



**feros
care**
GROW BOLD



INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

SEPTEMBER 2024 – SEPTEMBER 2026



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Feros Care acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as First Peoples and we recognise their cultures, histories and connection to the land, sea, and sky. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live and work and we pay our respects to Elders past and present. We extend that respect to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members, clients, participants, residents, partners, and stakeholders.



A person's hand is visible on the left, holding a wooden bowl filled with green ferns. A wisp of white smoke rises from the bowl. The background is a soft-focus green landscape.

OUR RESPONSE TO COUNTRY

We recognise the profound importance of “Country” for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, who have been caretakers of land, sea, sky and waterways for over 65,000 years. Country embodies more than just land; it encompasses cultural heritage, spirituality, and ancestral connections. Country provides identity, belonging, and continuity, shaping cultural practices and governance systems. Preserving and respecting Country is essential for the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and Country itself. That is why we are dedicated to acknowledging and respecting its significance.

GRATITUDE TO FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITY MEMBERS

We express our deep gratitude to the Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal community members across our regions who generously shared their language, knowledge, and stories. We are so grateful for the opportunity to learn more about the rich past and present Aboriginal culture.

We also extend our deep gratitude to the Torres Strait Islander community members in our regions who have graciously shared their culture with us and continue to carry on their Traditional practices on both the mainland and the Islands of the Torres Strait.

As we continue our reconciliation journey, we look forward to further learning from and walking alongside Traditional Custodians and First Nations community members across our footprint.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS AND ARTWORKS

For our Innovate RAP we continue to celebrate the artists and artwork “The Journey” created for our Reflect RAP by young Arakwal artists Mariah Roberts and Shanti Kelly-Torrens. Our Innovate RAP will also showcase a Torres Strait Islander story “Journey of the Straits” by artist, Zhane Osborne James, who was successful in our Expression of Interest process for the Torres Strait Island artwork.

About the artists: Mariah Roberts and Shanti Kelly-Torrens

Mariah Roberts is a proud Arakwal woman, Traditional Owner and talented young artist. She grew up at Cabbage Tree Island before moving to Ballina on the North Coast of NSW.

As well as being an artist, Mariah supports her Elders by working in Aboriginal aged care.

Mariah began painting early, at the age of seven. She paints to remember and honour her culture. Her grandmother is her biggest inspiration.

Her first commission was in 2022 when Feros Care invited her to create an artwork for their Reconciliation Action Plan. She intends to keep sharing her people’s stories through her art and is ready to take up more opportunities to expand her artwork as an individual.

Shanti Kelly-Torrens is a proud Arakwal – Bundjalung Dubay (Woman), Traditional Custodian and talented young Aboriginal artist.

As well as being an artist she works as Field Officer for the National Parks and Wildlife Service, who have Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs) and Co – Management in place for Looking after and Caring for Country – established by the Arakwal Elders for over 25+ years.

Shanti first became interested in art at school, studying art and creating a major artwork for her Higher School Certificate. She has also been involved with Byron Bay Railway Park – BOBBAC Arakwal Artwork Project with cultural stories and designs etched by sand blasting onto the pathways.

The focus of her artwork is embedded with Aboriginal culture and is reflected through its themes, Traditional and contemporary techniques. It also incorporates her stories, cultural perspectives and aspects.



Her first commissioned piece was in 2022 when Feros Care invited her to create an artwork for their Reconciliation Action Plan. She intends to keep sharing her people stories and culture, awareness and education through her art now and into the future.

About the artwork: The Journey

This artwork represents the journey - Past, Present and Future. Our culture is also expressed throughout this special piece.

The blue flowing pathway and footprints is George’s beginnings of birth and upbringing, the memories of collecting funds in a wooden box (ringing his bell) in and around Byron Bay, to the establishment of Feros Care today and future vision.

The first circle with handprints represents the past - George’s parents and ancestors, reflections of family values and traditions, learning and growth, becoming a man who has showed so much love and passion.

The second circle with pattern represents George's love and support, caring for his parents, looking after and ensuring them good health and wellbeing. This also is a symbol of the loving generosity of Byron Bay community spirit.

The third circle with Aboriginal huts and Aboriginal people represents the creation and establishment of Feros Care, support and medical assistance, a place of caring for those

in need. It symbolises connection, wellbeing, a sense of belonging for men and women.

The Aboriginal huts are the many spaces Feros Care have set up all over, that offer shelter and support to all.

The Arakwal totems of the Dolphin and Sea Eagle express the connection of Feros Care being first established and built on Arakwal country.

About the artist: Zhane Osborne James

Zhane Osborne James is a proud Saibai Island woman of the Torres Strait Islands in Far North Queensland. Zhane was born on the Torres Strait Islands and relocated to the mainland in Cairns, North Qld.

Zhane grew up around family and stayed connected to the land, sea and waterways. Zhane enjoys practicing Traditional customs and passing these onto future generations through the techniques of weaving, Traditional song and dance and having informative conversations around life as a Torres Strait Islander and the cultural practices that are involved.

About the artwork: Journey of the Straits

The center Dhari (Headdress) is an iconic and symbolic feature of the Torres Strait Islander people and Feros Care is represented as the Centrepoint. The four large animals – Dugong, Green Sea Turtle, Shark, and Crocodile are totems and respected animals that are moving in a circle to represent the circle of life and the importance of caring for those who are Elderly within the Feros Care community. These animals all portray various attributes within the Straits and reflects the variety of clients who come from diverse backgrounds and have different needs.

The five white stars are located within the piece to symbolize the five major Island groups that make up the Torres Strait. Northern, Eastern, Western, Southern and Central Islands.



The yellow swirls with blue dots represent the sandy beaches, coral cays, ocean lines and water surrounding each Island. The Islands are covered in an array of various tropical flowers and plants including the hibiscus and frangipani.

The Torres strait Islander culture is centered around supporting each family within the community and keeping the young ones strong and healthy. The mother dugong is guiding and teaching the young calf just the same as the Managers support the new staff coming through to give the best service to the clients.

The black and white Island patterns are travelling outward from the center piece, and this represents the clients of Feros Care on their journey to keep moving forward despite their barriers and hardships.

This painting captures the essence of our culture – that is respect of family and respect for community.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for reconciliation is a nation where every person has the opportunity to live their life, free from inequality and racial prejudice. A nation where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories are recognised, appreciated, embedded and celebrated.

As an organisation, we will start this by empowering our team members and the people we support to understand and have an active role in working towards reconciliation.

Message from Karen Crouch,

Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Feros Care

Welcome to our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

At Feros Care, we believe in the power of innovation to drive positive change. As a forward-thinking organisation, we understand that reconciliation is not just a destination but a continuous journey towards building stronger, more inclusive communities.

Our commitment to reconciliation is rooted in the core principles of respect, integrity, and collaboration for a reconciled Australia. We recognise the importance of acknowledging the past and working together towards a shared future of equality and opportunity for all Australians.

Through our Innovate RAP, we are committing to finding innovative ways to create meaningful and lasting impacts on reconciliation. This plan is more than just a document; it's a blueprint for action. It outlines our objectives, strategies, and key initiatives that will guide us on our journey towards reconciliation.

We understand that reconciliation is a collective effort that requires the engagement and participation of all members of our organisation, as well as the broader community. Together, we will strive to foster a culture of understanding, empathy, and respect.

