

Cancer Trials Australia Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

January 2025 – June 2026



Cancer Trials
Australia



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT

Cancer Trials Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's first communities, and as the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work. Connection to community is central to the lives, cultures and continuing traditions of First Nations peoples.

We pay our respects to all Elders past, present and emerging, and to the communities we have the privilege of working with.

Vision

To improve patient care by enabling the world's best clinical trials.

Mission

To deliver excellence in Clinical Trial Management and advance the Australian trial sector.

Our Values

📌 Shared Purpose 🛡️ Integrity 🤝 Collaboration 🔄 Adaptability 🤲 Compassion

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Artwork coming soon



Reconciliation Australia welcomes Cancer Trials Australia to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Cancer Trials Australia joins a network of more than 2,500 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 Cancer Trials Australia 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 Cancer Trials Australia, 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

Our Beginning

Our precursor was formed by oncologists working across six Melbourne hospitals and medical research institutes in 1993.

Initially established as the Centre for Developmental Cancer Therapeutics (CDCT), we offered clinical trial sponsors and clinical investigators a single point of contact, to manage all administrative aspects of oncology and haematology clinical trials, from feasibility through to trial close-out.

In 2003 Cancer Trials Australia (CTA) was incorporated as a Not-For-Profit, member-based organisation, with our six founding members. Our role also evolved to advocate for this important sector, supporting the implementation of the National Mutual Acceptance Program across our member sites, funding a project to develop a standard clinical trial agreement template for commercially-sponsored clinical trials, driving development of a First Time in Human protocol to enable Human Research Ethics Committees to strengthen their capacity to review early phase research, and jointly funding Phase 1 Fellows at our member sites.

CTA Today

Today our membership has expanded to 32 hospitals and three medical research institutes, spanning all major Australian states as well as New Zealand.

Our dedicated staff have supported the administration of more than 2,200 clinical trials, that have recruited in excess of 14,000 Australian patients. We continue to advocate for change in clinical trial regulation, working to ensure Australia remains an attractive destination for international clinical trial sponsors. We support the administration and management of clinical trials, predominantly oncology, across both metropolitan and regional hospitals. Our support helps to build clinical and industry knowledge, contributing to the development of novel therapies and most importantly improve the outcomes for people effected by cancer.

Our vision is *"To improve patient care by enabling the world's best clinical trials"*.

We undertake this by sourcing potential clinical trials for our network, disseminating trial specific information to our network, and providing administrative services for our clinical members. This includes the preparation of ethics and governance documentation, negotiation of budgets and contracts, financial management and the provision of information management systems to enhance efficiency.

To further underscore our important role in the Australian clinical trial landscape, from 1 January 2023, with the support from the Department of Health Victoria via the Victorian Cancer Agency, CTA was pleased to take carriage of the Victorian annual Cancer Clinical Trials Census. Previously developed and coordinated by the Cancer Council Victoria, this census is a valuable data set to understand cancer clinical trial participation across the state of Victoria and help inform future Government policy.

Our People

We are proud of our consistent growth over the past 7 years and currently employ almost 60 passionate, intelligent, and dedicated individuals that work toward achieving our vision and mission every day.

Our team strives to ensure clinical trials are conducted to the highest ethical standards. Knowing that our work contributes toward improving patient outcomes and advancing our local clinical trial ecosystem keeps us strongly connected and motivated as a team.

Our team are essential to the work we undertake. We have an ongoing commitment to deliver quality outcomes in alignment with modelling our company values of *"Shared Purpose, Integrity, Collaboration, Adaptability and Compassion"*.

CTA is proud to offer flexible work practices and operates a hybrid work model, with most employees working from our office one day per week and remaining days from home. We are based in the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC) in Parkville, 1.8km from Melbourne's CBD, a state-of-the-art facility for cancer research, treatment, care and education.

While we have significant diversity across our staff cohort, our organisation currently has no known staff who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Our RAP

The decision to develop our first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was collectively agreed by the CEO and People and Culture Manager, which received unanimous support from both our Management team and the CTA Board. We aim to improve patient care for all Australians, by creating equal opportunities to access clinical trials.

