

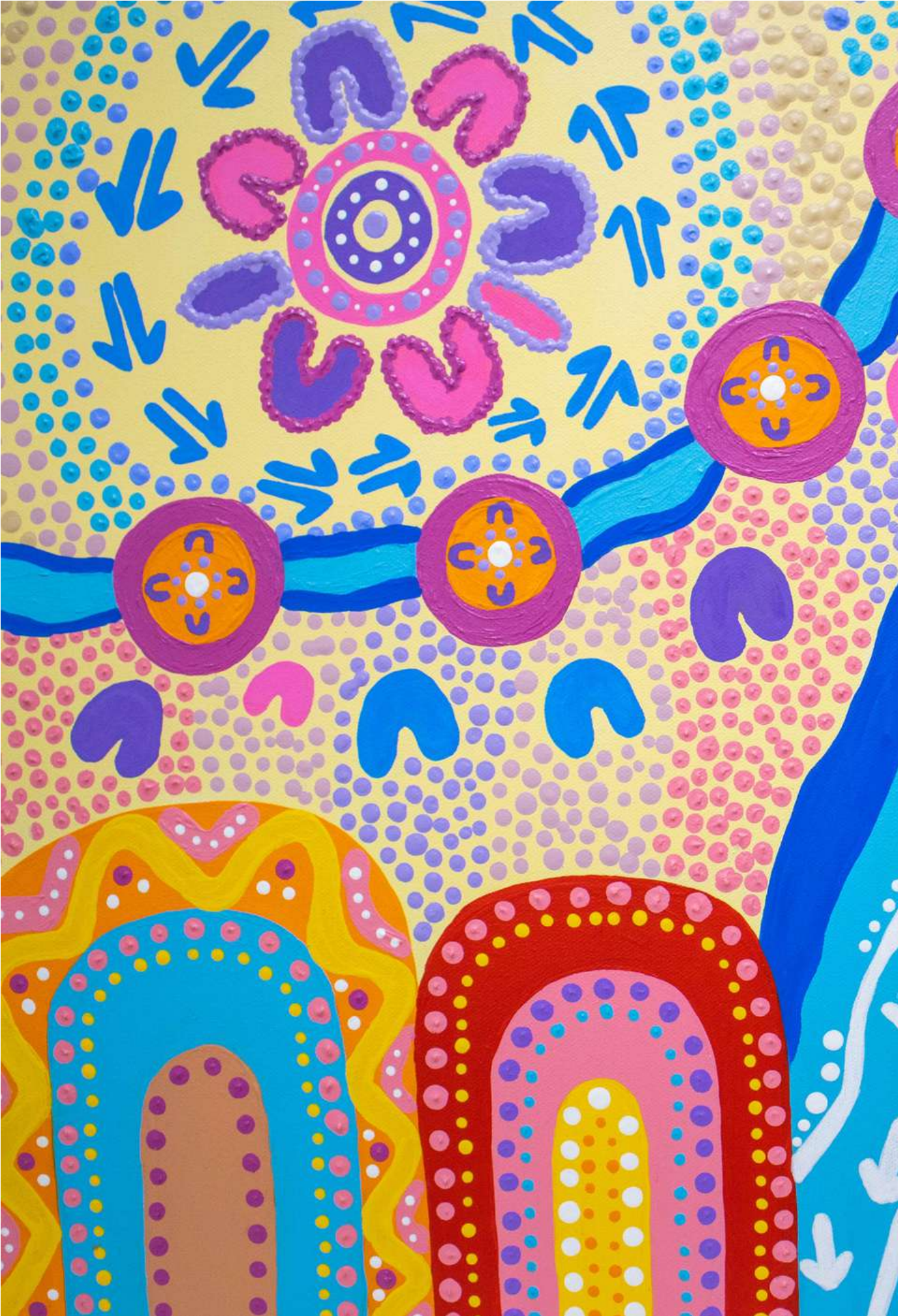
# Reconciliation Action Plan

2022 - 2024



Artwork by Jenna Oldaker





# About Jenna Oldaker and her artwork, "Yaluk Dja (River Country)"

Media: Acrylic on Canvas

Dimensions: 18 x 24 inch

Wadawurrung people were once known as the water tribe, due to our harmony with nature and resourcefulness using rivers as both our food and water source. Our coastal country, rivers (yaluk) and wetlands are represented in the artwork by the strip of blue moving through the centre, specifically the Specimen Vale Creek. Specimen Vale Creek is a historic Ballarat site, and was one of the main waterways in Ballarat, dating back to the Gold Rush.

