

2021 - 2022 Reconciliation Action Plan Report Card

A word from our Co-Chairs

Russel Taylor AM Board Director

Georgie Harman CEO

As the end of our second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) nears, it's important to reflect on where we've been, and where we're going.

Our RAP has been a powerful tool in many ways.

Our RAP empowers us to look forward. Where can we go next? What are the steps we can take? Where do we need to be more bold and courageous?

Our RAP also encourages us to look back. How far have we come in contributing to reconciliation? What are the steps that got us to where we are now?

The most powerful element of our RAP is that it inspires us to look inward. Where can we be doing better? What and who have helped us find our way?

While our first Innovate RAP provided us with ambition, our second Innovate RAP has seen us grow in confidence and start to embed elements of the RAP in the core of our culture.

Our approach is underpinned by respect – by walking together in friendship – and we have learnt so much over the last four years from First Nations peoples, communities and organisations.

We engaged the Burbangana Group to give us an independent and clearer understanding of ourselves and our readiness and capabilities: of how culturally safe and strengths-based our systems and policies are, and what we need to do to take the next steps.

While it was undertaken outside of our RAP, our place-based Be You

Pilbara and Kimberley project – and the evaluation that followed – has provided us with many learnings that we have been able to apply to our work, and our approach more broadly.

We have also learnt much by examining the systems and policies that sit behind many of our day-to-day operations. For example we reviewed our procurement systems, including our First Nations Procurement Strategy. In this case, a system that was already working well, which we were able to strengthen further, and work towards even better outcomes moving forward.

As our second Innovate RAP comes to a close, it is uplifting to see the many actions we have taken. There have been some big projects, and some small actions that have occurred

without as much recognition. They are all important, and they have all contributed to our reconciliation efforts and built the foundations from which we'll take our next steps.

We thank the Beyond Blue RAP Working Group – a thoughtful and committed group of community representatives and Beyond Blue employees – who drive our efforts.

Relationships

- Maintained and strengthened existing relationships with First Nations organisations, cultural consultants and community members.
- Invited First Nations community members to take up positions on a number of steering bodies – including the Way Back Support Service Advisory Group, the Enabling 2020 Steering Committee, and the competitive dialogue process for the Beyond Blue Support Service tender – to ensure that the voices and perspectives of First Nations peoples help to drive the design and development of our products and services and inform our advocacy priorities.
- Increased staff engagement in National Reconciliation Week by extending it across a whole month and sharing information, learning opportunities, (virtual) external events and asking all staff to commit to taking action, in line with the theme of 'More than a word: Reconciliation takes action.'
- Used our social media channels to promote reconciliation and an end to racism, with messages throughout the year, including days of significance.

Respect

- Completed the Be You Pilbara and Kimberley project. While this project was not undertaken as part of our RAP, we have aspired to embed our learnings from the project into other projects and areas of the organisation to strengthen our work towards reconciliation.
- Recognised and commemorated a number of days of significance including National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, National Close the Gap Day, the Anniversary of the National Apology, National Sorry Day and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day. Each day representing an opportunity to engage staff, build awareness and renew our commitment to reconciliation.
- Used our platforms to share strengths-based First Nations stories, including through season two of the Beyond Blue Not Alone podcast, which featured the stories of proud Barkindji woman Shantelle and a yarn with Dr Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr-Baumann.
- Came together virtually to connect with and learn from guest speakers, including Boon Wurrung Foundation Director Dave Johnston.
- Increased staff knowledge on the purpose and significance of cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. Developed new support tools to encourage and empower staff at all levels to feel confident in their understanding and delivery when providing an Acknowledgement of Country.
- Partnered with First Nations researchers, as part of our Research Strategy, to progress First Nations-led research that will advance reconciliation and enhance social and emotional wellbeing.

Opportunities

- Engaged the Burbangana Group to undertake a comprehensive review of the systems and policies in place at Beyond Blue to ensure they are culturally safe and strengths based, as well as providing insight into any areas for development. The recommendations that we will enact through this work are designed to strengthen employee recruitment, retention and cultural safety across the organisation.
- Continued to add our voice to advocacy efforts, including our support of the Uluru Statement from the Heart, greater funding for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, Indigenous Voice to Parliament, and action towards suicide prevention targets.
- Continued to review the implementation of our First Nations Procurement Strategy, introducing new measures to increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.
- Ensured we continue to track our expenditure with First Nations businesses, including through our Supply Nation membership, ensuring a diverse range of services were procured to strengthen our work across a number of areas.
- Maintained our active membership of the Close the Gap Campaign Steering Committee, along with an annual donation and support for campaign initiatives, including support for the Close the Gap report launch and associated activities.

What's next?

- Our second Innovate RAP concludes in 2022, and over the coming months we have a few important deliverables to work on to finalise all of the actions contain within it.
- Planning is underway for our next RAP. An important part of that preparation is ensuring our systems and policies are a sufficient foundation from which to take our next steps.
- Our commitment to reconciliation is bigger than just our RAP, and while the planning and development of our next RAP is a key priority, we will also continue to examine ways to culturally strengthen our work, to apply our learnings, and to build a space that encourages growth and contributes to reconciliation at a national level.



Beyond Blue acknowledges the Land on which our head office is based has deep connections to peoples and cultures across the Eastern Kulin Nation. As such we acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this area, the Wurundjeri Peoples, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. As an organisation with national reach, we extend our respect to all Elders and First Nations peoples across Australia.