



INNOVATE 20 RECONCILIATION 23 ACTION PLAN —

Progress Report



Science & Technology Australia Progress Report on our Innovate RAP: AGM 2023

Niina Marni from Kurna Country. As I wrap up my two-year term as President of Science & Technology Australia, I'm so proud of how deeply our community has invested themselves in our crucial work on respect, recognition and reconciliation. In 2023, our community campaigned with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities to support a Yes vote at the referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament. Our leaders spoke up consistently in support of this historic cause. And we honoured the community's deep grief that followed the referendum defeat. This year, we also partnered powerfully with Indigenous leaders and organisations in STEM to call for [Indigenous knowledges to be a dedicated priority](#) in Australia's next National Science and Research Priorities. This is a model for genuine deep partnership and relationships of trust. Since 2021, we have delivered strong actions under two comprehensive Reconciliation Action Plans. We support three Indigenous member organisations with pro bono membership. And we are delighted to have strong engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders right across STA's governance structures, programs, major events and membership community. There is much work still to be done – but the STA community's hearts are deeply invested in this work.



Professor Mark Hutchinson, President



Yurra from Quandamooka Country. When Science & Technology Australia launched its first Reconciliation Action Plan in 2021, it decided to report in detail each year on RAP progress to our member community. This creates an opportunity each year at the STA AGM to share not just **what** was achieved – but also to teach back into our wider membership community **how** that work was done. Partnerships and strong personal relationships of trust are the foundations for all lasting progress. In that spirit, one of the big opportunities we saw this year was to champion the opportunity for Australia's National Science & Research Priorities to enshrine Indigenous knowledges as a dedicated priority. STA and many senior Indigenous leaders and Indigenous organisations in STEM came together in a partnership reflected in [a joint submission](#) to the national consultations.

This was a powerful example of a model of working together, with a shared advocacy objective: to elevate and invest in Indigenous people and organisations in STEM. I'm pleased to report on this progress, and to help guide the work.

Professor Chris Matthews, Quandamooka Mathematician, STA Board Director, Chair of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mathematics Alliance

Yuma from Ngunnawal-Ngambri Country.

Since Science & Technology Australia launched our very first Reconciliation Action Plan, it's been a source of great inspiration to watch the STA membership community bring its hearts and leadership to this core business for STA. At our events, our members, leaders and Superstars have researched and delivered powerful personalised acknowledgements of country. You have taught our community knowledge about some of the hardest parts of our nation's shared stories since colonisation, as well as the awe-inspiring achievements of the world's oldest continuous cultures as sophisticated STEM knowledge systems. And you have brought your personal leadership to open and hold space for crucial discussions on Indigenous knowledges, an



Indigenous Voice to Parliament, and the work of repair. We're so grateful to each of you - especially the inspiring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who serve in STA governance: Quandamooka mathematician Professor Chris Matthews, Yawuru epidemiologist Dr Kalinda Griffiths, Kamilaroi CEO Corey Tutt and Mabuigilaig/ Goemulgal chemist Dr Katrina Wruck – and the current Indigenous Superstars of STEM - Ngemba-Wailwan computer scientist Susan Beetson, Kaurareg scientist Tiahni Adamson, and Alawarr ecologist Sophie Gilbey. Thank you!