As CEO, I am proud to lead an organisation that is committed to making a positive difference in the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and confident that, together, we can drive meaningful change.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the development of our Innovate RAP. Your passion, dedication, and commitment to reconciliation inspire us all.

Let's innovate, collaborate, and create a brighter future for all Australians.

Sincerely,

Karen Crouch

Chief Executive Officer, Feros Care



Message from Jason Bingham,

Feros Care Board Chair

As Chair of the Board, it is my distinct honour to introduce our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

At Feros Care, we understand the vital importance of reconciliation in shaping a more equitable and harmonious society. Our commitment to reconciliation is not only a moral imperative but also a strategic imperative. We recognise that by embracing reconciliation, we strengthen our organisation, our communities, and our nation as a whole.

Our Innovate RAP represents a significant milestone in our journey towards reconciliation. It reflects our unwavering dedication to innovation, collaboration, and meaningful action. Through this plan, we seek to harness the power of innovation to drive positive change and create a more inclusive future for all Australians.

We understand that reconciliation is not a one-time event but an ongoing process that requires sustained effort and commitment. As such, our Innovate RAP outlines clear objectives, strategies, and initiatives that will guide us on this journey. It is a living document that will evolve over time as we continue to learn, grow, and adapt.

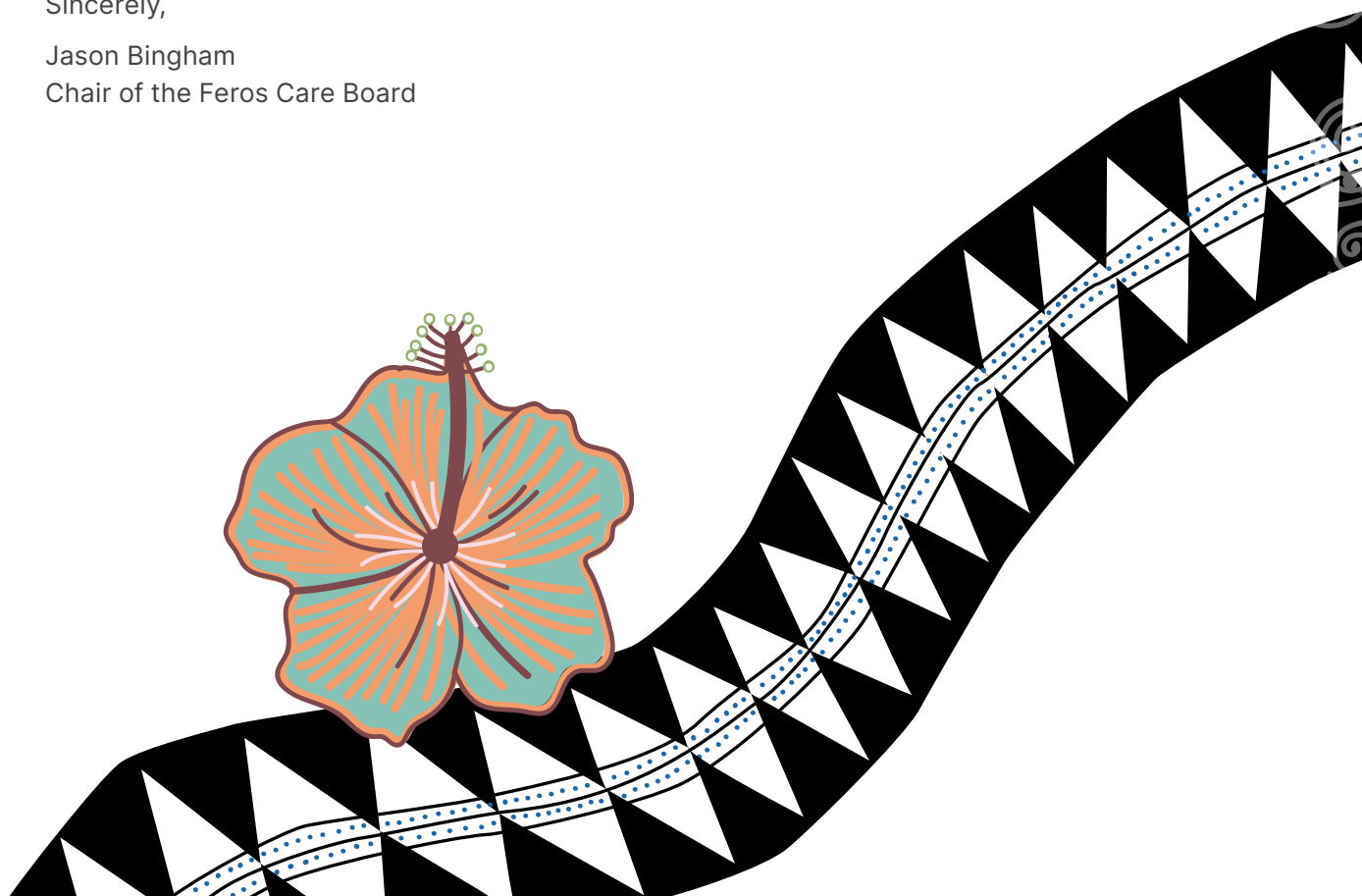
I am deeply proud of the work that has gone into developing our Innovate RAP, and I am grateful to everyone who has contributed their time, expertise, and passion to this important initiative. I am confident that together, we can make a meaningful difference and contribute to building a more reconciled and inclusive Australia.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to reconciliation.

Sincerely,

Jason Bingham

Chair of the Feros Care Board



Message from Karen Mundine,

Chief Executive Officer, Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Feros Care on the formal endorsement of its inaugural Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Commencing an Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build strong foundations and relationships, ensuring sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

This Innovate RAP is both an opportunity and an invitation for Feros Care to expand its understanding of its core strengths and deepen its relationship with its community, staff, and stakeholders.

By investigating and understanding the integral role it plays across its sphere of influence, Feros Care will create dynamic reconciliation outcomes, supported by and aligned with its business objectives.

An Innovate RAP is the time to strengthen and develop the connections that form the lifeblood of all RAP commitments. The RAP program's framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities emphasises not only the importance of fostering consultation and collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, but also empowering and enabling staff to contribute to this process, as well.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. Feros Care is part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

