

# *Reflect*

## Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

May 2024 – May 2025



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# Acknowledgement of Country

In the spirit of reconciliation, Avant acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia, and their connections to land, sea and community. As a national organisation, we pay our respects to Elders past and present, of the lands on which we gather and work, and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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## Terminology

Throughout our *Reflect* Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), we refer to First Nations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and First Australians, as we understand this naming reflects the diversity of cultural opinion across Australia.

## Barrigirriga



*Barrigirriga* was created by First Nations artist and Gumbaynggirr woman, Josie Rose Atkinson, for Avant's *Reflect* RAP launched in May 2024. The artist wishes to note she does not break any of the cultural protocols around the sharing of sacred information or the stories of the 'Old Ways' of knowledge holding.

# Statement from CEO of Reconciliation Australia Inaugural *Reflect* RAP

## Reconciliation Australia welcomes Avant to the Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) program with the formal endorsement of its inaugural *Reflect* RAP.

Avant joins a network of more than 2,500 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have made a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement. The program's potential for impact is greater than ever, with close to 3 million people now working or studying in an organisation with a RAP.

The four RAP types – *Reflect*, *Innovate*, *Stretch* and *Elevate* – allow RAP partners to continuously develop and strengthen reconciliation commitments in new ways. This *Reflect* RAP will lay the foundations, priming the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

The RAP program's strength is its framework of relationships, respect, and opportunities, allowing an organisation to strategically set its reconciliation commitments in line with its own business objectives, for the most effective outcomes.

These outcomes contribute towards the five dimensions of reconciliation: *race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity; unity; and historical acceptance.*

It is critical to not only uphold all five dimensions of reconciliation, but also increase awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge, and leadership across all sectors of Australian society.

This *Reflect* RAP enables Avant to deepen its understanding of its sphere of influence and the unique contribution it can make to lead progress across the five dimensions. Getting these first steps right will ensure the sustainability of future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, and provide meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.

Congratulations Avant, welcome to the RAP program, and I look forward to following your reconciliation journey in the years to come.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



Karen Mundine

# Avant's vision for reconciliation

Avant's vision for reconciliation, while simple, is incredibly important. As a company which exists to give doctors the confidence to serve their own communities, we want to make sure, as an organisation, our employees better understand the First Nations communities our doctors serve, as well as our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members.

In the spirit of reconciliation, Avant is committed to supporting our members in their efforts to Close the Gap in health outcomes between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the broader Australian population.

For Avant, this means tapping into – and strengthening – our existing relationships and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Committing to the activities outlined in the three pillars – Relationships, Respect and Opportunities – during 2024/25, our aim is to move towards the next step of the RAP process and draft our *Innovate* RAP.

To embed the principles of reconciliation into what we do as part of our daily business activities, and to align those business activities with our RAP goals, it's important we:



**Acknowledge** the peoples on whose lands we gather and seek opportunities to engage with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including procurement opportunities and increasing our knowledge base of local practices and stories.

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**Advocate** for better health outcomes for First Australians by communicating with our members on this topic more regularly.

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**Support** the reconciliation journey we're on by establishing a key section of the Avant employee community to which our RAP work belongs.

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**Better understand** the needs of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and how they might best participate in our RAP process, while seeking to educate the broader Avant community.

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**Create** time to raise awareness of the disparity in health outcomes, and other disadvantages, experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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# A message from Avant Mutual Group CEO and Managing Director

Over the last decade, Avant has undergone a rapid evolution in its ability to meet both the professional, practice and personal needs of its members and customers. By serving our members well, we strongly believe they will be able to focus on serving the communities throughout Australia who rely on their medical care.

When I think about why Avant is submitting a *Reflect* RAP, it's about the role we play in supporting our members, Australia's doctors, to reduce the inequality in the health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This *Reflect* RAP is built from our current activity, including determining a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) baseline in 2022; establishing a DEI Committee; integrating cultural awareness training within our learning modules, introducing Acknowledgements of Country across the Avant Group and celebrating key dates and events for First Nations peoples.