Misha Schubert, Chief Executive Officer

RAP ACTION HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023

- In partnership with our Indigenous member organisations, STA delivered all commitments in our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan in 2021-2022.
- In May 2023, STA launched our second RAP – an Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan – on the eve of National Reconciliation Week.
- STA campaigned strongly for a Yes vote in the lead-up to the historic referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament on 14 October 2023.
- In partnership with Indigenous leaders and organisations in STEM, STA made a strong case in 2023 for Indigenous knowledges to be a dedicated priority in Australia's next National Science & Research Priorities.
- STA elected four stellar Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders to our governance structures: Quandamooka mathematician Professor Chris Matthews to the STA Board, Yawuru epidemiologist Dr Kalinda Griffiths to Policy Committee; and Kamilaroi CEO Corey Tutt and Mabuigilaig/Goemulgal chemist Dr Katrina Wruck to the EDI committee.
- STA celebrated the selection of three new Indigenous Superstars of STEM – Ngemba-Wailwan computer scientist Susan Beetson, Kaurareg scientist Tiahni Adamson, and Alawarr ecologist Sophie Gilbey.
- STA championed the work of our Indigenous member organisations Deadly Science, ATSIMA and Indigenous Climate Change - and highlighted ways in which our members can support their work.
- STA continued to offer ad hoc support to the new National Indigenous STEM Professionals Network - NISTEMP.
- Deadly Science Founder and CEO and Kamilaroi man Corey Tutt and Chris Matthews serve on STA's RAP Working Group with STA CEO Misha Schubert, Deputy CEO Sandra Gardam, STA EDI Co-Chair Professor Sumeet Walia and EDI Committee Member Dr Susannah Cramb.
- Science & Technology Australia gatherings begin with a powerful Acknowledgement of Country. The shared responsibility for deep learning and the honouring of protocols is embedded in STA's formal Acknowledgement of Country policy, adopted in 2021.
- In partnership with STA's Indigenous member organisations, STA has an Indigenous Partnerships Policy which is promoted to our members.
- The CEO, Deputy CEO, President and President-Elect are deeply committed to STA's partnerships with Indigenous people and organisations in STEM – and actively champion this work throughout the organisation in STA member forums, policy advocacy, events, staff and Board meetings.
- STA staff are deepening knowledge and connections to Ngannawal Ngambri Country, history of First Nations people and key dates such as Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week.
- STA offers complimentary membership for First Nations member organisations as part of our commitments to reconciliation.
- STA's major events amplify Indigenous speakers – including a powerful session at Science Meets Parliament 2023 on truth telling in science.
- STA renewed its offer to host internships to First Nations STEM students in 2023.

Commitments delivered under STA's Innovate RAP (listed in date order)

Timeline	Deliverable	Details	Status
May 2023	Launch STA's new Innovate RAP in partnership with STA's Indigenous member organisations and with strong leadership visibility and support.	STA launched our Innovate RAP on the eve of National Reconciliation Week 2023. We held an online event to involve STA members, Superstars, staff and program participants from across Australia. Quandamooka man Dean Parkin, Campaign director for the Yes23 campaign, spoke at the RAP launch about the Voice referendum and how STA members can be involved in campaigning for a Yes vote.	Completed
May 2023	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week resources to our staff.	STA shared links to National Reconciliation Week (NRW) resources and website with Board and staff to learn more about the history of NRW and the milestone dates in it – Sorry Day on May 26, the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum on May 27, and Mabo Day on June 3.	Completed
May 2023	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	RAP Working group members and EDI Committee members were encouraged to attend NRW events and at the June meeting of the EDI Committee, members shared their experiences at NRW week events.	Completed
May 2023	Encourage STA staff & Board to attend an external event in NRW to deepen understanding and relationships.	STA shared links to National Reconciliation Week (NRW) resources and website with Board and staff to enable them to attend events. NRW media visuals and links were shared on STA social media channels, encouraging our social media followers to 'Be The Voice of Generations' and attend NRW events.	Completed
May 2023	Promote the work of STA's First Nations member organisations in National Reconciliation Week.	STA created bespoke copy about the work of each of STA's Indigenous member organisations and how STA members can best support their work. These were featured in our Member Update newsletter and published in our LinkedIn newsletter.	Completed
May 2023	Organise a National Reconciliation Week event in 2023 and 2024 for staff.	STA organised a staff excursion for staff to attend the First Nations Experiences of Democracy tour and exhibition at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House.	Completed
May 2023	Register events on the National Reconciliation Week website.	The event to launch STA's RAP was listed on Reconciliation Australia's National Reconciliation Week website so others in the STEM and wider communities could also attend.	Completed
May 2023	Engage First Nations peoples in attending Science Meets Parliament.	STA secured sponsorships to support 3 First Nations Scholarships for Science Meets Parliament 2023 with full financial support to attend the event. Scholarships are now being confirmed for SMP 2024.	Completed
May 2023	Define resource needs for RAP implementation in the annual STA budget process.	STA's 2022/23 Budget has allocated \$7000 for RAP implementation. This line item covers Welcome to Country fees, and other procurement including artwork for our RAP. Additionally, in line with our commitment to Indigenous procurement use of Indigenous suppliers is allowed for under other budget lines also, for example engaging Indigenous caterers for Superstars of STEM training days.	Completed
Oct 2023	Appoint the CEO and Deputy CEO internal RAP Champions from senior management.	The Board formally appointed the CEO and Deputy CEO as RAP Champions at its October 2023 meeting, reflecting their longstanding commitment and regular leadership championing of RAP responsibilities, actions and staff learning.	Completed
June 2023	Deliver a learning opportunity at Science Meets Parliament 2023 to deepen insight about the history of STEM institutions' engagements with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and knowledges.	A session was held at Science meets Parliament 2023 on 'Knowing our past: truth telling in science'. It included panellists from STA member organisations and external organisations. It discussed the process of STEM organisation examining and grappling with the history of their organisation's relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It gave STA members and conference attendees an important opportunity to learn about the process of truth telling and consider their own organisation's responsibilities. The session had positive feedback from members who found it highly valuable.	Completed

