




RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA
ANNUAL REVIEW 2023–2024



RECONCILIATION
AUSTRALIA



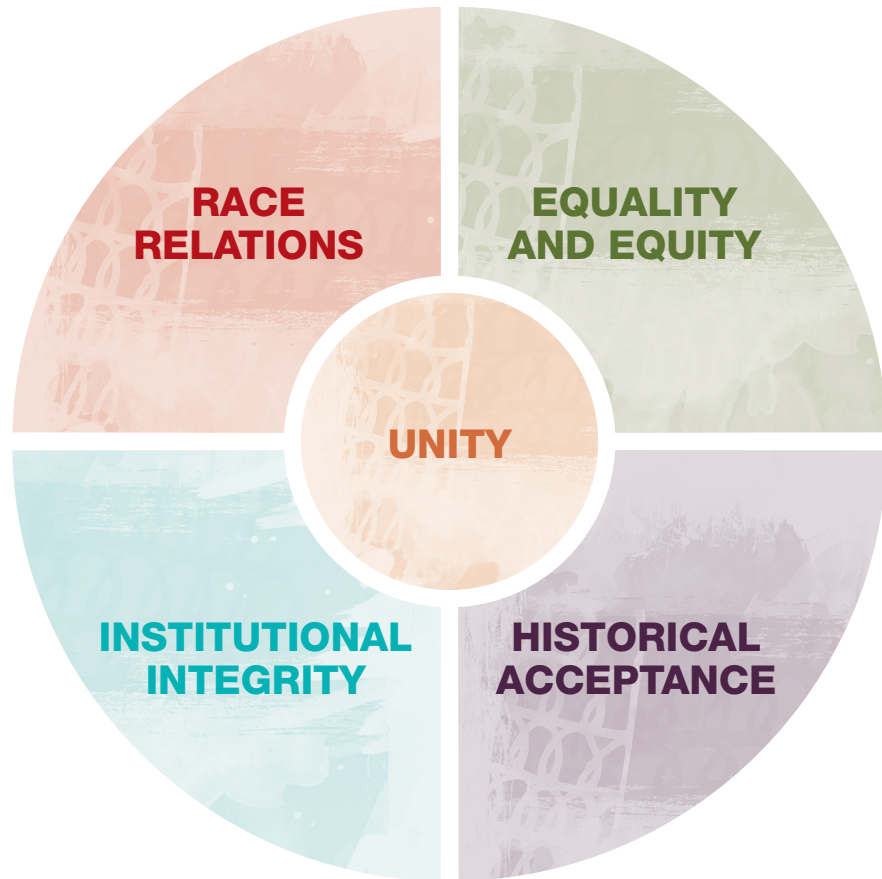
*Reconciliation Australia acknowledges the Traditional Owners
of Country throughout Australia and recognises their
continuing connection to lands, waters and communities.
We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
cultures, and to Elders both past and present.*



CONTENTS

FIVE DIMENSIONS OF RECONCILIATION	4
OUR VISION AND PURPOSE	5
MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA	6
MESSAGE FROM THE CEO	8
COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT Connecting with people	10
RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS A year of significant change and growth	12
INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE Towards self-determination	14
POLICY, RESEARCH AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMS Driving change through evidence	16
NARRAGUNNAWALI Reconciliation in Education	18
PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS	20
FINANCIAL SUMMARY	22

FIVE DIMENSIONS OF RECONCILIATION



RACE RELATIONS

All Australians understand and value Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous cultures, rights and experiences, which results in stronger relationships based on trust and respect and that are free of racism.

EQUALITY AND EQUITY

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples participate equally in a range of life opportunities and the unique rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are recognised and upheld.

INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY

The active support of reconciliation by the nation's political, business and community structures.

UNITY

An Australian society that values and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and heritage as a proud part of a shared national identity.

HISTORICAL ACCEPTANCE

All Australians understand and accept the wrongs of the past and the impact of these wrongs. Australia makes amends for the wrongs of the past and ensures these wrongs are never repeated.

Join us on our national reconciliation journey.

RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Our vision is for a just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

Our purpose is to inspire and enable all Australians to contribute to the reconciliation of the nation.

Reconciliation Australia was established in 2001 and is the lead body for reconciliation in the nation. We are an independent not-for-profit organisation which promotes and facilitates reconciliation by building relationships, respect and trust between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our vision of reconciliation is based on five inter-related dimensions: race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity and historical acceptance. These five dimensions do not exist in isolation; they are inter-related and Australia can only achieve full reconciliation if we progress in all five.

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Writing in last year's Annual Review, just months away from the Voice to Parliament referendum, we urged Australians to approach the referendum in a respectful and truthful way, and to not be drawn into the mistruths and disinformation which characterised much of the referendum debate.

At its heart, reconciliation is about building stronger relationships between the broader Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. That work was challenged by the referendum result. But, now more than ever, our call to build respectful relationships is critical.