CTA is committed to advancing reconciliation in Australia by:

- Increasing our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rich histories and cultures;
- Contributing to the lives, health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; and
- Actively working toward establishing and nurturing respectful and trusting relationships to better inform CTA's decision making within our operational parameters.

Our RAP Working Group, alongside other senior leaders will approach our RAP by consulting with each business function to ensure participation and awareness of our RAP deliverables and the importance of their collective achievement is met. Each deliverable underpinned by *Relationships, Respect, Opportunities and Governance* will be reported internally to all employees and to the CTA Board annually. We also intend to engage and work closely with First Nations stakeholders to seek culturally appropriate guidance and advice.

CTA is enlivened by the opportunity to collaborate with Reconciliation Australia, and our Reflect RAP will detail key actions that will guide our journey and above commitments to Australian and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Our RAP Working Group was formed in February 2024 and is comprised of the below CTA employees, each volunteering to lead this journey.

Our RAP Working Group

Kurt Lackovic	Chief Executive Officer
Kimberley Varrasso	People and Culture Manager
Annelise Tedesco	Finance Manager
Ellen Bruce	Senior Ethics Submission Specialist
Catherine Frith	Senior Budget and Contract Specialist
Emily Cuningham	Ethics Submission Specialist

CTA's RAP Champion is the People and Culture Manager. This role will be responsible for leading internal engagement and awareness of CTA's RAP and Reconciliation in Australia more broadly. Currently no members of the RAP Working Group are First Nations People. We will work within this RAP to establish this representation to provide essential perspectives and ongoing guidance.

Our Partnerships and Current Activities

Community Partnerships

CTA has not yet developed community partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations or communities; however, we are keen to explore how this could be achieved. CTA recently developed an Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) framework that details our priorities, measures, and initiatives, including the commitment to our RAP development as a key priority highlighted within this framework.

Internal Activities – Local, Responsible and Sustainable Purchasing

It is important to CTA that all existing and future partnerships and purchases with other businesses share our values and support corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices. This extends to our agreements within our member network, and the way CTA continues to assess and determine partnerships and local purchases.

Education

One of CTA's key priorities within our Reconciliation journey is the commitment to increasing employee knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures. CTA has recently begun exploring a partnership with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to assist with our education. We are looking forward to confirming and embedding the course series provided by AIATSIS within CTA's Learning and Development Curriculum.

Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	June 2025	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	August 2025	Lead: Finance Manager Support: Ethics Submission Specialist
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	May 2025 & 2026	People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event. 	27 May – 3 June 2025 & 2026	People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	27 May – 3 June 2025 & 2026	People and Culture Manager

Relationships continued



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	• Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	May 2025	People and Culture Manager
	• Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	June 2025	Chief Executive Officer
	• Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	April 2025	Lead: Senior Ethics Submission Specialist Support: Senior Budget and Contracts Specialist
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	• Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	September, 2025	People and Culture Manager
	• Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	February, 2026	People and Culture Manager



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. 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.	July 2025	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: People and Culture Manager
	• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	December 2025	People and Culture Manager
6. 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.	September 2025	Lead: Finance Manager Support: Senior Budget and Contract Specialists
	• Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	April 2025	Lead: Ethics Submission Specialist Support: People and Culture Manager
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	• Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2025	People and Culture Manager
	• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2025	People and Culture Manager
	• RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July 2025	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: Senior Budget and Contracts Specialist



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation. 	June 2025	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	May 2025	People and Culture Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	February 2025	Lead: Finance Manager Support: Senior Ethics Submission Specialist
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	August 2025	Lead: Finance Manager Support: Ethics Submission Specialist



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation. 	February 2025	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	March 2025	Lead: Finance Manager Support: Senior Budget and Contracts Specialists
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	January 2025	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: People and Culture Manager
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	February 2025	Lead: Chief Executive Officer Support: People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. 	January 2025	Chief Executive Officer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a senior leader to champion our RAP internally. 	September 2025	People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	October 2025	Lead: Senior Budget and Contracts Specialist Support: Senior Ethics Submission Specialist



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey. 	1 August annually	People and Culture Manager
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia. 	30 September annually	People and Culture Manager
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	March 2026	<p>Lead: Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Support: People and Culture Manager</p>

**Please direct public enquiries
regarding our Reflect RAP to:**

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