

# 2016-17 Reconciliation Arts NSW Action Plan



Arts  
NSW



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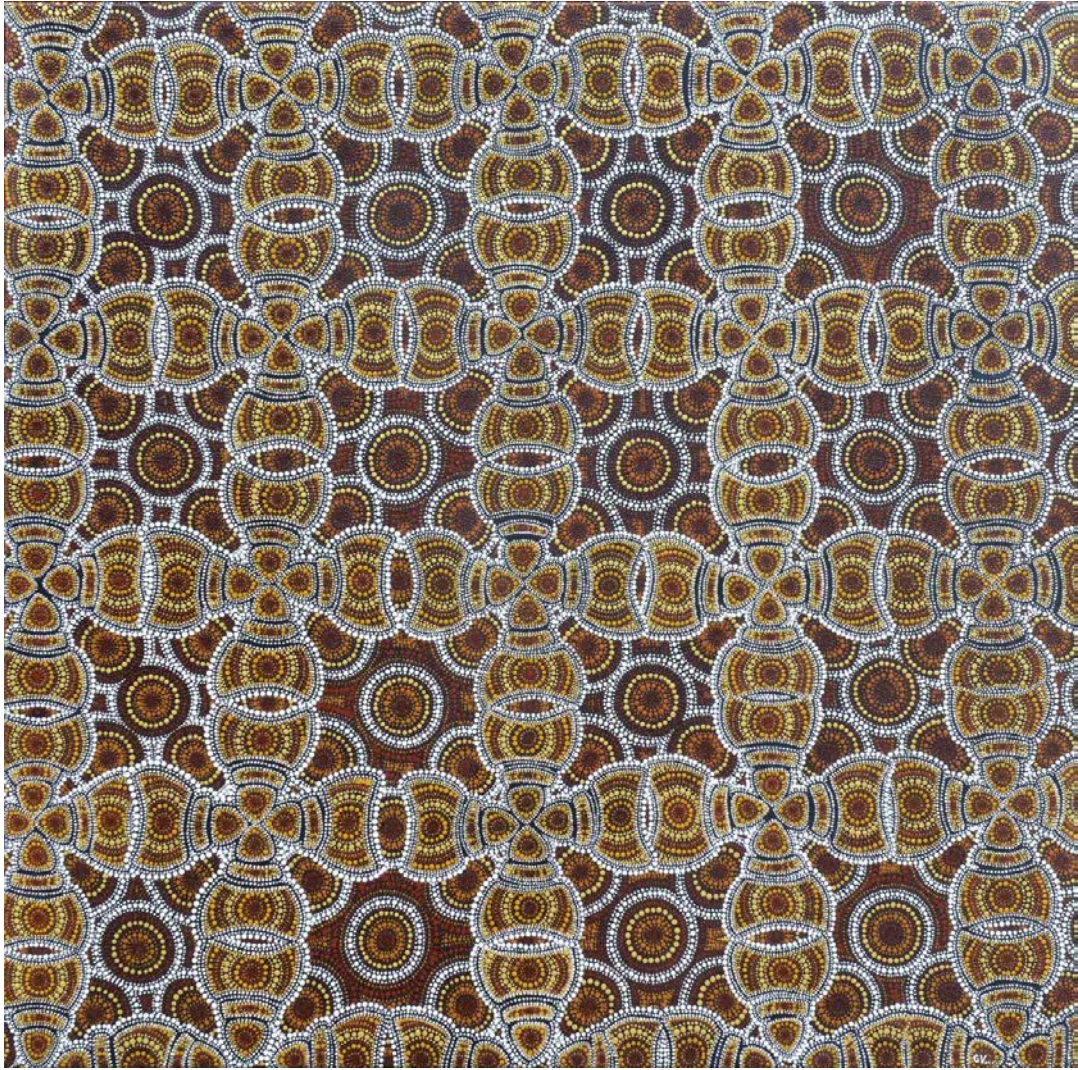
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# Message from Executive Director



Gina Simon Varagnolo, *Family Connecting*, 2015. Image courtesy: Campbelltown Arts Centre.

## MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - MARY DARWELL

Arts NSW acknowledges the Gadigal People from the Eora Nation, the Traditional Custodians, on whose ancestral land Arts NSW sits, and we pay our respects to their Elders past, present and of the future.

Arts and culture are powerful forces for breaking down barriers, creating paths to understanding, and building strong relationships with the youth and future Elders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As leaders and champions of arts and culture in NSW, Arts NSW recognises the important role we play as our nation works to achieve reconciliation.

NSW has the largest Aboriginal population of all the states and territories in Australia, and we have a unique and vibrant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural sector.

I am proud to say that Arts NSW has a long history of support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through our work to support the sector.

Under the NSW Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy 2010-2014, Arts NSW reshaped its investment in, and commitment to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures. As we move into Stage 2 of the strategy, we focus on Connection, Culture, Pathways 2015-18. This is a key action under the NSW Government's arts and cultural policy framework, *Create in NSW*.

Ongoing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural leaders, communities and artists to deliver on the original strategy's actions, combined with the consultation in 2013/14 for *Create in NSW* have directed the particular focus for Connection, Culture, Pathways.

Yes— we have a long history of supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures, but we can do more.

Our first Reconciliation Action Plan –Innovate RAP - places our staff at its heart. We will work to increase cultural competency within our agency, so as to empower our staff to consciously contribute toward our vision. We will identify opportunities to improve the provision of our services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural sector.

As we work to see our vision for reconciliation realised, we recognise the hundreds of other organisations working alongside us toward our common goal of a better Australia for everyone.

# Our Vision for Reconciliation





Warwick Keen, "SELFIE" – NSW, 2015. Image courtesy: Campbelltown Arts Centre.

## OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Arts NSW is committed to a reconciled Australia. Our vision is to excel and lead by example, demonstrating through meaningful symbolism and actions how true reconciliation can happen between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the broader community. We will actively engage and consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts practitioners to realise this vision.

We commit to honouring our role in creating opportunities to share and strengthen NSW's vibrant, rich and diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural sector. We have the capacity to showcase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures, and work towards meaningful actions to address the cultural, social and economic



challenges experienced by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, arts and cultural workers and audiences.

Our vision for reconciliation is genuinely collaborative and fosters meaningful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians based on respect, trust and understanding.

This is underpinned by our firm belief that such a relationship benefits all Australians.



Delma Currie – Faulkner, *Story Telling*, 2015. Image courtesy: Campbelltown Arts Centre.

**Our Business**

## OUR BUSINESS

Arts NSW is the NSW Government's arts and cultural policy and development body. Arts NSW champions the success and future of arts and culture encouraging access and participation. Arts NSW initiates and implements, develops and manages infrastructure initiatives and directly invests to support and grow NSW arts and cultural industries.

We work hard to achieve this by directly investing in artists, organisations and arts professionals, by developing creative spaces and places, and by leading and implementing strategies that bolster the sector's success.

We work collaboratively with the NSW cultural institutions, the arts and cultural sector and partners within government.

Our work and priorities are guided by the 10-year vision set out in *Create in NSW: The NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework*. This is a vision for a sector built on three mutually reinforcing ambitions of excellence, access and strength.

The NSW Government invests over \$300 million every year in direct support of arts and culture throughout the State.

### WE BELIEVE THE ARTS MATTER:

Experimenting with new ideas, challenging audiences and experiencing new ways of working are all central to the arts. Artists encourage us to see things anew.

The arts promote a culture of learning, inquiry and creativity. They bring together diverse communities, respecting their distinct tradition and strengthening understanding.

Arts and cultural expression are an important part of our daily lives, and part of our identity and reflect our values.

As the state with the largest Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, NSW takes pride in the visibility of its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and contemporary arts practice.

### OUR WORK TO SUPPORT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER ARTS AND CULTURES:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures in NSW is vibrant, distinctive and contemporary.

Arts NSW developed the Aboriginal Arts and Cultural Strategy to give direction to its investment in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures.

The first stage of this Strategy (2010-2014) saw an investment of over \$3.8 million in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, communities and audiences.

