URBIS



Urbis acknowledges the important contribution that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make in creating a strong and vibrant Australian society.

We acknowledge in each of our offices the Traditional Owners on whose land we stand.



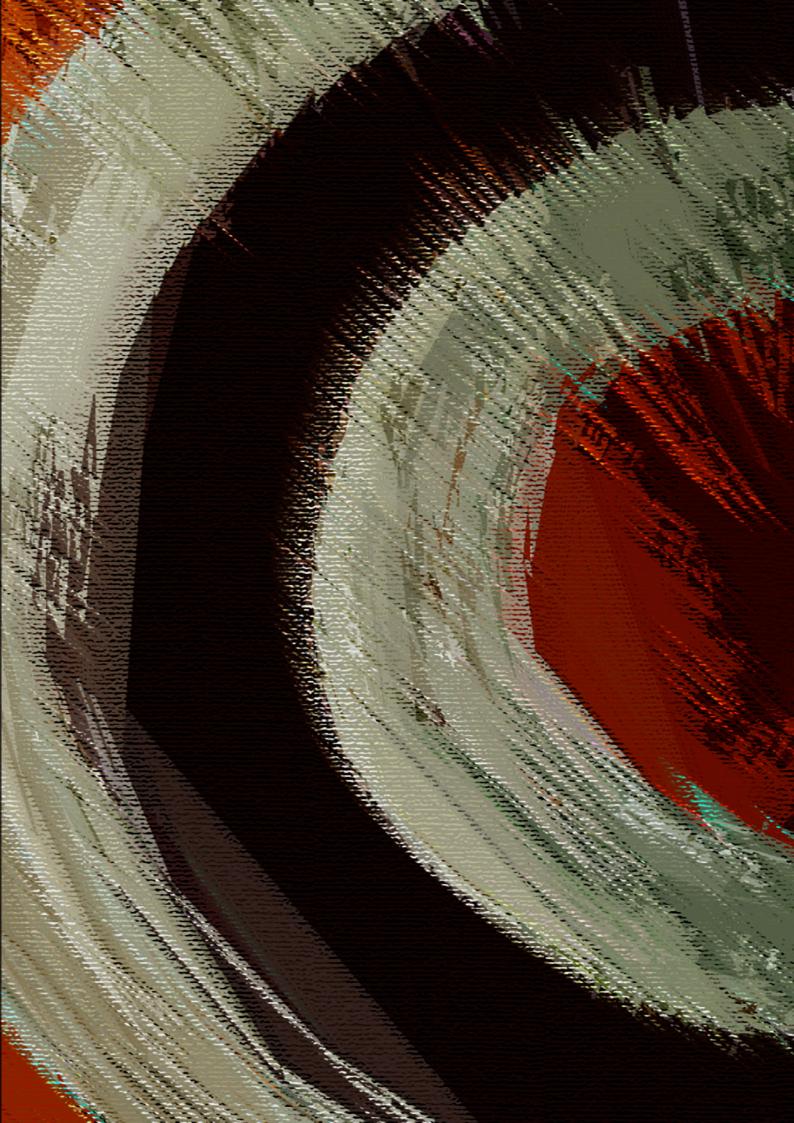
In Brisbane the Turrbul and Jagera peoples and in the Gold Coast the Yugambeh People.

In Perth the Whadjuk People of the Noongar Nation.

In Melbourne the Wurundjeri and Boon Wurrung peoples of the Kulin Nation.

In Sydney the Gadigal peoples of the Eora nation and in Parramatta the Burramattagal peoples of the Dharug Nation.

This Plan was prepared by the RAP Working Group with support from Karen Milward Consulting Services.



# MESSAGE OF COMMITMENT FROM OUR MANAGING PARTNER

Urbis' commitment to reconciliation is the foundation of our Reconciliation Action Plan. We continue our commitment to engaging with the First Peoples of this land, as we work toward common goals.

