

Developing a Reconciliation Action Plan

What is a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)?

A Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is a strategic framework developed by organisations and endorsed by Reconciliation Australia, an independent not-for-profit organisation.

A RAP outlines practical actions that an organisation will take to promote reconciliation and improve relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

What is the point of a RAP?

RAPs are widely used as a way for organisations to:

Make a formal commitment to reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians

Join broader reconciliation efforts in Australia, by respecting and valuing the rights, cultures, and contributions of Indigenous peoples.

The purpose of a RAP is to:

- Set goals by establishing clear objectives and targets for promoting reconciliation.
- Take action by outlining specific steps that the organisation will take to achieve those goals.
- Measure progress to ensure accountability.
- Raise awareness by highlighting Indigenous cultures, histories, and issues among employees and stakeholders.
- Promote inclusion by creating more respectful workplaces where all individuals can thrive, regardless of their background.

Different RAPs for different stages

Reconciliation Australia's RAP Framework offers organisations a structured approach to advancing reconciliation.

There are four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, and Elevate – each designed for different stages of the journey. The choice of RAP type depends on an organisation's readiness and commitment to reconciliation.

Which RAP is right for your organisation?

1. Reflect RAP

This is a 12-month plan suitable for organisations who are new to reconciliation, have limited relationships with Indigenous stakeholders, need to engage their entire organisation in reconciliation, lack a structured plan for reconciliation, or are unsure about the identities of their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and stakeholders.

It helps them prepare for future reconciliation initiatives by building relationships with Indigenous stakeholders, defining a vision for reconciliation, and exploring their sphere of influence.

2. Innovate RAP

Lasting two years, the Innovate RAP is aimed at organisations ready to make significant strides in reconciliation. It's designed for those with strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, who are eager to consolidate their commitment to reconciliation, overcome previous challenges, or refine their approaches. It encourages organisations to develop mutually beneficial relationships with Indigenous stakeholders, pilot innovative initiatives, engage staff actively, and identify effective approaches to advance reconciliation within the organisation.

Key prerequisites include organisational support, senior leadership backing, and a governance structure with Indigenous representation.

3. Stretch RAP

This is a two- to three-year initiative for organisations with a strong reconciliation foundation. It emphasises longer-term strategies and aims to integrate reconciliation initiatives into everyday business operations. This RAP type is suitable for organisations confident in their reconciliation approach, who are ready to expand commitments and collaborate with other RAP organisations.

Organisations are expected to set measurable targets, engage staff, continuously improve reconciliation strategies, and actively engage with external stakeholders.

Prerequisites include a successful previous RAP, robust engagement with Indigenous stakeholders, an effective governance structure, and senior leadership support.

4. Elevate RAP

This is for organisations that have demonstrated their commitment to reconciliation through Stretch RAPs and are ready to take a leadership role in advancing national reconciliation. It requires a strong relationship with Reconciliation Australia, active advocacy for Indigenous empowerment, and independent assessment of activities.

If you think your organisation is ready to start its RAP, more information can be found on the Reconciliation Australia website

<https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/>