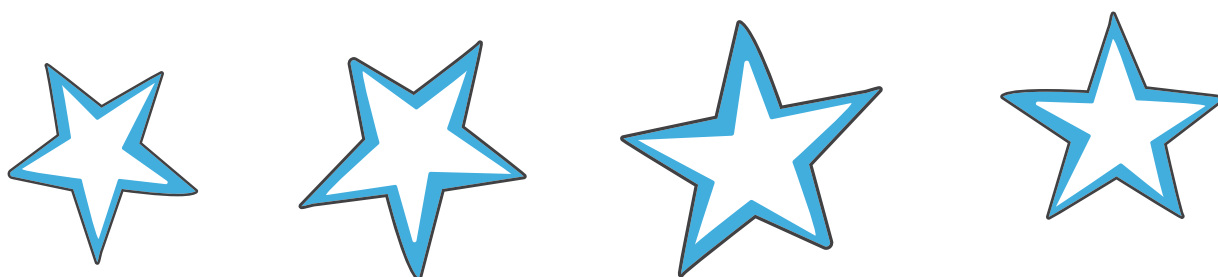
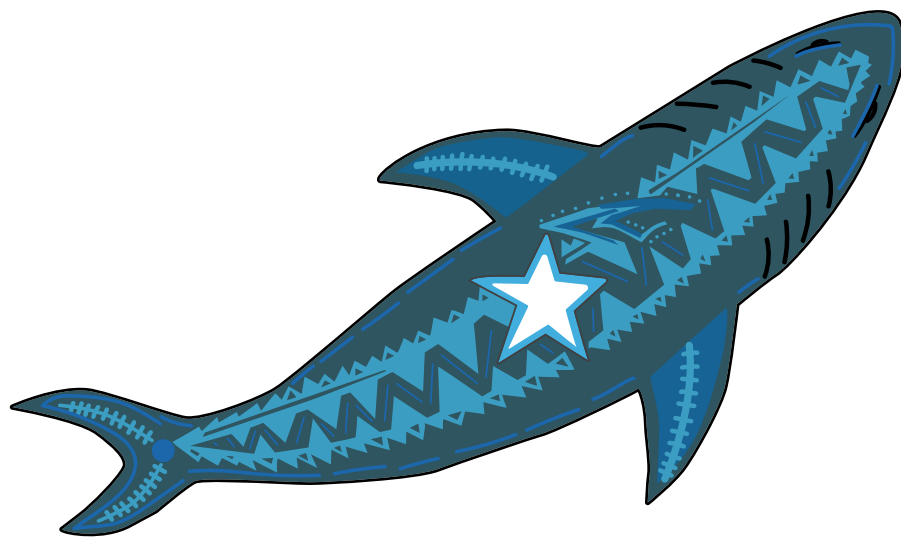
Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Feros Care's readiness to develop and strengthen relationships, engage staff and stakeholders in reconciliation, and pilot innovative strategies to ensure effective outcomes.

Getting these steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Feros Care on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia





National Sorry Day, Bowen 2023

ABOUT US

Our business

Feros Care is a not-for-profit people care organisation with more than 30 years' experience across Aged and Disability services in the community. This includes in-home support and services for seniors, residential aged care and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) local area coordination (LAC). We also have a volunteer arm that provides friendly visits to seniors in the community.

We have a track record in innovation and our mission is to empower people to live happier, healthier, and better-connected lives. We push the boundaries of what is possible for clients, participants and residents through co-design methods, service innovation and outcome-driven programs.

Our workforce

Feros Care employs 1005 team members, has 443 active volunteers, we employ 27 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander team members and have five Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander volunteers.

Our geographic reach

Feros Care delivers quality care, lifestyle support and LAC services to customers living in New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia.

Feros Care has offices located at Townsville, Mackay, Tweed Heads, Canberra, Salisbury, Gawler and Port Adelaide. We are headquartered at Coolangatta, Queensland.

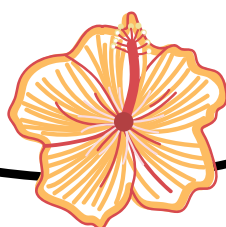
We have two residential aged care facilities located in Northern New South Wales at Bangalow and Kingscliff.

During the 2023/24 financial year, we supported 8,199 aged care clients in the community, 125 residents at our aged care villages and 28,673 NDIS participants.

Our organisation's sphere of influence

During our Reflect RAP, our focus has been mainly internal, providing opportunities for cultural learning and experiences across the business. We will continue to offer these opportunities as we know from feedback that they have helped our team members understand why reconciliation is important. Also, it has empowered them to have conversations within their own, personal sphere of influence.

As a reasonably large organisation, with a wide geographic footprint, we have a broad sphere of influence and the opportunity to foster reconciliation in Australia beyond our own organisation. In our Innovate RAP we will look outside our organisation to clients, participants, and residents. We will engage with suppliers, sub-contractors, community, and government organisations, as well as our public channels in a way that promotes reconciliation.



OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

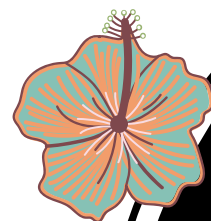
Our motivation to continue our RAP journey through the implementation of an Innovate RAP is driven by our hope for a kinder, more inclusive Australia. We have developed this Innovate RAP with these objectives at the forefront.

We aim to contribute to building a nation where every older person and person with a disability has the opportunity to live their version of a bold life, free from inequality and racial prejudice. As an organisation, we are dedicated to approaching our First Nations clients and participants without judgment or assumption and acknowledge their kinship relationships and decision-making processes. We will take the time to deeply listen to our clients and participants to understand their experiences, barriers and how we can support them. Additionally, we are increasing cultural safety and promoting positive race relations internally, and in our service delivery by implementing our Cultural Learning Strategy, holding truth-telling sessions, and celebrating First Nations cultures.

Feros Care strive for a team that reflects the communities we serve. Our Inclusion and Diversity commitments in our Workforce Strategy strive to diversify our workforce, and we will continue to expand and promote employee benefits such as the Yarn'n Circle (First Nations peer support network), Cultural Supervision, NAIDOC leave, and Cultural Leave.

Our first RAP, Reflect RAP (March 2023 – March 2024), had a strong focus on listening, learning, and understanding, to create a strong foundation of cultural intelligence and safety in our organisation.

Harnessing this foundation, our Innovate RAP will guide us to build on our cultural intelligence to further reconciliation in Australia and be trusted and respected by our First Nations team members, and communities.



Smoking Ceremony at Port Adelaide Office Opening.

OUR RAP WORKING GROUP

Our RAP Working Group consists of about 50 team members across Feros Care, who represent all levels of the organisation. We meet virtually every two months.

