

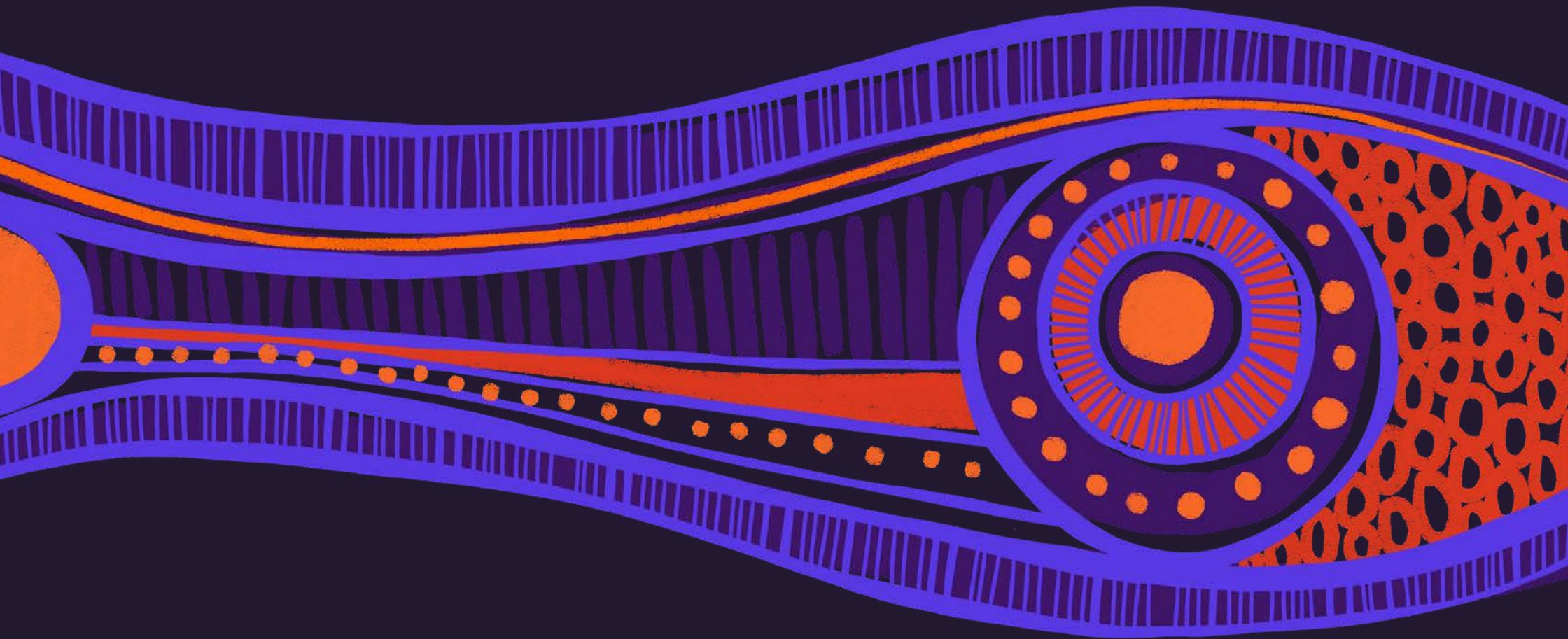


ESA Innovate RAP
Progress Report



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Acknowledgment of Country

Education Services Australia (ESA) acknowledges the Eastern Kulin Nation, Traditional Custodians of the land on which our head office stands, and pays our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise the Traditional Custodians of Country across Australia and their continuing connection and contribution to lands, waters, communities and learning.

Reconciliation Action Plan

Reconciliation Action Plan 2020–24 cover artwork by Keisha Leon



Our Innovate RAP's cover artwork is called A vision of change. It represents ESA's commitment to being seen, being brave and taking action. Of becoming a visionary and taking charge. Of learning, growing and working together to create a better future. This central theme is carried through from the cover image to design elements that echo it throughout the RAP.



Keisha Leon is a graphic designer and digital artist, and a proud Waanyi and Kalkadoon (Mount Isa, Queensland) woman. With ESA's RAP artwork, Keisha has created a visual story that is driven by culture

and the modern world, connecting people, and helping create the narrative for the future. Keisha is the Creative Director at Cause/Affect.

Cause/Affect

www.causeaffect.com.au

contact@causeaffect.com.au



Introduction

ESA's commitment toward reconciliation involves building stronger relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples to benefit all Australians.