In October 2023, Professor Tom Calma co-wrote an article for the leading medical journal, *The Lancet*, on racism and the referendum. The article argued that the referendum process had tapped into a deep well of historical racism that originated on the Australian frontier when Indigenous peoples 'were violently dispossessed from their lands by the British.'

As a nation, we have yet to reach that tipping point where most Australians understand our history and how it impacts the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As the organisation SNAICC – National Voice for our Children said after the referendum defeat, 'It is now time for some truth-telling. This means looking at who we were as a country, the impacts of that on who we are, but most importantly how we go forward to be the country we want to be. A place that values and has pride in being home to the oldest living culture on the planet.'

One of the foundations of reconciliation is an acceptance of our nation's history and agreement that the wrongs of the past will never be repeated.

Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan became the first political leader to present at a First Nations-led truth-telling hearing, when she told the Yoorrook Justice Commission hearing that she had only learned of Victoria's history of massacres of First Nations people while preparing her evidence.

One of the co-authors of *The Lancet* article, ANU Associate Professor Raymond Lovett, leads the *Mayi Kuwayu Longitudinal Study*, Australia's largest national study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, health and wellbeing.

The study has found that racism was linked to all negative outcomes examined, including (but are not limited to) pain, poor life satisfaction, psychological distress, anxiety, depression, heart disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes.

If we are to make real headway in achieving equity between First Nations peoples and other Australians the link between racism, a lack of awareness of our shared history and the continuing poor health outcomes of First Nations peoples must be clear. What is also clear is the absolute imperative of greater First Nations self-determination.

In the final report of its three-yearly review of government action on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, the Productivity Commission noted evidence of a failure by governments to relinquish power and the persistence of 'government knows best' thinking, underscoring a disregard for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's knowledge and solutions throughout government.

Listening to the voices of First Nations peoples and providing opportunities for all Australians to learn from the vast knowledge and experiences which First Nations people possess, will ensure the best outcomes for this nation.

Despite the disappointment of the referendum, we have always been motivated by what we have understood to be the underlying support for reconciliation in Australia. This was confirmed in May with the release of the *2024 Australians' Perceptions of First Nations Issues* survey by international market researchers, Ipsos.

The survey reinforced what we saw in the referendum: young people support First Nations aspirations and are the least racist Australian demographic. Young Australians remain our hope for the future.

Ironically, despite the rejection of the Voice to Parliament, 78% of Australians believe Indigenous Australians should have a say in the laws and political decisions that affect them.

The survey also found that 57% of Australians believe there should be retelling of Australia's history from Indigenous perspectives.

These findings and the more than 6 million Australians who voted yes – despite the information environment – should give us all some optimism for the future.

Reconciliation and justice for First Nations people are an unstoppable historical trend; we are on the right side of history.

Sadly, we have lost many people over these past 12 months including the incomparable Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue, a strong, fearless voice of First Nations advocacy for many decades, and Rev Dr D Gondarra, respected lawman of the Dhurili clan of north-east Arnhem Land and a highly effective advocate for his Yolŋu culture and language. Both were members of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

Our Parliament became a lesser place with the retirement of the extraordinary Senator Patrick Dodson, inaugural Chairperson of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, and Special Envoy for Reconciliation and Implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

Finally, we wish to gratefully acknowledge the hard work and commitment of our fellow Reconciliation Australia Directors, and our team. We give our heartfelt thanks to our supporters and partners.

The past year has involved extraordinary demands and pressures, and we acknowledge the tremendous and often unsung leadership of our CEO, Karen Mundine, these past 12 months.

Your support has led to the many successes reported in this 2023–2024 Annual Review.

Professor Tom Calma AO

Ms Melinda Cilento



Reconciliation Australia Co-Chairs,
Professor Tom Calma AO and Melinda
Cilento. Photo: Reconciliation Australia



Reconciliation Australia CEO, Karen Mundine.
Photo: Joseph Mayers

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The start of the 2024 financial year held enormous promise and an elegant opportunity to advance reconciliation and reset relationships between the State and First Nations peoples. Sadly, despite the efforts of the largest volunteer army ever assembled in Australia, we know that on 14 October 2023 the Voice referendum failed. In its aftermath we were left with hurt and pain, and a great reflection of our relationship.

While the temptation of disappointment is to think everything has been lost, I have been encouraged that First Nations people and the broader reconciliation movement have chosen to just get on with the job of building a fairer and more reconciled country.

Our National Reconciliation Week 2024 (NRW) theme, *Now More Than Ever*, reflected this sentiment, stressing the vital importance of staying engaged, connected, and committed to reconciliation.

Once again hundreds of choirs joined NRW singing the Warumpi Band's iconic reconciliation anthem, *Blackfella/Whitefella*.

The week offered the first opportunity for many people – including the 6.2 million Australians who voted Yes – to gather and recommit themselves to reconciliation.

We owe it to these Australians and our forebears, black and white, who built this movement over decades, to work harder than ever for reconciliation and justice.

