



# Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

FEBRUARY 2022 – FEBRUARY 2023





## Acknowledgement of Country

Anchor acknowledges and respects the Traditional Custodians of the land we stand on, the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people past, present and emerging.

## About the Artist

Teghan Voce is a proud Taungurong/Wiradjuri woman living in Healesville Victoria. At just 17 years old, Teghan crafted four uniquely beautiful paintings created specifically for Anchor's REFLECT Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The pieces represent Anchor's connection to community and land and the people they support.

Teghan developed the pieces using her skilled artistry and her own feelings of belonging to her community.

“ All of the pieces I have developed for Anchor represent elements of my community and our connection to country where we feel at home. ”

—Teghan Voce



## About the Artworks



This artwork is based on men, men gathering around the camp right next to the river, as the sun is setting they head off hunting for dinner.



This artwork is based on women, women gathering in a safe place around the river with their bush tucker, looking over the mountains under the stars.



The artwork is based around children, children around the rivers playing all together in their campsites, in their safe place with the elders watching over the children.



This artwork is based on family, family feeling safe with their families all gathering together while all the animals are feeling welcomed around them and around the river.

# Anchor, CEO statement

**As Chief Executive Officer, it is my role and responsibility to lead the journey of reconciliation in partnership with our Board of Management, staff and volunteers.**

I wish to acknowledge that Anchor operates on Aboriginal land which was never ceded. I honour Aboriginal elder's past, present and those young people who are emerging as future leaders.

Anchor accepts that it has been part of a service system for over 45 years that did not adequately recognise the harm caused to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by government and community sector policies. Additionally, Anchor recognises the current over representation of Aboriginal people in child protection and the justice system as well as those who are affected by chronic health conditions, family violence or homelessness.

The “why” is simple. Anchor joins the collective of organisations who are working to develop awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and leadership across all sectors of Australian society. We recognise that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continue to live with disadvantage and we must contribute to “closing the gap” in order to change the future for the people we serve.

Our Reflect RAP directs and supports our journey to reconciliation with Aboriginal people and ensures we develop all parts of the organisation to become



culturally safe for people who need our services. Our Reflect RAP will deliver outcomes that contribute toward the five dimensions of reconciliation: race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity and historical acceptance.

Anchor will ensure that it sets its strategic and business objectives to support reconciliation and invests resources to realise our commitments outlined in our Reflect RAP.

Anchor is honoured to have the support of Aboriginal people who have already been part of our journey. We seek to move in partnership with organisations controlled by Aboriginal people to ensure the people we serve feel culturally safe and secure.

**Heidi Tucker**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Anchor

# Reconciliation Australia, CEO statement

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

Anchor joins 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 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.

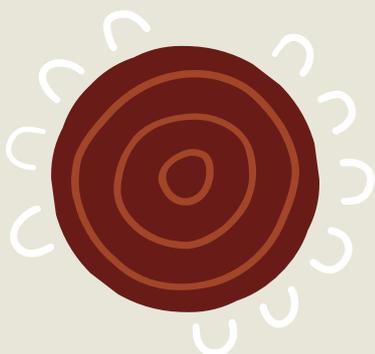


It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This Reflect RAP enables Anchor 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 Anchor, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



# Our Business

**Anchor is a community service organisation which has operated in Melbourne's east for over 45 years. We assist some of the most vulnerable in our community through services including homeless and crisis support, youth development, foster care, kinship care, transitioning from care, community education and family reconciliation.**

Our staff work using an 'Advantaged Thinking' and 'Trauma Focused' lens; helping people affected by crisis and trauma to restore relationships, receive the support they need, and take charge of their futures.

We work proactively to create stronger and more resilient communities by investing in and building local partnerships, educating community leaders, and setting up grassroots initiatives. We assist individuals at all stages of life by helping people achieve a safe and secure place to live, encouraging nurturing environments for children and young people and supporting education and life-long learning.

Anchor is proud to be a smaller and more flexible organisation, with the ability to respond directly to vulnerable members of our community and do this daily through local government, business, peak body, philanthropic and not-for-profit partnerships.

Anchor has five office locations in Melbourne including: Scoresby, Lilydale and Pakenham. Our services extend primarily across the Eastern Region however Anchor now partners with Southern Department of Families Fairness and Housing and is expanding its programs and services throughout the Cardinia and Gippsland areas.

Our geographical reach lends itself across Wurundjeri Land -the Maroondah, Knox, and Yarra Ranges Council areas and Boon Wurrung and Gunaikurnai Land and Waters; the Pakenham, Cardinia, and Gippsland areas. These areas are home to sizeable Aboriginal communities and Anchor is committed to working locally to ensure we address Reconciliation with local First Nations peoples in a manner that is meaningful to them.