Over the past four years, ESA has dedicated itself in a range of ways to advancing reconciliation in Australia.

ESA's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), developed in partnership with Reconciliation Australia, was the first step in acknowledging our commitment to meaningful and practical action. In March 2023, ESA moved to the next stage of the reconciliation journey when our Innovate RAP was approved by Reconciliation Australia.

The Innovate RAP has allowed ESA to gain a deeper understanding of our sphere of influence and establish the best approach to advance reconciliation through defined actions and deliverables.

Our actions include providing culturally inclusive and accessible high-quality projects, services and education technology platforms and engaging our stakeholders, delivery partners and employees in opportunities to develop a deep knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures. We have trialled new approaches to build genuine relationships and foster respect through our work.

Our Innovate RAP focused on four key areas, as outlined below.

- **Relationships:** Build relationships and engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to identify opportunities by understanding the specific educational challenges faced by First Nations educators, students and communities.
- **Respect:** Support the access of all young Australians to high-quality schooling and seeking to support equity in education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- **Opportunities:** Genuinely engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and organisations and our delivery partners to enable improved education, economic and social outcomes for First Nations peoples.
- **Governance:** Develop a governance structure that ensures the effective delivery of our RAP commitments through our ESA Executive Team, responsible work areas and the Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group (RAPWG).



Relationships

Education Services Australia's suite of products and services supporting and working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

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Yikan Noongar Language Program

ESA has been working in partnership with the Western Australian Department of Education to develop the Yikan Noongar Language Program.

Beginning in Year 3, the program supports public schools on Noongar Country – on which some 90% of WA schools are located – to officially offer Noongar language as part of their Languages Curriculum.

This groundbreaking program provides all the teaching and learning resources required to enable Noongar languages teachers and Noongar people with knowledge of language to deliver culturally responsive language learning pedagogies in each of the three dialectal regions.

The project demonstrates that distance is no barrier to collaboration as ESA's language specialists, writers and project delivery teams work alongside Noongar language specialists and Department teams at the WA Department of Education to co-design and shape this program.

The project team is further supported by a Circle of Advisors comprised of Noongar language teachers, oversight by a Noongar Elder, and curriculum input from Noongar curriculum writers and content creators, who play an essential role in capturing the dialect variations and supporting the development of resources.

Together, we have created a unique resource for schools enabling students to learn one of 24 Western Australian Aboriginal Languages across 97 public schools.

Expansion of the Yikan Noongar project

The Year 3 program has been completed, and the Yikan Noongar team is now developing curriculum for the Year 4 Noongar language program. The course builds on the content and processes that have been developed for the current Year 3 course. This includes continuation of the deep consultation model used in the early stages of the program.

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English Language Learning for Indigenous Children (ELLIC)

www.ellic.edu.au/

ELLIC is a program that helps preschool Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children build new skills in English and supports the home languages and language skills that these children and their families already have.

As part of this program, the ELLIC project team has created a series of beautiful story books, illustrated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists from across Australia. These books are designed to be enjoyed at home and provide children with the opportunity to deep dive into the lives of the ELLIC characters.

ESA has been working on the ELLIC program since 2020, and the Australian Government is investing in an expansion of the trial to include students in the early primary years (Foundation to Year 3), for whom English is an additional language or dialect, to participate in age-appropriate English language learning. In 2025, the program will commence an expansion from 20 to 100 centres.

The ELLIC trial is intended to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Build the English language learning of participating children.
.....
2. Deliver a program aligned to the Early Years Learning Framework, the School Aged Care Framework, as well as support EAL/D learning within the Australian Curriculum: Foundation.
.....
3. Focus on Indigenous children and communities, their first language/s and culture.
.....
4. Improve digital literacy capability.
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As an integral part of the ELLIC expansion, data and evidence will be captured to support its evaluation.

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The Girls in STEM Toolkit (The GiST)

www.thegist.edu.au/

The Girls in STEM Toolkit is a site providing female students, schools and families with activities, resources, case studies, lessons, study pathways and careers all related to STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths).

The GiST and myfuture teams collaborated in 2024 to host a webinar about girls in game design. [The recording of this session](#) is available on The GiST website.

One of the presenters, Phoebe Watson, a Yarrer Gunditj woman from the Maar Nation, is Lead Game Designer at a Melbourne-based studio. You can find out more about [Phoebe's journey from gamer to game designer](#) on the myfuture website.

