

Uniting WA Better Together

First Nations Strategy 2025–2028



Uniting

Acknowledgement of Country

by Josey Hansen (RIP)

Uniting WA kaadidj Noongar Moort Keyen Kaadak nidja boodja narnga ngaala yangka ngaalang noondakiny maar. Ngaala karnitj-djinang baalabiny kooranyi Midjiyooop boodja kepa. Ngaala maara-baron yira-ak kooralong kalyakool Bardip Yira-Maaman boodjara karroyal ngaala karodjin Koorakor birdiyar, koora, yeyi.

Uniting WA acknowledges the Noongar People as the Traditional Custodians of this land on which we provide our services. We recognise their unique and spiritual connection to Country and waters. We value the oldest continuing culture in the world, and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Better Together Strategy Cover Artwork



Bernie Narkle is the artist whose beautiful work is being featured in the **Better Together First Nations Strategy 2025-2028**. Bernie is a Ballardong Noongar man with strong ties to Wadjuk Boodja (Perth). His grandfather, Phillip Narkle, was a professional artist, and he inspired Bernie to learn the craft of painting. Bernie is largely a self-taught artist and has been painting for 15 years.

He is a father of two and his family largely influences his art along with animals, Dreamtime stories and Noongar Boodja. His art helps keep him connected to culture and is a form of grounding and meditation.

Bernie's inspiration for this painting is described in his own words; Noongar Boodja (Noongar land) with the Balga (grass tree) flowering and images of new life during Kambarang (Springtime in the Noongar 6 seasons). The Creator Spirit, the Warlken Wargal (Rainbow Serpent) rests in the Woorl (sky). The Bilya (river) he created below flows and breathes life into the Boorn (trees).

The colours of the sky were chosen to represent the dawning of a new day filled with hope for a brighter future. The purple in the centre represents Uniting WA bringing about positive change.

While painting this piece with Uniting WA in mind, Bernie gave consideration to the important work Uniting WA delivers for the community in Boorloo (Perth) and Menang (Albany). He used images of Balga trees to reflect that the painting is of Noongar country. Balga trees only grow in Noongar country as far south as Albany, and slightly to the east. Bernie's wish for this painting is that it encourages collaboration and brings peace and hope in Noongar country.

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Message from Co-Chief Executive Officers

At Uniting WA, we are deeply committed to fostering a culture of respect, understanding, and collaboration with First Nations Peoples. Our **Better Together First Nations Strategy 2025 - 2028 (Better Together Strategy)** is a testament to this commitment, reflecting our dedication to creating meaningful opportunities, building strong relationships, and showing unwavering respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

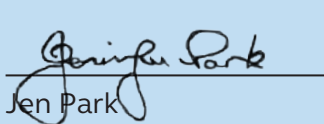
Opportunities: We believe in the power of opportunity to transform lives. Our **Better Together Strategy** outlines initiatives aimed at increasing employment, education, and business opportunities for First Nations peoples. By investing in these areas, we aim to empower individuals and communities, fostering economic independence and growth.

Respect: Respect for the rich cultures, histories, and contributions of First Nations Peoples is fundamental to our **Better Together Strategy**. We are committed to promoting cultural awareness and understanding within our organisation and the broader community. By fostering a deeper appreciation of First Nations cultures, we aim to build a more inclusive and respectful society.

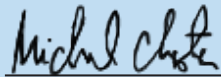
Relationships: Building and nurturing relationships based on trust and mutual respect is at the heart of our **Better Together Strategy**. We strive to create an inclusive environment where the voices of First Nations Peoples are heard and valued. Our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are crucial in guiding our reconciliation journey.

Our **Better Together Strategy** is not just a document; it is a living, breathing commitment to reconciliation. We understand that achieving these goals requires ongoing effort, reflection, and collaboration. We invite all members of our organisation and the wider community to join us on this journey towards a more equitable and just Australia.

Together, we can make a difference.



Jen Park
Co-Chief Executive Officers



Michael Chester



Michael Chester
Co-CEO, Uniting WA

Jen Park
Co-CEO, Uniting WA

Message from First Nations Cultural Advisor

In the development of the **Better Together First Nations Strategy 2025 - 2028 (Better Together Strategy)**, we acknowledge the support provided by Uniting WA Co-CEOs, Jen Park and Michael Chester. Their encouragement throughout the process enabled our team to develop this strategy in a very proactive and constructive manner.

We must also acknowledge the exceptional contribution made by the former Cultural Architect, Josey 'Djidi Djidi' Hansen (RIP) on the enhancement and delivery of services to the First Nations community through Uniting WA. The **Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan January 2019 – December 2021** is testament to her work and commitment to Uniting WA's delivery of services throughout Perth and in Albany. Josey's commitment continues to inspire us to seek innovative ways to further build on her work into the future.

Due primarily to Josey's passing and organisational structural change, the **Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan January 2019 – December 2021** expired without being fully implemented and progress on a new RAP stalled. However, with the engagement of a new First Nations Cultural Advisor and in consultation with the leadership team, a decision was made in October 2023 to replace the **Reconciliation Action Plan** with a new **Better Together First Nations Strategy 2025–2028**.

The **Better Together First Nations Strategy** is a variation of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), embracing the concept of Reconciliation and working towards achieving stated objectives. This new strategy is aligned with the Priority Reforms of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap (see Appendix 1).

As Uniting WA embarked on the development of the **Better Together Strategy**, team members were asked to volunteer and apply their skills, knowledge and valuable time to this task. They were also asked to self-select into one of the three groups - Opportunities, Respect and Relationships - and to work collaboratively to develop the strategy.

