

# Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

March 2022 to March 2024



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

INNOVATE



Jackson  
Clements  
Burrows  
Architects



Cover/inside cover: Birrarung at Dights Falls, Melbourne (photography: Jon Clements)

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the ancient lands on which we live, work and create. We acknowledge that their Countries, knowledges and customs were never ceded, and pay our deepest respects to Elders past, present and future.



Yellow Box, *Eucalyptus Melliodora* [photography: Victor Vieaux]

# Reconciliation Australia CEO Statement

Reconciliation Australia commends Jackson Clements Burrows Architects 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 Jackson Clements Burrows Architects 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, Jackson Clements Burrows Architects 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. Jackson Clements Burrows Architects is part of a strong network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and intention, and transformed it into action.

Implementing an Innovate RAP signals Jackson Clements Burrows Architects 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 Jackson Clements Burrows Architects on your Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



Kangaroo Grass, *Themeda triandra* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Our vision for reconciliation

JCB envisions a future where architecture and design contribute to the health and wellbeing of Country.

Our industry is responsible for the reshaping of environments and JCB is committed to respecting and repairing Country while celebrating culture and community. We understand that, at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.

Committed to reconciliation in its many forms, JCB imagines a reflective Australia that is honest and mutually inclusive for all, and in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and their Countries are not only embraced but celebrated through our buildings and landscapes.

We believe that our industry's creative processes should be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices, values, knowledges and aspirations, with all architects and designers understanding their responsibility to the Countries that they shape.



Diagram representing how design contributes to the health and wellbeing of Country



Basalt from Gunditjmara Country (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Our business

JCB is a Melbourne-based architecture, interior design and urban design practice established in 1998. Our team, including two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members, is united by a shared commitment to the delivery of innovative and sustainable design solutions.

We are driven by core design principles that allow us to explore each new project afresh and an approach that is site sensitive, engaged with local climatic conditions and adaptive to contextual opportunities. Our methodology is iterative and develops through engagement processes which embrace close collaboration with the client, stakeholders and the community, along with a deep understanding of the site and history.

Our national experience covers a wide range of typologies and scales, with each project, large or small, treated with equal importance in a collaborative studio environment.

Our ambition is to utilise the built environment as a vehicle for meaningful social change that challenges systems and policy to create a more welcoming and respectful Australia.

We also understand that every project we undertake in Australia is on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land. Through co-creation with Traditional Custodians and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, we are committed, where appropriate to exploring opportunities for the built environment to embrace Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Knowledges, customs and values.



White correa, *Correa alba* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Our RAP

Over the last few years, JCB has been undertaking Indigenous Advisory Architecture and Design (IAAD) services. Developing and implementing the RAP is an opportunity to formalise our commitment to reconciliation, respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their Cultural Knowledge and Country.

A RAP Working Group (RWG) was formed with key decision makers across all strategic aspects of the practice leading the RAP's development and ongoing implementation:

**Benjamin Pitman**, Associate Director

**Chloe Hinchliffe**, Interior Designer

**Jon Clements**, Director

**Mirelle Walker** (RAP Working Group Co-Chair), Communications Manager

**Sarah Lynn Rees** (Indigenous representation), Associate & Lead Indigenous Advisor

**Veryan Curnow** (RAP Working Group Co-Chair), Associate Director

Jon Clements champions our RAP internally.

A reference group comprising a cross-section of team members representing different experience levels and disciplines provided advice and ideas to the Working Group during the RAP's development.

**Briar Jackson**, Submissions Coordinator

**Eleanor Morgan**, Graduate of Architecture

**Fenina Acance**, Architect

**Jack Heatley**, Architectural Assistant

**Paula Johnson**, Executive Business Manager

**Sheldon Williamson**, Architect

**Will Christian**, Architect

Sarah Lynn Rees is a Palawa woman and architecture graduate, descending from the Trawlwoolway people of North East Tasmania. As an Indigenous woman she brings a unique perspective to her role in architecture, underpinned by her personal experience, heritage and research into the Indigenous built environment. In addition to her architecture and design role, Sarah leads our IAAD team, advising on Indigenous matters relating to the profession and the built environment.