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myfuture

www.myfuture.edu.au

myfuture is Australia's national career information service, providing resources to explore career pathways and tools to develop self-knowledge to help with career exploration.

The Term 1 2024 myfuture *Insights* paper explored how First Nations success can be shaped by providing culturally appropriate career advice. The myfuture team also hosted a webinar with author Tracy Ryan, Director of the Marradhali Aboriginal Corporation at Charles Sturt University, on supporting First Nations kids towards career success. [You can watch the recording online](#). Tracy Ryan is also working with the myfuture team on a series of lesson plans for educators, to be published in 2025.

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The Mathematics Hub

www.mathshub.edu.au

The Maths Hub offers resources for teachers and families to help students develop mathematics and numeracy skills.

In collaboration with the Stronger Smarter Institute, the Maths Hub team has [developed a series of resources](#) to help educators explore the connections between mathematics and the histories and cultures of First Nations peoples. You'll also find a [range of lesson plans](#) developed in collaboration with Caty Morris and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mathematics Alliance (ATSIMA) that explore reconciliation, First Nations games and the mankarr.

One [particular lesson plan for Year 9 students](#) explores the notion of reconciliation in Australia by asking students to analyse Reconciliation Australia's Australian Reconciliation Barometer report and answer an inquiry question for their statistical investigation.

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Digital Technologies Hub

www.dthub.edu.au

The Digital Technologies Hub (DT Hub) is an online learning resource that supports the implementation of digital technologies in Australian classrooms.

The DT Hub team has collaborated with First Nations educators and organisations in respectful partnerships to develop teaching resources that support teachers to embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures in Digital Technologies-related lessons.

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Other relationship-building events and activities

National Reconciliation Week (NRW)

In 2023 and 2024, ESA acknowledged National Reconciliation Week by providing a range of activities for employees to participate in. Both weeks started with a delicious morning tea full of native flavours and deep conversations. We encouraged employees to 'Wear it Yellow' to fundraise for Children's Ground, a not-for-profit organisation working towards changing the future for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, families and communities.

In 2023, we hosted a screening of *In my own words*, a documentary that follows the journey of adult Aboriginal students and their teachers as they discover the transformative power of reading and writing for the first time in their lives. The film provoked emotions and conversation around the lack of education support for Aboriginal students in some communities.

In 2024, we welcomed guest speaker Rhys Paddick from Acknowledge This! who shared his experiences with reconciliation in Australia.

Book and film club

Established in 2022, the ESA RAP book and film club meet throughout the year to come together to talk about a specific book or film that is by or about Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories or events. All employees are welcome and encouraged to join. We have enjoyed and discussed a range of titles, including *Dark emu*, *Growing up Aboriginal in Australia*, *Welcome to My Country* and *The visitors*.

Aboriginal heritage walks

We have so far organised three heritage walks through Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens, a significant cultural site for the local Kulin Nation. Guided by Den Fisher, we've gained insights into the rich history and thriving culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We learned how to identify significant native plants within the gardens and discovered Aboriginal plant uses, customs and ongoing connection to Country.

In 2024, we also joined the Birrarung Wilam (River Camp) walk, with the Koorie Heritage Trust, along Birrarung Marr. This gave our employees the opportunity to learn about the history of Birrarung and the Indigenous Peoples of the Kulin Nation.



Voice to Parliament

The Voice to Parliament was an historical event that we wanted to ensure employees well understood, in order to make an informed decision on the referendum. Training was provided through the 'Indigenous Constitutional Recognition through a Voice' course, along with an open discussion in the office. We also shared external events and webinars and decorated the office with posters promoting the 'Yes' vote.

Other key events

We celebrated William Barak and Wurundjeri Week by sharing information and asking employees to complete the activity: 'Whose Land am I on?'

To support Indigenous Literacy Day, annually we hold a Great Book Swap event, where employees bring in their own books to donate or purchase donated books from our Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS) collection. ESA has raised approximately \$1,800 for the Children's Ground charity through our 'Wear it Yellow' morning teas, and for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation via our book sales.