Moving through the centre of the artwork are the symbols for meeting place all connected in one line, illustrating community and how we are all joined together as one.

On the top left-hand side is the larger symbol for meeting place, a place where we all come together as one to create unity and strength. The classic U shapes symbolise people, whilst the concentric circles and lines illustrate journey paths. The arches on the bottom left-hand side symbolise Mount Buninyong and Mount Warrenheip, two culturally significant places on Wadawurrung country.

Circling the meeting place is the symbol for kangaroo tracks, representing the native animals we share our land country with. Moving across the centre of the artwork, are the classic U shapes symbolising children and community, representing the circle of life as a new generation evolves and contributes to the future.

The abstract square on the right-hand side symbolises Barkly Square, and it is surrounded by eucalyptus leaves as an illustration of the botanical gardens and trees that once filled the area. In the centre of Barkly Square is the symbol for people sitting together yarning, representing how Barkly Square is a place for community and helping one another.

Nyatne (Thank You)



# The BGT Jobs + Training Ballarat

## Acknowledgement of Country

BGT Jobs + Training acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and waters on which we teach, learn and grow, the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation; and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

BGT acknowledges that their children are our future, and we will encourage our community to continue fostering learning and growth through support strategies and leadership opportunities.

We also acknowledge the Ballarat and surrounding areas Aboriginal community, many of whom were forcibly removed from the area. We acknowledge the ongoing survivors of colonisation and the legacy of the Aboriginal community.



# Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous Australians to be working together to create shared success stories through meaningful training and employment opportunities.

This vision is built on a commitment to listen to, and value, diverse voices in our community. BGT seeks to enhance our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, history and enduring connection to Country, in order to identify the persistent inequalities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. BGT is also committed to establishing a safe environment in which the diverse unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are respected and valued.

This enhanced understanding guides our work, and informs the mechanisms and services we put in place to redress gaps, and create or advocate for change.



# A message from our CEO

## Graham McMahon

On behalf of BGT Jobs + Training, I am pleased to introduce our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) July 2022 – July 2024.

The purpose of this document is to outline and formalise the commitment of our organisation and our people, to building and sustaining meaningful action which advances reconciliation. An Innovate RAP is designed to focus on implementation; this document therefore provides a measurable framework for BGT's governance, relationships and practices which bring our commitment to life - translating intention into action.

Reconciliation Action Plans are based on the core pillars of relationships, respect and opportunities; these values are also central to the work and success of BGT and are echoed in our organisation's strategic purpose, vision and values. As a child-safe organisation, it is imperative that we work toward providing a culturally safe environment for all young people involved in our services.

In articulating our vision for reconciliation and through implementation of the Innovate RAP, BGT will continue working to ensure a culturally safe and respectful environment, with increased engagement opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We will achieve this through tangible actions outlined in this plan, acknowledging our shared history and the continued positive contributions made by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples throughout our Country.



The benefits of having a Reconciliation Action Plan are many, including:

- Alignment with BGT's commitment to celebrate diversity and promote inclusivity, ensuring we provide welcoming and accessible services for all members of the community, including children & young people
- Building deeper cultural understanding & relationships, which inform and help embed culturally safe practices for the entire community, including children
- Communicating the responsibility of each person within our organisation to embody respect and a proactive commitment to equity.
- Improving service delivery and participant experience, leading to improved opportunities and outcomes.
- Promoting opportunities for partnership and service co-design with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations.

The introduction of this RAP is an important time and step in BGT's history and reconciliation journey. I wish to sincerely thank each person who contributed to our Innovate RAP, in particular acknowledging the guidance provided by Mirriyu Cultural Consulting and Reconciliation Australia in its development.

Together with the BGT Board of Management, I look forward to overseeing implementation of this Reconciliation Action Plan.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Graham McMahon".