The entrants in the Indigenous Governance Awards 2024 are all cases in point; dozens of small, medium, and large First Nations organisations from

across Australia with inspiring stories of success, determination, and innovative governance. Despite enormous challenges, these organisations are getting on with the job of building stronger communities and a better nation.

One remote community in the Kimberley was unrecognised by the WA Government for more than 40 years after the people walked out of a mission to establish their own community back on Country. Despite the government obstacles to building a sustainable community they got on with the job regardless and today are economically successful and self-determining.

There were two key lessons from the referendum of particular relevance to Reconciliation Australia's work. The first is that the Australian public remains profoundly ignorant of Australian history and secondly, that there remains a significant bedrock of racism churning beneath the liberal facade of Australian society.

Everything we do, everything detailed in this Annual Review, is aimed at reconciling our country and reducing both ignorance and racism.

Truth-telling has always been at the heart of reconciliation and following the referendum, is perhaps even more urgent.

Our Community Truth-telling Pathways (CTTP) program is critical in supporting this vision by helping us understand how we each can play a part to increase our knowledge and address inequities.

Strategies for effective community truth-telling activities must be informed by evidence and the CTTP program has been busy this past year building a research base in collaboration with two key Australian universities.

In September 2023 we released a collection of truth-telling case studies, the *Recognising community truth-telling: An exploration of local truth-telling in Australia* report, compiled by the Alfred Deakin Institute.

In April 2024 we launched *Coming to terms with the past? Identifying barriers and enablers to truth-telling*, undertaken by UNSW researchers on behalf of Reconciliation Australia. This foundational report explores attitudes towards, barriers to and enablers of truth-telling in Australia.

Our Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program is having a significant impact on informing Australians of Australia's true history, reducing racism and building relationships between schools and early learning services and their local First Nations communities.

An inspiring example of this groundbreaking work is the Narragunnawali Awards schools' category winner – Winterfold Primary School in Western Australia – where Noongar language is pervasive throughout the curriculum and First Nations enrolments are growing significantly.

The importance of reconciliation in education is spreading with more than 13,000 schools and early learning services registered to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) on the Narragunnawali platform. Our RAP program continues to influence millions of Australians in their workplaces, educational and cultural institutions, and sporting clubs.

RAPs are fundamentally shifting the culture and practices of Australian corporate, educational, cultural, and sporting organisations as they increase leadership pathways and board representation for

First Nations people. Cultural learning by staff in RAP organisations is also increasing as is procurement from First Nations businesses.

The RAP program was crucial in educating tens of thousands of Australians about the importance of the referendum. Eight Reconciliation Roadshows were held in August and September 2023 across Australia. In September 2023, more than 150 RAP organisations signed up to a statement of support for a Voice to Parliament and a 'Yes' vote.

Once again, in January 2024 our world was brightened by hosting a breakfast for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander finalists in the 2024 Australian of the Year Awards. What a great pleasure it is to sit down with such an array of First Nations talent, to listen to their inspiring stories and hear of their successes.

The past year has seen some serious disappointments but also some successes and victories and above all, an overwhelming recommitment from millions of Australians to reconciliation, justice, and a fairer Australia.

All the achievements detailed in this report are testament to the strength, determination and intellect of First Nations people and the enduring support of our allies and partners.

I thank our team at Reconciliation Australia and our Board for their continuing determination and professionalism.



Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Connecting with People



Attendees at The Long Walk in Melbourne dropped in to the Reconciliation Australia and Reconciliation Victoria stall to record their commitments to reconciliation and build their dream team of First Nations footy stars. Photo: Reconciliation Australia

This was a year of contrasts for the Communications and Engagement team as the first section spanned the intense Voice Referendum campaign (July–October), followed by the Reconciliation and Education Forum and the Narragunnawali Awards ceremony (November). 2024 featured the Indigenous Governance Awards launch and finalists' selection process, supporting the new Community Truth-telling Pathways program, and the rollout and execution of a National Reconciliation Week to keep supporters inspired and engaged in reconciliation actions.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK: NOW MORE THAN EVER

The National Reconciliation Week theme for 2024 was a reminder to all of us that no matter what, the fight for justice and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people must continue.

The theme and campaign – created by Carbon Creative agency – stressed the vital importance of staying engaged and connected and moving forward in a post-referendum world.

The design and artwork represented the momentum of the theme; the chevron, a universal symbol for pointing the way forward, signified advancing together as we look towards a reconciled future; the vibrant artwork of Gubbi Gubbi artist Maggie Douglas encouraged connection with one another, understanding and continuing to move forward.

#NRW2024 highlighted the urgency of a continuing commitment to reconciliation. The week offered the first opportunity for many people – including the 6.2 million Australians who voted YES – to continue to engage with reconciliation.

We saw increased activity with choirs, videos, website content, and engagement increases on key social platforms.

This year our work had much increased visibility via the 100,000 free posters distributed nationally across the Kmart and Target Deadly Stores network.

