



**RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN**

**REFLECT**

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**ARTD CONSULTANTS**

MAY 2021 TO FEBRUARY 2022

[www.artd.com.au](http://www.artd.com.au)

## COVER ARTWORK AND DESIGN

Emma Walke's design shows a story of connection to Country and people and the journey that ARTD has undertaken to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia. The white lines are the passages taken, the community symbols of circles of dots are the three office areas, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. The coloured dots relate to people, communities and projects that ARTD have completed and worked with over the years.

Emma is a Bundjalung woman and potter from Northern NSW and her family is from Cabbage Tree Island/Ballina area and has over 19 years' experience in the Aboriginal and mainstream not-for-profit sectors. As Academic Lead for Aboriginal Health Education at the University Centre for Rural Health, University of Sydney based in Lismore, Emma works with medical and allied health university students to understand the history and its effects on Aboriginal peoples today, and to unpack their own individual identities, attitudes and behaviours in order to ensure the future health workforce can provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with the best possible care.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO COUNTRY

ARTD staff recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia and acknowledge their unceded sovereignty.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and respect their continued custodianship of the many lands upon which we conduct our business and the waterways that support life.

We acknowledge the past injustices, untold histories and respect the value, and ongoing contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to our communities and wider Australia.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO OUR ARTD COMMUNITY

ARTD would also like to acknowledge that Aboriginal people have been a part of our company's establishment and have led to our community connections and understanding that for Aboriginal projects, Aboriginal people should have their voices heard.

We would like to acknowledge all staff across our offices who have contributed their time, wisdom and insights into developing our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and who have been a keen part of the dialogue necessary for change to occur.

## A MESSAGE FROM ARTD BOARD AND MANAGING DIRECTOR

At ARTD, our staff are passionate about working towards reconciliation. We believe that developing a RAP with a working group to drive action and accountability will solidify our commitment and ensure our work supports communities in creating positive outcomes.

Much of our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities involves creating a genuine space for us to listen. We walk with them in the design and delivery of evaluations of their own programs to best meet their needs, goals and aspirations. As our company has grown, so too has our portfolio of work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and stakeholders. For this reason, we feel it is important that all our staff build their cultural awareness and competence so they can work respectfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and reflect on their own contributions to reconciliation.

Our RAP will help us to embed and refine processes across our company to ensure we work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and stakeholders in a way that meets the empowerment and self-determination principles. It will also ensure that we, as evaluators, are able to promote equity by engaging sensitively and meaningfully with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to build trust and uncover different types of knowledge and evidence to inform ways of doing our work.

## OUR BUSINESS

ARTD is a leading public policy consulting firm. Our core business is working with government agencies and non-government organisations to:

- make evidence-informed policy decisions
- co-design service models and delivery strategies
- plan for, track and evaluate outcomes
- continuously improve performance.

Our head office sits on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, in the heart of today's Sydney CBD. We also have offices and staff located on the lands of the Kulin Nation in Narm (Melbourne), and on the lands of the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples of Meanjin (Brisbane).

We work across multiple sectors, including human services, education, health, disability and environment sectors. Because social policy problems are complex and interconnected, we often work with stakeholders across sectors to develop and review cross-agency, whole-of-government and integrated policies and programs.

We are committed to listening to the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities in research and evaluation. We have a deep level of expertise and cultural competence when working with people and communities, drawing on our Aboriginal staff and associates to lead project design, engagement, review of data and decision-making about what findings mean for the next steps that should be taken. Our work ranges from grassroots, capacity-building partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO), to state-wide evaluations of targeted programs and national monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

We are recognised in our sector for our work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Most recently this has been recognised in 2019 when we won the Australian Evaluation Society's Aboriginal Evaluation Award for Excellence for our work with Abcare and Tirkandi Inaburra under Their Future's Matter's Aboriginal Evidence Building Partnership pilot.

## OUR RAP

We believe that a reconciled Australia is one that is comfortable with truth telling. Reconciliation brings benefits to all involved and is a necessary part of a strong national identity and for new and integrated ways of living for all Australians. Much of our work directly contributes to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led improvements to policies and programs, as well as strategic decision-making.