While the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff is currently not known, we will work within this RAP to determine culturally appropriate ways to understand our current status. Anchor employs 38 full time, 14 part time and four casual staff. Anchor has 83 foster families and ten volunteers working across the organisation. Our dedicated staff and volunteers support over 50 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, children and young people through our Housing and Crisis Support services at any one time.



## Our RAP

**Anchor is committed to supporting the national reconciliation movement and its efforts to promote equity between all peoples of Australia, and the process of solidifying the Victorian Treaty recognising all prior ownership of land and injustice experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.**

Anchor acknowledges that the lands on which we work, are home to communities and individuals largely impacted by the effects of colonisation, including the forcible removal of children from their families, their communities, their cultures, and their nations. We view firsthand the intergenerational impacts of this within the communities we serve and are committed to partnering with all Aboriginal Controlled Organisations to drive agency, strength and success, sharing our resources and knowledge and learning from theirs.

We are dedicated to yarning with all who want to be heard. We are working to re-vision our organisation to be a strong ally, and to exist within a culturally safe, competent, and educated space for all of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We will do this alongside our partnering Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations and all Aboriginal community members within the region.





# Anchor recognises that in this space we are not the experts.



We acknowledge that leadership, engagement and commitment of all stakeholders - our Board, staff, volunteers and funders - are critical in implementing this strategy. Implementation will be a learning process, and we must remain committed to listening to and reflecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples along the journey.

We are dedicated to walking alongside Aboriginal Elders, families, and individuals as we learn. We will work to drive our collective voice to create a strong and sustainable culture of knowledge, understanding, and respect.

Leading Anchor's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committee and acting as our organisations RAP Champion, is Anchor CEO Heidi Tucker. Anchor's established Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committee comprises of staff members, management, Board members, Aboriginal community members and representatives from local Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations. We know that in order for change to happen it needs to be driven by us all.

We believe that the whole organisation must be committed to, and heavily invested in, the journey through this process to enable the embedding of both curiosity and exploration of our history as Australians and our role in that history.

Anchor has included the Reconciliation Action Plan as a strategic priority for the organisation, which will be regularly reviewed and reported against. Anchor has taken this step to ensure that moving forward we are able to be held to account, to reflect on our history and to guide our future.

We have had a long-standing commitment to the journey of reconciliation, evident through our local Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisation partnerships, program and service development, working groups and consortia involvement across all the domains we work within.

Anchor began a deep dive into our organisational competence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in 2017 engaging an Aboriginal Consultant to explore our levels of cultural safety and wider understanding of community by our staff, management, and Board, and offering an insight into how community and local Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations view who we are and how we work.

Some informative, challenging and very clear realities regarding how Anchor was perceived by community came to light.

## Following this, Anchor dedicated staff and management to:

- Prioritise community and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations relationships.
- Strengthen the embedding of a cultural safety education plan and its continual and progressive agenda.
- Reinforce the organisation's engagement and connectivity with Oonah Health & Community Services Aboriginal Corporation and The Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency, its staff and community at a local grass roots level.
- Ensure a supported transition and ongoing involvement as needed, with the transfer of all Out of Home Care placements to Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Organisations.

This work continues across all levels of staff and management today.

# Anchor has prioritised a strong working relationship with Community since 2017.

## Consortia involvement across a number of direct response services including:

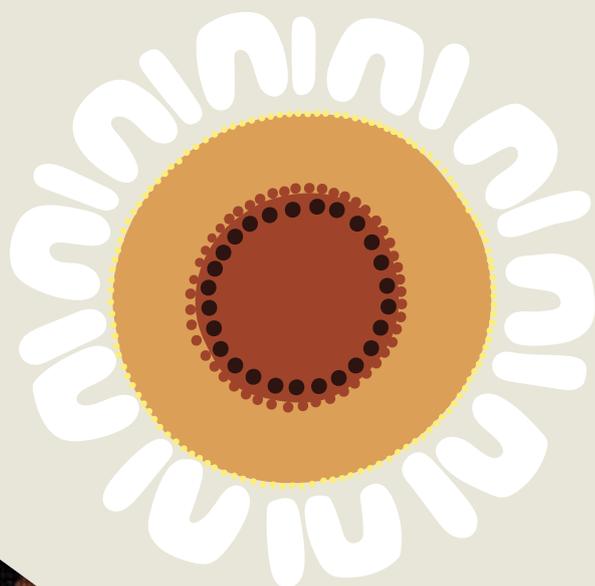
- The Lilydale Integrated Youth Health Hub (2019)
- Brighter Futures Outer East – (Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Association / Boorndawan Willam 2017)
- Homelessness to Homes Consortia (2021).