Relationships – our progress so far

● Completed ● In Progress ● Not Achieved

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	1. Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to review and improve ESA's supporting partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations guidelines for future engagement.	June 23 – June 24	●
	2. Develop and implement an engagement plan that articulates how ESA will work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations on initiatives of mutual interest.	June 23 – June 24	●
	3. Trial new approaches to strengthen and expand relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence, such as the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation, Indigenous Education Consultative Bodies, AIATSIS and the Stronger Smarter Institute.	June 23 – June 24	●
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	1. Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials across the organisation.	May 23 – May 24	●
	2. Ensure RAP Working Group members participate in an external NRW event once per year.	27 May – 3 June 23/24	●
	3. Encourage and support employees and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May – 3 June 23/24	●
	4. Organise at least one NRW event each year.	27 May – 3 June 23/24	●
	5. Develop a relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation in the education sphere to partner with events on NRW events.	27 May – 3 June 23/24	●
	6. Develop one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business.	January 23	●

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	1. Develop and implement an employee engagement strategy to engage employees and communicate ESA's reconciliation actions to our workforce.	January 23/24	●
	2. Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly, including improving our RAP presence on the ESA website, social media and communication platforms, positioning reconciliation as a commitment to our core company values.	January 23/24	●
	3. Amplify First Nations voices and proactively engage our employees and external stakeholders and delivery partners in discussions to advance embedding reconciliation action in our core business.	January 23/24	●
	4. Share stories of or insights from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators to promote reconciliation in education via ESA communication channels. This includes the ESA Book and Film Club focusing on books and films by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers and creators.	January and July 23/24	●
	5. Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes in areas where we can achieve collaborative impact.	August 23 and February 24	●
	6. Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia and other like-minded organisations, such as ACARA, ACECQA, AITSL and AERO, to identify agreed initiatives of impact on the education sector to advance reconciliation.	January, April, July and October 23/24	●
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	1. Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs.	July 23	●
	2. Develop, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation.	July 23	●
	3. Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy.	May 23	●
	4. Engage external experts to facilitate educating employees and senior leaders on the effects of racism.	July 23	●

Respect

Cultural awareness opportunities

To ensure our employees have a fundamental understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, all employees are required to complete an online cultural learning program based on the *Seven Steps to Practical Reconciliation framework*. A cultural learning strategy has been implemented and details suggested activities for employees to participate in. We actively encourage employees to attend internal guest speaker activities, share resources, participate in external events, and register for webinars focused on educating and expanding their knowledge further.

Office meeting rooms

In February 2024, as part of our commitment to our Reconciliation Action Plan, we renamed ESA's meeting rooms in honour of prominent Indigenous Australians who have made major contributions to education and advocacy. These include Professor Jeannie Herbert AM, Cathy Freeman, Japanangka errol West, Adam Goodes, Dr Bronwyn Bancroft, Dr Lowitja O'Donoghue AC CBE DSG, Dr Anita Heiss and Professor Marcia Langton AO.

We also renamed four meeting rooms to represent Indigenous nations from the north, east, south and west of Australia, based on the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) Map of Indigenous Australia.

Each room features a vibrant, authentic design by Indigenous artist, Keisha Leon, along with a brief biography highlighting the impact of the honoured individuals, giving staff and visitors a daily connection with these important cultural acknowledgements.

To celebrate, ESA staff were joined by Dr Anita Heiss, a leading Aboriginal writer and advocate for Indigenous literature, and Jillian West, daughter of Japanangka errol West, who is a great support in our reconciliation journey.



Schools Catalogue Information Service (SCIS)

www.scisdata.com/

SCIS creates high-quality, consistent catalogue records for school libraries.

The SCIS team has been working to include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language codes in its cataloguing. SCIS is using AustLang codes that were compiled by Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources, allowing users of SCIS metadata to find items in specific Australian Indigenous languages.

The project supports the RAP deliverable of 'Enhance SCIS Data to cultivate respectful, culturally appropriate subject heads, descriptive cataloguing and presentation of data'. The work the team has been doing aligns directly with the cross-curriculum priority of the Australian Curriculum, Version 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures.

Respect first: Understanding SCIS Subject Headings for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

SCIS continually works to enhance its data for diversity and respect. This article covers recent updates to SCIS Subject Headings within SCIS Data and Authorities that contribute to this project.

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Cultural Protocols policy

ESA has developed its own Cultural Protocols policy, which represents an important step towards understanding, respecting and encouraging culturally appropriate working practices and valuing the cultural diversity that enriches, motivates and drives ESA's work forward. Cultural protocols provide guidance for ESA employees to ensure their work respects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural beliefs and practices.

