



Reconciliation Action Plan

MARCH 2021 – MARCH 2023





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Acknowledgement of Country

Abt Associates (Abt) acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people as the Traditional Owners of the land upon which the organisation's Brisbane office is located and the Ngunnawal people upon which our Canberra office is located.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of lands across Australia where we conduct our work and we pay our respects to, and recognise Elders, past, present and future for they are the custodians of the memories, the traditions, the cultures and the hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

We recognise the individuals and organisations we have worked with, and will continue to work with, in developing our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

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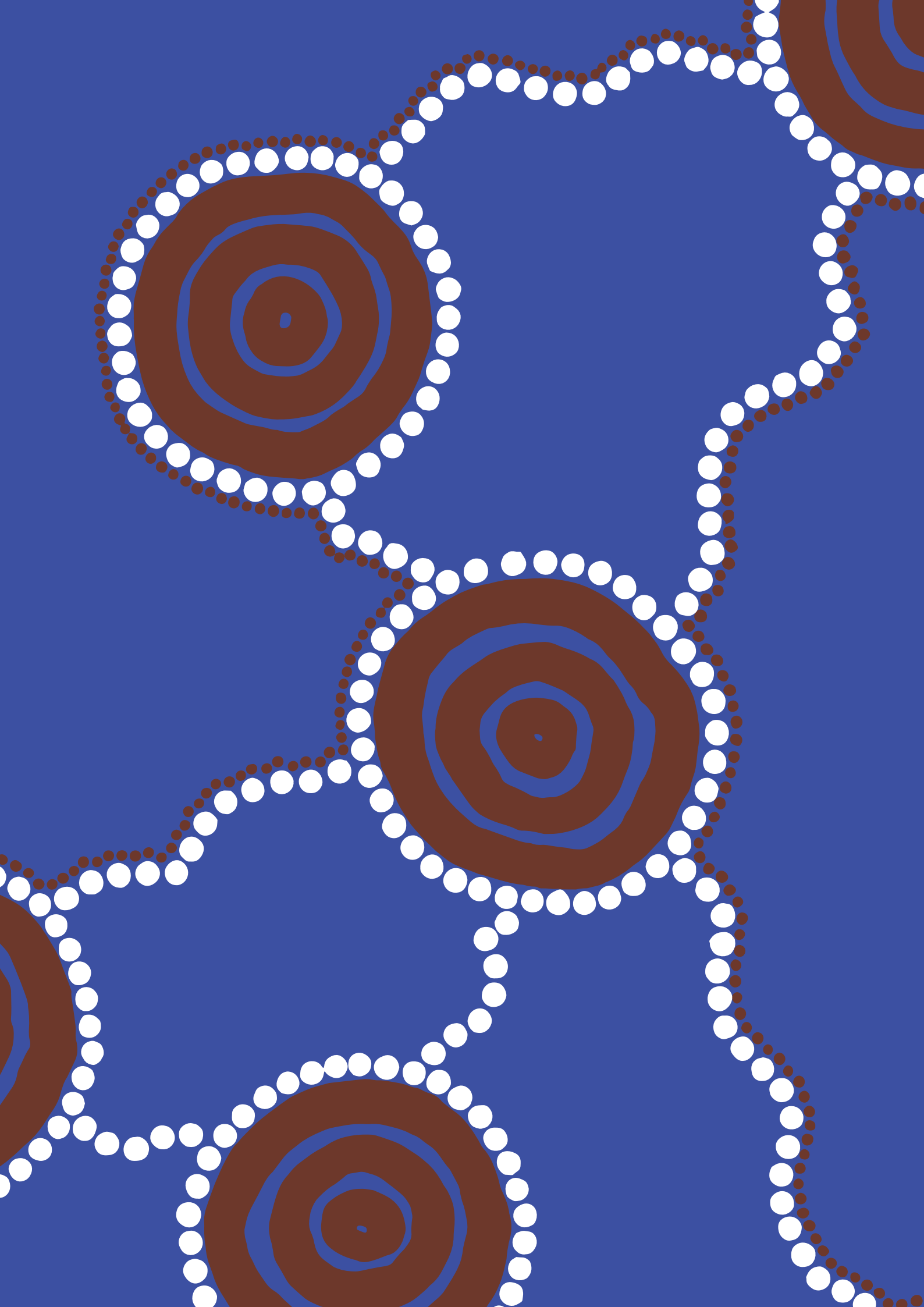
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Acknowledgements

About The Artist Stephen Hogarth



Stephen Hogarth
Descendent from Gamilaroi Country

Through a relationship with an Abt team member, we engaged Stephen to develop our RAP artwork, an important visual depiction and symbol of Abt’s RAP story and journey.

Stephen (descendent from Gamilaroi) draws his inspiration from our country. As a traveller he has seen most of the country and gets inspiration from the people and the land that we take for granted.

Stephen has worked at Tribal Gallery, Footsteps Gallery and eventually founded Hogarth Arts. Through art, Stephen believes he can keep both the Gamilaroi culture and other Aboriginal cultures alive and give people an insight into them.

A Word From Our Chair Rachel Bobir



Our Innovate RAP is led by our Chair Rachel Bobir, a proud member of the Quandamooka nation on Minjerribah (Stradbroke Island). Rachel shares her reflections here.

I started with Abt in April 2018, and quickly became involved in the RAP working group and have recently been appointed as the Chair. This is an important role, however more importantly, it is the entire group that makes this work come together.

Our working group want to support non-Indigenous Australians to have an understanding and acceptance of the historical impacts that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face today—including impacts around health, education, loss of culture and identity. We also want to help ensure respect for diversity, compassion and understanding of cultural difference.

Notably, the RAP working group is a diverse group of people from different cultures and backgrounds who are passionate about reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Together, across Abt, we will work towards reducing barriers and seeking more opportunities that support a unified workplace and society. We will do this through a shared vision and goals of creating equality and building strong relationships and connections.

We are very enthusiastic about how Abt plans to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and staff to make sure there is a strong voice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the work we do across our domestic and international teams and programs.

