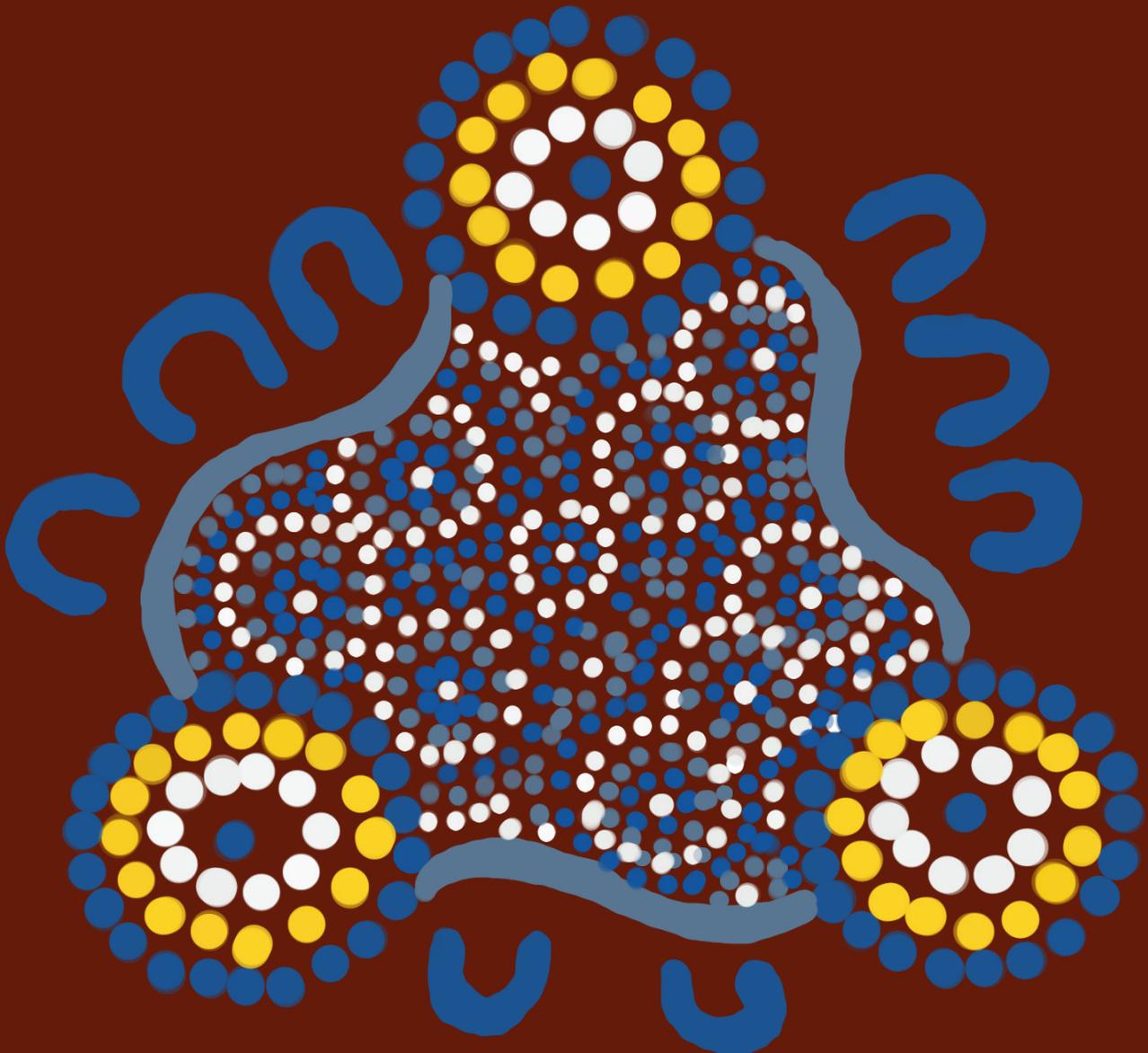




St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

August 2021 – August 2022



Cover Artwork:

Designed by Aboriginal artist Rosie Paine, this design represents the three areas of the Vinnies WA Reconciliation Action Plan (the large yellow/blue/white dotted circles). These three circles are connected by blue lines, which at its centre, represents Lake Joondalup in the northern suburbs of Perth, which is an important area to Noongar people. Many great feasts took place on its banks as it was a great hunting ground for water birds and turtles. The “U” shapes represent people working together towards reconciliation.