Progressing our RAP is a priority, and in this our third year, we celebrate our achievements, sharpen our focus and move ahead with confidence.

Across the country we have the privilege of engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners, businesses and communities, and our people are supported to do this work well. Under our re-freshed Innovate RAP we continue to celebrate and extend our partnerships, to invest in the cultural capability of our people, and contribute to advancing reconciliation through our projects, business operations and standing in our communities.

Our partnerships continue to grow from strength to strength. We celebrate our twelfth year of partnership with Karen Milward, and we continue to learn and benefit from her wisdom and guidance. Two years ago we formalised our partnership with Cox Inall Ridgeway, and it is thriving. Together we have crossed the country engaging, listening and learning – so we can contribute to better outcomes.

This year we are proud to announce a new partnership with the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation (ALNF). At Urbis, we know the value of education, and the place early literacy plays in education achievement. ALNF is an awardwinning charity that ensures children have access to the resources they need to learn – and we will now play our part in this great story.

The potential within these partnerships remains enormous, and together we will continue to deepen our engagement and expand our contribution.

We welcome feedback on our Reconciliation Action Plan. Get in touch via reception@urbis.com.au "For over 50 years Urbis has committed its expertise to shaping great outcomes for cities and communities. We recognise the critical importance of place, language and culture. Working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within Urbis, as clients and as stakeholders, we commit ourselves to applying our expertise to improve outcomes."



**TIM BLYTHE**Managing Partner

# What we are working towards

Our refreshed Innovate RAP maintains our focus on achieving a strong platform by 2020. Strengthening our relationships internally and externally will ensure we meet our goals, and put us on the path to our Stretch RAP.

- We will continue to invest in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Program, to promote understanding of the issues of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations and businesses.
- We will action our refreshed Internship Program recruitment strategy, to reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and ensure a culturally inclusive student experience.
- We continue our commitment to bring Urbis' capabilities to the improvement of state and local planning frameworks with the goal of supporting Aboriginal land based organisations and Councils to enhance the economic and social opportunities.
- Our people will drive the commitments of this RAP, supported by the state-based RAP Working Groups and the Diversity and Inclusion Board. Progress on RAP activity is reported to the D&I Board, and will be communicated to our people each quarter.
- We will support our people to know the Country on which they work, and provide guidance on culturally inclusive engagement.
- Through our new partnership we will directly support the work of the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation.

# Our RAP Board members



**CLAIRE GREALY** 



**KAREN WRIGHT** 



**GLEN POWER** 

# OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for Reconciliation is to be actively involved in supporting meaningful and lasting change in our spheres of influence.

In creating great cities and communities we can contribute to the inclusion and active participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

# What is a RAP?

# Our Reconciliation Action Plan

The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is about organisations from every sector turning good intentions into real actions and rising to the challenge of reconciling Australia.

A RAP is a business plan that uses a holistic approach to create meaningful relationships, enhanced respect and promote sustainable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

RAPs provide a format for exploring how reconciliation can advance organisational objectives, by formalising contributions through clear actions and realistic targets, as well as identifying lessons learnt. While each RAP includes specific required actions and targets, organisations also shape their own in relation to their core business, sphere of influence, resources etc. This results in a creative blend of objectives throughout relationships, respect and opportunities sections of a RAP.

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was developed by our RAP Working group in 2016.

A lot has been achieved over the last two years, and we celebrate and acknowledge the work and energy of our people.

This refreshed innovate RAP captures the tasks for the next 12 months. With the establishment work completed, we will be well placed to develop our first stretch RAP with the goal of a May 2020 launch.

More information on RAPs can be found at: www.reconciliation.org.au



# Our past and current activities in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community

Urbis has a long working history with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, businesses and communities.

