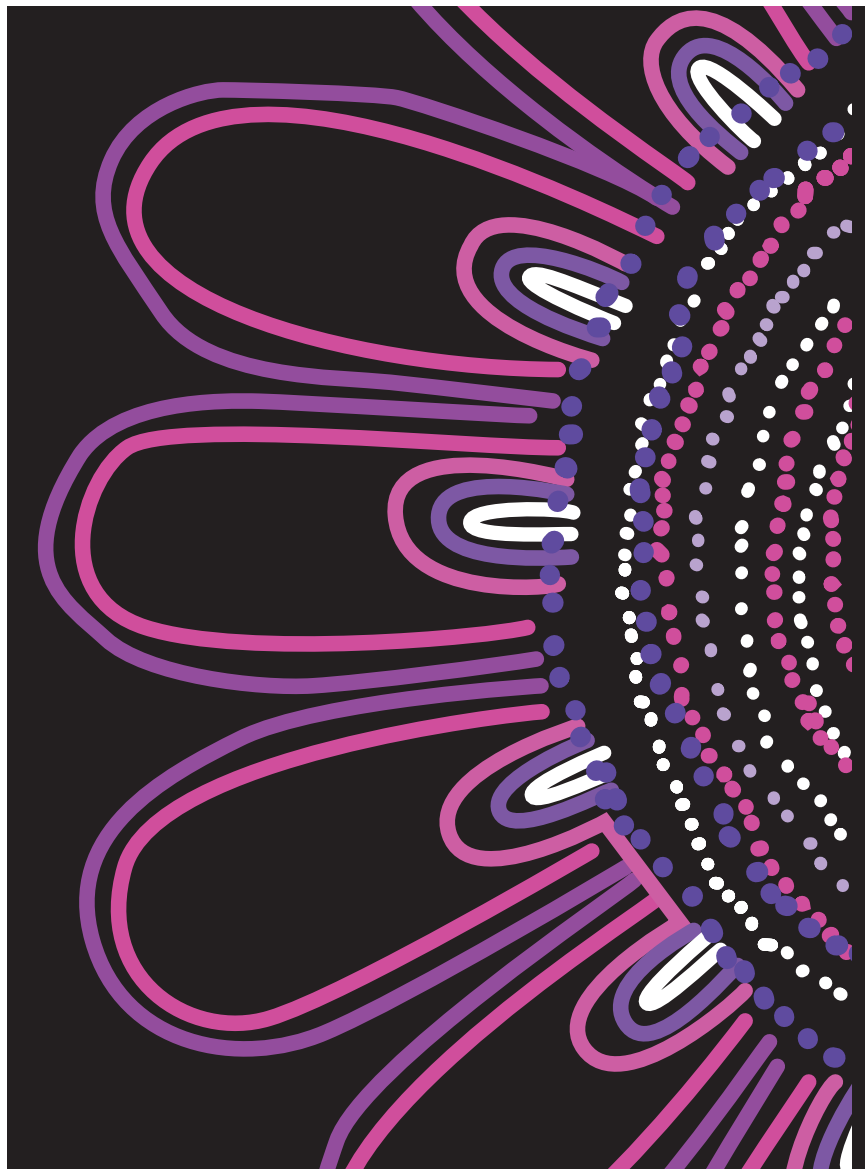


**ACT**  
Government  
Community Services

Funded by:

Department of Health and Ageing  
Community Services Directorate  
ACT Health

Artwork by Julianne Williams



## Toora Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–2016

This document has been prepared by the Reconciliation Action Plan Committee which consists of workers from each of the Toora services. We have consulted and sought feedback from our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group with regard to this document. We will continue to seek this support as we work with this RAP and in developing future RAPs.

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group in preparing this document.



### **Acknowledgement of traditional ownership**



**Toora Women Inc.** acknowledges that the Aboriginal people are the traditional custodians of this land that we live and work on. We would like to pay our respect to their elders past and present, to celebrate their ongoing contribution to Australian culture, and express gratitude for the privilege of being here.

## Our vision for reconciliation

**Toora Women Inc.'s** vision for reconciliation is of a nation that truly acknowledges and celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original custodians of this land. This is an Australia where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australian peoples have a shared understanding and mutual respect of each other's cultures and enjoy equal opportunities for participation in our community.