Spiny-headed Mat-rush, *Lomandra longifolia* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Our partnerships/ current activities

In 2019 JCB established the Indigenous Advisory Architecture and Design (IAAD) arm of the practice. Through this, we engage externally with Traditional Custodians and clients and internally through the IAAD Committee. The Committee meets bi-monthly to discuss opportunities to upskill and develop cultural awareness across the JCB team, employment opportunities, partnerships and develop policies and protocols for our practice. This includes communications, engagement and our RAP development.

JCB and the Monash University Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture have partnered to develop Practice Guides for Indigenising built environment processes. These Practice Guides will commence development in 2022. The first stage will include a review of JCB processes and identified improvements.

JCB also supports Sarah Lynn Rees to engage with industry in many forums including teaching and education, public talks, local, national and international conferences, mentorship, and key advisory roles such as AIA Victorian Chapter Council and Co-Chair of the AIA First Nations Advisory Working Group (FNAWG).

An example of the impact of these roles includes Sarah's role as Co-Chair of the AIA First Nations Advisory Working Group (FNAWG). The FNAWG engaged with the Architects Accreditation Council of Australia (AACA) to revise the National Competency Standards for Architecture (NSCA). This document sets out performance criteria that Universities must demonstrate through their curriculum, graduates of architecture must prove at the point of registration to become an architect and that are the basis for Continuing Professional Development.

Through FNAWG engagement with AACA, the NSCA now contains First Nations Specific Performance criteria which reinforce a shift in what we value as a profession. Speaking about the impact of these criteria, Sarah explains: "This shift is born from an appreciation of the immense value and critical need to work in partnership with First Nations Peoples and Country that has been slowly building for some time now. The changes will empower educators and practitioners to review their approaches by providing a baseline structure for what it means to practice architecture in an Australia that respects First Nations Peoples, centres Indigenous Knowledges and voices, and places genuine value in design approaches that ensure the health and wellbeing of Country."



River Red Gum, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Relationships



JCB believes that architecture and design can be advanced by building positive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For this to happen, we must open our minds and build upon fresh foundations of honesty and truth. We will honour our existing relationships and nurture new ones with a vision of a shared, equitable and sustainable future. We will embed our learnings within the wider architecture and design industry, supporting other practices to build stronger relationships for the benefit of all people.

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, including the development of memorandums of understanding (MoU). We will distribute and communicate these agreements with the JCB team.	March 2023	IAAD Committee Chair
	Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations and develop standard project processes and practice guides.	May 2023	IAAD Committee Chair
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our team members.	May 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May - 3 June 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs
	Encourage and support team members and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May - 3 June 2022/2023	RAP Champion
	Organise at least one NRW event each year and provide follow up reflections and learnings.	27 May - 3 June 2022/2023	Social Committee Chair
	Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	May 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs



Blackwood, *Acacia melanoxylon* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Relationships



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Implement strategies to engage our team members in reconciliation through learning sessions, internal surveys and presentations.	September 2022	Communications Manager
	Include a copy of the JCB RAP within the onboarding pack provided to all new team members. Include an overview of the JCB RAP in the onboarding checklist.	March 2022	HR Manager
	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	March 2022	Communications Manager
	Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	March, May, July, September, November 2022 January, March, May, July, September, November 2023 January, March 2024	RWG Co-Chairs
	Collaborate with like-minded built environment organisations which have RAPs to work together to develop ways to advance reconciliation across the industry.	March, May, July, September, November 2022 January, March, May, July, September, November 2023 January, March 2024	RWG Co-Chairs
4. Promote positive race relations through	Conduct a review of HR policies & procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	November 2022	HR Manager
	Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	November 2022	HR Manager
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	November 2022	HR Manager
	Educate our team members on the effects of racism.	March, May, July, September, November 2022 January, March, May, July, September, November 2023 January, March 2024	IAAD Committee Chair



Silver Wattle, *Acacia dealbata* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Respect



JCB shares a deep respect for Country. We acknowledge that it is our responsibility to listen and elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations voices and cultures within our industry and the communities in which we operate. We will champion Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership to enable a progressive and meaningful built environment.