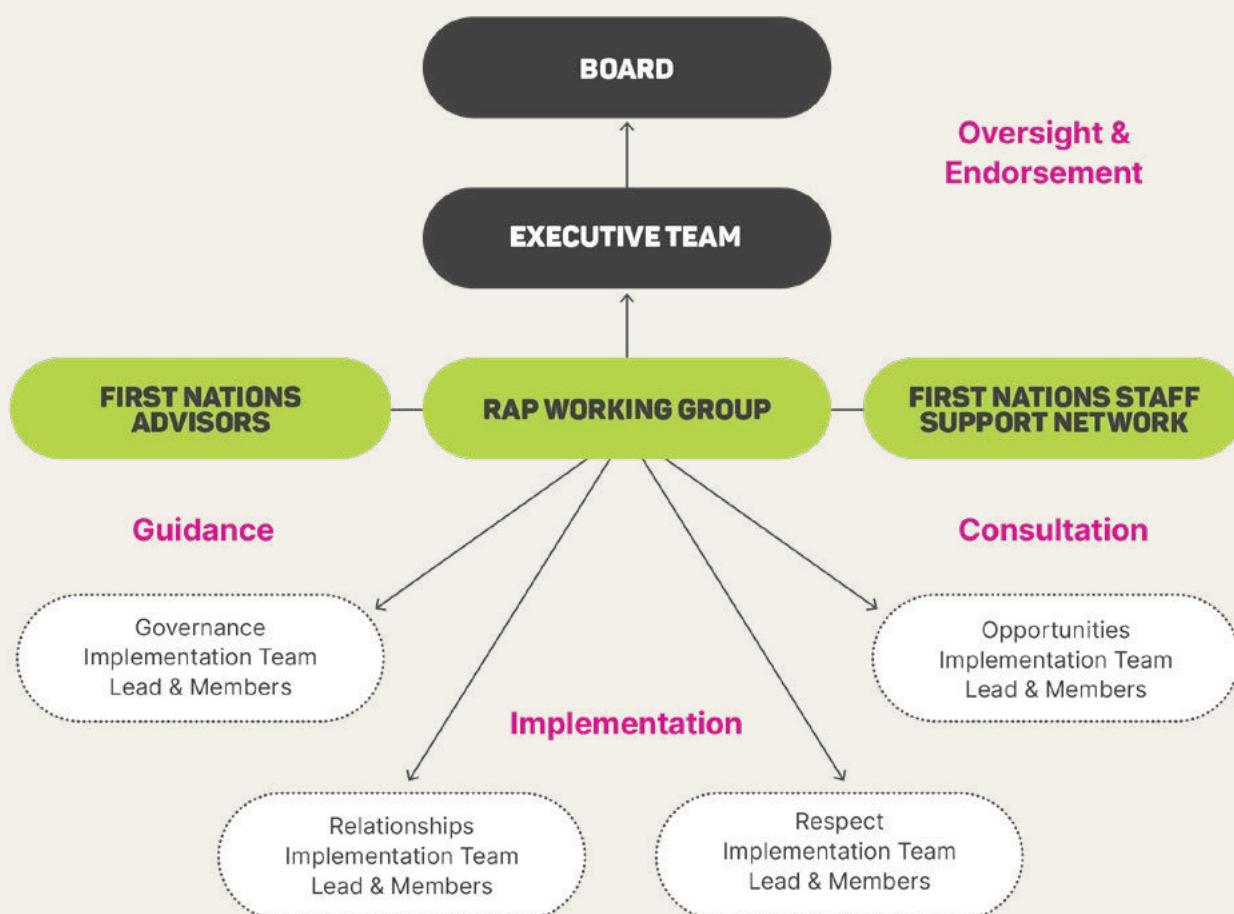
To effectively implement our Reflect RAP, we have established four implementation groups aligned with the RAP pillars: Relationships, Respect, Opportunities, and Governance. Each group is chaired by a designated leader responsible for the deliverables under their respective pillar and consists of 10-12 members. This structure allows our team members to engage deeply in reconciliation efforts while sharing knowledge and coordinating the work plan across the organisation.



Feros Board and Executive Team Members, 2023

We plan to apply the same structure for delivering the Innovate RAP. The four Implementation Teams will report to the RAP Working Group, which in turn reports to the Feros Executive Leadership Team and the Feros Board.

RAP IMPLEMENTATION



Our RAP working group members:

Amber Stachiw - Executive Assistant to Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development

Andrew Martin - General Manager, Local Area Coordination Operations

Ash Fotu - Local Area Coordinator

Bruna Ribeiro Correa - Organisational Capability Coordinator

Chelsea Corner - Local Area Coordinator, Quality

Chimi Lhaden - Practice Lead, Local Area Coordination

Christie Campbell - Community Development Manager

Craig Cousins - Head of Procurement and Facilities

Damien Cornford - Training Facilitator and Assessor, Local Area Coordination

Devina Kustic - Assistant Accountant

Diane Chataway - Community Development Coordinator

Ebony Rix - Local Area Coordinator, Community Mental Health

Eimi Sariman - Local Area Coordinator

Elle Moriarty - Community Development Coordinator

Geri McDermott - Assistant Service Area Manager

Jacqi Holloway - Marketing Specialist

Jaime Johnston-Smith - General Manager, Contact Centre

Jean Andersen - Community Development Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Jeanette Manuta - General Manager, Quality Practice, Disability and Community Development

Jo Field - Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development

Kaitlyn Bartlett - Practice Lead, Local Area Coordination

Karen Crouch - Chief Executive Officer

Kath Dodds - Human Resource Business Partner

Keiren Freeman - First Nations Home Support Assessor, Community Development Coordinator, Aspire4Life

Lalania Tusa Faaefili - First Nations Educator and Advisor

Lou Allen - Customer Service Liaison

Mark Kerle - Executive Manager - Residential Services, Residential Services Operations

Melissa Simpson - Chief Experience Officer, Experience

Michael Neighbour - Local Area Coordinator

Michael Stevenson - Senior IT Project Manager

Michelle Kramer - Financial Manager

Miren Endelman - Recruitment Operations Lead

Nicola Hoey - Senior Local Area Coordinator

Nigel Rennie - Chief Information Officer

Pauline Davidson - Service Area Manager

Rebecca Chivers - General Manager, Community Development

Rianna Nisbet - Community Development Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Rodney O'Loughlin - Community Development Coordinator, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Romina Bettega - Senior Local Area Coordinator

Shaun McKowen - Chief Financial Officer

Tanya Wilson - Accounts Receivable Officer

Tiffan Finn - Product Marketing Manager

Tija Mace - Organisational Capability & Culture Manager

Tom Doyle - Digital Learning Specialist

Tony Syme - Hospitality Supervisor

Turin Pattikara Bandenege - Talent & Partnering Manager

Wendy Viney - Workforce Governance & Safety Manager

Our **Reconciliation Action Plan Champion** is the **Organisational Capability & Culture Manager** who is responsible for driving and championing internal engagement and awareness of the RAP.

There are five Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members who are part of the RAP Working Group.

OUR RAP JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

2021



- Cultural Audit, NAIDOC leave
- Supply Nation Membership
- Yarn'n Circle established
- Strengthening of relationships with First Nations groups (Community Capacity Building Projects)
- Terri Janke First Nations Procurement training

2022



- Identified roles, First Nations Community Development Coordinators in Local Area Coordination Service
- 7 Steps to Reconciliation training made available across business (362 people attended)
- On-Country training rolled out across footprint
- Strengthening of relationships with First Nations groups (Community Capacity Building Projects)
- Commissioning of First Nations artwork - Arakwal Artists
- Clinton Brewer – Kombummeri-Ngarangwal man supporting Staff Member Awards
- Cultural Dance and Yarn (41 people attended)

Ceharnie Martin, Indigenous Services Manager, ETC Ltd and Tina Pidcock, Office Manager and Secretary, Minjungbal Museum & Cultural Centre and Tweed Aboriginal Co-operative Society Limited. Partners in the National Reconciliation Week Event in 2024.



2023

- Approval of Reflect RAP by Reconciliation Australia
 - Implementation of Reflect RAP Actions
 - Increase in spend with First Nations businesses (including uniform rollout in the end of 2023)
 - Strengthening of relationships with First Nations groups (Community Capacity Building Projects)
 - Sorry Day (Bowen)
 - RAP Launch Event and activities coinciding with the National Reconciliation Week
 - Commissioning of Torres Strait Islander Artwork
 - Hanging of RAP Artwork on Arakwal Country at our Bangalow Residential Village
 - Education/Training Sessions (914 people attended)
 - LAC First Nations Community Development Coordinators - 12 month Community Engagement Plan
 - Galambany Sentencing Circle – ACT
 - Murri Court Project – Mackay



2024

- Working toward Innovate RAP
 - Australia Day Leave choice / option
- Selecting our Innovate RAP Artwork with both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander pieces of art
 - Education/Training Sessions (131 people attended)
 - Partnered with Employment Training Community (ETC) and the Minjungbal Museum and Cultural Centre in hosting a National Reconciliation Week Event on 31 May 2024 at the Minjungbal Museum and Cultural Centre, Tweed Heads



RAP WORKING GROUP IMPLEMENTATION GROUPS

The four RAP Implementation Groups outline their key learnings and most significant achievements of the Reflect RAP below.



