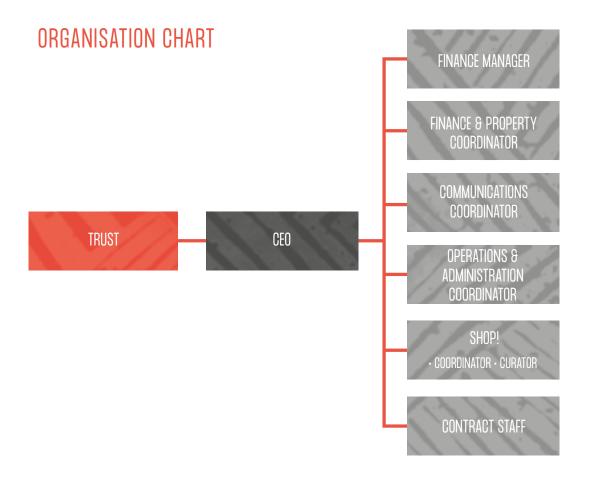
Our RAP will be directed and championed by Jo Porter, CEO. Each core business unit of the organisation will be responsible for contributing to the RAP and managing initiatives for their area.

QVWC Representative for the RAP Jo Porter, CEO
Programming Jo Porter, CEO
Finance Fiona Wilson, Finance Manager
Communications Natalie Forde, Communications Coordinator
QVWC SHOP! Marianne Duval, QVWC Shop! Coordinator
Building and Property Mazeena Mahroof, Finance and Property Coordinator
Thanks to Naomi Podbury, Katie Sfetkidis & Kate Robinson for their contributions to the RAP

### OUR PEOPLE AND WHO IS INVOLVED

Queen Victoria Women's Centre has three full-time employees, five part-time employees and two part-time contractors.

Trust Members	Staff & Contractors
Van Badham (Chair)	Jo Porter - CEO
Melanie Collett	Marianne Duval – QVWC SHOP! Coordinator
Jenna Davey-Burns	Natalie Forde – Communications Coordinator
Constantina Dertimanis	Jenny Huang – QVWC SHOP! Co-Curator
Meghan Hopper	Piper Huynh - Administration & Operations Coordinator
Jennifer Kanis	Mazeena Mahroof – Finance & Property Coordinator
Marion Lau, OAM JP	Fiona Wilson – Finance Manager
Merrin Mason	Jessamy Gleeson – Communications Advisor
Florence Mauwa	Kate Robinson – Feminist in Residence, 2020
Dimity Paul	Katie Sfetkidis – Feminist Emissary
Nina Springle	
Traci Williams	



### **DEVELOPING OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN**

The QVWCT identified reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as a strategic priority during a number of planning and strategy sessions over the 2018 and 2019 period. The Centre is a monument to Victorian women, but the Trust and the staff felt that a RAP would be an appropriate structure for reviewing both the building's history and the importance of reconciliation. Initial enquiries were made with Reconciliation Australia to develop a RAP in early 2019.

2020 was interrupted by COVID-19, however the Centre's staff met weekly to discuss the RAP and progress planning. Each week a different person presented a discussion topic drawing from their individual research and together we looked at:

- The history of the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service
- Governance and organisational models drawing from resources of the Indigenous Governance Institute at ANU
- · Alishia McCullouch's Circles of Whiteness tools
- Music and lyrics of Thelma Plum's Homecoming Queen and Briggs's Locked Up
- Representations of history with reference to photography by Hayley Millar Baker
- · Podcast: Nice White People
- · HBO series Insecure
- · Review of Victorian primary school teaching materials
- Online attendance of the Koorie Heritage Trust's panel discussion about COVID-19 and its impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Trust member Traci Williams met with the staff and subsequently the staff work was presented for discussion by Trust members. The Trust affirmed its commitment and this Reflect RAP is the Centre's starting point on a reconciliation journey.

With the support and commitment of the Trust, the management and team have undertaken cultural training ("Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency 2020" with the Koorie Heritage Trust) and met regularly to learn about and plan for undertaking the RAP. All are committed and motivated to develop and implement this RAP.

