



REFLECT RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

PROGRESS REPORT

November 2021 – Ngunnawal Country



FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the representative body for more than 90,000 Australian scientists and technologists, Science & Technology Australia is responsible for playing a part in our nation's journey towards reconciliation.

STA's core mission is to advocate the value of science and technology. Fundamentally, it is about bringing different people together to talk, listen and learn from each other. In this spirit, STA commits itself: to listen and learn about this nation's past and present.

STA has committed to improving our knowledge about Country, and the people who have cared for Country over millennia. We have committed to raising the profile of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander STEM organisations and researchers to amplify their voices and share their stories.

Australia's future, and the health and well-being of our communities rests with the kind of relationships we build today. This RAP is the first step to building better relationships.

Associate Professor Jeremy Brownlie
President



FROM THE CEO

Yuma! To know our history is to know ourselves. Deepening our knowledge of Country, language, culture and history is central to this task.

Across the STA community, all of us share a leadership responsibility to deepen our knowledge. To expand our skills and relationships of trust. And to build strong partnerships informed by the aspirations and priorities of First Nations people and organisations.

In the first report for our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan, STA's staff, Board, committees, program participants and members have built strong early momentum in this work. Our staff share responsibility for deepening their learning and knowledge. And we continue to deepen our relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member organisations.

As we extend our own knowledge, we are building a community of practice in the STA network. This includes modelling how to research and offer an Acknowledgement of Country. With each gathering, we are teaching our communities more about Indigenous knowledges, history, words and topography – and inviting them to share in responsibility for this learning and teaching.

There is much further work to do, but we are proud of the early momentum in this work and the strong buy-in from across the STA community. Thank you all for your powerful contributions.

Yara,
Misha Schubert
Chief Executive Officer



HIGHLIGHTS

- STA is proud to report strong progress to implement our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.
- All RAP actions due by the end of September 2021 have been met on time or ahead of time.
- Work continues towards the deliverables due later in this plan as we head into 2022.
- A strong leadership commitment to this work as a priority for STA is communicated regularly by our President, President Elect, CEO and Deputy CEO.
- Participants at STA meetings share responsibility to research and offer an Acknowledgement of Country that shares an insight from First Nations knowledge, history or language – deepening the shared knowledge of our community.
- STA staff are deepening their cultural learning – including learning how to deliver an Acknowledgement of Country in the Ngunnawal language.
- STA is proud to have given support to help establish an Indigenous STEM Professionals Network, including with an STA email account and administrative/logistical staff time.
- We consult regularly with our First Nations member organisations on policy advocacy and media comment on Indigenous issues such as the 2021 Closing the Gap statement.
- We are seeding STA's partnerships approach as the foundation of our work on First Nations issues in the STA community in advice to member organisations.
- STA is actively encouraging First Nations candidacy for our Executive.

Commitments up to the current reporting date (30 September 2021)

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
By May 2021	Provide logistical support to issue a callout and coordination support for initial virtual meetings about establishing an Australian Indigenous STEM Network.	CEO	Ongoing	STA issued a callout to our STA membership and universities in August 2020 to invite expressions of interest from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working in STEM to join discussions about establishing an Australian Indigenous STEM Professionals Network. This work was supporting the interim Indigenous leadership group of Kamilaroi water scientist Bradley Moggridge, Quandamooka mathematician Chris Matthews and Kamilaroi man and Deadly Science CEO Corey Tutt. STA provided in-kind administrative support to field emails and support the holding of two gatherings in November 2020 and February 2021. The second gathering appointed an expanded 8-member leadership group for the network. A First Nations facilitator led these workshops with some financial support from the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering. STA has since established an email address to support the network and is donating in-kind administrative support for its work.
May 2021	Hold a staff consultation session on the cultural learning needs in our organisation at an all-staff gathering.	CEO	Complete	All STA staff were invited to a session to discuss what they most felt they wanted or needed to learn. Staff identified they were particularly interested in learning more about Ngunnawal Country, where STA's office is located, its history and about Indigenous knowledge of the region. Our language training in June started this work.