Rosie Paine is a Noongar/Yamatji/Wongutha woman, a primary school teacher and successful artist, originally from Cosmo Newberry, an Aboriginal community in the north eastern Goldfields of Western Australia.

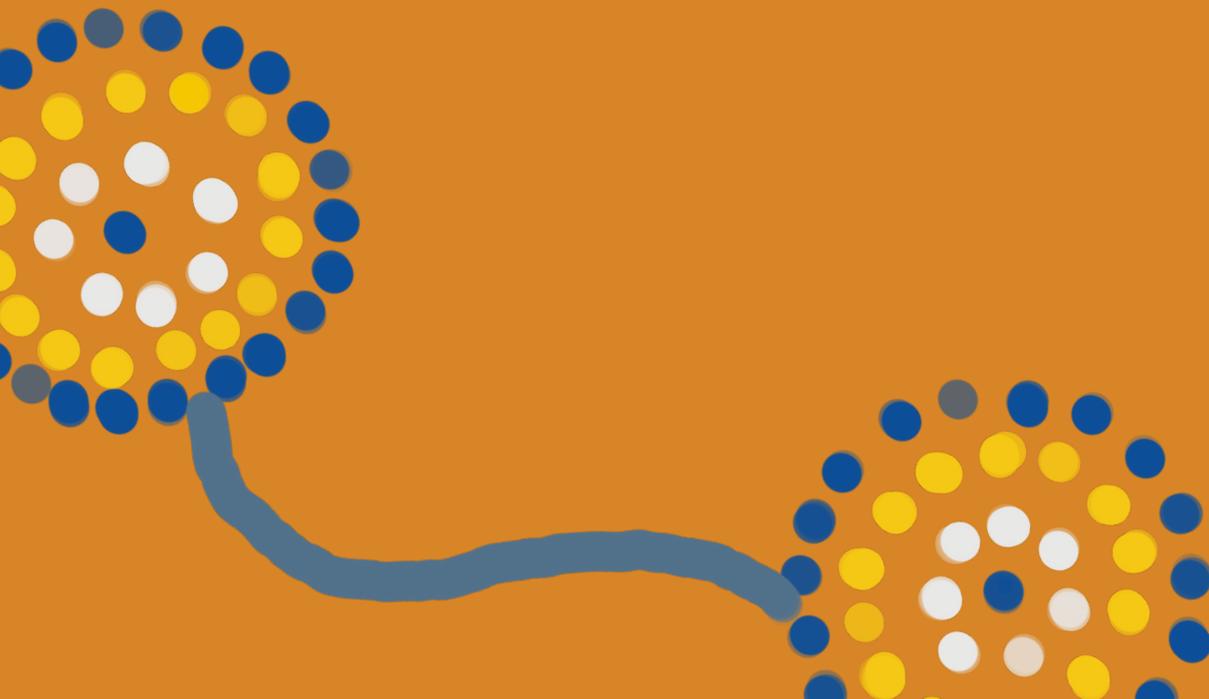
“My connection with Vinnies WA goes back to my late teens when I first moved to Perth to begin my studies to become a teacher. Growing up in the northern Goldfields town of Laverton and the remote Aboriginal community of Cosmo Newberry my family moved with me to Perth to help support me as I began my studies. In our first few months of being in Perth, our family struggled financially. We were unable to furnish our newly rented house, put three meals on the table and purchase other items such as clothing etc. Support from Vinnies WA allowed us to access affordable furniture (in some cases free), affordable clothing and food. Through the support of Vinnies WA we were able to find our feet allowing me to continue my studies as a primary school teacher.”

Rosie Paine
Artist



St Vincent de Paul Logo

Our logo is a symbol of hope and goodwill. The three hands; one offers the cup of love and compassion, the hand of need that accepts the cup, and the hand of the sacred that blesses the cup.





