Follow our journey

Reconciliation Action Plan

May 2026 — May 2028



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE

LAW INSTITUTE VICTORIA

innovate

On the cover



Spiritual Journey

2026 | Acrylic on canvas

© Fay O'Callaghan-Thorpe
Yorta Yorta, Kurtijar

Commissioned for the Law Institute of Victoria

As a survivor of the Stolen Generations, removed from my family at 13 months old, taken from my cultural roots and forced to adopt Catholic beliefs, I was forced to navigate an unknown world that taunted my resilience, damaged my sense of self but it never stole my spirit and that is how I have survived. My art showcases my story, and this has had therapeutic impacts on my healing journey and is a form of communication where words cannot speak enough volume.

The Law Institute of Victoria sits on the collective lands of the Kulin nation that is inclusive of Wurundjeri, Boonwurrung, Taungurung, Dja Dja Wurrung and Wathaurong. The Kulin nation is a meeting place of these five Traditional Owners, sharing cultural traditions, sharing in trade, holding ceremony that is immersed in a deep spiritual connection to this land that dates back over 40,000 years.

This connectedness has transcended into a modern-day sense where these First Nations groups and their allies are looking forwards to harmonise the division by forming connection, storytelling and sharing traditions including lore and law like the old ways.

"**Spiritual Journey**" captures the intention of this act of togetherness as it promotes inclusiveness where the central meeting place is open for First Nation people and their allies. **The sun** shares a universal understanding as the creator that gives life. Nurturing life is shown throughout the piece as it is continuousness. **Bunjil** (eagle) is always present as a spiritual guide, consciously directing us to spiritual health ensuring that we remain humble. **Waa** (crow) is always watching as a messenger to Bunjil when we stray from our path. The **native flora** illustrates the good intentions that First Nation Peoples and their allies value by sharing stories through trade to heal the past, take pride in the present and nurture the future.

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The Law Institute of Victoria (LIV) acknowledges the many Traditional Custodians of Country throughout our state and recognise their continuing connection to the lands, waters and communities. We pay our deep respects to First Peoples' cultures and to Elders past and present. We extend that acknowledgement to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We specifically acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our offices are located. We acknowledge that justice has been dealt and lore enforced on these lands for tens of thousands of years before British settlement.

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A statement from the LIV President & CEO

On behalf of the LIV, we are pleased to present our Innovate RAP for 2026–2028.



Tom Ballantyne

President



Adam Awty

Chief Executive

As the peak professional body for lawyers and those who work with them in Victoria representing more than 21,000 members, we recognise our responsibility to lead the profession in reconciliation.

We are committed to driving better outcomes for First Nations clients and creating a welcoming and inclusive culture for First Nations legal professionals. In making this commitment, we recognise First Nations people's fundamental right to self-determination.

This right underpins the importance of community-led solutions and of working in partnership and building relationships with First Nations and community-led organisations.

Our vision for reconciliation is founded on three pillars:

First, our legal system is fair and just for all. We will continue to advocate for legal and justice reforms to address the discrimination and injustices faced by First Nations peoples. We have long-standing advocacy positions to work to address laws that disproportionately discriminate against First Nations peoples, and we are committed to continuing this advocacy in this RAP.

Second, the legal profession recognises, respects and values First Nations cultures and lores. We are committed to building cultural capability in the legal profession to better provide for legal representation that is culturally informed, culturally safe and achieves better outcomes for First Nations clients. We have already begun this journey and will continue to commit through this RAP to supporting the implementation of cultural capability training, developed under the principles of self-determination.

Third, we actively encourage and promote inclusion of First Nations peoples in the legal profession. We are committed to creating a culture which supports First Nations lawyers to achieve their aspirations within the legal profession.

In this RAP, we will extend on our commitment to supporting members of Tarwirri with LIV membership and opening scholarships for First Nations graduates and lawyers for LIV professional development programs.

Our journey towards reconciliation formally began in 2012 with our first RAP (RAP 2012–13). It recognised the LIV's responsibility to lead reconciliation on behalf of the profession. In 2013, we committed to our second RAP (2013–2015). However, at the conclusion of our second RAP, our engagement with the RAP process was disrupted due changes in leadership within the organisation and the pandemic. In entering our third RAP, we recognise the critical need to re-commit to the formal reconciliation process.

In creating this RAP, we have reflected on our organisational strengths and tailored our RAP to harness our skills, resources, and influence to advance our vision for reconciliation through advocacy, building cultural capability within the profession, and creating an inclusive culture within the profession.

We thank everybody involved in creating this RAP, including LIV staff, members, and our external partners. We are looking forward to the next stage of our journey towards reconciliation.

A statement from the CEO of Reconciliation Australia



Karen Mundine

Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends the Law Institute of Victoria on the formal endorsement of its second Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.



Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. With more than 5.5 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. LIV continues to be part of a strong network of more than 3,000 corporate, government and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate – allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that LIV will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to LIV using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on relationships, respect and opportunities gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for LIV to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, LIV will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of LIV's future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

02

Our vision for reconciliation

...is threefold.

*Note that in this document we refer to First Nations peoples throughout to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.



First,

that our legal system is fair and just for all.

We recognise the continuing systemic injustices faced by First Nations peoples in their interactions with the legal and justice system. Many of our laws disproportionately negatively impact First Nations peoples. The LIV is committed in our vision for reconciliation to advocate for legal and justice reform to address the legislative and systemic injustices faced by First Nations peoples and to promote their right to self-determination.



Second,

that the legal profession recognises, respects and values First Nations peoples' cultures and lore.

For tens of thousands of years, First Nations lores governed all aspects of First Nations' people's lives. This continues today through the strength of culture and community. We recognise that the legal profession itself has had no systematic training to help address the systemic injustices that First Nations peoples face in interacting with the justice system. As the peak body for the legal profession in Victoria, we recognise that we are responsible for supporting lawyers to build cultural capability to ensure that legal services delivered to First Nations peoples are as culturally safe as possible within an inherently culturally unsafe system. The LIV is committed in our vision for reconciliation to supporting the development and delivery of a First Nations cultural capability framework for the legal profession in Victoria. The framework will be a foundational step to support further work across the sector to support legal representation that is culturally informed, culturally safe and ultimately achieves better outcomes for First Nations peoples.



Third,

to actively encourage and promote inclusion of First Nations peoples in the legal profession.

We recognise that the culture of the legal profession can be exclusionary for First Nations people and that they can encounter obstacles in finding pathways into and through the profession. The LIV is committed in our vision for reconciliation to support First Nations students and lawyers in achieving their aspirations within the legal profession. As part of this, the LIV has helped develop the Australian College of Applied Professions (ACAP) Practical Legal Training program to genuinely connect students with the legal profession, providing valuable networking, mentoring and career opportunities, and free Graduate LIV membership. Further, in recognising that the culture of the legal profession can be intimidating and exclusionary to First Nations peoples, the LIV offers an Accredited Specialisation First Nations Scholarship to enhance pathways for progression in the legal profession.



Our commitment to this RAP aligns with our values and our strategic priorities, and the actions outlined in our Innovate RAP 2026-2028 are embedded across the LIV business and championed by the Executive Leadership team and the LIV Board.

03

Our business

The LIV is Victoria's peak professional body for lawyers and those who work with them in the legal sector, representing more than 21,000 members. It is a not-for-profit charity registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission.

Our vision

Our vision is for an empowered community, a trusted legal profession and justice for all.

Our purpose

Our purpose is to connect the legal profession with the community it serves, advancing access to justice, supporting excellence in legal practice and ethics, and building a legal system that reflects the needs of all.

Our values

Integrity is how we are trusted.
Collaboration is how we build.
Adaptability is how we evolve.
Respect is how we connect.
Excellence is how we deliver.

Our staff

As of 31 March 2026, the LIV has 109 staff (FTE 96.4), and one employee who identifies as First Nations.





















Our operations

The LIV operates across the state of Victoria. Our office is located in Naarm, at 140 William Street, Melbourne. The 21,000 members of the LIV work in all areas of metropolitan Melbourne, rural and regional areas in Victoria, and some are based interstate and overseas. Consequently, our members conduct business on the lands of many First Nations peoples.

The LIV is a public company limited by guarantee. It was registered on 4 August 2014 as a not-for-profit charity (with an effective date for charity registration from 1 July 2013) with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).

The LIV is governed by a 12-person Board of Directors. Its directors' responsibilities are derived from the LIV Constitution, the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cth)* (Corporations Act), relevant common law principles, and a range of other legislative and regulatory regimes.

The LIV's business units provide advocacy on legislative reform on behalf of all Victorians, as well as ethics, practice support and training for legal professionals, and services and support for its members. The LIV has several policy sections, governed by committees.

One of these is the Reconciliation and Advancement Sub-Committee, which is a part of the Administrative Law & Human Rights Section and which reports to the Section's Executive Committee.

The Reconciliation and Advancement Sub-Committee includes First Nations and non-First Nations lawyers from a variety of backgrounds and organisations. The aims of the Sub-Committee are to work in partnership with the First Nations community to:

- raise awareness among non-First Nations legal professionals about issues of a legal nature that impact First Nations peoples and their shared histories, cultures and lores;
- comment on proposals and reviews of a legal nature that impact First Nations peoples;
- facilitate discussion about issues of a legal nature that affect First Nations peoples by organising forums and events;
- support increased participation of First Nations peoples in the legal profession; and
- develop policies and programs that aim to make justice more accessible to First Nations peoples and contribute to the reconciliation process.