- Training: Urbis staff have undertaken online and workshop-based training in Indigenous cultural awareness, and consulting with Indigenous Australians.
- Collaboration: Urbis staff regularly collaborate with our partners to deliver culturally inclusive projects Aboriginal consultants on research projects.
- Research and advice: Urbis has conducted projects across the country involving Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities.
- Recruitment: Urbis has worked with Career Trackers to support placements for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander students, and has hosted students in the Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane offices.
- Partnerships: Urbis has invested in new partnerships to extend our capability and share our skills.

# Relationships

We will continue to explore ways for greater connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, community leaders, businesses and community organisations by strengthening our relationships and focusing our contribution with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through mutually beneficial engagement in areas where we do business.

# **Action**

Urbis will actively engage in our partnership with the Australian Literacy and Numeracy Foundation as a key contribution to Closing the Gap in education outcomes.

# Action

Continue to improve staff understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture through ongoing implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training Program, including participation in:

- Face-to-face training sessions delivered by local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander trainers.
- Promote awareness of Aboriginal issues and projects Urbis is working
- Subscriptions to the Koori Mail and other significant media which is displayed in Urbis meeting rooms.

ongoing

ongoing

# **Target**

 Our people demonstrate understanding and engagement in the common goal of literacy, numeracy and language.

**Responsibility**RAP Working Group

# **Target**

- Selected staff in each office continue to participate in the Urbis Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training program.
- Improved understanding and awareness by our staff of issues of importance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations businesses and communities at the local level.

# Responsibility

Business Services, Human Resources and RAP Working Group

# **Action**

Strengthen our engagement strategy with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander centres in Universities and TAFEs.

**Action** 

Each RAP working group will identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community partners, organisations, businesses and peak bodies relevant to our business at the same level.

# Action

We will share our RAP learnings and work undertaken with Aboriginal and Torres strait Islander people, organisations, businesses and our people, partners and clients.

# **Action**

**Target** 

Urbis RAP champions and Urbis Ambassador for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues will actively promote and implement our RAP.

# **Target**

1. Increased awareness and understanding of our RAP learnings with all Urbis stakeholders.

Responsibility

# ongoing

1. Urbis champions and Ambassador are actively promoting the RAP nationally and at the local level.

Responsibility

# **Target**

ongoing

1. University and TAFE engagement strategy developed and actioned.

Responsibility

# **Target**

1. Mapping of relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community partners, organisations, businesses and peak bodies is undertaken and Urbis is actively engaged in key areas.

Responsibility Offce based RAP Working Groups

# RESPECT

We will support opportunities to better understand and respect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their history, culture, values, connection to land and place in Australia.

# Action

Develop guidelines in consultation with our advisors on the correct use of Aboriginal imagery, artworks and language in public spaces, buildings, graphic design.

# **Target**

ongoing

- 1. Increased awareness, appreciation of and promotion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art and culture.
- 2. Clear understanding by our staff and clients of the use of Aboriginal imagery, artwork/s and use of language.

Responsibility RAP Working Group

# **Action**

**Target** 

ongoing

Demonstrate respect by:

· Including Acknowledgement of Country at selected major staff and stakeholder events and where appropriate invite Elders to provide a Welcome to Country.

ongoing

**Action** 

Display a Statement of Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Custodians on the Urbis website and on our email signatures.

- 1. Urbis events and conferences will demonstrate respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.
- 2. Staff participate in key activities and events celebrated by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- 3. Protocols and guidelines are included in relevant speeches and provided to Urbis staff and shared on the Urbis website.

Responsibility RAP Working Group

# **Target**

1. Increased awareness of Urbis Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners/Custodians' by visitors to the Urbis website

Responsibility **Business Areas** 

2019

# **Action**

Urbis will meet with the building owners where each Urbis office is located to encourage agreement for display of the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Island flag in the downstairs foyer areas.

ongoing

# **Target**

 Foyer areas display the Aboriginal flag and Torres Strait Island flag where Urbis offices are located.

**Responsibility**Business Services

# **OPPORTUNITIES**

We will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations, businesses and communities, through active support and involvement in issues relevant to the areas of expertise at Urbis.