ESA has partnered with an organisation that provides Acknowledgement of Country training, giving employees a deeper understanding of Acknowledgement of Country, and the ability to develop their own personalised Acknowledgement of Country.

To support our recognition of Acknowledgement of Country, ESA has implemented:

1. Digital boards: Our company Acknowledgement of Country is prominently displayed on digital boards throughout the office. This ensures that all employees and visitors are reminded of and respect the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which our office stands.
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2. Websites: We have sought and obtained permission from our product owners to include an Acknowledgement of Country on all ESA-owned and/or managed websites. This extends our recognition and respect for Indigenous cultures to our digital presence, ensuring that our commitment is visible to a wider audience.
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3. Flags in the foyer: The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are proudly displayed in the foyer of our CBD office. This visual representation underscores our respect and recognition of the significance of these flags and the cultures they represent.
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NAIDOC Week

During NAIDOC Week 2023, employees were encouraged to attend various webinars focused on the theme for each year, *For our Elders* and *Celebrating our First Nations*. During NAIDOC Week 2024, we welcomed special guest Jillian West to join us for a session that discussed the eight core sub-paradigms or dimensions of the Japanangka Teaching & Research Paradigm, as written by her father, Japanangka errol West.

Substituting the Australia Day public holiday

To continue building respect and developing cultural awareness and understanding, ESA offers employees the option to work on the Australia Day public holiday and, instead, take another day off later in the year. We recognise this day means different things to different people and have elected May 26 as a substitute public holiday.

Building diverse personas

A series of user personas was developed to drive the design of the English Language Learning for Indigenous Children (ELLIC) trial. ELLIC aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander preschool children who are EAL/D learners to learn English in a fun and engaging way. User personas included those for:

- Indigenous educators
- non-indigenous educators
- education leaders of early years settings
- parents/carers of children in the year prior to full-time schooling
- Indigenous children in the year prior to full-time schooling.

The user personas reflected the geographic scope of the project: Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. They focused on the language strengths and needs of the communities as well as potential motivations and issues related to language learning.

These personas were used to determine the appropriateness and relevance of web-based resources for children and educators, professional learning, and information and resources for parents/carers. The project also used a co-design process with two target communities, which substantially informed the design and delivery of the project.

Respect – our progress so far

● Completed ● In Progress ● Not Achieved

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
1. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	1. Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation, drawing on the results of the employee cultural awareness survey in 2021.	January 23	●
	2. Consult local Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on developing and implementing a cultural learning strategy.	January 23	●
	3. Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy for our employees.	January 23	●
	4. Identify opportunities within the internal communications plan to identify opportunities for improving ESA employee awareness, understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; promote upcoming opportunities, and share how ESA is working in this space.	July 23	●
	5. Provide RAP Working Group members and other key leadership employees the opportunity to participate in formal and structured cultural learning, including anti-racism and cultural safety, as a minimum once per year.	July 23	●
2. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	1. Provide training on a yearly basis to increase employees' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	January 23	●
	2. Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols and guidance for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	January 23	●
	3. Continue to have local Traditional Owners or Custodians provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	January 23/24	●
	4. Continue to include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important internal and external meetings, including Board, employees, project and reference group meetings.	December 23	●

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
3. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	1. RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 23/24	●
	2. Communicate the provisions put in place and outlined in the ESA employees HR policies and processes to remove barriers to employees participating in NAIDOC Week	July 23/24	●
	3. Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all employees.	July 23/24	●
4. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledges, cultures and histories through inclusive and equitable work practices.	1. Develop, implement and communicate cultural protocols and guidance to embed equity, diversity and inclusion in ESA's product and system design, development and implementation processes and practices.	July 23	●
	2. Enhance SCIS Data to cultivate respectful, culturally appropriate subject headings, descriptive cataloguing and presentation of data.	June 23	●
	3. Research and document personas to reflect the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, teachers and parents/carers and share across national agencies to assist in the development of online systems and resources.	October 23	●
	4. Research and document personas and guidelines for non-Indigenous teachers and students to assist in the development of resources that assist in the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, knowledges, cultures and histories	October 23	●

Opportunities

Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program

We have actively promoted the Narragunnawali program, including nominees and winners via ESA's newsletter and social media channels.

Reconciliation and Education: Past-Present-Future Forum

Our CFO & GM Planning & Performance, Cameron Power, was a panellist at the event in November 2023, co-hosted by Narragunnawali and Ngarrngga.