VOICES FOR RECONCILIATION: BLACKFELLA/WHITEFELLA

Choirs continue to enable people to collectively contribute to NRW in a positive and joyful way. For the second year, nearly 500 choirs came together to raise their collective voices for this year's *Voices for Reconciliation: Louder Than Ever*. Taking on

the anthemic rock classic *Blackfella/Whitefella* by Warumpi Band, thousands sang in support of both observing the week and the ongoing need for reconciliation in Australia. Choirs continue to enable people to collectively contribute to NRW in a positive and joyful way. Their performances are available via youtube.com/ReconciliationAus.

KEY EVENTS

Recognising community truth-telling: An exploration of local truth-telling in Australia Report Launch: 7 September

The Communications and Engagement team worked with Deakin University's Alfred Deakin Institute to organise and promote a launch webinar attended by 700 people. It featured a panel discussion opened by Karen Mundine with Aunty Patsy Cameron AO, Aunty Enid Tom, Uncle Michael James 'Widdy' Welsh, Tiffany McComsey, and Peter Jones.

Reconciliation and Education: Past-Present-Future Forum | Narragunnawali Reconciliation in Education Awards Ceremony: 24 November

The team was very involved in the organisation and delivery of these successful events. The day-long forum brought together Australia's leading experts in the teaching of First Nations histories and cultures. The awards ceremony that evening celebrated the winners and finalists of the two Narragunnawali Award categories.

Australian of the Year Awards Breakfast: 25 January

This annual breakfast supports and celebrates the Australian of the Year (AOTY) First Nations finalists within the program of Australian of the Year events in Canberra. This year's finalists in attendance were Yalmay Yunupirju (NT and National Senior AOTY), Witiyana Marika (NT Local Hero), Janine Mohamed

(VIC AOTY), Naarah (Tas Young AOTY), Tiahni Adamson (SA Young AOTY), Mechelle Turvey (WA Australian of the Year), Selina Walker (ACT Local Hero). Mr Marika led the finalists in a stirring chorus of *Treaty* after the event.

Coming to terms with the past? Identifying barriers and enablers to truth-telling

Report launch: 18 April

We worked with UNSW to promote and produce this webinar launch at which Professor Heidi Norman and Dr Anne Maree Payne, Professor Leanne Holt (UNSW DVC Indigenous); CEO Karen Mundine; and community members Uncle Garry Matthews and Tess Meehan presented. It was attended by 1,017 people.

PUBLICATIONS

We produced two editions of Reconciliation News: November 2023 and May 2024. The November edition was our 50th edition and included stories on language revival, truth-telling, self-determination and reflections on the Voice to Parliament referendum and campaign, and actions for supporters to continue the momentum. The May edition presented stories related to the NRW theme. We co-published the two truth-telling reports mentioned previously; as well as the 2023 RAP Impact Report.

LOOKING AHEAD

We will celebrate self-determination and excellence at the Indigenous Governance Awards and promote the collective strength of our 3000+ RAP organisations at the National RAP Conference at the end of 2024. We will strike out with a new direction for NRW 2025 as we encourage supporters and stakeholders in greater action towards our reconciliation goals.

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLANS

A Year of Significant Change and Growth



RAP Program team members at the 2024
RAP Leadership Forum at Sydney Town Hall.
Photo: Joseph Mayers

The RAP network continues to grow and this year the number of active RAP partners surpassed 3,000 organisations. Over five million people across Australia now work or study in an organisation with a RAP, illustrating the significant reach and influence of the program.

VOICE EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

The 2023 program focus was on educating the RAP network about the importance of the referendum. We held eight Reconciliation Roadshows in August and September 2023 across Australia and more than 700 people attended. Each of the one-day learning events provided information on the Voice to Parliament referendum and supported organisations to consider ways to educate their stakeholders. The roadshows also encouraged organisations to reflect on their own governance structures and to listen and respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices. At each event key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders – including Dale Agius, Jackie Huggins and Shelley Reys – addressed key issues surrounding the referendum.

In September 2023, more than 150 RAP organisations signed up to a statement of support for a Voice to Parliament and a 'Yes' vote. These organisations came from a diverse range of sectors across Australia and highlighted opportunities for collective action amongst the RAP network.

Following the referendum, we hosted a webinar discussion between Karen Mundine and Peter Morris about the future of reconciliation and challenges for the RAP network. We shared a list of key actions with all attendees as a guide to next steps. Across the year we also continued to use the online RAP community to share and promote key messages about the referendum and more broadly about the role of institutions in advancing reconciliation.

DEEPENING LEADERSHIP ENGAGEMENT

We began 2024 by facilitating a series of RAP leadership yarning circles with Elevate and Stretch RAP partners to gather collective insights to inform the future RAP program. Representatives from 85 organisations attended the online and in-person sessions held in Brisbane, Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney. The insights from these sessions helped to inform 2024 priorities and the focus of the RAP Leadership Forum.