ARTD is grateful for any wisdom the Traditional Owners of the Land may share for the benefit of a wiser society for all Australians. We will prioritise learning and listening to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and the communities with whom we work. We make a commitment to building relationships, rapport and trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations to support them to grow and thrive. We

believe that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities know what works best for them and we will proactively seek out opportunities to undertake projects supporting their self-determination. Through our work, we will aim to build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and people to design, develop, monitor and evaluate policies and programs that serve their communities and contribute to a reconciled Australia.

Through engagement with communities, two-way learning, which can also change the way we do evaluation, we support a more thoughtful world, in which communities and decision-makers use evaluative tools to design and refine action for the public good. We will make every effort to ensure that ARTD is a culturally safe and welcoming space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to work in and with our teams.

## OUR VALUES

Five values underpin the way in which we approach and conduct our work at ARTD.

**COMMITMENT** – We give our all to each project, no matter the size. We are committed to continuous learning and staying at the forefront of our fields so our work can enable better public policy outcomes.

**CRITICAL THINKING** – We are focused on helping our clients improve the quality of judgements about the value of policies and programs, using credible evidence for real-world solutions.

**CURIOSITY** – We’re continuously learning about new approaches to policy and program design, research and evaluation. We explore the drivers of complex policy problems and seek to understand how interventions work.

**CREATIVITY** – We approach each project with a sense of possibility because we know new ideas and flexible approaches are needed to address complex policy problems within available resources.

**COLLABORATION** – We work with our clients and their clients as partners in policy co-design and review processes, listening and responding to clients’ needs and valuing diverse perspectives and cultures.

## OUR STAFF

Our staff come from a range of disciplinary and professional backgrounds, including government, education and training, community development, science, health, economics, psychology and communications. This diversity enables us to compile teams with the right range of skills and expertise to complete individual projects.

Position	n*
Partner	4
Senior Director	1

Director	3
Senior Manager	1
Manager	5
Senior Consultant	6
Consultant	6
Analyst	4
Research Assistant	3
Communications Officer	1
Operations Manager	1
<b>Total of internal ARTD staff members</b>	<b>35</b>
External Associates	7

\* March 2021.

Two ARTD staff (6%) identify as Aboriginal and five of our external Associates identify as Aboriginal. We are currently recruiting for a further two roles for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people (March 2021).

## OUR PARTNERSHIPS

### SENIOR ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATES

By building external relationships with Aboriginal Associates, ARTD is able to partner with these knowledge holders and draw on their abilities to communicate with communities, to ensure the voices of Aboriginal people and communities are heard in our projects. These partnerships have also been an opportunity for ARTD to support these Aboriginal-owned small businesses and independent consultants. We have five current Aboriginal External Associates.

### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

**The Northern Institute, Charles Darwin University** – This partnership combines our skills in public policy with the Northern Institute’s network of associates, including Aboriginal researchers, and leverages our shared realist approach to understanding the value of public policy and programs. The partnership includes Professorial Research Fellow, Gill Westhorp, who leads the Realist Research Evaluation and Learning Initiative (RREALI).

**Ninti One** – Our partnership with Ninti One gives us stronger reach into rural and remote communities and into Australia’s west and has brought an Aboriginal perspective to theories of change and data collection. Working with Ninti One means our projects draw on the wisdom and expertise of local community researchers. As we’ve learnt from Ninti staff, we

have also shared our own experience in research and evaluation methods, which in turn has contributed to the capacity of both of our organisations.

**Abcare Coffs Harbour and the Aboriginal Housing Office (AHO)** – We recently signed a formal partnership with Abcare and the AHO to support an innovative new program for Aboriginal young people leaving care and transitioning into independent living. The partnership formalises a strong collaborative relationship we have developed with Abcare across numerous projects in the past two years. Across our partnership we share knowledge and learnings that focus on strengthening Abcare’s ability to develop and implement strategies, policies and monitoring and evaluation activities to enhance their service delivery to local Aboriginal people, families and communities.

## CURRENT ACTIVITIES

### ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER INTERNSHIP AND RESEARCH ASSISTANT PROGRAM

ARTD offers internships and seeks to recruit research assistants who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers looking to develop pathways into program review, evaluation and social policy research. The support of a cultural mentor is also offered, and access to other supports such as professional development or study support. Our interns have taken up permanent positions with ARTD after completing their internships.