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 through an internal survey. The aim will be to establish current knowledge levels and inform areas for further cultural learning.	September 2022	IAAD Committee Chair
	Engage local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy specific to the built environment in locations in which we work.	March 2023	IAAD Committee Chair
	Develop, implement, and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our team members which builds upon internal survey findings.	March 2023	IAAD Committee Chair / HR Manager
	Provide opportunities and financial support for RAP Working Group members and key leadership team members to participate in formal and structured cultural learning.	March 2023	Managing Director / IAAD Committee Chair



River Mint, *Mentha Australis* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Respect



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Increase our team members' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2022	IAAD Committee Chair / Communications Manager
	Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	September 2022	IAAD Committee Chair
	In partnership with Monash University, expand our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement ethos into stage 1 practice guides. This first stage includes a review of JCB processes and identified improvements.	March 2023	IAAD Committee Chair
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	May 2022	IAAD Committee Chair
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings including weekly practice catch-ups. Rotate the responsibility across all team members to support internal learning.	March 2022	Communications Manager
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 July 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs
	Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to team members participating in NAIDOC Week.	May 2022	HR Manager
	Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all team members.	First week July 2022/2023	Social Committee Chair



Yellow Box, *Eucalyptus Melliodora* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Opportunities



JCB believes that creating beneficial opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will lead to positive relationships based on mutual respect. This will allow us to grow as individuals and as a practice as well as strengthening our communities. To create sustainable projects, we must develop a relationship with Country and be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We will embrace partnership opportunities to shape the built environment through a deeper understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, values and Knowledges.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	July 2022	HR Manager
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	July 2022	HR Manager
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	November 2022	HR Manager
	Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	November 2022	HR Manager
	Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	March 2023	HR Manager
	Increase the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members employed in our workforce.	September 2023	HR Manager



Yapeen Sandstone (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Opportunities



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy.	March 2023	Sustainability Committee Chair / IAAD Committee Chair
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	May 2022	HR Manager
	Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to team members.	May, November 2022	Sustainability Committee Chair / IAAD Committee Chair
		May, November 2023	IAAD Committee Chair
	Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. Develop a schedule of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers, consultants, contractors and materials to be maintained on an ongoing basis.	July 2022	Sustainability Committee Chair
Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	March 2023	Sustainability Committee Chair / IAAD Committee Chair	
10. Promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designers, artists and creative practitioners across the built environment industry.	Develop opportunities to promote and specify the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designers, artists and creative practitioners within JCB's projects.	September 2022	Social Committee Chair
	Develop opportunities to promote the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designers, artists and creative practitioners externally to clients, collaborators and the wider industry.	September 2022	Social Committee Chair



River Red Gum, *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. 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.	March, May, July, September, November 2022 January, March, May, July, September, November 2023 January, March 2024	RAP Champion
	Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	March 2022	RWG Co-Chairs
	Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	March, May, July, September, November 2022 January, March, May, July, September, November 2023 January, March 2024	RWG Co-Chairs
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	March 2022	RWG Co-Chairs
	Engage our senior leaders and other team members in the delivery of RAP commitments.	May 2022	RWG Co-Chairs
	Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	March 2022	RWG Co-Chairs
	Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	March 2022	Managing Director



Silver Wattle, *Acacia dealbata* (photography: Victor Vieaux)

# Governance



Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request a unique link to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	30 September 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs
	Report RAP progress to all team members and senior leaders at least quarterly through Morning Tea and Associate Meetings.	March, May, July, September, November 2022 January, March, May, July, September, November 2023 January, March 2024	RWG Co-Chairs
	Publically report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	October 2022/2023	RWG Co-Chairs
	Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2022	RWG Co-Chairs
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	September 2023	RWG Co-Chairs



Ngargee Djeembana (photography: Andrew Curtis)

From Birrarung-Ga we listen learn and make.

Through the design of this Reconciliation Action Plan, we've celebrated the flora, geologies and landscapes that are indigenous to our Richmond studio location and the surrounding geographical regions of Victoria.

The images were taken at the Birrarung, the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art's 'Who's Afraid of Public Space', keynote exhibition Ngargee Djeembana by N'arweet Carolyn Briggs and Sarah Lynn Rees.

JCB would like to warmly thank the Royal Botanic Gardens and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art for giving us permission to capture these images. We further extend our thanks to Jon Clements, Victor Vieaux and Andrew Curtis for permission to use their photography.

All photographs were taken on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country and we pay our deepest respects to Country and community.

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