



SuniTAFE

Reconciliation Action Plan

August 2024 – August 2025



Acknowledgement of Country

SuniTAFE proudly acknowledges the Latji Latji, Neri Neri, Ngintait, Wamba-Wemba and Barkindji as the Traditional Custodians of the land and waters around Mildura, Robinvale and Swan Hill.

We pay our respects to all Elders past, present and those emerging.

We acknowledge the important contribution that First Nation Peoples make in these communities today.

We honour those who continue to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures and Country.

Together we educate, cooperate, collaborate and create a future of hope and Reconciliation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this publication may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.



Artwork elements from SuniTAFE's Reconciliation Action Plan have been created by local First Nations artist Simone Spencer.

Winner of the Dulka Yuppata artwork competition 2024.

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MILDURA

453 Benetook Avenue, Mildura, VIC, 3500

SWAN HILL

64 Sea Lake-Swan Hill Rd, Swan Hill, VIC, 3585

SMART FARM

161 Dairtnunk Ave, Irymple, VIC, 3498

Email:

info@sunitafe.edu.au

Telephone:

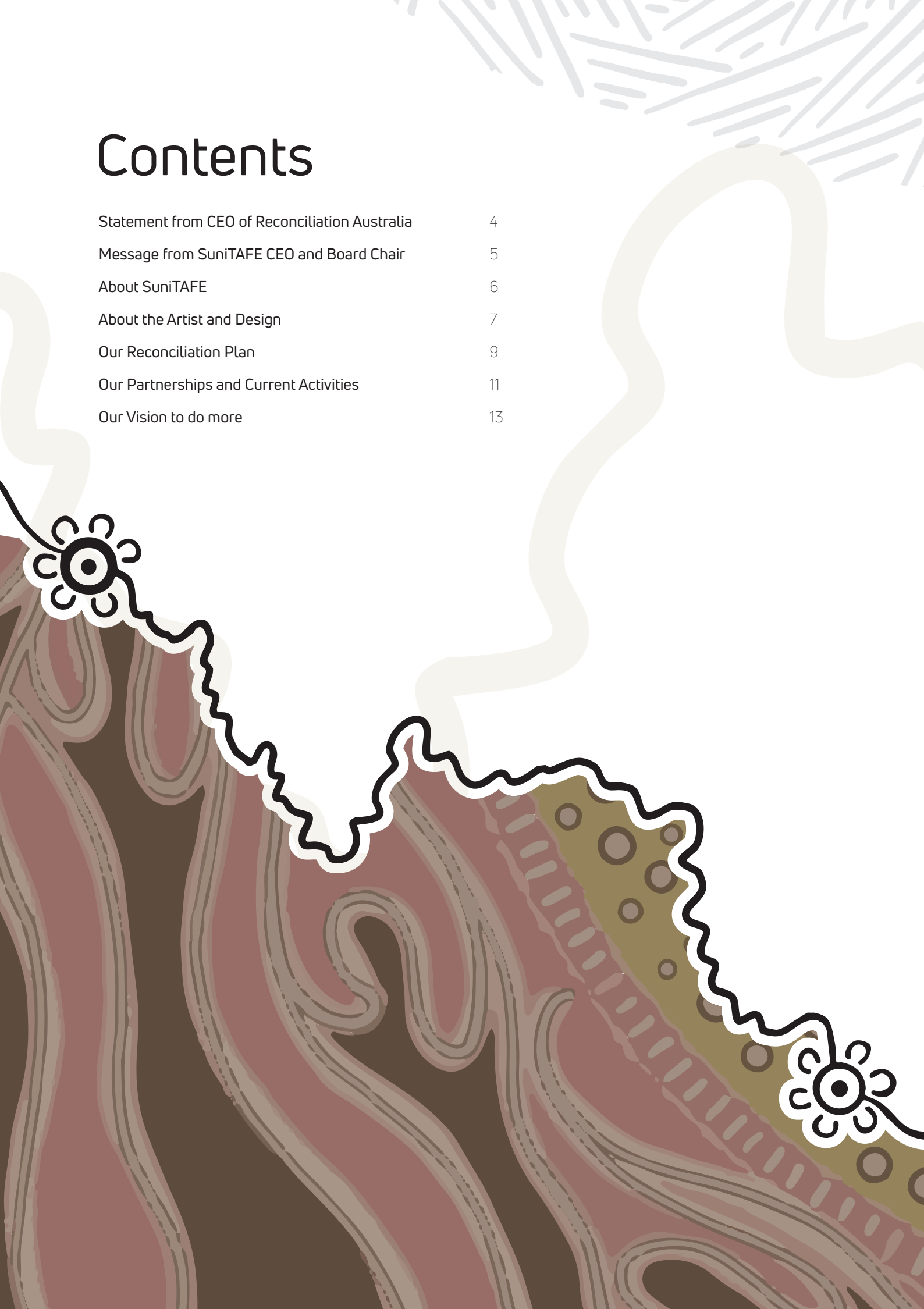
1300 478 648

www.sunitafe.edu.au



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Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia

Karen Mundine



Reconciliation Australia welcomes Sunraysia Institute of TAFE to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural Reflect RAP.

Sunraysia Institute of TAFE joins a network of more than 3,000 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 Sunraysia Institute of TAFE 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 Sunraysia Institute of TAFE, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.



Message from the SuniTAFE CEO and Board Chair

It's with great pride that we, on behalf of the SuniTAFE Board and community, present SuniTAFE's first "Reflect" Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This RAP is a significant milestone in SuniTAFE continuing genuine and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and a demonstration of our organisational commitment to not only acknowledging the cultural richness and diversity of First Nations communities, but also creating lasting and meaningful change.

At SuniTAFE, our core values of Relationships, Integrity, Accountable, and Improvement guide us in this important work. Building strong and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities is central to everything we do. We understand that these relationships are not just about engagement, but about deep listening, mutual respect, and shared growth. We are committed to ensuring that our education and training services create pathways to success for all, and that we remain steadfast in our support of First Nations students and staff.