Graham McMahon  
Chief Executive Officer  
BGT Jobs + Training Ballarat  
(03) 5333 8600  
[graham@bgt.org.au](mailto:graham@bgt.org.au)







Smoking Ceremony conducted by Barry Gilson  
to open the Community and Commercial  
Kitchen at Barkly Square



# Our business

BGT has been a story of continued success for over thirty years. In 1986 we began with a philosophy of providing young people with employment opportunities to reach their full potential and to provide employers with well skilled and suitable staff. While today, we offer a much broader range of services, our original philosophy remains as strong as ever to create positive life-stories for our local youth and the wider community.

Like many careers, ours is a story of change, determination and most of all growth. BGT now provide various entry level qualifications, employment and assistance programs to all members of our local community. We're extremely proud to have helped write, and in some cases rewrite, the story of so many local people's lives by providing critical assistance, knowledge, and employment early on, so that their career can deliver the outstanding personal success that so many of our graduates enjoy.

Our services are provided by a dedicated and professionally trained team who are passionate about their work. All BGT staff undergo extensive recruitment processes including interviews, reference checks, police checks and Working With Children checks. BGT employs 36 staff and over 120 apprentices and trainees who are hosted out to other employers - 6 of whom have identified as of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent (July 2022 figures).

BGT works throughout the Central Highlands region of Victoria, with service delivery extending into the Wimmera and North West Victoria. Our main office is at 25-39 Barkly St, Ballarat.

BGT's sphere of influence extends to all people we encounter, including our host employers, local businesses, apprentices, trainees, students, program participants, clients, regional schools, community agencies and the organisations we are co-located with at Barkly Square. Our sphere of influence is increased through our local media and social media strategy, as well as the local events we sponsor. We hold memberships with several organisations such as AEN (Apprenticeship Employment Network), Commerce Ballarat and Ballarat Youth Services Network.

Students from our Industrial Skills Centre with Industry Skills Centre Manager Bill Burgess (left), Michael McNeill and Rowena Kilbourne.





# Our Reconciliation Action Plan

BGT has chosen to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan to cultivate our knowledge and awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures, history and ongoing connection to Country within our workforce, and enable the work of BGT to contribute to reconciliation and greater equality and opportunity.

Its development has been supported and championed by a BGT Board member, with involvement from a range of staff representing the various teams in the organisation (particular acknowledgement goes to Dee Hastings and Sue Ogilvie).

The delivery of the RAP will be overseen by a BGT working group, comprising the following representation:

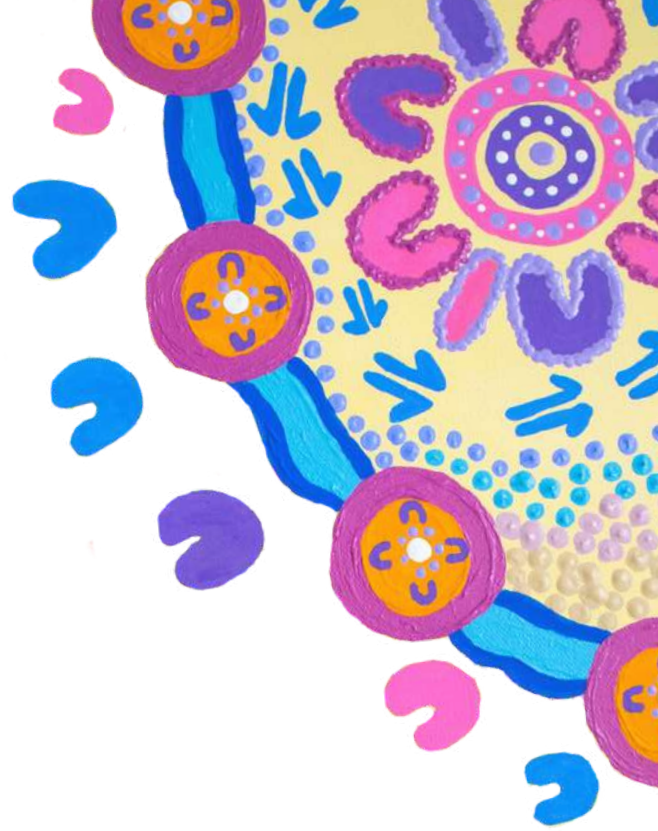
- BGT Community Services Representative
- BGT Administration Representative
- BGT GTO Representative
- BGT Leadership Representative
- RAP Champion (member of Executive Level - Board or Leadership)
- An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Local Community Member (external member)