As you read through this RAP, you'll see we're making commitments during 2024/25 to better understand how we might strengthen and build on our existing relationships and opportunities to interact with, and support, the reconciliation process in the medical sphere.

Along with our RAP Co-Chairs, and on behalf of the Avant Board and Executive Committee, it's my pleasure to support the submission of this document as testimony to Avant's commitment to the reconciliation process in Australia.



**Natasha Fenech**  
Avant Mutual Group CEO and Managing Director



Natasha Fenech

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## About Avant

In 1893, a group of Australian doctors met at the Australian Hotel in Sydney's Rocks area, with an idea to set up a way to share their financial risk with one another.

Today, Avant has diversified significantly to serve both the professional and personal needs of its members – more than half Australia's doctors.

Avant Mutual Group Limited (**Avant Mutual** or **Avant**) is a member-owned organisation and Australia's largest medical indemnity insurer.

As an organisation, Avant is committed to a sustainable health system that delivers quality care to the entire Australian community.

As well as offering insurance products, Avant and its related entities (**Avant Group**) offer legal and practice solutions, and financial and health insurance as part of an extended range of products, specifically tailored for doctors and designed to further support them throughout their careers and lives.

In 2023, Avant represented more than 85,800<sup>1</sup> health practitioners and medical students, across every state and territory in Australia. We employ almost 930<sup>2</sup> people across eight office locations in Australia: Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney and Perth.

In 2022, two per cent of our employees identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in our first Group-wide DEI survey, for which we had a 64 per cent response rate.

### Avant and its purpose

We know our employees come from diverse backgrounds around the globe, and in 2023 we published our commitments to taking actions for a better, more secure and sustainable future.

With our purpose to provide confidence to doctors so they can keep serving their communities, Avant is committed to improving support for our members, and in turn, for all Australians in the communities they serve.

1. Avant Members' Annual Report 2023

2. As at 30 April 2024



# A message from Avant's RAP Co-Chairs



Rachael Williams

We are proud to introduce Avant's first RAP, which sets out Avant's commitment to facilitate reconciliation between the wider Australian community and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

As an organisation whose membership represents a majority of Australia's doctors, we believe Avant can play a significant role in improving health outcomes for all Australians, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. For example, we know good communication is a key factor in helping deliver quality care for patients.

In reflecting on our current work to improve health outcomes for First Nations peoples, our team has already produced material for General Practitioners (GPs) on how to appropriately communicate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

And we have done this through direct consultation with First Nations peoples, engaging representatives for script and video production review, for example.

As we continue to work towards reconciliation, and how we might best play our part in the national process, we endorse the submission of Avant's *Reflect* RAP to Reconciliation Australia.

*Rachael Williams*

**Rachael Williams** Chief People Officer

*Michael Wright*

**Dr Michael Wright** Chief Medical Officer



Dr Michael Wright

Myles McKenzie  
AIDA Funding Recipient







*Barrigirriga* Panel 1 – Beginning (Josie Rose Atkinson © 2024)





*Barrigirriga* Panel 2 – Middle (Josie Rose Atkinson © 2024)





*Barrigiriga* Panel 3 – End (Josie Rose Atkinson © 2024)



# Avant is working towards a sustainable future

## Framework for action

Our sustainability framework was developed in the context of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Principles for Sustainable Insurance. We seek to take action in areas we can have most impact and create long-term value for members and the Australian community. These include areas where we can positively contribute to social needs, including health, education, social protection and job opportunities, while supporting initiatives that aim to limit our impact on the environment.



We're taking actions for a better, more secure and sustainable future.

## Improving Healthcare

We invest to drive improvements in healthcare, focusing on areas most relevant to members and for the benefit of communities most in need. This is achieved through funding of member research and initiatives, fearlessly advocating for improvements in healthcare, and influencing doctors' training for better health outcomes.