“It wasn’t long after starting work here that I began to understand the importance of reconciliation for Abt, particularly the ambition of Closing the Gap and building better relationships, and enhancing the collective understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and the reconciliation journey ahead.”

Rachel Bobir,
Abt RAP Working Group Chair

Foreword By The President & CEO Kathleen Flanagan



Abt is an engine for social impact, fuelled by caring, curiosity and cutting-edge research and technical services that move people from vulnerability to security worldwide—every day.

In line with Abt’s global mission statement *‘To improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people worldwide,’* we are committed to working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to make a positive, tangible difference to their life outcomes. Abt stands with Indigenous peoples, our colleagues, beneficiaries, and clients in the fight against racism, injustice, and inequality. We must speak out clearly and emphatically, and most importantly, we must follow our words with actions. Our company and our society need effective action with sustainable, positive impact on these issues.

Abt values diversity and inclusion and understands that our strength lies in our people. I am thrilled to see the enthusiasm displayed by our people

to promote reconciliation. As the President and CEO of Abt Associates, I am proud to support the launch of our second RAP (Innovate), which is a significant step in Abt Australia’s reconciliation journey. This RAP builds on improvements made through the Reflect RAP toward shared understanding of histories and cultures, stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities where we work and live, and increased representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our teams, programs, and partnerships.

The Innovate RAP is centred on not only celebrating these amazing, resilient peoples, but integrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures into how we work. Further, Abt Australia is focused on creating genuine opportunities to expand how we collaborate, work, and partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.

Message From The Managing Director Jacqui De Lacy



Abt is a global mission driven organisation that seeks to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people worldwide. Abt Australia works across the Asia Pacific region to service our mission. Core to our success is the diversity of our staff and our commitment to inclusion.

Whilst we work in many countries, Abt Australia is an Australian company. As such, we hold a special place for this reconciliation journey. This Reconciliation Action Plan is a critical platform to pursue our reconciliation journey.

From early discussions in 2014 through to the Reflect RAP today, I have seen some wonderful changes across the organisation. These include the creation of a culturally safe space with the opening of the Jarjum and Mabo rooms. 'Jarjum' means children and this room has been a place of learning for our largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health program, the Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program (ANFPP). The foyer of the Brisbane office has been transformed by a wonderful mural by Aboriginal artist Carl Simpson, descendant from the Wakka Wakka people, highlighting personal totem animals from Abt staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

We have been blessed with visits from local Elders and artists who have generously shared their time, their experiences, knowledge and skills with us at various events. In an effort to move beyond

awareness into understanding, members of our executive team and domestic program team were fortunate to participate in a cultural immersion experience in Cherbourg, Queensland's third largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Abt has also expanded partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through the Youth and Adult Throughcare programs which were co-designed with communities and key stakeholders, resulting in an increase in employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees. I am proud of the partnerships already formed and we are now committed to progressing Abt's reconciliation journey from Reflect to Innovate.

The commitments set down are not just words on a page. I, and all our staff, are personally and professionally committed to achieving what this RAP sets out. An expanded RAP working group was established 27 May 2019, evenly represented by all areas of the business, including domestic and international employees to ensure these commitments are realised.

Our Innovate RAP has three focus areas: Relationships, Respect, and Opportunities.

Relationships:

Abt is committed to forging deeper relationships with the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we are located. This includes our head offices in Brisbane and Canberra, and where our programs and projects are located. Relationships will be strengthened through meeting with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, as well as developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory network and inviting their input into guiding principles for future engagement.

National Reconciliation Week is an important part of Abt's calendar every year. It provides the perfect opportunity to celebrate the respectful relationships we currently share, as well as progress the reconciliation agenda within our sphere of influence with the other organisations with which we do business.

Further, critical to delivering on our mission, is embracing diversity and inclusion. This includes conducting a diversity and inclusion survey, improved internal policies (such as the addition of cultural/ ceremonial leave), training on unconscious bias, and improved usage of Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.

Respect:

At Abt, we are committed to strengthening our understanding of our joint history. This means not only gaining an awareness of the past, but also how the past affects our present, so that we can work together on our future as an organisation and as a country.

All Australians, no matter their heritage, should be incredibly proud that we have these amazing enduring cultures right here. It is an incredible gift that needs to be celebrated. NAIDOC week provides the perfect opportunity to celebrate these cultures and extend our understanding together.

Abt is seeking to create a range of genuine opportunities to collaborate and integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and cultures into our workplace. This is supported by an ongoing cultural learning strategy, including an improved cultural awareness onboarding of all new staff, understanding of protocols for all staff, not just those who currently go into communities, a library of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander books, and other formal and informal education.

Opportunities:

I do not see reconciliation as an obligation, but rather a process that provides real opportunities to develop and grow.

Abt is focused on continuously creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to engage with us as partners, suppliers, end-clients and as an employer. I am really proud of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff that work here at Abt. As an organisation, I want to support them to grow their own careers, as well as leverage their unique knowledge and skills to progress our collective understanding and mission. This will be supported with stronger recruitment, retention and professional development activities.

Abt currently partners with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities and will continue to build and deepen these relationships to strengthen our work and our impact. Further, Abt is currently developing an Indigenous Procurement Policy and other improvements to sub-contracting arrangements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to further develop economic opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the organisations they run.

It is with great pride that we commit as individuals and as an organisation to the reconciliation journey outlined in this document.



Message from Reconciliation Australia CEO Karen Mundine

Reconciliation Australia commends Abt Associates on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for Abt Associates to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, Abt Associates will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With over 2.3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Abt Associates is part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.



Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Abt Associates readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Abt Associates on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.



Our Vision For Reconciliation

Our vision for the future of Australia, is one where our nation is actively anti-racist, promotes equality and equity, one that celebrates diversity and embraces unity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader Australian community.

Our organisational mission is to strengthen the communities in which we work, by improving the social and economic wellbeing of all. Guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which sets out the minimum standards for the continued survival of, and level of respect and wellbeing for all Indigenous peoples, we aim to be an active participant in the reconciliation journey that Australia continues on, as well as a role model for other mission-driven organisations.