Feros Care Team member making their RAP Pledge 2023



Feros Care Team members at the 2023 Townsville NAIDOC, March



Yarning Circle Inspired Webinar, 2023

Relationships implementation group

Many of the deliverables under this pillar have supported us in reaching out to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders, organisations, and community members across our footprint. We have employed cultural groups to share dance and song, invited local Elders to give a Welcome to Country at events like our RAP launch and conference, and engaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to help our team members better understand diverse perspectives. These efforts have enabled us to form richer relationships with them.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Our RAP Working Group members attended external National Reconciliation Week (NRW) and NAIDOC Week events, including those offered by like-minded RAP organisations such as Employment, Training and Community (ETC) and Griffith University.

Many of our activities promoted reconciliation awareness and personal reflection within our organisation for our team members. During NRW, we created activities, content, and events that were shared daily across our entire organisation. Each day, videos featured a wide range of team members sharing why they believe reconciliation matters. First Nations team members shared their own perspectives around reconciliation, and at the end of the week, team members shared their RAP pledges to further reconciliation in Australia. These RAP pledges were also made at our official RAP launch event.

A highlight of this week was the Yarning Circle inspired webinar. We invited Kuku Yalanji women, Lalania Tusa Faaafili and her mother Janice,

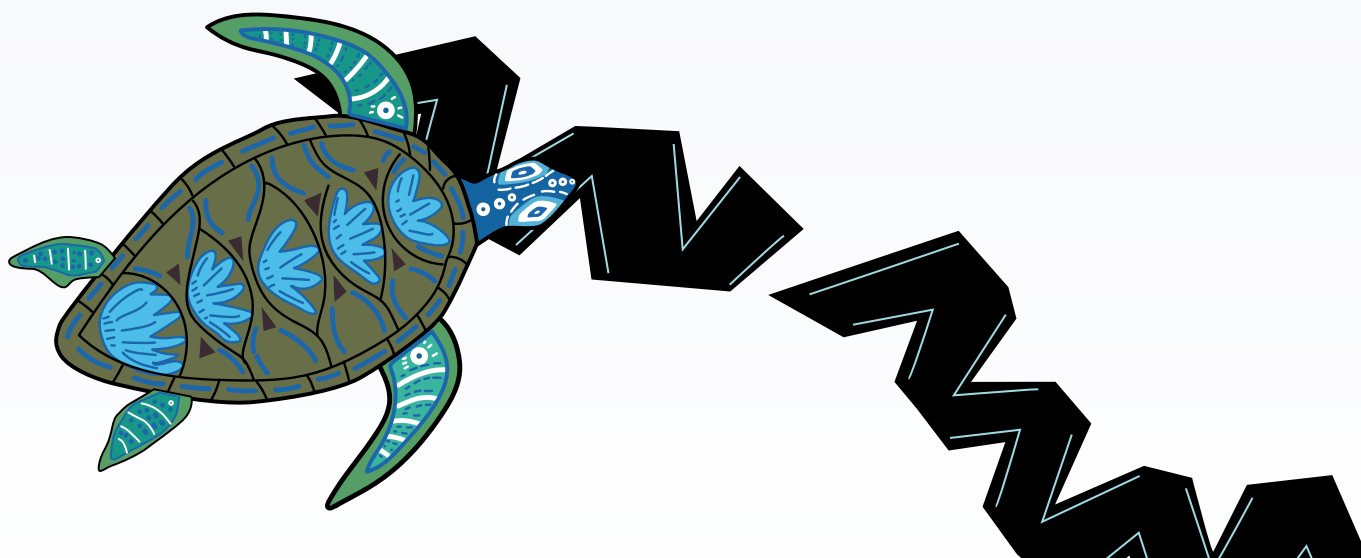
as well as Torres Strait Islander woman from the Saibai Island Koedal clan, Zhane James, to answer pre-submitted questions from our team members. The idea was to create a safe space for our team members to ask questions and gain more understanding. This event, broadcast live across our footprint, was well attended and well received. The organising team received heartening feedback from a team member who said it changed her view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and influenced her vote to 'Yes' for the Voice referendum. Most importantly, she felt strongly enough to share these learnings within her family. Every person needs to go on their own reconciliation journey, and we're proud to support people on that journey with clear information.

KEY LEARNINGS AND CHALLENGES:

A challenge we encountered during NRW launch week was the connection of satellite events to the main event at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary. We learned how passionate our satellite locations are about their local communities and realised we missed an opportunity to engage more locally.

We identified after the launch that we need to renew our efforts and focus on engaging Torres Strait Islander Communities. We have made this a focus on the Innovate RAP and honoured this commitment by commissioning an artwork from a Torres Strait Islander artist.

By addressing these challenges and building on our achievements, we aim to continue our learning and making meaningful progress in our reconciliation journey.



Respect implementation group

As the Respect Implementation Group, our primary focus has been to continue to develop the organisation's foundational principles while offering opportunities for our team members to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

We have connected with First Nations organisations across our footprint, and as a result we've initiated several programs aimed at embedding a workplace ethos of honouring First Nations protocols and practices. These programs include embedding a self-directed foundational course for all our team members, with training supplied by Evolve Communities and implementing local on country experiences for team members across our regions. One team member has gone on to complete Evolve's Ally Accreditation, with several other team members starting that journey. Those team members are able to share this additional knowledge and support across their areas of influence.

We continue to include respectful First Nations protocols into our team meetings, events, and practices. We've been pleased to offer extra learning opportunities, such as create meaningful Acknowledgement of Country seminars for our team members, and senior leaders have received extra cultural learning opportunities and support.

NAIDOC week celebrations have been a highlight, with many team members having the opportunity to attend local events and marches to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We have seen exceptional engagement in our 7 Steps to Reconciliation self-directed education with 847 completions, as well as with our other education opportunities outlined in our Cultural Learning Strategy. What we are excited about is having our organisation so committed to learning about First Nations histories, cultures and wanting to connect and build a positive future.

KEY LEARNINGS AND CHALLENGES:

One of our valuable learnings has been partnering with various First Nations providers who share their diverse experiences and stories that provide our team members a rich experience.

A challenge for Feros Care has been finding Torres Strait Islander providers who can support us on our reconciliation journey. Providers in our service regions are scarce, making it difficult for us to ensure we are giving well rounded opportunities for our team members. We are committed to finding support on this and will continue to leverage the relationships of our First Nations Advisors and Educators to build our professional network.



Opportunities implementation group

Our focus for the Reflect RAP has been on recruitment and retention of First Nations people to our team, and in increasing supplier diversity. Much of this foundational work undertaken during this time will be amplified with the implementation of our Innovate RAP.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

Prior to, and throughout our Reflect RAP, we have been Supply Nations members. We have actively implemented processes to encourage more First Nations businesses and suppliers to become Supply Nation members. We have already established relationships with First Nations suppliers in several areas, including stationery and merchandise. Our spend with First Nations businesses has increased by 549% since our Reflect RAP started in March 2023 and we have an ongoing focus of using First Nations suppliers into the future.