Four briefing sessions were held, with forum panellists and discussants; representatives from the National Education Architecture; Education jurisdictions; and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education organisations/initiatives.

Cameron sat on the 'Present' panel, which looked at the present state and if the current policy, pedagogies and praxis are answering the calls for equality and equity in education for all.

Following the forum, [a report has been created](#), which identified that truth-telling and anti-racism were identified as a key future focus areas for advancing reconciliation both in and through education.

Scootle

scootle.edu.au

Scootle is a [resource hub](#) that provides free, quality, curriculum-aligned resources for Australian educators.

In 2024, Scootle added 150 new First Nations resources from providers including Ngarrngga, Reading Australia, NSW Department of Education, VIC Department of Education, National Library of Australia, Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House, Australian Museum, the Digital Technologies Hub and the Mathematics Hub.

Carbon offsets

ESA has maintained carbon-neutral status for more than 10 years now. ESA's carbon offsets are purchased through the Thaa-Nguigarr Carbon Project, which manages and promotes Indigenous savanna burning, using land management methods that have been used on Country for thousands of years. This means we support local projects, embrace First Nations cultures, all while helping our environment and working towards sustainable outcomes.

Procurement and supplier relationships

Supply Nation membership

We have developed a procurement list for employees to reference and support the usage of Indigenous suppliers and companies, and we continue to establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations to support various projects and content within our business.

Procurement focus within ESA projects

Maths in Schools

The Maths in Schools project exceeded our Indigenous supply chain target through an expenditure of 4.23% of total budget across the life of the project. The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) provided the team with the following feedback: 'In achieving these targets, Education Services Australia Limited has made a valuable contribution to stimulating Indigenous entrepreneurship, business and economic development. This accomplishment will be recorded in a Commonwealth Government database for consideration by government agencies in future tender evaluations.'

Digital Technologies Hub

Both our Maths in Schools and Digital Technologies Hub (DT Hub) projects have reported on engagement with Indigenous suppliers during progress reporting and in Project Management Team (PMT) meetings. Lesson plans have been created for both projects through collaboration with Indigenous suppliers and providing resources that embed First Nations perspectives, knowledge and culture. These have been shared with the teaching community through social media, newsletters, conferences and other marketing activities. The DT Hub lessons that bring Indigenous perspectives into the classroom have been very popular with a strong engagement rate of around 80% and a variation in engagement time on site between 6 and nearly 11 minutes.

Early Learning Languages Australia (ELLA)

www.ella.edu.au/

ELLA is a digital, play-based program that makes language learning engaging and interesting for preschoolers.

The ELLA program exceeded the requirements for its Indigenous Participation Plan, with 17.41% of the total budget spent on engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and individuals. This was achieved through procurement of goods and services – including graphic design, printing of educational resources and promotional materials, penetration testing of the website environments, and event catering – and exceeding our workforce performance target.

Yikan Noongar

The Yikan Noongar Year 4 project team work with a Circle of Advisors who are Noongar educators, who review content and provide feedback, adding elements they think are necessary to reflect community expectations. The project relies on this group to ensure the credibility and authenticity of the resources.

The team also worked with several Indigenous consultants and suppliers, including a Noongar language expert, editor, photographer and illustrators during project planning and implementation. The project team would always begin by looking at the Indigenous talent pool first, in particular Noongar talent, then ask for recommendations from our stakeholders. When communicating with our Indigenous suppliers, we try to keep in mind that building relationships and trust is the most important thing we can do, while transactional activities come afterwards.

ESA respects the cultural and intellectual property of our partners and all Yikan Noongar language program materials must be taught on Noongar Country by a Noongar language teacher, a Noongar language speaker, or Noongar person with language knowledge, supported by a classroom teacher. Where third-party materials contain knowledge and information that constitutes Aboriginal cultural and intellectual property, we ensure that we handle the materials in accordance with the expectations of the Indigenous communities who contributed the content, and any restrictions or limitations that apply to the use of the materials are respected.



