



# FY26–28 Reconciliation Action Plan



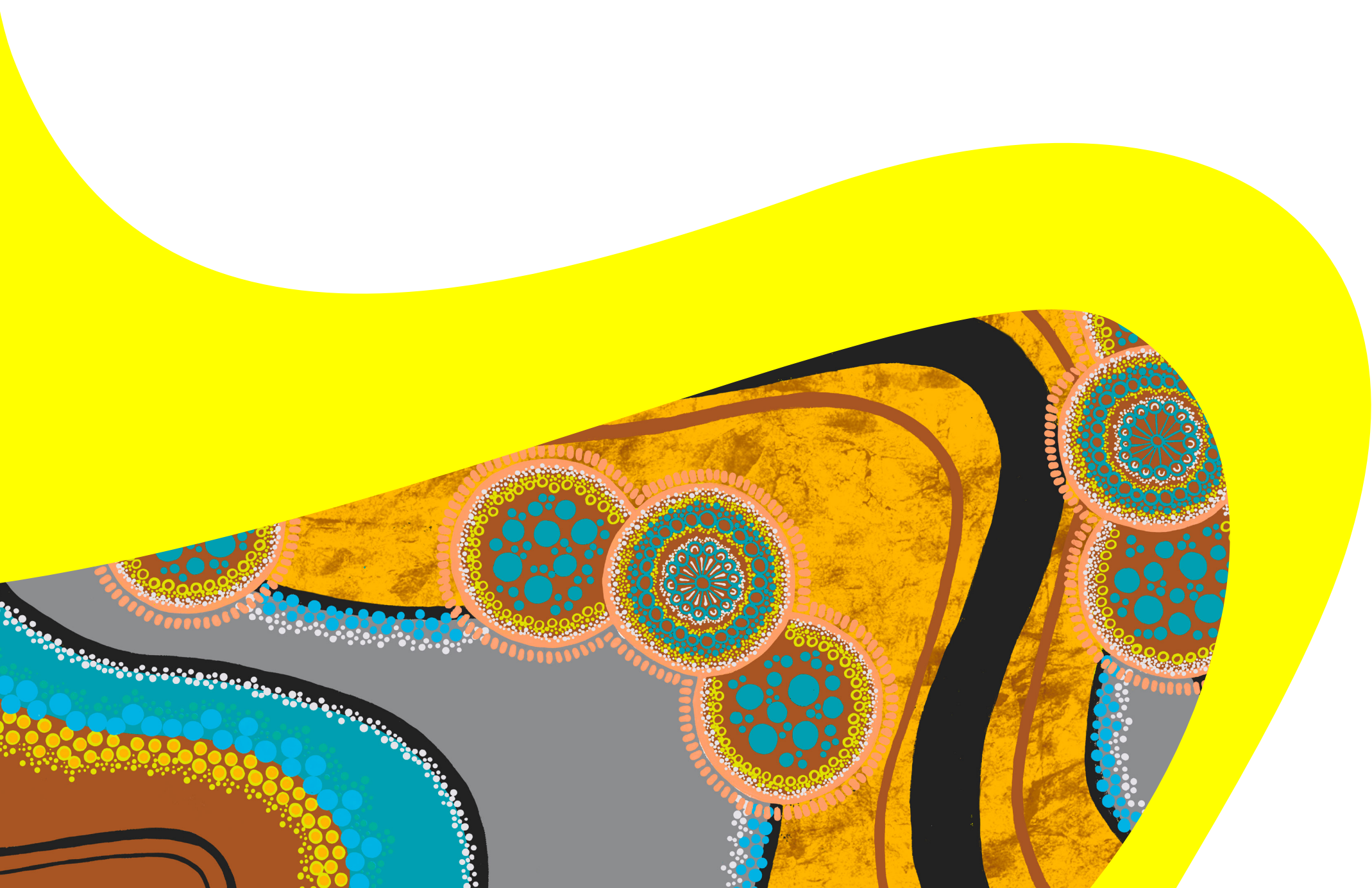
# Acknowledgement of Country.

Commonwealth Bank (CommBank) acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands across Australia as the continuing custodians of Country and Culture dating back to the creation of the Dreaming. We pay our respect to First Nations peoples and their Elders, past and present.

We acknowledge and celebrate the inherent resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

We thank the many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees, external advisers, communities and partner organisations that have guided us through achieving meaningful reconciliation outcomes.

Our head office is located at Tumbalong (Darling Harbour, Sydney) on the Lands of the Gadigal Peoples.



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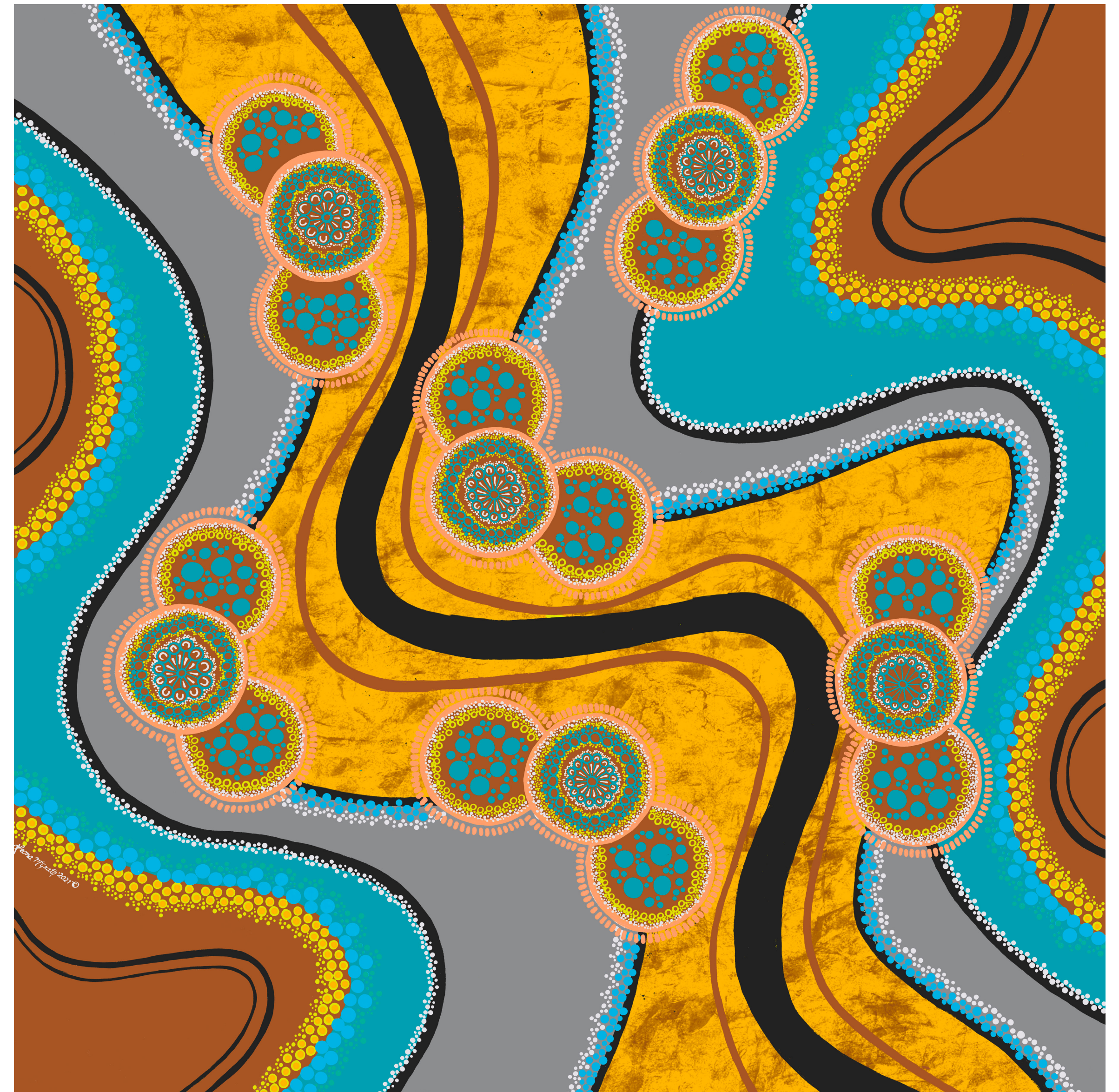
# Our reconciliation artwork.

Co-created by Kuku Yalanji and Woopaburra artist Leona McGrath, First Nations organisation Yerrabingin, CommBank's First Nations and non-Indigenous employees, and members of the community, the creative design visually expresses our brand and values. The artwork is designed to symbolise the bank's respect for and celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures as part of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

In developing the design, the artist conveyed three central themes: Community, Connections and Wellbeing, and pairs some of the CommBank colours with traditional Aboriginal designs to create an artwork and narrative that aims to conjure connectedness and pride with our customers, communities and our people.

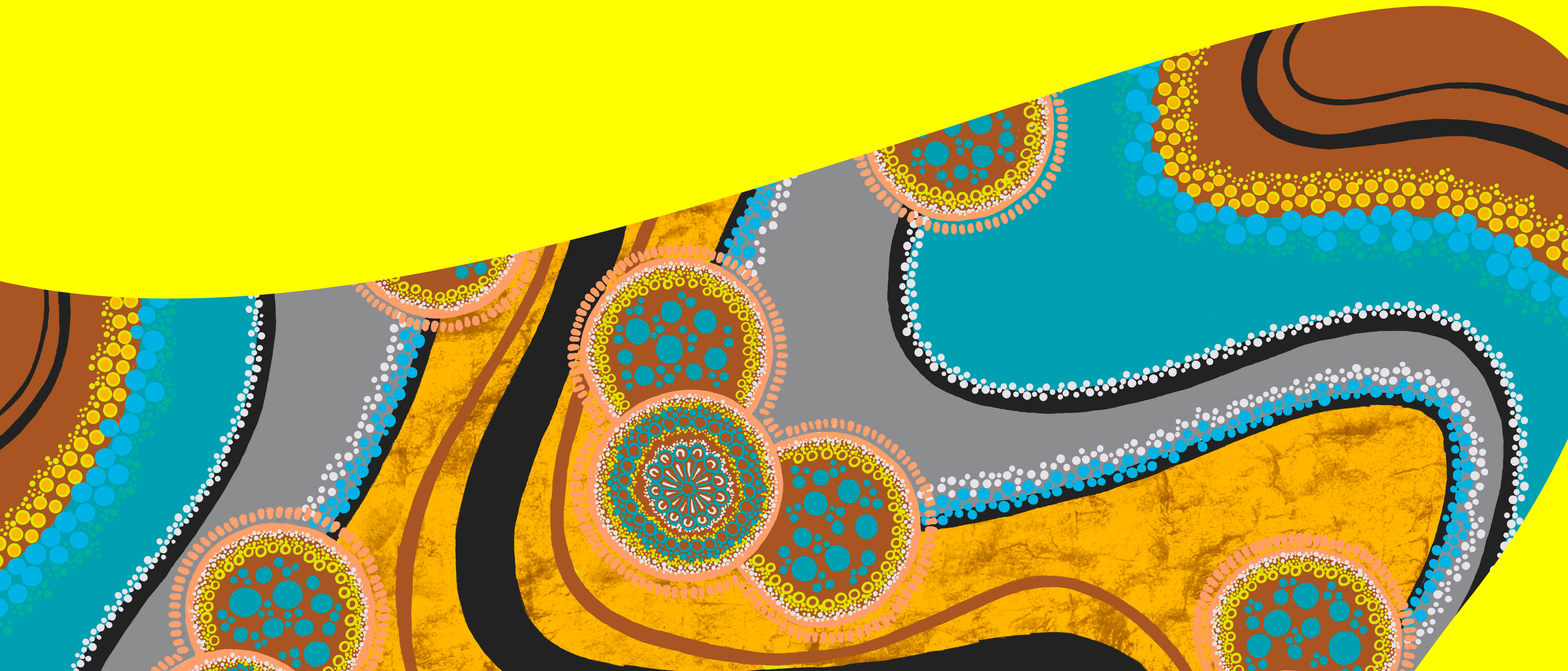
Leona McGrath is a proud Aboriginal woman originally from Queensland from the Woopaburra People of Great Keppel Island and Kuku Yalanji People of Far North Queensland. Leona is a Mother, Grandmother, contemporary Aboriginal artist and a Registered Midwife. Growing up on Gadigal Country, Leona has been blessed with a strong sense of connection to Country by being welcomed into the Community.

Leona has been painting for over 30 years and continues to learn and develop as an artist. Her journey of creating art has enabled her to have a stronger connection to her culture as well as providing opportunities to share and education the wider community about Aboriginal people and culture. Creating art has inspired Leona to travel on a personal journey of healing and growth.





# Introduction.





# CEO Messages.

## Commonwealth Bank

At Commonwealth Bank, our purpose is to build a brighter future for all. We recognise that progressing our purpose for First Nations peoples means being a trusted partner as they achieve their social, cultural and economic aspirations.

Our FY26–28 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) outlines our activities to support us in pursuing this ambition and builds on our longstanding commitment to reconciliation, including as set out in our previous RAPs.

Guided by our RAP, in 2024 we launched the First Nations Reach Program, which brings face-to-face banking services and financial education to remote communities, helping to improve access to banking services for First Nations peoples. During the 2024 financial year, we also had over 190 employment offers accepted by First Nations people for roles across the bank, which supported us to increase First Nations representation to 1.7%<sup>1</sup>, an increase from 1.2% as reported for 2023. We also saw momentum in our First Nations Supplier Diversity Program, with our spend with First Nations businesses increasing to \$22.65M as at 30 June 2024, an increase of 150% on the prior year.