Aboriginal Land Rights legislation recognises that land in Australia was traditionally owned and occupied by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that decisions of past governments have progressively deprived peoples of those lands. It provides legislative recognition that land is of social, cultural and economic importance to Aboriginal peoples.

The claiming of land under the Aboriginal Land Rights legislation was intended to be an important first step to improving Aboriginal self-sufficiency and economic wellbeing. Legislation was framed to enable the economic development of claimed lands not deemed culturally significant to Aboriginal peoples for the social and economic betterment of Aboriginal people. Today as a result of land rights, Aboriginal Land Councils hold significant freehold land and are often the largest single landowners in any local government area.

While well intended, in practice the outcomes envisaged have been frustrated by many factors including town planning laws managing land use and development. Strategic and statutory planning mechanisms throughout Australia perpetuate disproportionately adverse decision making in respect to Aboriginal lands often resulting in the imposition of restrictive environmental conservation land use zonings on Aboriginal lands.

There is a tendency by state and local government authorities to view Aboriginal lands as public environmental conservation assets or as quasi parklands, often without conservation values being established through formal evaluations. Accordingly, Aboriginal lands have tended to be 'downzoned' for conservation purposes often without any basis. This has the effect of sterilising development potential of lands and undermines the intent of the Aboriginal Land Rights legislation.

Recognising this, Urbis supports the introduction of appropriate national and state-wide mechanisms in relation to strategic and statutory land use planning which effectively promotes economic independence for Aboriginal peoples and self-determination in respect to Aboriginal lands.

# **Action**

Urbis will proactively contribute its capabilities to the advocacy of appropriate state strategic and statutory land use planning which effectively promotes economic independence for Aboriginal peoples in respect to Aboriginal lands by:

- Establishing working relationships with Aboriginal and other relevant peak bodies to highlight the importance of more effective strategic and statutory planning approaches to the effective development of Aboriginal lands.
- Advocating the importance of and need for reform in the approach to planning the development of Aboriginal lands.
- Contributing to activities focussed on reforming the approach to planning the development of Aboriginal lands.

ongoing

# **Target**

 Urbis staff are proactively involved in a range of activities supporting the improvement of the strategic and statutory approaches to the planning and development of Aboriginal lands.

**Responsibility** RAP Working Group

2019

# **Action**

Support Urbis business areas to effectively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses by:

 Reviewing our procurement process to be more inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.

# **Action**

Urbis will consider opportunities to sponsor Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander events or initiatives relevant to Urbis.

# Action

Recognise and reward staff who have demonstrated reconciliation outcomes with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, organisations, businesses and communities.

ongoing

ongoing

ongoing

# **Target**

- Urbis procurement processes are inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.
- More opportunities are available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to tender for Urbis and its clients contracts where appropriate and relevant.

**Responsibility**Business Services

# **Target**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait
 Islander initiatives are funded
 and supported by Urbis.

**Responsibility**RAP Working Group

# **Target**

Urbis staff who demonstrate reconciliation outcomes will be rewarded for their active involvement in initiatives that promote reconciliation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

**Responsibility**RAP Working Group

# TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

We are committed to achieving meaningful outcomes from our RAP.

# **Action**

Report on Urbis Reconciliation Action Plan implementation from 2019 to 2020.

# **Action**

The Urbis Reconciliation Action
Plan Working Group has Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander representation and
reviews progress of the Reconciliation
Action Plan implementation twice a year.

# **Action**

Report on the Reconciliation Action Plan progress to the Urbis Diversity and Inclusion Board.

# Annually

# **Target**

 Urbis's Reconciliation Action Plan progress is reported each year in the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.

**Responsibility**RAP Working Group

# **Target**

Review of the Urbis Reconciliation
 Action Plan reviewed with changes
 made as appropriate.

Responsibility
RAP Working Group

# **Target**

Urbis Board are more informed about RAP initiatives and outcomes.

**Responsibility**Managing Director