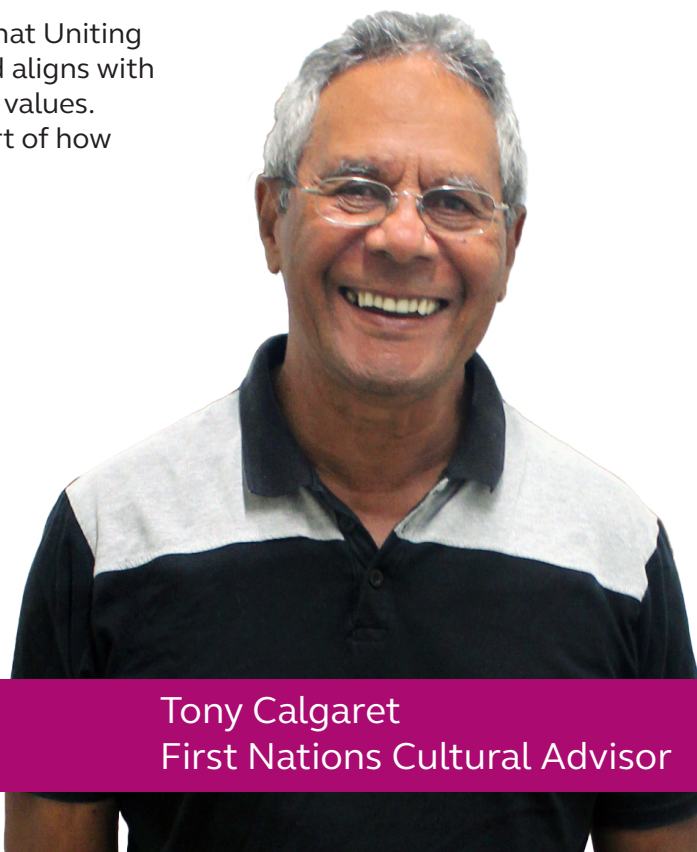
The response from our people was inspiring, resulting in a strategy that has been driven by team members from different areas of Uniting WA. And that has contributed to many and varied suggestions resulting in a meaningful and practical First Nations Strategy that we all own.

We believe this strategy should be an agile, living document. As time passes, it naturally follows that we will review this strategy to ensure it reflects contemporary thinking, innovations and organisational structural change for the enhancement of services delivered by Uniting WA.

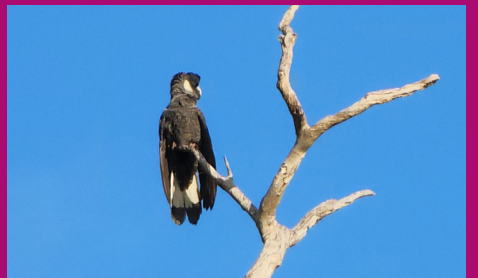
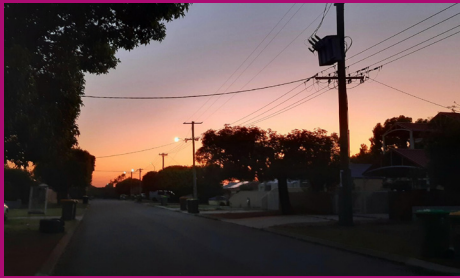
Importantly, this strategy is not separate to the work that Uniting WA delivers in the community. Rather, it underpins and aligns with the organisation's strategic plan, mission, purpose and values. In this way, we're confident it will become a normal part of how we at Uniting WA do business.

Tony Calgaret

Tony Calgaret
Uniting WA First Nations Cultural Advisor



Tony Calgaret
First Nations Cultural Advisor



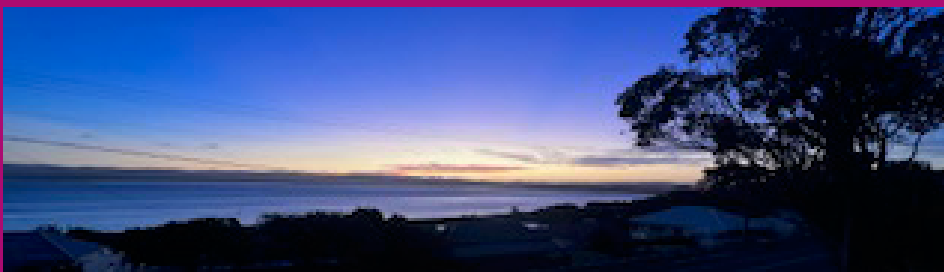
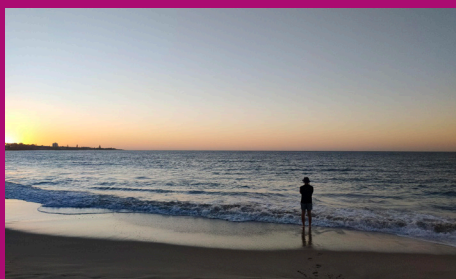


The Uniting WA team and Noongar Boodja

This land holds immense cultural and historical significance, and we want to honor and recognise connections to Noongar Boodja through our team's stories and images.

We invited Uniting WA team members to share photos and stories of places on Noongar Boodja that are important to them.

We are proud to share some of those images here and throughout this **Better Together Strategy**.





The Yongka (kangaroo) is of deep importance to the Noongar people. They are integral to culture, food and part of the stories that have been passed down from ancestors.

“This is one of the beautiful resident kangaroos on my property. It makes me so happy seeing them each day.”

Alison Pennie

Our vision for the Better Together Strategy

Our vision for the Better Together First Nations Strategy 2025-2028 (Better Together Strategy) is to integrate it seamlessly into existing and future Uniting WA strategic plans. This strategy is not meant to stand apart from the core business of Uniting WA, but to be an essential part of it.

In doing so, we aim to achieve measurable and enhanced outcomes for the First Nations community in WA, in a practical and culturally respectful manner.

We are committed to continually improving the **The Better Together Strategy** and its outcomes, with involvement from Uniting WA team members at all levels. This strategy is dynamic and flexible, allowing us to build and expand relationships within the organisation, through our Board, leadership, service and support pathways, as well as individual team members. It also strengthens our relationships with the First Nations community in WA, including Elders, leaders, businesses, community organisations and the broader Western Australian community.

Our values

The Better Together Strategy aligns with our values and will enable Uniting WA to deliver services in a culturally inclusive and responsive way.

Imaginative

We challenge convention, explore new possibilities and dare to dream for a better future.

