

2021 HART Awards

FINALISTS

HELPING ACHIEVE
RECONCILIATION
TOGETHER



SUPPORTED BY



Jobs,
Precincts
and Regions

THANK YOU

Aunty Donna Wright, Cr Denise Massoud and Tom Cazaly for judging this year's awards.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Aunty Vicki and Uncle Trevor for the prizes awarded to the winners of each category.
Artwork and Graphic Design by Mazart Communications.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that this booklet may contain mentions or images of people who have passed.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and recognise their continuing connections to lands, waters and community. We pay our respects to those communities and their cultures as well as Elders past, present and emerging.

MESSAGE FROM VLGA AND RECONCILIATION VICTORIA

The 8th Annual **HART Awards** celebrates and honours the efforts of local governments, schools and early years, and community groups across Victoria, who are **Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together** throughout the year.

While 2020 was an extremely tough year for many due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the innovative and creative HART nominations that grew from this were truly inspiring. The reconciliation landscape in Victoria has changed drastically in the last few years with the continuing Treaty process and the groundbreaking Yoo-rrook Justice Commission. Self-determination is fundamental to achieving genuine reconciliation which will enable a positive future for the state. It is encouraging to see our HART finalists grow alongside this, finding new ways to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voices and truth-telling into their work.

Reconciliation is not a static or generic term but an approach that can be interpreted and utilised in a myriad of ways; its strength comes from the people involved and the commitment to deepen relationships based on mutual understanding, respect and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination.

Each year, the stories of finalists demonstrate the need for the wider community to work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to shift the balance of power and ensure true self-determination.

**We are proud to present the finalists for the 2021 HART Awards
– Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together.**



Cr Lambros Tapinos
VLGA President



Shane Charles
Reconciliation Victoria
Co-Chair



Aislinn Martin
Reconciliation Victoria
Co-Chair

ABOUT THE HART Awards

The 8th annual HART Awards (Helping Achieve Reconciliation Together) are delivered in partnership between Reconciliation Victoria and the Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA), supported by Bank Australia and Local Government Victoria. They are designed to recognise Victorian partnerships and initiatives that contribute to local reconciliation outcomes.

Since the success of the inaugural awards in 2014, each year has seen an impressive number of quality nominations, featuring a breadth of initiatives across the state. Nominations are submitted by Victorian local governments, schools, early years centres and community groups that demonstrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and the wider community working together, and initiatives that have contributed to reconciliation through relationships, respect and understanding and which demonstrate a commitment to Aboriginal self-determination.

HART 2020 RECIPIENTS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2020 WINNER

Mildura Rural City Council
Mildura Corroboree

2020 HIGHLY COMMENDED

City of Ballarat and Koorie
Engagement Action Group
Survival Day Dawn Ceremony

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FOR CONTINUED LEADERSHIP IN RECONCILIATION

City of Port Phillip and Boonwurrung
Land and Sea Council

COMMUNITY ORGANISATION

2020 WINNER

Lord Somers Camp and Power House
Be Deadly @ Somers

2020 HIGHLY COMMENDED

VACCHO
Ngangkari Traditional Healing

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WORK DRIVING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

St John of God Hospital Bendigo

SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS

2020 WINNER

Balnarring Preschool
Living and Learning with Country

2020 HIGHLY COMMENDED

St Leonard's College
The Warruwi Program

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF WORK DRIVING SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Action on Aboriginal Perspectives
in Early Childhood



LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINALISTS

DJILA-TJARRIU City of Ballarat

The City of Ballarat consulted with the Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation and the Koorie Engagement Action Committee to name the first park in the Ballarat West Growth Area Djila-tjarriu – ‘place of play’ in Wadawurrung language.

Indigenous artist Tarni Jarvis was commissioned to create a piece of artwork to visualise Djila-tjarriu on park signage. The central park consists of four hectares of parkland, playground facilities, BBQ and shelter areas and is preserved for people to come together to enjoy and appreciate. The project celebrates Ballarat’s Indigenous heritage and provides an opportunity to understand the culture and language of the Traditional Owners of the land.