### CULTURAL COMPETENCY TRAINING

In 2019, all ARTD staff attended a day-long cultural competency training at Tranby Aboriginal College on working in and with Aboriginal people and communities, led by Justin Noel of Origins Communications Australia. Our staff were thoroughly engaged and expressed eagerness in participating in further training, which will focus on building our capacity to work with Aboriginal people and communities and ensuring ARTD is a culturally safe and welcoming place for all. This follows previous cultural competency training undertaken at different points in ARTD’s history.

## OUR JOURNEY

While this is ARTD’s first formal Reconciliation Action Plan, it is not the beginning of our proud story of working with Aboriginal communities across Australia.

In the early 1980s, our founding partners, Chris Milne, David Morrissey and Michael Brooks, met when they worked together teaching at Tranby Aboriginal College in Glebe. Tranby is an Aboriginal-run adult educational organisation with a strong sense of political activism and has been deeply involved with the land rights movements around Australia. In the mid-1980s Chris and David set up a consultancy unit for the college and won contracts to provide training and development work with Aboriginal organisations, especially land councils in NSW. In 1989 they built on this experience to set up ARTD Consultants, working with both Aboriginal communities and the wider community, joined by Michael Brooks in 1990.

Since 1989, we have worked with Aboriginal people and communities across Australia to design, deliver, map and evaluate social and human services policies and programs in their communities. During this time, a number of Aboriginal people have played a key role in developing ARTD as a business as well as extending our work into a diversity of communities around Australia. Through this, we have developed a network of experienced Aboriginal associates and organisations with whom we work. In addition, we take pride in the deep experience and continued commitment to learning that our staff have when it comes to working in Aboriginal affairs.

When we work with Aboriginal organisations, program staff and stakeholders, we work with them as partners and commit ourselves to supporting Aboriginal self-determination. We believe that Aboriginal communities should lead the design of solutions for their own communities. We are proud that our approach to working with Aboriginal communities was recognised when we were awarded the 2019 Indigenous Evaluation Award for Excellence by the Australian Evaluation Society.

In 2020, ARTD adopted a portfolio approach for our growing portfolio of Aboriginal projects and partnerships, reflecting our continuing commitment to developing strategic relationships with local Aboriginal community organisations and other government and non-government agencies within the sector. We always remember that this ever-growing network began from small roots in an Aboriginal organisation itself, with Aboriginal people playing a major part in our company's establishment.

Our Aboriginal portfolio is led by Simon Jordan, Director Aboriginal Partnerships and Projects, who is our allocated RAP champion. As the RAP champion, Simon leads the RAP Working Group.

## REFLECT RAP

Even though we have a long history of working in the NSW Aboriginal sector, our RAP Working Group chose to start with a Reflect RAP to ensure that we complete all the foundational steps and so that all our staff are involved in our reconciliation journey.

The 12-month Reflect RAP is about preparing ARTD for reconciliation initiatives in successive RAPs. We are committing our organisation to spending time scoping and developing relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, refining our vision for reconciliation and exploring our sphere of influence.

The following pages outline the four pillars that underpin our Reflect RAP. These pillars are:

1. Relationships
2. Respect
3. Opportunities
4. Governance and tracking progress.



## RELATIONSHIPS

*ARTD will create new and build upon existing relationships with communities to develop deeper connections, trust and rapport with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and all our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients*



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	1.1 Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	Sep 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	1.2 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Sep 2021	Operations Manager
2. Reconciliation through our sphere of influences	2.1 Develop communication strategy for ARTD staff to raise awareness and advise people of their RAP commitments and their responsibilities for these.	May 2021	Communications Officer
	2.2 Use ARTD blog/ social media to communicate internally/ externally about our RAP journey.	May 2021	Communications Officer
	2.3 Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	Jun 2021	Research Assistant
	2.4 Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	Jun 2021	Research Assistant
3. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander	3.1 Provide opportunities for all staff to build relationships with Aboriginal staff and associates	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	3.2 Hold a forum with Aboriginal associates to identify opportunities for collaboration.	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects

stakeholders and organisations	3.3 Develop a list of relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within each ARTD location we could approach on our reconciliation journey.	May 2021	Research Assistant
	3.4 Build relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics at local universities to identify collaboration opportunities.	May 2021	Manager
	3.5 Create opportunities for ARTD staff to work on Aboriginal projects in the Aboriginal Projects and Partnerships portfolio.	Dec 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	3.6 Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	May 2021	Research Assistant
4. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	4.1 Encourage our staff to attend events related to Sorry Day and NRW.	May 2021	Communications Officer
	4.2 Raise awareness, circulate resources (e.g. Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources), and share information among our staff of the meaning of these events, which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.	Mar, Jun, Sep 2021	Communications Officer
	4.3 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2021	Communications Officer
	4.4 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2021	Communications Officer