Opportunities – our progress so far

● Completed ● In Progress ● Not Achieved

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
1. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	1. Build understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	January 23/24	●
	2. Engage and connect with current and future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to inform future employment and professional development opportunities and strategy.	January 23/24	●
	3. Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy.	March 23	●
	4. Explore internship or secondment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	January 23/24	●
	5. Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	January 23	●
	6. Review HR and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in our workplace.	March 23/24	●
2. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	1. Develop and proactively implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy to ensure budgeted procurement spend is directed to traditionally under-represented businesses where it can create greater social good.	February 23	●
	2. Renew Supply Nation membership and increase the number of ESA users representing all business areas.	February 23/24	●
	3. Develop and proactively communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to employees, stakeholders and delivery partners.	July 23/24	●
	4. Review, update and proactively communicate procurement practices to ensure barriers to procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses are removed.	January 23	●
	5. Explore and implement strategies to increase EAS's overall annual procurement and key partner procurement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses.	January 23 and June 24	●

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
3. Promote Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education and AIATSIS Education Strategy to employees and external stakeholders.	1. Promote Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education program to all schools and early learning services in our network and encourage these schools to develop their RAPs via the Narragunnawali platform.	July 23	●
	2. Encourage engagement with professional learning resources and collaborate to identify opportunities for strengthening connections with Narragunnawali professional learning/RAP development processes and ESA's work in developing professional learning and resources for the education sector.	August 23 and May 24	●
	3. Help promote and encourage schools and early learning services within our network who have shown exceptional commitment to reconciliation to apply for the biennial Narragunnawali Awards.	April 23/24	●

RAP Working Group

Our dedicated RAP Working Group is passionate about advancing reconciliation in Australia. They meet monthly, are at the forefront of our RAP work, and are always looking for new approaches to develop our knowledge of and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, histories and cultures.

RAP Barometer survey results summary

The RAP Barometer survey aimed to assess the impact of the RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) and ESA's reconciliation journey on employees and the organisation. The survey was completed by 59 staff members during October 2024.

Key findings

- **Confidence in engaging with First Nations People:**

- 73% are fairly to very confident.
- 27% are not very confident.

- **ESA's commitment to reconciliation:**

- 80% believe ESA has a genuine and strong commitment.
- 17% think ESA has good intentions but we could do more.

- **Knowledge and cultural learning:**

- 40% get their information on First Nations peoples from the workforce.

- 59% have fairly low knowledge of First Nations histories and cultures.
- 91% learned something from cultural learning training.
- 87% felt more positive about First Nations peoples.

- **Support for actions:**

- Employees showed overwhelming support for traineeships and recruitment of First Nation peoples. There is also significant support from employees to learn, promote and celebrate First Nations culture and expand our relationships with First Nations suppliers and organisations.

- **Impact of the RAP:**

The survey results showed that 95% or above of employees felt that the RAP had an impact on:

- increasing their awareness of unconscious racism/prejudice
- improving their understanding of local First Nations cultural protocols
- being more confident working with First Nations peoples and engaging with First Nations communities and leaders.

Governance – our progress so far

● Completed
 ● In Progress
 ● Not Achieved

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
1. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	1. Maintain and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the ESA RAP Working Group.	January 23, September 23 and June 24	●
	2. Review and apply the Terms of Reference for the ESA RAP Working Group.	July 23/24	●
	3. Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	November 22, January 23, September 23 and June 24	●
2. Provide appropriate support for the effective implementation of RAP commitments.	1. Define and embed resource needs for RAP implementation as part of the annual budget process.	April 23/24	●
	2. Engage our senior leaders and other employees in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 23	●
	3. Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 23	●
	4. Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management.	July 23/24	●

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Status
3. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	1. Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence.	June 23/24	●
	2. Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.	August 23/24	●
	3. Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	September 23/24	●
	4. Report RAP progress to all employees, Leadership Team and Executive Team quarterly.	January 23, April 23, October 23, February 24 and April 24	●
	5. Investigate and recommend adding the option for employees' participation in and contribution to reconciliation as part of employees' KPIs and development plans.	July 23	●
	6. Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings annually.	August 23/24	●
	7. Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 24	●
	8. Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP.	August 23/24	●
4. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	1. Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	July 24	●

Looking ahead

Looking ahead, our focus will be on continuing to advocate for reconciliation by educating our employees to bridge their knowledge gaps and enhance their ability to communicate confidently with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This was a key message that emerged from our RAP Barometer survey results. We will also continue to nurture our existing relationships with suppliers and organisations, while actively seeking new partnerships that are mutually beneficial.

A key objective will be to determine our primary deliverables and areas of focus as we embark on the development and launch of our next Reconciliation Action Plan. By setting clear, measurable goals and engaging with our employees and partners, we aim to create a meaningful and impactful plan that supports reconciliation and fosters stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