Integrity is at the heart of our actions, and this RAP is a reflection of our genuine desire to honour the heritage, rights, and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We approach this work with honesty, transparency, and a sincere commitment to doing what is right.

We also hold ourselves accountable to the commitments we have made within this RAP. Every step we take will be carefully measured, and we will continuously evaluate our progress to ensure that we are living up to the principles of reconciliation. This means being accountable not only to ourselves, but to the communities we serve.

Finally, we embrace the value of improvement. This RAP marks the beginning of a long-term commitment to change. We will continually learn, adapt, and refine our practices to ensure that we are not only making a difference today but are setting the stage for a more inclusive and equitable future.

We are excited about what lies ahead and confident that, together with our partners, staff, and students, SuniTAFE will play a vital role in reconciliation. We are committed to moving forward with respect, empathy, and a shared vision for a better future.



Brett Millington

Chief Executive Officer, SuniTAFE



Neth Hinton

Board Chair, SuniTAFE

Our Business

SuniTAFE is a prominent Vocational Education Training (VET) provider located in the Mallee. Our core business is to provide quality vocational education and training to industry and communities assisting individuals to upskill, change careers, or gain new knowledge in their chosen fields. Through our VET programs, we aim to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in their respective industries.

"We aim to equip students with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed."

SuniTAFE has three campuses located in regional north west Victoria in Mildura, Irymple and Swan Hill on the ancestral lands of the Latji Latji, Neri Neri and Ngintait (Mildura) and Wamba Wamba Peoples (Swan Hill). These campuses also serve the surrounding areas including Robinvale, Ouyen, Kerang, Sea Lake and southern New South Wales (NSW) towns on the border. Our services are also delivered onsite in a variety of business and community locations.

The Mildura campus is situated near the NSW and South Australian (SA) borders.

At the Mildura and Swan Hill campuses we have Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Cultural centres. Dulka Yuppata is located at our Mildura Campus and Telkaya is located at our Swan Hill Campus. Our First Nations staff at both campuses work closely with all teaching departments to ensure our First Nations students are aware of our Centres' services. This geographic reach allows SuniTAFE to make a significant impact in local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities by providing education and training opportunities for individuals who may not have access otherwise. Additionally, our presence in the region allows the institute to engage with the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities, build stronger relationships and enable students to feel supported throughout their educational journey.