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
May 2021	Ask staff and committee members to research and personalise a local Acknowledgement of Country at meetings and events.	CEO	Regular practice	<p>STA staff, Board, committee members and program participants take it in turn to research and present a personalised Acknowledgement of Country to deepen the skills and knowledge of the STA community. We ask them to learn more about an aspect of local Aboriginal culture or history, knowledge or language, and teach it to the rest of the meeting attendees.</p> <p>In recent months, people have shared insights on the searing history of Lutruwita (Tasmania), the Kombumerri knowledge of the Gold Coast, the Dharawul significance of the lyrebird as peacekeeper who speak many languages, the origin of words like ‘yakka’ (from the Brisbane region in language), and many more insights about Country. This practice deepens knowledge in our community, and telegraphs the shared responsibility for learning and teaching our history and cultures by all in our community.</p>
May 2021	Encourage STA Staff to attend an external event during National Reconciliation Week to build further relationships.	CEO + EA	Complete	<p>In consultation with the CEO, the Executive Assistant sent out an email to Board members and staff explaining the significance of National Reconciliation Week (NRW), and the two anniversaries it holds. The email included NRW resources including further information, zoom backgrounds and email signatures. Staff were encouraged to spend time in reflection on how they could, as individuals work towards reconciliation. Staff were also encouraged to attend external events around National Reconciliation Week. An excerpt can be found in ANNEX A to help member organisations prepare similar materials in future.</p>
Prior to 27 May 2021	Circulate Reconciliation Australia’s NRW resources and reconciliation materials to staff.	CEO + EA	Complete	
27 May – 3 June 2021	Share knowledge with STA staff and Board about the significance of the milestone dates before and during NRW – National Sorry Day, the anniversary of the 1967 referendum, and Mabo Day.	CEO	Complete	

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
May 2021 and at events and meetings of the Indigenous STEM community.	Work with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders including STA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member organisations on our reconciliation actions.	All staff	Ongoing	The leaders of STA's two First Nations member organisations – Quandamooka mathematician Chris Matthews and Kamilaroi man Corey Tutt – are on our RAP working group and we engage regularly with them both about their work, STA actions and advocacy, and shared priorities. These conversations, their work and the aspirations of the Indigenous STEM Professionals Network have guided our RAP actions.
May and July 2021	Develop social media content to highlight Indigenous STEM partnerships and content and activate further supporters for STA's Indigenous member organisations.	Comms Director	Complete	In both National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week, and during the year, STA's Communications Director prepared materials for social media to promote the work of STA's First Nations member organisations to the STA community and beyond. We have also promoted the new Deadly Science books, and urged our community to support ATSIMA and Deadly Science with donations. ATSIMA was our community partner for Science Meets Parliament 2021.
June 2021	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	CEO	Complete	STA's 2021/22 Budget has allocated \$7000 for RAP implementation – the first time we have made a dedicated budget allocation to reconciliation work. This line item covers Welcome to Country fees, other procurement including artwork for our RAP, and Ngunnawal Language training. Additionally, staff time has been assigned to RAP related activities. One example of many is our Executive Assistant spending two hours per week managing the Australian Indigenous STEM Professionals Network email account to support this network's leadership group.

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
June 2021	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	CEO + President	Ongoing	STA Board and committees now rotate responsibility for researching and presenting an Acknowledgement of Country at meetings. STA Executive have discussed how to report back to the STA community on the progress against our RAP, including through this detailed report to inspire further actions by the STA membership and community. We also plan to present on our RAP progress at the Annual General Meeting with the full STA membership in November 2021.
July 2021	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the significance of NAIDOC Week.	CEO	Complete	In consultation with the CEO, the Executive Assistant emailed STA staff about NAIDOC Week. This email explained the significance of NAIDOC Week as a time to celebrate Australia's First Nations People and Cultures and to reflect on reconciliation. The email also contained links to external events that staff were encouraged to attend. An excerpt can be found in ANNEX B to help member organisations prepare similar materials in future.
July 2021	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area and encouraging staff to attend to build relationships further.	CEO	Complete	
August 2021	Build staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	CEO	Complete	In June 2021, Ngunnawal man Cheyne Halloran and Aboriginal linguist Dr Louise Baird (formerly of AIATSIS) ran a session for STA staff on local history and how to give an Acknowledgement of Country in Ngunnawal Language. This training also encompassed the significance of Country, who can give a Welcome to Country and the protocols for it.
30 September	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	CEO	Complete	Our first questionnaire was submitted to Reconciliation Australia in September 2021.