June 2023	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify contact details are current to receive RAP correspondence.	STA's contact details were updated in 2023 following the recruitment of STA's new Executive Officer in September 2023. The CEO continues to a key contact along with the Executive Officer and Deputy CEO to ensure strong leadership responsibility and visibility on our RAP engagements.	Completed
July 2023	Hold a staff meeting to identify cultural learning needs & reflect in staff workplans.	STA held a staff meeting in October 2023 to discuss training activities for staff on reconciliation and cultural learning. Staff discussed what areas they were interested in learning more about. Some staff members identified specific training or activities they would like to investigate in the coming year.	Completed
July 2023	At least once a year, invite a staff member to share information at a staff meeting about the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	At the staff meeting leading into National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week, the CEO shared the significance and history of key dates and events with the staff team. Other STA staff also shared information at meetings throughout the year, and contributed to major submissions on the importance of Indigenous knowledges which were crafted in partnership with senior Indigenous STEM leaders and organisations. STA organises Welcome to Country at our major events. STA staff and program participants shared knowledge at other formal gatherings under STA's Acknowledgement of Country policy .	Completed
July 2023	RAP Working Group members to acknowledge NAIDOC week by attending an external event.	EDI Committee members and RAP Working Group members were encouraged to attend an event during NAIDOC week and post information on their social media channels about events or insights they had learned by participating in those events.	Completed
July 2023	Promote the work of STA's First Nations member organisations as part of NAIDOC week.	NAIDOC week posts (including official NAIDOC week visuals) were published across our channels to promote NAIDOC week. Specific posts – Indigenous member org. CEO and founder Corey Tutt, alongside our Indigenous Superstars of STEM Susan Beetson, Jess Buck and Karlie Noon – were released to congratulate them on their inclusion in Cosmos Magazines list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people changing the world during NAIDOC week. Bespoke copy for each Indigenous member organisation was included in the Member Update newsletter to STA's large distribution list.	Completed
July 2023	Raise awareness and promote external NAIDOC events in our local area, encouraging staff to attend an event.	The NAIDOC Week events website was shared with staff in the lead up to NAIDOC week. Staff also shared events that they had identified on our Slack channel. Staff discussed the events they had attended at staff meetings.	Completed
July 2023	Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	The STA RAP working group includes Quandamooka mathematician Professor Chris Matthews and Kamilaroi man Corey Tutt.	Completed
July 2023	Ensure First Nations representation on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee - and promote opportunities for participation in other STA committees.	EDI and Policy Committee members were engaged in encouraging applications to join the committees in June-July 2023. Advertisements encouraged applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants. Following a selection process Yawuru woman Dr Kalinda Griffiths was appointed to the Policy Committee. Mabuigilaig and Goemulgal woman Dr Katrina Wruck was appointed to the EDI Committee, joining Kamilaroi man Corey Tutt who is already a serving member.	Completed
Aug 2023	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	STA completed our RAP questionnaire for 2023 before deadline. We reported actions on our detailed work to deepen relationships with Indigenous member organisations, strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation throughout the STA governance structures, and advocate strongly on Indigenous knowledges in the refresh of Australia's official National Science and Research Priorities.	Completed
Aug 2023	In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisers, seek training to meet our staff cultural learning needs.	Our cultural learning strategy guides staff on options available to support their cultural learning. We see this as a living document which we can contribute to regularly as staff needs evolve and we become aware of different opportunities, activities or courses.	Underway and ongoing.