Our sphere of influence

The LIV has a wide sphere of influence across its membership base and its practice area sections and committees, regional and suburban law associations, diverse law associations and large law firm members.

We also have partnerships and alliances with organisations and individuals across the legal sector in Victoria, across courts and tribunals, government, the regulator and other organisations servicing the legal sector.

- We have relationships with the legal assistance sector and First Nations legal services and organisations.
- We have strong relationships across Australia with law societies and Bar associations in states and territories.
- We have relationships with education providers, particularly law schools and practical legal training providers.
- We have a strong media profile and relationships with journalists and the media.

04

Our reconciliation journey

In 2012, the LIV demonstrated its commitment to reconciliation by launching its first RAP, after nearly two years of planning and consultation with the First Nations communities in Victoria and others across the legal sector.



At its foundation, the LIV's first RAP recognised the historical truth of the devastating impact of colonisation on First Nations peoples and the ongoing effect of Australian laws and policies which systemically discriminate against First Nations peoples.

The LIV established a RAP Oversight Committee in January 2013. The Committee's membership included representatives from First Nations communities in Victoria, as well as both LIV and non-LIV members and representatives from the LIV Council. The Committee was actively involved in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the 2012–13 and 2013–15 RAPs.

The first two LIV RAPs centred on three reconciliation pathways of "education to qualification", "access to justice" and "recognition and respect". The LIV paused developing RAPs after the conclusion of the 2015 RAP, due to significant operational restructuring, new leadership and personnel.

The LIV continued engagement with initiatives supporting reconciliation, but it was not until 2019 that the LIV had sufficient resources to re-engage with the RAP process. However the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted this, as the LIV pivoted to support the profession adjust to significant new ways of working.

The LIV acknowledges that the decade between the conclusion of the second RAP and the drafting of this third RAP is a considerable amount of time. However, the LIV is committed to contributing the necessary resources to ensure that the current and future RAPs are fully developed and that the full implementation of each of the commitments are adequately monitored and realised.

In drafting this 2026–28 RAP, the LIV has assessed how its performance against the actions and targets outlined in the second LIV RAP. We have reflected on where and why we fell short – not just in achieving our targets in 2013–2015 RAP, but what actions have been entrenched within the culture and practice of the organisation. We believe that some of the targets were not met because they were not within the control of the LIV to meet (such as increasing First Nations content in law degrees). Some of the actions have been embedded within the LIV (such as providing full Tarwirri members with LIV membership at no cost).

Other actions have continued but have had little effect in practice (such as including a statement encouraging First Nations candidates to apply in all LIV job advertisements).

Reflecting on our organisation's strengths, we have tailored this RAP to optimise the skills, resources and influence that the LIV has developed to work towards reconciliation across our three main areas of focus. These have pivoted since 2015, not because of a change in the LIV's focus, but because the wider community and the legal profession have a better understanding of the entrenched cultural barriers and structural challenges to achieving reconciliation.

Thus, the goals of "access to justice" and "recognition and respect" have been broadened to encompass advocacy on all levels to achieve reconciliation in Australia and cultural capability to ensure that legal professionals are proficient in advocating for First Nations clients and communities.

"Education to qualification" has been broadened in recognition that education alone will not increase the numbers of First Nations lawyers – the profession itself needs to change to be more welcoming, inclusive and culturally safe.

These three issues, advocacy, cultural capability and inclusiveness, are the three pillars of the LIV's reconciliation journey through this 2026–28 RAP.

Advocacy

In developing this RAP, we will continue to advocate for Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling.

We recognise how powerful our advocacy work on legal and justice issues can be, and we are proud of the influence we have had in advocating for rule of law, access to and the administration of justice issues for the benefit of all in the community.

The LIV has long advocated for the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, along with numerous other recommendations from various inquiries and reports. Yet the incarceration rate for First Nations peoples continues to grow at alarming rates. A number of the law reform issues on which the LIV advocates, including raising the age of criminal responsibility, decriminalisation of public intoxication and bail reform, disproportionately affect First Nations peoples.

In the 2025–26 financial year, the LIV has been mentioned 26 times in original media mentions supporting reforms to laws that have a disproportionate impact on First Nations peoples – including the Victorian government's bill to tackle post-and-boast offending, reform of the bail laws, family violence and the Victorian government's "Adult Time for Violent Crime" bill.

The LIV has also been quoted on its support for the Voice to Parliament and for the Yoorrook Justice Commission. The launch of the LIV's First Nations Scholarship for Practical Legal Training was also covered in the media.



In the 2026–28 RAP, the LIV seeks to increase our advocacy work on First Nations justice issues. We developed this RAP during the year in which Australia voted on a referendum to enshrine a First Nations Voice in the Constitution (which failed to pass), and at a time in which the state of Victoria is engaging in Truth-telling through the Yoorrook Justice Commission and succeeded in signing Victoria's statewide treaty.