Existing partnerships and activities BGT are involved in include:

- BGT endeavours to employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples through our group training, offering in Employment Services
- BGT delivers Better Futures across the Central Highlands in collaboration with CAFS (Child and Family Services) and BADAC (Ballarat and District Aboriginal Co-Operation) and across the Wimmera in collaboration with Uniting and Goolum Goolum Aboriginal Co-Operation. Better Futures is a support program for young people transitioning out of care and into independence.
- BGT is the lead tenant of Barkly Square Ballarat and has established relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations within the Barkly Square precinct.
- BGT actively looks for opportunities to nominate apprentices and trainees to the Indigenous Student of the Year Award through the annual AEN (Apprenticeship Employment Network) Apprentice and Trainee Awards.
- BGT encourages Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners to participate in our training offerings and ensure we provide a culturally welcoming and safe environment.

# Relationships

Only through engagement with our Traditional Land Owners that demonstrates respect, will reconciliation be successful and lasting. At BGT our strategy is to develop inclusive and sustainable relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by fostering learning and engagement in relationships built on respect and consultation. We are committed to building new relationships to achieve positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples by increased levels of representation within BGT.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Establish who our local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations are.	Dec 2022	CEO, RAP Working Group
	Meet with them and develop guiding principles for future engagement.	Mar 2023	CEO, RAP Working Group
Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) 27th May – 3rd June.	Promote Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff through weekly newsletter and staff meetings.	May 2023 and 2024	RAP Working Group
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2023 and 2024	CEO, RAP Working Group, Management
	Organise at least one NRW event each year collaboratively with our co-tenants at Barkly Square.	May 2023 and 2024	CEO, RAP Working Group
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	Early May 2023 and 2024	RAP Working Group



## Action

## Deliverable

## Timeline

## Responsibility

Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.

Focus a staff and board meeting on opportunities to engage reconciliation.

Feb 2023

Marketing team, RAP working group

Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly by

May 2023 and 2024

RAP Working Group

- Promoting reconciliation activities through newsletter inclusions with BRMC (Ballarat Regional Multicultural Centre), BYSN (Ballarat Youth Services Network), Commerce Ballarat and Committee for Ballarat. Promote reconciliation activities to BGT Jobs + Training staff at their monthly staff meeting.

Collaborate with other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.

Dec 2022 (ongoing)

RAP Working Group

Promote BGT's RAP with our local community and encourage them to develop their own.

Oct 2023

RAP Working Group, Management

Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination policies.

Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.