In order for us to achieve this vision through our everyday business operations we:

- Commit to forging stronger relationships with local Elders and communities so we can play a part in enhancing positive race relations
- Understand that there is no reconciliation without truth. We will not only strengthen our awareness internally of the unique value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures have, but also freely share this information with stakeholders and peers
- Aim to partner and work with community organisations that reflect our values, and to strengthen the social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our work.

This RAP confirms our commitment to the reconciliation journey Australia is on, and identifies focus areas where we believe we can have a positive impact and achieve the best outcomes. Through this process, we will continue to reflect on our values, promote our shared experiences and use our voice and position to drive the change we envision for the future.

Our Business

Abt is a global research and consulting company known for tackling some of today's toughest issues and making a difference in people's lives. Our mission is to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people worldwide and hence our work is particularly centred around addressing social disadvantage.

We are named after Clark Abt, an engineer, environmentalist, entrepreneur, educator and social scientist, who founded the company more than 50 years ago. He established Abt in a two-room office situated above a machine shop in Cambridge, USA, with the goal of offering clients in industry, government and education an evidence-based, interdisciplinary approach to solving social and economic problems. Today, Abt is a global company of more than 3,000 employees with corporate offices in the United States, Australia and United Kingdom and program offices in more than 50 countries. The Australian office has 711 staff located across Australia, the Pacific and South East Asia, with 92 people based in Brisbane and Canberra, 2 of whom identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (2.15% of Australian based employees).

Prior to its acquisition by Abt Associates, the Australian arm of the business was founded 22 years ago as JTA (Jane Thomason and Associates) initially delivering health programs across the Pacific, working with governments, international organisations and the private sector. Ten years ago, we extended our work to the Australian domestic setting.

Abt has been involved in many programs that positively impact the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including: the Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program (ANFPP); co-designing Adult and Youth Through-care models designed to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have been in detention or prison from returning; supporting the National Aboriginal Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to identify the elements of an appropriate model for the delivery of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS); and an evaluation of a Rheumatic Heart Fever program in seven remote Aboriginal communities. We also have comprehensive experience working with a range of Primary Health Networks (PHNs), including the Central Queensland, Wide Bay and Sunshine Coast PHN, Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, Adelaide PHN and Northern Territory PHN.

Outside of Australia we deliver flagship development programs, which sees us working on seemingly intractable challenges in some of the most demanding contexts possible, supporting Australia's bilateral partnerships and promoting prosperity, reducing poverty,

and enhancing stability in our region. These range from strengthening governance, leadership and coalitions in Papua New Guinea and alleviating emerging health threats in the Pacific to accelerating economic equality for women in Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam and Myanmar. Critically, we deliver programs in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to support Indigenous participation in the delivery of Australia's development cooperation. One such partner is Ninti One Limited, who for example is providing advice on the protection of intellectual property as it relates to traditional arts and crafts production in Papua New Guinea.

Our ability to bring innovation, bold thinking and creativity to bear on the toughest social issues

has been acknowledged by our peers. Abt is recognised as a Top 20 Global Research Firm, Top 40 International Development Innovator and a Top 100 Women-Led Business. Ranking amongst the top Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) delivery partners, we are delivering results and impacting over 250 clients around the world. Our clients include the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) United Kingdom, the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank, and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.





Our Reconciliation Action Plan

As an organisation, Abt strives to improve the quality of life and economic wellbeing of all people worldwide and specifically Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples throughout Australia.

Across the oceans and lands, we work together to make a social impact. The country's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors have shown us that a harmonious connectivity empowers us to gather and share knowledge and ideas to achieve our common purpose. Abt is a socially conscious and mission driven business with a long-term commitment to reconciliation. After successfully completing our Reflect RAP, the clear next step was for Abt to begin developing our Innovate RAP.

Our Innovate RAP is proudly championed by:

Geoff Scahill

Vice President, Program Delivery and Growth

Georgina Dove

Public Health Lead

Fleur Jackson

Talent Acquisition Coordinator.

Our working group is comprised of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives as well as the following roles in the organisation

- Senior Cultural Consultant
- Vice President, Program Delivery and Growth
- Vice President, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer
- Head of Domestic Programs
- Head of ICT
- Knowledge Management Lead
- Consultants and Senior Consultants
- Business Systems Lead, Information Technology
- Program Managers and Coordinators.

In this action plan, Abt outlines the steps we will take to embed systems that focus on reconciliation and be completely committed to focusing on inequalities, regardless of the personal or professional cost.

We will use our Innovate RAP to keep our own behaviours in sight and be an organisation that actively works toward positive change. We don't have the answers now, yet we are committed to listening, learning and breaking down barriers to support the future of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We recognise that traditionally, systems have been put in place to support the needs of the non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, we want to reverse this. Our RAP will work towards the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

SPOTLIGHT ON: **Andrew Alderdice,** **Head Of Domestic Programs**

What are your perspectives on the RAP and its meaning for Abt?

The RAP is so much more than the RAP document for me—it is a philosophical commitment to reconciliation with Australia’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Our initial RAP was the start of our journey to guide our approach to contributing to equity and empowerment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Along the way, it has moved far beyond isolated elements of Abt’s work and has been integrated into our philosophy. However, we need to continue to develop what this means for us in actual practice, including how this can influence equity and economic empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders more broadly.

Our RAP is fundamentally important for our reconciliation with and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia, including making available opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations in our domestic and international work.

What do you see as the key elements of our RAP to Abt as an organisation? And why?

From my perspective, as the Head of Domestic Programs, I believe we can make an important contribution to reconciliation through employment, procurement, and our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Together, these approaches must support empowerment (including economic empowerment), employment and training, and capacity building for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and potentially organisations.

On a larger scale, Abt recognises the importance of developing strong relationships and partnering with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and the longer term benefits this brings, such as better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and businesses.

