



The Piddington Society
**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

January 2020 – January 2021



**RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN**

REFLECT



Artist Alice Guinness - Gooru

"The Bundut is a dancing and meeting place at the law ground.

As the women dance they make concentric circles in the red soil. The Bundut is a special place for teaching and learning.

This important ceremonial site has its own song. At the Fortescue River is a large area of rock that is the first Bundut or law ground for Yindjibarndi people."

My name is Alice Guinness - Gooru. I paint Bundut Ground. The Bundut is a ceremonial dancing and meeting place at the law ground. At the end of each initiation ceremony of the men, the women get painted up in their ceremonial paints and dance around the men who sit in the centre of the circle. They dance all night until the Morning Star comes up.

The Bundut Dancing Ground is a special place for teaching and learning. This important ceremonial site also has its own song. I also paint. The lines of my country, out at Millstream, the land of my people, the Yindjibarndi fresh water people.



Roeburn Art Group

Roebourne Art Group Aboriginal Corporation is the West Pilbara Indigenous Art Centre, featuring contemporary Australian Aboriginal Art.

Located in Western Australia's remote northwest 1500 kilometres north of Perth, Roebourne Art Group represents Ngarluma, Yindjibarndi, Guruma, Banjima, Marthudunera and Torres Strait Islander and many other language groups.

We provide opportunities for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists who generally live in Roebourne, Wickham and Karratha to undertake art, to learn and develop their artistic skills as a hobby, to focus on leadership and to record and continue their culture.

The group aims to provide skill-based training and governance experience while learning and sharing various art practice as part of Roebourne Art Group's empowerment goals.

Roebourne Art Group is an Aboriginal community controlled and governed representative body and resource centre for artists throughout the region. The group is open to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from across Australia provided they reside in the Pilbara.

The artists paint in a wide range of styles. New artists are always welcome. New ways of creating art are welcome.

All works are for sale or commercial licensing; commissions are welcomed. The Artists regularly participate in public art projects.

Our principal funders are Rio Tinto Iron Ore, the Department of Communications & the Arts and sales of our artists' works to corporate and private clients. Roebourne Art Group is a not-for-profit organisation and has registered charity status.



From our Chair

On behalf of The Piddington Society, I welcome you to continue to join us on our pathway towards reconciliation.

We are proud to launch this Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan and to continue developing our projects to increase collegiality and access to justice within the WA legal profession.

The Piddington Society is grounded in our belief in access to justice.

We recognise that our justice system and legal profession has a long way to go to achieve access and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in WA. We believe that it is our responsibility as a profession to work together to meaningfully contribute to reconciliation. We hope that our commitment here will help further this.

Piddington's Reconciliation Working Group has been developing this comprehensive Reflect RAP with input from a wide range of stakeholders.

We are pleased to continue assisting community legal centres, including the Aboriginal Legal Service, in providing connections to law graduates, practical legal training, and facilitating CPD seminars on pertinent issues impacting justice and equity.

Within the RAP, our partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students seeks to empower young Indigenous professionals, and increase representation and equality in the profession.

Our Piddington Justice Bus initiative will strengthen ties and access to legal advice in rural and regional Western Australia. We will also be hosting seminars and round-table discussions to foster cultural awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights.

We are keen to develop our commitment to reconciliation through this RAP, and to strengthen our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders within our legal community. We are excited to see where implementing this Reflect RAP over the next twelve months will take us.

For us, this is not tokenism. This is a real, long-lasting commitment to reconciliation. We hope you will join us in realising these RAP objectives, and we look forward to developing these commitments into the future.

**The Hon John Chaney SC
Chair of the Piddington Society**



From Reconciliation Australia's Chief Executive Officer

Reconciliation Australia is delighted to welcome the Piddington Society to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program and to formally endorse its inaugural Reflect RAP.

As a member of the RAP community, the Piddington Society joins over 1,000 dedicated corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have formally committed to reconciliation through the RAP program since its inception in 2006.

RAP organisations across Australia are turning good intentions into positive actions, helping to build higher trust, lower prejudice, and increase pride in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Reconciliation is not one single issue or agenda. Based on international research and benchmarking, Reconciliation Australia defines and measures reconciliation through five critical dimensions: race relations; equality and equity, institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.

All sections of the community—governments, civil society, the private sector, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities—have a role to play to progress these dimensions.

The RAP program provides a framework for organisations to advance reconciliation within their spheres of influence. This Reflect RAP provides the Piddington Society a roadmap to begin its reconciliation journey.

