

Larter.

**RECONCILIATION
ACTION
PLAN
2023-2024**



Larter Consulting Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): 2023 - 2024

Larter Consulting acknowledges and pays respect to the past, present and future Traditional Custodians and Elders of this nation and the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Larter has developed a Reconciliation Action Plan as part of our commitment to reconciliation.

Contents

About the Artwork	3
Message from the Chair	4
Message from the Managing Director	5
Our organisation	6
Our RAP	7
Our partnerships/current activities	9
RAP activities	
Relationships	11
Respect	12
Opportunities	13
Governance	14

Larter Consulting Pty Ltd

A stronger primary health system

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About the Artwork



This piece is celebrating Larter Consulting and its commitment to First Nations communities, striving to build a strong relationship.

In the art piece are the four elements of responsive, collaborative, innovate and demonstrating integrity in each corner. In the centre of the art piece is Larter Consulting with the staff and the board extending outwards, with journey lines connecting to communities. The use of the Larter values in the corners guide the way forward to a better future.

Communities are represented with the Aboriginal symbol for person and the Torres Strait Islander dhari. Sitting in the centre of each community is a Larter staff member connecting within their community. The footprints of the Emu, Kangaroo, and person represent moving forward and never backwards to the future.

The additional elements of person, mountains and people sitting with a coolamon share the strengthening of Larter to its people and First Nations people. May Larter be guided by its values to always move forward to a brighter future.

Artist acknowledgement

Leah Cummins, Mayi woman from North-Western Queensland
Bunya Designs

Message from the Chair



We are thrilled to launch Larter's inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). This marks an important milestone in our reconciliation journey that aims to foster respect, improved relationships and opportunities underpinned by a RAP governance mechanism. This inaugural RAP is our foundation RAP, otherwise described by Reconciliation Australia as a Reflect RAP.

We recognise the responsibility of all healthcare professionals in Australia to actively address and reduce systemic inequities. Larter's work has a real impact on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in various ways – through the design of health services and programs; through evaluation of same; and through our education and training. We recognise numerous opportunities to enhance understanding, appreciation, and acknowledgement of the rich cultures, histories, knowledge and rights of First Nations. We embrace our responsibility to seek new ways to partner and yarn with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our lines of work.

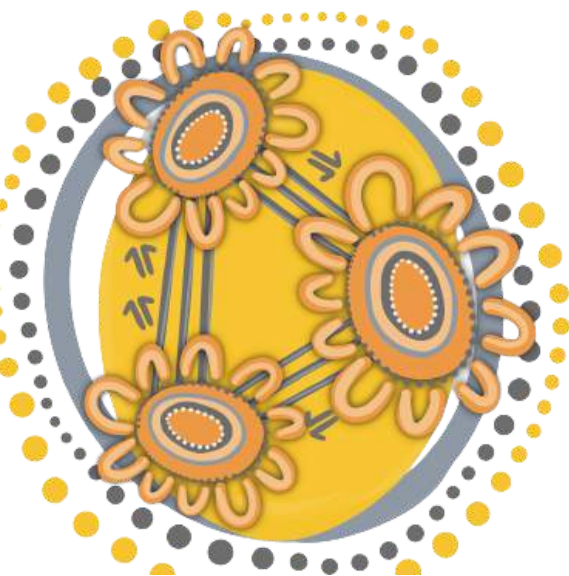
Additionally we recognise our internal organisational responsibilities, including fostering a culturally safe working environment and supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' businesses.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the people that were instrumental in helping us get to this stage. Firstly the Larter staff for their hard work in codesigning the RAP. Secondly to Reconciliation Australia for their guidance and rounds of feedback on our draft versions. Thirdly to artist Leah Cummins, who has created the terrific artwork that you see in this document that Larter will continue to use going forward. Finally to my fellow Board members for their support in the creation of this RAP.

We are enthusiastic about meeting the goals we've set in this RAP and striving to become a trailblazer in promoting reconciliation within the consulting industry in the health sector.