## Ongoing Community partnerships:

- The Rapid Response Pilot, a local government funded pilot project to support Rough Sleepers in the Outer Eastern region. Ensuring the support provided to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rough Sleepers is culturally safe is integral to the program.
- The delivery of 'Wahrwoonga' (my home) - a young women's shared transitional accommodation in Healesville delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Controlled Organisation, Healesville Indigenous Community Service Association (now known as Oonah) and Community Service Organisation, HICCI in 2017.
- Hazel Hams Homes and the Support for Young Families Foyer: individual units allocated to Aboriginal young mums in need of support and accommodation established in 2017.
- HEART - a state-wide COVID-19 emergency housing response to ensure all homeless individuals and families had a place to call home during the 2020 state lockdown.
- The ongoing sponsorship of a number of local Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations events and food drives.

Anchor understands that early partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations are the best way to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples can feel confident and safe engaging with Anchor when needed.

All of this increases our understanding of how we can reconcile with local communities in a way that is appropriate, timely and empowering for them.



# Internally Anchor has driven a shift in culture, diversity, and commitment to learning.

## We do this through:

- Ongoing Cultural Competency training and staff and management qualifications through The Centre for Cultural Competence Australia. This is built into our new staff onboarding procedures and for all staff and management annually.
- A 'Deep Dive' Cultural Audit: Community and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisation interviews and focus groups to gain a wider view of how Anchor is perceived.
- Ongoing Community Education: video interviews with Aboriginal community members surrounding National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week, the anniversary of Kevin Rudd's Sorry Speech, Sorry Day.
- The employment of young Aboriginal Artist, Teghan Voce, to provide Anchor with four key pieces of art depicting our relationship with Community and the Land we work on.
- Advancing Carer training - Foster Care Online Training Australia FCOTA: Updating and redesigning Anchor's Carer training modules in partnership with Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency in 2019 to include two modules of First Nations training - Introduction to Aboriginal Culture and Caring for Indigenous Children. This is now delivered to all new Foster Carers across our organisation.

## Grass roots engagement and co-location:

- Direct service and staff involvement with monthly Tuckerbox and Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisation run activities, events, and community meetings. Anchor has committed to embedding staff within Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations in an ongoing capacity for learning and service purposes including the placement of Crisis Response Staff into local Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations to work alongside individuals to secure and stabilise their tenancies.
- Local education and country-based history sessions through Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation in 2018. This will be embedded in staff and management yearly professional development 2022 onwards.



# Relationships

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. Including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing attendance at local Aboriginal Networks.</li> <li>• Introduction to less familiar Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations including Mullum Mullum Indigenous Gathering Place, Djirra, The Koori Business Network, Koori Heritage Trust, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies.</li> </ul>	Review: March 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Partnership and Development Lead
	Develop and establish an Aboriginal Partnership Plan that supports and guides future engagement with First Nations Organisations.	September 2022	Lead: Partnership and Development Lead Support: Business Development and Support Manager
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	March 2022	Partnership and Development Lead
	Connect to local Aboriginal Youth Services and initiate partnership to deliver Aboriginal 'Youth Voice' Committee: informing Anchors future service development.	July 2022	Homelessness and Youth Development Manager
	2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff and stakeholders.	April 2022
Financially support at least one local Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisation to hold a NRW event.		April 2022	Lead: Corporate Services Manager Support: Partnership and Development Lead
RAP Committee members and Board of Management to participate in an external NRW event.		May 27 – June 3 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Partnership and Development Lead

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 27 – June 3 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Team Leaders
<b>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</b>	Communicate and demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff and stakeholders including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dedicated RAP page on Anchor Point (intranet) updated regularly with resources, activities, links to events.</li> <li>• Ongoing education and resourcing of Anchor Point RAP platform.</li> </ul>	Review: March 2022	Lead: Communications and Marketing Coordinator Support: Information and Compliance Coordinator
	Instigate and encourage a sector-wide external process of contact to VACCA when there is a referral of an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander child. Ensuring a strong cultural / community connection right from the start of a child's Out of Home Care journey.	Review: August 2022	Lead: Child and Family Services Manager Support: OOHC Team Leaders
	Promote Anchor's commitment to reconciliation and the implementation of our RAP to stakeholders including local Councils, Business networks, homelessness and youth service networks, corporate partners and more.	March 2022	Lead: Communications and Marketing Coordinator Support: Partnership and Development Lead
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	June 2022	Lead: Partnership and Development Lead Support: RAP Committee
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	July 2022	Lead: Business Development and Support Manager Support: Partnership and Development Lead
<b>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</b>	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	Review process: May 2022	People and Culture Manager
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Review process: April 2022	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: People and Culture Assistant