Through progressing reconciliation and healing we will improve the wellbeing of both the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and the wider Australian community. We embrace a comprehensive approach involving all Toora women and their multiple communities; Service users; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partners; Workers and Board, in our reconciliation journey.

## Our business

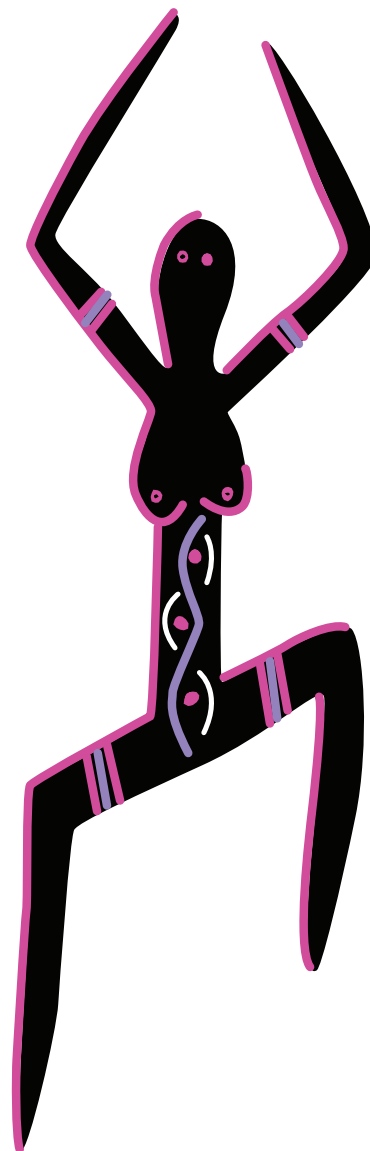
**Toora Women Inc.** is a non-profit, feminist organisation committed to the empowerment of women. We currently employ 35 women.

Toora has been providing accommodation and related services to women in the ACT since her establishment in 1983. We currently deliver 6 Programs across 14 locations as well as outreach services to ACT and interstate women and children. All Toora Women Inc. services are based on a model of recovery, respect and empowerment. This includes encouraging self-help and minimizing the effect of

institutionalisation and the harm associated with dependence. We are concerned with identifying and advocating against systemic issues that create the need for services such as ours.

Toora Women Inc.'s values include safety, respect, choice equality, kindness, courage, flexibility, accountability, humour, consistency, professionalism, feminism, diversity, recovery, self-determination, honesty, transparency and empowerment.

Toora operates within a framework of inclusiveness, cultural diversity and consensus, with clearly agreed upon accountability processes that include the women who use the services. Diversity is a documented and practised value at Toora and is reflected in our employment policies that ensure a mixture of identity and culture. We recognise the dominant culture in this country and are committed not to impose that on others. Our work practices encourage workers to challenge themselves to gain an increased self awareness of their own prejudice. Toora culture is underpinned by an awareness of the issues faced by minorities.



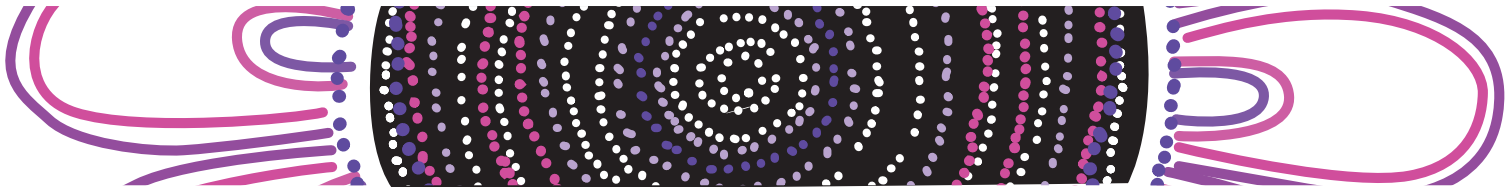
## Our reconciliation journey



**Toora Women Inc.** has been committed to reconciliation since opening in 1983. We have worked to develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations, build respect and identify and pursue opportunities for reconciliation.

Toora has worked to identify and articulate actions that we can undertake to contribute to reconciliation in a political forum, professionally and personally. We are committed to engaging with issues in a meaningful way.