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
Ongoing	Communicate commitment to reconciliation to staff.	CEO + President	Ongoing	The CEO and President have both made clear their strong commitment for STA to deepen our reconciliation work – and to inspire our staff, our governance structure, the STEM sector, and the STA membership to do likewise. They regularly telegraph this commitment in our member forums, policy advocacy, formal events, and staff and Board meetings. They have led work in partnership with the two First Nations member organisations of STA – Deadly Science and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mathematics Alliance – to draft STA’s first Reconciliation Action Plan and embark on this program of work. STA staff are invited regularly to share resources on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, Country, language, history and culture.

Future Commitments where work is in progress

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
By November 2021	Provide in-kind logistical support for early discussions to establish an Australian Indigenous Scientists/STEM Professionals Network.	CEO + EA	In progress	STA has supported the formation of this network by creating an email account (aistempn@sta.org.au) for the network and providing in-kind logistical and organisational support to the network. This includes assistance to coordinate email expressions of interest for a proposed December gathering of the network hosted by UTS.
November 2021	Promote leadership opportunities by including specific encouragement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates to nominate in STA elections.	CEO	In progress	STA has called for nominations for several Board and Executive positions this month. First Nations Australians have been particularly encouraged to nominate for these roles in all of the advertising materials. Additionally, the CEO, President and President-elect have actively encouraged a senior STEM sector First Nations candidate to nominate for a key role.
By November 2021	Track delivered achievements under the RAP in our annual report preparatory materials.	CEO + Comms Manager	In progress	In addition to the reporting to Reconciliation Australia, this public report to the STA community extends our reporting commitment. The materials in this report will feed into our annual report and AGM presentations on November 25.
By November 2021	Deepen existing relationships and develop new ones with Ngunnawal-Ngambri Custodians.	Deputy CEO	In progress	STA engaged Ngunnawal Elder Wally Bell to offer a Welcome to Country for our RAP launch in NAIDOC Week in July, and Ngambri-Ngunnawal Custodian Paul House to offer a Welcome to Country for the official launch of National Science Week 2021 delivered in August.
Due by November 2021	Draft a policy to reflect best practice and principles to support partnerships and work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Deputy CEO	In progress	STA's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee has identified the development of this policy as one of its key activities for the current period. We intend to develop this as a template that can be shared with STA member organisations to guide their work also.

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
December 2021	Draft a formal policy to include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important meetings (noting this is already our regular practice).	Deputy CEO	In progress	This work is in progress and will formally document our practice outlined in earlier sections of this report to share responsibility in meetings for people to research and present an Acknowledgement of Country that teaches others about an aspect of history, culture, language or knowledge as an additional resource/template.
By December 2021	Work with ATSI STEM Organisations to deepen partnerships and projects.	CEO	In progress	STA continues to engage regularly in conversations, emails and texts with our First Nations member organisations in STEM – Deadly Science and ATSIMA. We offer complimentary membership for First Nations member organisations as part of our commitment to reconciliation.
By December 2021	Embed opportunities for staff to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights.	CEO	In progress	Staff have begun a practice of sharing resources that they identify with each other. This includes TedX talks, media articles, and guidance on language and protocols. STA is also a member of the Diversity Council of Australia and staff take the opportunity to attend online training through their resources.
March 2022	Develop strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander program content in our flagship events such as Science Meets Parliament.	Events Manager	In progress	The launch of National Science Week featured Wiradjiri Nyemba woman Dr Virginia Marshall - the Inaugural Indigenous Postdoctoral Fellow with the Australian National University's School of Regulation and Global Governance (RegNet) and the Fenner School of Environment and Society as a panelist. We also featured a video highlight reel of Science week events around the country featuring the Indigenous Science Experience . The launch event finished with school children thanking scientists, two of the schools featured were in remote Indigenous communities: Haasts Bluff School and Robinson River School, both in the Northern Territory. We have begun developing draft programming for Science meets Parliament 2022 and plan to include strong speaker content from First Nations speakers as well as exploring session content focussed on Indigenous knowledge.