The second stage (2015-2018) focuses on the creation of jobs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts workers. It emphasises professional and market development, mentorships and secondments for NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts workers — especially in Western Sydney, where the majority of Sydney’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples live. It focusses on creating career pathways into the sector for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in particular. This investment will see a significant increase in opportunities over the next four years.

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures are a key focus of our policy framework *Create in NSW*, particularly in the fulfilment of the ambition of ‘excellence.’ Key actions to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture outlined in the framework include:

### **MARKET DEVELOPMENT:**

Valuing and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artistic intellectual property

Brokering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts practitioners and businesses

Investing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts product development and export markets

Working with regional arts networks, art centres and artists to develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural communities of practise.

### **CAREERS:**

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander practitioners at all levels in the arts and creative industries.

Partnership with registered training organisations and sector to achieve culturally appropriate solutions to sector employment gaps.

Developing cross-disciplinary opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artist and arts workers through mentorships, traineeships and industry placement

Continuing to invest in community engagement and connectivity in regional and remote NSW.

### **GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS:**

Creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures in NSW across all tiers of government.

Building Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander creative leadership in the NSW arts and cultural sector through the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts workers.

Developing new models of collaboration with the arts and cultural sector.

The NSW Government's major arts funding program is the Arts and Cultural Development Program (ACDP), which is administered by Arts NSW. One of the Program's priorities is to grow the quality and number of arts activities that engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Arts NSW has a total of 46 employees, which includes two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members which equates to 4% of our workforce. Arts NSW Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members are valued for their arts and cultural expertise and their direct impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and arts organisations. They make a valuable contribution to how Arts NSW engage with organisations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and the broader Arts sector.

## WHY A RAP?

The Reconciliation Action Plan program was developed by Reconciliation Australia in 2006 to encourage organisations to work within their own sphere of influence to contribute towards reconciliation in Australia.

A RAP outlines an organisation's commitment to contribute to reconciliation, and outlines the steps or activities the organisation will take to build strong relationships and enhance respect between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians.

Underpinned by a philosophy of mutual respect, the RAP program is closely aligned with our own core values as an organisation of integrity, trust, service and accountability. It just makes sense to us that we join hundreds of organisations around Australia, to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in order to create a better Australia for everyone.



Our RAP



Aleshia Lonsdale, *Significant to whom for what?* 2015. Image courtesy: Campbelltown Arts Centre.

## OUR RAP

The Arts NSW RAP Working Group formed in 2014, and is led by staff and guided by Our RAP champion Executive Director Mary Darwell, our RAP considers the influence of Arts NSW as both a leader of the arts and cultural sector in NSW and an inclusive workplace.

In developing our RAP, the working group considered both long term and current strategies and what we could do day-to-day to contribute to reconciliation. Such as actions detailed within the NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework and NSW Aboriginal Arts & Culture Strategy.

We also undertook a staff survey about their current level of awareness of reconciliation. The survey highlighted opportunities to undertake cultural awareness programs and what Arts NSW wanted to achieve through a Reconciliation Plan.



Michael Philp, *My Soul Beacon*, 2015. Image courtesy: Campbelltown Arts Centre.

Our RAP Working Group is represented by 10 members of Arts NSW, including one Aboriginal member:

**Executive Director**

**Business Manager**

**Program Support Officer (Performing Arts)**

**Manager (Policy & Partnerships)**

**Program Support Officer (Visual Arts)**

**Senior Project Officer (Strategic Initiatives)**

**Program Support Officer (Visual Arts)**

**Program Support Officer (Administration)**

**Project Officer (Communication)**

**Policy Officer (Infrastructure)**

# Relationships

## RELATIONSHIPS

DEVELOPING RESPECTFUL PARTNERSHIPS AND NETWORKS WITH ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES IS IMPORTANT TO ARTS NSW IN ORDER TO FOSTER A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT OF COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT. STRONG POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WILL STRENGTHEN THE ARTS AND CULTURE COMMUNITY.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
<p>1. RAP Working Group will continue to meet to monitor and report on the implementation of Arts NSW RAP</p>	<p>Business Unit Business Manager</p>	<p>February 2016 February 2016 February, May, September, 2016, 2017 March, 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch Arts NSW RAP</li> <li>• Invite all staff &amp; Key Justice Department Stakeholders to join Arts NSW in celebrating the launch of the Arts NSW RAP.</li> <li>• RAP Working Group will meet at least three times per year to discuss the implementation and reporting of the RAP</li> <li>• Develop and communicate ongoing RAP reporting measures</li> <li>• Brief all Arts NSW employees on the progress and achievements of our RAP</li> <li>• Upload our endorsed RAP onto the Arts NSW website</li> </ul>