A First Nations Procurement Plan and First Nations Procurement Policy have recently been endorsed by the Executive Leadership Team which will help us remain focused on increasing supplier diversity moving forward. One of the initiatives is a potential partnership with the NSW Indigenous Chambers of Commerce (NSWICC). The focus of this partnership will be to procure the services of First Nations businesses and suppliers registered with NSWICC. NSWICC also shared information on their Wuu-rri Vending machines initiative, an empowerment opportunity for First Nations enterprises, at no cost to Feros Care. The Opportunities Implementation Team are currently reviewing this opportunity.

A key piece of work has been the development and approval of a business case for recruitment and retention of First Nations team members. This has now been approved and the development and implementation of the strategy will be a focus for the Innovate RAP.

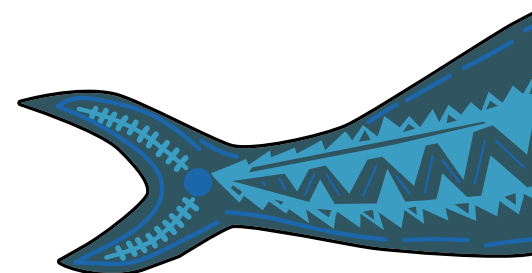
The team, and broader RAP Working Group remains committed to adhering to the First Nations Artwork Commission and Licence Agreement. Additionally, we put out an Expression of Interest (EOI) for the commissioning of a Torres Strait Islander artwork to be shared in our Innovate RAP. We wanted to ensure that both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were specifically represented in our Innovate RAP.

KEY LEARNINGS AND CHALLENGES:

One of our identified challenges is the need for an increase in recruitment and retention of First Nations employees, so that we are reflective of the communities we serve. Workshops were held with First Nations staff members and Employment Community Development Coordinators to better understand how to effectively recruit, retain and provide professional development for First Nations peoples. These data insights and discussions shaped the purpose and content of the business case for a First Nations Recruitment and Retention strategy.

Moving forward, we will hold another workshop with our People and Organisational Development Team focused on conducting a self-assessment of First Nations employment, training, and retention, with the outcomes of this contributing to the development of the future strategy.

We have recently transitioned to a new payment system to process payments to vendors. We are currently exploring the possibility of flagging Supply Nation suppliers in the Feros Care supplier data base as this functionality has not been activated to date. This will provide a platform to promote and support using First Nations businesses and to monitor the usage of securing goods and services through First Nations businesses.



Governance implementation group

Effective governance is the cornerstone of a successful RAP. We have established a dedicated and inclusive RAP Working Group which has focused on providing governance, support and implementation of our Reflect RAP.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS:

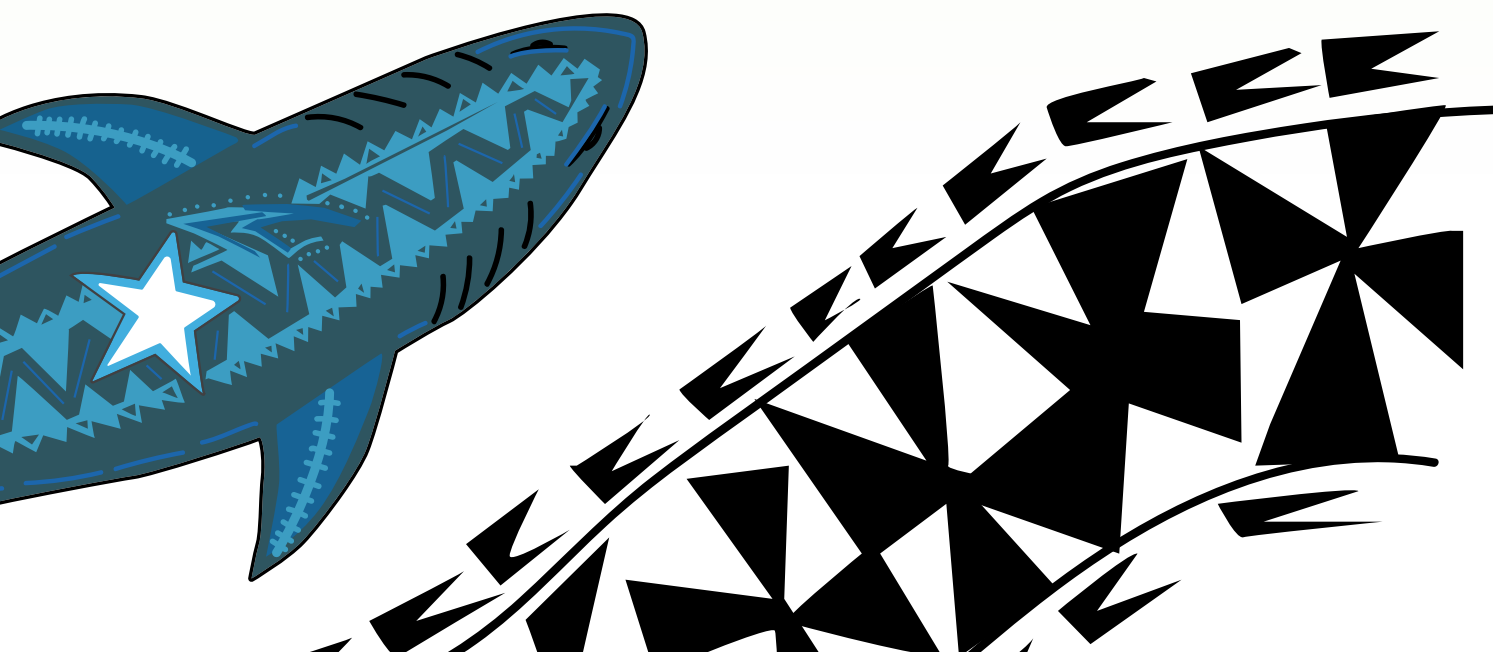
Our governance ethos is founded on the five dimensions of reconciliation (race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity and historical acceptance) as described in Reconciliation Australia's website and have used these to navigate the path to reconciliation with purpose and commitment. We have fostered an approach which values transparent communication and involves a wide cross section of our Feros Care team.

The journey towards reconciliation is ongoing, and a well-governed RAP ensures that each step is taken with respect, understanding and a genuine commitment to positive change. We are pleased with the progress we have made during our Reflect RAP – the key governance tasks have been: to maintain an active and effective and diverse RAP Working Group; to ensure appropriate leadership and support for the implementation of our initiatives; to develop accurate and transparent reporting of our RAP achievements and challenges; and to register our intention to progress to an Innovate RAP.

KEY LEARNINGS AND CHALLENGES:

The RAP Working Group has had oversight of our four Implementation Working Groups based on the four pillars: Respect, Relationships, Opportunities and Governance. These groups have led a wide range of tasks and deliverables, whilst also raising awareness and promoting respect and collaboration across our organisation and in the community. One of the most important learnings has been understanding that reconciliation is a journey for the whole organisation, and that it is important for everyone to be informed and involved in the RAP and its deliverables. We are now well placed to move to an Innovate RAP having built a firm foundation for ongoing learning, understanding and adaptation. We are excited about what challenges and successes lie ahead, and we are looking forward to the next leg of our journey.

