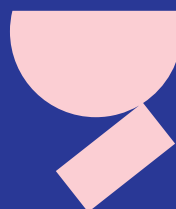




INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

JANUARY 2024 - DECEMBER 2025



geelong
arts
centre

ABOUT THE ARTIST AND THE ARTWORK

The artist, Shu Brown, is a proud Adnyamathanha man from the Flinders Ranges, South Australia.

Shu grew up on Wadawurrung Country, learning from Elders locally and all across Australia about his history, culture and heritage. As a young man Shu moved away from Geelong, later returning with further education, understanding, life experience and a family. Shu, his wife and his four children now call Geelong home. He is a passionate storyteller as an actor, dancer and more recently through the medium of digital artwork.

Cultures Connect

Art is connected to culture and culture is connected to Country. This artwork connects the Stars, the Sky, Wadawurrung Country and also depicts the rich diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. The wedge-tail eagle feather is the central piece, significant of the Creator Spirit, Bunjil. The feather represents the arts in all its forms; from the role it plays in traditional styles in a headdress to contemporary styles with its function as a writing tool. Art is created and expressed in many ways - through storytelling, dance and writing, something all people of all cultures can connect to.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which Geelong Arts Centre stands, the Wadawurrung People of the Kulin Nation. We pay our respects to Elders past, to Elders present and to emerging leaders, recognising their continuing connection to land, water, culture, and community.

We also acknowledge that the land on which the Arts Centre stands has been a place where culture, stories and art have been shared for tens of thousands of years and that it is our responsibility to ensure that the voices and stories of the First Peoples of this land continue to be heard and celebrated.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Geelong Arts Centre's vision for reconciliation is an Australia that truly values and prioritises First Nations cultures, stories and arts and recognises their rich contribution to Australia's diverse contemporary culture and national identity.



RECONCILIATION AUSTRALIA CEO STATEMENT

Reconciliation Australia commends Geelong Arts Centre 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 Geelong Arts Centre 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, Geelong Arts Centre 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 close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Geelong Arts Centre is part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Geelong Arts Centre's 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 Geelong Arts Centre on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



OUR BUSINESS

At Geelong Arts Centre, we believe that the arts have the power to shape people, society and the world. We exist to foster the artists and creative communities of Geelong, and to be the window through which our city can view the world's creative talent. Established in 1981 in response to the Geelong community's enthusiasm and commitment for a quality facility for artists and audiences, Geelong Arts Centre is the major provider of arts experiences in Geelong and the G21 region. We welcome 225,000 visitors and 15,000 artists across multiple theatres, studios, and creative spaces. We are home to Creative Engine; an artistic development initiative that fosters pathways to professional and sustainable artistic practice. Creative Engine supports local artists and creative industries through professional development, workshops, networking, events and funding opportunities including a range of grant and micro-grant opportunities.

Geelong Arts Centre is currently undergoing a period of immense change. In 2019 we opened our Ryrie Street Redevelopment, and the next stage of our Redevelopment supported by the Victorian Government with a \$140 million dollar investment will provide the Geelong region with a vibrant, inclusive and dynamic creative centre that will attract and host the best local, national and international performances.

Geelong Arts Centre currently employs 124 staff; a number which continues to grow as we draw ever closer to the opening of our redeveloped centre. Of these 124 staff, Geelong Arts Centre currently employs one Aboriginal staff member.

Due to be completed in 2023, the Redevelopment will significantly expand the capacity of Geelong Arts Centre with multiple new performance venues, an upgraded Box Office and refurbished back-of-house and administration facilities, as well as more dining options. When completed, the redeveloped Geelong Arts Centre will affirm Geelong's status as a UNESCO City of Design, especially by showcasing the integration of designs by First Nations artists from across the Wadawurrung region developed in collaboration with Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation.

Geelong Arts Centre has defined its vision as:

"Geelong Arts Centre is a leader, connector and creator of extraordinary cultural experiences for local and global communities."

OUR PURPOSE

To nurture creative expression, lead artistic collaborations and inspire audiences, reaching out to all parts of our community.