## Health and Wellbeing

The wellbeing of doctors is essential for the sustainable delivery of healthcare. Working with stakeholders, we strive to change the systems and cultures which adversely impact doctors' wellbeing. Avant is also committed to ensuring the physical and mental health of its employees by engaging with employees to be a model organisation for employee welfare.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Australia's multicultural society is reflected in our membership and the diverse communities our members serve. We seek a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion to be fostered across the healthcare industry, and are proactively building a diverse and inclusive workplace that harnesses people's unique capabilities and perspectives.

## Sustainable Consumption

We are committed to minimising our impact on the environment through sustainable consumption and production.

## Responsible Business Practices

As a member-owned organisation, we have a responsibility to act in members' best interests and in a way they can feel proud of. Good corporate governance and sound risk management practices lay the foundation of a sustainable organisation. We maintain high standards of governance and regulatory compliance which is overseen by the doctors and business experts on our Board.



## Our journey of *Reflection*

Since 2021, Avant has been slowly increasing its activity in terms of First Australians' recognition, shining a light on the organisations, programs and people we support, and committing to embed that support more deeply at a Group-wide level as we seek to further our connections with First Australians peoples and their communities.

It's been a happy set of events, with great minds thinking alike, that has seen Avant focus particularly on bringing DEI to the fore, recognising the need to support a diverse workforce and the value this adds to our business activity and employees – working on our RAP has been a natural extension of this recognition.

**We began working with First Nations consultants in 2022, commencing with a presentation to our Executive Committee in December that year. By early 2023, Avant Group CEO and MD, Natasha Fenech, moved Avant to a position where an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country would become commonplace at Avant's larger gatherings – and as people felt comfortable to do so.**

The Avant Foundation provides bursary funding to the Australian Indigenous Doctors Association (AIDA). In 2021/22 AIDA supported First Nations medical student, Shontae Coyne, and in 2022/23 supported two First Nations medical students during the first year of their medical degrees.

With this background, we've determined our current capability and made commitments to a set of agreed achievements in 2024/25, which support the larger process of reconciliation from the Avant perspective.

As we've slowly talked through – had a good 'yarn' about – our opportunities, we've discovered several ways of connecting with First Nations communities and peoples, particularly through our focus on member education, having already produced training videos for GPs about consultations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

While in 2021 and 2022 we recognised National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week in our internal communication channels, in 2023 we focused on these weeks through a series of articles, including a feature interview with Shontae Coyne, highlighting the Foundation's association with AIDA.

Our team produced a detailed document on how to correctly deliver an Acknowledgement of Country – illustrating how we might appropriately personalise our own versions to deliver at internal/external Avant gatherings of Avant employees around the country in our offices.



**Shontae Coyne**  
AIDA Funding Recipient



# Meet our First Nations artist: Josie Rose

From the moment we saw Josie's work and *yarned* with her, the connection was natural and clear. With a medical background and an interest in telling our story, *yarning* with Josie sealed the deal.

Her passion for what she does, along with the serene approach she has to life, her work and others has brought with it the joy of engagement and opportunity.

Josie Rose is a saltwater, freshwater woman from the *Gumbaynggirr* Nation. The land of her Ancestors is renowned for a beautiful and diverse environment with oceans, rivers, mountains and an abundance of native wildlife.

She is inspired by the land, water, flora and fauna and expressing her ancient culture through contemporary artwork. Her dad explained *Gumbaynggirr* women would dance with dots across their foreheads and her use of dots pays homage to the matriarchal Ancestors. Her designs also feature line work, which represents sacred songlines and sacred tools such as clapsticks and digging sticks.

## Artist statement on reconciliation

The artist believes in reconciliation as a pathway forward for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to work together for the healing of Country, all communities and a healthy, sustainable future for Australia.