Tell us about the personal impact of key RAP initiatives

I have seen greater engagement and enthusiasm from all levels of staff across Abt in this space since our last RAP. I believe this is a reflection of the leadership by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, who have generated a broader commitment and understanding amongst all staff who are on this journey together. There is a strong commitment to enhancing our approach and working better in the reconciliation space. One practical example has been our partnering with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment agency that has led to the recruitment of key staff to lead and contribute to our programs and projects, both in the domestic and international areas of our organisation.

What do you think is the future of domestic programs in the reconciliation space? What do you think this will be like in five or ten years’ time?

Abt supports the principles and objectives of the Indigenous Procurement Policy to drive Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic development and grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business sector, so strategic partnerships will be a key focus for us moving forward. There may be few Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations with size and scale in our operational sectors now, but I believe this will grow over time. As it does

grow, we will aim to maintain and further enhance our existing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and also build on our strategies for recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, student placements and internships, procurement, and capacity building.

We will also continue to seek and value cultural advice for the development and delivery of our programs and project through our dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff; and encourage two-way learning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander evaluations.

Are there other opportunities for improving our commitment and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and peoples?

I think it’s really important to be open to new opportunities for building people, organisations and partnerships. In line with Abt’s mission, that’s our higher purpose—empowering through self-determination, where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations define what success looks like and we stand behind and support that journey. We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in their plans to grow through our partnerships, with a focus on shared understanding, valuing strengths, capacity building and two-way learning.

SPOTLIGHT ON: **Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program (ANFPP)¹**

The Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program (ANFPP) is a nurse-led home visiting program that aims to empower and inform first-time Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers, or mothers who have an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander partner, by supporting them to not only reach for and achieve their personal goals as mothers, but also grow happy, healthy families. Based on the US Nurse-Family Partnership, this program was established here in Australia as part of the Government's commitment to improving and sustaining the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their communities, with particular focus on maternal health and early childhood development. With funding from the Federal Government as part of the Closing the Gap strategy, this program is managed by the Department of Health and delivered in collaboration with 11 partner organisations, the majority of whom are Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Organisations (ACCHOs). A National Program Centre was established to support and coordinate the efforts of partner organisations in order to provide information and resources, and the technical support and specialised

training that is essential to sustaining this program and contributing to its positive outcomes. The ANFPP model works on building relationships, where specially trained Nurse Home Visitors and Family Partnership Workers set up routine visits with mothers-to-be from the early pregnancy stage through to the child's second birthday and through these visits, provide skills and knowledge to assist mothers through the process. As the mother grows in confidence and develops an awareness of her role in creating a safe and healthy environment, this promotes opportunities for success for both the mother and child throughout the program and after its completion.

A core focus is building client autonomy and this means encouraging an awareness to identify what pathways and solutions are achievable for each individual taking part in the program. Progress can and will look different to everyone however, it is made through small incremental changes that build the confidence of mothers and each success encourages further change. The aim of ANFPP is to improve pregnancy outcomes and child health and development and the best way this is can be achieved is by supporting women

through encouraging them to make good choices for their health and wellbeing and empowering them to be the best parent they can be for their children. This program also helps parents develop a plan to create a positive future for themselves not only by providing the skills and knowledge to plan future pregnancies, but also encouraging the continuation of education and finding job opportunities. With any community program there are challenges that must be overcome: social and economic disadvantages, unhealthy behaviour patterns and inter-generational cycles of poor health among the clients enrolled in the program. The home visiting teams are so important for the success of the program and of its clients, as they have a strong understanding of these individual and community challenges. A key part of the program is the presence of a Family Partnership Worker (an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific role) who provides cultural knowledge and expertise and promotes understanding of the health beliefs and practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The program has been operating in Australia for over 11 years, 10 with Abt as the managing partner and has seen numerous success stories of its clients as well as broader community health changes including the increase in breastfeeding rates within the program compared to the national average for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. One success story is from Shanina, whose baby Ozaisis, was born 13 weeks premature which caused

numerous developmental and parental challenges. Although Shanina was quite shy and had a reserved disposition, she was inspired by the program's weekly art activities and the lunches provided to clients at the regular Community Day events and made a request to cook a special dish for the group. Her Family Partnership Worker recognised that this was a step in the right direction as it showed that Shanina was able to identify ways to achieve her personal goals and share her individual capabilities with a trusted group in a safe setting. With the activity being a success and receiving positive feedback from program staff and other clients, this encouraged Shanina to set herself other goals connected to her love of cooking. By providing clients with the skills, knowledge and then opportunities to develop their confidence to plan and navigate their own path to fulfilling personal goals and creating healthy and happy families, ANFPP will continue to see positive outcomes overcoming the challenges faced by clients well into the future.

SPOTLIGHT ON: **Cultural Immersion Trip To Cherbourg**

In December 2018, members of Abt's Executive team and largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program, ANFPP, visited Cherbourg, one of the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Queensland, to learn about the cultural and historical significance of this area to help inform and build on our understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.

Upon our arrival in Cherbourg, staff were greeted by Auntie Sandra, Cassie and Rocko who were guest speakers at the Ration Shed. Auntie Sandra and Cassie facilitated the morning session and talked about the history of Cherbourg. During the presentations, staff watched informative videos about the lives of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were forcibly removed from their families to live in this controlled mission.

The information provided was confronting, moving and humbling. One of the most memorable experiences was a video about life in the Boys Dormitory which showed the impact of removing young boys from their families into a strict regimented institution. This left those who attended with some understanding of why some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders peoples and communities are experiencing significant issues today.

The cultural immersion experience at the Ration Shed gave a firsthand look into the history of Cherbourg and how previous governmental policies created long-standing issues that continue to impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

On a positive note, visiting Cherbourg also demonstrated how, through the great work of staff at the Ration Shed (including Auntie Sandra), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are trying to move forward through their self-determination to heal and grow as communities.

Our Journey So Far...

2014

Luana Sanders is the first Aboriginal person employed by Abt JTA. This number has grown over time. Luana suggests to Jane Thomason (then CEO) that Abt JTA should embark on their Reflect RAP journey.

2015

Aboriginal artwork, 'Community Networking' by Aunty Denise Proud (now in Jarjum Room) was commissioned by Abt JTA in May 2015 and became the water mark for the Reflect RAP.

