

Sydney Opera House
Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan
2017–19

Reconciliation



Principal Partner

SAMSUNG



RECONCILIATION
ACTION PLAN

STRETCH

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Warning: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are advised that this document may contain images of deceased persons.



2016 Lighting the Sails, *Songlines*,
at Vivid Sydney. Artwork by Donny
Woolagoodja. Photo by Daniel Boud.



I am delighted to present the Sydney Opera House's 2017–19 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

We have come such a long way since first developing a RAP in 2011. Our fourth RAP builds on the strong foundations established over the past five years, and brings together all the great initiatives being undertaken across the organisation. The Opera House is committed to respecting, embracing and celebrating the world's oldest culture, and it is wonderful to see this commitment becoming ever more integral to our daily lives at the Opera House.

This is appropriate in every way, not least because the Opera House stands on the land known to the Gadigal people as Tubowgule, which means 'where the knowledge waters meet'. For thousands of years Tubowgule was a place to gather, eat, sing, dance and share stories. It is fitting that the Opera House carries on this legacy, for everyone.

At its 40th Anniversary in 2013, the Opera House embarked on a Decade of Renewal. It includes not only major capital works to safeguard the building for future generations, but also work across the organisation to ensure a deeper, richer and more fulfilling experience for 21st century artists, audiences and visitors.

Our RAP is fundamental to achieving this vision. The 2017-19 plan sets out a clear path to further embed reconciliation values across the full spectrum of what the Opera House offers, from art and experiences to education and employment.

I look forward to continuing this important work towards reconciliation, together with our community, staff and partners.

Louise Herron AM
Chief Executive Officer



Reconciliation Australia congratulates the Sydney Opera House on its past successes and ongoing commitment to reconciliation as it implements its fourth Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

In adopting a Stretch RAP, the Opera House is demonstrating its readiness to re-focus on tried and tested strategies with a view to achieving clear outcomes in advancing reconciliation.

Major public institutions such as the Opera House play a fundamental role as a gateway to knowledge and culture in our society, and have a unique ability to support increased knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their histories and cultures.

The Opera House has been a leading advocate for reconciliation since 2011, in becoming the first performing arts centre in Australia to establish a RAP.

The outstanding support the Opera House shows for the development of career paths for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists and students, celebrating

First Nations arts and culture through extensive programming, providing opportunities for young people to learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories and history, and cultural engagement for its staff continues to grow.

The Opera House's advocacy for the importance of respecting and nurturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and culture to the national identity of Australia is clearly core to its organisational values.

The Opera House's Stretch RAP signifies its accelerated commitment to reconciliation within its organisation and across its sphere of influence. On behalf of Reconciliation Australia, I commend the Opera House on its Stretch RAP and look forward to following its ongoing reconciliation journey.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Justin Mohamed'.

Justin Mohamed
Chief Executive Officer
Reconciliation Australia

OUR RECONCILIATION VISION

“

I am Bennelong –
and my spirit and the spirit of my
people lives; and their dance and
their music and their drama and their
laughter also remains.

”

Ben Blakeney OAM, Aboriginal actor,
at the opening of the Opera House in 1973

The Sydney Opera House’s vision for reconciliation is to foster and celebrate a shared sense of belonging for all Australians.

For thousands of years, Tubowgule, the land on which the Opera House stands, has been a place of gathering and belonging. The Gadigal would meet on the tidal island, eat and share stories. The Opera House carries on this legacy by embracing and celebrating the culture of Australia’s First Peoples.

The Opera House’s RAP commits to a range of actions and initiatives that aim to safeguard these traditions and adapting cultures for future generations.



↑ NAISDA performer at 2014 *Homeground*.
Photo by Prudence Upton.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE STAND FOR

The Opera House is the symbol of modern Australia, one of the world's busiest performing arts centres and the nation's premier tourist destination.

The Opera House is operated and maintained on behalf of the NSW Government and the people of NSW by the Sydney Opera House Trust. *The Sydney Opera House Trust Act 1961* charges the Opera House with:

- ▶ The administration, care, control, management and maintenance of the Opera House as a performing arts centre and as a meeting place for matters of international, national or local significance;
- ▶ The promotion of artistic taste and achievement; and
- ▶ Scientific research into, and the encouragement of, new and improved forms of entertainment and methods of presenting entertainment.

Our vision is to be as bold and inspiring as the Opera House itself.

Our mission is two-fold:

- ▶ To treasure and renew the Opera House for future generations of artists, audiences and visitors; and
- ▶ To inspire, and strengthen the community, through everything we do.

Built to “help mould a better, more enlightened community”, in the words of former NSW Premier Joseph Cahill, the Opera House has more than repaid the vision and daring of those that created it, becoming the building that changed the image of an entire country, as renowned architect Frank Gehry once observed. More than four decades after it opened in 1973, the Opera House continues to play a transformative role in Australian life.

In 2013, Deloitte Access Economics found that the Opera House contributed \$775 million a year to the national economy and had a broader cultural and iconic value to Australia of \$4.6 billion. Internationally, the Opera House brand is considered more relevant and esteemed than the national brand of Australia itself.

One of the biggest employers in the NSW arts and cultural sector, the Opera House employs more than 900 people, including 20 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander identified staff (as at 1 June 2016) in full-time, part-time or casual roles, and directly and indirectly supports more than 8,400 jobs.