This belief comes from both her Indigenous and non-Indigenous families who continue to encourage personal and professional self-determination and community empowerment despite the historical and modern challenges in the journey of reconciliation.

The space of cultural safety, cultural awareness, cultural capacity building and cultural sensitivity – embedded into government, corporate and community organisations' Reconciliation Action Plans – will create positive outcomes for all Australians.

The process of creating contemporary art designs as a means of storytelling in project collaboration creates important discussions, which become opportunities for reconciliation to activate conscious change for a better future.



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## Giimagay Hello!

"I am a *Gumbaynggirr* woman with family ties to *Dunghutti*, *Yaegl*, *Bundjalung* Country and community ties to *Biripi* Nation. I am honoured to represent Avant as an artist working on the Avant RAP and have enjoyed several *yarns* with the Avant team – a chance for Avant to get to know more about what reconciliation means to me and how dedicated to contemporary cultural practices I am through learning the 'Old Ways'.

"I've been able to tell the people at Avant about the latest artistic projects I've completed and what I am currently working on, as well as my career in the healthcare sector, working in many areas including: disease elimination with the University of Wollongong (UOW) Graduate School of Medicine as a professional Indigenous research assistant."

# Barrigirriga

Josie Rose Atkinson

Acrylic on canvas – Triptych, 110 x 150cm panels x 3

© 2024

*Barrigirriga* was created by First Nations artist and Gumbaynggirr woman, Josie Rose Atkinson, for Avant's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) – a *Reflect* RAP launched in May 2024. The artist wishes to note she does not break any of the cultural protocols around the sharing of sacred information or the stories of the 'Old Ways' of knowledge holding.

## ***Barrigirriga – ironbark, small-leaved***

The artist conceptualised the work by focusing on Avant's story through conversations with Avant's employees, along with independent research. The artwork tells the story of Avant's beginnings in 1893 when a group of doctors gathered at The Rocks in Sydney to discuss how they could best share the financial risk associated with their profession and better service the healthcare industry.

***As the artist translates: 'from seeds planted and nurtured in Mother Earth, biodiversity will flourish and grow; a eucalyptus seedling grows into a huge tree providing shade, shelter and food for the birds, wildlife and cleaner air for the people. The ironbark is among the strongest eucalyptus trees found in nature, its strength a philosophical comparison to Avant's journey of growth.'***

Avant began when a metaphoric seed was planted and nurtured, growing into one of Australia's largest organisations, supporting doctors. The now multiple arms of the Avant Group – like the branches of a large *Barrigirriga* – provide integral support to the medical industry.

Avant's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) is part of the good fight for better healthcare outcomes for First Nations peoples, while supporting First Nations doctors and allies. Avant has proudly created its *Reflect* RAP to continue to positively grow and meet the ever-changing needs of the healthcare industry.

## **Artist statement**

The colour palette used in *Barrigirriga* represents Avant through the bold, dramatic and bright hues of 'Gumbaynggirr Country' on the mid-North Coast of NSW. The land and sky of the Gumbaynggirr saltwater, freshwater people can be found along eastern Australia, where the Great Dividing Range and associated Great Escarpment connect to the coastal plain.

The tones and shades of air Country are seen sunrises and sunsets, which provide inspiration for the artist's storyteller imagination. The abstract imagery entwines with the artist's modern experience of Country through a detailed lens, representing the biodiversity existing in the seasonal cycles supporting precious ecosystems, fused with the artist's cultural knowledge and ancestral heritage.

Artist, Josie Rose – as she prefers to be known – is a Gumbaynggirr woman from a family encompassing generations of cultural leaders and artists, each sharing their knowledge through oral and visual traditions that include song, storytelling, wood turning, art, weaving – all supporting the cultural revitalisation of the Gumbaynggirr nation.

