

REFLECT

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2022 - SEPTEMBER 2023



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT

DENTON
CORKER
MARSHALL

Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre
Artwork by Waanyi artist, Judy Watson
Melbourne Museum | Wurundjeri Country

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

A watercolor-style map of Australia is centered on the page. The map uses soft, blended colors of orange, yellow, and green, with a prominent dark grey area in the center representing the continent's interior. The text 'ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY' is overlaid on the top left of the map in a large, bold, black sans-serif font.

Denton Corker Marshall acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which our company is located and where we conduct our business. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We commit to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

A MESSAGE FROM RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA

Reconciliation Australia welcomes Denton Corker Marshall to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Denton Corker Marshall 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 Denton Corker Marshall 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 Denton Corker Marshall, 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



Karen Mundine, CEO, Reconciliation Australia
Photo by Joseph Mayers

OUR BUSINESS

————— Denton Corker Marshall is recognised as one of Australia’s most celebrated design practices. We are known internationally as leaders in producing distinctive, innovative, and functionally excellent architecture and urban design across Australia, and throughout Europe and Asia.

We set the bar high for design, researching new building technologies, contemporary architectural practice, and sustainable solutions. Experiments with colour, surface, scale and sculpture, and the way architecture is inhabited, contributes to the distinctive architectural language for which we have been critically acclaimed for 50 years.



Shepparton Art Museum, Shepparton, Yorta Yorta Country

Both global and local

Our experience encompasses the international stage where our designs have achieved recognition for excellence with projects such as Stonehenge Exhibition + Visitor Centre and Manchester Civil Justice Centre, UK, the Australian Embassies in Jakarta and Beijing, and the Australian Pavilion, Venice.

Although international, our head office and sensibilities are truly local, creating some of our nation’s most enduring and instantly recognisable landmarks: the Melbourne Museum, Melbourne Gateway and Bolte Bridge, Anzac Hall at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra, and Governor Phillip and Macquarie Towers in Sydney.

From the Bunjalika Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Melbourne Museum to Webb Bridge in the Docklands, and numerous civic and transport projects throughout Melbourne, as well as throughout Victoria at Twelve Apostles Shipwreck Coast to Shepparton Art Museum, we continually draw inspiration from working on Country and learning from our First Nations advisors and collaborators.



Stonehenge Exhibition + Visitor Centre, Salisbury Plain, United Kingdom

OUR BUSINESS

Our people

Established in Melbourne in 1972, the practice now operates worldwide with studios in London, Manchester, Jakarta, Melbourne, and Sydney, employing 70 people in Australia and approximately 150 worldwide.

We pride ourselves on being culturally diverse, with over twenty different languages spoken in our Melbourne studio alone.

Our mentoring program comprises participation in the former Federal Government's Indigenous Cadetship Support (ICS) scheme, including the provision of employment opportunities and financial support for international studies.

We currently do not employ any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff but are keen to develop employment outcomes through the establishment of our Reconciliation Action Plan.



Denton Corker Marshall Studio, Melbourne, Wurundjeri Country



Denton Corker Marshall Studio, Melbourne, Wurundjeri Country

OUR PLAN FOR RECONCILIATION

———— All projects in Australia exist on First Nations Country. As architects, we can play a role in creating strong and culturally respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, by celebrating the rich history and acknowledging the unique connections to Country.

Denton Corker Marshall seeks to collaborate with Traditional Owners in respectful, authentic, and ethical discussions to incorporate knowledge and culture in the design of infrastructure and built environment projects.



Fabric design by Kaiela Arts
Shepparton Art Museum, Yorta Yorta Country



Shepparton Art Museum, Yorta Yorta Country

OUR PLAN FOR RECONCILIATION

Our reconciliation journey

Whilst Denton Corker Marshall has over 30 years of experience undertaking engagements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and have mentored Aboriginal architecture students in the past, we recognise we are in the initial stages of developing our Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Reflect RAP will allow us to consider which existing relationships we can build upon and how we can improve our engagement and understanding across the whole company.

We have developed strong working relationships with First Nations collaborators and artists over many years and look forward to nurturing these relationships further through the lens of reconciliation.

We plan to improve accessibility to our Traditional Owner engagement processes to a greater number of colleagues, ensuring all studio members are able to respectfully prioritise First Nations peoples' voices within their work.

Working in a multicultural studio means that many of our colleagues have had little exposure to, or education in Australia's First Nations people and their histories. Similarly, we also recognise gaps and misconceptions in the understanding of our locally trained architects.

Nurturing reconciliation in our workplace and the wider community we engage with is a primary objective in our RAP journey. Developing learning opportunities and tools for our colleagues and clients to help building positive and respectful relationships between diverse cultures is a firm goal.