Time	Deliverable	Responsibility	Status	Details
March 2022	Organise a Welcome to Country at major events such as Science meets Parliament.	Events Manager	In Progress	STA engaged Ngunnawal Elder Wally Bell to offer a Welcome to Country for our RAP launch in NAIDOC Week in July, and Ngambri-Ngunnawal Custodian Paul House to offer a Welcome to Country for the official launch of National Science Week 2021 delivered in August.
May 2022	Seek procurement where possible from indigenous owned businesses.	Events Manager	In progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STA purchased a custom Indigenous artwork to adorn our RAP. The artwork 'Diverse Communities' is by Ngunnawal, Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi artist Lynnice Letty Church and Barkindji artist Brendan Church. • STA has sourced Ngunnawal language and cultural training for staff through Indigenous provider, Ngunnawal man Cheyne Halloran. • STA has sourced professional video production for the Superstars of STEM Program from Supply Nation certified studio, Wolf Lab. • We have also begun identifying a range of Indigenous suppliers to invite to tender as opportunities arise. • Gifts for outgoing Board Directors were purchased from Yarn Marketplace and Welcome to Country.
November 2022	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RAP Working Group	CEO	In progress	<p>Our RAP working group currently includes two First Nations member organisation leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kamilaroi man Corey Tutt, founder of Deadly Science, 2020 Young Australian of the Year (NSW), CSIRO Indigenous STEM champion, ABC 2020 Trailblazer • Professor Chris Matthews, Quandamooka First Nation, Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mathematics Alliance (ATSIMA) and Associate Dean, Science Faculty, University of Technology Sydney.

Work we have committed to undertake in 2022

Time	Deliverable	Responsible
March 2022	Within limited resources, encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants for internship or student work placement to expand experience opportunities for Indigenous undergraduates.	CEO
May 2022	Encourage STA Staff to attend an external event during National Reconciliation Week to build further relationships.	CEO
May 2022	Promote professional learning opportunities for staff to deepen cultural competencies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.	CEO
May 2022	Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment with specific encouragement to apply for employment opportunities in job ads and recruitment processes.	CEO
27 May – 3 June 2022	Encourage staff and Board to share content on Indigenous STEM knowledges for NRW via social media channels.	Comms Manager
May and July 2022	Develop social media content to highlight Indigenous STEM partnerships and content and activate further supporters for STA's Indigenous member organisations.	Comms Manager
July 2022	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the significance of NAIDOC Week.	CEO
July 2022	Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area and encouraging staff to attend to build relationships further.	CEO
August 2022	Register via RA's website to begin developing new RAP.	CEO
September 2022	Ask key Indigenous leaders in STEM to share information on any future STA job vacancies with their networks.	CEO

Time	Deliverable	Responsible
30 September	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	CEO
November 2022	Track delivered achievements under the RAP in our annual report preparatory materials.	CEO + Comms Manger

ANNEX A: Excerpt of staff email to Staff and Board for National Reconciliation Week 26 May 2021

Yuma All,

Today is National Sorry Day, recognising the handing down of the 1997 *Bringing Them Home* report on the Stolen Generations. Tomorrow marks the start of National Reconciliation Week with the 54th anniversary of the 1967 Referendum. Indeed, it is a good time to reflect on the enduring impact of colonisation, and how we can be agents for change.

Next Wednesday from 9am-11am, STA staff will learn to give an Acknowledgement of Country in the Ngunnawal language. This will also include education on the history of Ngunnawal Country, pre and post European settlement.

In line with our RAP actions, I'd also like to share with you all some resources on NRW.

Firstly, there is a report on the state of reconciliation in Australia. It identifies how Australia has progressed, but also where additional work is required.

The next document is an impact report on the Reconciliation Action Plan program. It highlights the positive change that has come about from organisations such as ours, and reminds us of why this work is important.

Finally, I have attached a zoom background and an email signature that you can use if you wish.

ANNEX B: Excerpt of NAIDOC Week Email to Staff 2 July 2021

Yuma all,

This Sunday marks the start of NAIDOC Week, which is a celebration of Australia's First Nations people, and a time to reflect on how we can undo colonial injustice.

This year's theme is *Heal Country*. Country is everything to Australia's First Nations people, to quote the [NAIDOC website](#):

"It is more than a place.

When we talk about Country it is spoken of like a person.

Country is family, kin, law, lore, ceremony, traditions and language. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples it has been this way since the dawn of time."

What can STA do to help heal country? The RAP that we are launching this week is an excellent starting point.

Our Welcome to Country training was personally moving, and has also equipped us with knowledge we can use for good in the wider community. That's just one of many action items that we will complete in the next 18 months.

Our internal document for tracking progress on action items can be [found here](#), please remember to update your sections as you progress.

Of course, Healing Country is an ongoing process, and ultimately goes well beyond the remit of our RAP. Personally, we can all make our own contributions I can encourage you personally to attend some of the NAIDOC Week events. Quite a few are being held at the Arboretum, details can be [found here](#) (just remember to set state to ACT).