"Dulka Yuppata is located at our Mildura Campus and Telkaya is located at our Swan Hill Campus"

SuniTAFE has a large workforce, employing over 300 staff members, which includes both permanent and casual employees. Currently 10 staff members identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples. We are dedicated to promoting employment opportunities for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples, actively striving to cultivate a workplace that embraces diversity and fosters inclusivity. By providing employment opportunities to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders peoples, we are contributing to the economic and social well-being of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

About the Artist and Design

I am a proud Barkindji woman with a great passion for culture, education and empowering Aboriginal young people to become the next generation of leaders.

I am a part of a very artistic family with my mother and father both actively creating art, mainly acrylic painting on various materials.

I have always loved drawing but have never explored any further. In the last few years, I have purchased a Samsung Android tablet and found myself exploring art apps.

Digital art really grew to be a passion and I have loved experimenting and exploring ever since.

I would love to continue to share my art with people and tell stories through my artwork and creativity.

The design elements are layers with different representations of the lands, the waterways and the people. Our ancestors and spirits that have guided us also.

In creating this piece, the Vision, Mission and Values of SuniTAFE were also embedded into the design.

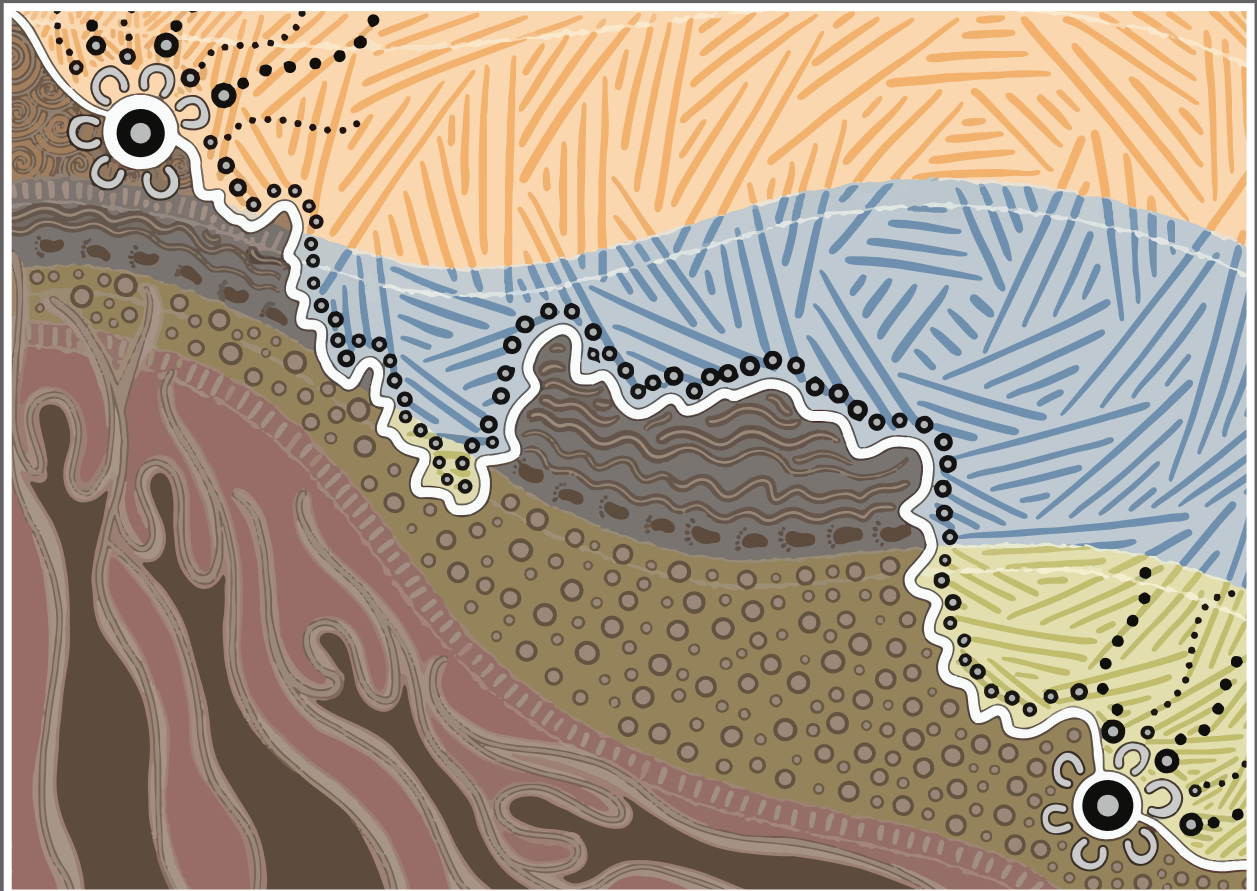
The river is represented, as well as the Mildura and Swan Hill sites. Relationships, Integrity, Accountable and Improvement underline the overall vision of striving to be the leading regional training provider.