In developing this RAP, we will continue to advocate for Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling. We recognise the importance of self-determination for First Nations peoples, and we strive to support First Nations people and communities in Victoria in their journey towards self-determination through our advocacy.

In delivering on this objective, the LIV recognises the crucial role First Nations controlled organisations play guiding us and our policy positions.

The LIV strongly believes that self-determination for First Nations peoples is at the heart of any good reform, and the LIV 2026–28 RAP reflects this position by placing a strong emphasis on building relationships with First Nations-controlled organisations.



Cultural capability

The LIV is committed to supporting the development and implementation of a First Nations cultural capability framework



We recognise that the culture of the legal profession can be intimidating, particularly for those from minority and marginalised communities.

That experience is magnified when communities also experience racism, bias and negative or uninformed cultural and behavioural assumptions.

Culturally unsafe and uninformed services can lead to devastating outcomes, evident in coronial inquests and systemic inquiries that have highlighted the need for mandatory professional development training of lawyers in cultural capability when providing services to First Nations peoples.

The necessity for this training is confirmed by many organisations with whom the LIV collaborates – those providing legal assistance to First Nations peoples, the Disaster Legal Help Victoria partnership, and of course the LIV's Reconciliation and Advancement Sub-Committee.

Culturally safe and responsive assistance is essential in providing competent and professional services that empower First Nations clients to make informed choices about legal options.

To build cultural capability in the profession, the LIV is committed to supporting the development and implementation of a First Nations cultural capability framework. The framework will establish standards of practice that identify the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for lawyers to provide culturally safe and responsive legal services to First Nations clients. The framework will also inform culturally safe workplace practices.

Ultimately, embedding cultural capability across legal professional training and accreditation, and changing how legal professionals interact with First Nations clients are key aims of the LIV's reconciliation vision.



Inclusion within the legal profession

We recognise that, as part of the LIV's reconciliation journey, we need to ensure that we are actively building opportunities, pathways and careers within the legal profession for First Nations students

Data on the number of legal professionals who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples within the legal profession is incomplete for several reasons.

The most recent Annual Report (2024–2025) by the VLSB+C notes that, of the lawyers who voluntarily provided their information to inform the report, 115 identified as having Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander ancestry.

In the LIV's own Member Engagement Survey conducted in mid-late 2022, no respondents identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or First Nations. Despite that, the LIV does have members who identify as First Nations, and there are organisations, such as Tarwirri Indigenous Law Association of Victoria Inc, that are actively promoting pathways into the legal profession for First Nations students.



We recognise that, as part of the LIV's reconciliation journey, we need to ensure that we are actively building opportunities, pathways and careers within the legal profession for First Nations students.

This begins before law school, in de-mystifying the law and demonstrating the inclusiveness and the value of the profession for First Nations law students. It continues through law school and with early career lawyers, a cohort with which the LIV Young Lawyers network actively engages.

We recognise the importance of funding scholarships and supporting First Nations students, which we have done for a number of years through free membership for Tarwirri members, through the new Indigenous Practical Legal Training (PLT) scholarship we are providing with our PLT partner provider, the Australasian College of Applied Professions, and through offering a scholarship to First Nations lawyers who wish to pursue LIV Accredited Specialisation.

We recognise the importance of creating space for different perspectives. Dialogue and greater understanding between First Nations peoples and the wider community can enrich the whole Australian community.

We further recognise that we have much to learn from the strength of First Nations peoples demonstrated by their ongoing struggle for recognition and self-determination.

Lastly, we recognise that ingrained belief systems, formed over generations, are not easily unravelled. Change takes time, strategy and persistence.

The LIV hopes and believes that Australia is on its way towards reconciliation and is proud to play its role in Australia's reconciliation journey.





05

Our RAP

Why are we developing a RAP?

The LIV is developing a RAP because, as the peak legal body in Victoria, we want to harness our skills, resources and influence to advance our vision of reconciliation through our advocacy work to drive better justice outcomes for First Nations peoples through our commitment to cultural change and cultural capability in the legal profession and through our promotion of inclusion within the profession.



The LIV recognises the need for better outcomes for First Nations peoples in the justice system, as identified by the Closing the Gap reports on justice system indicators and the Yoorrook Justice Commission's investigations and reports on injustice against First Nations peoples in Victoria since colonisation.

We also recognise that there is a limited availability of culturally safe legal services for First Nations peoples and that the vast majority of services to First Nations people are delivered by mainstream services that are not controlled or informed by the First Nations community.

We are also developing a RAP because we are cognisant that the legal profession may not have been welcoming for First Nations lawyers and that they face particular barriers in entry to and pathways through the profession.