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Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Custodians of this land, with deep respect. May Elders, past and present, be blessed and honoured. May we join together and build a future based on compassion, justice, hope, faith, and reconciliation.

RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA CEO STATEMENT

Reconciliation Australia congratulates the St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc on continuing its reconciliation journey by formally endorsing the St Vincent de Paul Society Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Through this plan, St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) continues to play an important role in a network of more than 1,100 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 over 2.3 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 continues the journey and primes 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 to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) 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 steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) on your Reflect RAP, and I look forward to following your continuing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



STATE PRESIDENT AND CEO OVERVIEW

As part of our RAP development, the Society has written its own Acknowledgement of Country and these words will be at the core of our reconciliation work:

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the Traditional Custodians of this Land, with deep respect. May Elders, past and present, be blessed and honoured. May we join together and build a future based on compassion, justice, hope, faith and reconciliation.

St Vincent de Paul Society in Western Australia is committed to reconciliation between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander West Australians and non-Indigenous West Australians.

The St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) RAP August 2021-August 2022, developed in consultation with Reconciliation Australia, contains 13 actions and 45 deliverables the St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) will implement over the next year.

This Reflect RAP contains three priority areas of Respect, Relationships and Opportunities; and the Society is confident that all aspects of our work will be strengthened as a result of this focus.

This RAP is a commitment by all our staff, members and volunteer people, to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to extend and deepen our relationship, and to the broader community. We commit to regular measurement and reporting on our progress. Finally, we commit to working with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners in a compassionate and just way.

Gladys Demissie
State President
St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc

Susan Rooney
Chief Executive Officer
St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) Inc

OUR ORGANISATION

St Vincent de Paul Society has global reach spanning nearly 200 years and over 150 years here in Western Australia, changing the lives of people in need through care and compassion. Today, the St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) continues to grow with a powerful statewide impact helping over 65,000 Western Australians each year.

St Vincent de Paul Society services and programs are more vital than ever for vulnerable Western Australians. In the spirit of its founder, Frederic Ozanam, the Society's core work continues to be Home Visitation - whereby dedicated members and volunteers visit people who are experiencing hardship in their home.

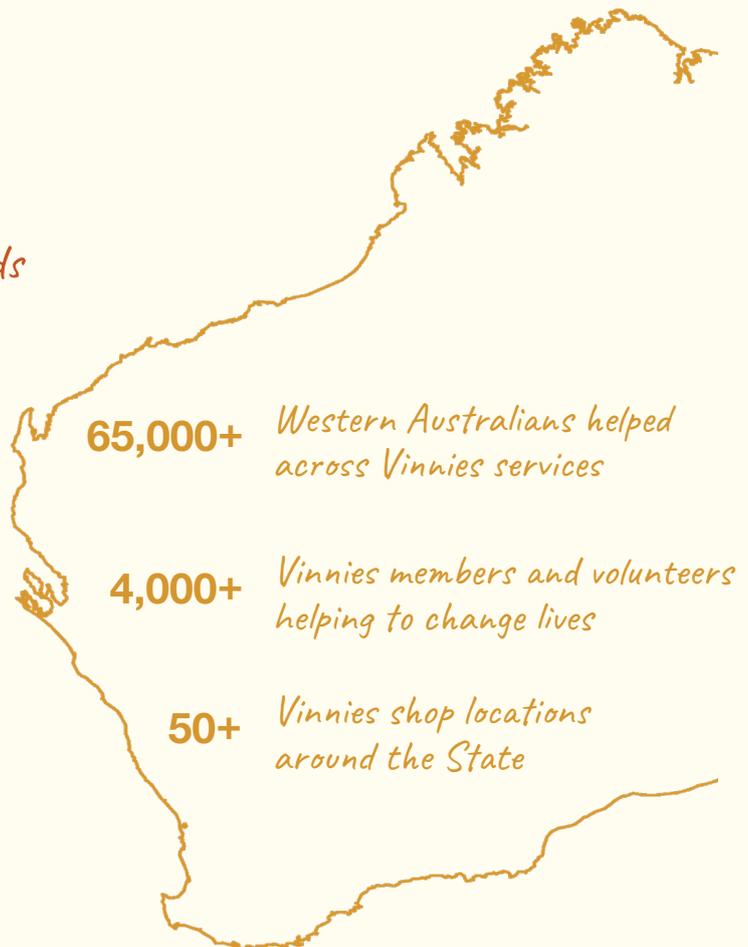
Whether it is through emotional support, financial advice, help with food, clothing and furniture or through advocacy; members walk alongside our clients every step of the way.