While we are proud of these achievements, we recognise that the way we engage with First Nations customers, team members, businesses and communities is important to achieving sustainable outcomes. Our FY26–28 RAP seeks to apply a set of engagement principles to the way we deliver our 12 reconciliation priorities so we can continue to strengthen our engagement with First Nations peoples. These principles have been developed with our Indigenous Leadership Team (ILT) and our Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) to support better engagement with First Nations Stakeholders while our teams deliver our Reconciliation Programs, as set out in our FY26–28 RAP.

Reconciliation is an ongoing journey, and I thank our IAC members, Sean Gordon AM, Dr Bronwyn Bancroft, Mayrah Sonter, Aunty Gail Mabo and Mick Gooda, for their continued guidance. I also extend my thanks to our ILT for their ongoing commitment to reconciliation and supporting us to deliver outcomes for First Nations customers, team members, businesses and communities.

In delivering our FY26–28 RAP, we look forward to working with Reconciliation Australia as we progress our purpose of building a brighter future for all. I thank Karen and the team at Reconciliation Australia for their continued leadership and guidance in supporting our reconciliation priorities.

**Matt Comyn**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Commonwealth Bank

1. As at 30 September 2024.

## Reconciliation Australia

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I congratulate Commonwealth Bank on their ongoing formal commitment to reconciliation, as they implement their fourth Elevate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

As an Elevate RAP organisation, Commonwealth Bank has a proven track record of embedding effective RAP initiatives and consistently shows their ability to take on leadership to advance national reconciliation.

With a well-established presence in the RAP program, Commonwealth Bank proves that when reconciliation commitments are closely aligned with business strategy and areas of expertise and spheres of influence, success follows. Commonwealth Bank's RAPs stand on their foundational purpose to build a better future for all. In the context of furthering reconciliation, this guiding mission coupled with their operational capacity places Commonwealth Bank in a uniquely impactful position to increase the economic self-determination and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Commonwealth Bank's previous RAPs story their commitment to increasing First Nations representation across their business and improving equitable access to financial services for First Nations people. Commonwealth Bank sought to improve its understanding of the unique nature of financial abuse impacting First Nations communities and to bring face-to-face banking services and financial education to remote communities. This work helped to lay the foundation for their new commitments to First Nations-led initiatives.

As part of this Elevate RAP, Commonwealth Bank has developed Indigenous Engagement Principles (IEPs) to apply to the delivery of their reconciliation priorities. The IEPs – self-determination, participation in decision-making, respect and recognition of culture and equality and non-discrimination – aim to further strengthen Commonwealth Bank's engagement with First Nations peoples as it builds on its reconciliation commitments. This strategy shows their deep understanding that initiatives are far more effective when First Nations people are involved in the design and delivery and lead the solutions. Additionally, Commonwealth Bank continues to focus efforts on expanding access to financial services for First Nations people and communities.

By building on its past RAP experiences, listening to the voices and expertise of First Nations people and using that knowledge to continually expand their strategies, Commonwealth Bank demonstrates their maturity and the sustainability of their approach to their reconciliation program, now and into the future.

On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend Commonwealth Bank on this Elevate RAP and look forward to following their ongoing reconciliation journey.

**Karen Mundine**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Reconciliation Australia



# Context on Commonwealth Bank.

## At CommBank, our purpose is to build a brighter future for all.

Our purpose reflects our ambition, and it inspires and connects us to the bank’s reason for being, conveying our hope and optimism for the future. Inspired by our purpose, we are focused on building tomorrow’s bank today for our customers, through our strategic priorities - helping build Australia’s future economy; reimagining banking; and simpler, better foundations.

We are guided by our values in everything we do:

- **Care:** We care about our customers and each other – we serve with humility and transparency.
- **Courage:** We have the courage to step in, speak up and lead by example.
- **Commitment:** We are unwavering in our commitment – we do what’s right and work together to get things done.

## Our Code of Conduct

Our Code of Conduct is the ultimate guide for how we do things at CommBank. It describes the standards of conduct we expect. The Code connects our purpose, values and key Group policies, with a series of questions: ‘Must We’, ‘Can We’ and ‘Should We’, to help us to deliver the right outcomes for all our stakeholders.

## Our Customer Commitment

The Customer Advocate has a focus on helping the bank identify opportunities to improve the bank’s products, services, systems and processes, informed by data, insights and different perspectives.

Everyone can experience financial hardship at some time. This may be related to cost of living pressures, serious illness or injury, unemployment or changes in income, natural disasters or unexpected expenses or business downturn. But getting support is important. Our Financial Assistance Solutions team can work with customers if they are struggling to keep up or worries about managing debt repayments in the future. We can help with tailored support to suit individual customer needs.

## Our business operations

CommBank is a leading bank in Australia, serving approximately 15.5 million customers nationally in FY24. Across Australia, as at 30 June 2024, CommBank employed more than 36,500 full-time equivalent employees, with 1.7% of our workforce identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander as at 30 September 2024.

Our domestic brands include well-known names in banking and financial services in Australia:



<b>Retail Banking Services (RBS)</b>	RBS provides simple and convenient banking products and services to personal and private bank customers, helping them manage their everyday banking needs, buy a home, or invest for the future. RBS also includes the retail banking activities conducted under the Bankwest and Unloan brands.
<b>Business Banking (BB)</b>	BB serves the banking needs of business, corporate and agribusiness customers across the full range of financial services solutions. BB also provides Australia’s leading equities trading and margin lending services through our CommSec business.
<b>Institutional Banking and Markets (IB&amp;M)</b>	IB&M provides domestic and global financing and banking services to large corporate, institutional and government clients. This includes access to debt capital markets, risk management, transaction banking, sustainable finance, structured and working capital solutions, and tailored research and data analytics.
<b>Support Units</b>	Our support units include Marketing and Corporate Affairs, Human Resources, Technology, Operations, Financial Services, Group Strategy, Risk Management and Legal and Group Secretariat.

The activities set out in our FY26–28 RAP apply to CommBank. Brands including CommSec, Bankwest and Unloan may support the delivery of CommBank’s RAP, where practical.



# Key reconciliation achievements.

## FY23–25 Elevate RAP

- Launched seventh RAP, being our third Elevate RAP.
- Over 190 employment offers accepted by external First Nations people for roles across the bank in FY24; First Nations representation across our domestic workforce increased to 1.7%, as at 30 September 2024.
- First Nations Reach Program provided face-to-face banking services to 1,426 customers in remote locations in 2024.
- Spent \$22.65m with First Nations businesses in FY24, an increase of almost 150% on our FY23 spend, compared to our goal of a 10% year on year increase.
- 40.4% of Australian-based employees completed one or more forms of Indigenous cultural development training in FY24, exceeding our goal of 25% for the year.

## FY20–22 Elevate RAP

- Launched sixth RAP, being our second Elevate RAP.
- Introduced the Indigenous Leadership Team.
- Increased First Nations representation across our domestic workforce to 0.9%, as at 30 September 2021.
- Embedded First Nations Lead Teams across the business and introduced a First Nations employee representative on the Indigenous Advisory Council.
- Collaborated with Supply Nation to launch JumpStart, a volunteering platform to connect employees of member organisations with First Nations businesses to share their skills and time.

## FY17–19 Elevate RAP

- Launched fifth RAP, being our first Elevate RAP.
- Announced Indigenous employment parity ambition and launched Technology and Operations traineeship program and Training Academy.
- First placement of a First Nations university graduate to CommBank's Graduate Program in 2015.

## 2013–2014 RAP

- Launched fourth RAP.
- Established the Indigenous Advisory Council.
- Celebrated 10 years of School Based Traineeships.
- Provided \$1m over five years in scholarships to the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.
- Launched the Indigenous Customer Assistance Line Third Party Transfer Service, providing customers additional access to funds.

## 2010–2011 RAP

- Launched third RAP.
- Expanded employment program to offer Indigenous university internship opportunities.
- Partnered with Jawun Secondment Program.
- *(includes activity delivered in 2012 during new RAP development)*

## 2009–2010 RAP

- Launched second RAP.
- Launched our first Indigenous Employment Strategy.
- Became Founding Member of Supply Nation.
- Launched our Indigenous Customer Assistance Line for remote customers.
- Launched cultural e-learning module for employees.
- Became sponsor of National NAIDOC Person of the Year Awards.

## 2008 RAP

- Launched first RAP.
- Supported scholarships for First Nations students via partnership with Australian Indigenous Education Foundation.

## 2002

- Established Indigenous School Based Traineeships.



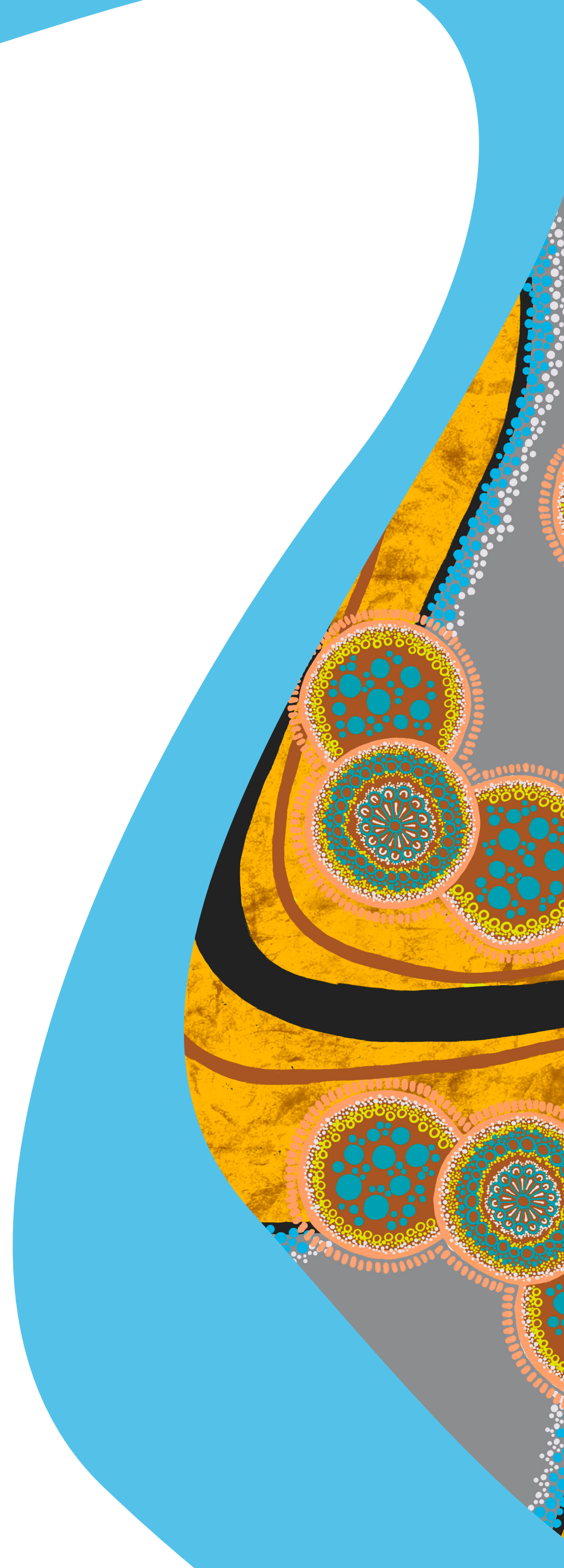
# About our FY26–28 Reconciliation Action Plan.





# Our FY26–28 Reconciliation Action Plan.

<b>CommBank Purpose</b>	<b>BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL</b>			
<b>Reconciliation Ambition</b>	We seek to be a trusted partner to First Nations peoples as they achieve their social, cultural, and economic aspirations.			
<b>FY26–28 RAP Pillars</b>	<p><b>Reconciliation and Community</b> We aim to engage our people in reconciliation and encourage place-based approaches to working with First Nations communities, supporting solutions designed by the community, for the community.</p>	<p><b>Education and Careers</b> We aim to attract and grow First Nations talent, by continuing to provide a compelling employee value proposition and offering tailored support and a culturally safe environment for First Nations employees to grow their careers at CommBank.</p>	<p><b>Business Success and Growth</b> We aim to improve our banking and procurement propositions to support First Nations businesses to succeed, and support communities to engage economically in the transition to net zero.</p>	<p><b>Financial Inclusion</b> We aim to improve banking inclusion through access to culturally safe, affordable and appropriate financial products and services and support First Nations peoples to turn increased income into wealth legacies for them and their families.</p>
<b>Reconciliation Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Yana Budjari Reconciliation Network</li> <li>2. First Nations Place-Based Engagement</li> <li>3. First Nations Next Chapter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. First Nations Education Partnerships</li> <li>5. First Nations Talent Acquisition</li> <li>6. One.Mob Employee Network</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. First Nations Supplier Diversity</li> <li>8. First Nations Business Banking</li> <li>9. First Nations Net Zero</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. First Nations Banking Products and Services</li> <li>11. First Nations Remote Banking</li> <li>12. First Nations Financial Independence</li> </ul>
<b>Indigenous Engagement Principles</b>	<p><b>Self-determination</b> Work with First Nations peoples to enable self-determined social, cultural and economic aspirations.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Participation in decision-making</b> Engage First Nations peoples in decisions relating to our reconciliation priorities.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Respect and recognition of culture</b> Build organisational cultural capability to enable culturally informed responses.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Equality and non-discrimination</b> Address barriers preventing equal access to opportunities for First Nations peoples.</p>			
<b>First Nations Leadership and Governance</b>	Underpinned by a First Nations-led approach and engagement with the Indigenous Leadership Team and Indigenous Advisory Council.			