According to the VLSB+C Annual Report for the 2024–2025 practising year, only 115 of Victorian lawyers, and less than 0.2 per cent of new lawyers identify as First Nations.

The LIV is committed to the principle of self-determination for First Nations peoples and to all three tenets of the Uluru Statement from the Heart – Voice, Treaty and Truth-telling.

In 2026, the LIV set out its new five-year Strategic Plan. The plan is anchored by five strategic pillars, supporting the wider community, the legal community, and individual legal professionals, including LIV members.

The community

- We advocate for a legal system that is accessible, fair, and serves the community
- We support a resilient and sustainable community through the practice of law

The legal community

- We represent and connect the legal community

LIV members and legal professionals

- We help legal practices of all sizes operate smarter and grow stronger for the communities they serve
- We support our members and legal professionals build expertise and community throughout their careers

The LIV is committed to:

- the development of a Reconciliation Action Plan
- the promotion of greater participation of First Nations peoples in the legal profession, and
- greater access to justice for First Nations peoples.

These commitments fall within the objectives of "advocating for equitable access to justice", "removing barriers to participation" and "influencing law reform and public policy to strengthen the legal system for public benefit" under the community pillars, objectives of "fostering connection across the legal sector by strengthening networks and promoting collaboration among legal professionals" under the legal community pillar, and the objectives of "supporting our members and legal professionals throughout their career, and their inclusion in, and long-term contribution to, the community and the profession" under the LIV members and legal professionals pillar.

This RAP aligns with our values of integrity, collaboration, adaptability, respect and excellence. These values reflect how we work and deliver outcomes through our people.

At the LIV we recognise that to develop our employees' experience and career growth, supporting employment and career growth for First Nations peoples within the LIV will take us further together as an organisation.

The actions in this RAP are embedded across the LIV business in its promotion of advocacy to benefit the community, supporting a connected and engaged membership, enhancing life-long learning in the profession, and in the LIV's staff, technology, governance and financial sustainability.

06

Development and oversight

How was the LIV RAP developed?

The LIV RAP was developed following positive collaboration with LIV Senior Leadership and the LIV RAP Working Group, which includes external consultants.

Our commitment to the RAP aligns with our values and our strategic priorities, and the actions outlined in our Innovate RAP 2026-2028 are embedded across the LIV business and championed by the Executive Leadership Team.

The LIV Board approved the adoption of the LIV Innovate RAP and provides oversight and governance to support sustainable reconciliation outcomes and accountability across the LIV.

Senior Leadership

- CEO
- Chief Member Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- General Manager Strategic Delivery
- General Manager People, Capability, Culture and Wellbeing
- General Manager Governance and Risk & Company Secretary
- General Manager Policy, Professional Standards and External Affairs

RAP Working Group

- CEO
- General Manager People, Capability, Culture and Wellbeing (Chair)
- Head of Operations, Legal Policy
- Head of Experiences
- Head of Content, Learning and Channels
- Head of External Affairs and Media
- Legal Policy Officer and Contracts Lawyer
- Section Lead for Administrative Law, Human Rights and Government Lawyers
- Relationship Manager
- Event Operations and Experience Manager
- Member Services Coordinator
- Learning Projects Lead

Key external people

Tekan Cochrane
Proud Kooma and Yuwaalaraay woman with Torres Strait Islander heritage, lawyer; Executive Officer of Tarwirri – Indigenous Law Students and Lawyers Association of Victoria; and Chair of the LIV Reconciliation Advancement Sub-Committee (sitting on the WG in personal capacity)

Laura Wilson-McGinn
Lawyer, currently working as Senior Legal Officer at the Yoorrook Justice Commission and Tarwirri member (sitting on WG in personal capacity)



Our organisation does not have a First Nations Advisory Group, but does have a Reconciliation and Advancement Sub-Committee, made up of lawyers with special interests in justice for First Nations peoples (see commentary on governance). We also hold regular discussions with legal organisations representing First Nations people and provide legal services to First Nations peoples across the state.

The LIV is committed to ensure that First Nations peoples with whom the LIV has consulted regarding the RAP are remunerated for their time and expertise.

The LIV recognises the generosity of our external members of the LIV RAP Working Group in providing support to the LIV in developing and implementing the 2026–2028 RAP. In particular, the LIV wishes to acknowledge the contributions by Hayden Walker and Peter Rankin who contributed to the development of the LIV RAP as past members of the RAP Working Group.

07

Relationships

Building strong relationships between First Nations peoples and the broader community is essential for us to achieve our reconciliation goals.