Colin Duff
Chair, Larter Consulting



Message from the Managing Director

Seventeen years ago, before I became a consultant, the CEO of an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service sat me down before I had said a word and essentially said “keep in mind not to tell us what we should be involved in – we tell you what our community has prioritised, and then we discuss if you can help”. This was a great practical lesson in what community control means. I've subsequently come to understand that all work we do touches on the lives of First Nations people and how important it is to seek knowledge about local needs and ways of doing things.

This RAP is the culmination of several years of internal reflection on how we can take genuine steps toward greater cultural awareness and maturity when working on Aboriginal lands and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our team knew that committing to a RAP is a significant commitment for a small business. However I'm proud that all team members have stayed focused on the journey and am confident we will be able to implement this RAP.

Our RAP has four sections, and 13 actions within those sections. I will briefly touch on some of the actions.

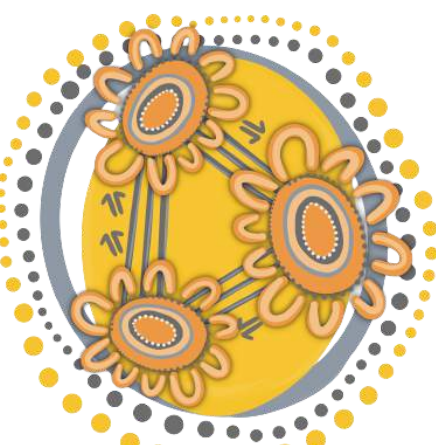
1. **RELATIONSHIPS** - we have dedicated ourselves to strengthening genuine two-way relationships with Aboriginal peoples and organisations.

2. **RESPECT** - we commit ourselves to demonstrating respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through a range of actions including regular cultural safety training, reviewing communications products, and paying respect during days of significance.
3. **OPPORTUNITIES** - we have a vision to make a contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment, and businesses when we are procuring.
4. **GOVERNANCE** - we will form a Reconciliation Working Group with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander representation and establish a system to report on our commitments.

I would like to thank a few people for their guidance, support and friendship on the journey:

- Uncle Andrew Gardiner of the First Peoples' Assembly of Victoria
- Jack and Lisa Bulman of Mibbinbah Spirit Healing
- Leah Cummins for her wonderful art work, displayed in this document
- The Larter Board for their encouragement and ideas
- All Larter staff who participated enthusiastically throughout the process.

We look forward to reporting on our progress.



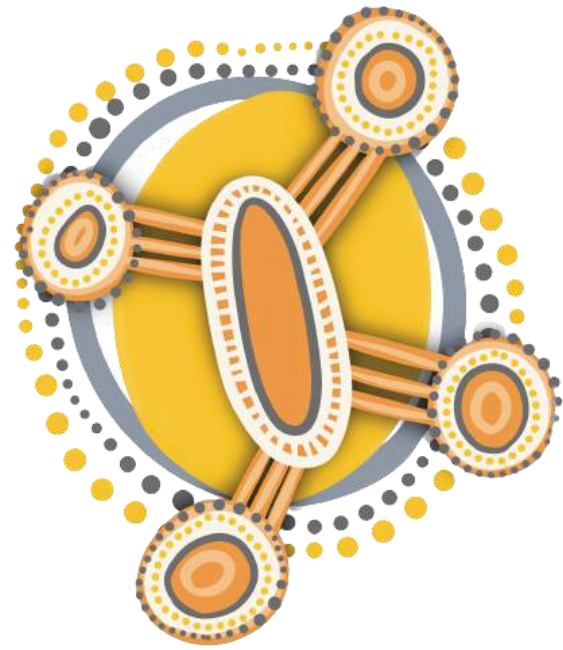
Peter Larter
Managing Director, Larter Consulting

Larter Consulting Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): 2023 - 2024

Our organisation

Larter Consulting v Larter is a small business that provides expert advice, support services and education to individuals and organisations working in the health sector. Combining knowledge, technical expertise and hands-on primary health sector experience, our competencies include:

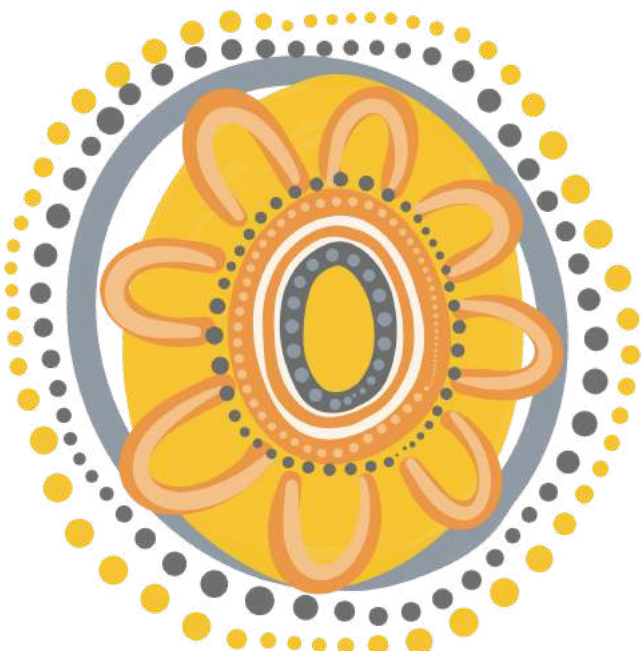
- Assessing community health needs
- Engaging stakeholders
- Designing and evaluating health programs and services
- Developing sustainable financial and business models for health and community services
- Writing funding submissions, activity plans and corporate reports
- Health professional education and training
- Local health system plans and strategies



Larter is majority owned by CheckUP Australia, which has its own independent Reconciliation Action Plan, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Board sub-committee.

Larter is governed by a Board of Directors with a diverse range of skills and experience. The Board is responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the organisation and for delivering accountable corporate performance in accordance with Larter's goals and objectives.

In 2021, our business provided services in Victoria, Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania, with our major operating areas being Gippsland, Darling Downs and West Moreton, Far North Queensland and Eastern Melbourne. We currently employ five people in Victoria and two in Queensland, with no employees self-identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people. The business is mobile, with staff working primarily from home offices or client offices. We do not have a physical office space.



Larter Consulting Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): 2023 - 2024

Our RAP

Larter staff and board members share a deep respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, recognising the impacts of colonisation in Australia and its effects on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Larter understands the importance of truth-telling and its role in supporting rights to a fair and just society and self-determination.

We decided to develop a RAP to make a contribution toward reconciliation. We share the vision in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have the same opportunities as all Australians, through self-determination, and within a climate of understanding and respect. Given our focus on health and community development, equal access to health care through self-determined health care delivery and funding models are core considerations. We see lasting relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as particularly important.

As an organisation, we have a history of working on projects that have been led by and involved engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We need to increase our understanding and knowledge of the histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and to build relationships with communities and those working in the primary and First Nations health care sectors rather than just consulting.

In the lead up to the development of this RAP, internal work has been undertaken to promote respect and reconciliation such as through the development of a first Cultural Safety and Security Policy (an internal policy) in 2020. Larter has also adopted aspects of the Indigenous Evaluation Strategy (Productivity Commission, 2020) which promotes best practice principles for evaluating programs that involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. This highlighted the many mistakes that some consulting companies have made in the past, often due to cultural ignorance or poor engagement/follow up of communities and leaders.

Our team at Larter plan to regularly report on RAP progress through our weekly meetings known as Huddles, with a reconciliation standing item once every four weeks. We have taken the first steps to build a focus on reconciliation into Huddles by asking each staff member to research some of the history and cultural practices of the Traditional Owners of the lands on which they live (as each staff member works from home in different regions of Australia), and report back to other staff on their findings. Our intention is to extend this research to other Primary Health Network regions where we deliver our consultancy and education and training services.