Respectful

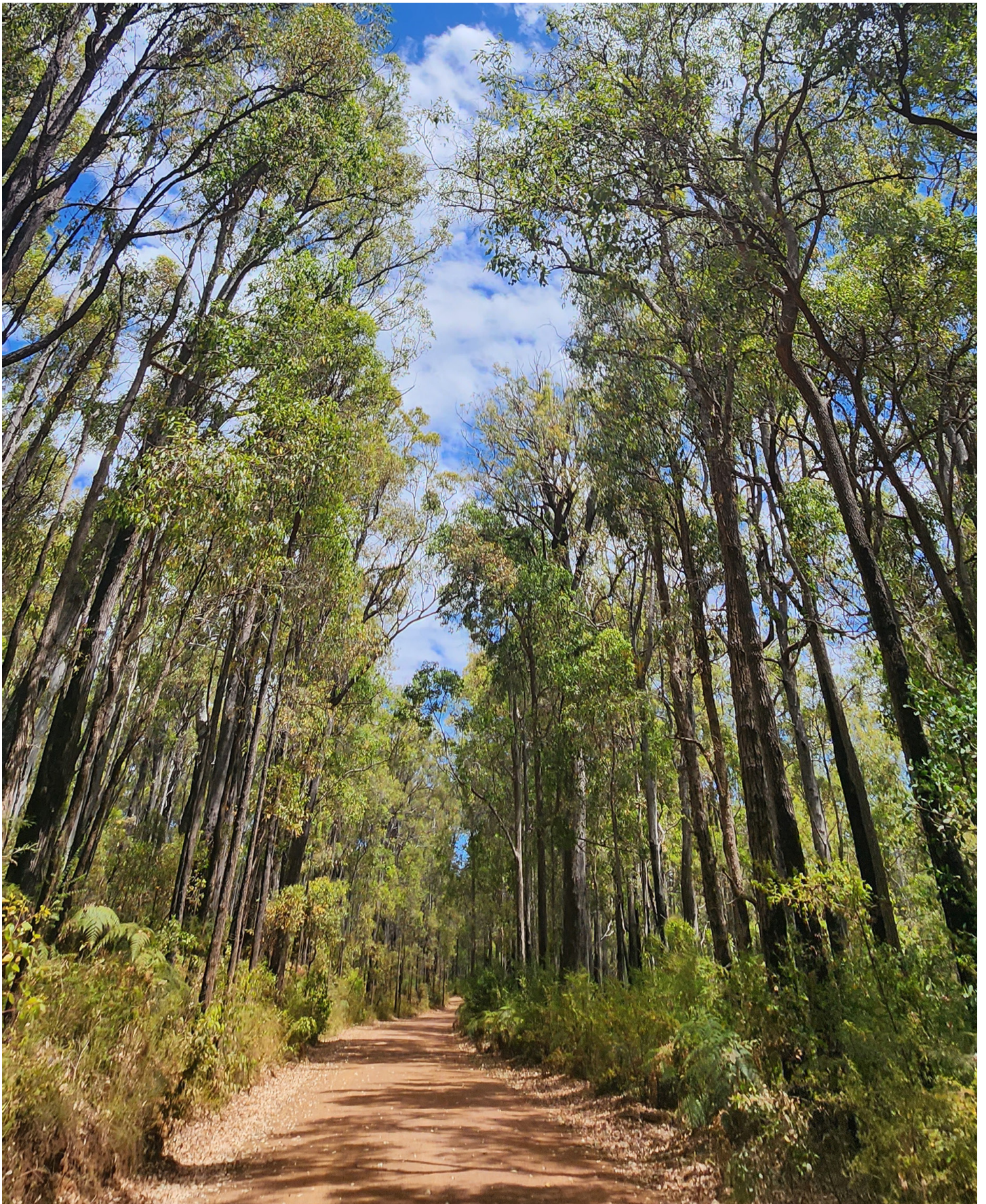
We act with honesty and integrity, and open our hearts to all people without exception.

Compassionate

We are nurturing, generous and thoughtful in our words and deeds.

Bold

We face injustice head on, standing up for what is right and true with confidence and strength.



In the Noongar language, “Dwellingup” translates to “place of nearby water”. This is a beautiful image of the Dwellingup forest (Djarlma).

“My family feels deeply connected to Dwellingup Forest. It is more than just a forest to us—it’s a sanctuary that reminds us of the importance of slowing down and being present.”

Abbie Wilcox

National priority reforms and Better Together Strategy initiatives

The National Agreement on Closing the Gap has been built around four Priority Reforms that have been directly informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Each priority reform is outlined in detail in Appendix 1.

Uniting WA has developed 9 initiatives that align to the priority reforms as shown below and explained on the following pages.

		Reform one	Reform two	Reform three	Reform four
		Formal partnerships and shared decision making	Building the community-controlled sector	Transforming government organisations	Shared access to data and information at a regional level
Opportunities	Initiative 1. Learning and development opportunities for our team	✓	✓		
	Initiative 2. Attracting and retaining First Nations team members	✓			
	Initiative 3. Supporting First Nations people to develop skills and gain employment	✓	✓		
	Initiative 4. Prioritising First Nations suppliers in procurement	✓	✓	✓	
Respect	Initiative 5. First Nations events and dates of significance	✓	✓	✓	
	Initiative 6. Recognising, acknowledging and showing our respect for First Nations people		✓	✓	
Relationships	Initiative 7. Yarning together	✓		✓	
	Initiative 8. Building networks	✓	✓		
Measuring success	Initiative 9. Enable, monitor and measure success			✓	✓

Opportunities

Uniting WA seeks opportunities to work with First Nations people. We ensure First Nations people are provided with the opportunity to access available services.

We create opportunities for First Nations people through procurement, employment, training, and development. It is imperative that our workforce not only reflects our communities, but we also need to model and promote the strengths we will develop from having a culture of connectedness amongst workers and their communities.

Having a well-represented workforce that includes First Nations people, communities and businesses will create an environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel comfortable, supported, and can achieve their career goals.