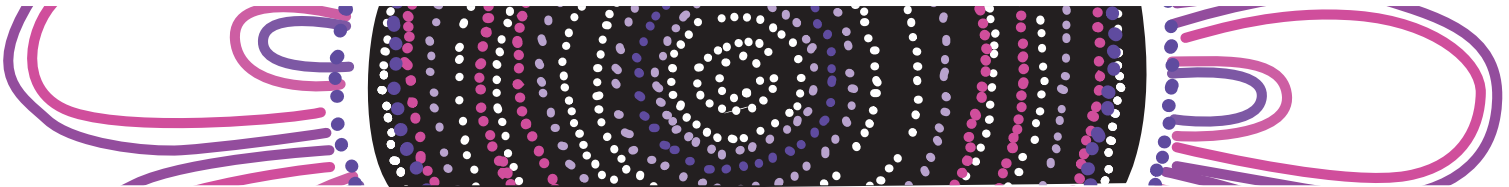
Toora workers have had access to opportunities to engage with reconciliation through increasing their knowledge and building their understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander history, culture and contemporary issues and by participating and contributing to events that foster reconciliation.

This, our first RAP, will ensure that reconciliation remains at the forefront of Toora Women Inc. culture and that workers commitment to reconciliation is recorded in a structured way.

We believe it is important to acknowledge our achievements and progress, and we recognise we have a way to go. We are committed to this process. This RAP builds on Toora achievements and learnings, will work towards embedding the principles of reconciliation into organisational culture, and endeavours to advance our contribution to the reconciliation process.



## Relationships

**Toora Women Inc.** believes that building strong and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities will lead to real, meaningful and personal change towards reconciliation and this will benefit all Australians.

### Focus area

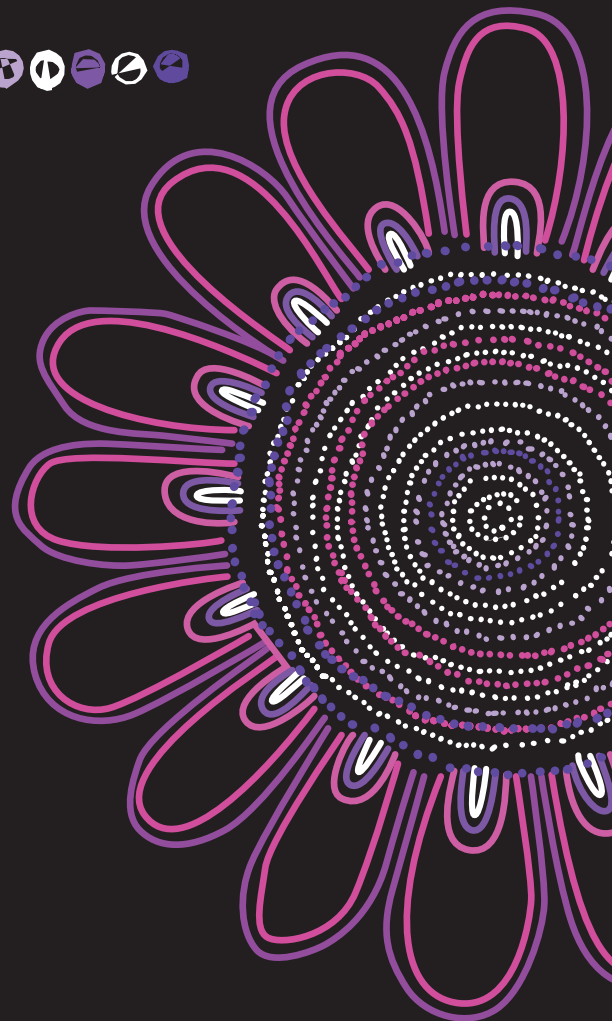
Support the development of strong relationships and partnership programs with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers, organisations, service users and communities.