The path to reconciliation is not without its challenges. We recognise that each step forward requires a commitment to continuous learning, adaptation, and reflection. Embracing the complexities and difficulties inherent in this process will strengthen our resolve and deepen our understanding. Our commitment to overcoming these challenges will foster growth, build stronger relationships, and create lasting, positive change within our organisation and the broader community. As we move forward, we are eager to face these challenges head-on, confident that each one presents an opportunity to learn, grow, and make meaningful progress towards reconciliation.



THE CONNECTION TREE:

Acknowledging the Stolen Generations – past and present survivors.

Feros Care partnered with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Non-Government Organisations, local medical centres, allied health, mainstream schools, and various business owners to support service providers to:

- Provide social and emotional wellness support.
- Acknowledge the impact of forcible removal and the potential recovery pathways.
- Recognise the signs and symptoms of trauma associated with forcible removal in clients, families and others involved with their service.
- Avoid re-traumatising survivors of the Stolen Generations.

The program supported local businesses and organisations to be a culturally safe place for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. They are provided with ongoing support to create culturally safe practices.

Cultural skills workshops – First Nations cultural experiences and histories

The intention of these workshops was to support workplaces to have a greater understanding of intergenerational trauma and the impacts it has on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and then to transfer this knowledge and understanding within their workplaces. Attendees at the workshops included:

- Whitsunday Regional Council (project partner)
- Queensland Department of Health – Bowen Hospital
- Queensland Child Safety Services – Bowen
- I'ara Support Coordination Services
- Bowen Aged Care – Murroona Gardens and other support coordination organisations

The seminar started with participants divided into two groups to be able to understand the different workplaces and industries attending. Information was shared about Australian Aboriginal histories and to a lesser extent, Torres Strait Islander histories and the effects of intergenerational trauma. There was a focus on discussing the underestimated and unknown ripple effect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, being born into intergenerational trauma. The session was facilitated by Bindal community Elder and Traditional Owner, Aunty Dorothy Savage and by her son, Alfred Henaway, Senior Principal Cultural Capability Officer for Youth Justice State-wide Services. Feedback from employers attending this workshop included:

“I think that we as a country [have] so long to go, ... but it makes us excited that there is movement within cultural safety.”

“This has given more of an understanding where racism has come from, especially in the dementia ward. Understand that the older generation where the hurt and anger comes from.”

Sorry Day – Bowen

As an addition to the cultural workshops, we worked in partnership with local council and Girudala to hold a community event on Sorry Day.

The event was attended by more than 100 people. Michelle Wright, Whitsunday Regional Councillor, and Traditional Owner, Darryl Paul, officially opened the Connection Tree and plaque, overlooking the Whitsunday area.

The National Sorry Day Commemorative Tree acknowledges the strength of lived and living of the Stolen Generations' survivors and how we can all share the healing process from the impacts on their mental well-being. Local school children attended the event and performed Traditional dances. Auntie Janice attended and shared her story on the effects of being part of the Stolen Generations.

Local Services, such as Girudala, Herbert Street Family Medical Centre, Selectability, Headspace, Proserpine Youth Space, Queensland Health, and the Queensland Health Deadly Choices team, set up stalls at the event. Woolworths and the local football club provided a free sausage sizzle.



Students from Bowen State High School - Djuru Traditional dancers at Sorry Day Bowen, 2023

FIRST NATIONS STAFF SUPPORT NETWORK

One of our First Nations Educators and Advisors established the Yarn'n Circle (First Nations Staff Support Network) in 2021 as a safe space for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff to connect, learn, and support each other. Initially, the network had four staff members and has since expanded to 19 members. The regular meetings in a culturally safe environment and informal structure have created a forum for leadership to hear the voices of First Nations staff.

New team members are made aware of the Yarn'n Circle during their induction.

Rianna Nisbet joined Feros Care as a Local Area Coordinator and is now a First Nations Community Development Coordinator on Bindal and Wulgurukaba country (Townsville).

"I came to work at Feros Care because I wanted a job that would directly impact the social and physical wellbeing of our mob. Things can only change from inside of the system and I wasn't aware of anyone I knew who worked for their community within the NDIS space. I work in Community Development, so basically I support people with disability to be able to connect with others, utilise all their town has to offer and to feel as though they belong and are a part of this community. I do this through reducing barriers and yarning with people to find out how I can help."



Team members ready to celebrate NAIDOC Week 2024.

COMMUNITY AND PLACED BASED CO-LOCATIONS

Feros Care prides itself on being place based within community. Across our LAC Program we have co-locations in each of our service areas. Co-location is a program where we have staff members based in mainstream and community services. This allows us to support community in community. Townsville Aboriginal and Islander Health Service (TAIHS) and Feros Care have had a long-standing collaboration between the Integrated Team Care and Aboriginal Liaison Officers. The partnership started between Feros Care and TAIHS in April of 2022 and has continued with a co-location on site every week since then.

The place-based, culturally sensitive approach given to Townsville Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders has worked well with 54 people meeting NDIS access in 2023. TAIHS is a safe place for people in the community with many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples feeling safe to attend, having long standing connections with the staff and transportation provided by the Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) assisting people to attend appointments where required. During our time at the Medical Centre, we have supported participants and their families to understand their plans and provided education to the doctors and support team. Additionally, we participate in community engagement activities such as men's groups, mental health yarning circles, Children's Christmas party and Deadly Choices awareness days. We also provide direct community connections for people from TAIHS, as many free services to support them mentally and physically, are available there to attend. The feedback we have received from the AMS and Aboriginal Liaison Officer has been overwhelmingly positive with our collaboration.

Justin's story provides an insight on how supports provided through co-locations can have impacts.

Justin's move from Alice Springs to South Australia.

Justin, a proud Warlpiri and Arrernte man, faced challenges growing up and those challenges became more pronounced as he transitioned into adulthood. His early years in the Northern Territory were marked by a lack of support for his diagnosis, leading to difficulty finding independence and a place within the community. The relocation to Adelaide marked a turning point for Justin and his family. They discovered Feros LAC. Feros Care provided support in regard to accessing the NDIS and choosing and accessing supports.

"Because of our place-based approach at Wonggangga Turtpandi Aboriginal Primary Health Care in Port Adelaide, I was able to really support them through the whole journey," LAC shared.

While waiting for his NDIS outcome Justin was supported to connect with the Department of Education and he has since been working as a Student Support Officer, assisting young people in school art classes. Justin has been recognised for his creativity for the design of an Aboriginal sports shirt and he is eager to pursue more projects in this area.

The doctor at Wonggangga Turtpandi also appreciated being educated and supported through this process and is very pleased to be able to provide the information in the way their patients need. This had an impactful effect at the clinic with GPs, Occupational Therapists and Aboriginal Health and Wellbeing staff coming together to work collaboratively to support clients through the NDIS process. They now feel a bigger part of the solution for their community, who now have additional professionals to seek support through.



Justin and a piece of his art.