That forum was held in March 2024 at the Sydney Town Hall and was attended by 253 representatives from Elevate and Stretch organisations.

The event began with a First Nations-only session that was well-attended and provided a culturally-safe space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander attendees to meet and connect. The purpose of the gathering was to enhance the impact of the RAP program by empowering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices to inform the role of the RAP program in advancing reconciliation.

Ian Hamm from the First Nations Foundation delivered the keynote which challenged organisations to think critically about how they can continue to drive reconciliation outcomes in a post-referendum landscape.

Attendees also heard from a panel of Elevate partners discussing their transformation projects, which included Cath Brokenborough (Lendlease), Angela Burt (Richmond Football Club) and Allan James (BHP).

We also allowed space for strategic discussion amongst attendees which focused on three areas (1) identifying and addressing challenges, (2) recommitting to reconciliation and (3) addressing racism and advancing truth-telling.

LOOKING AHEAD

The key focus for the team in the latter half of 2024 will be on successfully delivering the National RAP Conference and Indigenous Governance Awards. The National RAP Conference will be held on the lands of the Turrbal and Jagera peoples in Meanjin, from the 6 – 7 November. It will bring together 800+ RAP leaders to strengthen the collective impact of the RAP network and to steer reconciliation initiatives moving forward. After the difficult outcome of last year's referendum, we will focus on harnessing the impact of our network and interconnectedness with First Nations peoples.

We look forward to receiving the results of the Workplace Reconciliation Barometer in late 2024, which will include post-referendum insights and will highlight the impact RAPs are having on shaping attitudes and perceptions towards reconciliation.


Our demonstrated commitment to program innovation will continue as we work with organisations to pilot adapted approaches to the RAP framework for better sectoral alignment, with a focus on local government and universities. The work to broaden engagement in the RAP program will also continue, with a focus on growing the representation of organisations in high impact sectors.

INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE PROGRAM

Towards Self-Determination

Looking ahead: As part of the assessment process for the Indigenous Governance Awards 2024, judges visit finalist Djarindjin Aboriginal Corporation on the Dampier Peninsula in Western Australia. L-R: Djarindjin Aboriginal Corporation CEO Nathan McIvor with judges Val Price-Beck, Belinda Duarte and Kenny Bedford. Photo: Ashlee Jensen/Wirrim Media





The Indigenous Governance Program (IGP) brings together people, organisations and communities to highlight and share the success of community-led Indigenous governance practices.

The program supports First Nations-led organisations, by sharing knowledge and stories of successful Indigenous governance practice in action and amplifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices.

Indigenous governance is integral to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and self-determination. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have had systems in place to lead and govern for thousands of generations. These are unique ways of self-governing, driven by culture and community priorities. A reconciled Australia would celebrate these tried and tested ways of working.

We facilitate community-led partnerships across different sectors and systems and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to contribute to policies and programs affecting them.

We finalised a renewed communications strategy in July 2023 to support the program's expansion over the next three years.

PARTNERSHIPS TO EXPAND INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE

Reconciliation Australia facilitates two-way partnerships to expand the impact and reach of Indigenous governance practices.

Partnerships amplify the excellence, knowledge and resources of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and create more ways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership to be heard in decision-making systems and institutions where they are often unheard.

They offer connection under intentional Indigenous-led agreements. This creates more sustainable long-term collaborations and greater impact of Indigenous governance.

Under the Indigenous Governance Program, partnerships are explored by bringing together Indigenous Governance Award (IGA) finalist organisations with a Stretch or Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) organisation, to collaborate on growth initiatives as determined by the Indigenous organisation.


Both sides work together to facilitate community self-determination and decision-making; each partnership is initiated by the awards finalist, with the goal of shared leadership.

Through these partnerships RAP organisations and IGA finalists are able to share expertise and resources to scale up the impact of Indigenous governance practices.

Partnerships contribute to a broader understanding of reconciliation in Australia. They are models for effective relationships between Indigenous and other governance structures.

THE PARTNERSHIP PATHWAY

The partnership pathway draws on the work of Mumma Doris Shillingsworth – a well-respected Gandugari Elder of the Murrwarri Nation within the Dubbo community and a cultural leader in the Aurora Foundation's High School Program in Western Sydney. Her work shows how, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, all authentic and productive engagement requires a process beginning with deep respect. This moves into building personal connections and trust.



The pathway sets out the processes and responsibilities for the partnership in a series of phases. Each phase draws from and builds on the previous, maintaining respect as a core component.

In June 2023, MTL Consulting was engaged to support four of the 2022 IGA finalists to scope and develop partnership proposals. These proposals were refined following senior governance reviews and then presented to Stretch and Elevate RAP organisations in early 2024.

Participating 2022 IGA Finalist organisations are: Naru Goori Groms, Brewarrina Local Aboriginal Land Council, Kolling wada-ngal Aboriginal Corporation, and The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council Human Research Ethics Committee.