**Josie Rose's art practice weaves the wisdom gained through time spent yarning with the knowledge holders of the 'Old Ways' with the symbiotic axis of her lived experience as a healthcare professional.**

The layers and textures within *Barrigirriga's* design are broadly representative of the power intrinsic in the human spirit, of the wonderful achievements possible when like-minded people work together from a strength-based approach, to pave the way for opportunities which support a common goal focused on humanity's greater good – much like the aspirations of those first few doctors who met at The Rocks in 1893.

The spirit of the design captures the positive outcomes Avant has continued to work towards for the betterment of our communities. Avant's *Reflect* RAP is the latest community journey upon which Avant finds itself. What's most important in the flow of the artwork, as well as an acknowledgement of the challenges faced in this space, is also a celebration of positive change.

An important stage of this journey involves engaging and working with a First Nations artist to consolidate the journey Avant is about to undertake; a collaboration and transfer of knowledge between the artist and organisation. It's an extension of, and means of tapping into, the ancient artistic traditions that seek to both support and embed cultural respect – where an artist and an organisation can work together as a team, to practise in real terms what it means to promote reconciliation.

**Since 1893 – and not unlike the large ironbark trees of Queensland and northern New South Wales – Avant has grown to be the largest Medical Defence Organisation in Australia.**

Stemming from such history, the story contained in the RAP artwork needed to capture both the original intention of that first meeting in 1893, and the ongoing action that sees Avant provide doctors with the confidence they need to support their local communities; as part of today's Western healthcare system.

**The left panel of the Triptych begins the story, starting at the top far left of the design, where the intention has been to capture the essence of a new journey, one with high ideals and big goals.**

**Three distinctly blue figures, outlined on the left, are multi-dimensional in their meaning and express pathways illustrative of how Avant continues to grow in its support for doctors, increasing itself in size, with the artwork referencing a three-fold vision.**



**With Avant's Reflect RAP, the Avant story now includes increasing support for First Nations peoples, working towards leading change and embedding pathways into the healthcare industry to improve the health experience for First Nations peoples navigating the healthcare system.**

The semi-circle and semi-oval symbols of the artwork were taught to the artist as a teenager from a senior mid-North coast female *Moran* Elder now in the *Dreaming*. Aunty taught her that placing the symbols in particular positions indicated different ways of communicating. Josie Rose's dad taught her that matriarchal *Gumbaynggirr* women would dance with dots across their foreheads.

The artist employs a dotting technique as the contemporary form of *Gumbaynggirr* storytelling, using this same artistic expression. The circles seen throughout the artwork represent nature and how, in hundreds of ways, the circle appears on Country land, air and water forms and wildlife.

**Think of the intricate patterns in seashells, the flower of bush medicine or the flesh of berry bush tucker. Think of how, under a microscope, human cells are replicated in the artist's work as a statement of her heritage.**

The location and position of the line work indicates the holistic journey Avant is on as it continues to move forward.

The imagery captures both the success and struggles of this journey, with the black line carving a sense of beginning to end, representative of the space and place First Nations peoples have held since that conversation in 1893, through generations to the present time.

The black line at the end of the painting models Avant's ongoing story as, alongside numerous other corporates, it moves into the arena of support for reconciliation within Australia. The artwork provides a visual statement, illustrating the parallels and disconnects between First Nations peoples' concept of health and healing and the Western concept of health and healing.

**However, it's people who remain at the core, detailed in the work – the subtle and nuanced traces of human experience.**

## Triptych map



### Panel 1 – Beginning

Avant's early years: from the beginning, where the vision began – the foundations on which the organisation was built and continues to grow, strive and achieve.

Shaped from left to right; small to large, it showcases 3 different levels and layers.

A number of key employees are engaged on the journey of reconciliation, with the artwork reflecting Avant's origins and communicating its key common goal to support the work of doctors in our community.



### Panel 2 – Middle

Success continues and the organisation begins to expand well beyond the original charter, the details in the work outlining the further intricacies of the diverse range of business activities, support services and communication that needs to take place.