In addition to our emergency assistance, Vinnies delivers a range of highly specialised services and programs focused on assisting Western Australians when times are hard.

These include a recovery focused mental health service, low barrier services which assist people to forge a pathway out of homelessness, housing services, programs for young people, financial counselling, retail and distribution centre operations.

In Western Australia, St Vincent de Paul Society employs nearly 200 staff none who currently identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, divided across its main operation in Canning Vale, as well as particular sites for its specialised services. Our 4,000 volunteers make up the largest part of our workforce, delivering our Emergency Assistance program, and being a friendly face in our 50+ shops around the state.

Vinnies WA offers vital support and guidance to people in need, helping to change lives of thousands of Western Australians.



RECONCILIATION IN ACTION

The St Vincent de Paul Society shares a vision of an Australia in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, languages, philosophies and cultures penetrate the marrow of our institutions, our organisations, our communities and the lives of all Australians.

The Society in Western Australia has had a long history of involvement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, however, this has never been formalised.

This Reflect RAP will guide us over the next year to lay the foundations from which we can develop stronger relationships, deeper understanding and new opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.

The Reflect RAP provides a platform for us to establish meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and lay strong foundations for the development of future RAPs. In our Reflect RAP we will begin to explore how we can strengthen internal processes and build the cultural competency of our staff, members and volunteers.

With the St Vincent de Paul Society brand identity, we utilise hands to symbolise that we belong to a spirituality which is practical, relational, and engaging. Our tradition is grounded in an open and inclusive faith which provides and shares living hope to all we meet, all we assist, and all we care for.

Our founders believed dignity is expressed by the presence of God in every human being. They saw all people as sacred with basic rights such as food, clothing and shelter. They also believed in the right to freedom and self-determination, the right to participate in society, and to thrive and contribute. Pope Francis calls on us to “foster a culture of encounter”. We believe this attitude of reconciliation and healing is life giving and is explicitly expressed in our vision of a “hand up”.

Many steps have been taken in the past and many steps lie ahead as we share our stories. But this journey cannot proceed without us expressing our deep sorrow and sincere regret for the injustices of the past.

At the St Vincent de Paul Society (WA), we advocate for a future where all Australians have the opportunity to achieve their full potential. We aspire to alleviate injustice, overcome disadvantage, and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ right to equality and self-determination within the life of the nation.

The St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) RAP will be governed by the RAP Working Committee (RWC) made up of Andrew York, Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services, Julie Greer and Raena Kidd, Youth Workers from one of Vinnies WA specialised services, Colin Krause, Youth Service Coordinator and Louise Macfarlane, Manager, Marketing, Fundraising and Communication. The St Vincent de Paul Society also acknowledges Aboriginal Insights Founder and Ngarluma & Yindjibarndi Aboriginal woman, Jolleen Hicks for her support and guidance.

The Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services is the champion of the RAP and will convene and coordinate the RWC and its engagement.

RAP Working Committee

The RAP Working Committee (RWC) provides reports and/or advice to the RAP Champion and reports to the Executive Team on the progress of the RAP development and implementation. The RWC also provides progress reports against the RAP to Reconciliation Australia.

The Terms of Reference for the RWC defines the purpose and structure of the Committee; which will meet at least four times a year.

OUR HISTORY WITH FIRST PEOPLES OF AUSTRALIA

The St Vincent de Paul Society has a long history of working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Western Australia.

In **1959** the Society commenced providing services in the Kimberley region. In the mid **1960s** the first shipment of clothing and medical supplies was dispatched to the region and in **1965** a Special Works Kimberley Missions Conference was established.

In the **1970s** the Society established St Norbert's Hostel and Anawin Women's Refuge for First Peoples of Australia located at Norbert Street Perth. The hostel was supported by St Norbert conference and then Anawin Conference.