Simone Spencer
Art Competition Winner

Simone Spencer "From the Dreaming"

"I really want to use my artwork to help bring my culture into mainstream community to promote a better understanding of our culture."



"The ancestors were the main layer on the bottom and each other layer depicts a part of our culture. My intention was to remind everyone that the lands in which we are, everywhere, there's culture embedded in the ground."

Our Reconciliation Action Plan

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, SuniTAFE has developed our **Reflect RAP**. Through this Reflect RAP, we aim to develop and implement strategies to **enhance our relationship** with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, promote employment, and provide culturally appropriate **education and training opportunities**. We recognise our responsibility to contribute to the reconciliation process, and the development of a Reflect RAP is one way we can demonstrate our **commitment** to this process.

We regularly engage with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities to build and foster ongoing relationships. We see this as critical to the development of a meaningful Reflect RAP.

It is important to engage with local Elders, community leaders, and organisations to understand the needs, aspirations, and challenges of our communities.

The success of a Reflect RAP relies on the implementation of the strategies and actions outlined in the plan. We utilise the SuniTAFE Project Management workbook and stakeholder engagement plan to ensure we stay on track and communicate regularly with our stakeholders. The creation of a RAP Working Group will be an integral component of successful implementation. The CEO will champion the Reflect RAP, along with the other members of our Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Our Reflect RAP will be led from the top and flow through the rest of the organisation.

We will ensure all staff members are aware of the roles and responsibilities in implementing the plan, and provide training and support where necessary. We will monitor and evaluate progress regularly to ensure the strategies and actions outlined in the plan are effective and achieving the intended outcomes. If required, we will adjust our strategy to ensure we are meeting our commitments and making a positive contribution to reconciliation.

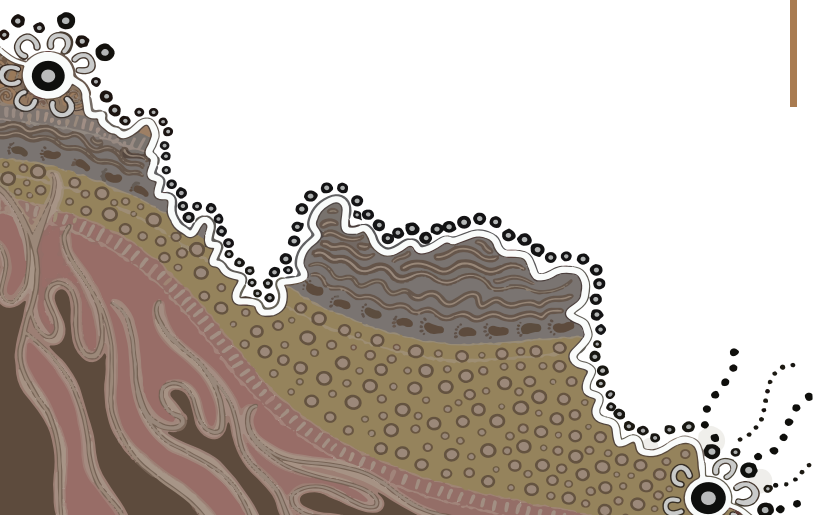
We will report regularly to the SuniTAFE Board, ELT and Stakeholders on progress made towards achieving the goals outlined in the Reflect RAP and communicate this progress to staff, students, and the local communities to demonstrate our **commitment to reconciliation** and to **inspire others to take action**.

