



**Burnet Institute**  
Medical Research. Practical Action.



RECONCILIATION  
ACTION PLAN

REFLECT



# Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

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Progress Report, February 2023

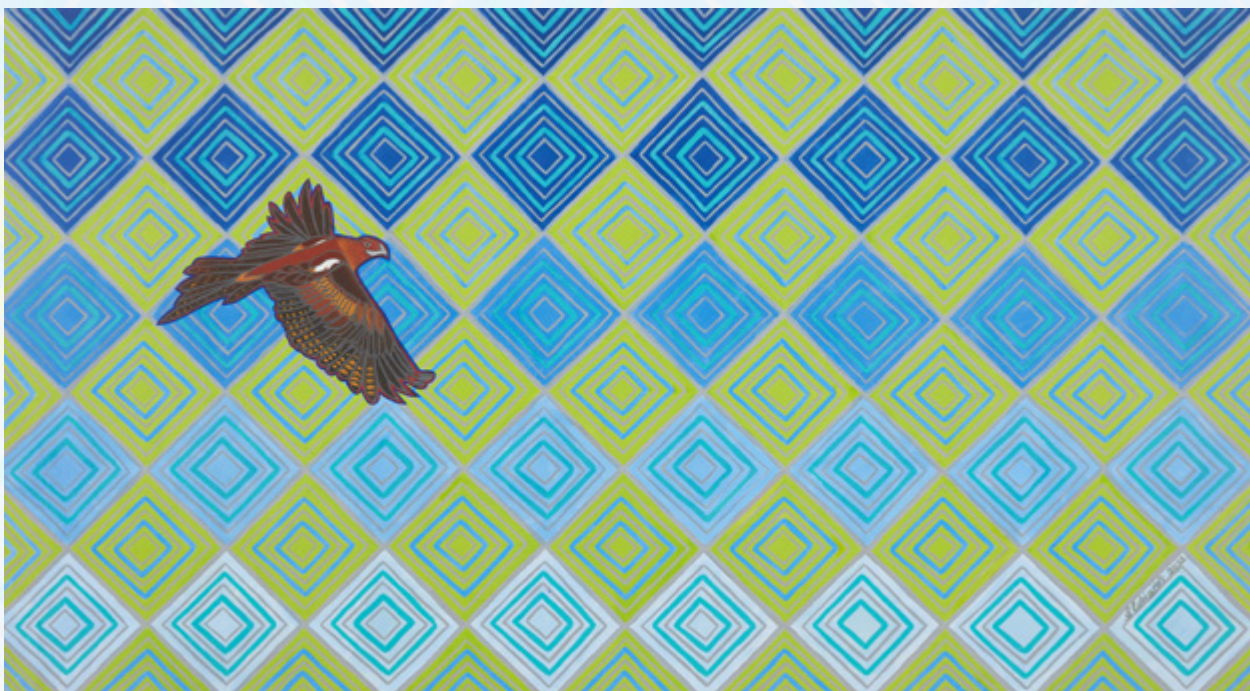
# Acknowledgement of Country

Burnet Institute Board, staff and students recognise the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we live and work.

We are proud to acknowledge the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nations as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which our head office is located and recognise their strong and ongoing connection to Country. Recognising the ongoing impact of colonisation and intergenerational trauma on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, our position as a leading medical research institute demands that we strengthen our commitment to close the gap in health outcomes.

To do this, we are working to develop and maintain strong relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities both locally and nationwide. Unequivocally, we need to ensure Burnet Institute becomes a safe, respectful and inclusive workplace for First Nations people and that research initiatives pertaining to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters rest in the hands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

## Bunjil The Creator, 2021



### About the Artist

Stacey is a participant of the Torch and a Taungurung/Boon Wurrung woman with traditional connections to the Melbourne region.



### About the Artwork

Bunjil is the creator of the Kulin Nations. He takes the shape of a wedge-tailed eagle. Any guests of the Kulin Nations have to follow two rules: to obey the laws of Bunjil, and to not harm the children or land of Bunjil.