Aug 2023	Develop a cultural learning strategy document phasing across two years.	The suggestions and requests identified in the staff meeting were circulated to staff for further input. From this a cultural learning document was developed. The document includes a variety of learning options for staff including formal courses, self-education options through online, video and written resources, and group experiences such as site visits.	In progress
Aug 2023	Invite local Traditional Owners or Custodians to do a Welcome to Country at major STA events such as Science Meets Parliament and National Science Week launch (in line with our Acknowledgement of Country policy).	Ngambri Elder Paul House offered a deeply moving Welcome to Country at Science Meets Parliament 2023. Nunnawal Elder Serena Williams welcomed people to Country on the morning of day one of SMP2023 and welcomed guests also to the STA-run SABRE Alliance event following SMP. Ngunnawal Elder Uncle Warren Daly Welcomed us to Country at the 2023 launch of National Science Week. Serena Williams will also Welcome guests to Country at the 30 November Parliamentary Friends of Science event on STEM workforce.	Completed
Aug 2023	Review Terms of Reference for the RWG as required.	STA has had a RAP working group to oversee the development, implementation and reporting of our RAP since commencing work to developing our first RAP in 2020. A terms of reference was drafted for this group formalising our current practice into policy.	Completed
Aug 2023	Explore further internship opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	In May 2023, STA renewed our communications materials seeking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander STEM students to undertake internships at STA, with guidance from STA Board Director Professor Chris Matthews. A flyer was prepared for circulation at UTS.	Ongoing
Aug 2023	Cover RAP working group activities at STA Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee meetings (4 times a year) to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	The EDI Committee discusses the RAP deliverables assigned to the RAP working Group and to the EDI Committee Co-Chairs at each meeting. These are standing items on their agenda. The Committee has focussed on the RAP engagement strategy and reviewing policies for anti-discrimination provision in the first 6 months of this RAP.	Ongoing.
Sep 2023	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	STA completed our RAP questionnaire for 2023 before deadline. We reported actions on our detailed work to deepen relationships with Indigenous member organisations, strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation throughout the STA governance structures, and advocate strongly on Indigenous knowledges in the refresh of Australia's official National Science and Research Priorities.	Completed
Sep 2023	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	STA has a longstanding practice of considering Indigenous businesses in all procurement processes and selected Indigenous businesses wherever possible. This was formalised into our procurement policy in 2023 to ensure strong staff visibility of the policy and actions.	Completed
Oct 2023	Develop and implement an engagement plan to guide building and strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander STEM organisations and stakeholders.	A stakeholder engagement plan was drafted by our EDI committee. The plan sets out the main Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander STEM organisations and stakeholders we interact with and how we do this. The EDI committee members will continue to suggest additional organisations for STA to support and engage with – and make suggestions via STA's Deputy CEO.	Completed
Nov 2023	Report on achievements under the RAP in our annual report and our separate RAP report at our AGM.	STA's actions under our RAP are reported in both our Annual Report to be tabled at the AGM in November 2023, and in this detailed reporting document which will also be presented at the AGM and published on the STA website to share knowledge and skills with the STA membership.	Completed
Nov 2023	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to our members and publicly in our annual public RAP reporting to our members and wider	At the 2023 AGM, STA will report formally in its own standing agenda item about the actions we have undertaken in the last year to contribute to reconciliation. This is typically delivered by the CEO and EDI Co-Chairs, with input as required from RAP working group members.	Completed at the AGM