Our RAP team, including a Senior Director as our RAP Champion, as well as a Director and a Senior Project Leader, will drive our Reflect RAP and will create a solid foundation for future Reconciliation Action Plan stages.



Shepparton Art Museum Inaugural Exhibition by Lin Onus, Yorta Yorta painter, sculptor and activist

OUR PARTNERSHIPS + CURRENT ACTIVITIES

————— Denton Corker Marshall has a long and proud history of supporting First Nations design and inclusion of Aboriginal art work in our projects. Since the creation of the Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at the Melbourne Museum over 25 years ago, we have been fortunate to collaborate on numerous projects with First Nations communities who have contributed to defining project concepts with outcomes overtly and authentically reflective of First Nations peoples.

We are particularly proud of the ongoing educational value that many of our projects have, providing platforms that continue to share cultural stories with opportunities to teach the next generation and wider community.



'Wurreka' by Waanyi artist, Judy Watson, Melbourne Museum



Melbourne Museum, Wurundjeri Country

OUR PARTNERSHIPS + CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Melbourne Museum Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre

Bunjilaka presents, interprets and celebrates Aboriginal cultures, philosophies and issues. It serves the unique needs of Aboriginal communities Australia-wide and provides a focus for visitors with a particular interest in our First Nations cultures. Bunjilaka promotes Koorie (Victorian Aboriginal people) and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures as contemporary cultures and helps raise awareness of, and interest in, their unique aspects.

The design of Bunjilaka was undertaken by working with a group of key Elders and advisors as well as 19 tribe groups' cultural representatives. An iterative process of development took place with the resulting design comprising collaborative works such as the Kalaya Activity Centre, a stylised version of the bark shelters used by Aboriginal peoples of south-eastern Australia.

Artworks such as 'Wurreka' by Judy Watson are beautifully etched into the zinc walls of the Museum, and the Indigenous Milarri Garden offers the opportunity to learn about the native plants important to Aboriginal communities.

Denton Corker Marshall has continually collaborated with Melbourne Museum since its inception. The most recent projects include the Learning Lab completed in 2020, and the Gandel Gondwana Garden currently under construction.

The Learning Lab embodies the amplification of learning in museums – connecting museum collections and stories underpinned by a philosophy based on First Nations concepts of deep listening. First Nations stories of Creation will also feature throughout the Gandel Gondwana Garden and chronicle Australian cosmogony and the inextricable link between land, language and culture.



Kalaya Activity Centre at Bunjilaka is a stylised version of bark shelters used by Aboriginal peoples of south-eastern Australia

OUR PARTNERSHIPS + CURRENT ACTIVITIES

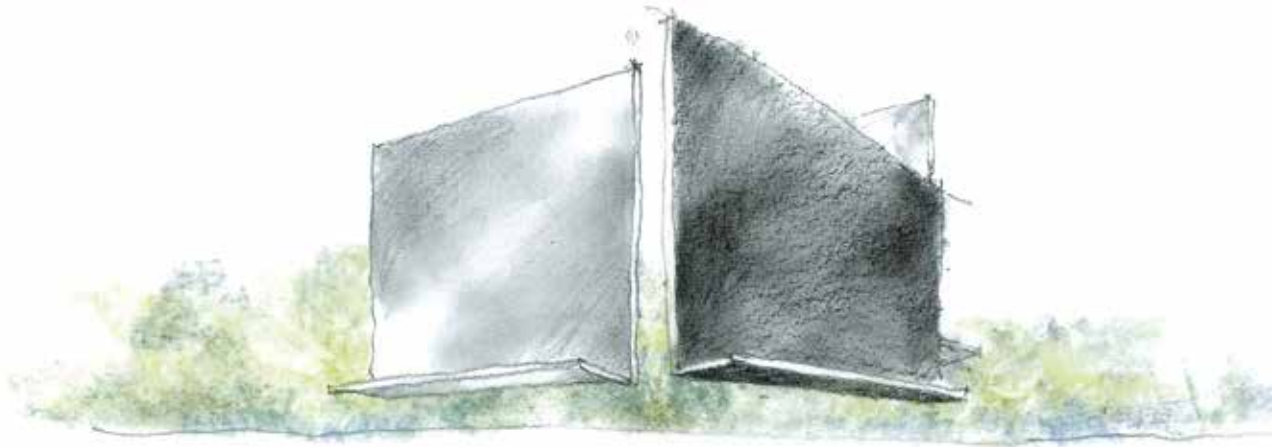
Other Cultural Institutions

The gifting of an important collection of Indigenous artworks to the Shepparton Art Museum by Carrillo Gantner AC was instrumental to the decision to create a new museum building. In preparation, the Greater Shepparton Council established a project specific Reconciliation Action Plan to facilitate employment and upskilling of the local Yorta Yorta community.