OUR VALUES

- Bold** – We embrace the freedom to challenge the boundaries of our work
- Welcoming** – Our smile celebrates inclusiveness and a shared passion for creativity
- Connected** – We are proactive in connecting to and engaging with the arts and wider communities, reaching out and facilitating exchange of ideas
- Ensemble** – Our team seeks to work ‘as one’, respecting and valuing the role and contributions of all

OBJECTIVES

Five objectives are at the core of the Strategic Plan guiding the Centre’s key activity strands;

- 1) Art** – supporting artists, creativity and vibrancy
- 2) Sector** – supporting sector and market capacity development
- 3) Audiences** – making connections and supporting relevance for diverse communities
- 4) Business** – growing people, culture and commercial capability
- 5) Assets** – creating opportunity, capitalising on and caring for our expanded infrastructure

OUR RAP

We are developing this Innovate RAP in order to continue to grow and further build on the work we have already commenced in our reconciliation practice. We know we have made great progress through the Reflect RAP, and we are committed to continuing the celebration of reconciliation within our organisation. From our initial Parrwang Community Arts program (previously Parrwang Youth Arts program), through to collaboration with Short Black Opera, and the presentation of many significant First Nations performance works, we have a wonderful foundation to build on.

Geelong Arts Centre is committed to a long-lasting reconciliation journey that listens, acknowledges, respects, includes and responds to First Nations community, and connects First Nations stories and voices with the broader community through meaningful artwork, performance, and conversation. We are committed to walking alongside First Nations communities and artists to build a stronger, safer and more inclusive future for our organisation. We are committed to

ensuring diversity and inclusion that promote a happy, inclusive and culturally representative workforce.

We acknowledge the challenges for our Centre to consistently and sensitively decolonise our organisation; to seek to challenge the traditionally colonial perspectives of the organisation that can create barriers for First Nations participation and cultural safety. We understand this means creating change, embracing new ways of working, and ensuring we have a presence in community beyond the walls of the physical building from which we work.

We see a future where we successfully enable First Nations self-determination; where we provide access to creative spaces to make work and share stories. A future that acknowledges and is respectful of the generational trauma inflicted upon First Nations Peoples through colonisation, while embracing new relationships and connections to ensure a brighter future.

Photo: Ferne Millen Photography



We want to:

- Document our progress and ensure reconciliation is a strategic focus for our organisation, embedded in everything we do
- Commit to the continued presentation of First Nations stories and performances that highlight Traditional and contemporary voices, to present work that provokes reflection, creates understanding, and elicits an appreciation for First Nations cultures
- Create a workplace that is culturally safe and respectful for First Nations employees and stakeholders, and of which our staff are connected to and proud
- Become an industry leader in the reconciliation space for arts organisations
- Celebrate and continue to build on the deep partnerships and relationships we have with First Nations artists and communities



Photo: Ferne Millen Photography

Geelong Arts Centre launched our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan on 5 March 2020 with a celebration of community, culture, dance and song, symbolising a heartfelt and genuine commitment to celebrating First Nations cultures across all aspects of the organisation. In reviewing the Reflect Plan, it has been encouraging to discover that COVID did not prohibit us from making progress on our RAP, it just altered the way the ideas were implemented. Reviewing the Plan was also an opportunity to acknowledge projects and initiatives already established.

We are dedicated to celebrating First Nations cultures across all aspects of the organisation and have made some important progress in recent years. Actions towards progress include:

- Commitment to increasing First Nations programming across all programming streams
- Cultural awareness training for all staff including unconscious bias training
- In-progress development of a Learning and Development Plan that will inform future Cultural Training programs
- Continuing to establish connections and build relationships with local First Nations artists as facilitators for workshops and discussions through the Creative Learning program and the Parrwang Community Arts initiative
- Holding space for First Nations voices on our marketing and social media platforms,

sharing interviews and profiles of local First Nations creatives and artists

- Commencing a program of lighting up our Ryrie Street building for significant events in colours paying tribute to the event, including Geelong Arts Centre's NAIDOC Week illumination, inspired by 2021 National NAIDOC Poster Artwork - 'Care for Country' by Gubbi Gubbi artist, Maggie-Jean Douglas, and National Reconciliation Week illumination, inspired by 2021 National Reconciliation Week Artwork - 'Action' by Jessica Johnson
- The launch of our Centre's first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2020

In reflecting on the above initiatives, we acknowledge that further innovation and commitment is required as we continue to grow in this space. We currently have a lack of First Nations voices within our organisation, which we intend to address through the introduction of the Geelong Arts Centre First Nations Advisory Panel and a focus on First Nations recruitment by partnering with community members and making a concerted effort, through consultation and implementation, to ensure our workplace is both culturally safe and responsive, in order to attract and retain First Nations employees. We are also seeking community input on what desirable/ attractive role(s) would look like, and through which targeted channels the promotion of recruitment opportunities would be best placed.