# Our FY26-28 reconciliation priorities and Indigenous Engagement Principles.

## Our reconciliation ambition is to be a trusted partner to First Nations peoples as they achieve their social, cultural and economic aspirations.

To support progress towards achieving our ambition, our FY26-28 RAP builds on the three ambitious transformation projects we set out in our prior RAP, focusing on:

- understanding the unique nature of financial abuse impacting First Nations communities, as part of our Next Chapter program;
- working to understand and remove barriers to accessing appropriate financial products and services; and
- supporting First Nations communities interested in pursuing opportunities with the carbon market.

These projects complemented our foundational areas of:

- providing opportunities to develop meaningful careers within the bank; and
- supporting economic participation for First Nations businesses.

We have maintained our focus on these key issues in our FY26-28 RAP - given addressing them requires sustained focus over time - and they have been formalised into 12 reconciliation priorities, led by First Nations Lead Teams within key business and support units.

In developing our FY26-28 RAP, these specialist teams reviewed the strategies for each of the reconciliation priorities. In consultation with the ILT, IAC and relevant senior leaders across the bank, we selected activities from the strategies for inclusion in our FY26-28 RAP.

## Applying the Indigenous Engagement Principles into our reconciliation priorities

Since the launch of our first RAP in 2008, we have improved our understanding of the role we play in reconciliation, and we recognise that initiatives are more effective and impactful when First Nations peoples are leading solutions, and where First Nations peoples are involved in the design and delivery of initiatives.

Building on this insight, we have worked with our ILT and IAC to develop our Indigenous Engagement Principles (IEPs). These principles aim to strengthen our capacity and capability to deliver our reconciliation priorities by equipping relevant teams with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver opportunities that are appropriate, effective and aligned with the needs of First Nations stakeholders. Over the next three years, our transformation project will focus on applying these IEPs in our 12 reconciliation priorities, as set out in this RAP.

The IEPs represent our understanding of the key principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), in a business context. We have considered the IEPs in determining our 12 reconciliation priorities and the activities that form our FY26-28 RAP. For the avoidance of doubt, the IEPs do not apply outside the 12 reconciliation priorities set out in our RAP. Our Environmental and Social (E&S) Framework sets out our commitments to human rights, including First Nations peoples' rights, which apply outside our RAP.



### IEP 1: Self-determination

Work with First Nations peoples to enable self-determined social, cultural and economic aspirations

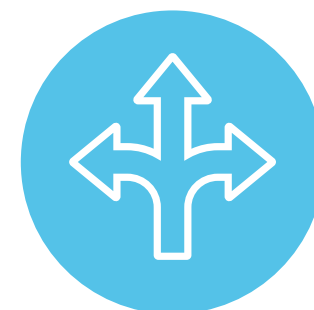
Self-determination is about people having choice, participation and control over their own lives and being able to govern themselves in ways that support them to achieve the things that really matter to them and their communities. For First Nations peoples, this means being able to self-determine their social, cultural and economic aspirations and deliver solutions for their communities. When delivering our reconciliation priorities, early engagement with First Nations peoples often leads to better outcomes and less unintended consequences.



### IEP 2: Participation in decision-making

Engage First Nations peoples in decisions relating to our reconciliation priorities

Closely linked to self-determination is First Nation's peoples' ability to effectively and meaningfully participate in decision-making in matters which affect them and their community. Our own experience has been that listening to Indigenous voices when issues uniquely impact First Nations communities, in particular through our own IAC and ILT, has improved the way we are able to support First Nations employees, customers and communities.



### IEP 3: Respect and recognition of culture

Build organisational capability to enable culturally informed responses

Respecting and protecting culture is important, so that the oldest living continuous culture in the world can be passed on to future generations. Recognising culture requires developing an understanding and embracing First Nations peoples' ways of being and knowing; ways of communicating and ways of thinking about the world, which have been developed over millennia. Together with celebrating First Nations peoples' achievements and resilience, we can build a brighter future where First Nations cultures and heritage are a proud part of our shared national identity.



### IEP 4: Equality and non-discrimination

Address barriers preventing equal access to opportunities for First Nations peoples

In life we all start from a different place - we come from different backgrounds, have different upbringings, have differing access to education and experience the world in different ways. Through our reconciliation priorities, we recognise that because of these differences, to achieve equality for First Nations peoples, we may need to tailor support based on our understanding of peoples' unique circumstances. This may require concerted effort to identify existing barriers to opportunities, and to work with First Nations stakeholders to understand how they are best addressed.



# First Nations Leadership and Governance.

**We aim to maintain a First Nations-led approach to the delivery of our reconciliation priorities, with strong engagement with the Indigenous Leadership Team and Indigenous Advisory Council.**

## Indigenous Leadership Team

Our Indigenous Leadership Team (ILT) was established in 2022 to advocate for, and support, the aspirations of First Nations employees at the bank.

The ILT aims to amplify the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing and being. Although the majority of ILT members are in key roles delivering the bank's RAP, ILT members are appointed based on their strong connections to culture and community, and their cultural understanding of First Nations leadership.

To help drive positive outcomes for First Nations peoples, the ILT focuses on three key priorities:

- Working with our First Nations employee network, One.Mob, so their voices are heard, and their ideas, issues and concerns are responded to.
- Providing guidance and support to teams in delivering our reconciliation priorities and offering lived experience advice to help drive greater impact for First Nations employees, customers and communities.
- Being a trusted advisor to the bank's senior leadership on matters relating to First Nations peoples.

## Indigenous Advisory Council

Our Indigenous Advisory Council (IAC) was formed in 2014 to enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices and perspectives to inform our approach to reconciliation. The IAC consists of external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who offer guidance on the development and implementation of our reconciliation priorities.

Having been an inaugural member of the IAC, we appointed Sean Gordon to the role of Chair of the IAC in 2018. In this role, Sean also sits on the CEO Advisory Panel, bringing First Nations views to this forum's discussions.

Other external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander members on the IAC include Dr Bronwyn Bancroft, Mayrah Sonter, Mick Gooda and Aunty Gail Mabo. Since 2022, a First Nations employee representative, a position generally filled by the Chair of the ILT, has also sat on the IAC, strengthening the voice of One.Mob.

In addition, CommBank senior leaders who have responsibilities under the RAP also sit on the IAC.

## First Nations Lead Teams

Our reconciliation priorities are led by First Nations Lead Teams within key business and support units. They are supported by several teams across their business or support unit, who are responsible for delivering aspects of the reconciliation priorities. These specialist teams provide guidance to their business or support units on matters that uniquely impact First Nations peoples. They report to senior leadership regularly to update on progress and to discuss opportunities and challenges.

Our First Nations Lead Teams are:

- **First Nations Strategy and Partnerships:** The team sits within Marketing and Corporate Affairs and coordinates our bank-wide RAP; advises the business on community engagement and coordinates our First Nations stakeholder engagement forums, including our IAC. The team also oversees our First Nations cultural development strategy, seeking to improve the cultural safety of our workplace for First Nations colleagues, customers and community.
- **Indigenous Community Experience:** The team sits within Human Resources and develops and delivers strategies to increase talent attraction and representation across the business, working with business and support units to develop and deliver direct hire strategies and tailored employment programs, including the RBS traineeship programs, the Technology and Operations Academy and the CareerTrackers internship program.

- **Indigenous Procurement and Engagement:** The team sits within the Group Corporate Services function in Financial Services and supports the business to increase supplier spend with First Nations businesses. The team works with the CommBank buying community to raise awareness of aligned businesses and provides advice on purchasing products and services from First Nations businesses.
- **Indigenous Business Banking:** The Indigenous Business Banking portfolio is supported by a team of Business Banking specialists who have access to cultural training and progressive learning opportunities. The team works to develop deeper customer relationships with Indigenous businesses to better understand and support their business banking needs.
- **First Nations Customer Engagement:** Indigenous engagement specialists sit within Retail Banking Services and work with internal stakeholders to consider First Nations customer banking needs, including working with the First Nations Reach Program team that delivers face-to-face banking services to select remote communities, and the Indigenous Customer Assistance Line (ICAL) team who support First Nations customers with extra care.



# Contributing to reconciliation.

**Through our transformation project, we aim to contribute to reconciliation by supporting the Australian Government's Closing the Gap priorities through an approach that complements Reconciliation Australia's Five Dimensions of Reconciliation.**

## Reconciliation Australia's Five Dimensions of Reconciliation

As defined by Reconciliation Australia, at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous peoples, for the benefit of all Australians. Reconciliation Australia's vision of reconciliation is based and measured on five dimensions: historical acceptance; race relations; equality and equity; institutional integrity and unity.

Reconciliation Australia states that these five dimensions do not exist in isolation but are interrelated. Reconciliation cannot be seen as a single issue or agenda; the contemporary definition of reconciliation must weave all these threads together. Applying our IEPs in our reconciliation priorities can be complementary to Reconciliation Australia's five dimensions of reconciliation:

**Historical Acceptance:** In line with *Reconciliation Australia's dimension Historical Acceptance*, we recognise that First Nations peoples were excluded from the financial system, and this has contributed to economic disadvantage which continues to impact on First Nations peoples today. Through our principle of *Self-determination*, we aim to work with First Nations peoples to enable self-determined social, cultural and economic aspirations.

**Race Relations:** Aligned with *Reconciliation Australia's dimension Race Relations*, our principle of *Participation in decision-making* focuses on engaging First Nations peoples in decisions relating to our reconciliation priorities. Through this principle, we seek to continually build First Nations stakeholders' trust in our organisation.

**Unity:** A key aspect of our commitment to building our cultural capability is recognising that culture extends to embracing First Nations peoples' ways of knowing and being, so First Nations cultures, heritage and systems are valued as an integral part of our national identity. Our principle of *Respect and Recognition of Culture* is complementary to *Reconciliation Australia's dimension of Unity*.

**Equality and Equity:** Our principle of *Equality and Non-Discrimination*, which is closely linked to *Reconciliation Australia's dimension of Equality and Equity*, aims to address barriers preventing equal access to opportunities for First Nations peoples. Inclusion and respect are integral to how we live our values, meet the needs of our customers and deliver our strategy. As we work towards having a workforce which reflects the diversity of our customers and communities, we are focused on creating an environment where we embrace differences and celebrate the things we have in common.

**Institutional Integrity:** Recognising *Reconciliation Australia's dimension of Institutional Integrity*, our IEPs have been informed by the priorities outlined in UNDRIP, as defined by the Australian Human Rights Commission. They represent our understanding of the key principles of UNDRIP. They were developed through engagement with our ILT and the IAC.

## Australian Government's Closing the Gap

Through our transformational project, we aim to meaningfully contribute to the Australian Government's Closing the Gap (CtG) agenda. Specifically, our FY26-28 RAP pillars include activities that support certain CtG outcomes, including:

**Families and Kin:** Our *Reconciliation and Community* reconciliation priorities can contribute to *CtG Outcome 13: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and households are safe, with the rate of all forms of family violence and abuse against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children reduced at least by 50%, as progress towards zero*.

**Education, Employment and Economic Development:** Our *Education and Careers* + our *Business Success and Growth* reconciliation priorities can contribute to *CtG Outcome 6: Students reach their full potential through further education pathways*, *CtG Outcome 7: Young people are engaged in employment or education*, and *CtG Outcome 8: Strong economic participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*.

**Connection to Country, Culture and Languages:** Our *Business Success and Growth* reconciliation priorities can contribute to *CtG Outcome 15: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people maintain a distinctive cultural, spiritual, physical and economic relationship with their land and waters*.

**Housing and Infrastructure:** Our *Financial Inclusion* reconciliation priorities can contribute to *CtG Outcome 9: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people secure, appropriate, affordable housing that is aligned with their priorities and needs*, and *CtG Outcome 17: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have access to information and services enabling participation in informed decision-making regarding their own lives*.



# Our FY26–28 RAP Activities.





# How we deliver our reconciliation priorities.

**Our approach to delivering our reconciliation priorities has supported us to lay the foundations for strong reconciliation engagement across the bank.**



## Maintaining strong First Nations Governance

Our First Nations Governance forums, which includes our ILT and IAC, provide regular opportunities for teams to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples so their voices and perspectives can inform our approach to reconciliation.

Throughout FY26-28, our ILT will:

- Meet monthly and maintain a rotating Chair who will lead the group for a one-year period. The Chair coordinates agendas for each monthly meeting.
- Meet twice a year with our ELT E&S Committee to discuss reconciliation progress, opportunities and challenges.
- Review our biennial Measurement and Evaluation (M&E) data to consider program improvements and share insights with relevant teams across the bank.
- Throughout FY26-28, our IAC will:
  - Meet four times a year to guide the development and implementation of the RAP and advise CommBank on reconciliation related matters.
  - Prioritise discussion and consideration of the IEPs and how teams are applying them in the delivery of their reconciliation priorities.
  - Review the IAC Terms of Reference (ToR) annually to consider the skills and knowledge required to deliver our reconciliation priorities. The ToR will outline our intentions to maintain an independent First Nations Chair, seek an appropriate gender, age and cultural mix and set out the remuneration for the IAC members for sharing their knowledge and insights with us.