RELATIONSHIPS

Building strong relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians is important to Feros Care because without the respect and interest in building relationships with First Nations Peoples we won't flourish as an organisation, nor will we be able to truly or effectively work toward reconciliation.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1 Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.	September 2025	First Nations Educator and Advisor
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	September 2026	First Nations Educator and Advisor
2 Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2025 and May 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	May 2025 and May 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	May 2025 and May 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	Organise at least one NRW event each year.	June 2025 and June 2026	Organisational Culture and Engagement Lead
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website .	April 2025 and April 2026	Organisational Culture and Engagement Lead
3 Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce.	September 2025	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	June 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	June 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	Collaborate with RAP organisations and other like-minded organisations to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	By September 2025	First Nations Educator and Advisor



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
4 Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	September 2025	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Develop, implement, and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	September 2026	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	September 2026	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Educate senior leaders on the effects of racism.	March 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager



RESPECT

Respect is at the core of everything. By building our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, cultures, histories, knowledge and rights we are better able to show and be respectful of and build relationships with First Nations communities.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5 Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	September 2024, September 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy.	October 2024	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Continue to implement our cultural learning strategy document for our staff and review it annually.	October 2025, October 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Continue to provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning and review it annually.	October 2025, October 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Support the culturally safe delivery of Truth-telling within our organisation	October 2025, October 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
6 Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Maintain commitment to offer education to increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols and review it annually.	October 2025, October 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	February 2025	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Continue to invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	May 2025	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	May 2025	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
7 Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	First week in July, (2024 and 2025)	Culture and Engagement Lead
	Maintain HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week and review it annually.	April 2025, April 2026	Organisational Capability and Culture Manager
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff.	First week in July 2025, First week in July 2026	Culture and Engagement Lead



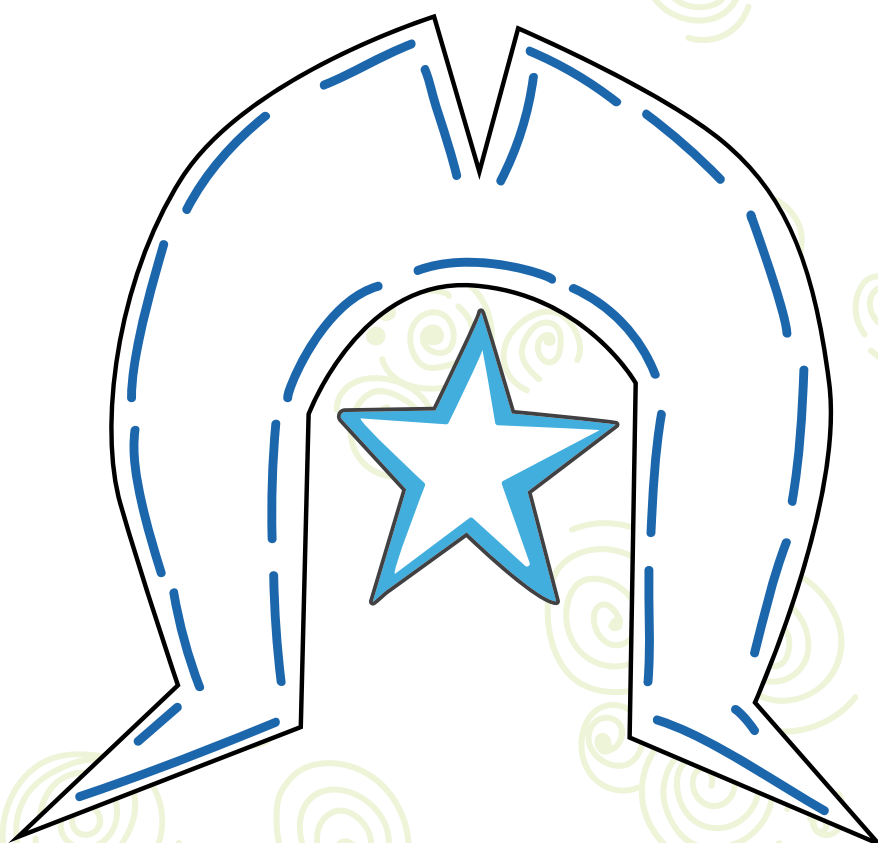
OPPORTUNITIES

To strengthen our employment and procurement outcomes the first thing we want is to hear the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples - both internally through our team members and externally from First Nations community members. This will assist us to identify opportunities that could potentially provide improvements in this space, and further reconciliation in Australia.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8 Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention, and professional development to ensure our staff represent the community we serve.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	December 2025	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on our recruitment, onboarding, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2025	GM Community Development
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	December 2025	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	December 2025	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace which provides a culturally safe environment.	December 2025	Executive Manager, People and Organisational Development



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9 Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Review, update, and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	June 2025	Head of Procurement and Facilities
	Continue and maintain Supply Nation membership.	May 2025 and May 2026	Head of Procurement and Facilities
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	June 2025	Head of Procurement and Facilities
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2025	Head of Procurement and Facilities
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	June 2025	Head of Procurement and Facilities



GOVERNANCE

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10 Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	September 2025	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Maintain a Terms of Reference for the RWG and review it annually.	September 2025 and September 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	September 2025 and September 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
11 Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2025	Chief Executive Officer
	Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	March 2025	Chief Executive Officer
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	September 2025	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	December 2024	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
12 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June 2025 and June 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Survey.	August 2025 and August 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2024, 30 September, 2025 and 30 September 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Report RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly.	November 2025 and November 2026	Chief Executive Officer

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
12 Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	November 2025 and November 2026	Chief Executive Officer
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	February 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
	Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	September 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
13 Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	March 2026	Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development
14 Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander external advisory body to advise Feros in our reconciliation journey.	In consultation with the Executive and Board, establish a Terms of Reference for external advisory body including meeting protocols, remuneration, roles, and responsibilities.	December 2025	Chief Executive Officer
	Consult with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups regarding the composition of the board, the nomination and expression of interest process.	February 2025	Chief Executive Officer
	Convene the external advisory body by September 2025	September 2025	Chief Executive Officer

Contact details:

Name: Jo Field

Position: Executive Manager, Disability and Community Development

Chair of the RAP Working Group

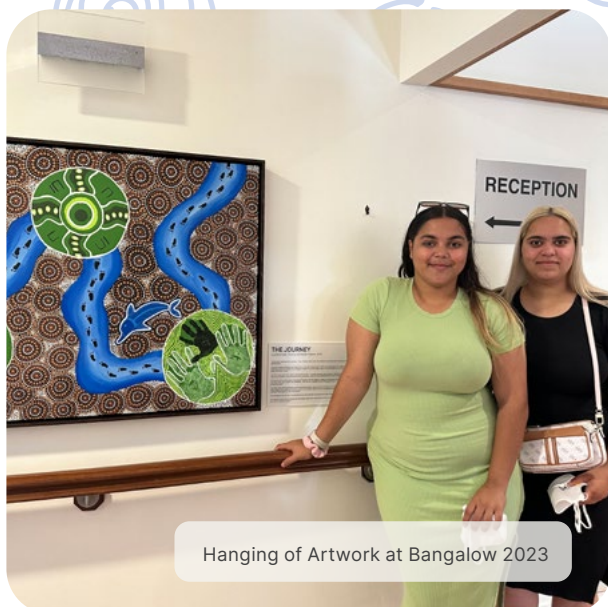
Phone: 0436 356 744

Email: jofield@feroscare.com.au





Auntie Janice speaking at Sorry Day Bowen, 2023.



Hanging of Artwork at Bangalow 2023



LAC Conference 2024 Smoking Ceremony



Team members at Deadly Day Out 2024



Feros Care team members and invited guests at the launch of our Reflect RAP.