Larter Consulting Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): 2023 - 2024

Our RAP

We have sought guidance and advice from First Nations' stakeholders in the development of this RAP by seeking feedback from an Aboriginal Cultural Consultant, Mirriyu Cultural Consulting. Larter will also continue to celebrate significant days in the calendar such as National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC week.

Larter will actively seek First Nations representatives to participate in our RAP Working Group. Our "RAP Champion" is Managing Director, Peter Larter, who is a driving force behind Larter's reconciliation journey.

Being a small organisation, three of seven team members across the business participate in the RAP Working Group, ensuring shared accountability and buy-in to the RAP across our organisation. The RAP will be promoted throughout our organisation and implementation of assigned deliverables shared by each staff member, making reconciliation a priority, front of mind and ultimately making Larter a culturally secure organisation.

Larter will continue to focus on engaging with First Nations' Stakeholders to inform our RAP development, implementation, and reporting.



Our partnerships/current activities

Historically, Larter has worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Victoria. A number of projects - such as working with Kulin Balit Strategy project leaders to enhance the evaluation of projects and promulgation of learnings; and creating a “Black Pages” service directory for two rural communities in the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula catchment area. The Boon Wurrung Djiri Djiri (“messenger of the Boon Wurrung”) is a 60-page hardcopy resource that was distributed throughout the Frankston-Mornington Peninsula catchment area. Local services were mapped, and Aboriginal-specific service providers and community members were consulted with to identify the community’s health service information needs. Community consultations were supported by the Aboriginal Health Alliance, Peninsula Shire, and Peninsula Health, and included visiting local gathering places. Through these consultations Larter identified the appropriate structure, content and format for the directory, including the use of culturally appropriate branding and language.

Larter was partially acquired by non-profit health and human services organisation, CheckUP Australia, in 2019. CheckUP’s purpose was to gain some consulting expertise and a footprint in states beyond Queensland; while Larter’s purpose was to gain intellectual expertise and knowledge of the Queensland market and release some capital. CheckUP Australia has its own RAP; an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Lead; and significant partnerships with and programs that work with and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. CheckUP is guided by its Aboriginal Health Advisory Committee, which sits under and advises their Board. Partnerships include Aboriginal peak bodies, including a Memorandum of Understanding with the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC). QAIHC is the peak body for the Community Controlled Health Sector in Queensland and is co-located in the same building as CheckUP.

These partnerships also include maintaining formal two-way partnerships with 30 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities or organisations in Queensland and the current development of new partnerships with communities in the Northern Territory, specifically Papunya and Yuendumu through their Allied Health in Remote Schools project.

In 2021-22, Larter was invited to evaluate two programs that specifically involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in rural/remote Queensland. One of these projects was the 2021 evaluation of the Be Well Learn Well (BWLW) program, a Department of Education initiative in partnership with CheckUP Australia, and two Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, Gidgee Healing, and the Apunipima Cape York Health Council. The initiative aims to identify and address behavioural and learning issues, improving educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from pre-prep to Year 12 across eight remote state schools. Larter’s evaluation methodology used a strengths-based approach using the Most Significant Change stories to illustrate achievements for children and families, as well as the schools and their staff. Larter undertook site visits to two schools (Kowanyama State School and Aurukun State School), which allowed for in depth observation and yarning with school staff to uncover the achievements and learnings for the BWLW program.