May 2017

Annual ANFPP Conference was held on 17 May 2017. Luana and Jane launch the Reflect RAP at the Grand Chancellor during the conference.

2014-2017

RAP working group established, made up of, and led by, Abt JTA Domestic employees for the most part. Karen Harmon (then Head of Domestic Programs) was identified as RAP champion.

2016

'Jarjum' decided as the name for the largest room in the Abt Brisbane office, meaning 'Children' in Yugambeh language.

Jarjum Room was named with approval from an Elder from the Munanjali Nation and dedicated to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children whose lives the Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program (ANFPP) strives to improve.

Oct 2017

Youth Throughcare program (supporting young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders to reduce recidivism) commences, which sees an increase in the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Abt employees to lead the co-design and trial program.

May/June 2018

Abt participates in Reconciliation week in May/June 2018. Uncle Joe Kirk (a Jagera Elder and Traditional Custodian) welcomed the group and gave a wonderful, if sometimes harrowing, history lesson on the treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Brisbane. The Wirri-Wacka dancers entertained before a sharing afternoon tea.

The Mabo room was officially opened with the permission of Benito Mabo, Eddie Mabo's wife.

Eddie Mabo, a proud Torres Strait Islander man, is celebrated for his role in campaigning for land rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The artwork displayed in Mabo room is titled 'Dhari Dreaming' and is by Darlene Devery, a Torres Strait Islander artist born in Mount Isa. The painting depicts time Darlene spent in the Torres Strait. The Dhari is the distinctive traditional dance and ceremonial headdress of the Torres Strait.

May 2018

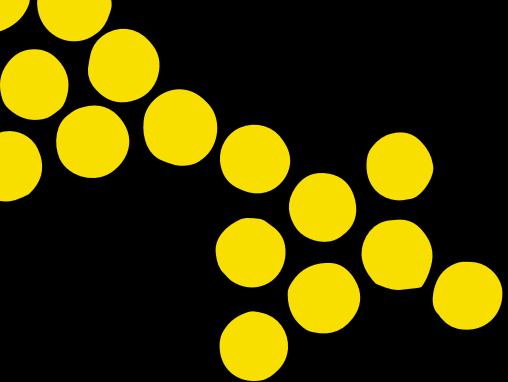
Mural painting by Carl Simpson and other Wakka Wakka artists titled 'Our Country, Our Home' is hung outside of Jajum in May 2018. It includes totems from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Abt employees, including the Carpet Snake and Black Cockatoo.

July 2018

Abt participates in NAIDOC week celebrations, 8-15 July 2018. The theme was 'Because Of Her, We Can'. Activities included yarning circles, art, dancing and singing.

2018

Acknowledgement of Country cards and Abt shirts with a design by an Aboriginal artist are created as part of Reflect RAP commitment.



Oct 2018

Members of Executive team, ANFPP team and RAP representatives visit Cherbourg Ration Shed in QLD and community on 25th October as a cultural immersion experience.

May 2019

Abt commits to commencing its Innovate RAP and a RAP working group was established on 27 May 2019. The working group is evenly represented with a total of 27 personnel from the Domestic, International and Corporate arms of the business, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives.

June 2019

International Program Delivery team hire their first Aboriginal employee on 24 June.

June 2019

Abt launches a Diversity and Inclusion Survey, with all Abt Australia and Abt Britain staff invited to participate. The intent of the survey was to better understand the current-state diversity of the Abt workforce and how Abt practices inclusivity as part of our workplace culture; and how we can continuously improve upon this.

2019

Abt partner with Ninti One, i2i Development Global, and The Seedling Group on business opportunities under Australia's Aid program.

Aug 2019

Abt participates in International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples (IDWIP), with staff collaborating globally to produce several short films incorporating the theme of Indigenous languages. Staff from across the business were invited to share their thoughts and reflections on this day.

Abt celebrates 10 years of delivering and supporting ANFPP at their National Conference in Alice Springs, and at the Brisbane office in

conjunction with National Aboriginal and Islander Children's Day. Local Elder and General Manager of Wandarrah Preschool and Community Centre in Inala joined Abt staff sharing the ANFPP history, and participated in a reading of 'Tjulpu and Walpa', a story about the importance of love and attachment in childhood. A range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's books were donated to commemorate the celebrations.

Nov 2019

Abt includes cultural leave to the Employee Leave Policy

April 2020

On 22 April Abt was successful in its bid to deliver the AUD 200m Papua New Guinea Australia Transition to Health (PATH) program. This program cements Abt's 20 years of support for health outcomes in Papua New Guinea and builds on previous success to strengthen health service delivery at the provincial level.

Abt partnered with Ninti One Limited (Ninti), a Supply Nation Registered,

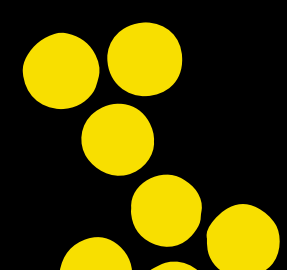
100% Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned enterprise, in its successful bid. We committed that a target of 5% of the value of the work performed under the Contract will be subcontracted to Ninti over the term. We are committed to deepening a meaningful partnership with Ninti, evidenced on a further win to deliver Education Support Services in Papua New Guinea and the drafting of a Memorandum of Understanding between our companies.

May 2020

National Reconciliation Week (27 May–3 June) occurred differently this year, with all activities being virtual (due to COVID-19), however 60 people attended the NRW Webinar event. This was a high turnout for internal staff meetings, with contributions from Abt staff and executive. This event was recorded and is hosted on two Yammer pages. In addition, the NRW email banner was circulated to all Australian staff to embed in their email signature. Further, the remote NRW events were shared on Yammer with 30 clicks.

Jan 2020

Abt continues to explore best practice inclusive recruitment methods to attract Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander talent to the business. All Abt vacancies are now advertised on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seeker websites (e.g.: Koori Mail) as well as other usual standard platforms.



Relationships



We are a relationship focused organisation that recognises that working collaboratively produces excellence.