Photo: Peter Foster Photography

RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN WORKING GROUP

The RAP Working Group involves the following parties:

Internal

Reconciliation Action Plan:

Shana Miatke – Director Operations and Experience

Rhys Holden – CEO and Creative Director

Joel McGuinness – Former CEO and Creative Director

Penny McCabe – Head of Programming

Emily Donoghue – Senior Producer Creative Learning, Families and Community Engagement

External

Representatives from the Geelong Arts Centre First Nations Advisory Group, including:

Corrina Eccles – Wadawurrung Traditional

Owners Aboriginal Corporation

Marsha Uppill – Arranyinha

We have also had feedback contributed by several other community members who did not wish to be named.

The broader First Nations Advisory Group also provides oversight and feedback on the development of the RAP. This includes, but is not limited to, representatives from Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, Deakin/NIKERI, the Victorian Department of Education, Short Black Opera, Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-Operative, Strong Brother Strong Sister, as well as practising First Nations artists and senior members/ respected Elders from within local First Peoples communities.

We also have strong connections with several local community representatives outside of the Advisory Group who act as informal advisors and supporters, especially across our youth and families programming.

The Staff Consultative Committee

The purpose of the Staff Consultative Committee is to assist in the implementation of the Enterprise Agreement, ongoing workplace reform and changes relating to refurbishment and redevelopment. The Committee meet quarterly or more frequently as needed. The RAP Working Group is responsible for driving the actions and deliverables of Geelong Arts Centre’s RAP, whereas the Staff Consultative Committee is a forum for staff to be briefed on the RAP and provides an opportunity for feedback regarding the deliverables.

Current members of the Staff Consultative Committee are:

Rhys Holden – CEO and Creative Director
Liza Cumming – People and Culture Manager
Ahmer Jalil – Director Corporate Services
Roberta Henderson – Executive Assistant
Tina Rettke – Manager Audience Insights and Ticketing

Kimberley Sinnott – Development Manager
Ben Van Dillen – Technical Operations Manager
Emily Donoghue – Senior Producer, Creative Learning, Families and Community Engagement
Tracey Taylor – Presenter Services Coordinator
Kim Hodgkinson – Box Office Coordinator
Dean Taylor – Head Technician - Lighting
Jennifer Waugh – Box Office Attendant
Georgia Chara – Venue Supervisor Creative Engine / Supervising Technician

Photo: John Gollings Photography



Photo: Verity Stubbs

CASE STUDY

Redevelopment Engagement

Through the Geelong Arts Centre's Little Malop Street Redevelopment between April 2020 and August 2021, project partners Development Victoria, Creative Victoria, Lendlease and Geelong Arts Centre facilitated 14+ engagement sessions with RAP organisations and First Peoples communities, including a community artists roundtable, Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation and Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative, in addition to a young people's workshop.