In **1986** the Kimberley Missions Conference was deemed to be outside the "remit of the Society" as the Society could not use its funds to support other charities. Conferences were encouraged to fundraise and support local families.

In **1966** W. J. Forrestal, Chairman, Kimberley and Overseas Relief Committee authorised every WA parish to fundraise for the Kimberley works. One thousand five hundred and twenty-two pounds six shillings and five pence was raised.

In the **1980s** The Aboriginal Apostolate of the St Vincent de Paul Society in WA was further extended when the Midland conference partnered with Daughters of Charity in the establishment of the Marloo Centre.

In the **1990s** the Solidarity with Aborigines WA State Advisory Committee was started. The Committee worked with a group of Noongar Elder women to provide appropriate guidelines in dealing with different Aboriginal communities.

The Society employed its first Aboriginal field worker who worked with Aboriginal peoples across the State, liaising with conferences and supporting their role where possible. She was provided with the first car purchased for the Society's administration as her work entailed a lot of travel. She was a "mediator" between people of quite different cultures and backgrounds.

As a result, in **2005** the State Council of WA decided to disband the Solidarity with Aborigines Advisory Committee in WA. The focus going forward was for each Conference to work individually with Aboriginal families and communities to make an impact at a local level.

In **2000** the Society published the “Seeking a Shared Spirit” paper which was a powerful social justice statement.

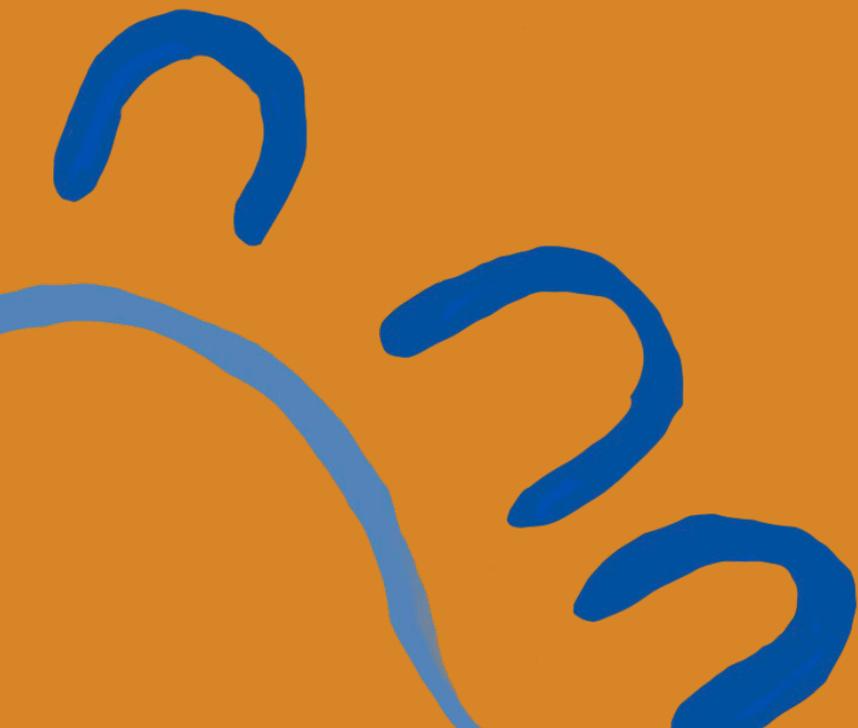
We wrote:

“The St Vincent de Paul Society, along with other charitable institutions, has at times fallen into the trap of treating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as welfare cases rather than as brothers and sisters with whom we share a spiritual bond. We are sorry for any pain or hardship we have caused... We all need to listen to what Aboriginal people say about their relationship to the land so that true healing and reconciliation can take place. Concepts such as ‘practical reconciliation’ and claims Aboriginal people already enjoy more benefits than other Australians should be refuted and organisations like the St Vincent de Paul Society need to be part of this process of truth-telling.” Eighteen years later our commitment to truth-telling remains undiminished as we celebrate the launch of our first RAP.