Collaboration is a core value at Abt, recognising the need to reach beyond our organisation to forge enduring working relationships based on trust, mutual respect, together with a shared pride in our work and its impact.

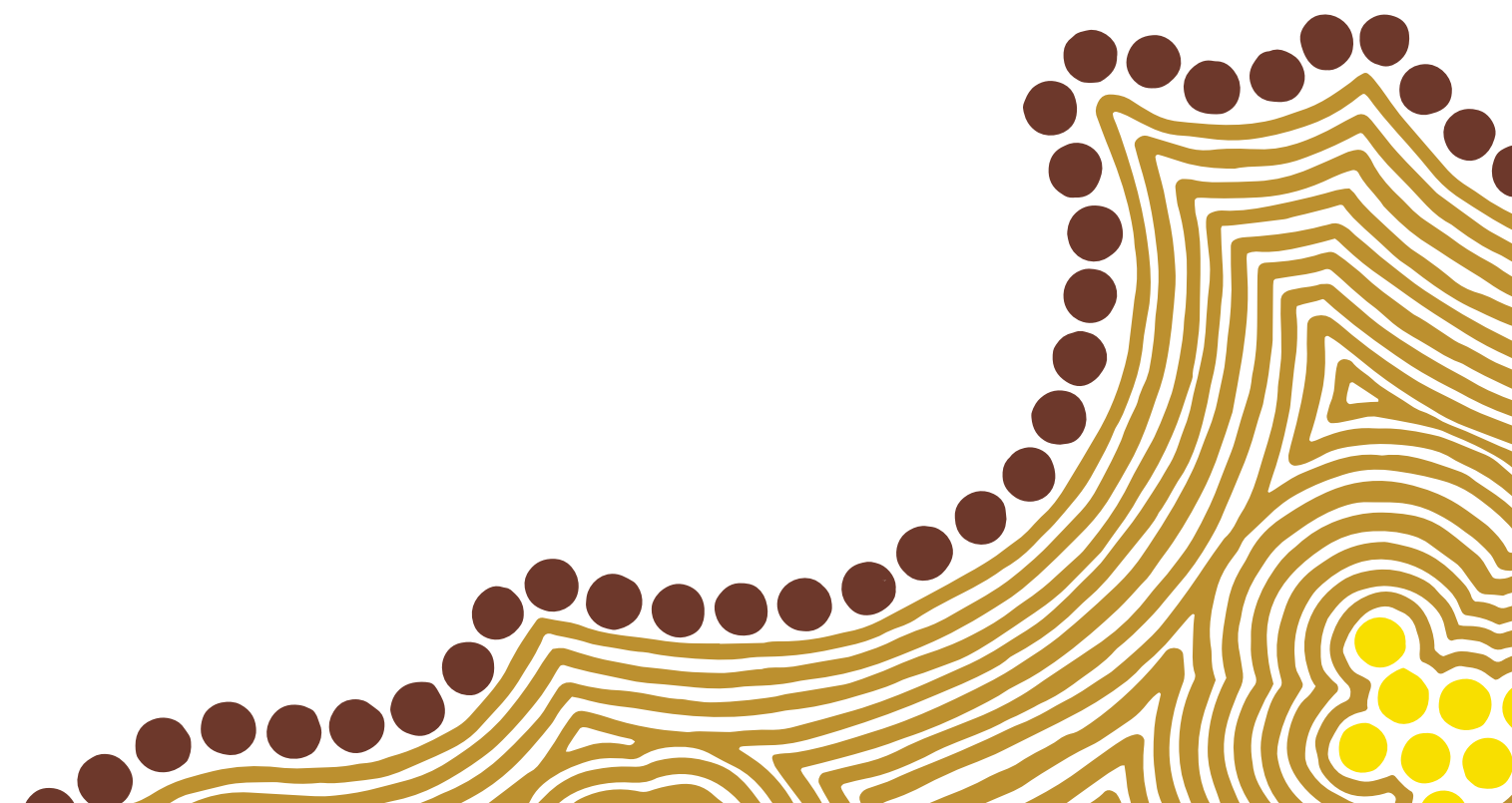
In partnership with the Australian Government and partners, we are leading programs in Australia, across the Pacific (in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Tuvalu, Tonga, Samoa and Kiribati) and in South East Asia (Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar and Timor-Leste).

In Australia, Abt is currently working in the areas of social and emotional wellbeing, justice and health. We will continue to forge and build relationships both directly with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and workforce to create powerful impactful solutions with the aim to improve the lives of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under the Australian Government 's Closing the Gap strategy.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	June 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Head of Domestic Programs
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	June 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Head of Domestic Programs
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May to 3 June 2021, 2022	Senior Communications Specialist
	Promote NRW on internal social and share details of Abt supported activities during onboarding activities for new staff to ensure a baseline understanding of the history and significance of NRW.	May 2021, 2022	Senior Communications Specialist Learning and Development Lead
	RAP working group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May to 3 June 2021, 2022	RWG Chair Senior Consultant Senior Manager, Domestic Consulting and Knowledge Management
	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation material to all staff.	27 May to 3 June 2021, 2022	Senior Communications Specialist Talent Acquisition Coordinator
	Organise at least one NRW event each year (private or public) encouraging active participation.	27 May to 3 June 2021, 2022	RWG Chair Senior Consultant Senior Manager, Domestic Consulting and Knowledge Management
	Register all Abt's NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	27 May to 3 June 2021, 2022	Contracts Officer and Paralegal

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	March 2021	People and Culture Operations Partner Senior Communications Specialist Learning and Development Lead
	Implement strategies to engage our staff in reconciliation.	March 2021	VP, People and Culture Contracts Officer and Paralegal Head of ICT
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	December 2021	Head of Domestic Programs Business Growth Lead
	Build positive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners and actively seek feedback from them to build on and capture lessons learned.	March 2022	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Head of Domestic Programs
	Collaborate with RAP and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	June 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Operations Directors

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	June 2021	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Develop, implement and communicate an Anti-Discrimination Policy for our organisation.	June 2021	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our Anti-Discrimination policy.	June 2021	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	December 2021	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead Learning and Development Lead



Respect



At Abt, we build mutual trust and respect in the communities where we work.