# A message from our CEO and RAP champion

2022 has been a monumental year for Reconciliation at Burnet Institute, and it is my great honour as CEO and Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) champion to present the first annual report documenting our progress.

Our reconciliation journey officially began in 2020, but it was not until May 2022 that Burnet's first Reflect RAP was fully endorsed by Reconciliation Australia.

During these past two years – and particularly since our official launch – I have had the pleasure of witnessing the enthusiastic, creative, collaborative, community-oriented, and committed approach developed by our RAP team and across the Institute. This commitment is demonstrated in our reported outcomes, including: the Bunjil artwork acting as a creative reminder of Country and local community; foundational collaborations with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) for our research and implementation work; and the financial commitment and practical actions that were galvanised to improve cultural safety at Burnet and increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career-development opportunities for years to come.

In the first year of our RAP we have reaffirmed our commitment to reconciliation. The strong foundation set by our Reflect RAP will enable us to meet future challenges, and to identify and utilise our opportunities for reconciliatory action in 2023.



**“I wish to thank each and every one of you involved in our RAP and look forward to continuing to progress our action plans and move forward on our path to reconciliation.”**

**Professor Brendan Crabb AC**  
Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B Crabb', written in a cursive style.

# Respect

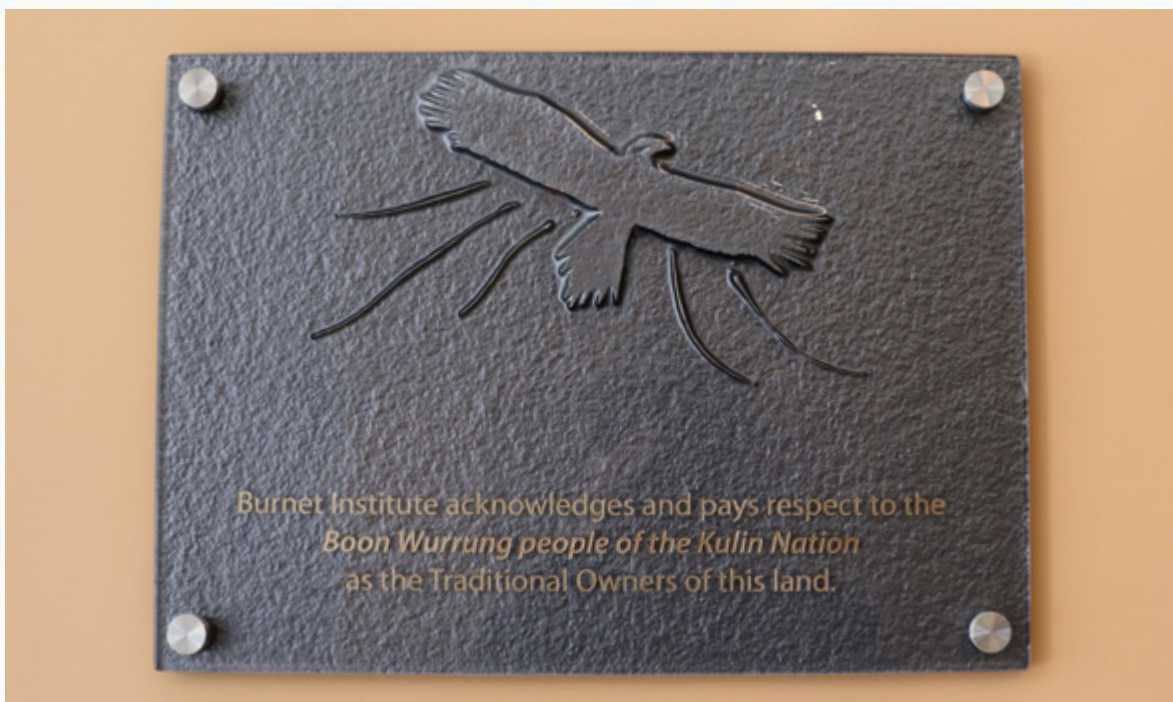
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1. Acknowledgement of Country plaques have been placed in Burnet Institute's foyer, at Reception and entrances to Level 3 and Level 7 to raise awareness and pay our respect to the Traditional Owners of the land upon which Burnet is situated.
  2. Artwork for our Reconciliation journey was commissioned by a Taungurung/Boon Wurrung artist and participant of The Torch - an Indigenous program providing art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous Peoples in prisons and in their communities. We have purchased licensing to use the image in various other ways, including in PowerPoint slides, end of year cards and at reconciliation events.
  3. We engaged with the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) to provide Aboriginal Cultural Safety Training to 60 staff to create opportunities for influencing and modelling culturally safe work practices across the Institute.
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*RAP artwork located on Level 3 foyer wall (left)*