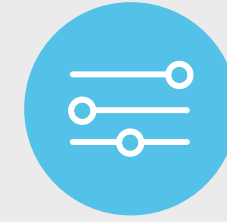


## Measuring and evaluating the impact of our reconciliation priorities

We value measurement and evaluation as an important way to test the impact and effectiveness of initiatives and gather insights that will support continuous improvement.

In measuring, evaluating and reporting progress, we will:

- Gather Measurement and Evaluation (M&E) data, to be completed biennially, and present insights trends and comparisons to the ILT and IAC for feedback.
- Participate in Reconciliation Australia's Workplace RAP Barometer (WRB) and present insights to the First Nations Lead Team Connects, ILT and IAC for feedback and consideration.
- Share biennial WRB insights with relevant teams in Human Resources to support our Respect Lives Here program in strengthening understanding of respectful and disrespectful behaviours and equip our people to take action in situations where things don't feel right.



## Monitoring and reporting progress through monthly First Nations Lead Team Connects

To track and monitor progress towards implementing our reconciliation priorities, the First Nations Strategy and Partnerships team brings together the First Nations Lead Teams, based on their relevant FY26-28 RAP Pillars, to discuss and document progress.

As part of our First Nations Lead Team Connections, we will:

- Schedule monthly meetings to discuss matters that uniquely impact First Nations peoples and share insights and lessons learned.
- Review the strategies for each of the reconciliation priorities annually and consider how cross-cutting frameworks like the Cultural Capability Framework can be matured to further support our reconciliation priorities.
- Provide updates on progress, opportunities and challenges to relevant internal E&S governance forums as required, and to the IAC during each meeting.
- Share insights and lessons learned with Reconciliation Australia quarterly and, where practical, support Reconciliation Australia's peer networking by sharing our progress and insights to support the collective understanding of good-practice approaches.
- Develop our annual RAP progress report, which is published on our website, where we share progress and insights, and complete Reconciliation Australia's annual RAP Impact Survey.



## Strengthening capability and engagement to apply the IEPs

We have a number of teams across the bank that are involved in delivering our reconciliation priorities. To support teams to develop the skills and knowledge to deliver opportunities that are appropriate, effective, and align to the needs of First Nations stakeholders, we will:

- Maintain our IEP digital toolkit, available on our internal intranet, to provide easy access to the IEPs and practical considerations for applying them in community engagement. The toolkit includes videos with First Nations employees discussing the IEPs and sharing their own insights on how applying them may lead to better outcomes when engaging with First Nations stakeholders.
- Hold four RAP Working Group meetings each year and invite relevant teams from across the bank to attend. The RAP Working Group meetings are an opportunity to connect and hear from internal and external subject matter experts, so together we continue to foster good practice approaches to reconciliation engagement.
- Maintain our Reconciliation Knowledge Hub to provide a central location for our people to access resources, information and details of engagement opportunities, including events that are being held during National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.



# Reconciliation and Community.

**We aim to engage our people in reconciliation and encourage place-based approaches to working with First Nations communities, supporting solutions designed by the community, for the community.**

## Yana Budjari Reconciliation Network

In building a brighter future for all, we want our people to feel respected, safe and included at work. This means embracing our differences and celebrating the things we have in common, staying connected to each other and taking extra care in what we say and do.

As one of Australia's largest employers, we have a significant opportunity to engage our employees in reconciliation. We do this through our Reconciliation Network, Yana Budjari – meaning "Come Together You Mob" in the Dharawal language from the South Coast of NSW. Bankwest work with Yana Budjari through their own employee reconciliation network, Koort Waangkiny meaning "Heart Stories" in the Noongar Language from the Southwest of Western Australia.

Yana Budjari members seek to drive reconciliation engagement within their respective regions, build strong and respectful local and regional relationships, and support community initiatives, where practical, including by National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. Bankwest work with Yana Budjari through their own employee reconciliation network, Koort Waangkiny meaning "Heart Stories" in the Noongar Language from the Southwest of Western Australia.

The Yana Budjari National Committee is led by co-Chairs, one who identifies as First Nations and one who is non-Indigenous. Where practical, each region of Yana Budjari has Co-State Leads who reside within the relevant geographical area and who represent their respective regions on the Yana Budjari National Committee.

Our Yana Budjari members have access to an internal social network channel where they can share their reconciliation work with their colleagues in real time and promote First Nations events happening in their local community. The channel is a great way to foster cultural learning, inclusivity, respect, and collaboration so we can continue to build meaningful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, businesses and communities.

Visit [www.commbank.com.au/diversity](http://www.commbank.com.au/diversity) to find out how we're building an inclusive culture that embraces diversity.

## First Nations Place-Based Engagement

As a national organisation with employees working across Australia, we recognise the importance of taking a place-based approach to engaging with First Nations communities. Place-based approaches are about local people, government, service providers, and other stakeholders working together towards a shared vision to create a thriving community.

In 2012, we commenced our partnership with Jawun. For over 20 years, Jawun has worked to create connections between the corporate, government and philanthropic sectors to support First Nations organisations who are leading change for their communities and building capacity to advance their goals – both social and economic.

The Jawun program engages secondees from across corporate, government and philanthropy in 6 and 12-week placements on-Country, working with First Nations-led organisations on solutions designed and delivered by the community. Jawun reports that secondees return with a deeper connection to Indigenous Australia and the motivation to pass on the lessons and experiences gained during their secondment within their own networks.

For First Nations leaders, these partnerships provide access to a highly skilled and experienced network with influence across business and governments, presenting valuable opportunities for learning, cross-sectoral collaboration and leadership development.

For CommBank, our partnership with Jawun supports us to foster meaningful connections with First Nations communities and help enable First Nations-led change. Through participating in the 6-week placements, our people gain invaluable insights and experiences that enhances their professional and personal growth while deepening their understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Visit [www.jawun.org.au](http://www.jawun.org.au) to find out more about their secondment program.

## First Nations Next Chapter

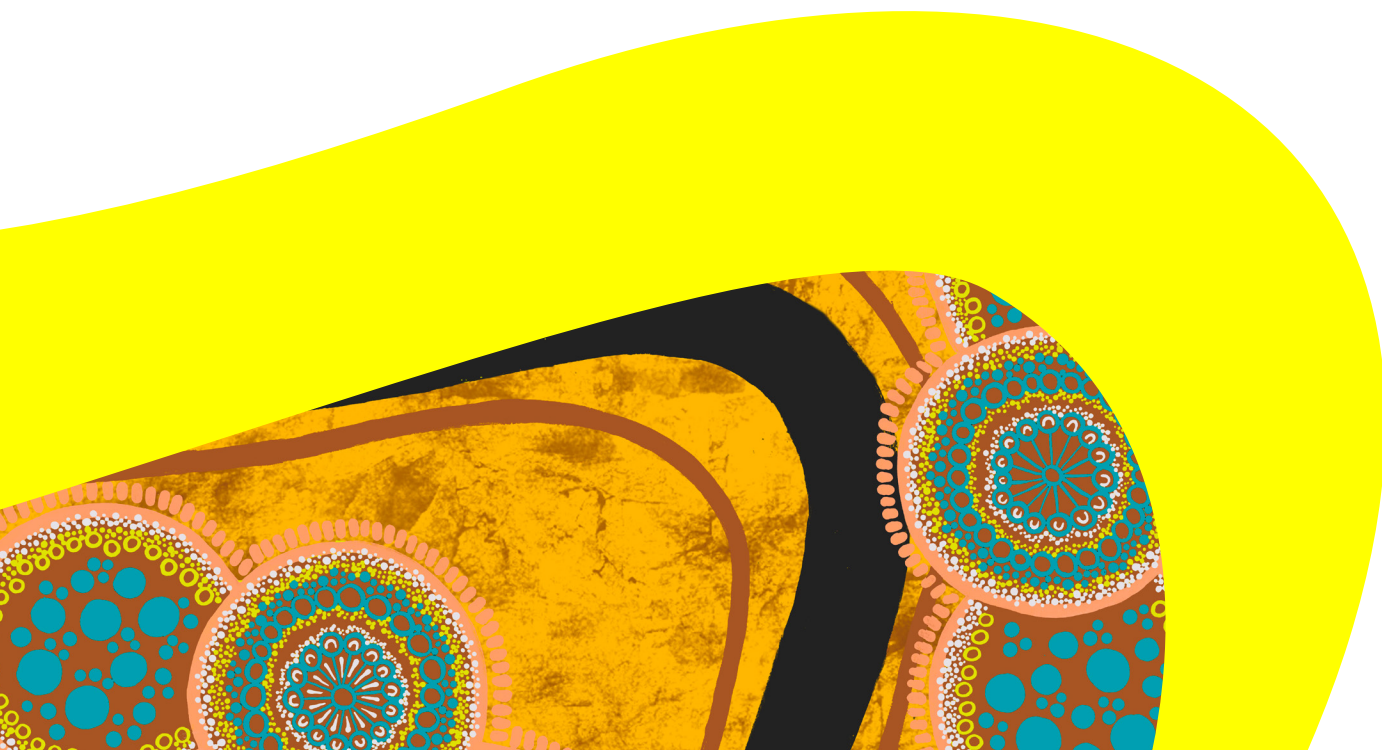
Financial abuse is a serious form of domestic and family violence which involves someone using money as a means to gain power or control over their partner. Almost 40% of the adult population has experienced or know someone who has experienced financial abuse.

Our FY23-25 RAP included a transformation project to support First Nations peoples and communities impacted by financial abuse, with a focus on supporting them on their road to long-term financial independence.

Over the last three years, we have focused on working with community partners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to take a First Nations-led approach to addressing financial abuse. The CommBank Next Chapter team, in partnership with BlackCard, created guidance to support them to provide culturally safe support to individuals (including those who are not CommBank customers) experiencing financial abuse. The guidance includes referral pathways to national and state-based First Nations community support services. The CommBank Next Chapter team also implemented a referral partnership with 13YARN, a dedicated 24/7 First Nations crisis support service.

By collaborating on culturally appropriate content, we aim to empower individuals, families and community leaders with the knowledge and tools to identify, prevent, and address financial abuse. In 2024, CommBank Next Chapter partnered with ICAN Learn – a subsidiary of the Indigenous Consumer Assistance Network (ICAN) – to create culturally informed frameworks to help prevent financial abuse and to support First Nations peoples who may be impacted by or recovering from financial abuse. The frameworks are available to organisations working with First Nations victims-survivors to support the sector more broadly.

Visit [www.commbank.com.au/support/next-chapter](http://www.commbank.com.au/support/next-chapter) to find out more about our support for customers affected by domestic and family violence.





# Reconciliation and Community.

## Our FY26–28 RAP Priorities

IEP focus for FY26–28 RAP	Self-determination	Participation in decision-making	Respect and recognition of culture	Equality and non-discrimination
<p>In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we seek to prioritise partnerships with First Nations-led organisations.</p>	<p>We seek to promote First Nations leadership and governance practices and engage First Nations peoples in key decisions in the following three reconciliation priorities.</p>	<p>In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we seek to provide opportunities for employees to develop a foundational understanding of First Nations cultures, so First Nations stakeholders feel safe and included when engaging with us.</p>	<p>Through the following three reconciliation priorities, we seek to provide meaningful opportunities for our people and our partners to engage in reconciliation and strengthen relationships between First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous peoples.</p>	
Reconciliation Priorities		FY26–28 RAP Activities and Implementation		
<p><b>1. Yana Budjari Reconciliation Network</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Strategy and Partnerships (MCA)</p>	<p><b>1.1</b> Support at least 10 First Nations-led organisations to host NAIDOC Week events to share their achievements, histories, cultures and affairs <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>1.2</b> Maintain a First Nations and non-Indigenous co-chair for Yana Budjari National Committee and encourage similar co-chair arrangements at the Yana Budjari State Committee level, where practical <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>1.3</b> Encourage at least 30% of our Australian based workforce to complete cultural capability training each year, with at least 10,000 people completing online learning and 400 people completing learning with BlackCard <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>1.4</b> Hold at least 10 events to celebrate National Reconciliation Week <b>(annual)</b>. <b>1.5</b> Deliver an annual National Reconciliation Dialogue, providing opportunities for First Nations leaders to raise awareness of their community's cultural, social and economic aspirations <b>(annual)</b>.</p>
<p><b>2. First Nations Place-Based Engagement</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Strategy and Partnerships (MCA)</p>	<p><b>2.1</b> Support Reconciliation Australia's Indigenous Governance Awards and Jawun's Stories of Female Leadership Programs to promote, strengthen and expand Indigenous governance and leadership practices <b>(June 2027)</b>.</p>	<p><b>2.2</b> Partner with a First Nations-led organisation to support First Nations communities to strengthen local decision-making governance structures to drive positive social change <b>(June 2028)</b>.</p>	<p><b>2.3</b> Provide at least 20 CommBank senior leaders with opportunities to connect with First Nations leaders to understand their communities' aspirations and needs <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>2.4</b> Through our partnership with Jawun, offer secondees to First Nations organisations to support them in delivering local responses to local opportunities <b>(annual)</b>.</p>
<p><b>3. First Nations Next Chapter</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Strategy and Partnerships (MCA)</p>	<p><b>3.1</b> Partner with at least three First Nations organisations to enable them to design and deliver innovative, place-based programs as part of Next Chapter Innovation <b>(December 2026)</b>.</p>	<p><b>3.2</b> Seek guidance from First Nations peoples to support the direction of the First Nations Next Chapter reconciliation priorities, including where we are working with First Nations-led organisations through Next Chapter Innovation <b>(December 2026)</b>.</p>	<p><b>3.3</b> Where our people are engaged as mentors to First Nations-led organisations through Next Chapter Innovation, require them to complete cultural capability training to understand First Nations ways of knowing and being <b>(December 2026)</b>.</p>	<p><b>3.4</b> In delivering First Nations Next Chapter program activities, provide meaningful opportunities for One.Mob to support the program, including through community engagement, where practical <b>(December 2026)</b>.</p>



# Community first | Sono Leone Weatherall, CEO Strong Women Talking.

Story by Stephanie Nuzzo.