	community at the AGM.		
Nov 2023	Share STA's RAP progress publicly at our AGMs to encourage our stakeholders to enhance their reconciliation actions and share practical examples from our work with our membership community.	As part of our AGM reporting we encourage our member organisations to improve their own reconciliation efforts. This progress report will be available publicly on our website to demonstrate the types of activities organisation can undertake to support reconciliation and to encourage others to make commitments to advance reconciliation and deepen their knowledge of Indigenous history, cultures and the work on reconciliation, rights and repair.	Completed at the AGM
Nov 2023	Publicly report our RAP achievements and lessons each year in a progress report, annual report and on the STA website.	This report forms our formal public reporting about our RAP achievements. The report will be available on our website. At our AGM on 28 November 2023, this report will be formally released and our achievement and lessons shared with the STA community.	Completed
Dec 2023	Report RAP progress to staff and Directors at Board meetings.	RAP actions by staff are reported in the CEO's report to the Board at each meeting. Progress on our RAP commitments is reviewed and discussed at each EDI Committee. Where the EDI Committee has responsibility for an action, it is reported to Board via the EDI Committee report at each Board meeting.	Completed
Dec 2023	Engage First Nations peoples in STA programs (such as Superstars of STEM and Science Meets Parliament) and networks to inform employment and professional development strategy.	The 2023-2024 Superstars of STEM cohort includes three Indigenous Superstars of STEM. Participants receive 2 years of professional development training and networking opportunities to boost their careers. Scholarships are available to enable Indigenous participation in the program and these are strongly promoted. STA also actively encourages participation in STA committees, events and programs by proactively encouraging applicants.	Completed
Dec 2023	Review HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	EDI Committee has begun reviewing STA's existing policies.	Underway
Dec 2023	Guided by the principles of our Indigenous Partnerships Policy , meet with STA's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander member organisations at least once a year to confirm ways for STA and our members to support their work	STA met with its three Indigenous member orgs in 2023 to ascertain their priorities and identify how best to support their work. We used STA membership and communications channels to call for donations, volunteers or help with sponsorship for their major projects. STA has also provided letters of support, references and introductions to assist each organisation to advance its goals. This included a government relations directory for ATSIMA, strong involvement of Superstars of STEM in Deadly Science's Deadly Learners, and reference support for Indigenous Climate Change.	Completed
Dec 2023	Seek procurement and develop relationships with First Nations owned businesses.	STA engaged Indigenous design firm Ingeous to develop a new branding and visual identity for the National Industry PhD Program delivered for the Department of Education.	Ongoing.
Dec 2023	Deepen relationships with Ngunnawal-Ngambri Elders by inviting them to offer Welcome to Country for major events.	The STA team have formed close relationships with Ngunnawal and Ngambri Elders and invite various Elders to offer Welcome to Country at all major events.	Ongoing
Apr 2025	Showcase the expertise and build the profiles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander scientists at STA events such	Program planning for SMP2024 is underway. STA are aiming for a minimum of 15% of speakers to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals.	In progress

	as Science meets Parliament.		
May 2025	In line with our Acknowledgement of Country policy adopted in 2021, arrange for staff or committee members to deliver a personalised local Acknowledgement of Country, including sharing aspects of First Nations culture, at STA meetings and events.	Policy Committee holds monthly meetings (except in April) and has a well-established practice of rotating Acknowledgement of Country among the various members at each meeting. The EDI and FAR Committees and Board each meet quarterly. Each meeting begins with a personalised Acknowledgment of Country from one of the committee members or a staff member. Committee and Board members are provided with our Acknowledgement of Country policy to help guide this practice.	Ongoing
May 2025	Support the success of First Nations member organisations by facilitating connections across the STEM sector and actively advocating for the inclusion of First Nations voices in STEM sector decision making forums.	STA policy work and advocacy submissions actively seeks and includes Indigenous input and perspectives. STA partnered closely with Indigenous leaders and organisations in STEM to call for Indigenous knowledges to be a dedicated Australian Science Priority – and several of our major policy wins in 2023 were on Indigenous topics . STA also consistently advocates for all government policy and programs to consider equity issues, including Indigenous participation.	Ongoing
May 2025	In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and advisors, share examples of approaches to Truth-telling in science's relationships with First Nations peoples.	A session was held at Science meets Parliament 2023 on 'Knowing our past: truth telling in science'. The session included panellists from STA member organisations and external organisations. It discussed the process of STEM organisation examining and grappling with the history of their organisation's relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The session provided STA members and other conference attendees with the opportunity to learn about the process of truth telling and consider their own organisation's responsibilities.	Completed