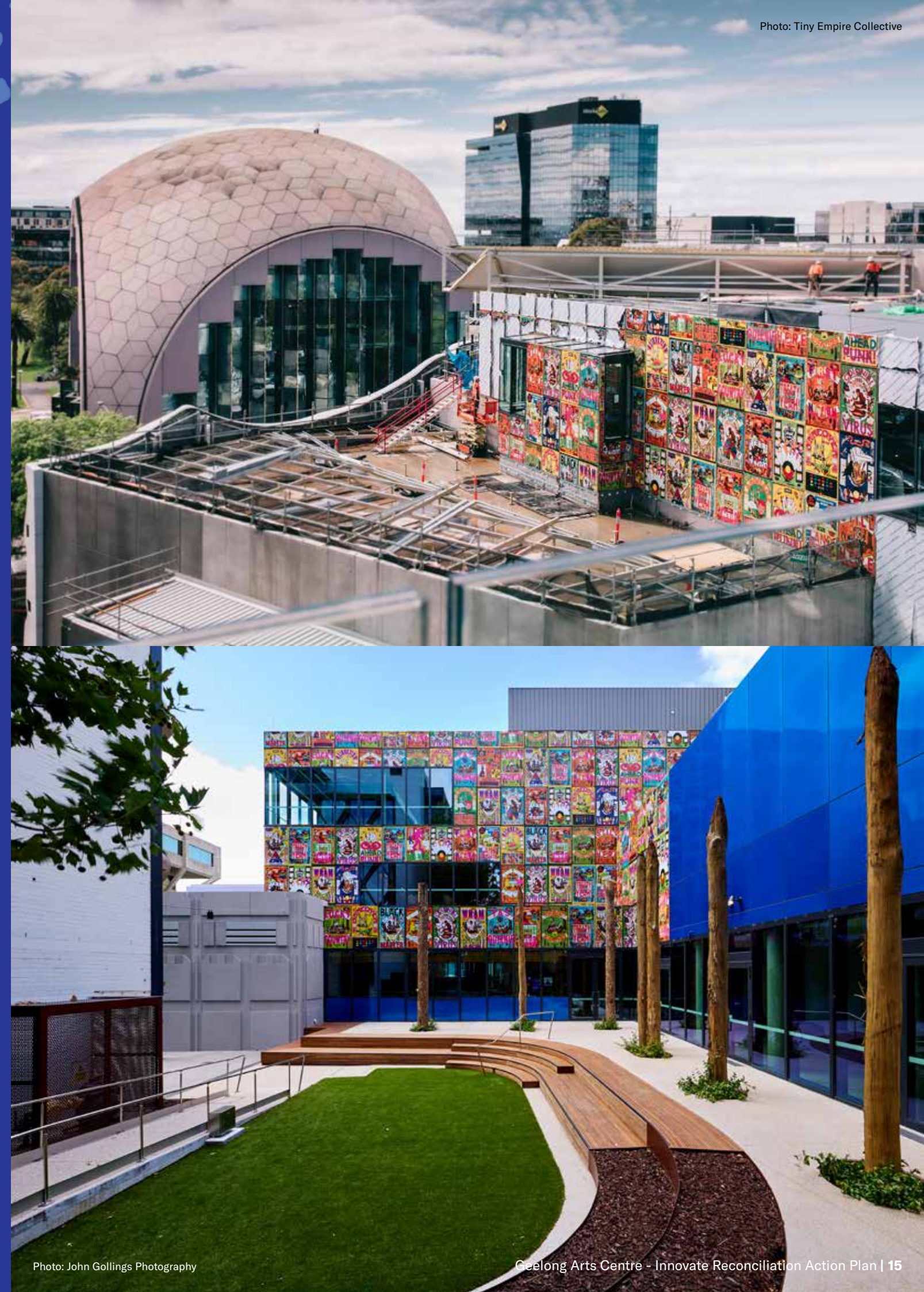
The purpose of these sessions was to identify opportunities for First Nations communities in the Redevelopment and to provide an opportunity to work with the architects on the design. To date, proposed design outcomes include Acknowledgement of Country upon arrival, stories and Country embedded across every level of the building, inside the theatres, on external facades and in sound installations too - weaving in traditional stories of the land, water and sky, and the colours and textures of Moonah trees, ochre, and granite stone throughout the campus - as well as featuring First Peoples' artwork embedded into the design of the theatres and other spaces within the Arts Centre.

Specific to the Geelong Arts Centre Little Malop Street Redevelopment, a social procurement plan has been established with project partner Lendlease. Economic impacts to date

include approximately \$300,000 spent with First Nations businesses (equivalent of 2.7% of total construction expenditure). A further \$500,000 expenditure between now and the end of the 2022 financial year is planned with regards to employment on the project. Since commencement on site, there have been seven roles for First Nations workers on the project and First Nations artists have been engaged to feature in the design of the Arts Centre.

Aimed at unlocking employment and procurement opportunities for First Nations Victorians, project partners Development Victoria, Creative Victoria, Lendlease and Geelong Arts Centre engaged Wamarra, a Victorian First Nations business, to undertake site establishment works on the Geelong Arts Centre Little Malop Street Redevelopment - a Local Jobs First Strategic Project.

Wamarra is an Aboriginal-owned and operated Victorian-based civil contractor, providing meaningful long-term and sustainable career opportunities for First Peoples, and civil solutions for their clients. Winning the contract on the Geelong-based Redevelopment and working with Lendlease has assisted Wamarra to employ more people and provide a fantastic training ground for their employees to gain new skills in a range of construction areas.