MAM-BADOOL DJERRING (LET’S WORK TOGETHER) Banyule City Council

Banyule City Council took a unique approach to creating their Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan by engaging Aboriginal business Indigenous Employment Partners (IEP) to seek specialist advice and support to write, develop and implement their plan.

The relationship between council and IEP has been a highly successful collaboration which embedded IEP staff within Banyule’s workplace to support and coach non-Indigenous staff to understand how to effectively engage with Traditional Owners and Banyule’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members and partners. This new approach for developing a council’s RAP reflects genuine reconciliation and has resulted in council strengthening its relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, increasing its Aboriginal workforce, improving staff cultural capacity and exceeding its RAP expectations and targets.



KOORIE HOMEWORK CLUB

Brimbank City Council

The Koorie Homework Club was developed in consultation with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to improve the social, cultural and academic wellbeing of local Indigenous students and their families. The Koorie Homework Club supports student connection to education via Indigenous games and art, and Elders sharing their knowledge through story time. The Koorie Homework Club facilitators then work closely with schools to incorporate cultural learnings into student assignments fitting the school curriculum.

The Koorie Homework Club provides a space where community and Brimbank City Council can collaborate closely on projects that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture with the broader community.



26 JANUARY – AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PERSPECTIVE

Glen Eira City Council

Glen Eira City Council is strongly committed to reconciliation and making the municipality a culturally safe place for First Nations' peoples to live, work and visit. Council established the Koorie Day Out to recognise the significance of January 26 to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and promote reconciliation, understanding and respect. Council took the bold step of lowering the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags to half mast to acknowledge the pain of the day and ensure the Koorie Day Out is a culturally safe place.

Non-Indigenous attendees were completely engaged by the ceremony and culture of the day, and many have now sought advice on how to incorporate First Nations' culture, knowledge and history into their schools, early learning centers and businesses.



PEAKS, WETLANDS AND RIVERS – TRUTH TELLING AND RECONCILING OUR SHARED HISTORY AT CONTACT

Hepburn Shire Council

Hepburn Shire Council in partnership with Council's Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Committee and Jaara Elder Uncle Rick Nelson have delivered on Country tours during National Reconciliation Week. The tours convey the truth of our history at contact with site specific histories delivered by Uncle Rick Nelson and Professor Barry Golding.

In March 2020, with COVID-19 restrictions looming, Council changed delivery format from a bus tour on Country to four short films made on location under Stage 2 COVID restrictions. The films include a Welcome to Country by Uncle Rick followed by three significant sites on Dja Dja Wurrung Country that take us back 180 years to seldom visited environments and events from the early contact period, marking the beginning of unimaginable loss and trauma for Dja Dja Wurrung people.



Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL

NAIDOC 2020 ONLINE EVENT

Mildura Rural City Council

Mildura Rural City Council in partnership with Council's Aboriginal Action Committee celebrated NAIDOC 2020 as an online initiative. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Council and the AAC worked together to look at other ways our community could celebrate and learn more about our region's rich Traditional culture despite the pandemic. This resulted in a diverse range of online content that featured on Council's website and social media channels.

Content included local Aboriginal artists, musicians, storytellers and Elders sharing knowledge about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and achievements. Content produced is still available online and have already been shared and used by schools, community groups and made available in Council's cultural awareness training content.



Mildura Rural City Council

SCHOOLS AND EARLY YEARS FINALISTS

RECONCILIATION ENDEAVOUR

Carlton North Primary School

Over the past 4 years, the school community at Carlton North Primary have worked towards developing a strong acknowledgement and understanding of their cultural heritage. They have undertaken a number of projects including the development of a Young Dark Emu Indigenous Garden and Cultural Learning Walk.

This space includes an outdoor learning space with a ceremonial smoking pit. Carlton North also fly the Aboriginal flag, replaced the singing of the national anthem with Judith Durham and Kutcha Edwards' version and acknowledge the Country on which the school stands at all community events and meetings. All initiatives at the school have an embedded process of consultation and have established a position within school council to advocate on behalf of Indigenous perspectives. Students are encouraged not just to understand the true history of Australia, but to make connections between Indigenous knowledge and culture and all areas of the curriculum including science, performing arts and mathematics.