The Opera House welcomes more than 8.2 million visitors each year, with over 1.5 million attending more than 2,000 performances, and more than 400,000 taking a guided tour of the building. About 2.5 million dining and retail transactions happen on site annually.

Its reach is not limited to its geographic location – the Opera House is also an online portal for performances, creative learning, ideas and discussions, reaching audiences and communities nationally and internationally through an innovative program of digital experiences.

The Opera House is central to Australia's arts and cultural ecosystem and works closely with its government and industry colleagues, including the other NSW Cultural Institutions: Art Gallery of NSW; Australian Museum; Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences; and the State Library of NSW. It is home to seven flagship Resident Companies: Australian Chamber Orchestra; Bangarra Dance Theatre; Bell Shakespeare; Opera Australia; Sydney Symphony Orchestra; Sydney Theatre Company; and The Australian Ballet. The Opera House itself presents almost 900 performances a year through its programming arm, Sydney Opera House Presents, ranging from contemporary music to talks and ideas, children, families and creative learning programs and international and indigenous shows and festivals.

The Opera House is a State and National Heritage-listed building, and was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2007 as a “masterpiece of human creative genius”. It has become the world's house, a source of universal inspiration.



Our Values

Creativity

Be bold and innovative.

Excellence

Make it the best.

Collaboration

One team.

Accountability

Focus and own it.

←
Cake and song as the Opera House turns 40 in 2013, with the Jannawi Dancers performing.
Photo by Daniel Boud.



OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The Opera House's commitment to foster and celebrate a shared sense of belonging for all Australians is an essential part of its role as a modern symbol of the nation and its transformation of the communities it serves.

In 2011, the Opera House became the first performing arts organisation in Australia to launch a RAP. The inaugural RAP was developed to turn the Opera House's commitment into a meaningful strategy for achieving its reconciliation vision. In the five years since the Opera House joined Reconciliation Australia's RAP Program, many initiatives and a range of programs have become part of its core business.

The 2017–19 Stretch RAP builds on these foundations and aligns with Reconciliation Australia's three principles of Relationships, Respect and Opportunities. The Opera House's fourth RAP strengthens and expands strategies in the following key areas:

- ▶ Cultural awareness, competency and engagement;
- ▶ Deepening relationships;
- ▶ Advocacy and storytelling; and
- ▶ Artistic, professional and organisational development.

The RAP touches every aspect of the Opera House business: Building; Finance; Engagement & Development; People & Culture; Performing Arts; Visitor Experience; and Safety, Security & Risk. The 2017–19 RAP was developed by the Opera House RAP Working Group (RWG), a team of staff members who represent all organisational portfolios, and was approved by the Opera House Executive Team. It reflects written and verbal consultation with Reconciliation Australia and key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander industry stakeholders and organisations.

The RWG members champion the plan and its initiatives across the business and externally to the Opera House's wide-ranging stakeholders. As at June 2016, the Opera House's RWG was comprised of 24 members, including four Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, as well as an Aboriginal representative from Bangarra Dance Theatre:

- ▶ Director, Safety, Security & Risk
- ▶ Director, Visitor Experience
- ▶ Head of Indigenous Programming
- ▶ Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning
- ▶ Associate Producer, Performing Arts
- ▶ Programming Assistant
- ▶ Event Account Manager
- ▶ Tour Guide
- ▶ Sound & Audio Visual Operator
- ▶ Learning & Development Manager
- ▶ Learning & Development Consultant
- ▶ Human Resources Consultant
- ▶ Head of Communications
- ▶ Manager, Strategic Development & Projects
- ▶ Strategic Development Assistant
- ▶ Assistant Marketing Manager, Performing Arts
- ▶ Head of Insights & Optimisation
- ▶ Partnerships Account Manager
- ▶ Head of Operations, Tours & Retail
- ▶ Head of Operations, Food & Beverage
- ▶ Finance and Business Manager
- ▶ Manager, Business Strategy, Building
- ▶ Head of Government Relations
- ▶ Senior Government Relations Officer

The Opera House aims to play a leadership role in reconciliation across the arts and cultural community. It will continue to work closely with its partners, stakeholders and community to achieve its reconciliation vision and RAP objectives.



Shane Howard and friends perform at 2014 *Homeground*. Pictured: Yirmal, Emma Donovan and Amy Saunders. Photo by Daniel Boud.

2014-16 RAP HIGHLIGHTS

Highlights of the Sydney Opera House's 2014-16 RAP illustrate the reach and impact of the Opera House's programs, and its deepening relationships and connection with community.

Homeground

Homeground, the Opera House's annual free outdoor festival celebrating First Nations music, dance and cultures from around the world, was launched in 2014 to an audience of more than 10,000 on the Opera House's Western Broadwalk. Since then, *Homeground* has played host to many world-class international and domestic artists including Archie Roach, Paul Kelly, A Tribe Called Red, Dan Sultan, OKA, Excelsior and Tenzin Choegyal.

Dance Rites

Dance Rites, a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance competition designed to revitalise vanishing cultural practices, was launched in 2015 with more than 150 participants from 10 communities across NSW, Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands. The competition culminated in a breathtaking final round watched by a capacity crowd on the Opera House's Western Broadwalk during *Homeground*. A detailed case study is provided on page 24.