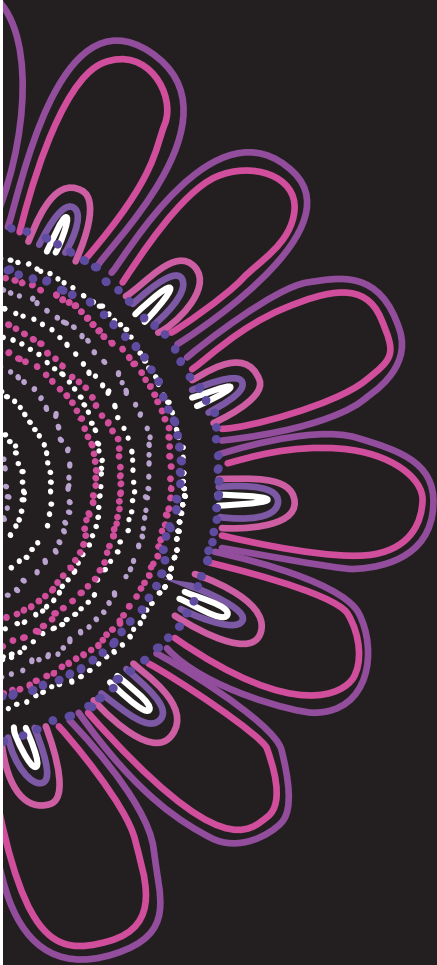
Action	Responsibility
<b>Develop relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities and Leaders to seek guidance on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, children and Communities.</b>	RAP Committee RAP Committee
<b>Participate in events, projects and celebrations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities.</b>	All Workers
<b>Learn from and extend existing partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations.</b>	Executive
<b>Build on our relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman service users with a view to improved outcomes.</b>	Coordinators/ Leadership
<b>Celebrate National Reconciliation week by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build relationships</b>	All Workers



Timeline	Measurable target
March 2014	<p>Create Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group to assist in developing our RAP.</p> <p>Six or more letters of introduction along with our RAP are sent to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, Traditional Owners, Elders and leaders encouraging collaboration and skills and knowledge sharing with a view to building mutually beneficial and meaningful relationships.</p>
December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	<p>Invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and communities to attend Toora Women's events.</p> <p>Accept invitations from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and encourage worker participation in at least two events per annum (NAIDOC, Sorry Day etc).</p>
December 2013	An organisation wide partnership is built with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Organisation and MOU developed.
December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	<p>Each service completes 1 standard on the ACTCOSS Cultural Awareness Self Assessment Tool per quarter and outcomes are reported to the RAP Committee.</p> <p>Processes for receiving feedback and measuring outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman are reviewed. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status is included on feedback forms and ask for specific information on how we can improve access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander woman service users.</p>
27 May to 3 June 2013 and annually	Organise at least one internal event and attend events in community.





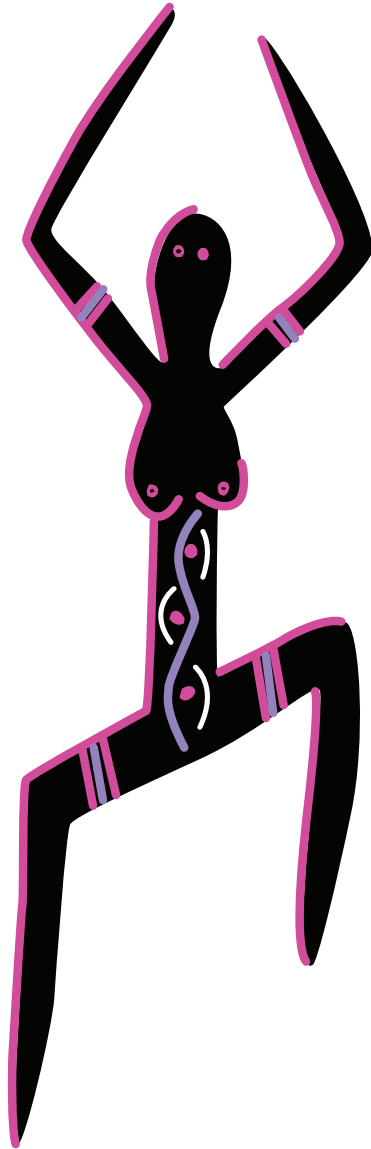


## Respect

**Toora Women Inc.** is committed to delivering quality services of social value and practical benefit. We believe that respect is based on understanding. Reconciliation requires a commitment to continually improve our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and contemporary issues. Toora Women Inc. demonstrate this commitment through action as reflected in our RAP. Respectful relationships and good communication are the foundations required for effective service delivery and ensuring we meet the needs of Toora Women Service Users and workers through culturally respectful and appropriate support.

### Focus area

Increase our understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and contemporary issues. This will include how the various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures interact with the cultures and current issues of the wider Australian community, acknowledging that there are many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. Reconciliation is a dynamic and continuous process.