CASE STUDY

Engagement with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative: The Mission Songs Project

With continued guidance from the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation, in the past two years we have focussed on further building our connection with the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. We recognise the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative as a hub for local First Nations community and therefore we have been making a direct effort to increase our participation and engagement opportunities for community through the Co-operative. In 2021, we worked with community members at the Co-operative to be part of a collaboration with First Nations artist, Jessie Lloyd, and her concert, The Mission Songs Project.

Jessie was able to work with community members on documenting stories and turning them into an original song, with the goal of having the song included in the concert which was to be presented at Geelong Arts Centre. The product was an amazing musical composition that was deeply connected to community members' stories.

Due to venue closures during the pandemic, the concert and presentation of the song was not able to go ahead, however the experience of the song writing workshop and documentation of story was still valuable. We hope to be able to build on this concept and encourage connection to story through music and song more in the future.

This is just one example of how we have been making a focussed effort to reach out to and create opportunities for the Wathaurong Aboriginal Co-operative. Other examples include building strong relationships with the Co-operative's Communications Officer, providing free school holiday workshops, inviting staff to present as part of our mainstream children's programming, and initiating connections to visiting artists.





RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships are of vital importance to Geelong Arts Centre given our role as community leaders in our cultural precinct and broader Creative City. As leaders in the sector, it is integral for us to work with other creative and community organisations to learn and share knowledge that will support us in our aspiration towards being leaders in reconciliation. We recognise that relationships are imperative to First Peoples, and we are committed to coming together with First Nations communities in our shared values and creating strong and meaningful relationships.

By the conclusion of this Innovate RAP, we aim to have further developed existing relationships and to be recognised in community as a culturally safe space for First Nations Peoples. We aim to connect with and empower First Nations Peoples to have a

self-determined presence across the organisation by consulting with First Nations communities and the First Nations Advisory Group. This will enable us to continue learning and refining recruitment strategy, promotion, and job creation opportunities. We are committed to harnessing community feedback, both formally and informally, to develop a programming strategy that represents the stories of First Peoples.

We recognise the importance of these ongoing conversations in developing trust and avoiding complacency. To ultimately ensure a long-lasting reconciliation journey that listens, acknowledges, respects, includes and responds to First Nations communities, and connects First Peoples' stories and voices with the broader community, we need to maintain an open and understanding dialogue with all community stakeholders.

Focus area:

Geelong Arts Centre is committed to developing reciprocal and longstanding relationships with local First Nations individuals, groups, and the community at large by initiating and collaborating on creative experiences and programming direction (Art), expanding outreach programs to be more inclusive of diverse communities (Audiences) and being an employer of choice (Business).

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	Continue building relationships with local First Nations stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement so that all facets of our organisation can authentically engage with community.	May 2024	CEO
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with First Nations stakeholders and organisations.	January 2024	Director Marketing & Development
	Convene the Geelong Arts Centre First Nations Advisory Panel who will meet quarterly to consult on Geelong Arts Centre progress.	July 2024	CEO
	Invite local First Nations Peoples to present and connect with staff.	July 2024	Manager People & Culture
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2024, May 2025	Manager People and Culture
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2024, June 2024, May 2025, June 2025	CEO / EA to CEO
	Ensure staff and senior leadership commitment to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2024, June 2024, May 2025, June 2025	CEO
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	May 2024, June 2024, May 2025, June 2025	Head of Programming
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	April 2024, April 2025	Head of Programming
	Ensure continued Geelong Arts Centre representation on Geelong's National Reconciliation Week Committee through the City of Greater Geelong	May 2024, June 2024, May 2025, June 2025	CEO

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	February 2025	Manage People & Culture
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	June 2025	CEO
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	February 2025	CEO, Head of Programming
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly including on our website, social media, Acknowledgement of Country plaques or a physical representation of acknowledgement on all buildings.	June 2025	Marketing Manager
	Offer opportunities for learning from First Nations artists within the Creative Engine program – Geelong Arts Centre’s artistic development program offering grant and support initiatives, networking events and professional learning opportunities	June 2025	Head of Programming
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.	July 2025	Lead: CEO Support: Director Corporate Services
	Build upon our existing Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy to highlight cultural safety and other support mechanisms for First Nations People and communicate this to employees as part of the Centre’s internal communication strategy. A diversity and inclusion lens is applied to all staff communication and initiatives are designed to maintain a working environment that supports and celebrates staff diversity and psychosocial safety.	December 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Engage with First Nations staff and/or First Nations advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	December 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Educate senior leadership team on the effects of racism through formalised training.	February 2025	Manager People & Culture





RESPECT

Geelong Arts Centre appreciates that respect for First Nations Peoples strengthens relationships. We respect that First Nations People have been telling and performing stories for tens of thousands of years and we are committed to providing opportunities on stage and beyond to honour this and ensure its continuation. We understand that respect for First Nations Peoples means acknowledging and respecting the difficult history of invasion and ongoing impacts that First Nations People endure. While we always remain cognisant of the past, we also maintain a positive respect and hopeful approach to our shared future.