Homeground Talks

The inaugural *Homeground Talks*, a new forum for provocative conversations about contemporary First Nations issues, took place on the 2016 anniversary of Australia's 1967 Indigenous referendum, with influential artists, activists and academics debating economic opportunity and sovereignty for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Career Paths

From 2014 to 2016, the Indigenous Work Experience and Traineeship Programs gave 66 young people the opportunity to learn practical skills across a range of Opera House business areas. A detailed case study is provided on page 28.

Songlines

Songlines, the first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander work commissioned exclusively for the Opera House sails, was a feature of Vivid LIVE and Vivid Sydney 2016. A detailed case study is provided on page 30.

Bangarra

In 2014, Bangarra Dance Theatre celebrated its 25th anniversary and its 10th year in residence at the Opera House with a free performance on the Opera House Forecourt as part of Corroboree Sydney. The Opera House also presented a photographic exhibition of Bangarra's work on the Western Broadwalk.

Digital Tour

The interactive digital creative learning tour *Guwanyi Walama: To Tell and Return* was launched in 2014 and explores the history of Bennelong Point and the Gadigal lands of Sydney Cove before 1788. A detailed case study is provided on page 26.

Staff Immersion

An Opera House staff member was appointed Head of Ceremonies at the 2016 Boomerang Festival, an annual multi-arts and multi-venue event within Bluesfest on Bundjalung lands in northern NSW. During this two-week, cross-organisational learning and mentorship opportunity, she shared her production and technical expertise and cultural knowledge.

Tri Nations

The Opera House, with support from the Australia Council for the Arts, partnered with Active Events (Scotland) and Taranaki Arts Festival (New Zealand) in 2014 to present the *Tri Nations Boomerang Concert*, a unique collaboration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, Maori and Gaelic/Celtic indigenous artists. The concert was presented at WOMAD in New Zealand, the inaugural *Homeground* festival, and at the Commonwealth Games Arts Festival in Scotland.

Teaching Aboriginal Perspectives

Developed in collaboration with the NSW Department of Education in 2014, the Opera House launched an annual forum, *Teaching Aboriginal Perspectives*, designed to provide teachers with guidance on cultural protocols and support the teaching of Aboriginal perspectives across all subjects. More than 90 teachers have participated in the program so far.

Redfern Talks Back

In 2014, the Opera House partnered with the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, the Redfern Area Command and Tribal Warrior Association to develop *Redfern Talks Back*, an engagement program for young people at risk. Participants created a forum theatre show, which is a format designed to generate debate and audience participation. It explored the issue of crime prevention, and culminated in a performance to 160 people at the Opera House.

Cultural Awareness

Each year, Opera House staff participate in cultural engagement activities during National Reconciliation Week. To increase staff understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements, a cultural awareness e-learning module was launched in 2016.

Careers Day

An annual Careers Day for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander high school students was launched in 2014 to develop relationships with students and encourage them to consider a career in the arts and cultural industry. A detailed case study is provided on page 28.



Bangarra celebrates 25 years in 2014 with a performance on the Opera House Forecourt. Photo by Edward Mulvihill.

CASE STUDY 1

DANCE

rites

“

Our preparation for *Dance Rites* inspired others to return to traditional dancing and performance groups to be more competitive for future events. It gives hope for diverse performers across the country in remote and urban areas to bring their traditional and contemporary dances to Sydney and the Opera House.

”

Leonora Adidi
Manager, Naygayiw Gigi Indigenous Corporation

In 2015, inspired by the successful North American Powwow circuit and the Kapa Haka festival in New Zealand, the Opera House launched *Dance Rites*, a ground-breaking national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance competition. *Dance Rites* was designed to strengthen Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural heritage and increase participation of First Australians in cultural life. The project revives a range of vanishing cultural practices including dance, language, traditional instruments and skin markings to ensure that they are passed from one generation to the next.

The 2015 pilot provided an opportunity for more than 150 participants from 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across NSW, Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands to learn more about their local traditions. The Opera House's *Dance Rites* team worked with community dance groups to research and develop local cultural material for the competition. *Dance Rites* was held in November 2015 as part of the Opera House's annual *Homeground* festival, with the finalists performing to a capacity

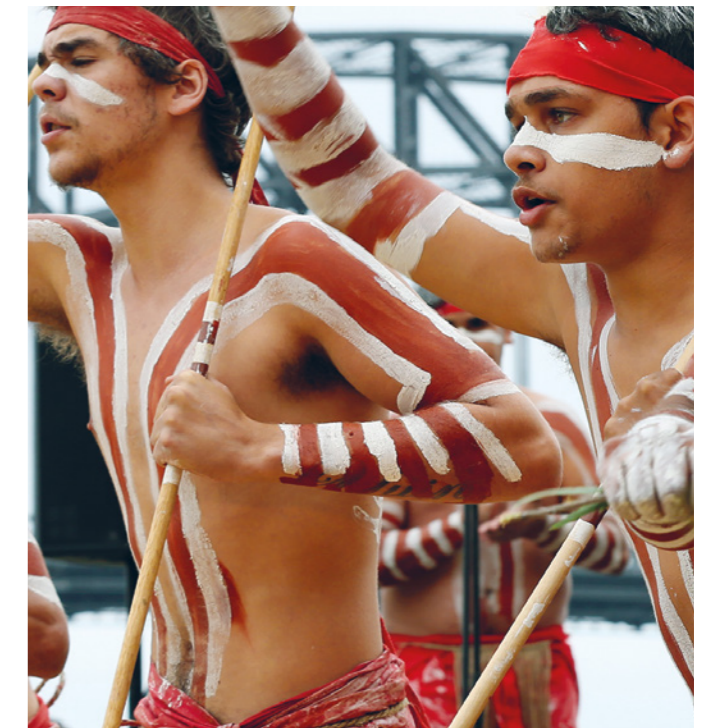
general public audience of 1,200 people on the Opera House's Western Broadwalk. The program, enabled by the Opera House and Creative Music Fund donors, generated sustained media that reached a cumulative audience of 1.8 million. The ABC's *Lateline* story was a standout, while the *White Fella Dreaming* web series, designed to drive awareness, attracted more than 250,000 views on Facebook.