The RAP created a close connection with the Traditional Owners and enabled members of the local Kaiela Aboriginal Art Centre, who now share spaces at the Museum, to play an instrumental role imbedding cultural references into the building fabric and interior design – resulting in an award-winning design that draws inspiration from the country on which it stands.

The Museum of Sydney, set around the site of the First Government House, required particularly sensitive engagement with First Nations communities to develop an appropriate environment for the expression of their cultures.

The award-winning 'Edge of Trees' installation by artists Fiona Foley and Janet Laurence in the forecourt of the Museum connects with a cultural and physical history of the site by invoking Captain Cook's first landing at Botany Bay as seen by Aboriginal people from the edge of the trees.



Concept sketch for Shepparton Art Museum, Yorta Yorta Country



'Edge of Trees' installation by artists Fiona Foley and Janet Laurence, on the lands of the Eora Nation

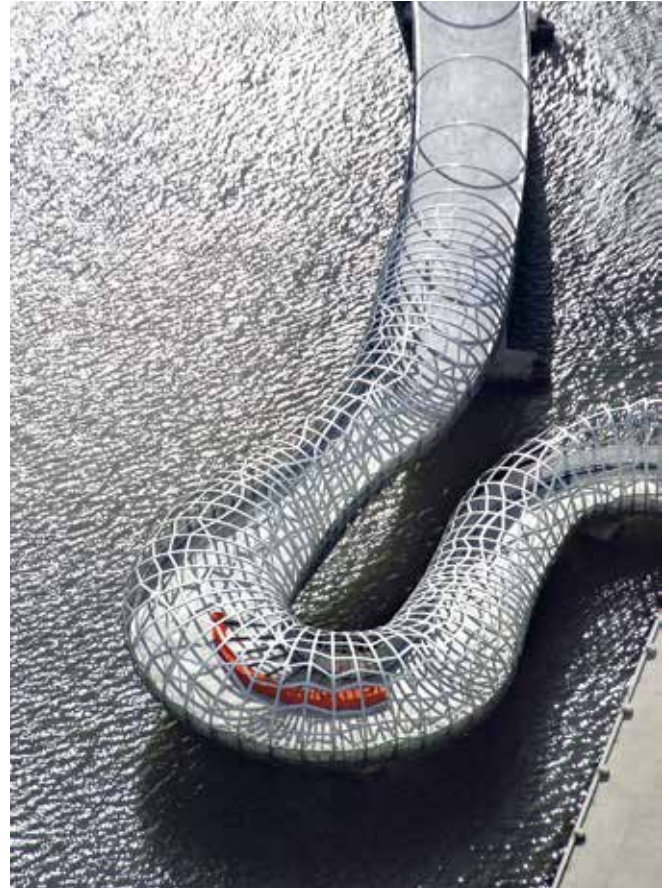
OUR PARTNERSHIPS + CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Infrastructure Architecture + Urban Design

Denton Corker Marshall has undertaken 12 infrastructure and rail projects under the Western Program Alliance (WPA) in Victoria. Through these projects, we have been privileged to work alongside Kat Rodwell, a proud Ngunnawal woman and the Alliance's Indigenous Engagement Lead. The inclusive process has presented many opportunities to celebrate Aboriginal cultures and connection to Country.

Throughout the Shipwreck Coast project – a series of lookouts and bridges within an extremely sensitive coastal location – our team worked alongside Traditional Owner representative group, the Eastern Marr Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC). As part of Denton Corker Marshall's ongoing commitment to the inclusion of artists in our built works, EMAC member and highly regarded Gunditjmarra artist Vicki Couzens was included as an integral member of the project design team.

Webb Bridge in Docklands is a pedestrian and cycle bridge over the Yarra River (Birrarung). This public art expression, reminiscent of an Aboriginal eel trap has become a much-loved cultural icon of Melbourne since its completion in 2002.



Webb Bridge, Melbourne Docklands, Wurundjeri Country



Shipwreck Coast masterplan on Eastern Marr Country incorporates artwork by Vicki Couzens, Gunditjmarra artist and member of the Eastern Marr Aboriginal Corporation (EMAC)

OUR PARTNERSHIPS + CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Activities + Initiatives

Our Reflect RAP acknowledges National Sorry Day, National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week and encourages our staff to attend associated events.

In 2020, Denton Corker Marshall established a resource for our staff to guide the sharing of First Nations knowledge and engagement opportunities in our design practice. The resource covers First Nations' Design Charters, Acknowledgement of Country, Publications and Guidelines, Organisations and Networks. We also publish news and events to alert staff to National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week events, upcoming RAP actions, as well as education programs and forums.