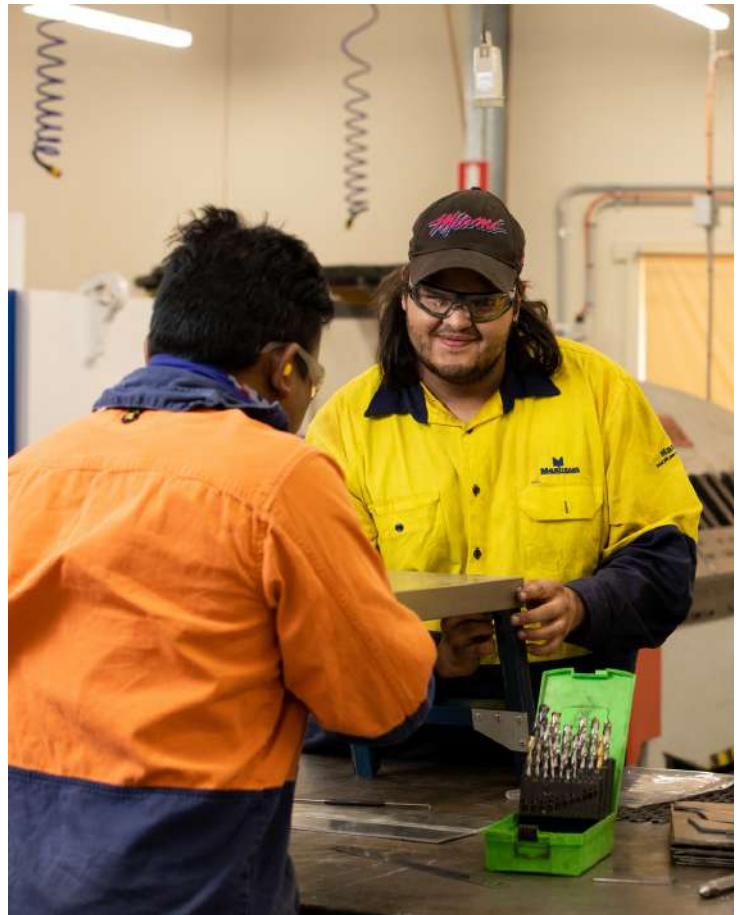
Mar 2023

RAP Working Group, Board



# Respect

BGT acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia. We are committed to respecting all individuals regardless of their colour, race, religion or socio-economic background. We recognise that respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and shared learning, is critical to delivering culturally appropriate and safe services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. BGT encourages staff participation in cultural events as a celebration of diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural awareness, sensitivity and safety training.	Nov 2022	RAP Working Group
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation. All staff members and BGT Board members to participate in RAP survey to assess gaps in knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.	Feb 2023	RAP Working Group
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural awareness strategy for all our staff and board members, including cultural awareness and safety training delivered by a representative from the Aboriginal community.	Feb 2023	RAP Working Group



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
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Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols

Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.

Nov 2022

RAP Working Group

Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol guideline that includes the BGT preferred Acknowledgement of Country through the staff handbook.

Dec 2022

RAP Working Group

Invite a local Traditional Owner to provide a Welcome to Country at significant events each year.

Ongoing

RAP Working Group

Include the brief Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of all internal meetings that require an agenda/minutes.

Sept 2022 (ongoing)

CEO

Include the comprehensive Acknowledgement of Country at all public-facing meetings/events including conferences, Board meetings, formal events, forums and functions.

Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.

Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff, with the support of Senior Managers.

First week in July 2022 (ongoing)

RAP Working Group, Management



# Opportunities

BGT is committed to providing employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across all levels of our organisation. We respect and support our employees and create an inclusive culture from within. We will continue to be culturally sensitive and effective, and implement strategies to increase our employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Ongoing	Management
	-Adhere to set review dates for HT and recruitment procedures and policies, to remove barriers and increase the population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in our workplace.	Ongoing	CEO, Management
Work with schools to improve career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Continue relationships with our Regional Koori Engagement Support Officers within the Department of Education.	Ongoing	Employment Services Manager and Apprenticeship/Traineeship Consultants
	Continue relationships with careers counsellors across the public and private secondary school networks to promote and encourage job opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Ongoing	Employment Services Manager and Apprenticeship/Traineeship Consultants
	Promote BGT school-based apprenticeships at schools encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to apply.	Ongoing	Employment Services Manager and Apprenticeship/Traineeship Consultants
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop commercial relationships with culturally safe businesses through greater levels of service procurement.	Ongoing	CEO
	Advocate / Nominate for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific award at the Apprenticeship Employment Network (AEN) Awards.	Ongoing	CEO
	Advocate for an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific award at the Commerce Ballarat Business Excellence Awards.	Dec 2022	CEO





# Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Establish, apply, and review the Terms of Reference and membership for the RWG.	Review annually in July	CEO
	Maintain and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	Review annually in July	CEO
	Ensure RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP	Nov 2022	RAP Working Group
	Ensure RWG meets bi-monthly to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Commencing July 2022	Current Chair of RAP Working Group
	Ensure RWG undertakes an annual review of RAP progress	Review annually in February	Current Chair of RAP Working Group
Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP Working Group to champion the RAP to measure its progress.	Mar 2023	CEO, RAP Working Group
Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges, and learnings both internally and externally.	Provide an annual review of RAP progress to all staff and Board members	Mar 2023 (ongoing)	CEO, Current Chair of RAP Working Group
	Publicly report our RAP achievements, and learnings, annually at the BGT AGM.	Oct 2022 (ongoing)	CEO
Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Continue developing our RAP journey, by reviewing gaps through analysis.	Sep 2024	Current Chair of RAP Working Group







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