Initiative 1. Learning and development opportunities for our team members

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Continually review the Supervision and Development process to ensure suitability for First Nations workers.	Complete before next Supervision and Development Cycle 2025	People Services Team	Diverse cultural learning opportunities are available to Uniting WA team members providing enhanced cultural competence, improved service delivery, and stronger relationships with First Nations communities.
Review culturally specific training included in the Annual Training Calendar and consider additional inclusions (e.g. First Nations Mental Health Awareness training, Acknowledge this! Workshop etc.)	Complete within 2026/ Ongoing		
Engage First Nation mentors to provide cultural support to our Service Pathways.	Complete within 2025 - 2028		
Review the current cultural safety training completed as part of employee onboarding to ensure ongoing suitability.	Complete within 2026		
Allocate a dedicated budget for cultural learning activities and events.	Complete Financial year 2026	Co-CEOs	
Secure a First Nations Uniting WA Board Member.	Complete within 2027	Board	Provide a First Nations cultural lens on Board decisions.
Establish “Library” of First Nations books – to be shared amongst Uniting WA team members to facilitate learning and raise awareness of First Nations peoples and culture.	Ongoing 2025-2028	First Nations Cultural Advisor	Provides First Nations perspectives which increases the cultural knowledge base of our team.
People leaders to regularly self-assess their understanding and application of appropriate behaviours regarding First Nations employment, leadership, and development, with these self-ratings included in their annual Supervision and Development document.	Ongoing within 2025 - 2027	People Services Team	People Leaders can proactively identify areas for self-improvement.
Develop a mentoring program for leadership and skill development for our First Nations colleagues, alongside a work experience program for our First Nations volunteers.	Complete within 2025 - 2027	People Services Team and Community Engagement Team	First Nations colleagues can develop skills and learn from leaders and/or specialist team members, while volunteers can experience Uniting WA's working culture and explore various career opportunities.

Initiative 2. Attracting and retaining First Nations team members

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Undertake a survey of current and past First Nations employees to understand their experience of working at Uniting WA.	Complete within December 2026	People Services Team	A deeper understanding of the factors that can affect retention of First Nations colleagues at Uniting WA.
Ensure practices are in place to identify / assess specific roles where First Nations Recruitment should be prioritised (e.g. Strengthening Families / Together Walking).	Complete within 2027	Senior Managers	Well-defined employment pathways are utilised by People Services and Leaders during recruitment, with specific positions across the organisation prioritised for First Nations candidates where appropriate. Additionally, relationships are built with First Nations organisations to source candidates for suitable positions.
Consider flexibility of the recruitment process in light of First Nations people and culture. Document the organisation's current considerations and practices (i.e., what additional considerations / strategies do we use, or could we use?) in place to attract and recruit First Nations candidates.	Complete within 2026	People Services Team	Clearly defined actions to improve Uniting WA recruitment processes for First Nations candidates.
Explore opportunities to establish relationship with education / training organisations to provide First Nations students' placements and internships at Uniting WA.	Complete within 2025	People Services Team	Enhanced educational and employment pathways for First Nations students.

Initiative 3. Supporting First Nations people to develop skills and gain employment

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Map out skill development resources / pathways available to Uniting WA service users.	Complete within 2027	People Services Team	A deeper understanding of the factors that can affect retention of First Nations colleagues at Uniting WA.
Identify and secure funding opportunities within existing Uniting WA services to proactively provide skill development and employment support for First Nations service users.	Complete within 2027	People Services Team	First Nations service users are prioritised for skill development and employment support, with funding secured to provide tailored assistance.

Initiative 4. Prioritising First Nations suppliers in procurement

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Ensure procurement processes Identify appropriate First Nations businesses that could supply Uniting WA with services and / or products. Make changes to relevant policies and procedures to ensure that First Nations suppliers are prioritised during procurement, where appropriate.	Completed within 2025	Executive General Management (EGM)	A deeper understanding of the factors that can affect retention of First Nations colleagues at Uniting WA.



The central image of the Wellington Dam mural is painted from a historical photo of a group of Aboriginal children on a picnic day out from Roelands mission.

“This picture was taken at Wellington Dam. I am interested in learning about Aboriginal heritage and culture and I love nature and discovering the beauty of Australia.”

Davina Haines

Respect

Uniting WA respects First Nations peoples, cultures, lands, histories, and rights. Respect is one of the organisation's core values and we embrace practices that show respect to First Nations people and cultures. We are committed to learning about the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work - and First Nations people and cultures more broadly.