INDIGENOUS GOVERNANCE AWARDS

The awards are held every two years and are proudly presented in partnership by Reconciliation Australia, the Australian Indigenous Governance Institute (AIGI), and the BHP Foundation.

The applications process was launched in early 2024. Thirty-seven applications were received and assessed by the review committee, comprised of members from the RA, IGP and AIGI teams. Ten applications were recommended to the eight-member judging panel. For these awards, the judges were organised across the three award categories.

The awards portal was redesigned, creating a more streamlined, accessible and user-friendly process for applicants.

We congratulate all finalists and look forward to celebrating their work and their communities at the Indigenous Governance Awards 2024 gala dinner.



POLICY, RESEARCH AND STRATEGIC PROGRAMS

Driving Change Through Evidence

Reconciliation Australia uses advocacy, research and evidence to build public support, influence government policy and the national conversation on reconciliation, and to help drive progress in the five dimensions of reconciliation.

The Policy and Research team works across all programs using research evidence and program data to inform Reconciliation Australia's programs.

POLICY FOCUS

Our policy focus expanded and strengthened this year as we examined multicultural Australia's perspectives of reconciliation, and we further positioned climate justice and clean energy in the reconciliation agenda.

This is all within the framework of self-determination, economic participation and justice, and the legal rights related to Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

The Policy and Research program provided submissions to several government inquiries and independent commissions. The team worked with Narragunnawali on a submission to the Department of Education on its *Review to Inform a Better and Fairer Education System Consultation Paper*, and on a submission on the Yoorrook Justice Commission's Issues Paper: *Education – Schooling*.

Walter Saunders (R) stands with the Mayapa Weenyn sculpture in Portland, Vic with Jason Scott (L) who collaborated on the construction. The sculpture – the basis of a community truth-telling case study – has created a conversation about who and what we commemorate. Photo: Damian Goodman

We also collaborated with the RAP program to provide a submission on the *Indigenous Procurement Policy Reform Discussion Paper*.

Further submissions in 2023–24 included to:

- Department of Home Affairs' Multicultural Framework Review
- Yoorrook Justice Commission's *Issues Paper on Economic Prosperity*
- Department of Climate Change, Clean Energy, the Environment and Water on *First Nations Clean Energy Strategy: Consultation Paper*
- Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) *Draft Blueprint Framework Fair, Fast and Inclusive Climate Change Action* campaign

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

We continued working closely with state and territory reconciliation organisations and coordinated meetings of the Australian Reconciliation Network (ARN), including the annual two-day meeting in Melbourne in April 2024. These meetings discussed shared priorities and opportunities for strategic collaboration and skills sharing. Significant reflection on the post-referendum environment in respective states and territories brought about new ideas and strategies for collaboration and coordination.

We provided secretariat support to the network and distributed funding to support ARN activities during National Reconciliation Week. In the lead up to the referendum we procured community engagement services from the ARN for referendum education activities in regional areas.

We continued our support of, and involvement in, national campaigns including Close the Gap (health equality), and Change the Record (incarceration and family violence).

RESEARCH AT WORK

A review of the Australian Reconciliation Barometer (ARB) survey instrument was undertaken to ensure it is timely and fit for purpose as it goes into the field in August 2024. We are collaborating with the RAP program to analyse findings from questions common across both the ARB and Workplace RAP Barometer (WRB). This will provide insight into the differences and similarities between these cohorts and identify the impact that RAP organisations may have in educating and informing employees in comparison to the general community.

Scoping for the *2025 State of Reconciliation in Australia Report* has commenced. The report will utilise new ARB and WRB data, reflect on Australia in a post-referendum environment, while providing strategic and tangible guidance going forward.

We will continue to respond to policy developments and work closely with the Indigenous Governance Program and Community Truth-telling Pathways programs to incorporate their goals into our policy and research development.

COMMUNITY TRUTH-TELLING PATHWAYS

Truth-telling underpins Reconciliation Australia's work to create a more just and equitable Australia. The Community Truth-telling Pathways (CTTP) program works towards this vision, supporting communities to collaborate and/or access resources to explore and undertake new, or advance existing, truth-telling initiatives.

This financial year, the program framework was refined including its approach to funding, resources, and research to guide community truth-telling activities.

Two foundational research reports were finalised this year:

Coming to terms with the past? Identifying barriers and enablers to truth-telling – an important contribution to the evidence base required to support meaningful and productive community truth-telling.

Recognising community truth-telling: An exploration of local truth-telling in Australia – a collection of truth-telling case studies developed from extensive academic research on community truth-telling.

Toolkits and fact sheets are in development to assist CTTTP stakeholders in initiating truth-telling projects.

Networking and engaging with established truth-telling communities and organisations has been a focus. The team participated in community conversations and workshops in Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia that discussed funding needs and how to promote truth-telling initiatives.