Judged by a panel of peers from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance and artistic community, the winning group, Naygayiw Gigi, from Bamaga in the Torres Strait Islands, received a \$15,000 cash prize. Since the dancers won the competition, they have received offers to perform at the Rainforest Music Festival in Malaysia and Big Fire One Talk, which is part of the Cairns Indigenous Art Fair. The group has also received positive feedback from their community, which has affirmed the group's goal to achieve "cultural preservation and share it with the world".

After the success of the 2015 pilot, the Opera House will continue to develop *Dance Rites* by extending its reach to Western Australia and South Australia.



↑ 2015 *Dance Rites* winners, Naygayiw Gigi Dance Troupe.
Photo by Prudence Upton.



↑ Yuin Ghudjargah perform at 2015 *Dance Rites*.
Photo by Prudence Upton.

CASE STUDY 2

GUWANYI WALAMA: DIGITAL TOUR

“

Surpassed my expectation. Great to learn about how important Bennelong was. Excellent lead up to NAIDOC Week activities.

The enthusiasm of the presenters was a major engagement factor.

”

Feedback from participating schools

In 2014, the Opera House launched an interactive digital tour for students in Years 3 to 6, *Aboriginal Perspectives of Bennelong Point: Guwanyi Walama: To Tell and Return*. Using video conferencing technology, students are connected from their classroom to the Opera House for a 45-minute live tour and journey through the history of Bennelong Point and the Gadigal lands of Sydney Cove before 1788.

Guwanyi Walama enables students from outside Sydney to explore the Opera House and learn about First Nations stories they may not otherwise hear. More than 6,000 students from across Australia, and 130 students in Korea and India, have participated in the tour so far.

Students experience the sense of stepping back in time, walking among the Gadigal people and visualising the landscape, through references to detailed historical accounts, recordings and virtual simulations of Sydney Cove pre-settlement.

The tour, which is aligned with the NSW and Australian curriculum outcomes, encourages students to learn about and acknowledge the Traditional Owners of their own school community while paying respect to and acknowledging Gadigal land and ancestors through the shared stories of the Opera House.



↑ Filming the *Guwanyi Walama* digital tour. Photo by Rob Hansen.



↑ Greenacre Public School participating in *Guwanyi Walama* digital tour. Photo by Kate Jones.

CASE STUDY 3

CAREER PATHS

“

My sister and I commenced our ticketing traineeship at the Opera House when we were 16. Arriving by train after school, the long days were worth it to work in such a well-known performing arts venue. Practical customer service skills have equipped us both for future employment opportunities. We were very fortunate to return for a second traineeship with the Front of House team. This is my favourite position, as it allows me to connect with patrons and personally assist them. Not long after our traineeship we applied for casual Front of House positions and have been working here ever since while studying at university. We are both thankful for the great support from the staff.

”

Georgia Durmush, Opera House employee and former trainee

The Opera House provides opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to learn new skills in the workplace and understand the variety of career paths in the performing arts sector.

Since 2011, the Indigenous Work Experience Program has enabled 125 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Year 10 students to spend a week with Opera House staff, experiencing a wide range of jobs, including technical production, catering, tours, programming, marketing, publicity, security and front-of-house services. Whenever possible, students are also given insight into the working lives of First Nations artists.

Students from the Work Experience Program, as well as students from around NSW, can then participate in the Careers Day for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Years 11 and 12 students, launched in 2014. This day is often students' first experience of the Opera House. Students learn how to write a CV and develop a quality job application, participate in drama workshops to practise interview skills, and learn from Opera House staff, industry professionals and past interns and trainees. More than a third of the students who have attended the Careers Day have gone on to participate in other professional development programs at the Opera House.



↑ Annika Pike from Elderslie High School participating in the work experience program. Photo by Claudia Wade.

HSC students can access the Indigenous Traineeship Program, originally launched in 2011 in partnership with Guwara at St Andrew's Cathedral School and St Scholastica's College. The program has grown to include alumni of other programs at the Opera House and students from a range of schools across Sydney. Eight trainees per year are required to complete 90 hours of paid work at the Opera House. The Opera House encourages trainees to apply for other training and employment opportunities after the traineeship program. Almost a third of students who have participated in the traineeship program have returned for a second traineeship to develop their skills, and a quarter have received casual employment at the Opera House.