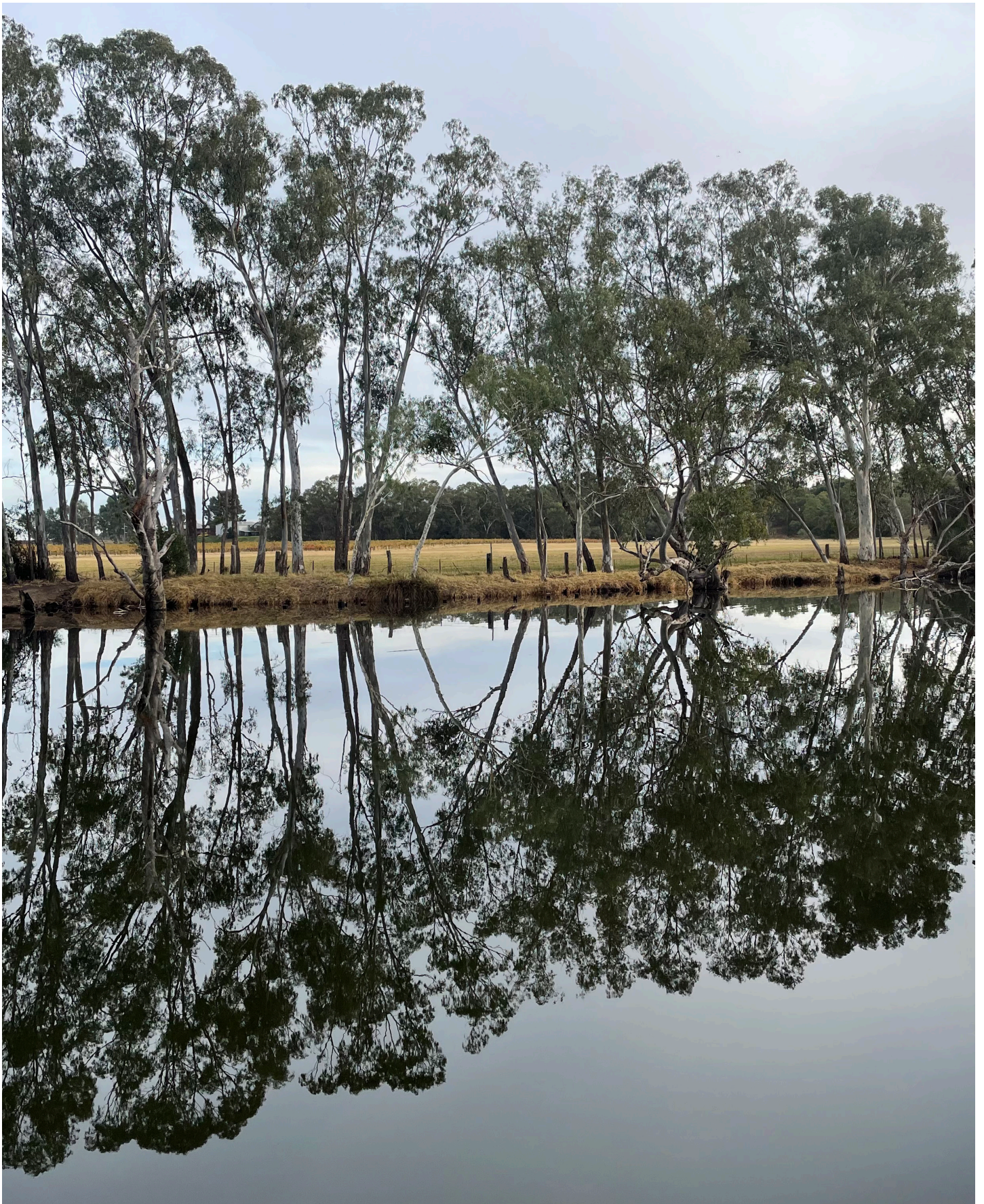
We seek to understand the impacts of intergenerational trauma, caused by the colonisation of these lands, and the systems, policies and practices which followed. We continuously look for opportunities to inform ourselves, and others, about these impacts. We celebrate, acknowledge, and accept our differences so that we all may learn, work, grow and achieve together. We can build an inclusive community that will heal, continue to grow and most importantly, thrive.

Initiative 5. First Nations events and dates of significance

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Develop an annual calendar of First Nations events and dates of significance and seek out creative and innovative methods to promote these events.	Complete within 2025	Marketing and Communications	Increased awareness and participation in First Nations cultural events.
Host a range of events across Uniting WA sites (e.g. Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC week, Children's Day etc.)	Ongoing		

Initiative 6. Recognising, acknowledging and showing our respect for First Nations people

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Uluru Statement from the Heart posters will be purchased and displayed in all Uniting WA offices.	Complete within 2024 -25	First Nations Cultural Advisor	Increased awareness and support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart within Uniting WA and the broader community.
Develop an Acknowledgment of Country guide for Uniting WA.	Complete within 2025		Team members understand the value, meaning, and purpose of Acknowledgment of Country and Welcome to Country.
Develop a guide for organising a Welcome to Country.	Complete within 2025		



This image represents the sheer beauty of the river (Bilya) together with the tree's (Boorn) beautifully reflected in the water.

“I was supporting a participant and he chose to spend time here in Bassendean where we checked out the waterside beside the park. It was a really nice to be out in the fresh air and watch the calm water.”

Joyce Merritt

Relationships

Uniting WA engages with First Peoples in a manner that leads to positive relationships and greater understanding. Relationships are formed in a way that is mutually beneficial. We believe that building relationships between First Nations people and other Australians is fundamental to community growth. We build on trust and respect.

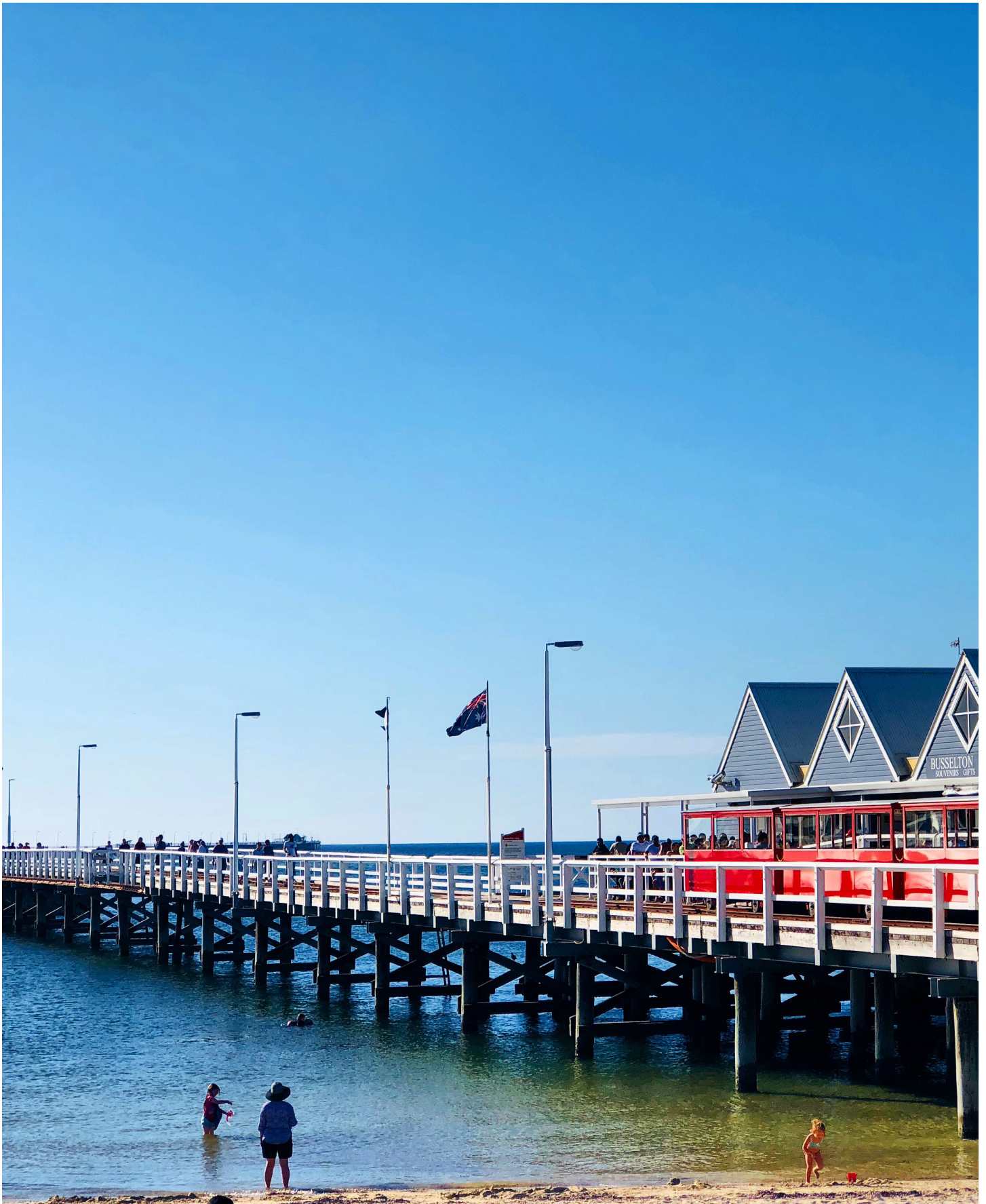
We build relationships by yarning together; celebrating, raising awareness, and promoting healing; and purposefully embracing, strengthening and maintaining partnerships with Aboriginal Community-controlled Organisations (ACCOs), First Nations communities and people.