		<p>March 2016, 2017</p> <p>July, 2016, 2017</p> <p>October 2016, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct an annual staff survey on the RAP to review progress.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Celebrate key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events and important dates including National Reconciliation Week (NRW), to provide</p>	<p>Business Unit/RAP Team/ Business Manager</p>	<p>May 2016, 2017</p> <p>May 2016, 2017</p> <p>27 May – 3 June 2016,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actively promote National Reconciliation week by utilising the NRW toolkit.</li> <li>• Organise an internal National Sorry Day event to bring staff together to build relationships and mark this important occasion.</li> <li>• Organise at least 1 internal NRW event each year.</li> <li>• Register all NRW events on Reconciliation Australia’s website to capture participation.</li> <li>• Support an external NRW event.</li> <li>• Develop and distribute a calendar of significant Aboriginal</li> </ul>

<p>opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other employees to build relationships</p>		<p>2017</p> <p>May 2016, 2017</p>	<p>and Torres Strait Islander events and dates for employee reference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extend an invitation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations to attend Arts NSW events.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Be leaders and advocates within our department (NSW Department of Justice) for the promotion of Reconciliation</p>	<p>Business Unit Business Manager</p>	<p>June 2016</p> <p>January, March, 2016, July 2016, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite staff from other departments under NSW Department of Justice to attend presentations /events around Arts NSW RAP.</li> <li>• Facilitate partnerships with other NSW government departments by meeting at least twice per year.</li> <li>• Communicate our RAP achievements and learnings to other NSW government agencies annually.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Develop and</p>		<p>February</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with</li> </ul>

maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to enhance our reconciliation journey

2016

April, 2016

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders
- Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.

**Respect**

# RESPECT

BUILDING RESPECT BETWEEN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES AND OTHER AUSTRALIANS WILL ENSURE THAT ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CULTURES AND INTERESTS ARE BOTH ACCURATELY REPRESENTED AND SUPPORTED THROUGH ARTS NSW POLICY AND PROGRAMS. AS THIS SUPPORTS THE RECONCILIATION VISION FOR ARTS NSW

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
<p>1. Engage employees in understanding the protocols around Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to</p>	<p>Business Management Business Manager/RAP Committee.</p>	<p>February 2016  February 2016, May 2016, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.</li> <li>• Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintain respectful partnerships.</li> <li>• Invite a Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at Arts NSW significant events such as the launch of Arts NSW Innovate RAP, National Sorry Day and National</li> </ul>



<p>Country to ensure there is shared meaning and understanding of the cultural significance behind ceremonies</p>		<p>February 2016</p> <p>March, 2016</p>	<p>Reconciliation Week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All other events to include an Acknowledgement of Country</li> <li>• Incorporate Welcome to Country and Acknowledgment of Country in all Arts NSW official events.</li> <li>• Continue to ensure all meetings at Arts NSW commence with an Acknowledgement of Country.</li> <li>• In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, include a general Acknowledgement of Country in Arts NSW employee signature block.</li> <li>• Organise and display an Acknowledgment of Country in our office/s or on our office building.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Engage employees in</p>	<p>Business Management/ Business Manager</p>	<p>February 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement a cultural training strategy for our staff which defines cultural learning needs of employees in</li> </ul>

cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, history and achievements

February 2016

March 2016

December 2017

January, December, 2016, 2017

January, December 2016, 2017

all areas of our business and considers various ways of which cultural learning can be provided (online, face to face workshops, cultural immersion).

- Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural training.
- Provide opportunities for RWG members, RAP Champions, HR Managers and other key leadership to participate in cultural training.
- Provide the opportunity for all staff to participate in at least one cultural competence program.
- Encourage ongoing understanding and appreciation of different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through a range of experiences including cultural immersion programs.
- Organise for an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander artist or organisation to facilitate a cultural competency training session.

<p>3. Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures to Stakeholders and the Arts sector</p>	<p>Manager - Communications &amp; Stakeholder relationships</p>	<p>January 2016, 2017 February, May 2016, 2017 March, April 2016 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure E-news releases include an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Arts and Cultural story.</li> <li>• Promote internal activities to the Arts sector that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander key dates.</li> <li>• Organise at least (2) Arts NSW events that promote diverse Aboriginal Arts and Cultural experiences.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to engage with culture and community by</p>	<p>Business Manager</p>	<p>May 2016  July 2016, 2017 July 2016, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week</li> <li>• Provide opportunity for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in local NAIDOC Week events.</li> <li>• Encourage all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week celebrations.</li> </ul>

celebrating  
NAIDOC Week.

Opportunities

## OPPORTUNITIES

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES IS IMPORTANT TO ARTS NSW, AS IT STRENGTHENS OUR CULTURAL IDENTITY AND ENRICHES OUR ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT WITHIN THE NSW ARTS AND CULTURAL SECTOR.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
<p>1. Explore the opportunity to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention within Arts NSW</p>	<p>Business Manager</p>	<p>March 2016</p> <p>December 2015, 2016, 2017</p> <p>December 2015</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention strategy</li> <li>• Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development. (Arts NSW are participating in traineeship employment initiatives)</li> <li>• Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to ensure there are no barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and future applicants participating in our workplace.</li> <li>• Create further opportunities for employment by advertising</li> </ul>

		February 2016	<p>vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants to apply for all roles by including “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are encourage to apply” on our job advertisements.</li> <li>• Provide development support to staff through developing mentoring and secondment programs.</li> </ul>
2. Create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders to be involved in decision making	Arts Development & Investment, Policy and Partnerships	June 2016  March 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a strategy to support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees on all peer assessment panels.</li> <li>• Investigate opportunities to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders on Arts NSW interview panels.</li> </ul>
3. Engage with	Business Manager	June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review procurement policies and procedures to address</li> </ul>

<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to increase supplier diversity</p>		<p>February 2016, 2017</p> <p>February, 2016, 2017</p>	<p>barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and enable the opportunity to supply goods and services to our organisation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services from.</li> <li>• Develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.</li> <li>• Investigate Supply Nation membership.</li> <li>• Provide ongoing advice and support to Aboriginal artists, arts workers and cultural institutions/events.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Improve the provision of Arts NSW's services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients</p>	<p>Arts Development &amp; Investment</p>	<p>January 2016, 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult with emerging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists to investigate how Arts NSW can better support them.</li> </ul>



5. Continue to provide support to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultural sector

Director Arts Development and Investment/Arts Cultural Development office

January 2016, & 2017

- Arts NSW will invest in a range of programs that have been effective in increasing both professional employment opportunities for Aboriginal arts workers and new markets for First Australian art.
- Work with Cultural Institutions to promote opportunities for the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Arts and culture sector

# Reporting

# REPORTING

## TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TIMELINE	TARGET
1. Report achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the Annual Impact Measurement Report.	Executive Director, RAP Working Group	September 2016, & 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia each year.</li><li>• Participate in the RAP Barometer survey, conducted to collect data about the impact and power of the RAP.</li></ul>

<p>2. Report on Arts NSW RAP learnings and achievements</p>	<p>Executive Director, RAP Working Group</p>	<p>March 2016 March, July, October, December 2016, &amp; 2017  June 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.</li> <li>• Communicate quarterly updates on RAP progress to staff.</li> <li>• RAP progress to be reported annually in Arts NSW Annual Report.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Refresh and develop a new RAP for Arts NSW</p>	<p>Business Manager Rap Committee</p>	<p>December 2016  March 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to draft Arts NSW second RAP based on learnings and challenges experienced in previous RAP.</li> <li>• Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal review, feedback and endorsement.</li> <li>• Organise and launch Arts NSW second RAP.</li> </ul>

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