## As the CEO of Strong Women Talking, Sono Leone Weatherall transforms the narrative of financial abuse recovery into one of empowerment by creating a sisterhood that nurtures healing.

In Australia, First Nations people are about three times more likely to have experienced financial abuse from a partner. CommBank's second cohort of Next Chapter Innovation Partners features First Nations-led and Aboriginal-Community Controlled organisations that offer culturally appropriate care.

For Sono Leone Weatherall, a Butchulla and Gurrawa woman and the CEO of Strong Women Talking, the essence of her work lies in directing energy towards recovery rather than "crisis and response servicing" alone.

Strong Women Talking was born in 2014, when Sono identified a gap in care provided for families experiencing abuse. "There wasn't a culturally safe place for First Nations women to unpack their stories and lived experience or where they could take a journey of deep healing from the impacts of domestic and family violence," she says.

### Gathering together

The organisation has since grown into something far more wide-reaching. "We're a grassroots movement of sisters and aunties," says Sono. "From seeing the need for education about the forms of abuse and the cycle of violence, Strong Women Talking has evolved into a beautiful, trauma-informed, eight-week Healing Journey workshop where we unpack different topics each week."

Following the workshop, participants are welcomed into the Sisters Connect group, which meets regularly for arts and crafts as well as visits from special services that can empower women. This is a space to build relationships with others who have experienced abuse.

### Strong connections

"I realised early on that you can't just run an educational workshop alone," says Sono. "An important part of healing from trauma is staying connected. That's what we try to create – a sisterhood." And that sisterhood is committed to the care it provides. "We also have Elders in residence. They run a program called Elders Connect, where they check on women who have disengaged from the group. That way, nobody falls through the cracks."

### Healing work

The impact of Strong Women Talking's work is significant. "As the weeks progress, you can see such a change. Women come away with a lot more confidence. We've had women come in stuttering – in such a heightened state of survival mode – and over the weeks you see them come to life as they're able to regulate and have a voice to let out their stories in a safe and confidential space with the sisters and aunties."

Despite a community-led approach to care, a lack of funding limited how far the work could go. "We were a small organisation with just three to four women working part-time," says Sono. "Today, Strong Women Talking has as many as 14 staff members."

### Committed partners

With CommBank's Next Chapter Innovation partnership, the outlook is even better. "We can get so much more support," says Sono. "It empowers and equips us to do the work we love."

The partnership has provided more than just funding; it's also connected the organisation with a mentor who is helping bolster its strategic plan. "We want to take the model we've built and be able to offer it into other communities – allowing them to lead the change as they see the need. We believe the new educational van we are building using the CommBank Next Chapter Innovation grant will be a great step towards that."

For Sono, investment in grassroots First Nations-led initiatives is vital. "We're trying to break the shame around talking about things that keep our women oppressed. Because every tidda [sister] deserves to know what it feels like to be safe, valued, loved, seen and heard."

Visit [strongwomentalking.org.au](https://strongwomentalking.org.au) for more information.

### What can you do?

#### TALK about financial abuse

If someone you care about is experiencing financial abuse, use the TALK model to guide your conversation:

- Trust your instincts
- Ask openly and gently
- Listen actively
- Know the support available

#### Recognise and Recover

Download [CommBank's Recognise and Recover booklet](#), which has been designed to help people identify the signs of financial abuse and seek support. Search CommBank Recognise and Recover for more information.

#### Reach out to the Next Chapter Team

Nobody should have to face financial abuse alone. The Next Chapter team provides free, confidential support and can connect you with specialist services. Call 1800 222 387 Monday to Friday between 9am and 6pm (Sydney/Melbourne time), excluding public holidays. You can also contact us via online chat (Ceba) in the CommBank app. Search CommBank Next Chapter to start today. In an emergency or if you're not feeling safe, always call 000.

For confidential information and support, we recommend calling 1800RESPECT (1800 737 732) or 13 YARN (13 92 76). These free and confidential services are not part of Commonwealth Bank.



Image of Sono Leone Weatherall, CEO Strong Women Talking. Photography by Guy Bailey.

This article was originally published in [The CommBank Magazine - May/June 2025: The Brighter Side of Banking](#).



# Education and Careers.

**We aim to attract and grow First Nations talent, by continuing to provide a compelling employee value proposition and offering tailored support and a culturally safe environment for First Nations employees to grow their careers at CommBank.**

## First Nations Education Partnerships

We recognise that having access to education is a key element of building a brighter future. Not only is it an enabler of financial wellbeing, it also has a profound impact on long-term career opportunities. The [Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#) reports that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who complete Year 12, or a higher qualification, are more likely to be employed, to work full-time, and have higher skilled jobs than early school leavers.

Recognising the role we can play in supporting education, in 2008 we joined with the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) as a founding partner to help First Nations students pursue their education at leading Australian boarding schools and universities.

Through our partnership, we support the AIEF Pathways Program, which helps students transition from school to further education, training and meaningful careers. Through the program, AIEF connects scholarship students with mentors in trusted, structured relationships that supports them through senior school and beyond. AIEF also hosts career immersion opportunities, such as experience days, that help students build confidence and explore employment options.

In 2022, we commenced a partnership with Brisbane Boys' College (BBC) to support a new First Nations Bursary Program, delivered by BBC. The program provides financial support to First Nations students from remote, regional and urban communities across Australia to complete their education at BBC. As part of the program, the school employs a dedicated Indigenous Program Manager to provide cultural support to the students as they progress in their studies.

In 2023, we partnered with St Andrew's Cathedral School in Sydney to provide financial support for students transitioning to high school from Gawura (a school within a school) which aims to give First Nations students opportunities to fully participate in the life of the school, while being surrounded by culture and language.

Visit [www.aief.com.au](http://www.aief.com.au), [www.bbc.qld.edu.au](http://www.bbc.qld.edu.au) and [www.sacs.nsw.edu.au/gawura](http://www.sacs.nsw.edu.au/gawura) to learn more about these organisations.

## First Nations Talent Acquisition

Through our First Nations talent acquisition strategy, we are working towards our ambition of increasing First Nations representation across our domestic workforce to 3%, from our 30 September 2024 position of 1.7%.

To help achieve this ambition, we are focused on supporting more First Nations peoples to join CommBank, with a target to recruit at least 150 First Nations peoples each year. Our Guaranteed Interview Scheme means that for First Nations candidates who share with us in their application form that they are an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person, where they meet the minimum requirements of the role they are applying for, our dedicated First Nations Talent Acquisition team will facilitate a first-round interview for them.

For those interested in joining our supported career pathway programs, we offer three dedicated Indigenous Careers Programs across the bank:

- **School-Based Traineeship program:** The program is designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Year 11 and 12 and provides students with exposure to a career in the financial services industry while also allowing us to find and promote talent. Along with vital on-the-job experience, the program gives students the opportunity to gain valuable skills and confidence in a safe and secure environment.
- **Full-Time/Part-Time Traineeships:** Our Full-Time Traineeship Program offers Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers with the opportunity to develop into a role over 12 –18 months. Participants receive ongoing training and support to build their skills and confidence, with the potential to be offered a permanent position once they complete the traineeship. Our traineeship programs in our retail bank and our Technology and Operations Academies mean we have early career opportunities available in many locations across Australia.
- **University Internships:** We provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students with an opportunity to gain first-hand experience aligned to their degree, plus a pathway onto CommBank's Graduate Program.

Visit [www.commbank.com.au/indigenoucareers](http://www.commbank.com.au/indigenoucareers) to find out more about our Indigenous careers programs.

## One.Mob Employee Network

At CommBank, we're committed to offering meaningful employment to First Nations peoples at all stages of their careers. Key to achieving this is the support and development programs we offer, so more First Nations peoples choose to grow their careers at the bank. Through these programs, we aim to reduce the First Nations employee attrition rate, as progress towards achieving parity with the bank's general attrition rate.

All First Nations employees are welcome to join the Indigenous Employee Network, known as One.Mob, which aims to be a safe space to connect with First Nations colleagues and discuss topics that may relate to First Nations employees, their families and communities.

The One.Mob network meets regularly for virtual Yarning Circles. The Yarning Circles provide regular engagement opportunities for First Nations employees and help provide an inclusive and culturally safe working environment. The Yarning Circle sessions vary in their format and often include guest speakers yarning about issues of local and national importance. Yarning Circles also offer career development sessions.

In May 2023, we hosted the inaugural One.Mob Summit, which brought together First Nations employees from across the country for career development and listening sessions, to help define future priorities and our First Nations Employee Value Proposition.

Through One.Mob, First Nations employees have access to a range of career development programs, including leadership coaching, which aims to support and empower First Nations leaders within CommBank to achieve their career goals, enhance their professional skills, and overcome barriers to advancement. This initiative is crucial for fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace, promoting equity, and supporting the long-term career success of First Nations employees.





# Education and Careers.

## Our FY26–28 RAP Priorities

IEP focus for FY26–28 RAP	Self-determination	Participation in decision-making	Respect and recognition of culture	Equality and non-discrimination
	<p>Through delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to support First Nations current and potential employees to see the positive opportunities working for CommBank can provide them and their communities.</p>	<p>In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to engage with First Nations peoples to help inform the direction and investment of CommBank’s First Nations education and careers initiatives.</p>	<p>Through delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to provide opportunities to develop our people’s cultural capability and integrate this learning to continually build a culturally safe and inclusive workplace.</p>	<p>We aim to understand and address the barriers preventing First Nations peoples from accessing and participating in the following three reconciliation priorities, where practical.</p>
Reconciliation Priorities		FY26–28 RAP Activities and Implementation		
<p><b>4. First Nations Education Partnerships</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Strategy and Partnerships (MCA)</p>	<p><b>4.1</b> Host an annual yarning circle with First Nations students and CommBank First Nations leaders to share career insights and how their work supports their connection to community <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>4.2</b> Encourage engagement with First Nations peoples and advisors in education programs where the bank is supporting the program <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>4.3</b> Support AIEF’s Pathways Program, providing opportunities for our people to connect with First Nations students to provide support and guidance, while also learning from them, listening to their ideas and understanding their challenges <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>4.4</b> Host at least two Lunch and Learn events with Senior Leaders and First Nations students to promote career opportunities in the financial services sector <b>(annual)</b>.</p>
<p><b>5. First Nations Talent Acquisition</b> First Nations Lead Team: Indigenous Community Experience (HR)</p>	<p><b>5.1</b> Attend or host at least 10 community engagements each year to profile career opportunities within CommBank and monitor increases in job applications to target future community engagement opportunities <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>5.2</b> Require First Nations representation on first-round interview panels for roles that are dedicated to designing and delivering products, services or programs for First Nations peoples <b>(June 2026)</b>.</p>	<p><b>5.3</b> Review the Guaranteed Interview Scheme to continually improve how the business is applying the scheme to increase First Nations representation in interviews <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>5.4</b> Aim to recruit 150 First Nations peoples each year and offer First Nations new starters with a “buddy” to support their transition into CommBank <b>(annual)</b>.</p> <p><b>5.5</b> Provide trainee and intern pathway programs across CommBank, offering 70 placements each year, with an aim to retain at least 60% of those who successfully complete a program <b>(annual)</b>.</p>
<p><b>6. One.Mob Employee Network</b> First Nations Lead Team: Indigenous Community Experience (HR)</p>	<p><b>6.1</b> Support First Nations employees to grow their career at CommBank through career development planning and reskilling pathways into new roles with the bank <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>6.2</b> Conduct listening sessions with the One.Mob employee network, via the annual One.Mob Summit, to understand the employee experience and consult with the ILT to help shape the employee network’s future direction <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>6.3</b> Make available quarterly sessions for managers and teams to support and understand culturally inclusive management for First Nations employees <b>(annual)</b>.</p>	<p><b>6.4</b> Aim to reduce First Nations employee attrition rate as progress towards achieving parity with the bank’s general attrition rate, through retention initiatives such as the leadership coaching program and internal and external learning programs for emerging and senior leaders <b>(June 2028)</b>.</p>



# Finding financial freedom | Ky Simms.

Story by Bek Day.

## Ky Simms' determination to take control of her finances from a young age led her to reach her goal of home ownership.

The first big-ticket item Ky Simms ever bought herself was a MacBook laptop, with \$1,500 diligently saved from the three jobs she worked while completing her HSC – one at a local Thai restaurant, another at a Japanese restaurant and the third, a one-day-a-week traineeship through CommBank's Indigenous Careers Programs.

### Turning point

"Growing up with three siblings and a single mum, we didn't have a lot of spare money," says Ky, a Bidjigal woman from Nowra, about two hours south of Sydney. "I was contemplating dropping out of school when I finished Year 10 to get a full-time job but the Aboriginal education officer at my school told me about a traineeship at CommBank. At the interview I was so nervous I cried!"

The traineeship, which allowed Ky to study for her HSC four days a week while working and learning with CommBank on the other day, saw her not only complete Year 12 but also go on to earn a Certificate II in Business Services.