Initiative 7. Yarning together

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Develop a Better Together SharePoint site (or other suitable platform) to serve as a forum for sharing information, external community events, and learning opportunities. This hub will also facilitate communication of progress and celebrate achievements, ensuring ongoing engagement and visibility of First Nations initiatives.	Ongoing	Marketing and Communications	Enhanced transparency, communication, and celebration of achievements and learnings related to the First Nations strategy. Team members attend cultural events to foster greater understanding and engagement.
Create innovative ways of sharing learnings from the Better Together Strategy (e.g. Uniting WA desktop backgrounds etc.).	Ongoing		Increased team awareness of new ways to provide quality services.
Senior Managers actively support the successful implementation of the Better Together Strategy.	Ongoing	Senior Managers	Our services to First Nations peoples will be enhanced.
Actively invite other community organisations to participate in Uniting WA's First Nations strategy events, fostering collaboration and strengthening community ties.	Complete within 2025-2028	Service Pathway Senior Managers	Strengthened community connections, fostering partnerships that contribute to shared goals.
Create an external First People Reference Group, known as the Wisdom Circle, to provide cultural advice and guidance.	Complete within 2025	First Nations Cultural Advisor	Cultural guidance and advice will inform and shape Uniting WA's activities, ensuring they are aligned with First Nations perspectives and values.

Initiative 8. Building networks

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Maintain active membership and engagement with Reconciliation WA and the National Uniting First People's network.	Ongoing	First Nations Cultural Advisor	Uniting WA consistently participates in network events and activities, fostering a culture of continuous learning and engagement.
Build relationships with ACCOs which allow for the sharing of experiences, knowledge, and information - to build capacity and learn new ways of working.	Complete within 2025-2028		Enhanced capacity within Uniting WA and partner ACCOs to deliver culturally informed and effective services to First Nations communities.



An image which shows the beauty of the sky (Worl) and the ocean (Maambakoort) at the Busselton Jetty.

“Busselton Jetty is an iconic spot on the journey around South West WA. The blues all lined up beautifully on a clear day.”

Smriti Yadav

Measuring success

Transparency and accountability are central to enacting meaningful, lasting change. We will monitor and report on our progress so that we can celebrate our achievements, acknowledge challenges and identify opportunities to improve throughout the life of the **Better Together First Nations Strategy 2025-2028**.

Initiative 9. Enable, monitor and measure success

DELIVERABLE	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBILITY	OUTCOME
Identify and allocate appropriate resources for the implementation of the Better Together Strategy as part of annual budgetary processes and planning.	Complete within 2025 Financial year.	Chief Financial Officer; Senior Managers Cultural Advisor	The Better Together Strategy is adequately funded to produce quality outcomes.
Utilise systems (e.g., Microsoft Planner) that enable us to track, measure and report on our progress toward our initiatives and deliverables throughout the life of the Strategy.	2025-2028	All Working Groups	Utilise a monitoring tool to measure progress and identify challenges.
Include the First Nations Strategy as a standing agenda item at senior management meetings.	2025-2028	Executive Team members / General Managers	Strategy accountability is monitored and achievement of outcomes is clearly identifiable.
Report to the Uniting WA Board on a biannual basis to provide progress updates, including achievements to-date and any challenges.	2025-2028	First Nations Cultural Advisor	
Include an update in the Uniting WA Annual Report.	2025-2028	Cultural Advisor; Communications	

PRIORITY REFORM ONE

Formal partnerships and shared decision making

“In order to effect real change, governments must work collaboratively and in genuine, formal partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples because they are the essential agents of change.”

Engagement survey participant
from the Northern Territory

Outcome: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are empowered to share decision-making authority with governments to accelerate policy and place-based progress on Closing the Gap through formal partnership arrangements.

Target: There will be formal partnership arrangements to support Closing the Gap in place between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and governments in place in each state and territory enshrining agreed joint decision-making roles and responsibilities and where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have chosen their own representatives.