We include Acknowledgement of Country in our presentation and report templates and email signatures, and explained their use at Staff Information Sessions.

Through our continuing relationship with Kat Rodwell, our Senior Staff attended interactive workshops on Navigating Aboriginal Culture and Stakeholder Engagement. During NAIDOC week 2022, our staff attended a Koorie Heritage Trust Birrarung Wilam Walk to learn about the Aboriginal histories and cultures of the Kulin Nations around Federation Square and Birrarung Marr, and a Resin Workshop with Gunaikurnai and Monero Ngarigo artist Hollie Johnson. Denton Corker Marshall aims to strengthen our relationship with the Koorie Heritage Trust by attending more cultural workshops and events in the future.

We have established a Social Procurement Supplier List to prioritise the engagement of First Australians and their businesses to provide opportunities or participation in the economy and stimulate entrepreneurship, business and economic benefit. Our Board reviews expenditure bi-annually and commits to 1% of office expenditure to be allocated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their businesses with year upon year increases to reach a target of 5%.

It is our intention to grow these initiatives and build upon our existing relationships to establish new and deeper connections with First Nations communities. We want our reconciliation journey to achieve meaningful outcomes for all.

Our RAP Team

Neil Bourne, Senior Director + RAP Champion

As our Leader of Infrastructure Architecture and Urban Design, Neil builds strong working relationships with large complex teams and has established a reputation for collaborative work processes with First Nations and other stakeholders. Neil is our dedicated RAP Champion.

Sonja Syre, Director + RAP Co-Chair

Sonja actively facilitates Knowledge Share and Quality Assurance at Denton Corker Marshall and has a keen interest in contributing to an informed, diverse and inclusive workplace. Understanding and sharing First Nations cultural values is an integral ambition of our practice. Sonja is the primary contact for our Reflect RAP.

Alison Pedder, Senior Project Leader + RAP Co-Chair

Alison has a deep personal interest in supporting Indigenous design and engagement. In addition to attending seminars and undertaking self-directed learning, she completed a Koorie Heritage Trust program focused on Building Aboriginal Cultural Competencies for Not for Profit, Public Sector and Corporate Organisations. Alison compiles the reference material for our Indigenous Engagement resources as part of our Quality Management System.

John Denton, Founding Partner + RAP Overview

John has extensive experience in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander design engagement and a long history of supporting First Nations artists and curators through his role as Chair of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) and other arts organisations. John's oversight of our RAP is invaluable.

Our RAP Team will be expanded during our REFLECT RAP to form a RAP Working Group with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation.

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, 2022	RAP Co-Chair
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	October, 2022	RAP Co-Chair
2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff	May, 2023	RAP Co-Chair
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	27 May- 3 June, 2023	RAP Champion
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	27 May- 3 June, 2023	RAP Champion
3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff	May 2023	RAP Champion
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey	September, 2022	RAP Co-Chair
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach for collaboration on our reconciliation journey	October 2022	RAP Co-Chair
4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination	September, 2022	HR Manager
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs	October, 2022	HR Manager

RESPECT

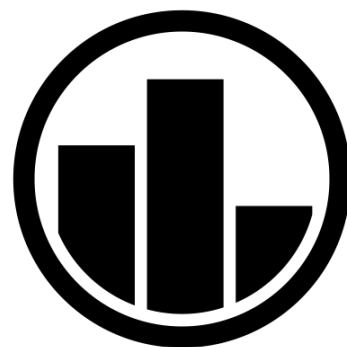


Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation	November 2022	RAP Champion
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	October 2022	RAP Co-Chair
2 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational area	February 2023	RAP Co-Chair
	Increase our staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country protocols	February 2023	RAP Champion
3 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	Raise awareness and share information among our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week	June, 2023	RAP Co-Chair
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area	June, 2023	RAP Co-Chair
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	First week in July, 2023	RAP Champion

OPPORTUNITIES



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation	November 2022	RAP Champion
	Build an understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	September 2022	HR Manager
2 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses	November, 2022	RAP Champion
	Investigate Supply Nation membership	October, 2022	HR Manager



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation	December, 2022	RAP Champion
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG	November, 2022	RAP Co-Chair
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG	December, 2022	RAP Champion
2 Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	Define resource needs for RAP implementation	October 2022	RAP Co-Chair
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments	September 2022	RAP Champion
	Appoint a senior leader to champion our RAP internally	September 2022	RAP Champion
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	October 2022	RAP Co-Chair
3 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	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	June annually	RAP Co-Chair
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire	1 August annually	RAP Co-Chair
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia	30 September, annually	RAP Co-Chair
4 Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	June, 2022	RAP Co-Chair



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