Through implementing a Reflect RAP, the Piddington Society will lay the foundations for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives. We wish the Piddington Society well as it takes these first critical steps in its reconciliation journey. We encourage the organisation to embrace this journey with open hearts and minds, to grow from the challenges, and to build on the successes. As the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation reminded the nation in its final report:

“Reconciliation is hard work—it’s a long, winding and corrugated road, not a broad, paved highway. Determination and effort at all levels of government and in all sections of the community will be essential to make reconciliation a reality.”

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend the Piddington Society on its first RAP, and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia



Our organisation

The Piddington Society is a Western Australian association of lawyers who are committed to collegiality and access to justice.

In order to promote professional development and a harmonious legal profession, the Piddington Society organises a range of Continuing Professional Development and social events for the profession.

A core initiative of the Piddington Society is Piddington PLT, where the Society collaborates with community legal centres to increase employment opportunities for law graduates.

We now operate mostly online, with access to two different offices in the Perth CBD, and we are thankful for venue support from the profession. Our Committee of nine people is supported by a staff of six.

Our Story

The Piddington Society Inc was formed in 2010 by two Perth lawyers, Chris Bates and Nicholas van Hattem. With a belief that professional development, collegiality and supporting community legal centres can go together, the Society has become a sophisticated organisation which works tirelessly to further justice.

Supporting justice, seeking collegiality

We sourced our name from Albert Bathurst Piddington, Australia's shortest serving justice High Court. Inspired by his brevity, and commitment to justice, in 2010 we began by organising relaxed and informal professional events.

It worked on the premise that lawyers were not being provided with enough quality opportunities for collegiate hospitality. Chris and Nick wanted a way for practitioners to come together, learn and engage with each other in a social environment.

From this one of our core beliefs was developed:

"you don't write an angry letter to someone you've had a drink with."

In 2013, the Piddington Bali Law Conference was held for the first time. Our capstone event, held annually on the WA Day long weekend in June, is an opportunity for lawyers to come together in a collegiate way to undertake continuing professional development.

Our annual calendar of events now includes a range of CPD masterclasses, conversations with senior practitioners and judges, as well as conferences in regional WA and the Bali Conference. We firmly believe that Piddington is for the profession - no matter where practitioners are - we have held sessions in Kalgoorlie, Broome and on Rottnest, as well as online CPD.

Furthering justice in the community

With our belief in furthering justice, we understood that community legal centres were seriously underfunded and lacked capacity. Simultaneously it has long been clear that employment opportunities for law graduates are diminishing. So, we formed the Piddington Justice Project (PJP), where the Society collaborates with community legal centres.

The first PJP cohort commenced in 2016. The law graduates complete their 80 days of legal practical training required to be admitted to the profession in one of our partner centres, and the centres receive a monetary donation from the Society to assist with their funding.

The majority of PJP graduates have gone onto employment in the law, and continue to work in and support the community law sector.



Our Reconciliation Action Plan

The Piddington Society recognises that the Australian justice system has a long way to go to achieve access and equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The transgenerational disadvantage of Aboriginal people in Western Australia is an area that the Western Australian justice system critically needs to address. We support the national movement for reconciliation and seek to build community relationships, respect and opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Our vision is to recognise and take responsibility for the impacts of colonisation and dispossession, racism and intergenerational trauma.

As part of our commitment to reconciliation, the Piddington Society aims to implement a number of action targets that are specific and measurable.

Who champions our RAP internally?

The Piddington Committee and its Reconciliation Working Group.

Additionally, Katherine Swann has responsibility at the Committee-level as RAP Director, she is supported by the Convenor and Executive Officer.

Who was involved in the development of our RAP?

Piddington RAP Working Group members and the Piddington Committee

Our partnerships and current activities

The Piddington Society works closely with the Aboriginal Legal Service in WA to place law graduates in both Perth and Kalgoorlie offices.

We also run CPD events and social media campaigns on pertinent legal issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Australia.

With the introduction of our Reflect RAP, our aim is to adopt a more targeted and entrenched approach towards reconciliation.

We hope to foster partnerships with key stakeholders to further develop the movement towards reconciliation in the WA legal profession.