## RESPECT

ARTD staff will further develop our existing respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and cultural capacity through deepening knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and achievements.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	5.1 Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	July 2021	Communications Officer
	5.2 Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area.	July 2021	Communications Officer
	5.3 RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	5.4 Encourage our staff to organise and attend events related to NAIDOC Week.	4-11 July 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	5.5 Ensure our RAP working group participates in an external event to recognise and celebrate NAIDOC Week.	4-11 July 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
6. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	6.1 Develop a survey to capture data and measure staff's current level of understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	May 2021	Consultant
	6.2 Review feedback of cultural awareness needs and training within our organisation.	May 2021	Consultant

	6.3 Teams to develop plans for increasing their local awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements to present at a staff meeting.	May 2021	Research Assistant
	6.4 Communicate and encourage all staff to use Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online tool.	May 2021	Consultant
	6.5 Develop a business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and rights within our organisation.	Oct 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
7. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	7.1 Scope and develop a list of key local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our office location's sphere of influence.	May 2021	Communications Officer
	7.2 Develop and implement a lunchtime learning session to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols), working towards building on staff's cultural competence and capacity.	May 2021	Manager
	7.3 Include Acknowledgement of Country in all ARTD forums and workshops.	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	7.4 Develop a guide and visual signage with specific knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history of our office locations for our website, foyers, acknowledgements and documents.	Jun 2021	Communications Officer
8. Improve and increase levels of cultural safety within the workplace	8.1 Research best-practice and principles that support cultural safety in the workplace.	May 2021	Research Assistant
	8.2 Purchase and display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags, AIATSIS maps and artworks in all offices.	May 2021	Consultant

## OPPORTUNITIES

ARTD will embed procurement and recruitment protocols that support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and businesses.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development	9.1 Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	May 2021	Research Assistant
	9.2 Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation to meet ongoing needs, as part of the internship and graduate policy.	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
10. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	10.1 Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	May 2021	Manager
	10.2 Identify and commence procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses including services supporting projects and the running of the office i.e. caterers, artist pool.	Jun 2021	Manager
	10.3 Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	May 2021	Manager
	10.4 Investigate Supply Nation membership.	Jun 2021	Consultant
11. Explore business and pro-bono opportunities to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations	11.1 Promote volunteering or donation opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned organisations.	Jul 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	11.2 Develop strategic partnerships and relationships with the non-government Aboriginal Affairs sector to maximise their social impact using evidence building and codesign approaches.	Dec 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects

## GOVERNANCE AND TRACKING PROGRESS

ARTD pledges to complete our RAP's tasks and provide the support to staff to go forth and complete the RAP deliverables as they will help ARTD work towards and contribute to reconciliation.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	12.1 Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	12.2 Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
	12.3 Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	May 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
13. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	13.1 Define resource needs for RAP development and implementation.	May 2021	Director
	13.2 Define systems and capability needs to track, measure and report on RAP activities.	May 2021	Consultant
	13.3 Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Jun 2021	Director
14. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	14.1 Complete the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire and submit to Reconciliation Australia.	Sep 2021	Research assistant
	14.2 ARTD leadership to be informed on the progress of implementation and engage in the delivery of RAP outcomes through the staff and Board meetings.	Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects

	14.3 RAP working group members to report back to teams after each quarterly meeting (at a minimum).	Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec 2021	Director of Aboriginal partnerships and projects
15. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	15.1 Register via Reconciliation Australia's <a href="#">website</a> to begin developing our next RAP.	Jul 2021	Manager
	15.2 Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review.	Sep 2021	Manager
	15.3 Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement.	Dec 2021	Manager

## ARTD DETAILS

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SYDNEY**

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FOR PUBLIC ENQUIRIES ABOUT ARTD'S REFLECT RAP, PLEASE CONTACT:

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