“

I get a warm feeling when I am walking to the Opera House. It's such an inspiring place to work. I was regularly involved with activities here in high school, first the Deadly Awards and the Youth Advisory Committee, and then later the Indigenous Work Experience Program. I was really excited to be invited back recently to help facilitate that program alongside Opera House staff. Now at university studying Media and Indigenous Studies, I am also completing an internship at the Opera House – seeing where I find my feet so that I can relate the work back to my studies and hopefully get a degree and career in something I really enjoy.

”

Aiesha Saunders, Opera House intern

CASE STUDY 4

SONGLINES ON THE SAILS

“

The songlines are a living map and an archive of our culture. *Songlines* is a monumental work and an unprecedented opportunity for people around the world to really connect with the culture of Australia's First People. These pieces of art bring an entirely new look to the Opera House – steeped in tradition but so contemporary and relevant.

”

Rhoda Roberts AO, *Songlines* Director and
Opera House Head of Indigenous Programming

Every year during Vivid LIVE, part of the citywide Vivid Sydney festival of light, music and ideas, the Opera House sails become a canvas for animated visual art. For the eighth year, in 2016, the Opera House's Head of Indigenous Programming, Rhoda Roberts AO, directed this centrepiece Lighting the Sails. When the completed work *Songlines* was projected at nightfall on 27 May, Indigenous art took its place on the Opera House sails for the first time – and the effect was profound.

A stunning visual tapestry co-curated by the Opera House and Destination NSW, *Songlines* was conceived to weave time and distance through the enduring art of Australia's most influential contemporary First Nations artists. And there could be no more fitting place in Sydney for this showcase than the Opera House on Bennelong Point, a meeting place for thousands of years. Aboriginal playwright Cathy Craigie writes that Tubowgule was a place for Gadigal and surrounding clans to share feasts, ceremony and celebration; a place to gather, sing, dance and tell stories. These were important ways to teach, not to mention fun and entertaining.

Six artists – Karla Dickens, Djon Mundine, Gabriella Possum Nungurrayi, Reko Rennie, Donny Woolagoodja and the late Gulumbu Yunupingu – played a part in this historic occasion. Each came from different clans, national estates and territories. Roberts brought them together to create an inspiring artwork celebrating First Nations spirituality and culture through the songlines of our land and sky. Music composed by Roberts and Damien Robinson – the creative force behind *Wicked Beats Sound System* – and songmen Djakapurra Munyarryun and Cecil McLeod accompanied the piece on site and online.

More than a quarter of a million people around the world tuned in to watch the first livestream of *Songlines* on Facebook, with nearly a million viewing the video over the first weekend. Within 24 hours, *Songlines* became the most watched, commented and shared online video produced for the Opera House.

Songlines showcased the legacy of today's Opera House, established to be a place for excellence in the arts and a meeting place for matters of local, national and international significance.



↑ 2016 Lighting the Sails, *Songlines*, at Vivid Sydney.
Artwork by Karla Dickens. Photo by Ken Leanfore.



Member of the 2015 Dance Rites winning group, Naygayiw Gigi Dance Troupe, hugs a Waang Djari dancer. Photo by Prudence Upton.



PRINCIPLE 1

RELATIONSHIPS

The Opera House connects people through creativity, collaboration and community. The reach and impact of these connections will grow through strong, meaningful, two-way partnerships based on trust and respect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and organisations.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
RAP Working Group monitors RAP development and implementation.	1.1	Oversee the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [RAP Working Group]	August 2016
	1.2	Meet at least four times per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.	RAP Working Group chair	January, April, July, October in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	1.3	Establish terms of reference for the RAP Working Group.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	June 2017
	1.4	Develop an advocacy strategy for the appointed Executive Team RAP Champion/s to engage the Trust and senior leaders in the delivery of RAP objectives.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	January 2017
	1.5	Set up systems to support casual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff members to participate in the RAP Working Group. This includes providing financial support to achieve 50% participation in at least one meeting or event per year.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	January 2017
Develop, maintain and leverage mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.	2.1	Develop a framework for engaging current and past Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander trainees and work experience students in the RAP Working Group and RAP-related projects. This will include opportunities for them to: > Volunteer during <i>Homeground</i> , NAIDOC Week programming and other events; > Attend RAP Working Group meetings; and > Create networks between past and current participants to share experiences.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	Review in July in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	2.2	Establish at least two formal, mutually beneficial partnerships between the Opera House and Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations or communities to build capacity and cultural understanding.	Director, Performing Arts Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Children Families & Creative Learning] [Head of Government Relations]	June 2019
	2.3	Meet with a minimum of three local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement to ensure staff are aware of how to effectively engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [RAP Working Group]	June 2019
	2.4	At least once a year, host a meeting or an event with local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community member/s to connect with staff and share stories.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [RAP Working Group]	Review in July in 2017, 2018 and 2019

←
Opera House staff go on the Royal Botanic Garden's Aboriginal Heritage Tour with guide Judy Orcher to celebrate 2016 National Reconciliation Week. Photo by Paul Najor.