### Panel 3 – End

The possibilities remain endless, with the promise of continued growth: *Change, Adaptation and Abundance*.

In this sense, Avant continues to adapt, shift and change to stay focused on offering products and services to a diverse range of individuals and organisations.

# Our RAP development

Avant's employees recognise the importance of reconciliation for all Australians and the part we play, from a medical perspective, in educating our members and supporting both First Nations members and employees, along with the broader community.

**Since August 2022, Avant has been working towards the development of our *Reflect* RAP.**

**We began by setting up a RAP Steering Committee (SteerCo) of executive employees and a RAP Working Group of volunteers from across the Avant Group.**

**Our approach was to be as inclusive as possible and invite everyone to help build our RAP.**

This has included regular communication about the RAP in both informal and formal settings, as well as rolling out an Acknowledgement of Country over the period of a year, encouraging employees to do so when appropriate and as per their comfort level.

Through a process of ideation and regular *yarning*, our steering and working groups spent 18 months working through our current connections and opportunities for further connection with First Nations peoples, focusing on how we might best strengthen and build on our existing relationships in the medical sphere and share this across the Avant Group.

Sourcing our office supplies through Complete Office Supplies (COS), Avant already has access to several First Nations suppliers, including the MURU Group for our stationery and Yaru Mineral Water.

In setting up our artist contract with Josie Rose, we engaged law firm, Terri Janke and Company – an award-winning, 100% Indigenous-owned law firm that empowers clients to achieve success in business and innovation.

Recommended by Josie Rose, Terri Janke is a *Wuthathi/ Meriam* woman and an international authority on Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property (ICIP), known for innovating pathways between the non-Indigenous business sector and Indigenous people in business.



## Implementation framework

Guided by Avant's Executive Committee, this *Reflect* RAP has been driven by our RAP Champion, who has brought together our RAP SteerCo and helps direct our RAP Working Group, as we work in close collaboration with our teams – sharing our output and inviting collaboration from our employees across the Avant Group.

“

I am part of the RAP Working Group as I would like to be part of an Australia where our Indigenous communities will have the same opportunities as our non-Indigenous communities.

RAP Working Group Member



“

The foundation of  
reconciliation is first  
built upon trust.

Dr Vennassa Wong  
Rural and Remote General Practitioner, Anaesthetist  
Indigenous Health Coordinator, Charles Sturt  
University School of Rural Medicine  
Board Member SNSWLHD – Chair Aboriginal Health  
subcommittee  
Avant Member

# Relationships



As a mutual focused on working closely to support its members and give them the confidence they need to support our communities, Avant well understands that building strong relationships between people is the basis for better outcomes for everyone.

As our organisation has expanded its member offering significantly over the past decade, Avant is in the business of offering its members and communities the professional and personal resources they need to be successful. Beginning our RAP journey has been a natural extension of this, as we provide ongoing education and opportunities for both our members and the Australian communities they support.

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.	December 2024	General Manager, Public Affairs and Sustainability
	Research best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	December 2024	General Manager, Public Affairs and Sustainability
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our employees.	June 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Encourage and support RAP SteerCo, Working Group, senior leaders and employees to participate in an external event and celebrate NRW.	June 2024	General Manager, Public Affairs and Sustainability
	Explore the possibility of inviting a local elder to conduct a Welcome to Country in each office for NAIDOC Week.	June 2024	General Manager, Public Affairs and Sustainability
3. Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	Continue to communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all employees with the launch of our <i>Reflect</i> RAP.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Identify RAP and other like-minded organisations that we could approach to collaborate with on our reconciliation journey.	August 2024	General Manager, Public Affairs and Sustainability
	Increase member awareness around the responsibility of being an ally in situations of workplace discrimination, like racism.	August 2024	Member Education Specialist
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination.	December 2024	Senior Associate – Workplace Law
	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	December 2024	Senior Associate – Workplace Law



# Respect



Respect is one of the key foundations underpinning the way Avant operates both internally as a team, and externally with its members. Avant's four central values – *Purpose, Passion, Courage and Trust* – encourage employees to always operate with respect.