The Centre had already established Acknowledgement of Country in communications and established connections with Traditional Custodians of the land upon which the Centre stands. Planning for a RAP has already extended our understanding and we have found ways for further Acknowledgement throughout our Centre and its activities.

#### GURRK: WOMAN, 2020

Matriarchs are many things. Knowledge holders, Lore keepers, nurturers, friends, family. They take many paths and undertake many journeys; leading the way inclusively for others. It becomes a continual cycle, like those before us and those after us. Always was, always will be.



### THE ARTIST

Racquel Kerr is a Dja Dja Wurrung, Barapa Barapa and Boon Wurrung woman living on Wurundjeri Country. Her works are a fusion of contemporary and traditional Aboriginal Art, having designed and produced works for the likes of the Women's and Girl's Emergency Centre, the Regional Centre for Culture, Northern Central Catchment Management Authority, Bendigo Stadium and various other clients.

### **OUR APPROACH TO A REFLECT RAP**

#### Our approach to RAP implementation will be as follows:

- Consult with Reconciliation Australia and submit the RAP for approval and publishing, then provide progress reports;
- Take a whole-of-organisation approach to our RAP forming a working group drawn from Trust, staff and a TBC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person with cultural ties to the Country upon which the Centre stands;
- Consult and discuss initiatives with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with cultural ties to the Country upon which the Centre stands;
- Develop budgets which anticipate inclusion of RAP initiatives across the organisation;
- · Regular cultural awareness activities and involvement in reconciliation activities;
- Using the Reconciliation Australia guidelines and reviewing current Centre operations to identify collaboration, amplification, employment, procurement and other opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; and
- Provide regular updates to the Trust and receive their regular participation, feedback and advice.

See also details set out in Attachment A.

### **OUR CURRENT PARTNERSHIPS AND ACTIVITIES**

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS TO DATE

The QVWCT is in the initial stages of developing partnerships and has made connections with artists and community organisations with whom we will continue conversations about supporting each other's goals. These connections include:

**Yirramboi** In 2019 we began conversations with Yirramboi and supported a "Matriarchs' Morning Tea". Conversations are underway with Yirramboi to host events during May 2021.

**The Torch** In 2020 we have been discussing ways to work with The Torch – hopefully an exhibition of artworks will be possible in 2021.

**The Koorie Heritage Tru**st has provided staff training and also made introductions to artists whose work the Centre commissioned and featured during NAIDOC Week 2020

**Aunty Zeta Thomson** has come to the Centre to speak at our events and Welcome the attendees to Country. Most recently Aunty Zeta recorded a welcome for the virtual exhibition of Make A Fuss.

**QVWC SHOP!** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander makers represent 10% of the artisans whose work is stocked in the QVWC SHOP! Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Makers currently represented are Marlee Silva and Rachel Sarra.

**Art Exhibition** In March 2020 the Centre hosted an exhibition by Simone Thomson as a part of International Women's Day celebrations held from 1-7 March 2020. Simone, a Wurrundjeri/Yorta Yorta artist, presented her solo exhibition 'Exhale' with works in paint, woven feathers and wood.

#### LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS - OUR PREPARATION FOR THE RAP

In preparation for the Reflect RAP we have reviewed our current work and potential opportunities and prepared an overview of some key initiatives. We will investigate these further, then develop strategies for their inclusion in the Trust's overall activities.

We will reach out to organisations and individuals with whom we already work and seek to meet others, to discuss how we might extend and deepen our relationships. These organisations and individuals might be connected with the Centre's other priorities and may:

- Support us as we build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Benefit from our programs and offerings

The QVWCT Communications Plans will support Reconciliation:

• We will share content & amplify preferred messages of organisations including Yirramboi, Djirri Djirri, KHT, Ilbijerri, The Torch, Djirra, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS), Rumbalara Football & Netball and Rumbalara Aboriginal Co-operative

We will seek connections and consultation to scope and evaluate future initiatives including:

- An Aboriginal garden and mural by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons with cultural ties to the Country upon which the Centre stands. These will be installed on the West wall of the Centre
- Displays of flags, language maps and recognition of historic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- Naming spaces (in consultation about meaning and language)

We will consider new opportunities to contribute to reconciliation when planning events or programs.

