

Media, Entertainment and Arts Alliance

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

July 2021–July 2022



MEAA Acknowledgement of Country

The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance acknowledges the traditional custodians and cultures of the lands and seas on which we live and work. We pay our respects to all First Nations Peoples, Elders and Ancestors. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and stand in solidarity towards a shared future.

About the artwork

'Pathway to the Stars'

Artist : Riki Salam, We are 27 Creative.

Darkness is illuminated, our journey begins.

Creation Spirit shifts and moves bringing Country to life. Through knowledge and understanding – Culture is born.

We are guided across all country, we are one with this land. Land, Sea and Sky we are connected, Celebrations unite us all.

The Artwork; 'Pathway to the Stars', depicts the creation of both Country and Culture forming and coming together under the night sky. Celebrating and honouring the storytellers who have achieved much, each representing their Country, their Culture, their Communities and their Families. Each excelling in their chosen professions, creating their own pathways to reach for the stars.

Riki created the artwork by painting ink on paper which was then digitised and further developed on the computer. Riki's work is influenced from growing up in Cairns, Far North Queensland and the traditional stories from that area.

Cover Artwork: Eileen Napaltjarri
'Untitled' 2008



Message from the Federal President

MEAA is the largest and most established union and industry advocate for Australia's creative professionals.

Our members tell stories and bring them to life – through performance and in the media.

An indispensable part of our story telling is the history and experience of First Nations people. As we know, it is a history marked largely by dispossession and ignorance of their lived experience.

MEAA openly acknowledges these facts.

Acknowledgement of Australia's First Nations history is a valuable part of the reconciliation process. It is equally important – if not more so – that the union act on its principles and change the way it operates to represent and project the undeniably immense talents of First Nations members and others in the artistic and media communities.

In recent times, MEAA has established an Indigenous Caucus (ICMEAA), improved First Nations representation on its key Section Committees and assisted with the launch of the Aboriginal Press Club. We are also now fortunate to have Elaine Crombie and Nathalie McLean employed as First Nations First Peoples Organisers.

Although these are critical steps, to properly acknowledge history and open ourselves up to overdue change, the union's principal governing body, Federal Council committed to the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

This RAP represents both a solidification of our efforts to date and critically, the new steps we will take to engage and represent our First Nations members. These steps include education of union staff, changes to union protocols and practices in how we do business and measuring the progress we make.

The work effort in this RAP will be steered by a RAP Working Group. This group will ensure that we hit our marks and stay on song.

This will be MEAA's first RAP. It will last for 12 months, at which time we will produce a more detailed RAP with extended commitments in our areas of operation and community engagement.

I commend this RAP to you all. It is a concrete step towards MEAA's role as a partner in reconciliation.

Simon Collins
MEAA President



Our business

MEAA is the largest and most established union and industry advocate for Australia’s creative professionals.

MEAA was registered in May 1992 as the Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance (MEAA). MEAA was formed from the merger of three organisations: the Australian Journalists Association, Actors Equity of Australia, and the Australian Theatrical & Amusement Employees Association. The history of these unions goes back to the early days of the twentieth century. In 2006, a fourth section was created for musicians, with the incorporation of the Symphony Orchestra Musicians Association (SOMA).

MEAA is evolving to meet the changing needs of the creative professionals of Australia.

Our 15,000-plus members include people working in TV, radio, theatre & film, entertainment venues, recreation grounds, journalists, actors, dancers, sportspeople, cartoonists, photographers, orchestral and opera performers as well as people working in public relations, advertising, book publishing and website production – everyone who works in the industries that inform or entertain.

MEAA has five offices and sixty employees – in Sydney (Gadigal), Melbourne (Wurundjeri), Brisbane (Turrbal), Adelaide (Kurna Tarntanya) and Perth (Whadjuk).