LIV's advocacy to promote justice reform in areas that have a disproportionate effect on First Nations communities and individuals needs to engage all Victorians or people residing in Victoria to achieve change. Likewise, to build the legal profession's cultural capability in assisting with First Nations clients, the whole legal profession needs to be engaged and supported to ensure successful and lasting outcomes. Further, creating a welcoming and inclusive profession for all legal professionals, including First Nations lawyers and allied legal professionals, means sharing best practices and experiences across the profession, and engaging broadly in collaborative, co-designed projects. The LIV is laying the foundation with First Nations peoples and organisations to foster learning and engagement in relationships built on mutual respect and consultation. At the LIV, we support our employees to seek and create an inclusive culture within the workplace through living our values.

Focus area—Relationships is most closely aligned to the LIV's strategic theme: *"We advocate for a legal system that is accessible, fair and serves the community"*



Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1	Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations	Meet with local First Nations stakeholders and organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement	From May 2026	CEO and Relationship Manager
		Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with First Nations stakeholders and organisations	From July 2026	Legal Policy Officer and Relationship Manager
		Build and strengthen relationships with First Nations stakeholders and organisations	From May 2026 and monitored every May of each year.	CEO and Relationship Manager
		Organise regular meetings between Tarwirri Executive Officer (EO) or Tarwirri President and LIV CEO	From May 2026 and to take place annually, every May and October (subject to availability).	CEO and Relationship Manager
		Invite Tarwirri Executive Officer, President, and/or committee members to LIV functions and events to exchange governance experience and to build new networks with Regional and Suburban Law Associations	From May 2026, October 2027 and October 2028	CEO and Relationship Manager
		Ask and encourage First Nations-led organisations and those committed to assisting and advancing First Nations peoples (such as Tarwirri, Djirra and Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service) to nominate a staff member to join the LIV's Reconciliation and Advancement Sub-Committee to represent their organisations	From May 2026	Legal Policy Officer

Relationships cont.

Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
2	Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to LIV staff through various communication channels such as email, CEO fortnightly email to staff and General Managers' team meetings	From May 2026, 2027, and to continue throughout May–June 2026, 2027	General Manager People, Capability, Culture and Wellbeing (PCCW) and Head of Content, Learning and Channels (CLC)
		RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event	27 May–3 June 2026, 2027	PCCW
		Encourage and support staff and senior leaders to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW	27 May–3 June 2026, 2027	CEO
		Organise at least one NRW event each year	27 May–3 June 2026, 2027	PCCW and Chief Membership Officer (CMO)
		Register all LIV NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website	May 2026, 2027	CLC
3	Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence	Develop and implement a staff engagement strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce	From May 2026, to be revisited on May 2027, 2028	PCCW
		Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly	From May 2026 and will be revisited in May 2027, 2028	CMO
		Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes	From August 2026, 2027 and 2028	Relationship Manager and Legal Policy Officer
		Collaborate with RAP organisations and key stakeholders and partner with other key organisations (including legal) to develop innovative approaches to advance reconciliation.	From July 2026	CMO
4	Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Conduct a review of People and Culture policies and procedures together with the Code of Conduct to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions and future needs	From May 2026	PCCW and General Manager Governance and Risk & Company Secretary
		Engage with First Nations staff and/or First Nations advisors to consult on our anti-discrimination policy	From May 2026	CEO and PCCW
		Continuously develop, review, revise, implement and communicate an anti-discrimination policy for our organisation	August 2026, 2027	CEO and PCCW
		Provide additional education to senior leaders and managers on the impact of discrimination and effects of racism	From June 2026, 2027 and 2028	PCCW
		Support the development of a First Nations cultural capability framework to support lawyers to provide culturally safe and responsive services to First Nations clients	June 2025	CMO
		Contribute to the roll-out of the cultural capability framework across LIV members and the Victorian solicitor community	From June 2025	CMO
		Circulate materials to encourage participation of the Victorian solicitor community in training and education around the cultural capability framework	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CMO
		Take steps to develop educational resources to raise awareness, inform and take positive action against racism	From August 2026, 2027 and 2028	CEO and all General Managers

Respect



Respect is one of the LIV's core values. We strongly believe that everyone should be treated with respect.

Embedding respect for First Nations' cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within the LIV and its membership is essential to effectively advocating for law reform, recognition of First Nations histories and cultures in the Australian legal system, and ensuring the legal system promotes positive outcomes for First Nations peoples. To effectively advocate for law reform, provide culturally safe services and build strong relationships, our employees and members must seek to understand the lived experiences of First Nations peoples, be culturally capable and create an inclusive culture founded on respect. These aspirations for LIV employees and members are necessary to engage in law reform, but also many other aspects of the profession's work.