Moreover, we're focused on making sure Avant is a great place to work, regardless of who we are, how we identify or our country of origin. Embedding this understanding of respect is another reason why working through the RAP process is of great value to us as an organisation.

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 business case for increasing understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights within our organisation.	October 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	October 2024	Head of Learning and Development
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	Embed an understanding of the local Traditional Owners or Custodians of the lands and waters within our organisation's operational areas, as part of our speaker training resources.	October 2024	Member Education Specialist
	Increase team member understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	October 2024	Member Education Specialist
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	Raise awareness and share information among our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Introduce our employees to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in our local area, encouraging participation in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications



I am passionate about reconciliation in Australia because it strengthens relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples across the country, which leads to better opportunities and outcomes for all Australians.

RAP Working Group Member

# Opportunities



Over the past 12 months, our RAP Working Group has identified key opportunities available to our organisation that meet both our business goals and the larger aim of national reconciliation. These activities include broadening the cultural knowledge of our employees and encouraging participation in educational events – both national and local – including producing, and embedding, further eLearning materials for employees and members.

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 promoting the attraction and hiring of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members within our organisation.	November 2024	Head of Talent Acquisition
	Investigate opportunities to increase the cultural safety of our organisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees.	November 2024	Head of People & Culture Business Partners
	Build understanding from current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander team members to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.	November 2024	Head of People & Culture Business Partners
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.	April 2025	Chief Risk Officer
	Investigate Supply Nation membership.	April 2025	Chief Risk Officer
10. Strengthen Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA) relationship and support model.	Investigate opportunities for AIDA members to speak to Avant employees.	October 2024	Manager Member Education
	Investigate opportunities to present to AIDA members on medico-legal issues.	October 2024	Manager Member Education
	Offer free use of the Well-Being Index to AIDA members (app, developed by the Mayo clinic, used by doctors to self-assess stress and burnout).	October 2024	Manager Member Education



I'm involved to contribute towards meaningful change at Avant and advance my own knowledge and understanding so I can be a better advocate for equity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples when it comes to health, opportunity and quality of life.

RAP Working Group Member



# Governance



Our RAP work is led by our RAP Champion who drives our RAP SteerCo and RAP Working Group – in turn responsible for monitoring, measuring and reporting the output of our RAP initiatives across the Avant Group.

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
11. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	Maintain a RWG to govern RAP implementation.	June 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG.	June 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG.	June 2024	Head of Internal Communications
12. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	July 2024	Head of Internal Communications
13. 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 out on important RAP correspondence.	October 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link for the RAP Impact Survey.	October 2024	Head of Internal Communications
	Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Survey to Reconciliation Australia.	January 2025	Head of Internal Communications
14. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	Register via Reconciliation Australia's website ( <a href="http://rap.reconciliation.org.au/s/registration">rap.reconciliation.org.au/s/registration</a> ) to begin developing our next RAP.	January 2025	Head of Internal Communications



I wanted to be part of Avant's contribution to reconciliation, based around relationships, respect and creating opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, which are core values of mine.

RAP Working Group Member







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I have a strong desire to contribute towards reconciliation especially in healthcare. In my role at Avant in member education, we have published content for medical practitioners to help improve communication skills with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It was a delight to engage with an Elder from our local community in the development of this course. We have also worked with AIDA to present further information on racism in the workplace as a joint venture. My hope is that these initiatives will be of benefit to both doctors and patients.

RAP Working Group Member

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Working on the Avant Mutual RAP is an opportunity to work towards a personal and deeply-held intention of contributing to reconciliation in Australia. It is a tangible way I can make a positive impact within my organisation on this issue, which I feel strongly about. This is another example of my personal values aligning with those of my employer.

RAP Working Group Member

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