"It taught me so much about managing my money and saving for the future, which is something they don't teach at school," says Ky. "I was empowered seeing how I could build up to the things I wanted to achieve. After the laptop, I put my mind to saving for a car, and I managed it – \$5,000 on my own."

When you grow up without a lot of money, "You have a strong sense of wanting to create certainty for yourself," says Ky, who went into a full-time position with CommBank after graduating. "When I started working in branch, I saw the way people were with their finances – a lot of people live week-to-week – and I really didn't want that to be my story. So I've always worked really hard and have probably been a little tight with my money in terms of how much I put away!"

### Helping hand

A few years after joining CommBank, Ky moved to Sydney, where her partner had been offered a job. And that hunger for financial independence moved with her. "We rented a small unit in Bankstown," she recalls. "But rent is so expensive and when I started to look into what was on offer, I realised it would be cheaper to pay off a mortgage than giving such a big chunk of my pay to a landlord."

At the time, Ky was taking part in CommBank's Flex-Lender Academy, a training program for mobile lenders, and she says she was surprised by how many grants and incentives were on offer. "I learnt about the First Home Buyers Assistance Scheme, which would exempt us from paying stamp duty. I also learnt about an Indigenous grant called the Deadly Deposit Grant, which would match every dollar I had saved in my bank account, up to \$10,000."

Not only did the Deadly Deposit Grant match Ky's savings, it also contributed \$2,500 for legal fees associated with her property purchase. "We didn't want a huge loan. It was so important to me to buy something we could easily manage, even if rates continued to go up."

Her checklist for her home purchase? Pretty loose, actually. "The main thing I was looking for was just something that felt like home," she says with a laugh. "Because I cast a pretty wide net, we were lucky to find something fairly quickly."

### Where the heart is

After only a few months of searching, the couple stumbled upon "the one" – a two-bedroom apartment in Bankstown that jumped out at Ky as soon as she walked through the door. "It just had an immediate homely feel and it's the same feeling I get every time I return from work at night – a feeling of relief when I walk through the door. It's like, I'm home, I'm settled, it's mine." As far as styling goes, Ky says she's kept the décor minimal, bar a splurge on a couch in her favourite colour: turquoise. "We have candles around the house, a comfy sofa and the TV on the wall – it's simple and it's perfect."

But despite all of Ky's hard work and determination, she still finds it hard to believe that she owns her own home. "When I think back to being in Year 10 before I started the CommBank traineeship, it seemed like a viable option to just drop out of school and try to get full-time work – I had no idea what was possible. It's the same for people looking to get into the property market. We never owned the houses I grew up in – my family had always rented – and I never thought it would be possible to own my own unit at age 20 – or at all."

### Making it happen

Ky's advice for others in a similar position? Do your research. "I'd urge anyone who feels like it's out of their reach to look into the available grants and savings help and to make sure they have the right products to maximise savings. Particularly for young people wanting to get into the market, there are lots of options available as long as you set your sights on something reasonable."

And while the first-time home buyer would be well within her rights to rest on her laurels, she's already looking forward to the next rung on the ladder. "Honestly, this whole process has been such a learning curve but I feel like it's put us in a great position for when we decide to grow our family and look for our next home," says Ky, adding that, ideally, she'd like to hold onto the unit as an investment property when the time comes to upsize to a family home. "There's a great feeling of satisfaction that comes with knowing that I've set myself up like this and that I have a solid foundation that I can just keep building on."



Image of Ky Simms. Photography by Guy Bailey.

This article was originally published in [The CommBank Magazine - July/August 2024: The Brighter Side of Banking](#)



# Business Success and Growth.

**We aim to improve our banking and procurement propositions to support First Nations businesses to succeed, and support communities to engage economically in the transition to net zero.**

## **First Nations Supplier Diversity**

Suppliers help CommBank achieve our purpose and strategic ambitions and we are committed to supporting the growth and prosperity of businesses that reflect our population. We have partnered with Supply Nation since 2009 to deliver our First Nations Supplier Diversity Program, which aims to provide greater economic participation and self-determination opportunities for First Nations businesses in urban and regional Australia.

In FY24, we appointed a dedicated First Nations procurement Executive Manager to further supplier spend and relationship development. This role has enabled us to take a First Nations-led approach to executing and governing initiatives that impact First Nations businesses within our supply chain. This approach has supported us to increase our spend with First Nations businesses to \$22.65m in FY24, an increase of almost 150% on our FY23 spend. This spend was across 34 First Nations businesses.

The increase in spend was partially driven by the introduction of new First Nations suppliers, including First Nations-owned security supplier and technology business Baidam. In addition to helping the bank achieve important security outcomes, our partnership means we can support Baidam in their efforts to invest in First Nations university students as part of their commitment to increasing First Nations representation in the IT security sector.

Beyond supplier spend, in 2020, we extended our partnership with Supply Nation to support their Capability Hub. This hub offers programs such as the Drive Program, which is designed to assist suppliers' understanding of the procurement and tender functions and place them in a position to submit a tender response that is more in line with the expectations of procurement professionals and buyers. The Capability Hub also offers JumpStart, a volunteering platform to connect employees of member organisations with First Nations businesses to share their skills and time.

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Visit [www.commbank.com.au/supplierdiversity](http://www.commbank.com.au/supplierdiversity) to find out more about our First Nations Supplier Diversity Program.

## **Indigenous Business Banking**

When it comes to business banking, we believe a strong relationship allows us to provide better support and the right products and services to meet the needs of First Nations businesses.

Recognising the unique needs of First Nations businesses, our Indigenous Business Banking team leads the delivery of our Indigenous Business Banking growth strategy, which aims to support our business banking specialists to strengthen engagement with First Nations businesses.

As part of this strategy, in 2024, we worked with Supply Nation to launch CommBank's Indigenous Business Concierge, which offers First Nations business owners one point of entry to a team of business banking specialists. Where possible, these specialists are part of our IGNITE Community, an internal network of business banking specialists who have access to cultural e-learning and training. They are available to support First Nations businesses with their banking needs and connect them to products and services to support their business goals. This includes products like our Working Capital solutions, which aims to support businesses to better manage their cash flows.

As part of our partnership with Supply Nation, we collaborated on a bespoke education offering to support the Indigenous business sector. To further strengthen business capabilities, in 2024, we delivered a proactive Working Capital campaign, engaging First Nations businesses to discuss their cash flow needs and in 2025, we partnered with UNSW to deliver a Cash Flow Management Course.

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Visit [www.commbank.com.au/business/indigenous-banking](http://www.commbank.com.au/business/indigenous-banking) to find out more about our Indigenous business banking solutions.

## **First Nations Net-Zero**

In our FY23-25 RAP, we set out activities that aimed to build our capacity to support the growth of the Indigenous carbon market. Over the last three years, we have focused on establishing relationships with current and potential clients, to better understand the needs of the industry. We continue to work closely with industry partner Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN) to understand how we can further support communities interested in establishing new carbon projects.

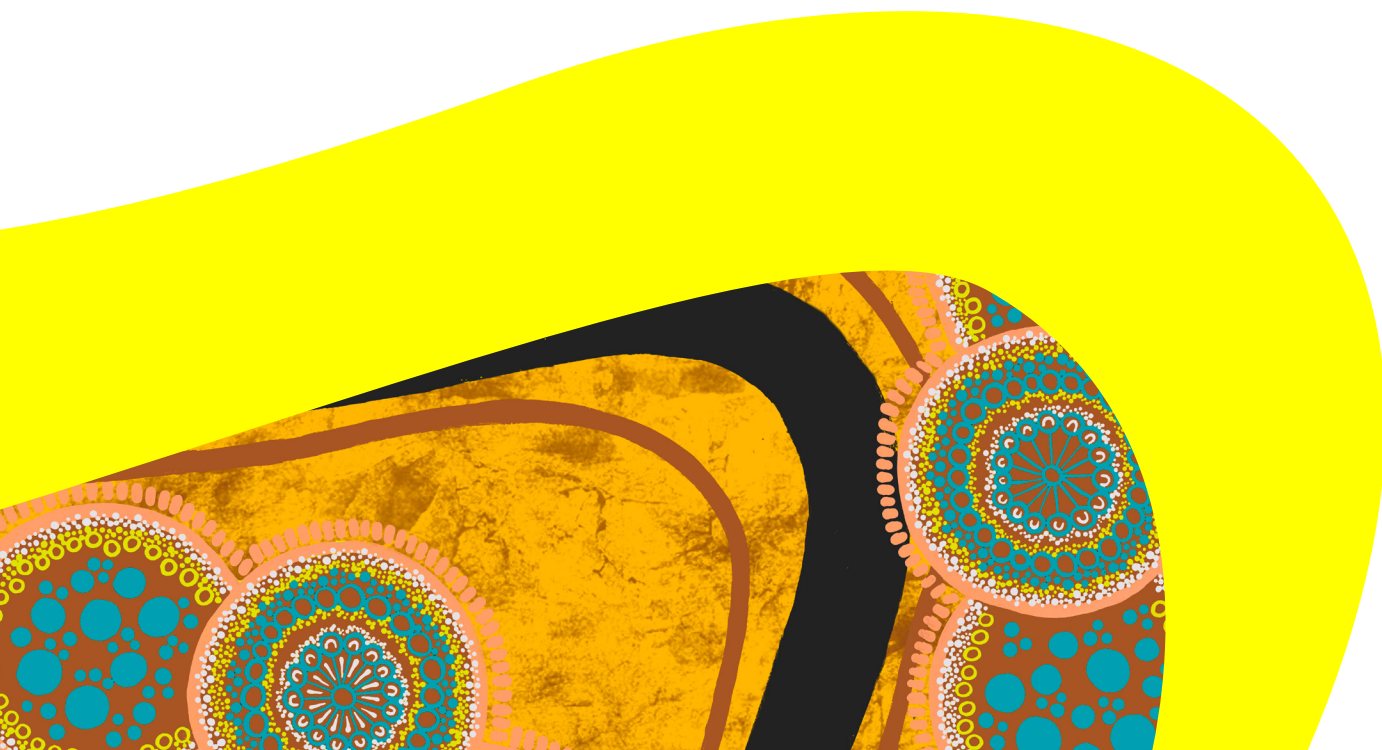
In February 2024, CommBank sponsored the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network (ICIN) North Australia Savanna Fire Forum in Darwin. The forum provided an opportunity to improve our understanding of the Indigenous carbon industry and hear first-hand from First Nations leaders and the rangers who manage carbon projects.

In March 2024, CommBank held Momentum, a sustainability conference which invites attendees to explore a host of sustainability content and learn about various ideas and solutions that can help accelerate Australia's transition to a brighter, more sustainable future. Suzanne Thompson, Director of ICIN, joined a panel to discuss how First Nations carbon projects are supporting a more sustainable future and what is needed to support these projects.

As part of our FY26-28 RAP, we will continue our focus on supporting First Nations communities to engage in the transition to net zero, broadening our scope to include both First Nations carbon sequestration and First Nations clean energy projects. Building on lessons and insights to date, our First Nations Net Zero reconciliation priorities place emphasis on the relationships, partnerships and knowledge needed to successfully work with First Nations peoples to achieve outcomes that are more sustainable.

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Visit [www.commbank.com.au/institutional/carbon-markets](http://www.commbank.com.au/institutional/carbon-markets) to find out more about financing and risk management solutions for global carbon markets.





# Business Success and Growth.

## Our FY26–28 RAP Priorities

IEP focus for FY26–28 RAP	Self-determination	Participation in decision-making	Respect and recognition of culture	Equality and non-discrimination
	Through delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to support First Nations peoples to self-determine the business opportunities they want to pursue.	In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to engage First Nations stakeholders to provide their perspectives to help inform our approaches.	In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to provide opportunities for relevant teams to build their knowledge and capability to confidently support First Nations businesses through each stage of their business lifecycle.	Through the three following reconciliation priorities, we aim to understand and address the barriers preventing First Nations businesses from securing financing and contracts with CommBank, where practical.
Reconciliation Priorities		FY26–28 RAP Activities and Implementation		
<b>7. First Nations Supplier Diversity</b> First Nations Lead Team: Indigenous Procurement and Engagement (FS)	<b>7.1</b> Partner with Supply Nation to support them to deliver their Capability Hub, offering First Nations businesses a range of training sessions, development workshops and practical resources to continually strengthen business capabilities <b>(June 2028)</b> .	<b>7.2</b> Collect feedback from on-boarded First Nations suppliers to understand the impact of our supplier diversity program and identify areas for improvement, and present insights to the procurement leadership team for discussion <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>7.3</b> Work with CommBank category managers and buyers through one-on-one support and education sessions to build their understanding of First Nations sector and the benefits of engaging First Nations businesses throughout the procurement process <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>7.4</b> Investigate opportunities to work with suppliers in regional areas to support micro-economies <b>(June 2028)</b> .  <b>7.5</b> Spend a cumulative \$100m with First Nations businesses between 1 July 2025 and 30 June 2028, (including Direct and Directed spend), with a focus on introducing new suppliers where practical, and report progress annually in our Annual Report <b>(annual)</b> .
<b>8. First Nations Business Banking</b> First Nations Lead Team: Indigenous Business Banking (BB)	<b>8.1</b> Partner with Supply Nation to jointly deliver the Indigenous Business Education Series to strengthen the sector’s business capabilities <b>(annual)</b> .  <b>8.2</b> Create opportunities to amplify the success of Indigenous businesses via partnership with The Indigenous Business Review <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>8.3</b> Engage with Indigenous business banking customers to better understand their individual banking needs to support the bank to continually improve our Indigenous business banking propositions <b>(June 2027)</b> .	<b>8.4</b> Develop foundational level learning to support business bankers to provide banking services to Indigenous businesses <b>(June 2027)</b> .  <b>8.5</b> Deliver quarterly sessions to the IGNITE community to build their understanding of First Nations ways of being and knowing and how these inform First Nations people’s approach to business <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>8.6</b> Deliver the Indigenous Business Concierge service for access to culturally trained Business Banking specialists <b>(June 2028)</b> .  <b>8.7</b> Develop a business banking proposition that builds a brighter future for Indigenous businesses, meeting their existing banking needs and supporting future growth <b>(June 2026)</b> .
<b>9. First Nations Net Zero</b> First Nations Lead Team: Indigenous Business Banking (BB)	<b>9.1</b> Establish a partnership with at least one First Nations organisation to support First Nations communities to participate in the net zero transition <b>(June 2028)</b> .	<b>9.2</b> Engage at least one external First Nations person with expertise in the net zero transition to support the direction of our First Nations Net Zero priorities <b>(June 2026)</b> .	<b>9.3</b> Engage at least five relevant CommBank senior leaders to participate in an on-Country learning experience to increase their understanding of how we can support communities to unlock economic opportunities from the transition to net zero <b>(June 2027)</b> .	<b>9.4</b> Investigate opportunities to partner with a First Nations-led third party to support them in providing financial products and services that benefit First Nations businesses <b>(June 2028)</b> .  <b>9.5</b> Where practical, prioritise the use of First Nations carbon units where carbon offsets are used to offset our residual emissions <b>(annual)</b> .