Our aim is to examine our surrounds through a cultural lens, both professionally and personally. To achieve this; we will increase our awareness of and

immersion in the local cultures of First Peoples by providing staff with cultural learning experiences and development opportunities. In listening to and learning from Wadawurrung Traditional Custodians about the significance of Wadawurrung Country on which we live, work and play; our processes and practices will be informed by respect for cultural protocols.

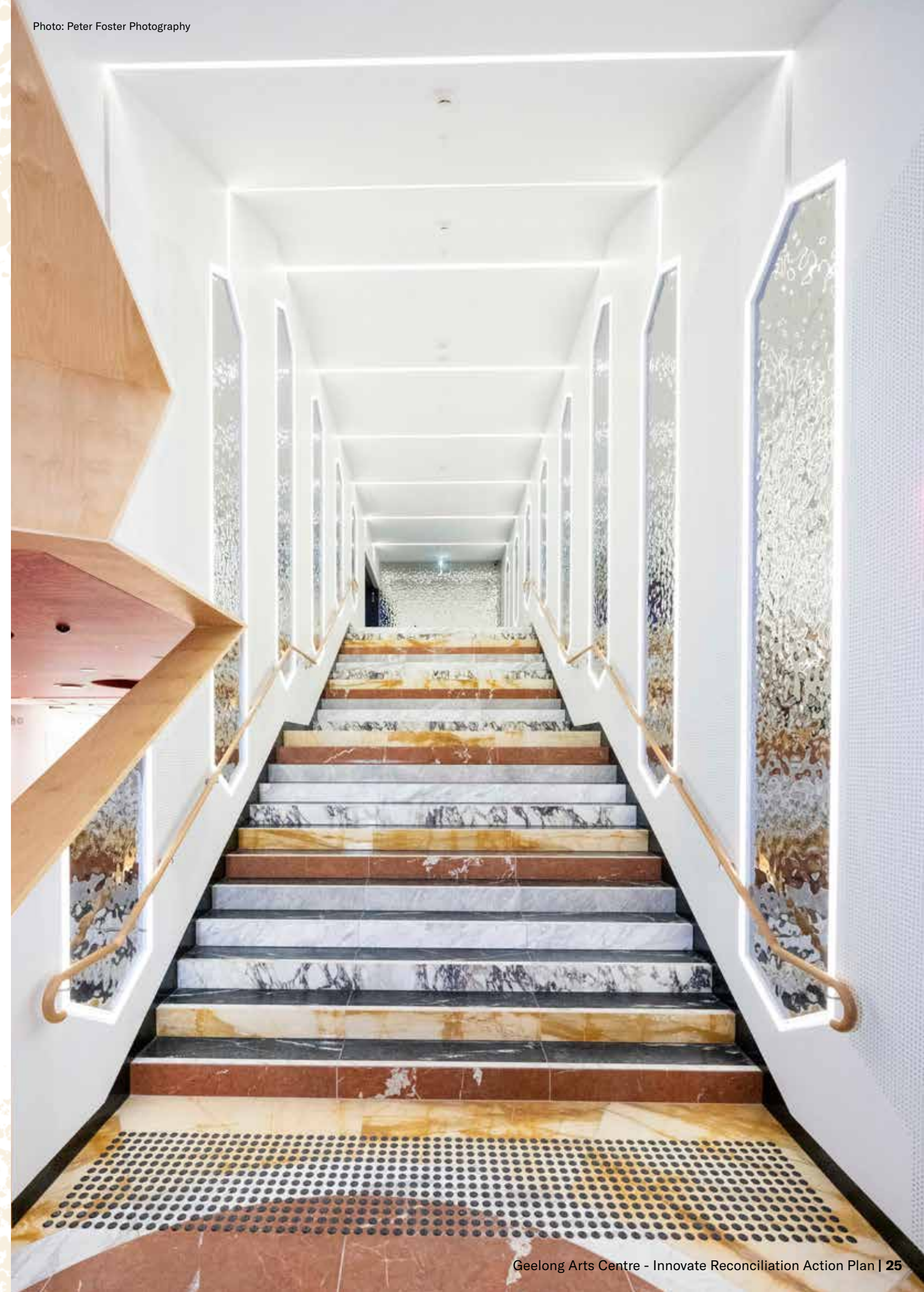
Geelong Arts Centre is steadfast in displaying this respect by creating culturally safe spaces, promoting community events across owned channels, developing cultural protocols for artists entering Geelong Arts Centre spaces, and maintaining genuine concern for all aspects of cultural safety when entering these spaces.