Stronger partnership elements

- Partnerships are accountable and representative.
- Formal agreements are in place.
- Decision-making is shared between government and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Governments will:

- Acknowledge the shared decision-making structures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have already developed. Actions under this Priority Reform are not intended to replace these arrangements but rather build on these successes.
- Commit to establishing policy and place-based partnerships to respond to local priorities.
- Review existing partnership arrangements to assess how they meet the partnership elements by:
 - » Undertaking a stocktake of existing partnership arrangements
 - » Reviewing and strengthening existing partnerships
 - » Reporting on the number of partnerships, changes made to existing partnerships, and which strong partnership elements are met and unmet for all partnerships.
- Include the outcomes of the review in annual reports.

The partnership will:

- Establish a joined-up approach between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives in five policy priority areas. These should focus on identifying opportunities to work more effectively across governments, reduce gaps and duplication, and improve outcomes.

The first priority areas are:

- Justice (adult and youth incarceration)
- Social and emotional wellbeing (mental health)
- Housing
- Early childhood care and development
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.
- Develop six new place-based partnerships in areas to be agreed by Joint Council.

PRIORITY REFORM TWO

Building the community-controlled sector

“A community-controlled organisation implicitly recognises the strength, the expertise and the right to self-determination by Indigenous communities”

Engagement participant at New South Wales meeting

Outcome: Building the community-controlled sector: There is a strong and sustainable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sector delivering high quality services to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the country.

Target: Increase the amount of government funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and services going through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisations.

Strong community-controlled sector elements

- Sustained capacity building and investment.
- Dedicated and identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.
- Community-controlled organisations are supported by a Peak Body, which has strong governance and policy development and influencing capacity.
- Community-controlled organisations have a dedicated, reliable and consistent funding model designed to suit the types of services required by communities.

Governments will:

- Commit to building strong Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled sectors and organisations in line with the strong sector elements.
- Include in annual reports information on action taken to strengthen the community-controlled sector.
- Implement measures to increase the proportion of services delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.

The partnership will:

- Recognise that building strong community-controlled sectors to deliver Closing the Gap services and programs requires national effort and joined up delivery against all sector elements in agreed priority areas.
- Identify sectors for joint national strengthening effort every three years through Sector Strengthening Plans. The initial Sector Strengthening Plans will focus on:
 - » Early childhood care and development
 - » Housing
 - » Health
 - » Disability.
- Develop Sector Strengthening Plans in line with the strong community-controlled sector elements and have the following four streams:
 - » Workforce
 - » Capital infrastructure
 - » Service provision
 - » Governance.

PRIORITY REFORM THREE

Transforming government organisations

“To be effective, mainstream organisations need to spend time understanding what is happening in our communities and need to recognise and understand the skills that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people hold.”

Engagement participant at Coalition of Peaks membership meeting in the Torres Strait

Outcome: Improving mainstream institutions: Governments, their organisations and their institutions are accountable for Closing the Gap and are culturally safe and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, including through the services they fund.

Target: Decrease in the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have experiences of racism.

Transformation elements

- Governments will:
 - » Identify and eliminate racism
 - » Embed and practice meaningful cultural safety
 - » Deliver services in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, communities and people
 - » Increase accountability through transparent funding allocations
 - » Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
 - » Improve engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Governments will:

- Challenge unconscious biases that result in decisions based on stereotypes.
- Share and publish their approaches to engagement approaches, consistent with the transformation elements.
- Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representatives before, during, and after emergencies.
- Include in their annual report's information on implementation of the transformation elements.
- Identify, develop or strengthen an independent mechanism, or mechanisms, that will support, monitor, and report on the transformation of mainstream agencies and institutions. The mechanism, or mechanisms, will:
 - » Support mainstream agencies and institutions to embed transformation elements, and monitoring their progress
 - » Be recognisable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and be culturally safe
 - » Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to listen and to respond to concerns about mainstream institutions and agencies
 - » Report publicly on the transformation of mainstream agencies and institutions, including progress, barriers and solutions.

“Collect, analyse, use our own data to meet our own needs. It’s our information and we should use it for our own purposes as decided by us.”

Survey participant from New South Wales

PRIORITY REFORM FOUR

Shared access to data and information at a regional level

Outcome: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to, and the capability to use, locally relevant data and information to set and monitor the implementation of efforts to close the gap, their priorities and drive their own development.

Target: Increase the number of regional data projects to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to make decisions about Closing the Gap and their development.

Data and information sharing elements

- Partnerships are in place to guide the improved collection, access, management and use of data to inform shared decision-making.
- Governments provide communities and organisations with access to the same data and information they use to make decisions.
- Governments collect, handle and report data at sufficient levels of disaggregation, and in an accessible and timely way.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations are supported by governments to build capability and expertise in collecting, using and interpreting data in a meaningful way.