# Keep it in the family | Melissa Greenwood, founder of Miimi & Jiinda.

Melissa talks to Narelda Jacobs about how she learnt to start, run and grow her business.

**When Melissa launched Indigenous art and apparel brand Miimi & Jiinda in 2018, she never dreamed that she'd be showing it at Australian Fashion Week just five years later – especially considering it was never about fashion in the first place.**

The business began with Melissa selling the artwork she and her mother, Lauren Jarrett, spent every day painting side-by-side. Using pastels and bright colours, their paintings tell stories of Gumbaynggirr country on the New South Wales Mid North Coast. Melissa realised these stories needed to be seen and heard. Here's hers.

## **Take us back to the beginning, when you first started Miimi & Jiinda...**

In 2018, Mum was living with me to help with my firstborn and we started painting and weaving together to pass the time. I'd been watching her do it my whole life but I'd always been too busy to learn. But having a baby gave me a chance to be still. So we started doing that every day and one day I said to Mum, "Why don't we do a market stall?" Her face lit up.

## **What were the crucial steps that took you from a single market to your own business?**

At the stall, we got a really good response and then my sister-in-law asked if we'd like to do an exhibition in her café. We painted like crazy and wove baskets for about eight months to get ready. And on the first day we sold out. So we ran home, collected the rest of the paintings and put them up – and they all sold, too. Next we created an Instagram page and started to gain momentum from there.

## **When you named your business, how did you decide on Miimi & Jiinda?**

Miimi is mother and Jiinda is sister in the Gumbaynggirr language. When we were thinking about what to call the business my sister pointed to herself and Mum and said those words – and that was it. One reason this started is because I saw Mum have low self-esteem throughout my life and she never had the confidence to put her art or weaving out into the world. I really wanted to show her that this was possible and that what she was creating was incredible. Our success has really given her that self-confidence. She's completely transformed now.

## **I love your designs – I was cheering the loudest at your Australian Fashion Week show. What was it like moving from interiors to fashion?**

Fashion required big scaling for us as it's an expensive venture. We took the leap when our business was gaining momentum and decided to try something different. Some things work and some things don't but fashion has done well for us.

## **Were you interested in fashion before you started designing?**

When I was young I wanted to study fashion and business but I ended up going down a different route at university with criminology and justice studies. But then when the opportunity came up with Miimi & Jiinda, I thought, "Well, let's just see how it goes." I started with a small collection and when that was well received I built on that.

## **How did you deal with the stress of that investment in fashion not paying off?**

Of course, I was terrified the pieces wouldn't sell but I was also really proud of the work we'd created. It was all from original artworks that we'd painted and that we knew our customers loved. I thought that if I love these bright, bold, beautiful pieces then there's a chance others will, too.

## **You've had some great collaborations. How do you choose partners?**

We'll research the company and look at their social media to make sure they have the right intentions. Have they worked with Indigenous businesses or do they have any intention of doing so outside of NAIDOC week? A lot of brands want to just tick the box. So we want to know if they have a long-term goal to work with more Indigenous businesses. You can find out pretty early on if something is going to work.

## **What is the key to creating a brand with good purpose?**

Your business needs to come from a genuine place. Mine was to support Mum and then to show my culture from a place of pride and expressing my heart. It was never about making money and I think that's why we've been successful.

### **Mel's business tips:**

**Evolve creatively:** Seeing the early signs of success, Miimi & Jiinda moved into ceramics and then women's and kids' clothing. "We've made decisions quickly but we've also expanded into products we believed were worthwhile."

**Think about your supply chain:** Consider expanding operations to include activities that are earlier or later in the production process. Much of Miimi & Jiinda's iconic artwork is created by Melissa and all framing is built by her husband.

**Know your brand:** Melissa says it's been easier to know when to introduce new products because she has a firm grasp on what it was about Miimi & Jiinda that appeals to her customers.



Image of Melissa Greenwood, founder of Miimi & Jiinda  
Photography by Hannah Puechmarin.

This article was originally published in [The CommBank Magazine](#) - July/August 2024: [The Brighter Side of Banking](#).



# Financial Inclusion.

**We aim to improve banking inclusion through access to culturally safe, affordable and appropriate financial products and services and support First Nations peoples to turn increased income into wealth legacies for them and their families.**

## **First Nations Banking Products and Services**

Launched in 2009 as a service dedicated to First Nations customers living in remote communities, our Indigenous Customer Assistance Line (ICAL) is now available to any First Nations customer requiring extra care, regardless of where they live in Australia, as well as for all First Nations customers living in regional and remote areas.

Our ICAL team complete Indigenous cultural training during onboarding as well as participating in ongoing learning, which aims to strengthen their understanding of First Nations people's cultural differences and practices.

ICAL aims to improve the financial wellbeing of First Nations customers via key processes including culturally sensitive identification processes and alternative solutions for failed identification checks. For customers who may be facing challenging circumstances, ICAL offers support through independent access to funds and interpreter services. In recent years, ICAL has supported the First Nations Reach Program team by providing assistance to First Nations customers when the team is in community as part of the program.

The Better Banking for Indigenous Consumers Project was undertaken by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC). This Project considered a cohort of First Nations customers who receive government payments. Where customers hold certain concession cards, they may be eligible for a basic account. The Project found that in certain cases, customers receiving a government payment were holding a full feature transaction account. In support of ASIC's Project, CommBank and Bankwest committed to making goodwill payments to eligible First Nations customers holding certain transaction accounts. These customers were identified by CommBank and Bankwest in response to ASIC's Better Banking for Indigenous Consumers Project.

Visit [commbank.com.au/banking/indigenous-banking](https://commbank.com.au/banking/indigenous-banking) to find out more about products and services available.

## **First Nations Remote Banking**

Our FY23-25 RAP included a transformation project to deliver the Indigenous Customer Support Program (ICSP) to support First Nations customers' financial inclusion and help remove barriers to banking they may come up against. A key innovation of the program has been the establishment of the First Nations Reach Program. The aim of the program is to improve access to banking services in remote communities, increase awareness of our banking products and services and build confidence among First Nations customers in using digital banking.

On each visit, the CommBank team works with local organisations to share the program's purpose, better understand community needs and offer targeted banking support. While in the community, the First Nations Reach Program team seeks to build strong relationships with customers and help equip the community with skills and understanding of how to use digital banking tools.

The First Nations Reach Program was launched in March 2024, and during the 2024 calendar year, the program visited 14 locations across Australia, supporting over 1,400 customers during 38 visits. The program aims to roll out to a total of 46 locations by 30 June 2028, which will expand the reach to over 34,000 First Nations peoples.

The Program aims to complement CommBank's remote banking support services, including our Indigenous Customer Assistance Line (ICAL), our partnership with Bank@Post in remote communities and our support for the Australian Banking Association (ABA) Fee-Free ATM initiatives, which sees ABA participating banks provide fee-free ATM withdrawals and balance enquiries at up to 85 selected ATMs in remote parts of the Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia.

Visit [commbank.com.au/firstnationsreach](https://commbank.com.au/firstnationsreach) to find out more about the First Nations Reach Program, including where it goes and when it will be there.

## **First Nations Financial Independence**

At CommBank, we recognise that owning a home can bring health, stability and wellbeing benefits. It also offers the opportunity to create intergenerational wealth.

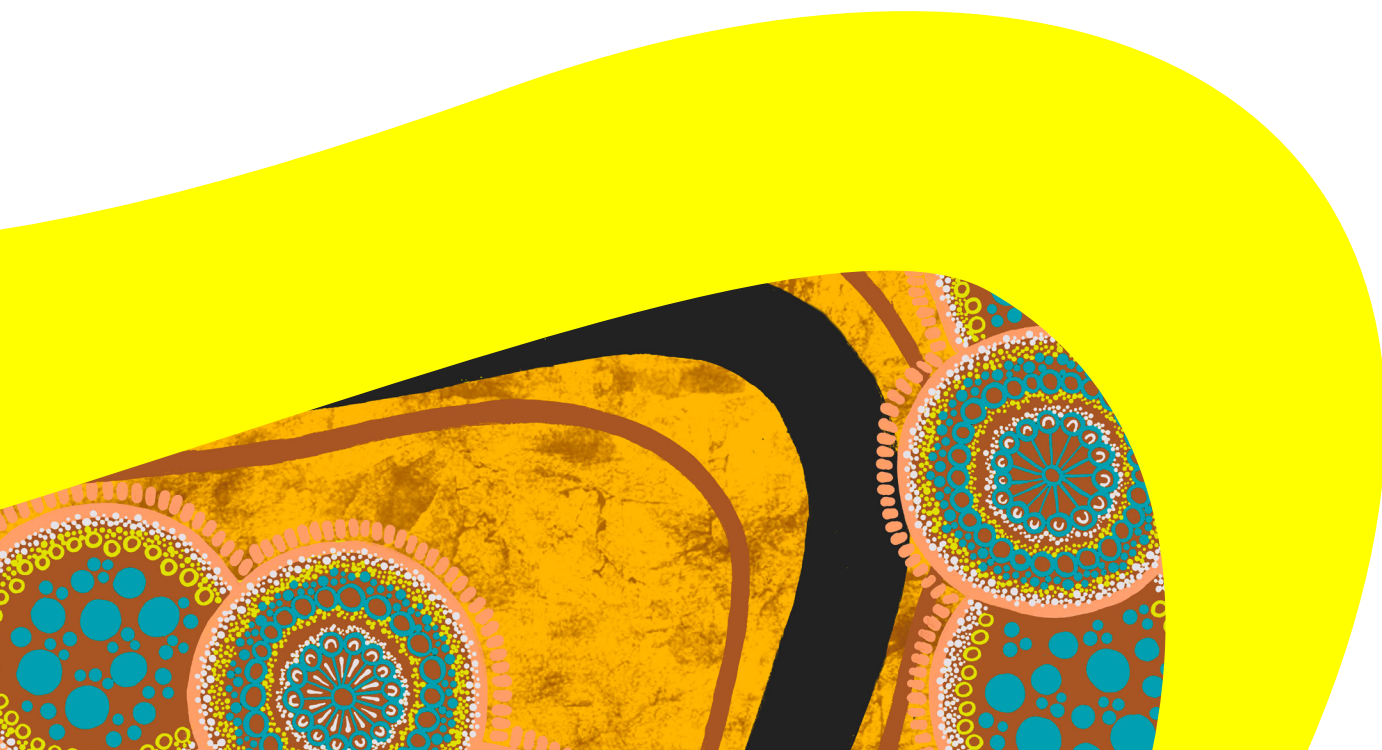
Starting the journey towards buying a home can be both exciting and daunting, especially for first time home buyers. Our Home Lending specialists are available to help with individual financial goals, including budgeting and providing guidance through the end-to-end application process.

There are several state and territory-based initiatives supporting people into home ownership across the country and our Home Lending specialists can help with access to information on available home ownership schemes and grants.

Additionally, CommBank and Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) offer a split home loan arrangement that supports First Nations peoples to enter the housing market. Through this arrangement, we can provide loans of up to a maximum of 80%, with the remaining contribution being provided from a combination of IBA finance and any deposit savings an eligible applicant may have.

We aim to work with customers to support them along the path to home ownership. Our "[Home buying made easy](#)" guide offers a step by step guide to buying a first or next home, investing in property, or refinancing. The guide includes expert guidance, handy tips and useful information to support the home buying journey.

Visit [commbank.com.au/home-loans/home-buying-guides](https://commbank.com.au/home-loans/home-buying-guides) for information, guides and tools to support owning your own home.