Focus area:

Geelong Arts Centre is committed to respect - a diversity of ideas, contemporary thought and world views.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	July 2025	Manager People and Culture
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or First Nations advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy.	December 2025	Manager People and Culture
	Develop, implement and communicate a Cultural Learning Strategy for our staff.	July 2025	Manager People and Culture
	Build on existing opportunities for RAP Working Group members, People and Culture Managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning as part of the centre's Professional Development program.	July 2025	Manager People and Culture
	Hold an all staff meeting off-site at an appropriate cultural site of significance to show commitment to learning and cultural connection	July 2025	CEO
	Promote and encourage opportunities for staff to attend all programming events that support and promote a greater understanding of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights.	July 2025	Head of Programming
6. Demonstrate respect to First Peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important meetings.	May 2024	CEO
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	March 2024	Director Marketing & Development
	Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols and intellectual property around language and culture.	March 2025	Manager People and Culture

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	Book Welcome to Country ceremonies or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year through Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corporation – the local Registered Aboriginal Party.	July 2024	CEO, Head of Programming
	Review and update marketing policies regarding public facing communications and advertising to ensure that all content has appropriate Acknowledgements of Country, references and calls to action that reflect feedback from First Nations community.	May 2024	Director Marketing & Development
	Embed cultural practices and respect into our quarterly all Staff Meetings, and all staff gatherings. This includes Welcome and/or Acknowledgement of Country and a five-minute First Nations reflective prior to starting formal agendas.	July 2024	CEO, Manager People & Culture
	Embed cultural practices and respect into our induction processes including culture and diversity training delivered by the People & Culture department. Ensure new employees are informed of their responsibility to consider diverse perspectives and the expectation of Acknowledging Country, inclusive ways of working and barriers to inclusion for diverse peoples including First Nation peoples.	March 2024	Manager People & Culture
7. Build respect for First Nations cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	March 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	June 2024, June 2025	CEO / EA to CEO
	Program at least one NAIDOC celebration event in our public programming, to be developed in collaboration with the First Nations Advisory Panel and artists.	July 2024, July 2025	Head of Programming
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2024, 2025	CEO / EA to CEO





OPPORTUNITIES

At Geelong Arts Centre, our goal is to provide an array of meaningful opportunities for First Nations People. We will continue to work with our current First Nations partners, while acknowledging that considerable effort is required internally and externally to create more opportunities. If we are to increase engagement and participation among First Nations People in the local and surrounding communities, we need to be guided by their aspirations and needs and, furthermore, to understand and be responsive to the intricacies of cultural safety.

We will take a holistic approach in exploring employment, training, professional development, creativity, and business opportunities in all areas of our Centre, including programming, administration, and presenter services. The successes of this undertaking will be determined by our ability to audit, revise, assess, and amend our current internal processes and practices. It is imperative that these reflect social inclusion and diversity principles and have input from local First Nations People. This will drive and hold the organisation accountable to a workplace environment that is culturally inclusive of First Nations staff and contractors, and a workplace culture that contributes to the economic development of First Nations People.

Focus area:

Geelong Arts Centre is focussed on creativity and community. We are driven by inspiring growth in activity, innovation, outstanding spaces, and creatives. We aim to foster creative growth in a region renowned for its artistic energy and engagement.