Focus area—Respect is one of the LIV's values and aligns with the LIV's strategic theme: *"We support a resilient and sustainable community through the practice of law"*

Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5	Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation	From May 2026	PCCW
		Consult local Traditional Owners and/or First Nations advisors to inform our cultural learning strategy	From August 2026	PCCW
		Develop, implement and communicate a cultural learning strategy document for our staff	From August 2026	PCCW
		Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, PCCW managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning	April 2026	PCCW
		Include cultural leave and significant cultural dates in the LIV Hub and Employee Handbook	October 2026	PCCW
		Include specific cultural training for the LIV Referrals team to ensure that they are able to handle matters in a culturally safe way	August 2026, 2027	PCCW and Manager of Member Services, Compliance & Referrals

Respect cont.

Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
6	Demonstrate respect to First Nations peoples by observing cultural protocols	Communicate to staff the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols as part of our Diversity and Inclusion program	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CEO and PCCW
		Develop, implement and communicate a cultural protocol document, including protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country on relevant letterhead, email signatures, website and as part of LIV events.	May 2026	CEO and CLC
		Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to offer a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year	May and July 2026, 2027	CEO and Head of Experiences
		Include an Acknowledgement of Country and other appropriate protocols at the commencement of meetings	From May 2026 and to be implemented in all meetings of the Board	CEO and General Manager Governance and Risk & Company Secretary
		Implement an Acknowledgement of Country Policy that recognises the different lands on which LIV staff and members work, both when in the office and at home	From May 2026	CEO and CMO
7	Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week	RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event	First week in July 2026, 2027	PCCW
		Review PCCW policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week	April 2026, 2027	PCCW
		Promote and encourage participation in external NAIDOC events to all staff	First week in July 2026 and 2027	PCCW
		Invite LIV members and LIV staff to engage with First Nations cultures and communities through attendance at NAIDOC Week events	July 2026 and 2027	CEO & PCCW
8	Improve awareness of the members on First Nations law and perspectives of the Australian legal system	Include First Nations perspectives on the law in LIV communications such as *LawNews* and the Law Institute Journal once per quarter	From May 2026 and to be done every quarter	CLC
		Investigate developing a curated resource hub featuring First Nations legal perspectives, case studies and scholarly articles	From May 2026	Legal Policy Officer and CLC
		Investigate delivering CPD workshops or seminars led by First Nations legal experts	From May 2026 and 2027	Legal Policy Officer and CLC
9	Identify and support opportunities for legal professionals to engage with and learn about First Nations cultures and lores	Investigate opportunities to include practice area specific First Nations legal content in professional development activities and conferences	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CLC
		In consultation with relevant Victorian First Nations legal organisations, review LIV application guidelines for Accredited Specialisation to ensure they contain appropriate topics relevant to First Nations for assessment, as well asadequate recognition of First Nations cultures, beginning with Family, Children's and Criminal Law	From May 2026, 2027	CLC

Opportunities

Opportunities for First Nations peoples to enter the legal profession, to work within an inclusive culture, and to engage with other professionals who are culturally capable are critical to increasing First Nations' representation within the profession.

The LIV is committed to increasing and retaining the number of First Nations peoples in our workplace and in the profession. Doing so will expand professional opportunities for First Nations peoples, reflect the diversity of our society, ensure the profession is informed by the lived experience of First Nations peoples, and support First Nations mentors and leaders within the LIV and the profession to nurture the next generation of lawyers.

As Victoria's peak legal body, the LIV has a responsibility to lead by example in fostering a legal profession that reflects the diversity and depth of the communities it serves. Encouraging First Nations membership and supporting First Nations members is not only a matter of equity. It also strengthens the profession by bringing in vital perspectives rooted in thousands of years of legal traditions and cultural knowledge. The LIV must ensure that it creates pathways within the legal ecosystem for meaningful participation, leadership and innovation by actively recruiting First Nations staff and supporting the success of First Nations business. By committing to these actions, the LIV positions itself as a leader in reconciliation and justice reform and build stronger relationships with First Nations communities to foster trust, shared learning and a more resilient and representative legal profession for all Victorians.

Focus area—Opportunities most closely aligns with the LIV's strategic theme: *"We support members and legal professional build expertise and community throughout their careers."*

Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10	Improve employment outcomes by increasing the recruitment, retention and professional development of First Nations staff	Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	PCCW
		Engage with First Nations advisors to consult on our recruitment, retention and professional development strategy and to determine how we can encourage more individuals who identify as First Nations to join the LIV staff	From August 2026	CEO and PCCW
		Develop and implement a First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	From August 2026	CEO and PCCW
		Advertise job vacancies on specialist sites to effectively reach First Nations candidates	From August 2026	PCCW
		Review PCCW and recruitment procedures and policies to remove barriers to First Nations participation in our workplace	From August 2026	PCCW
		Increase the number of First Nations staff employed in our workforce	From September 2026 and to be monitored at least quarterly	PCCW

Opportunities cont.

Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11	Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	Develop and implement a First Nations procurement strategy, ensuring the procurement of goods and services from First Nations businesses registered with Supply Nation.	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CEO and CFO
		Investigate Supply Nation membership.	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CEO and CFO
		Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from First Nations businesses to staff.	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	Head of Experiences
		Review and update procurement practices to remove barriers to procuring goods and services from First Nations businesses.	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CFO
		Develop commercial relationships with First Nations businesses.	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	CFO
12	Support increased participation of First Nations peoples in the legal profession	Continue to provide community rates for full Tarwirri members to LIV CPD activities	From May 2026 and will be available all throughout the RAP period	CEO & CMO
		Provide at least one scholarship for First Nations Practical Legal Training	December 2025, January, March, May, July and September 2026	CEO and CFO
		Provide scholarships for First Nations lawyers to undertake the LIV Accredited Specialisation program	February 2026, February 2027, February 2028	CMO & CFO
		Collaborate with the Victorian Bar Indigenous Justice Committee to design methods to promote First Nations barristers to the wider legal profession	July 2026 and 2027	CMO
		Feature a minimum of three articles each year in the Law Institute Journal authored by a First Nations lawyer or student based in Victoria	From May 2026 and to be observed every quarter	CLC
		Provide the option for LIV members to identify as First Nations when they renew their membership	From May 2027	Head of Experiences
		Consult with First Nations LIV members and explore further actions that the LIV can take to improve access to, cultural safety within and pathways into the legal profession for First Nations people.	From July 2026	CEO and CMO
		Investigate a targeted approach specifically for First Nations students at TAFE or universities to work at the LIV as a starting point for experience in all areas of the LIV	From May 2026, 2027 and 2028	Head of Growth
13	Advocate for self-determination and the rights of First Nations Peoples	Continue to make submissions on issues affecting the legal rights of First Nations peoples in consultation with the LIV's Reconciliation and Advancement Sub-Committee	From May 2026, to be reviewed every quarter	CEO and General Manager Policy, Professional Standards and External Affairs (GM-PPSEA)
		Participate in advocacy that addresses the over-representation of First Nations peoples in the criminal justice system, child protection and family violence	From May 2026, to be reviewed every quarter	CEO and GM-PPSEA
		Consult with First Nations organisations to facilitate our engagement with and advocacy for First Nations peoples	From May 2026, to be reviewed every quarter	CEO and GM-PPSEA

Governance

The LIV recognises that effective governance is foundational to fully realising our RAP commitments, which means ensuring that the RAP is fully integrated into our governing frameworks.

In recognition of this, the LIV's commitment to the development of a RAP, the promotion of greater participation of First Nations peoples in the legal profession, and greater access to justice for First Nations peoples is underpinned by our five strategic pillars, as outlined in the LIV's five-year Strategic Plan 2026-2031.

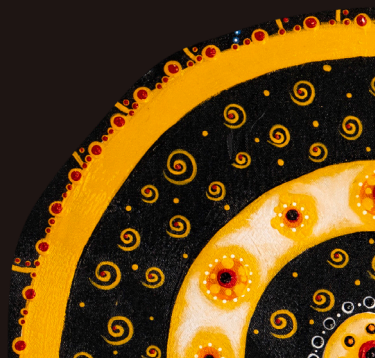
Our commitment to this RAP aligns with our values and our strategic priorities, and the actions outlined in our Innovate RAP 2026–2028 are embedded across the LIV business and championed by the Executive Leadership team and LIV Board.

Action		Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
14	Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP	Maintain First Nations representation on the RAP WG.	May 2026	CEO & PCCW
		Establish and apply a Terms of Reference for the RWG	March 2026, to be reviewed in October 2027 and 2028	PCCW
		Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation	February, July, September and November 2026	PCCW
15	Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments	Define resource needs for RAP implementation	April 2026 and 2027	PCCW & CFO
		Engage senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments	April 2026 and 2027	CEO
		Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments	April 2026 and 2027	CEO & PCCW
		Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management	May 2026 and to be reviewed in May 2027 and 2028	CEO
16	Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally	Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss important RAP correspondence	June, annually	RAP Project Manager
		Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the Online RAP Impact Survey	1 August 2026 and 2027	RAP Project Manager
		Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia	30 September, annually	RAP Project Manager
		Report on RAP progress to all staff and senior leaders quarterly	May 2026, and August, November, February 2026, 2027 and 2028.	PCCW
		Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually	May 2026, 2027	CEO & CLC
		Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer	May 2026, 2027	CEO & PCCW
		Submit a traffic light report to Reconciliation Australia at the conclusion of this RAP	June 2027	PCCW
17	Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP	January 2027	CEO & PCCW

Contact

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RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN
INNOVATE

LAW INSTITUTE VICTORIA

That's a RAP

Thanks for joining the journey

Our vision

An empowered community, a trusted legal profession and justice for all.

Follow our journey

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Find us

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