* Sydney Opera House Directors hold primary responsibility for the completion of action items, with support from Heads of Department and senior management.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
Celebrate, promote and support participation in National Reconciliation Week (NRW) with staff and the community.	3.1	Develop a program of at least two NRW activities, including at least one cultural learning event or initiative, and encourage staff, onsite operators, Resident Companies and key stakeholders to participate.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [RAP Working Group]	27 May – 3 June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	3.2	Register all NRW events via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	27 May – 3 June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	3.3	Promote participation by all staff at external events and initiatives that recognise and celebrate NRW.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [RAP Working Group]	27 May – 3 June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	3.4	Develop <i>Homeground Talks</i> into an annual program during NRW, to provide a platform for discussion of contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	27 May – 3 June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
Celebrate the Opera House's reconciliation journey through raising awareness of our RAP, internally and externally.	4.1	Develop and implement a strategy to communicate the Opera House's RAP to internal and external stakeholders. The strategy will incorporate stories demonstrating the importance of Tubowgule's First Nations heritage.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Communications]	January 2017
	4.2	Create a year-round calendar of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programming, activities, experiences and storytelling at the Opera House to maximise marketing, communications and media opportunities.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Communications]	January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	4.3	Promote reconciliation through ongoing engagement with stakeholders, including providing guidance and encouraging stakeholders to develop a RAP.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	4.4	Establish a dedicated Opera House CEO Town Hall presentation to celebrate RAP achievements and engage staff in RAP initiatives.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [Head of Communications]	June 2017
	4.5	Review and update the Opera House's RAP website page annually.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	4.6	Promote Reconciliation Australia's Share Our Pride online tool to staff and include it on the Opera House's website.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	June 2017



→
2016 Lighting the Sails, *Songlines*,
at Vivid Sydney. Artwork by
Mrs Gulumbu Yunupingu.
Photo by Ken Leanfore.



PRINCIPLE 2

RESPECT

Built on Tubowgule, land with a rich heritage, the Opera House's respect for the land, histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples is integral to our daily activities. By appreciating, learning about and honouring the histories, art and cultures of Australia's First People, we will ensure the Opera House reflects the national identity and diversity of its people.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
Engage employees in continuous cultural learning to increase knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.	5.1	Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy for staff, which will define the continuous cultural learning needs of employees in all areas of the business and consider different ways cultural learning can be provided. Implement our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training strategy.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	January 2017 Review in January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	5.2	Face-to-face cultural competency training to be delivered to 46% (420) of staff members: > 80% (120) of People Leaders; > 80% (250) of Visitor Experience staff; > 65% (40) of Emergency Planning & Response staff; and > 100% (10) of People & Culture staff	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	July 2019
	5.3	100% of Opera House Executives (8) and Trustees (10) to attend a cultural competency governance workshop.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Learning & Development Manager] [Trust Secretariat]	January 2018
	5.4	Cultural awareness e-learning module to be completed by 60% (548) of existing staff.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	January 2018
	5.5	Cultural awareness e-learning module to be completed by 90% (821) of existing staff.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	January 2019
	5.6	Cultural awareness e-learning module to be completed by 100% of new staff.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	Review in January in 2017, 2018, 2019
Provide opportunities for staff to participate in cultural immersion activities to gain a deeper connection with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.	6.1	Develop an annual staff Cultural Immersion Program, involving seven participants from across the business (0.7% of staff across the organisation), that provides Opera House staff with the opportunity to learn from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Human Resources Manager]	January 2017
	6.2	Create volunteer opportunities through Indigenous Programming initiatives to enable all staff (913) to engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Head of Indigenous Programming]	October in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	6.3	Provide staff with a calendar of charity and partner events for volunteering and cultural learning opportunities.	Director, People & Culture [Human Resources Manager]	January 2017

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Hot Brown Honey performs at the Opera House in 2016, featuring Kamilaroi woman Juanita Duncan. Photo by Anna Kucera.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE
Support stakeholders to engage in cultural learning activities.	7.1 Invite Opera House contractors, onsite commercial partners, corporate sponsors, donors and Resident Companies to access the Opera House's e-learning module.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Head of Operations, Food & Beverage] [Director, Performing Arts] [Director, Engagement & Development]	June 2019
Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and culture into Opera House programs and the precinct.	8.1 Include at least one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander interpretive or artistic component in the Stage 1 Building Renewal projects. They include upgrades to the entry point and foyers, a new creative learning centre, a new function entre and upgrades to the Concert Hall.	Director, Building [Renewal Core Team]	July 2017
	8.2 Engage visitors from around the world with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories by developing a free daily experience onsite that celebrates the history and cultures of Australia's First Peoples.	Director, Visitor Experience	December 2017
	8.3 At least twice a year during significant events such as NRW or NAIDOC Week, develop a customised menu with one or more onsite food and beverage operators to celebrate First Nations cultures.	Director, Visitor Experience [Head of Operations, Food & Beverage]	May or July in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	8.4 Expand the Bennelong Walk tour, which explores the history of Bennelong Point from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspective, into a regular offering that will run a minimum of five times per year, and be available for education groups to book at any time.	Director, Visitor Experience [Head of Operations, Tours & Retail]	June 2017
	8.5 Present at least one production annually through the Children, Families & Creative Learning program that tells Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stories.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE
Embed cultural protocols in the organisation's processes and functions.	9.1 Review, update and promote the Opera House's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Protocols document, including guidance on arranging and delivering a Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [Head of Communications]	June 2018
	9.2 Invite a local Traditional Owner to give a Welcome to Country at a minimum of three Opera House events of state or national significance each year.	Director, Engagement & Development Director, Visitor Experience Director, Performing Arts [Executive Team]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	9.3 In collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, hold workshops for Resident Companies and Opera House programmers to develop a meaningful Acknowledgement of Country for each organisation.	Director, Performing Arts Director, Visitor Experience [Head of Indigenous Programming]	June 2018
	9.4 Acknowledgement of Country to be given at all Opera House events and functions.	Director, Engagement & Development Director, Visitor Experience Director, Performing Arts [Executive Team]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	9.5 Include an Acknowledgment of Country at the commencement of all important internal meetings.	Executive Team	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	9.6 Maintain and regularly review a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	June 2017
Celebrate, promote and support NAIDOC week activities with staff and the community.	10.1 Organise, and promote to staff, at least one event or initiative at the Opera House to celebrate NAIDOC Week.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	July in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	10.2 Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers for staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	June 2017
	Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to participate in NAIDOC Week.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk Director, People & Culture [Human Resources Manager] [Head of Government Relations]	July in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	10.3 Deliver at least one programming initiative to support NAIDOC at another time of the year.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	Review in July in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	10.4 Identify local community NAIDOC Week events and promote them to staff to encourage participation.	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	July in 2017, 2018 and 2019