Our RAP

MEAA’s peak body, Federal Council, resolved at meetings in 2018 and 2020 that the union should create a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

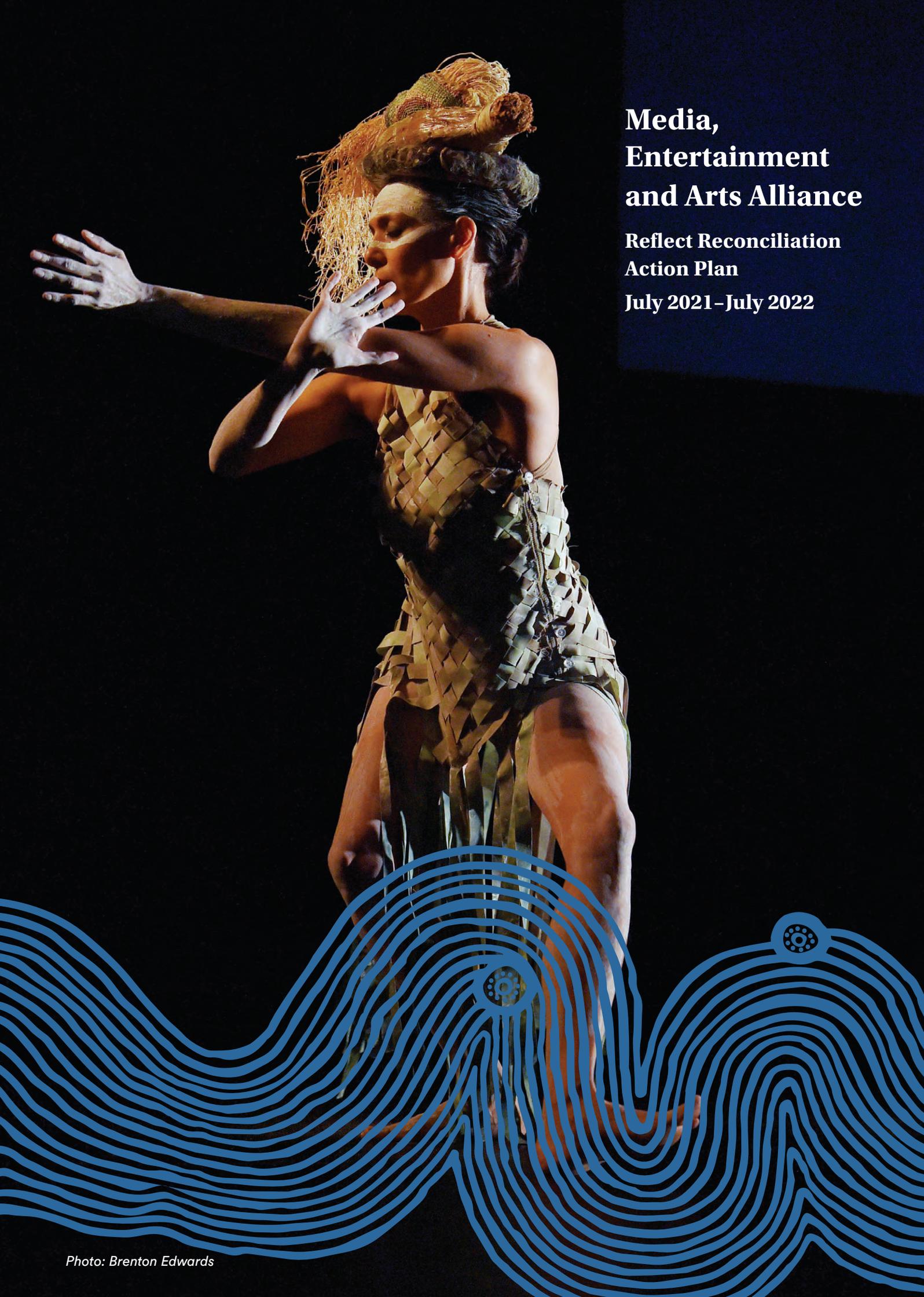
MEAA has developed a RAP because it wants to improve engagement with First Australian members and communities. We seek to demonstrate that the union is dedicated to meaningful and durable engagement with First Australians and will work to advance and respect their interests.