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current First Peoples staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	March 2024	CEO and Manager People & Culture
	Engage with First Nations staff to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Embed strategy for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development into Geelong Arts Centre's current policies, procedures and Innovation, Diversity and Workplace strategy.	July 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	July 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	March 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Increase employment of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff in our workforce (currently 0%).	July 2025	CEO
	Ensure that position descriptions for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employees include provisions and protections for becoming the sole source of knowledge in the organisation. Actively prevent cultural loading to ensure no Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander employee feels that they carry the weight of all First Nations knowledge on behalf of the organisation.	July 2025	CEO

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
9. Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Embed an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy in line with Geelong Arts Centre's current social procurement policy.	October 2025	Director Corporate Services
	Investigate membership and relationships with Supply Nation and Kinaway while also connecting at a local level to Ngarrimili who support Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses in the Geelong region.	December 2025	Director Corporate Services
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff, always with the goal to use local suppliers first.	July 2025	Procurement Officer
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	October 2025	Procurement Officer
	Build on commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses including capturing feedback from First Nations businesses on the process of working with our organisation.	October 2025	Procurement Officer
10. Support First Nations artists to develop new work.	Ensure at least one Creative Engine Micro Grant for the development of a new work is specifically offered to First Nations Artists each year.	December 2024	Senior Producer
	Include opportunities for First Nations artists to develop their skills within the Creative Engine Professional Development program.	July 2025	Head of Programming
	Ensure that all opportunities offered by Creative Engine are accessible, inclusive, and culturally safe for First Nations artists.	July 2025	Senior Producer

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
	Collaborate with our partners in the Geelong Cultural Precinct (Geelong Gallery, Geelong Library and Heritage Centre, Back to Back Theatre, Platform Arts) on reconciliation focussed programming with a broad reach.	March 2024, March 2025	Head of Programming
	Investigate opportunities to support the presentation of First Nations work that fosters a greater understanding of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights	July 2025	Head of Programming
	Build on our relationship with NIKERI and the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Innovation at Deakin University to develop an ongoing Cultural Conversations series that encourages First Nations and non-Indigenous people to walk together on the reconciliation journey, through discussion, learning and sharing of story. This includes increasing access and attendance for NIKERI students by formalising a tailored NIKERI ticket offer specifically to increase student engagement.	July 2024, July 2025	Head of Programming
	Research and connect with First Nations-led arts companies, forming both formal and informal relationships to increase opportunities for collaboration and/or support through programming, artistic development/mentorship and networking opportunities.	July 2025	Head of Programming
	Investigate options for the presentation of a work that is specific to the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners and their Country.	December 2025	Head of Programming



GOVERNANCE AND TRACKING PROGRESS

ACTION	DELIVERABLE	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	June 2024	CEO
	Maintain Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	July 2024	CEO
	Ensure the delivery of all actions within the RAP are reviewed and implemented by the members of the Staff Consultative Committee, and that they meet to drive and monitor RAP implementation at least four times a year	December 2025	EA to CEO
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2024	Lead: CEO Support: Staff Consultative Committee
	Ensure our senior leaders and other staff are committed and accountable to the delivery of RAP actions.	July 2024	CEO
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2024	EA to CEO
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	June 2024	CEO
13. 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.	September 2024, September 2025	Manager People & Culture
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	July 2024	Senior Producer
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings, annually.	July 2024	Director Marketing & Development
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	April 2025	Manager People & Culture
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	August 2024	CEO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PHOTOS

Page 5: Wadawurrung Women, Corrina Eccles and Kait James at Smoking Ceremony. (Ferne Millen Photography)	Page 15: (Top image) Kait James artwork revealed on Western Façade of Geelong Arts Centre. (Tiny Empire Collective)
Page 6: Karen Mundine – Reconciliation Australia CEO. (Supplied)	Page 15: (Bottom image) Kait James artwork in courtyard. (John Gollings Photography)
Page 9: Geelong Arts Centre post-show event. Shirley Clarke, Kylie Clarke, Ngara McEwen, Ammie Howell and Lily McEwen. (Ferne Millen Photography)	Page 17: Level 1 Foyer - Moonah Forest. (Peter Foster Photography)
Page 10: Level 3 Foyer - Sky Country. (Peter Foster Photography)	Page 21: (Top image) Geelong Arts Centre post show event. (Peter Foster Photography)
Page 11: First Nations Artists - Tarryn Love, Gerard Black, Kait James and mentor Kiri Tawhai. (Ferne Millen Photography)	Page 21: (Bottom image) Ground Foyer - Ochre Country. (Peter Foster Photography)
Page 12: Tarryn Love artwork at The Story House. (John Gollings Photography)	Page 25: Stairs. (Peter Foster Photography)
Page 13: Gerard Black artwork at Tutti Café. (Photograph: Verity Stubbs)	