# Respect

Action	Deliverables	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.	Review: March 2022	Business Development and Support Manager
	Facilitate opportunities for staff to connect within external Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations to embed learning and grass roots experience.	Review: June 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Senior Management Team
	Purchase an Australian Centre for Cultural Competency license for staff to gain a deeper understanding of local Aboriginal Cultures and Stolen Generation Trauma. <i>Ensure all Staff and Management graduate the course with a full licence.</i>	Review: March 2022	People and Culture Manager
	Review, monitor, evaluate and report on staff cultural learning needs to support future growth and continuing needs.	Review: March 2022	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: People and Culture Assistant
	Introduce KPIs for staff surrounding engagement and contribution to the RAP process and team involvement in regular attendance and training.	Review: June 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Senior Management Team
	Ensure each staff member includes goals in their Employee Personal Development Plan that pertains to learning about specific Aboriginal Cultures, Nations and how it relates to their work.	May 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Senior Management Team
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.	Review: June 2022	Lead: Partnership and Development Lead Support: Business Development and Support Manager

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
	<p>Increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monthly updating / information sharing / education of staff and management via Reconciliation Action Plan platform on Anchor Point.</li> </ul>	March 2022	Communications and Marketing Coordinator
	Increase the visual presence of cultural safety and connection to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through presence of the Aboriginal Flag and other materials throughout all locations / office spaces.	March 2022	Communications and Marketing Coordinator
<b>7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</b>	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	June 2022	Lead: Communications and Marketing Coordinator Support: Team Leaders
	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area and increasing attendance year on year.	July 2022	Communications and Marketing Coordinator
	RAP Committee to participate in two external NAIDOC Week events.	July 2022	Partnership and Development Lead



# Opportunities

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	Review: June 2022	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: CEO
	Begin recruitment of an Aboriginal Board member / Advisor.	August 2022	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: CEO
	Complete HR audit of existing policies; the development of four specific policies surrounding Anchor advancing and sustaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.	Review process: April 2022	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: People and Culture Assistant
	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak with First Nations staff about the kind of professional development they are seeking within Anchor.</li> </ul>	July 2022	Lead: People and Culture Manager Support: CEO
	Connect to three external organisations with existing Aboriginal Employment policies to increase understanding.	July 2022	Lead: Partnership and Development Lead
	Conduct a review of HR recruitment policies and procedures to promote the advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	July 2022	Support: People and Culture Manager
	Explore the inclusion of an Aboriginal Interview panel member for all interviews.	Review: May 2022	People and Culture Manager
	Develop a People and Culture strategy / framework to attract, recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Staff.	July 2022	People and Culture Manager
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	April 2022	Partnership and Development Lead and Corporate Services Manager
	Investigate new ways to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned business owners (i.e Supply Nation, Indigenous Business Network, Kinaway).	Review: March 2022	Lead: Corporate Services Manager Support: Partnership and Development Lead



# Governance

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Evaluate and review RAP Committee Governance including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anchor Board of Management to implement a formal review of RAP Committee progression and leadership</li> <li>Complete an evaluation of progression based on Strategic Direction indicators.</li> </ul>	June 2022	Lead: Anchor BOM Support: Partnership and Development Lead
	Review and update Terms of Reference for the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee.	June 2022	Partnership and Development Lead
	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee.	June 2022	Partnership and Development Lead
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	February 2022	Lead: Partnership and Development Lead Support: CEO
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments including: Addition of standing agenda item at SMT meetings – RAP deliverables and progress.	February 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Senior Management Team
	RAP Committee member to attend team meetings bimonthly to support and promote activities and tasks.	February 2022	CEO
	Senior Management to participate in RAP Committee reporting.	June 2022	Lead: CEO Support: Team Leaders
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	February 2022	Lead: Business Development and Support Support: Partnership and Development Lead

Action	Deliverables	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Build Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisation sustainability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to ensure that our primary and secondary contact are up to date to ensure we are receiving important correspondence.	June 2022 and annually	Partnership and Development Lead
	Follow up with Reconciliation Australia if we have not yet received our unique reporting link to participate in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2022 and annually	Partnership and Development Lead
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2022 and annually	Partnership and Development Lead
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	September 2022	Partnership and Development Lead



“ I’m proud of my artwork.  
I hope that it inspires safety,  
strength and Aboriginal  
self-determination to progress  
reconciliation. I’m excited to be  
a part of Anchor’s journey. ”

—Teghan Voce



## Contact details

**Lauren Gordon**  
Partnership and Service Development Lead

Phone: 0409 668 005  
Email: [lauren.gordon@anchor.org.au](mailto:lauren.gordon@anchor.org.au)



Anchor