With the program's foundational research and resource development, brand identity and initial community engagement established and ongoing, we now turn our attention to the development of the community funding framework which includes a co-design approach and testing phase.



NARRAGUNNAWALI Reconciliation in Education Program

At the Narragunnawali Awards 2023. L-R: Fern Vallesi, Winterfold Primary School teacher, judges Aunty Geraldine Atkinson and Joe Sambono, Kim Calabrese, Winterfold Primary School Principal, and awards judging panel chair and Reconciliation Australia Director, Sharon Davis. Photo: Tom Hoy/Wirrim Media

Our Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program promotes and facilitates reconciliation by providing educators, schools, and early learning services with the tools to engage their communities in reconciliation learning and action. In the 2023–24 financial year, the Narragunnawali program continued to progress into its second generation supported by the BHP Foundation. Our focus is on individual, institutional, and systemic change, with a vision of placing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination at the centre of education systems. This included the strategic development of comprehensive professional learning offerings designed to equip educators and teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to support this vision and drive reconciliation in their spheres of influence.



NARRAGUNNAWALI RAP COMMUNITY

In this period, 3,430 schools and services had published a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). More than 13,000 schools and early learning services registered to develop a RAP on the Narragunnawali platform, representing 47% of all schools and early learning services across Australia.

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND CURRICULUM

There are more than 180,000 registered users on the Narragunnawali platform. They have access to a wide range of professional learning and curriculum resources to support reconciliation in educational practice. The Narragunnawali team delivered five webinars during the 2023–24 financial year, including a series focused on reconciliation and professional requirements, featuring guest speakers such as Director and Filmmaker Rachel Perkins, Carly Pettiona from The Healing Foundation, and key speakers from the education sector. 7,927 participants registered across both the live and on-demand webinar offerings, surpassing our goals.

Narragunnawali contributed to over sixty external events across the education sector, including the 2024 *Early Childhood Australia Reconciliation Symposium*. Additionally, the team developed multiple resources, including published articles and books, and contributed to televised episodes, curriculum resources, and advisory partnerships.

WIDER SECTOR AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Narragunnawali Regional Engagement Program continued to work across the continent, supported by formal partnerships with the six state-based Reconciliation Councils. The Education Reconciliation Industry Network Groups (RINGs), established in all states, provided additional platforms for stakeholder collaboration.

The team also worked closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education and community organisations, including Culture is Life, and The Healing Foundation, to build relationships and promote reconciliation within the education sector.

NARRAGUNNAWALI AWARDS

In December 2023 the Narragunnawali Awards recognised the efforts of Australian schools and early learning services in advancing reconciliation in education. Held on Ngannawal and Ngambri Country in Canberra, the event honoured the finalists' commitments to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and perspectives in their communities. Supported by the BHP Foundation, the awards reflect the Narragunnawali program's vision of reconciliation through education.

This year's winners were Winterfold Primary School (Noongar Country, WA) and Stirling District Kindergarten (Kurna Country, SA). They were commended by the judging panel – Chair, Sharon Davis, and Auntie Geraldine Atkinson and Joe Sambono – for their proactive anti-racism efforts and integration of Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum. Judges highlighted the lasting impact of these initiatives on students and broader society.

Preceding the awards, the *Reconciliation and Education: Past-Present-Future* forum, co-hosted by Narragunnawali and the University of Melbourne's Ngarrngga project, gathered over 100 education sector representatives to discuss key issues in reconciliation and education.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the program and another season of the Narragunnawali Awards.

We are also committed to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the program, by maintaining and strengthening existing partnerships across the education sector. We seek to create a robust support network that promotes continuous improvement and innovation in teaching practices through collaborative relationships with schools, educational organisations, and community groups.

Continued engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education organisations remains a priority.

We will continue to enhance and broaden the scope of professional learning offerings and a key focus will be on the development and implementation of fee-for-service professional learning workshops. These workshops aim to meet the diverse needs of educators and institutions, ensuring that they are well equipped with the knowledge and skills to develop inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments.

Through these efforts, the Narragunnawali program aspires to make a lasting impact on the educational landscape, contributing to the development of a more inclusive and equitable education system for all.

PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

We are very proud and grateful to include many of Australia's leading organisations amongst our partners and supporters. All share our commitment to reconciliation, and to making a difference to the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Together we are creating a more just, equitable and reconciled Australia.