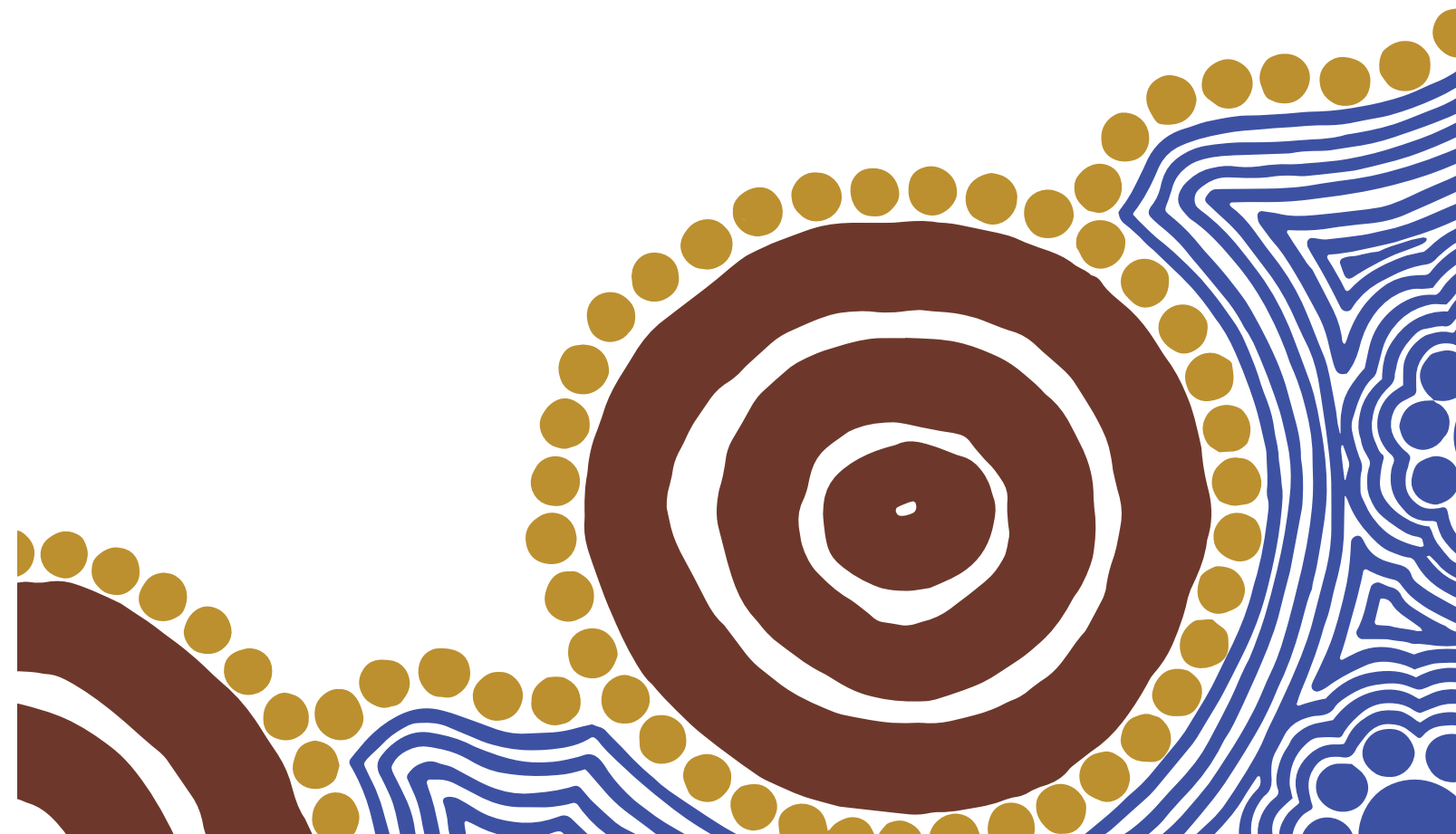
We respect and value that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the oldest living cultures in the world, and the first people to have inhabited Australia and its surrounding islands. We work with many different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities including urban, rural and remote regions. We acknowledge and respect the rich cultural diversity of all communities. As part of Abt's culture we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we stand, respecting the unique contribution by Elders past, present and emerging.

Globally, respect is a core value for Abt Associates. In Australia, we embrace the history, cultures, and communities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia and the Torres Strait. We naturally value and respect the benefits that diversity brings to our workplaces and places of work. Respecting, collaborating, and including all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples wherever and whoever they may be.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within Abt.	July 2021	Senior Communications Specialist Learning and Development Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate into Learning and Development planning and onboarding activities. Identify and ensure baseline knowledge on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories, cultures, achievements for all new staff. Incorporate trauma informed education into any cultural program. 		
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	September 2021	Learning and Development Lead People and Culture Operations Partner Cultural Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned organisation/s to develop cultural learning strategy. 		
	Develop, implement and communicate a Cultural Learning Strategy for Abt.	December 2021	Senior Communications Specialist Learning and Development lead Cultural Consultant
	Develop library of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander books.	March 2021	Head of Domestic Programs
	Explore options for an annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural immersion activity for staff.	December 2021, 2022	Cultural Consultant Head of Domestic Programs
	Provide opportunities for RWG members, People and Culture managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	December 2021	People and Culture Lead, Learning and Development Lead People and Culture Operations Partner

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	March 2021	RWG Chair
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	March 2021	VP, People and Culture Head of ICT
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	March 2021	Head of Domestic Programs
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	March 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RWG members to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week of July 2021 & 2022	RWG Chair and members
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	September 2021	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Update Employee Leave Policy to include cultural and ceremonial leave.	September 2021	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC Week events to all Abt staff.	First week of July 2021 & 2022	Managing Director Executive Assistant



Opportunities



Abt is united by its mission to improve the lives of people in Australia and worldwide through working with our clients and communities to create positive social impact. Abt is focused on continuously creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to connect with us as partners, suppliers, end-clients or employees.