Relationships

Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)

- Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to Piddington members
- Ensure our RAP Working Group support an external event to recognise and celebrate NRW
- Committee to decide upon NRW events to partake in, and encourage Piddington Society members to attend a NRW event
- *On 27 May - 3 June 2020 | RAP Director and Piddington Director of Communications*

Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance are recognised internally and externally

- Promote awareness internally of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates of significance
- Incorporate cultural considerations into strategic and event planning by ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders are valued and acknowledged for their input and significance in the justice system
- *By September 2020 | RAP Director and Piddington Director of Communications*

Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations

- Develop a list of RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey

- Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence that we could approach to connect with on our reconciliation journey
- Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations
- Connect with the Aboriginal Legal Service and other key stakeholders to identify needs within the profession, and further facilitate pro bono assistance programs in collaboration with the ALS
- *By June 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*

Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

- Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination
- Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs
- *By November 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*

Raise internal awareness of our RAP

- Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness amongst all staff across the organisation about our RAP commitments
- Develop and implement a plan to engage and inform key internal stakeholders of their responsibilities within our RAP
- Consult with Aboriginal artists to develop cover art for the RAP publication
- *By March 2020 | RAP Director and Piddington Committee*



Respect

Promote understanding and cultural awareness within the legal profession; promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence

- Consider organising a workshop or guest speaker CPD series for Piddington members to increase cultural awareness among the legal profession, and to facilitate discussion of law reform
- Organise Piddington Society strategic development meetings to brainstorm and plan for 2020 events and initiatives which promote the movement for reconciliation
- Undertake annual cultural awareness training for all Piddington Society members
- Develop a strategic plan to increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, legal systems and achievements within the Piddington Society
- Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey
- *By September 2020 | RAP Director*

Develop Piddington communications to build cultural awareness internally and externally

- Include Acknowledgement of Country on all Piddington email signatures, on the Piddington website and social media presence and on printed materials
- Establish external referral pathways with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to continually develop external communications which further the reconciliation movement
- *By September 2020 | RAP Director and Piddington Director of Communications*

Participate in and celebrate NAIDOC Week

- Raise awareness and share information among Piddington members on the meaning of NAIDOC week, including information on WA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area.
- Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event.
- *By July 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*



Respect

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

- Raise awareness and share information among our members of the meaning of NAIDOC Week which includes information about the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
- Introduce our members to NAIDOC Week by promoting community events in our local area
- Ensure our RAP Working Group participates in an external NAIDOC Week event
- *In July 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*

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 awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements within our organisation
- Measure our staff's current level of knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements
- Conduct a review of cultural awareness training needs within our organisation
- *By November 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*

Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols

- Develop a list of local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our sphere of influence
- Explore who the Traditional Owners are of the lands and waters in our local area
- Develop and implement a plan to raise awareness and understanding of the meaning and significance behind Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols (including any local cultural protocols)
- *By November 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*



Opportunities

Investigate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity

- Develop an understanding of the mutual benefits of procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses
- Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses
- *By September 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*

Provide employment and professional experience opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples within the profession

- Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders regarding existing needs and develop proposals for related engagement and employment in the WA legal profession
- Identify current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform future employment and development opportunities
- Provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander law students with professional opportunities within the legal profession
- *By November 2020 | Convenor and Director of Piddington PLT*

Identify and address legal issues which present a barrier to reconciliation, including identifying areas of need within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals and the broader profession

- Facilitate round-table discussions, and meet with the Aboriginal Legal Service and other key stakeholders to identify areas of need within their legal practice
- Develop pro bono assistance programs to target these needs, such as securing graduate placements to the Aboriginal Legal Service, and assistance with pro bono legal advice to their clients around WA
- *By November 2020 | RAP Director and Piddington Committee*



Report

Establish a RAP Working Group tasked to monitor the progress of RAP in the Piddington Society

- Form a RAP Working Group that is operational to support the implementation of our RAP, comprising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and decision-making staff from across our organisation
- Hold regular meetings to monitor and report on the progress on all areas of the organisation and report to the Piddington Society Committee
- *By July 2020 | RAP Director, Coordinator and Convenor*

Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments

- Define resource needs for RAP implementation
- Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments
- Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments
- *By July 2020 | Convenor and Director of PJP*

Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally

- Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia
- *By September 2020 | RAP Director and Convenor*

Review and refresh RAP

- Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements
- Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review
- Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal endorsement
- Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP
- *By December 2020 | Convenor and RAP Director*



Get in touch

Email us at:

pidsoc@pidsoc.org.au

Visit our website:

piddingtonsociety.org

Find us on Facebook:

facebook.com/piddingtonsociety

See out Instagram:

[@piddingtonsoc](https://www.instagram.com/piddingtonsoc)

Send us mail to our office at:

c/- Pragma, Level 1, 254 Rokeby
Road, SUBIACO WA 6008