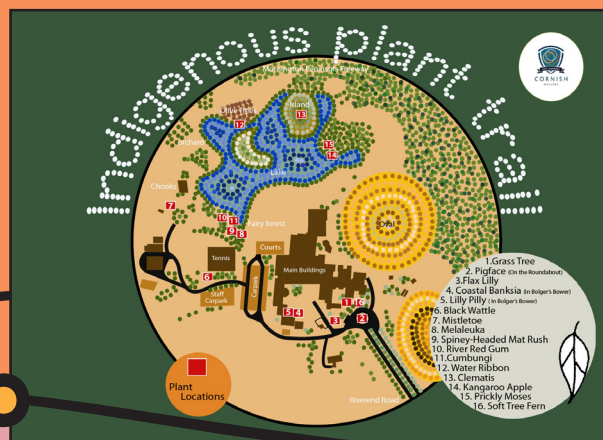


RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Cornish College

Cornish College is passionate about reconciliation and have always looked for ways to make Indigenous perspectives visible. Their Indigenous Plant Trail (which was created by students) celebrates the many ways that First Nations people used each plant and the trail is regularly used by all year levels each year.

The process of beginning a Reconciliation Action Plan has been enthusiastically embraced by the whole school community and has guided the school to make reconciliation far more prominent in everything we do. The Kulin Nation Seasons have been incorporated into the student diaries and the wider school calendar, and Acknowledgement of Country have been strengthened by including celebrations of specific skills, knowledges and cultures of Traditional Owners.



CULTURE FOR LIFE

Healesville Primary School

Culture for Life is a cultural education program at Healesville Primary School. Now in its fifth year, the program builds appreciation and understanding of both traditional and contemporary Wurundjeri culture, history and more recently Woiwurrung language. The program creates awareness and respect for cultural diversity within the school and the community. The program has been designed and delivered by Traditional Owner Brooke Wandin with support from her family and Elders.

There have been significant results around the school with the program growing from Prep to Grade 2 participating in 2017 to all year levels in 2021. Preps say an Acknowledgement of Country in Woiwurrung language at the beginning of each day. Culture for Life aims to plant seeds of curiosity in students and, when nurtured, can grow into strong trees to live within them for their adolescent and adult lives.

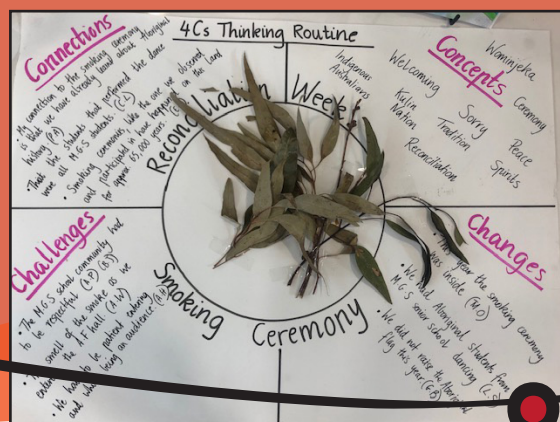


ADVOCACY AT MGGH

Melbourne Grammar Grimwade House

Since 2019, Melbourne Grammar Grimwade House has implemented a three-tiered approach to advocacy which includes students, teachers and executive groups. The objective has been to move to a model of teaching First Nations education which is sustainable and where the understanding and respect of, and responsibility for First Nations perspectives and culture are embedded into the fabric of Grimwade House.

At a student level, a Year 6 RAP team has been established to grow knowledge and advocate amongst the student body. At a teacher level, a Reconciliation Action Team has been formed to support colleagues, audit curriculum and source camps, incursions and excursions that utilise Indigenous representatives and include Indigenous perspectives.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL



MOOLAP CULTURAL IMMERSION PROJECT

Moolap Primary School

The Cultural Immersion Project was a collaborative effort supported by Deakin University, the Department of Education and Training, Koorie Education Team and Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Corporation. A unique video resource was created to assist teachers to bring Wadawurrung culture into classrooms with Grade 3 and 4 children authoring and illustrating their own picture books in response to the video. A collaborative, permanent mural was also created in the space where school assemblies are held, and students were taught about Aboriginal artistic symbology, styles and featured stories, animals and spirits.