Our partnerships/current activities

Internally, Larter:

- Promotes the use of respectful and inclusive language in our writing Style Guide
- Includes an Acknowledgement of Country when presenting workshops and education
- Celebrates National Reconciliation Week or NAIDOC week – for example the team watched then collectively discussed the film “In My Blood It Runs” in 2020 and in 2022, promoted awareness of NAIDOC week through use of the NAIDOC Week banner and messaging in our email signature blocks (and the internal work we are committed to as an organisation through the development of our RAP)
- Has developed and endorsed a Cultural Safety and Security Policy (2020)
- Made changes to HR policies such as offering new employees an opportunity to self-identify as being an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person
- Developed a Best Practice Checklist based on the Commonwealth Government’s Indigenous Evaluation Strategy (2020) (which was developed in consultation with First Nations Peoples) to use throughout the evaluation lifecycle when working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health programs or activities (2021), The Indigenous Evaluation Strategy is a whole-of-government framework developed following extensive engagement and input from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organisations, government agencies and people administering, delivering and evaluating policies and programs
- Attended the Reconciliation Action Australia Convention (2021)



Larter Consulting Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): 2023 - 2024

Relationships

Relationships			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
1. Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence. 	August 2023	Evaluation Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and document best practice and principles that support partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations. 	August 2023	Healthcare Consultant
2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff. 	October 2023	Business Support Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and support all staff to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW. 	October 2023	Managing Director with all staff
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconciliation Working Group to Participate in at least one external NRW event. 	October 2023	Managing Director
3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate our commitment to reconciliation to all staff during induction (update Induction Manual). 	August 2023	Principal Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external stakeholders that our organisation can engage with on our reconciliation journey. 	August 2023	Evaluation Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an organisational annual cultural calendar to mark significant dates for First Nations Peoples. 	August 2023	Marketing Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify organisations in the RAP network and/other like-minded organisations that we can engage and collaborate with on our reconciliation journey. 	September 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Larter website in collaboration with a First Nations partner to ensure it reflects Larter's commitment to reconciliation. 	September 2023	Marketing Consultant
4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research best practice and policies in areas of race relations and anti-discrimination. 	September 2023	Healthcare Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures (including recruitment, induction, performance review and ongoing management) to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, culturally inclusive hiring, and other future needs. 	November 2023	Managing Director



Larter Consulting Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP): 2023 - 2024

Respect

Respect

Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
5. Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.	Review internal documents to ensure our materials are culturally appropriate and respectful including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document (Word and PowerPoint) templates • Email signatures • Style Guide • Policies and procedures 	November 2023	Healthcare Consultant and Business Support Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate cultural awareness training as part of our staff orientation. 	September 2023	Marketing Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research cultural learning options appropriate for all staff. 	September 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation in line with our Cultural Safety and Security Policy, 2020. 	September 2023	Managing Director
6. Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of the local Traditional Owners of the lands and waters within our organisation's major operating areas. 	July 2023	Process led by Business Support Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols. 	July 2023	Senior Associate Consultant
7. Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and share information amongst our staff about the meaning of NAIDOC Week. 	November 2023	Principal Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce our staff to NAIDOC Week by promoting external events in their local area of residence. 	July 2023, 2024	Marketing Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAP Working Group to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event. 	July 2024	Managing director



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Opportunities

Opportunities			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
8. Improve employment outcomes by increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and/or formal subcontractor arrangements for the organisation. 	September 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build an understanding of current Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities. 	August 2023	Managing Director
9. Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a business case for procurement from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses. 	November 2023	Primary Health Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate Supply Nation membership. 	August 2023	Business Support Consultant



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Governance

Governance			
Action	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
10. Establish and maintain an effective RAP Working Group (RWG) to drive governance of the RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a Reconciliation Working Group (RWG) to govern RAP implementation. 	August 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft a Terms of Reference for the RWG. 	August 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the RWG. 	September 2023	Managing Director
11. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define resource needs for RAP implementation. 	August 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage senior leaders in the delivery of RAP commitments. 	July 2023	Managing Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define appropriate systems and capability to track, measure and report on RAP commitments. 	September 2023	Managing Director
12. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia. 	September annually	Evaluation Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to verify that our primary and secondary contact details are up to date, to ensure we do not miss out on important RAP correspondence. 	November annually	Business Support Consultant
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact Reconciliation Australia to request our unique link, to access the online RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire. 	1 August annually	Business Support Consultant
13. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP. 	March 2024	Business Support Consultant