Our Prayer for Reconciliation

“Holy Spirit, we pray that the St Vincent de Paul Society be a place in which the First Peoples of Australia are welcomed and deeply respected. May the Elders be blessed and honoured. May this sacred land of ours truly inspire us to come together as one. Renew our hearts as we heal one another and build a future based on mercy, justice, faith, hope and love. May we listen and learn from each other as we walk together in a profound spirit of reconciliation.”

Fourteen years later our commitment to truth-telling remains undiminished as we celebrate the launch of our first RAP.



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Priority Area 1 – Relationships

We seek positive and enduring relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and will use our reputation and influence to advocate for stronger recognition, equal opportunities and respect for cultures and communities.

We will work to communicate this message and fight for social justice so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may experience equality in respects to life expectancy, child mortality, educational achievement, disability support, and employment outcomes.

We will achieve this by committing our staff, members and volunteers to developing relationships wherever our work is based and ensuring our services are culturally appropriate.

Action 1

Vinnies will promote positive relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
1.1 We will research best practice policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	October 2021	Manager, People & Performance
1.2 We will conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	December 2021	Manager, People & Performance

Action 2

Vinnies will establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
2.1 We will identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	August 2021	Vinnies WA Youth Worker
2.2 We will research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	October 2021	Vinnies WA Youth Worker
2.3 We will build two new strategic partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.	March 2022	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services

Action 3

Vinnies will build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
3.1 We will circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff, members and volunteers via the intranet.	May 2022	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
3.2 We will ensure our RAP Working Committee participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 27 – June 3 2022	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services
3.3 We will support one external NRW event and encourage all our staff, members and volunteers to attend.	May 2022	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
3.4 We will organise one internal event for NRW.	May 27 – June 3 2022	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services

Action 4

Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP with the aim of promoting reconciliation across our agency and the sector.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
4.1 We will communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff, members and volunteers by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulating the RAP to all staff, members and volunteers. • Posting the RAP to our intranet site. • Embedding RAP awareness into all staff, member and volunteer inductions. 	September 2021	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
4.2 We will identify at least two external stakeholders that we can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	October 2021	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services
4.3 We will identify at least three RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	January 2022	Manager, People & Performance

Priority Area 2 – Respect

St Vincent de Paul Society (WA) recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Peoples of Australia and respects their cultures, lands, waters, histories, and rights to live in a society free of economic, social, and cultural oppression.

All Society staff, members and volunteers will acknowledge and adhere to these values in every aspect of their work. We acknowledge and celebrate the deep, abiding pride that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have in their diverse cultures, and we place great value in the contributions they make to the wider Australian society. We welcome the chance to learn more.

Action 5

Engage staff in cultural learning opportunities to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
5.1 We will measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	April 2022	Manager, People & Performance
5.2 We will embed cultural awareness into staff orientation.	October 2021	Manager, People & Performance
5.3 We will upload resources on the intranet for staff to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.	October 2021	Manager, People & Performance
5.4 We will investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop cultural awareness training.	September 2021	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services