MEAA has implemented protocols to acknowledge ownership of the land in which we undertake our work and is actively building First Australians’ representation on its internal committees.

This RAP sets tangible goals and obliges the union to think about the way it carries out its work and how we can make changes to further respect the reconciliation process and extend our appeal to First Australians working in the four areas of work we represent.

The union’s RAP Champion – the key employee to drive RAP implementation and the people tasked with individual RAP objectives, will be the MEAA Chief Executive, Paul Murphy. Paul and other MEAA officers will work with the RAP Working Group to implement the objectives of this RAP.





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and Arts Alliance**

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Relationships

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence.	October 2021	Section Directors, Regional Directors
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.		Director Legal and Policy
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW) – 27 May to 3 June.	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2022	Director Operations
	RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May to 3 June 2022	RWG members
	Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.		Chief Executive, Regional Directors
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff.	July 2021	MEAA President, Board, Chief Executive
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with in our reconciliation efforts.	August 2021	Chief Executive, Section and Regional Directors
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations to approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation exercise.	August 2021	MEAA Board, Chief Executive
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	October 2021	Directors: Operations, Finance, Legal and Policy
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.		

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	Develop a strategy for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	October 2021	Director, Legal and Policy
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.		Director Operations
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational areas.	August 2021	Chief Executive, Division Directors, MEAA Board
	Increase MEAA employees' understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	September 2021	Chief Executive, Director Operations, Regional Directors
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	July 2021	Chief Executive, Director Operations
	Promote NAIDOC Week external events in areas where MEAA has offices.	July 2021	Chief Executive, Director Operations, Regional Directors
	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.		RWG members

Lillian Crombie accepting her Equity Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019.
Photo: Brenton Edwards



Opportunities

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment within our organisation.	November 2021	Directors: Operations, Finance and Legal and Policy
	Assess current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	October 2021	Directors: Operations, Finance and Legal and Policy
	Advertise positions in forums that have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement.	From July 2021	
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	August 2021	Directors: Operations, Finance and Legal and Policy
	Work with MEAA Finance and branches to investigate Supply Nation membership.	August 2021	Directors: Finance, Legal and Policy
10. Investigate changes to MEAA's operations to foster greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participation in representative MEAA bodies	Audit current national committees and Federal Council to establish density of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander membership	September 2021	
	Seek MEAA Board input into measures to improve First Australians' representation at all levels	November 2021	Director, Legal and Policy
	Consult with union sections to determine means of increasing participation in section committees and sub-committees	September 2021	



MEAA Indigenous members and community representatives
(from left) Nathalie McLean, Wiradjuri Cultural
Representative Donna Ingram, Elaine Crombie, Senator
Patrick Dodson, Wayne Blair, Ursula Yovich at the MEAA
Federal Council meeting in Sydney in February 2020.
Photo: Mark Phillips/MEAA



Miranda Tapsell and Aaron McGrath with the Equity Ensemble Award
they accepted on behalf of the cast of Redfern Now in 2013.
Photo: Adam Hollingworth/Hired Gun Photography

Rae Johnston, the first Indigenous Australian to be elected to MEAA's
National Media Section Committee, on the set of NITV News.



Governance

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Form a RWG to govern RAP implementation.		Chief Executive
	Draft Terms of Reference for the RWG.	July 2021	Director, Legal and Policy
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.		Chief Executive
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2021	Chief Executive, Directors: Operations, Finance and Legal and Policy
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2021	MEAA President, Chief Executive
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2021	Directors: Operations, Finance and Legal and Policy
13. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	May 2022	Director Legal and Policy
14. Continue our reconciliation commitment by developing our next RAP.	Register with Reconciliation Australia to develop MEAA's next RAP.	February 2022	MEAA Board, Chief Executive, Director Legal and Policy



Members of ICMEAA, the MEAA Indigenous Committee,
from left: Shareena Clanton, Ben Graetz, Jacqueline
Marranya, Tessa Rose, Sean Kerinauia and Elaine Crombie.



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