# Financial Inclusion.

## Our FY26–28 RAP Priorities

IEP focus for FY26–28 RAP	Self-determination	Participation in decision-making	Respect and recognition of culture	Equality and non-discrimination
	In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to provide First Nations customers with information and knowledge that supports them to self-determine their financial aspirations.	In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to engage with First Nations stakeholders to provide feedback on relevant products and services to help improve First Nations financial inclusion.	In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to provide relevant teams with information and training on First Nations ways of being and knowing to support First Nations customers' financial inclusion.	In delivering the following three reconciliation priorities, we aim to understand and address the barriers First Nations customers experience in accessing CommBank's products and service, where practical.
Reconciliation Priorities		FY26–28 RAP Activities and Implementation		
<b>10. First Nations Banking Products and Services</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Customer Engagement (RBS)	<b>10.1</b> Formalise a partnership to deliver financial education programs relating to budgeting, saving, scams, managing debt and family obligations to First Nations customers <b>(June 2026)</b> .  <b>10.2</b> Encourage First Nations customers to use self-service digital services, including app and internet banking, to increase take-up of these services and improve banking access <b>(June 2028)</b> .	<b>10.3</b> Seek guidance and feedback from the ILT and IAC on the bank's products and services to support the bank to continually improve our customer propositions for First Nations customers <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>10.4</b> Identify an appropriate cultural financial education training program and deliver to 100 employees to raise awareness of the banking needs of First Nations customers when developing future products and services <b>(June 2028)</b> .	<b>10.5</b> Deliver a First Nations customer engagement campaign to provide clear product information to support First Nations retail customers to select the most appropriate everyday transaction account <b>(June 2026)</b> .
<b>11. First Nations Remote Banking</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Customer Engagement (RBS)	<b>11.1</b> Raise awareness with customers across First Nations Reach Program regions of our remote banking products and services, including First Nations Reach, ICAL, free-fee ATMs and Bank@Post, and increase awareness of topics such as scams and fraud prevention <b>(June 2027)</b> .	<b>11.2</b> Through the First Nations Reach Program, capture insights from engagement with local organisations during visits and servicing local customers to understand the community's banking needs or concerns and share insights with the First Nations Customer Engagement team to inform the focus for First Nations banking products and services <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>11.3</b> Encourage senior leaders to attend First Nations Reach Program visits each year to learn from First Nations peoples about financial wellbeing from a First Nations perspective <b>(annual)</b> .	<b>11.4</b> Deliver the First Nations Reach Program to 46 locations, offering customers in remote areas access to face-to face banking services <b>(June 2028)</b> .
<b>12. First Nations Financial Independence</b> First Nations Lead Team: First Nations Customer Engagement (RBS)	<b>12.1</b> Promote government grants that support homeownership and provide educational materials that can help First Nations customers understand the benefits of shared equity schemes in various states and territories <b>(June 2028)</b> .	<b>12.2</b> Engage with First Nations retail customers through surveys or focus groups to understand their banking needs and share insights with relevant teams to help inform future financial independence strategies and approaches <b>(June 2028)</b> .	<b>12.3</b> Host a yarning circle series with First Nations employees to understand their money management experiences to help inform the bank's approach to supporting First Nations customers <b>(June 2026)</b> .	<b>12.4</b> Present insights to the retail bank leadership team outlining the needs of First Nations peoples in developing intergenerational wealth, including challenges to enter the housing market <b>(June 2027)</b> .



# First Nations Reach Program | Remote banking access.

Story by Dilvin Yasa.

**For many First Nations peoples living in remote communities, opening a bank account and accessing their money or support can be seen as near-impossible tasks. CommBank's First Nations Reach Program is working to improve the access to banking services for remote First Nations Australians.**

It's hard to understand the challenges of living in the remote reaches of our vast nation, until you hear the stories: the 69-year old community member unable to access their pension as they locked their account after failing identification questions, the 18-year-old travelling two hours each way (at \$186 a pop) to do a simple ID check at her "local" branch, the 40-year old mother unable to open an account for her children as she can't produce a birth certificate... the Elder unable to adjust the security features to prevent losses.

Someone who understands the tyranny of distance better than most is proud Bunuba woman Dianne, who calls Bungardi – a remote outstation some 400 kilometres east of Broome – home. "We like being in our community – it's safe," she says. "But sometimes we don't get service. The nearest bank branch is in Broome, which is too far and sometimes I find it hard to travel." Distance, language barriers, low literacy and limited connectivity are just some of the issues that can make everyday banking challenging for First Nations people living in remote communities, says fellow Bunuba man Eric, a Fitzroy Crossing community member. "Some of our community members don't even have reception," he says. "The mob tells them to go see a branch manager. Without reception, they can't even call to get a lift into town so there are a lot of obstacles." Gambling, financial abuse and scams (often enabled by the candid sharing of information on social media) are some of the other common issues remote First Nations communities face.

To better serve these communities, CommBank has launched its First Nations Reach Program. It's designed to not only improve access to banking services for Indigenous Australians in remote regions but also support the spread of information that safeguards customers' financial wellbeing. Ultimately, it gives people like Dianne the confidence and skills to use self-serve digital banking options.

Staff from remote branches and our Indigenous Customer Assistance Line (ICAL) have been travelling to First Nations residents in Fitzroy Crossing and Queensland's Palm Island, to offer face-to-face support across a wide range of banking needs since 2023. The teams open and reinstate accounts, resolve ID issues, lodge dispute enquiries and provide education on everything from ways to bank with us remotely to scams awareness and online gambling. "Free transport is arranged for residents from nearby communities who need help," says Cody Milnes, First Nations Reach Program Manager.

Thanks to the success of the pilot – demonstrated by the tangible results it produces for customers who have been helped – CommBank has extended the program by another 12 locations across the country in 2024. The team spends one to three days every three months within the communities to provide banking assistance. It's a move Jim Stacey, CEO of Urapuntja Aboriginal Corporation, applauds.

"The phrase 'please drop into our local branch' sends me into a tailspin," he says, "For Urapuntja homelands customers, it means a 600-kilometre return trip over some very ordinary roads. It's why I loved the CommBank remote team's recent visit. It facilitates everyday banking – which most Australians take for granted – for the least privileged."

Community feedback regarding the program is positive, says Marcel Sithole, manager of financial counselling services at Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation, which has been collaborating on the program with CommBank. "We've had great feedback about having a presence in person – especially for customers who might have challenges communicating over the phone or navigating the internet," he says. "The possibilities are endless for what we can achieve together."

Dianne says that the program's value is already felt by the community. "It's good that we can do our banking in the app, check our balance and all that. I found it hard before – always asking family members for help – and now I can do it on my own."

Visit [commbank.com.au/firstnationsreach](https://commbank.com.au/firstnationsreach) to find out more about the First Nations Reach Program, including where it goes and when it will be there.



Self image of Jade Tansley, Nekaya Carpenter and Kaye and Allison Cox.

This article was originally published in [The CommBank Magazine - November/December 2024: The Brighter Side of Banking.](#)



# Measurement and Evaluation.





# Understanding the impact of our transformation project.

## Measurement and Evaluation (M&E) supports us to test the impact and effectiveness of our reconciliation priorities and gather insights that can support continual improvement.

To measure and evaluate the impact from our reconciliation priorities, we worked with Social Ventures Australia and our First Nations Lead Teams to set four impact areas, covering what we are seeking to achieve through applying our IEPs in our reconciliation priorities.

Recognising that our desired impacts are long-term, we have set nine medium-term changes that we will measure our FY26-28 RAP against to determine if our activities are supporting us to progress our desired impacts. We aim to gather M&E data biennially and evaluate it to provide comparisons and trends that, over time, will support us to understand the impact of our work.

Our 2024 M&E provided insights which have informed the direction of our FY26-28 RAP. The insights included the need to maintain focus on supporting First Nations-led approaches; the need to continue to provide employee engagement opportunities while we mature our approach by providing more tailored learning aligned to key roles; and the opportunity to strengthen engagement with First Nations customers, through surveys and focus groups, so we can continue to evaluate the impact of our financial inclusion reconciliation priorities.

### 2024 Workplace RAP Barometer

Every two years, Reconciliation Australia conducts the Workplace RAP Barometer (WRB) and CommBank has participated in the biennial survey since 2016. The WRB assesses the impact of an organisation's RAP on its employees by measuring their perceptions of their organisation's commitment to reconciliation and the impact their RAP has had on workplace culture and relationships with First Nations peoples.

CommBank employees were invited to complete the 2024 WRB in September 2024. The results reinforced the importance of employee engagement in progressing reconciliation and the need to regularly refresh our approach to promoting and encouraging employee engagement in reconciliation.

## Measuring progress towards our reconciliation ambition

### Impact area 1 | Self-determination

Work with First Nations peoples to enable self-determined social, cultural and economic aspirations.

**Outcome 1:** CommBank actively demonstrates a commitment to supporting First Nations-led approaches in delivering their own reconciliation priorities.

**Outcome 2:** CommBank supports First Nations peoples to deliver solutions designed by the community, for the community.

### Impact area 2 | Participation in decision-making

Engage First Nations peoples in decisions relating to our reconciliation priorities.

**Outcome 3:** First Nations voices inform the direction of CommBank's reconciliation priorities.

**Outcome 4:** Decisions made by CommBank, in relation to the reconciliation priorities, actively consider First Nations peoples' needs.

### Impact area 3 | Respect for and recognition of culture

Build organisational capability to enable culturally informed responses.

**Outcome 5:** CommBank employees are confident to engage with First Nations peoples and can translate education into improved engagement.

**Outcome 6:** CommBank is considered to be a culturally safe, welcoming and respectful workplace.

### Impact area 4 | Equality and non-discrimination

Address barriers preventing equal access to opportunities for First Nations peoples.

**Outcome 7:** CommBank develops and grows its First Nations workforce.

**Outcome 8:** First Nations businesses have increased opportunities to grow, through improved banking propositions and increased procurement opportunities.

**Outcome 9:** First Nations customers have access to banking products and services that enable them to achieve their financial goals.



# 2024 Reconciliation Measurement and Evaluation baseline data.

Based on responses to M&E data collected in September 2024, unless otherwise noted.

## Impact area 1 | Self-determination

Work with First Nations peoples to enable self-determined social, cultural and economic aspirations.

**Outcome 1: CommBank actively demonstrates a commitment to supporting First Nations-led approaches in delivering their own reconciliation priorities.**

- 68% First Nations employees who strongly agree or agree that CommBank is committed to supporting First Nations-led approaches.
- 47% First Nations employees who strongly agree or agree that First Nations representatives hold key leadership positions within CommBank and are setting key strategies where reconciliation priorities impact on First Nations peoples.

**Outcome 2: CommBank supports First Nations peoples to deliver solutions designed by the community, for the community.**

- 69% First Nations employees who strongly agree or agree that CommBank has a strong commitment to supporting First Nations communities to lead change.
- \$4m Sponsorships and grants with First Nations organisations to support community-led initiatives in FY24.
- 18 CommBank employees who completed a place-based secondment with First Nations organisations.

## Impact area 2 | Participation in decision-making

Engage First Nations peoples in decisions relating to our reconciliation priorities.

**Outcome 3: First Nations voices inform the direction of CommBank's reconciliation priorities.**

- 86% First Nations advisors who strongly agree or agree First Nations voices inform the direction of CommBank's reconciliation priorities and supporting policies and procedures.
- 71% First Nations advisors who strongly agree or agree that First Nations voices are genuinely valued and heard in key reconciliation-related decisions.

**Outcome 4: Decisions made by CommBank, in relation to the reconciliation priorities, actively consider First Nations peoples' needs.**

- 68% First Nations employees who strongly agree or agree that reconciliation-related decisions are made with First Nations peoples' needs in mind.
- 71% First Nations advisors who strongly agree or agree that decisions relating to our reconciliation priorities actively consider First Nations needs.

## Impact area 3 | Respect for and recognition of culture

Build organisational capability to enable culturally informed responses.

**Outcome 5: CommBank employees are confident to engage with First Nations peoples and can translate education into improved engagement.**

- 40.4% CommBank Australian-based employees who completed one or more forms of Indigenous cultural development in FY24.
- 89% CommBank employees (who had completed at least one form of cultural learning in the preceding 6 months) who strongly agree or agree that they feel more confident to engage with First Nations peoples.
- 52% CommBank employees (who had completed at least one form of cultural learning in the preceding 6 months) who reported they had applied new knowledge or awareness in their work or life.

**Outcome 6: CommBank is considered to be a culturally safe, welcoming and respectful workplace.**

- 37% First Nations employees who reported seeing CommBank employees increasing their cultural safety awareness and practice.
- 66% First Nations employees who strongly agree or agree that they feel culturally safe and well supported during the employment lifecycle.
- 86% First Nations advisors who strongly agree or agree that CommBank creates an environment where First Nations peoples feel welcome and respected.

## Impact area 4 | Equality and non-discrimination

Address barriers preventing equal access to opportunities for First Nations peoples.

**Outcome 7: CommBank develops and grows its First Nations workforce.**

- 61% First Nations employees who strongly agree or agree that they feel supported to progress their career at CommBank.
- 1.7% First Nations representation across our domestic workforce, as at 30 September 2024.

**Outcome 8: First Nations businesses have increased opportunities to grow, through improved banking propositions and increased procurement opportunities.**

- 100% First Nations suppliers who strongly agree or agree that they feel welcome and respected when engaging with CommBank for procurement opportunities.
- \$22.65m Spent with First Nations suppliers (Direct and Indirect spend) in FY24.

**Outcome 9: First Nations customers have access to banking products and services that enable them to achieve their financial goals.**

- 15K First Nations people who had access to the First Nations Reach Program in 2024.
- 260K Calls received from First Nations customers into ICAL in FY24.



# Who to contact.

The Commonwealth Bank First Nations Strategy and Partnerships team can be contacted at [reconciliationactionplan@cba.com.au](mailto:reconciliationactionplan@cba.com.au).