Action 6

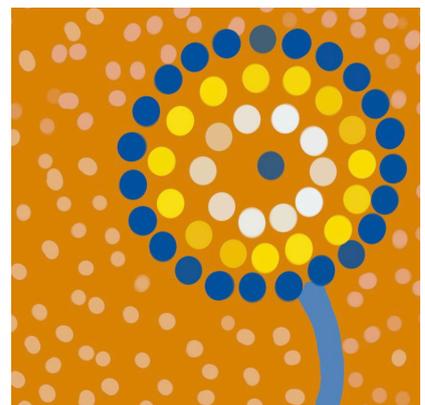
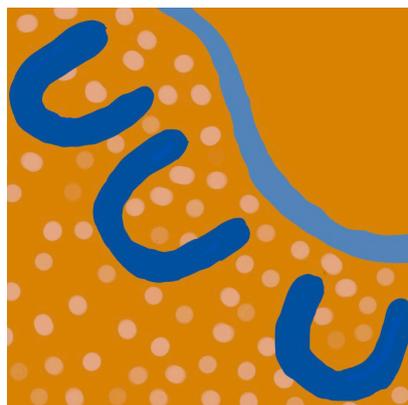
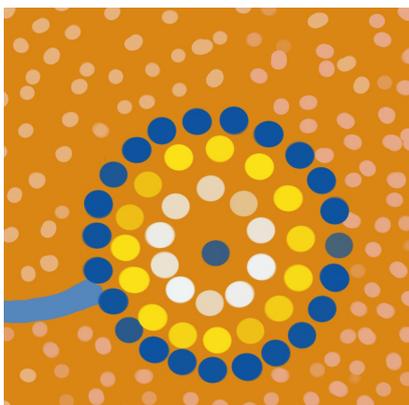
Engage staff in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols, such as Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country, to ensure there is a shared meaning.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
6.1 We will develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation.	November 2021	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
6.2 We will develop a Cultural Protocol document for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guidelines for staff leading an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all internal and external meetings. Ensuring Acknowledgement of Country is on all meeting templates. 	September 2021	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
6.3 We will develop a resource kit that ensures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, customs and rights are recognised and respected. This will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect and Acknowledgement Culturally Appropriate Language and Terminology Communication and Publication Consultation and Conducting Meetings and Events Use of intellectual and Cultural Property Undertaking Projects and Research Death and Dying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags 	November 2021	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
6.4 We will ensure all staff have access and are trained in the use of these protocols.	March 2022	Manager, People & Performance

Action 7

Provide opportunities for staff, members and volunteers to participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
7.1 We will raise awareness and share information amongst our staff, members and volunteers about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2022	Manager, People & Performance
7.2 We will facilitate opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate with their culture and community's events during NAIDOC Week.	June 2022	Manager, People & Performance
7.3 We will introduce our staff, members and volunteers to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in the relevant local area and encourage them to participate in one NAIDOC event.	June 2022	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services
7.4 We will ensure the RAP Working Committee participates in at least one external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2022	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
7.5 Review existing HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to any staff engaging in local NAIDOC week activities.	June 2022	Manager, People & Performance



Priority Area 3 – Opportunities

One of the most important reconciliation actions we can undertake as an organisation is to provide employment and procurement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses.

We must ensure our workforce and our supply chain reflect the diversity of the communities in which we work. We must also make every effort to provide volunteer opportunities (including management and leadership) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

A measure for any employer is retention rates for staff and volunteers, and we will seek to provide rewarding opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who join our organisation. We envisage many professional development pathways will emerge as a result of our focus over the 12 month lifespan of this RAP.

Action 8

Investigate opportunities to improve and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment outcomes within our workplace.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
8.1 We will include the following phrase in all job advertisements: 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are encouraged to apply'.	October 2021	Manager, People & Performance
8.2 We will update employment policies to ensure all role vacancies are advertised in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media as part of the recruitment process.	October 2021	Manager, People & Performance
8.3 We will develop a procedure that promotes the attraction, retention, engagement, support, and development and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples employed by St Vincent de Paul Society (WA).	March 2022	Manager, People & Performance

Action 9

Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
9.1 We will develop a procurement policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to supply our organisation with goods and services.	August 2021	Executive Manager, Business Services
9.2 We will develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander owned business.	September 2021	Executive Manager, Business Services
9.3 We will investigate Supply Nation membership.	August 2021	Executive Manager, Business Services
9.4 We will provide staff with a list of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to consider the procurement of goods and services.	August 2021	Executive Manager, Business Services

Governance – Tracking Progress & Reporting

Action 10

Vinnies will maintain an effective RAP Working Committee (RWC) to drive governance of the RAP.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
10.1 We will ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous people are represented on the RWC.	November 2021	CEO
10.2 We will ensure the RWC reviews its Terms of Reference annually.	April 2022	Manager, People & Performance
10.3 We will ensure the RWC meets a minimum of four times a year.	August, October 2021 January, March 2022	Manager, People & Performance

Action 11

Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP content.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
11.1 We will define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	October 2021	CEO
11.2 We will maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	October 2021	CEO
11.3 We will engage Society senior staff and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	September, November 2021 February, June 2022	Manager, People & Performance
11.4 We will define resources needed for RAP implementation.	August 2021	CEO
11.5 We will provide a half yearly update on the RAP to State Council.	November 2021	CEO