In 2016, the Victorian Government and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) launched Marrung: Aboriginal Education Plan 2016-2026 (Marrung). The vision of Marrung is Victoria will be a state where the rich and thriving cultures, knowledge and experiences of First Nations peoples are celebrated by all Victorians; where our universal service systems (including Higher Education and Skills) are inclusive, responsive and respectful of Koorie peoples at every stage of the learning and development journey; and where every Koorie person achieves their potential, succeeds in life, and feels stronger in their cultural identity. Marrung has a strong commitment to Higher Education and Skills, and acknowledges education and training are vital to achieving better life outcomes for all young people. Strong learning and development foundations are essential to ensuring Koorie learners have access to the full range of higher education and training pathways, and subsequent economic opportunities, to lead healthier and more prosperous lives.

The Wurreker Strategy (Wurreker) is a partnership agreement between the Victorian Government and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated (VAEAI) to improve education and training delivery for Koorie students to achieve quality education, training and employment outcomes. Wurreker is consistent with Marrung's commitment to assisting Koorie learners to transition successfully into further education and employment, and for Koorie peoples to have opportunities to access education at all stages of life.

“Education and training are vital to achieving better life outcomes for all young people.”

Our workplace reconciliation journey has been based on implementing strategies and actions from our Wurreker Implementation Plan. This includes providing cultural support for students through employment of a Koorie Liaison Officer, Koorie Student Support Officer, Koorie participation assistants and training Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander teachers. We provide students with transportation, breakfast program, career advice and individual learning plans. We have expanded our course offerings to include delivery of the Certificate II in Mumgu-dhal tyama-tiyt community, connection, pathways and community arts. We celebrate all significant events such as NAIDOC week and regularly host Elders from local communities. We will also embed Cultural Awareness training for all staff as part of our ongoing professional development.



Our Partnerships and Current Activities

SuniTAFE collaborates closely with the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Inc (VAEAI) and the Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (LAECG) to address challenges within communities and enhance the effectiveness of education services in supporting community members to overcome barriers to training and employment.

A significant aspect of our partnerships includes working with various organisations, such as:

- The First People of the Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corporation: we deliver training in Conservation and Ecosystem Management to staff. The corporation facilitates access to Country for excursions, offers feedback on resources, and collaborates on projects alongside Eco Futures like seed bank trials and exclusion plots. Additionally, providing work experience opportunities in nursery operations and seed
- Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation: we actively participate in events like Check Health Day, R U OK? Day, and Easter activities. The collaboration extends to mentoring opportunities for students from schools.
- Mildura District Aboriginal Services (MDAS): we work with MDAS on initiatives such as NAIDOC Week, National Reconciliation Week and Sorry Day. Staff and students attend facilities and assist in the activities such as preparing and serving food. MDAS contributes to the Elders program by providing guest speakers, especially in the context of health and employment opportunities. MDAS organised a visit to Lake Victoria and for the Elders to share the history of the sacred site with staff and students. The Elders performed a smoking ceremony and shared lunch.

Additional activities that the staff and students participate in include

- The Stan Grant Anti- Racism Community Yarning Circle: This program was organised by the Aboriginal Action Committee, (Mildura Rural City Council) in partnership with Yuranga LAN (Local Aboriginal Network). Students and staff attended the evening event with approximately 300 people.
- The Barka community event is organised by Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation, held at the Canoe Tree in Wentworth which is part of the Kumpa Kira suicide prevention program. Students support the day by handing out raffle tickets, cooking the bbq, setting up and packing up, and helped the elders, and primary and secondary schools, approximately 400 people attended.
- Aboriginal Self Determination Camp Fire stories hosted by the Department of Education and Training. Students were able to share educational experiences and stories with the aim to influence future policy decisions around best practice in Koorie Education.
- Back to Country Judicial Dinner: Staff and students organised, prepared and served a bush tucker inspired menu to approximately 60 attendees from the Judicial College of Victoria.
- Cultural excursions to Lake Mungo: Students, teachers and support staff experienced the Mungo Sunset Tour at Mungo National Park. This was a unique experience that combined an on-country experience with deep historical and cultural significance. The excursion provided insights into the Aboriginal history of the area, offering a deeper understanding of the significance of the land and its ancient inhabitants.
- NAIDOC with Mildura Primary School: Staff and students assist Mildura Primary School with NAIDOC activities such as cooking Johnny cakes, traditional jewellery making and playing Koorie games.
- Staff and students created a yarning circle for TAFE Kids which is the early learning centre situated on the SuniTAFE campus. The students designed the yarning circle and went to the early learning centre and assisted with the installation.