PRINCIPLE 3

OPPORTUNITIES

The Opera House is committed to providing artistic, cultural, educational and employment opportunities that build capacity and understanding. The Opera House will focus on providing opportunities in the areas where it can make the greatest impact for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals, communities and organisations. The Opera House believes creating these opportunities is essential to nurture the next generation of artists, audiences and visitors.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
Increase employment and retention outcomes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the Opera House.	11.1	Consult with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff on employment strategies, including professional development and retention.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Human Resources Manager]	January 2017 Review in January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	11.2	Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment and retention plan for the Opera House, including partnership opportunities with the other NSW Cultural Institutions.	Director, People & Culture Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Learning & Development Manager] [Human Resources Manager] [Head of Government Relations]	January 2017
	11.3	Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment from 2% to 3% (19 employees to 30 employees).	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Human Resources Manager]	June 2019
	11.4	Develop relationships with recruiters, universities and organisations specialising in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment.	Director, People & Culture [Human Resources Manager]	June 2017
	11.5	Maintain a minimum of two identified positions at the Opera House for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the next three years.	Director, People & Culture Executive Team [Learning & Development Manager] [Human Resources Manager]	June 2019
	11.6	Develop a tourism internship program that aims to introduce more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tour guides into the Opera House's Tours Team.	Director, Visitor Experience [Head of Operations, Tours & Retail]	June 2017
Create opportunities to develop employment skills, paths and professional development for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	12.1	Offer a minimum of four traineeships in Ticketing and Front of House to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students each year. This will include preparation for applying for jobs, resume writing and interview coaching.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	April and September in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	12.2	Explore collaboration and growth opportunities with the NSW Cultural Institutions in relation to traineeship programs.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Human Resources Manager]	June 2018
	12.3	At least 35 students to be offered a place in the Opera House's Indigenous Work Experience Program each year.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	12.4	Pilot and evaluate at least one educational project, outside of performance programming, that engages children in Aboriginal culture, history and stories, such as <i>Guwanyi Walama</i> swap cards.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	June 2017
	12.5	Establish an annual Careers Day for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	January 2017

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Aiesha Saunders, Opera House intern. Photo by Versus Media.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
	12.6	Develop a strategy for reaching more schools to invite Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to participate in the Careers Day.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager]	January 2017
	12.7	Pilot a joint Careers Day with the NSW Cultural Institutions.	Director, People & Culture [Learning & Development Manager] [Head of Government Relations]	December 2017
Develop initiatives to support educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and teachers.	13.1	Develop at least one project partnerships with the NSW Cultural Institutions annually to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education learning opportunities.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	Review in January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	13.2	Support the NSW Department of Education by holding their strategic program, <i>Aboriginal Teacher Professional Learning</i> , annually at the Opera House.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	13.3	Connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities through digital programs, by delivering a pilot to remote and regional school districts.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	June 2017
	13.4	Investigate the possibility of encouraging schools involved in Opera House learning programs to develop a RAP using the Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Schools and Early Learning RAP resources.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children, Families & Creative Learning]	January 2017
Continue to develop Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, content and communities throughout Opera House programming.	14.1	Expand <i>Homeground</i> to include participation from the NSW Cultural Institutions.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming] [Head of Government Relations]	January 2017
	14.2	Expand <i>Dance Rites</i> into an annual standalone event (i.e. not a component of <i>Homeground</i>) to grow community participation.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	June 2019
	14.3	Expand the <i>Homeground Arts Market</i> , which provides opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artisans and makers to sell their works, into an annual offering.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	November 2017
	14.4	Continue to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences with Opera House programming through the Hope Project, which invites local Aboriginal groups across metropolitan and Western Sydney to performances at the Opera House throughout the year.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	14.5	Present <i>Deadly Voices</i> , the Opera House's First Nations national radio program, weekly to develop audiences for First Nations music and culture, and provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander musicians with professional development opportunities.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
	14.6	Expand <i>Songrites</i> into an annual program to provide professional development for mid-level First Australian artists, giving them the opportunity to develop their work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander industry specialists.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	14.7	Work with the other Opera House programming specialists to continue to embed Indigenous Programming across all programming genres.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Indigenous Programming]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	14.8	Secure a minimum of \$40,000 each year for Indigenous programming and/or RAP-related initiatives through philanthropy, sponsorships or government grants.	Director, Engagement & Development Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Philanthropy] [Head of Partnerships] [Head of Government Relations]	Review in June in 2017, 2018 and 2019
Increase engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences.	15.1	Develop and implement an audience development strategy for increasing engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences, which includes developing the scope for a research and analytics project to: (a) Quantify the current levels of participation and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences at Opera House events and programming; (b) Ascertain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audiences attitudes and motivations to attending performances at the Opera House; and (c) Develop a value proposition required to grow engagement with these audiences.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Insights & Optimisation]	January 2017
	15.2	Secure funding to develop and implement appropriate metric/s for reporting on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander audience engagement for paid and unpaid programming.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Insights & Optimisation]	September 2017
Increase audiences for the Opera House's Indigenous programming and digital content.	16.1	Develop and implement an audience development strategy to increase audiences for Indigenous programming at the Opera House, which includes using the communications calendar to align opportunities for marketing and communications to target and amplify messages.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Marketing] [Head of Insights & Optimisation] [Head of Communications] [Head of Indigenous Programming]	January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	16.2	Explore the possibility of a partnership with at least one other organisation to develop a campaign and/or product offering to engage audiences with the Opera House's Indigenous programming.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Insight & Optimisation]	January 2017
	16.3	Develop a marketing plan to promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content, experiences and history at the Opera House, including onsite and online channels.	Director, Engagement & Development [Head of Marketing]	January 2017