We are committed to employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and are continually reviewing and implementing strategies to attract, retain and increase representation in our workforce. We recognise and value the diverse skills, experience and expertise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees bring to Abt—embracing this diversity is part of who we are.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 2022	VP, People and Culture
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	January 2022	People and Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead Talent Acquisition Coordinator Business Growth and Talent Specialist
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment, Retention, Professional Development Strategy.	April 2021	VP, People and Culture People and Culture Lead Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	May 2021	Talent Acquisition Coordinator Business Growth and Talent Specialist
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	April 2021	People & Culture Special Projects and Safeguarding Lead
	Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employed in our workforce.	December 2021	VP, People and Culture

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procurement Strategy.	August 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Business Growth Lead Program Delivery Leads
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	August 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	October 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Operations Directors
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	September 2021	VP, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	December 2021	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Head of Domestic Programs

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Investigate opportunities to support reconciliation in our sphere of influence.	Actively seek out opportunities that increase Abt's involvement in joint ventures, partnerships, in-kind support and community capacity opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	December 2022	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Business Growth Lead
	Create a volunteer day as a personal commitment from Abt staff to support not for profit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	December 2022	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Incident Manager
	Use our influence to promote and share Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures using social media (internally and externally) with the global Abt company, clients and stakeholders.	December 2022	Executive Assistant Senior Communications Specialist



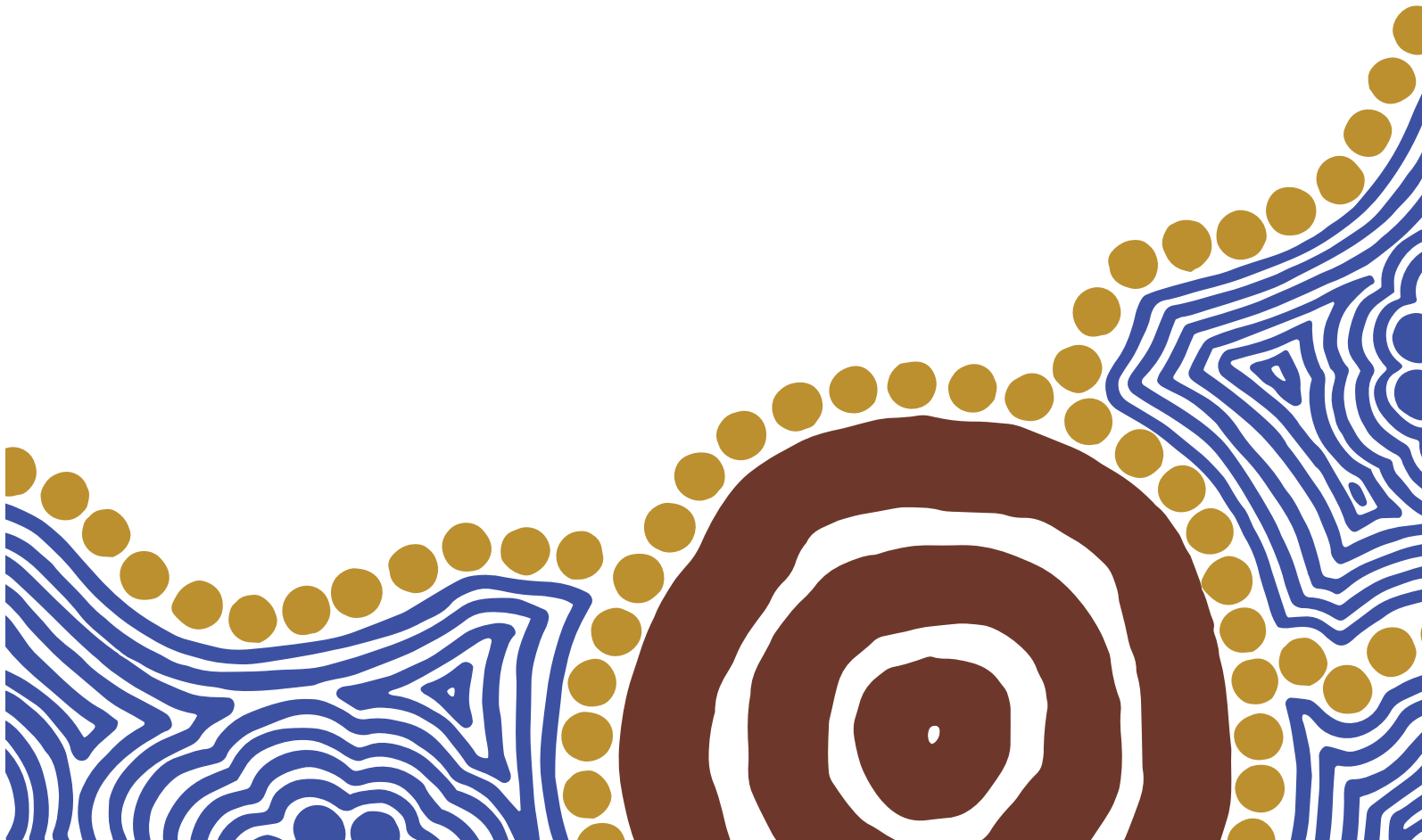
Governance



We are committed to our RAP journey and fully invested in it. Governance actions will assist us to track how we are travelling, monitor our achievements and identify challenges.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and maintain an effective RAP working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	June 2021 & 2022	VP, Program Delivery and Growth Contracts Officer and Paralegal
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	June 2021 & 2022	RWG Chair
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2021	RWG Chair VP Program Delivery and Growth
2. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2021	VP, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2021	RAP Champions
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March 2021	Head of ICT Incident Manager
	Maintain internal RAP Champion/s from senior management.	June 2021 June 2022	VP, Program Delivery and Growth

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. 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.	30th September 2021 & 2022	VP, Chief Financial Officer and Chief Information Officer
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	March, June, September, December 2021 & 2022	Senior Communications Specialist RWG Chair
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.	June & December 2021 & 2022	Senior Communications Specialist
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2022	RAP Champions
4. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2022	VP, Program Delivery and Growth RWG Chair



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