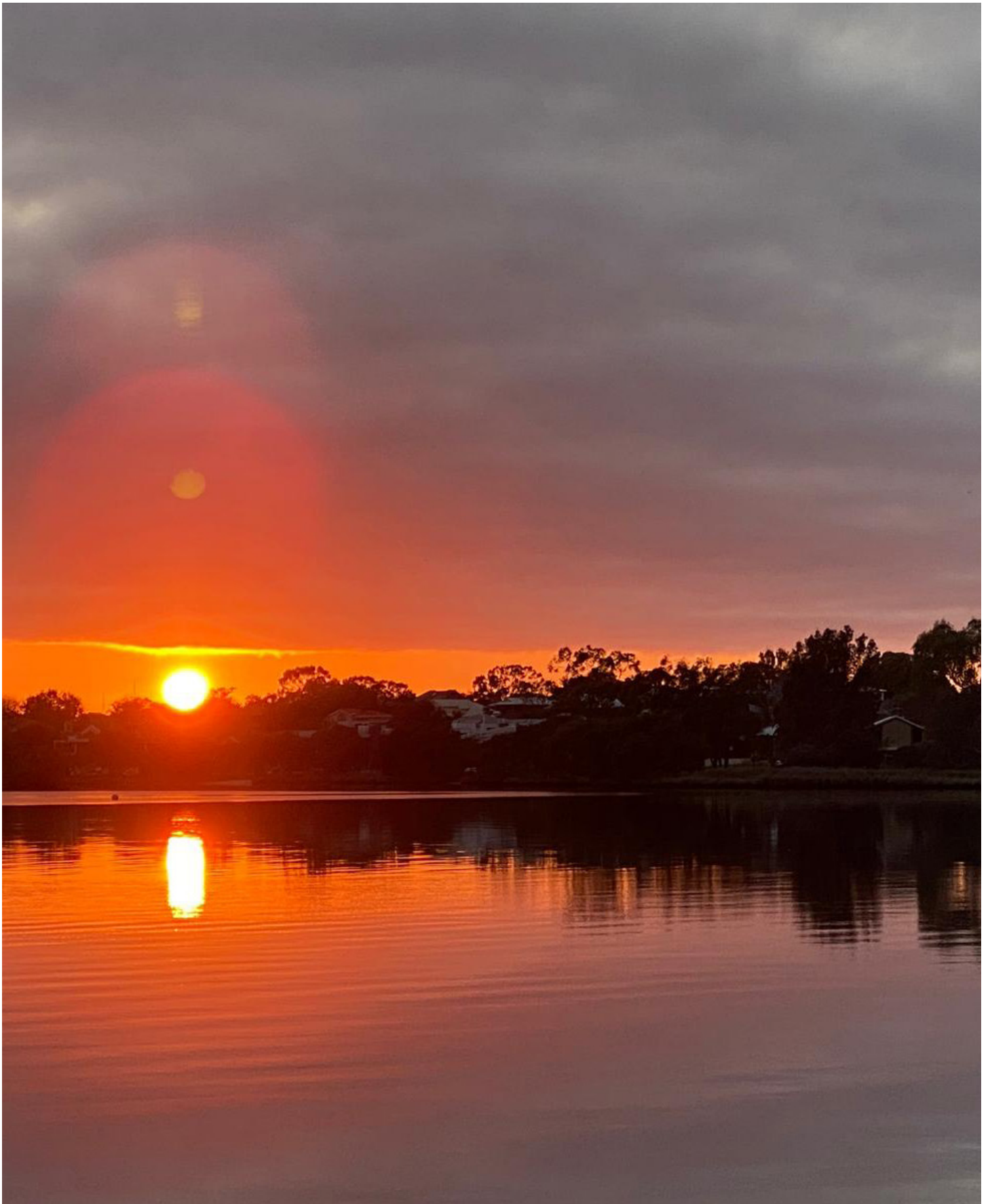
Governments will:

- Share available, disaggregated regional data and information with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities on Closing the Gap, subject to meeting privacy requirements.
- Establish partnerships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and government agencies to improve collection, access, management and use of data, including identifying improvements to existing data collection and management.
- Make data more transparent by telling Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people what data they have and how it can be accessed.
- Build capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to collect and use data.

The partnership will:

- Establish data projects in up to six locations across Australia to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to access and use location specific data on the Closing the Gap outcome areas.
- Data projects will:
 - » Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to analyse and use regional specific data to help drive their own development and discussions with governments on Closing the Gap
 - » Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to collect and access other data which they consider important
 - » Be covered by localised agreements, consistent with Priority Reform One, between the governments and participating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations in the region.

The parties to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which Australians live and work, and pay respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.




A sunset (Ngangk Wirdiny) over the Swan River (Derbal Yerrigan), which has been central to the culture and heritage of the Whadjuk Noongar people for over 40,000 years.

“I go to the Swan River most evenings to watch the sun go down. It allows me to switch off from the busyness around me and connect to myself and this beautiful country I get to call home.”

Lisa Ross

National First Nations significant events observed by Uniting WA

	Day of Mourning and/or Survival Day	26 January
	National Apology day	13 February
	Close The Gap Day	Third Thursday in March
	Sorry Day	26 May
	Reconciliation Week	27 May - 3 June
	Mabo Day	3 June
	NAIDOC Week	First Full Week of July
	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Day	4 August
	International Day of the Worlds Indigenous Peoples	9 August
	Indigenous Literacy Day	5 September
	Anniversary of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	13 September
	Universal Declaration of Human Rights	10 December



An image of a Magpie (Koolbardi), Yongka (Kangaroos) and Grass trees (Balga) which only grow in Noongar country.

“A magpie on a fence at Stilt Park in Joondalup; a lucky photo that was captured while walking and enjoying the view of some kangaroos that love to munch on the parks’ lawn most evenings.”

Michael Harris

About Uniting WA

Uniting WA (Uniting) is a community services organisation of the Uniting Church Western Australia, which touches the lives of thousands of WA families and individuals each year. At Uniting, we exist to inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice. We work to address the causes of vulnerability and disadvantage, and we stand for a just society where individuals and communities are valued and connected.

Uniting is part of the national network of UnitingCare Australia agencies that provide community services to over two million Australians each year. While we offer services throughout Western Australia, most services we provide are located in metropolitan Perth and the Great Southern, based on Noongar Country.

Uniting is proud to deliver a range of holistic, person-centred programs to enable Western Australian people and communities to belong and thrive. As an organisation, we celebrate diversity and welcome all people regardless of ethnicity, faith, age, ability, culture, language, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Our aim is to build relationships that empower people to better connect with the people and places around them. Our aspiration is to educate ourselves on First Nations cultures, engage meaningfully with and enable increased positive outcomes for our First Nations peoples.

At Uniting WA, we deliver:

- Services to support people experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Specialised services for children and young people in Out of Home Care
- Programs for families at risk of breakdown
- Mental health services
- Disability services (NDIS)
- Disability Advocacy
- Financial Wellbeing Services including financial counselling and emergency relief
- Housing as a registered Community Housing Provider
- Services to support men to reintegrate into community following periods of incarceration.

Our team of more than 400 team members and 200 volunteers, are proud to deliver a range of services that have a lasting impact on thousands of West Australians every year.



Wave Rock (Kattar Kittj) is an icon in Noongar country.

“Wave Rock is a place that I had wanted to visit since arriving in Australia. In 2021 I visited for the first time, 13 years after being in Australia.”

Danni Evans

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Uniting