Governance – Tracking Progress & Reporting

Action 12

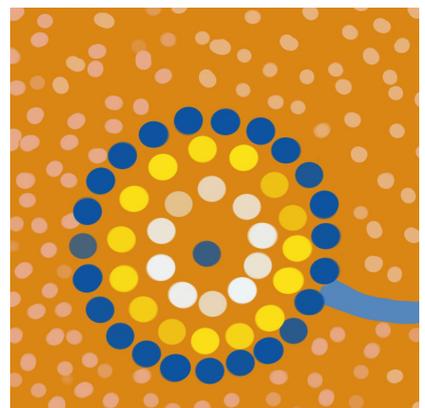
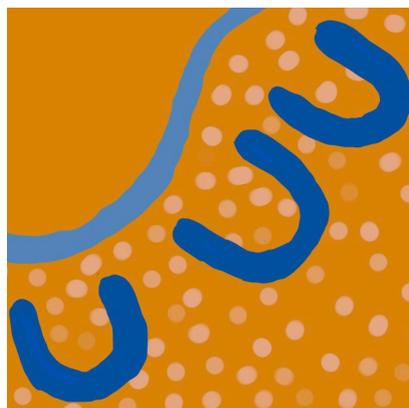
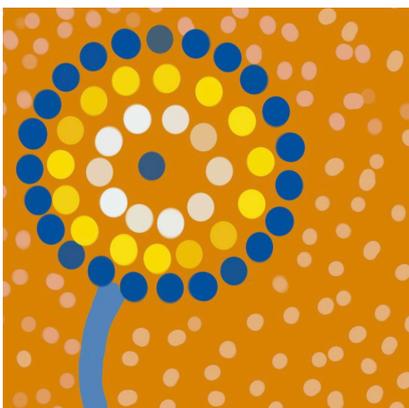
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings internally and externally.

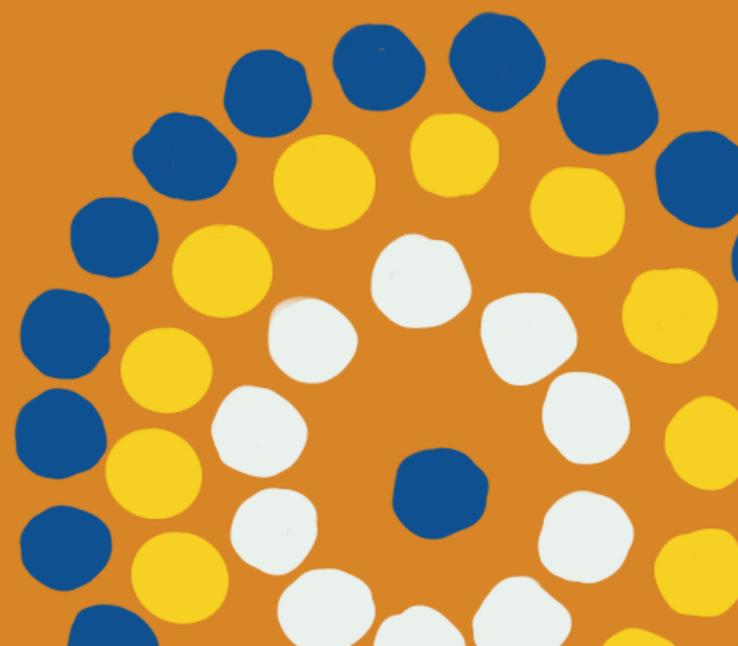
Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
12.1 We will publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings in our Annual Review.	July 2022	Manager, Marketing, Fundraising & Communication
12.2 We will ensure that we regularly report on our RAP progress in relevant reports for our funders - we will include Government.	December 2021	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services Executive Manager, Specialist Community Services
12.3 We will complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.	September Annually	Manager, People & Performance
12.4 We will participate in the Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2022	Manager, People & Performance

Action 13

Review, refresh and update RAP.

Deliverables	Time Frame	Responsibility
13.1 We will arrange a meeting to discuss options for a new RAP with Reconciliation Australia.	May 2022	Executive Manager, Community Engagement Services







St Vincent de Paul Society
(WA) INC
good works

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