### Action

**Acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the land.**

### Responsibility

All Workers

**Suggest during Toora Women Inc. review of Values statement inclusion of 'Reconciliation'.**

**Training opportunities about the history, cultures and current issues facing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are made available to all workers, acknowledging that new issues are always emerging.**

All

Workers and Board

Admin

Leadership



**Make our spaces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander friendly.**

All Workers

**Encourage participation in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander events with a view to fostering a culture within Toora of learning from and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.**

Leadership

Timeline	Measurable target
December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	<p>An Acknowledgement of Country statement is included in all publications, email signatures, Toora events and Toora meetings.</p> <p>A protocols document is developed, implemented and communicated to all workers to ensure that protocols regarding Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country ceremonies are understood.</p>
December 2014	If agreed through Toora process, add Reconciliation as stated value in Toora values statement in printed material and future plans of organisation.
December 2014	All workers and where possible Board members participate in and regularly update Cultural Awareness Training (undertaken as part of induction within the first 6 months of employment for new employees).
December 2014	Completion of the Share our Pride introductory web based training (on the Reconciliation Australia website), is a requirement as part of the worker induction program.
December 2013	Toora Women Inc. RAP is supplied and explained to all workers and included in the standard Induction Package for new employees.
December 2014	Training is undertaken by Leadership Group on hiring, inducting and supervising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.
December 2014	Include Aboriginal and Torres Strait materials and artworks displayed at each of Toora Women's services office space.
December 2014	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural events are acknowledged and attendance is recognised as worker training opportunities (supported and budgeted for).</p> <p>A calendar of events for our services to participate in is developed.</p>



## Opportunities

**Toora Women Inc.** believes that everyone who is part of the community has the right to contribute to, and share equally in, the benefits of the community's social, cultural and economic development. Our capacity to deliver quality services is underpinned by our knowledge of and relationship with the communities we serve. Our service delivery is more effective when women service users and workers are supported by a policy framework that embeds consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations as a matter of course.

### Focus area

Toora Women will identify specific opportunities, in terms of governance, employment and service delivery, to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users and workers expertise, knowledge and perspectives inform our service delivery and development, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users and workers are supported to achieve their potential.



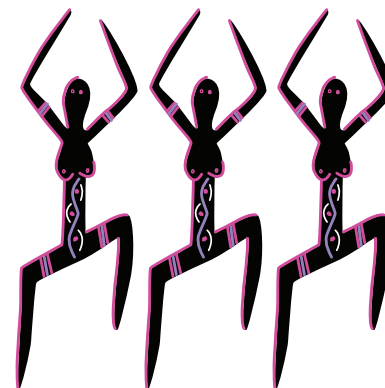
## Action

**Ensure Toora Women Inc. Services are accessible for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users and workers.**

**Actively recruit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.**



Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable target
Executive	December 2013 to December 2016	Identify opportunities for relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations and establish dialogue with a view to MOU's in the future.
Leadership	December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	Implement Feedback suggestions from service users regarding improving accessibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.
All workers		Identify opportunities that may exist for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users and workers to access Leadership workshops.
Executive, Board and Leadership	December 2014	Create mentoring relationships for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers that support and complement the existing supervisory relationships.
	December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	All external Toora job advertisements are circulated to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander networks and include an encouragement to apply.



## Tracking progress and reporting

**Toora Women Inc.** believes that everyone who is part of the community has the right to contribute to, and share equally in, the benefits of the community's social, cultural and economic development. Our capacity to deliver quality services is underpinned by our knowledge of and relationship with the communities we serve. Our service delivery is more effective when women service users and workers are supported by a policy framework that embeds consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations as a matter of course

### Focus area

Toora Women will identify specific opportunities, in terms of governance, employment and service delivery, to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users and workers expertise, knowledge and perspectives inform our service delivery and development, and that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users and workers are supported to achieve their potential.



### Action

**RAP Committee continues to meet regularly.**

**Report on RAP progress.**

**Make Toora Women Inc. RAP publicly available.**

**Data and feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women service users is collected and recorded.**



Responsibility	Timeline	Measurable target
RAP Committee	December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	RAP meets at least quarterly to have an overview of the implementation and tracking of the RAP.
Meeting Chairpersons	December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	RAP is a standing agenda item at team, Leadership, AF and Board meetings.
RAP Committee	December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	Toora Women RAP Report will be available on Toora & Reconciliation Australia website.  RAP Report is included in Toora Women Inc. Annual Report.
Leadership	December 2013 and ongoing to assess progress	Services 6 monthly and AGM Reports include numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander service users and feedback.