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE	
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity at the Opera House.	17.1	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy. Review Opera House policies and guidelines to ensure procurement engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers is actively encouraged.	Chief Financial Officer [Head of Procurement]	December 2017
	17.2	Develop at least three commercial relationships with recognised Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses. Set targets for procuring goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses.	Chief Financial Officer [Head of Procurement]	June 2019
	17.3	Encourage staff to access Supply Nation and NSW Indigenous Chamber of Commerce members, and other recognised First Australian businesses, for supply of goods and services.	Chief Financial Officer [Head of Procurement]	June 2017
	17.4	Ensure companies submitting responses to Opera House building and renewal projects adhere to the NSW Government Aboriginal Participation in Construction Policy.	Director, Building Building Renewal Team [Manager, Building Projects & Contracts]	Review in January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	17.5	Commission at least two items celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures for the Opera House's retail store to expand economic opportunities for First Nation artists.	Director, Visitor Experience [Head of Operations, Tours & Retail]	December 2017
Support social outcomes that benefit our community.	18.1	Increase financial and organisational support for the Opera House's Housemate Indigenous Charity, the Jimmy Little Foundation, through an annual awareness raising activity.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	Review in January in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	18.2	Formalise the Opera House's relationship with the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) in a Memorandum of Understanding, including a framework to identify opportunities for future programming, and a commitment by the Opera House to host ILF's annual launch.	Director, Performing Arts [Head of Children Families & Creative Learning]	June 2017



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The interactive show, *Saltbush: Children's Cheering Carpet*, performs in 2016 at the Opera House. Photo by Anna Kucera.



TRACKING PROGRESS AND REPORTING

Through effective and regular tracking and evaluation, we will understand the impact and reach of our RAP initiatives, celebrate our achievement, reassess internal capabilities and identify opportunities for improvement.

ACTION	MEASURABLE TARGET	RESPONSIBILITY*	TIMELINE
Review, refresh and update the RAP.	19.1 Liaise with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on lessons, challenges and achievements. Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and formal endorsement.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations] [RAP Working Group]	January 2019
Report RAP achievements, challenges and lessons.	20.1 Complete and submit the RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	September in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	20.2 Discuss how the Opera House can participate in the RAP Barometer with Reconciliation Australia.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	June 2018
	20.3 Develop and implement systems to effectively track, measure and report on RAP activities.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk RAP Working Group [Head of Government Relations]	January 2017
	20.4 Publicly report on RAP achievements, challenges and key lessons.	Director, Safety, Security & Risk	July in 2017, 2018 and 2019
	20.5 Report on RAP progress to: > NSW Government: Annually through the Opera House's Statement of Business Intent and Annual Report > Trust: Annually > Australia Council Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Board: Annually > Executive Team: Quarterly > RAP Working Group: Quarterly	Director, Security, Safety & Risk [Head of Government Relations]	Annually: in July in 2017, 2018 and 2019 Quarterly, in January, April, July and October in 2017, 2018 and 2019
Incorporate RAP-related projects and objectives in portfolio business planning and budgeting processes.	21.1 Opera House business planning templates to include a mandatory section for RAP commitments.	Chief Financial Officer Executive Team [Finance & Business Manager] [Head of Government Relations]	January 2017
	21.2 Set up a streamlined process for incorporating RAP projects into portfolio annual budgets.	Chief Financial Officer Executive Team [Finance & Business Manager] [Head of Government Relations]	January 2017

For more information about the
Opera House's RAP, please contact:
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02 9250 7488



Malu Kiai Mura Buai Dance Troupe performs at Homeground 2015. Photo by Prudence Upton.

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