We aim to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women artists and creative consultants within our own events, through our communications and to our network.

The QVWCT has reviewed its procurement strategy to address buying from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses for the provision of goods and services. These procurement opportunities will be reviewed annually.

See also attachment A for timeline and details.

### STRENGTH, 2020

Triangles represent strength to me so this painting so this painting represents me and my family. Through hard times, we come together like these triangles. We are each others' strength, as represented in the line work. The crow represents the family members who have passed and are with us in spirit.



### THE ARTIST

Narnz - Gunaikurnai/Barkindji/Wurundjeri/Bundjalung people

This artwork was created through The Torch, a not for profit organisation, that provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders in Victoria

# ATTACHMENT A

# 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.	September 2021 and March 2022	Administration & Operations Coordinator
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2022	CEO
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	November 2021	Communications Coordinator
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 June 2021	Administration & Operations Coordinator
	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
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Identify other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2022	Administration & Operations Coordinator
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	February 2022	Administration & Operations Coordinator
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff and Trust members via: inductions, policies (including procurement), regular communications and participation in RAP activities and external events	June 2022	CEO
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	December 2022	Policy Committee Chair
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti- discrimination provisions, and future needs.	December 2022	Finance Manager
5. Engage Programming and Communications to support our reconciliation journey.	Programming: Build on relationships with Yirramboi and The Torch.	December 2022	CEO
	Communications: Emphasise and highlight the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on our website, in podcasts and through other communications channels.	October 2021 and June 2022	Communications Coordinator

# RESPECT

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Develop a strategy for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	January 2022	Administration & Operations Coordinator
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	January 2022	Finance Manager
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	November 2021	CEO
	Extend and communicate to the Tenants our learned understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	December 2022	CEO
	Invite Traditional Custodians to provide a     Welcome to Country at key events	December 2022	CEO
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country (written & spoken) at public events and in written publications (digital and otherwise)	December 2022	CEO
	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area.	January 2022	CEO
8. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	July 2022	Communications Coordinator
	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	July 2022	Communications Coordinator
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2022	CEO
9. Create an installation recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and acknowledge history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from their local, regional and national areas.	Undertake consultation and planning to create an installation in our building	July 2022	CEO, RAP Working Group
	Develop a business case for the installation.	February 2022	CEO & Finance Manage

# OPPORTUNITIES

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
10. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and Trust members to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	October 2021	Chair & CEO
	Develop a strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	February 2022	CEO
11. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Utilise programming and communications to support and promote Reconciliation and schedule and annual calendar of events and activities.	October 2021	Communications Coordinator
	Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributors to QVWC Communications	October 2021	Communications Coordinator
	Explore and build on relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and makers for supplying the QVWC SHOP!	November 2021	SHOP Coodinators
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	November 2021	Finance & Property Coordinator
	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	March 2022	Finance Manager
12. Offer Tenancy to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation	Communicate availability of premises in our building to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, strongly encouraging them to indicate their interest in tenancy at the Centre.	November 2021	CEO
	Offer tenancy in our building to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations when space becomes available.	December 2021	CEO

### **GOVERNANCE**

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
13. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation and review annually	September 2021	Venues Manager
	Draft Terms of Reference for the RWG.	September 2021	CEO
	Seek paid Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September 2021	CEO
14. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	October 2021	CEO, RAP Working Group
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	October 2021	CEO
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	December 2021	Venues Manager
15. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2022	CEO
16. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	July 2022	CEO, Venues Manager

### **CONTACT DETAILS**

For public enquiries about the Queen Victoria Women's Centre Reconciliation Action Plan, please contact:

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Position: Chief Executive Officer

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