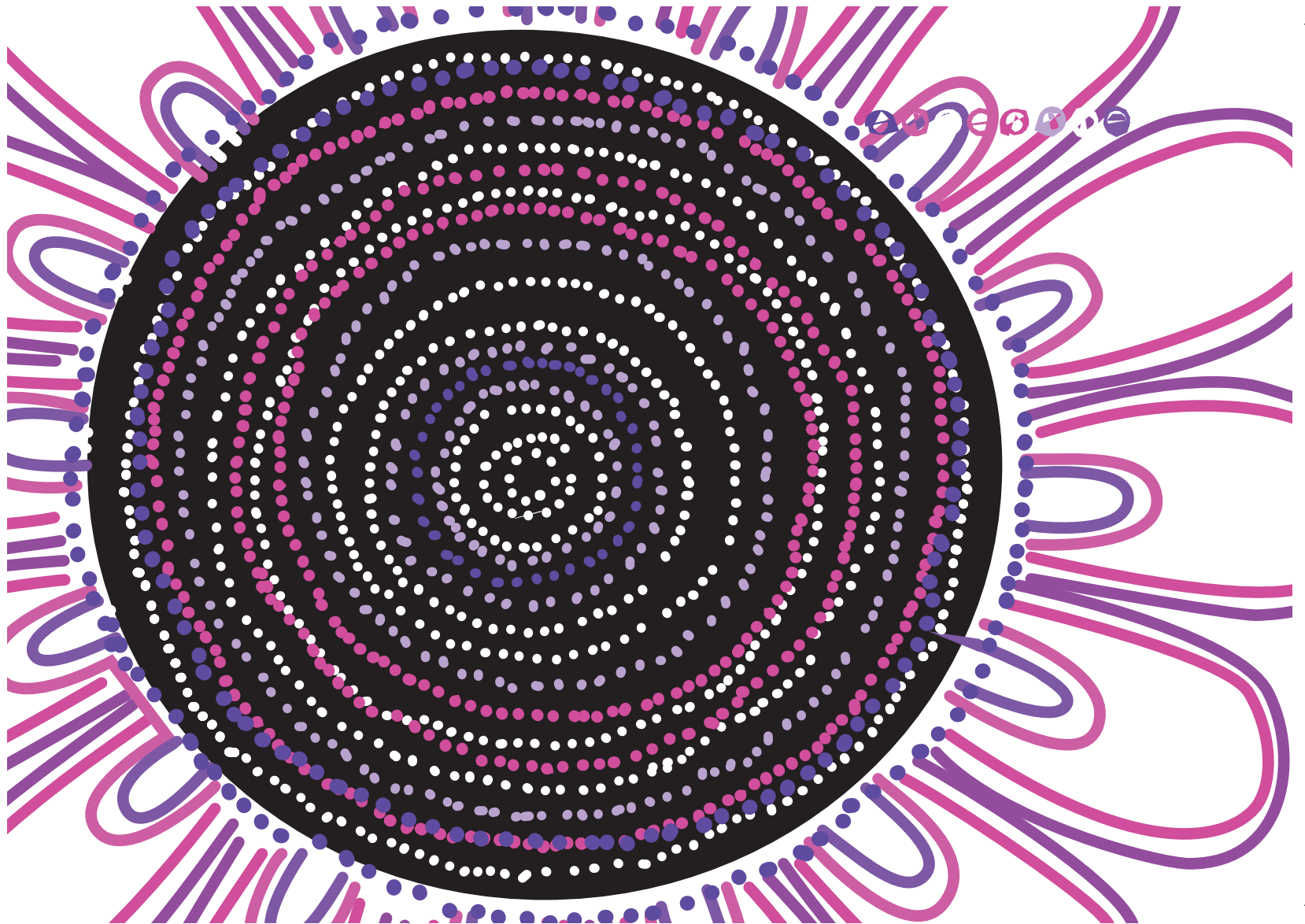


## RAP Contact

Phone (02) 6122 7000

Email [ea@toora.org.au](mailto:ea@toora.org.au)







**Toora Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–2016**