Program funders

Australian Federal Government
through the National Indigenous
Australians Agency (NIAA)

BHP Foundation

BHP Group Operations Pty Ltd

Major supporters

Commonwealth Bank

Services Australia

Supporters

Alfred Deakin Institute for
Citizenship and Globalisation,
Deakin University

ACT Reconciliation Council

AMP

ANZ

Arts Centre Melbourne

Australian Human
Rights Commission

Australian Council of Social
Services (ACOSS)

Australian Indigenous Governance
Institute (AIGI)

Australian Indigenous
Leadership Centre

Australian Institute of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander
Studies (AIATSIS)

Benevolent Society

Cairns Convention Centre

Carbon Creative Agency

CATSINaM

Centre for the Advancement of
Indigenous Knowledges, UTS

Change the Record Campaign
Steering Committee

City of Melbourne

Close the Gap Campaign
Steering Committee

Committee for Economic
Development of Australia (CEDA)

City of Sydney

Diversity Council of Australia

DLA Piper

Early Childhood Australia

Family Matters Campaign

Federation University Australia

Gilimbaa

ICC Sydney

King & Wood Mallesons

KPMG

Magabala Books
Aboriginal Corporation

Message Stick

Minter Ellison

NACCHO

National Australia Day Council

National Indigenous Television (NITV)

National Museum of Australia

Netball Australia

NewsCorp

OMD Australia

Origin Energy

Polity Research and Consulting

Qantas

Reconciliation New South Wales

Reconciliation Queensland

Reconciliation South Australia

Reconciliation Tasmania

Reconciliation Victoria

Reconciliation Western Australia

Social Ventures Australia

South Australian Museum

Supply Nation

Telstra

Transdev

The Healing Foundation

Uniting Communities

University of Canberra

University of Newcastle

Vicinity Centres

Wakakirri Story-Dance Association

Naru Goori Groms hosted NRL representatives in Coffs Harbour for two days of cultural activities and planning as part of developing an Indigenous Governance Program partnership. Photo: Lee Davison



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Across the organisation we have met the key accountability measures that our Board and management team use to monitor our financial performance on a regular basis.

The result of Reconciliation Australia's operation in 2023–24 was a surplus of \$271,056 (surplus of \$375,685 in 2022–23). Total revenue for the current year was \$10,090,894 (\$10,221,345 in 2022–23) and total expenditure was \$9,819,838 (\$9,845,660 in 2022–23).

WHERE DO OUR FUNDS COME FROM?

We are an independent, non-government organisation. Our core funding is from the Australian Government through the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and we also receive significant funding from the BHP Foundation and BHP Group Operations Pty Ltd. Other income is sourced from corporate supporters, private donors, event registration fees, licence fees and investment income.

WHERE DO OUR FUNDS GO?

In 2023–24 Reconciliation Australia delivered program and initiatives which accounted for 89% of the organisation's expenditure. Our primary costs relate to employees and communications.

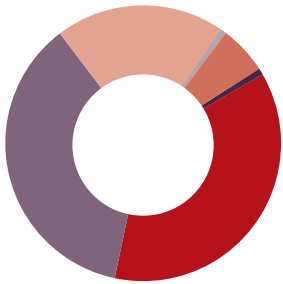
FURTHER INFORMATION

This annual review provides a summary of the financial performance and position for the financial year ended 30 June 2024. Copies of the full Annual Financial Report, including the Independent Audit Report can be obtained from our website.

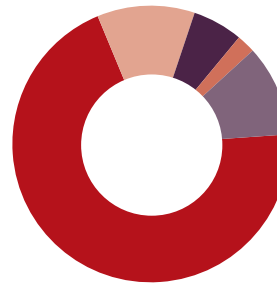
SUMMARY RESULTS

	2023–24	2022–23
Total revenue and other income	\$10,090,894	\$10,221,345
Total expenditure	\$9,819,838	\$9,845,660
Surplus / (deficit)	\$271,056	\$375,685

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

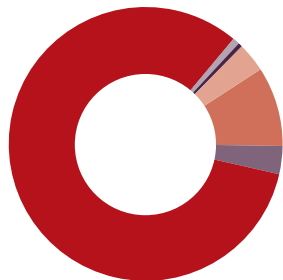


Income	2023–24
Government grants	\$3,708,000
Program funding	\$3,677,380
Fee for service	\$2,002,594
Charitable donations	\$75,448
Interest	\$576,065
Other	\$51,407
Total	\$10,090,894

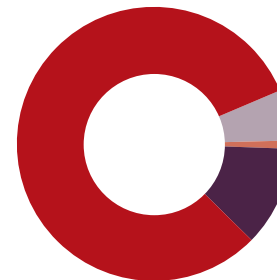


Expenses	2023–24
Programs and partnerships	\$6,876,913
Communications and engagement	\$1,123,360
Policy and research	\$577,655
Constitutional reform	\$214,901
Operations	\$1,027,009
Total	\$9,819,838

FINANCIAL POSITION



Assets	2023–24
Cash at bank	\$990,649
Receivables	\$349,826
Other financial assets	\$8,695,028
Property and equipment	\$89,013
Leased assets	\$46,984
Other	\$365,072
Total	\$10,536,572



Liabilities	2023–24
Trade creditors	\$308,428
Lease liabilities	\$49,830
Provisions	\$607,579
Contract liability	\$4,181,775
Total	\$5,147,612



RECONCILIATION
AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia
PO Box 224
Surry Hills NSW 2010

Tel +61 2 6153 4400
enquiries@reconciliation.org.au
reconciliation.org.au