*Acknowledgment of Country plaque located in Burnet Institute's entrance (below)*



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4. Through consultation with the Boon Wurrung Foundation and the Bunurong Land Council, 11 meeting rooms across Burnet were named using local Boon Wurrung language, to increase knowledge and understanding of local languages. For example, we have a room named 'TARTBENARRA' which means 'care/caring for patients' and one named 'NGARNGA-DJI' which means 'listening, learning'.

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5. We have raised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and understanding amongst Burnet staff and students through the promotion and attendance at Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander celebratory events and Reconciliation activities. For example, Burnet staff and students attended events to mark Sorry Day in Melbourne, NAIDOC Week celebrations at Barmah Forest and Geelong, Reconciliation Week held by Reconciliation Australia, and Treaty Day Out in Shepparton. Events were promoted via tweets, HUB posts (Burnet's Intranet) and at Open Door meetings (all of Institute monthly meetings) to increase understanding of their significance and encourage staff and students to attend.

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*Burnet staff and students attending a NAIDOC Week event in Geelong*

# Relationships

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6. We have developed and strengthened relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations, including the Wurundjeri/Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation, the Boon Wurrung Foundation, and the Bunurong Land Council who have performed Welcome to Country ceremonies at important Burnet Institute meetings and events.

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  7. As part of the Eliminate Hepatitis C Australia Partnership, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Strategy was developed to strengthen partnerships with ACCHOs, peer-drug user organisations and other organisations in the viral hepatitis sector. We have established a new partnership with Bulgarr Ngaru Medical Aboriginal Corporation which aims to increase STI/BBV testing and treatment within a network of ACCHOs in regional NSW.  
Find out more here: [burnet.edu.au/news/1475](http://burnet.edu.au/news/1475)

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  8. Burnet received funding to develop a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hepatitis C Campaign in partnership with ACCHOs. We have convened a National Health Promotion Reference Group consisting of the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO), their State/Territory Affiliates and select member services who together will design, implement, and evaluate the campaign ensuring it is culturally appropriate and meets the needs of ACCHOs.  
This work builds on our 'It's Your Right' Campaign, for which we developed specific 'bloodline' artworks and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with Riki Salam of We Are 27 Creative – an Indigenous art, design and communications agency.
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National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hepatitis C Campaign posters designed by Riki Salam of We Are 27 Creative

# Opportunities

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9. A business case has been developed, endorsed and funded by Burnet Institute's executive team, for increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and career development opportunities within the Institute. Over the next 10 years the Institute will establish a training program that builds capacity and capability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers and public health practitioners. This training program will help foster long-term trusting relationships with First Nations peoples and their communities based on cultural connections and mutual accountability.
  10. A new procurement policy has been developed to promote the purchase of products and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses or organisations, with the aim of supporting improved economic and social outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and their communities. As part of this commitment, we are also a proud member of Supply Nation (the Australian body for supporting and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses).
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# Governance

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11. Burnet's RAP Committee has grown from just 6 initial members in 2019 to a total of 15 members in 2022, including students and staff in senior roles from across all disciplines within the organisation (i.e. public health, international development, life sciences, administration and finance).
  12. In 2021, Burnet Institute committed to funding a RAP committee coordinator position (0.2FTE).
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*Burnet staff attending a Q&A session with Judge Nathan Jarro during NAIDOC Week at the University of Queensland*



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# Burnet Institute

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