These activities aim to share educational experiences, influence future policy decisions in Koorie Education, and foster a sense of community engagement and support

Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	•• Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	October 2024	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	•• Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	January 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	•• Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May and June 2025	Koorie Liaison Officer
	•• RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June, 2025	Head of People and Culture
	•• 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	Head of People and Culture
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	•• Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	August 2024	CEO
	•• Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	August 2024	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	•• Consult with the local Traditional Owner and Elders when the naming of any building and or rooms includes consideration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names.	August 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	•• Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	August 2025	Koorie Liaison Officer
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	•• Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	March 2025	Diversity & Inclusion officer
	•• Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	January 2024	Diversity & Inclusion officer

Respect

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.	May 2025	Diversity and Inclusion Officer
	•• Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	February 2025	Diversity and Inclusion Officer
	•• Review and implement Cultural Awareness Training programs provided to SuniTAFE staff.	January 2025	Head of People and Culture
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	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	•• Develop an email signature with an Acknowledgement to Country at the bottom.	November 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	•• Install Acknowledgement of Country plaques at the front entrance	August 2024	CEO
	•• Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags	August 2024	Koorie Strategic Relationship
	•• Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2024	Koorie Strategic Relationship 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	Manager-Marketing, Communications and Events
	•• Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	June 2025	Manager-Marketing, Communications and Events
	•• RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2025	Koorie Liaison Officer

Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	••• Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment strategy.	March 2025	Head of People and Culture
	••• Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development	May 2025	Senior Manager-HR
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	••• Procure services/products from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	January 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	••• Investigate Supply Nation membership.	November 2024	Senior Manager Education Delivery
10. Partner with First Nations communities to explore opportunities for additional skills training requirements, short courses and accredited training	••• Research employment opportunities and develop training to meet the demand	January 2025	Education Delivery Manager-Koorie Programs & Youth
	••• Develop specific marketing and branding to promote our course offerings	February 2025	Senior Manager-Marketing & Communications
	••• Explore options to provide scholarships for further study and training	February 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager

Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	••• Form a RWG to govern Reflect RAP implementation.	August 2024	Koorie Liaison Officer
	••• Draft Terms of Reference for the RWG.	August 2024	Koorie Liaison Officer
	••• Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	August 2024	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	••• Define resource needs for Reflect RAP implementation.	September 2024	Senior Manager Education Delivery
	••• Engage senior leaders in the delivery of Reflect RAP commitments.	August 2024	Head of People and Culture
	••• Appoint a senior leader to champion our Reflect RAP internally.	August 2024	CEO
	••• Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on Reflect RAP commitments.	August 2024	Senior Manager Education Delivery
	••• Regularly report to the Board on the progress of the RAP	October 2024	Senior Manager Education Delivery
	••• Include Reflect RAP into SuniTAFE operational plans	January 2025	CEO
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	••• 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 Reflect RAP correspondence.	June 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	••• Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online Reflect RAP Impact Survey	1 August 2024 and 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	••• Complete and submit the annual Reflect RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2024 and 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager
	••• Identify staff and student champions to promote the Reflect RAP across SuniTAFE	August 2024	Koorie Student Support Officer
	••• Official SuniTAFE launch of Reflect RAP	March 2025	Manager-Marketing, Communications and Events
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	••• Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	June 2025	Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager



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Reconciliation Action Plan

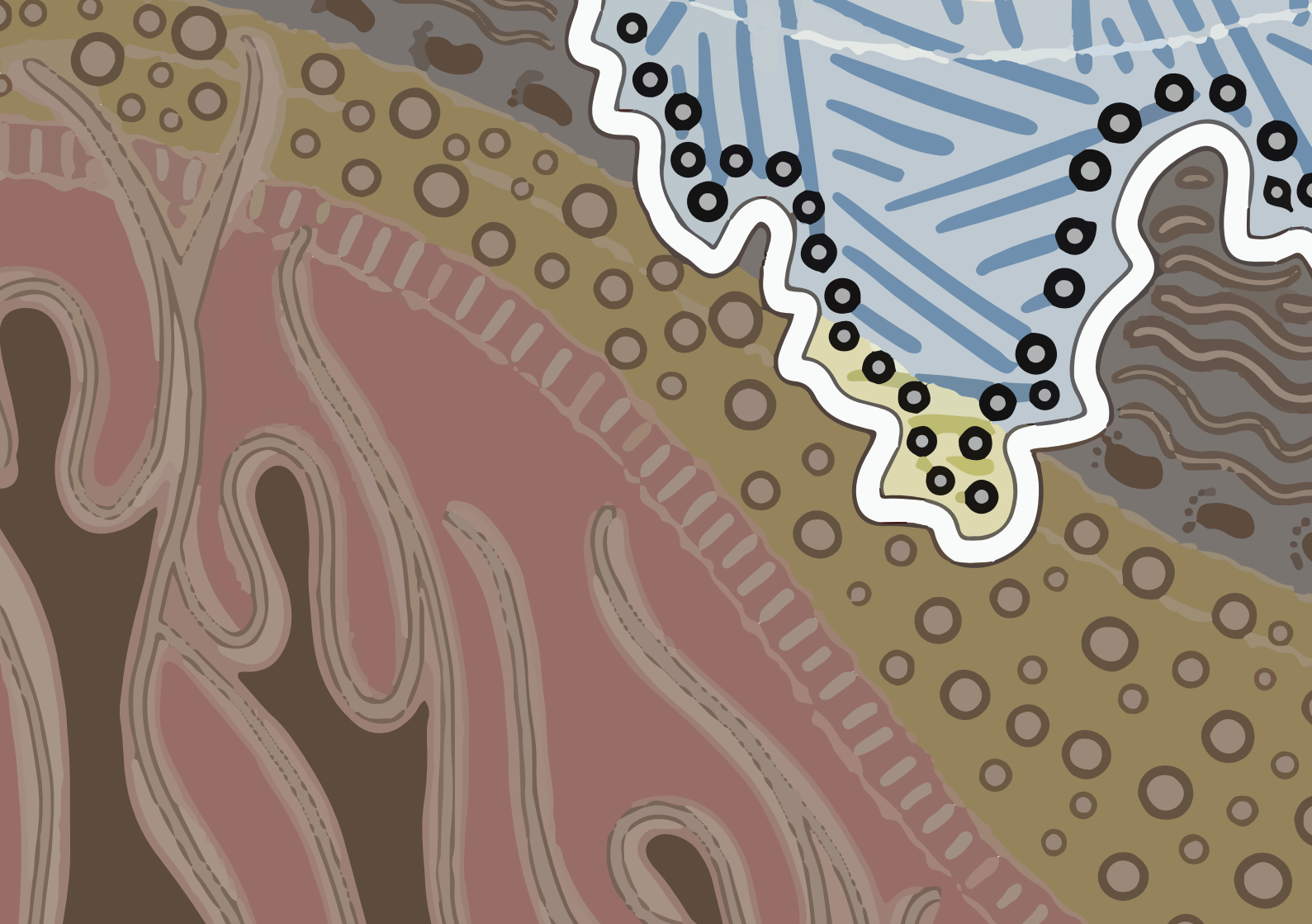
Contact details:

Name: Eilene Mitchell

Position: Acting Koorie Strategic Relationship Manager

Phone: 03 5022 3982

Email: emitchell@sunitafe.edu.au



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453 Benetook Avenue, Mildura, VIC, 3500

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64 Sea Lake-Swan Hill Rd, Swan Hill, VIC, 3585

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