At the conclusion of the project, all students received a copy of their books to take home and share with their families. Relationships were formed and strengthened with all participating organisations and teaching staff were given voluntary cultural awareness training on Country.

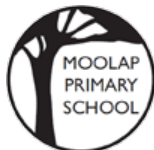


NYATNE MOK BORIYN (THANKFUL AND PROUD)

Yuille Park P-8 Community College

Nyatne Mok Boriyn (Thankful and Proud in Wadawurrung language) began as an identified need within the community to educate staff, students and families on how to create a culturally safe environment while embedding Indigenous perspectives into both curriculum and everyday lives. In consultation and collaboration with local Elders, a KESO, Indigenous school community members, BADAC and local government, Nyatne Mok Boriyn guides all areas of learning at Yuille Park.

Indigenous students, who make up 20% of the Yuille Park student body, are incredibly enthusiastic to speak in class, share experiences and knowledge when discussing culture and connecting culture to other topics. Being able to teach their peers fills them with confidence and pride and allows non-Indigenous students to make deeper connections as well.



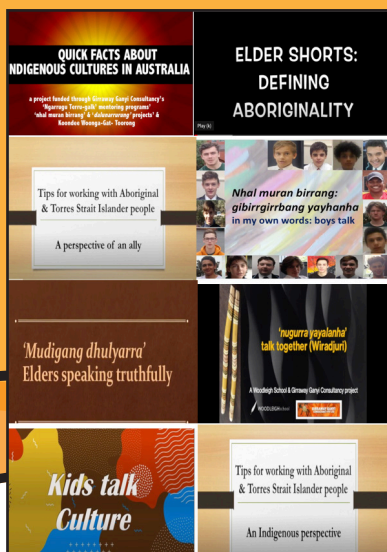
COMMUNITY ORGANISATION FINALISTS

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

Girraway Ganyi Consultancy Pty Ltd

During COVID, Girraway Ganyi Consultancy envisioned a portal where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples could share their stories, thoughts and experiences in a way that would allow Indigenous narratives to be told by Indigenous people themselves. These stories and experiences would then be able to be viewed by all people allowing Indigenous understandings of personal histories, experiences, facts and strategies to be heard in an attempt to achieve reconciliation.

In partnership with Scotch College, Camberwell Grammar School, Woodleigh School, local Elders, Aboriginal Health Workers and non-Indigenous allies, a total of 105 short videos were written, recorded, edited and uploaded to the Girraway Ganyi Consultancy YouTube.



STORIES FROM THE EEL FESTIVAL – KUYANG LAPAKIRA (PLENTY EELS)

Lake Bolac Eel Festival Inc.

Working closely with the Festival Cultural Advisory Group led by Gunditjmara woman Aunty Adeline Thomas (McDonald), the Lake Bolac Eel Festival worked on two major projects over the last year contributing to local reconciliation. The Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoo (Wirran) is a sculpture created by Natimuk artist Dave Jones with weaving by Indigenous master weaver Aunty Bronwyn Razem and completed with the assistance of students at both Ararat College and Lake Bolac College. The Cockatoo, coming from the North, will join the Brolga from the east and the Emu from the west.

A series of four short promotional video clips were also created for Victoria Together and funded by Regional Arts Victoria. The clips cover some of the history of the Eel Festival and the associated Healing Walk and include the Djabwurrung Rivertime Project.



OUR SURVIVAL DAY EVENT

Our Songlines Pty Ltd

Our Songlines is a 100% Aboriginal-owned social enterprise operating on the Mornington Peninsula. In January 2021 they hosted 'Our Survival Day', an all-inclusive, free family event providing First Nations musical performances, culturally safe spaces and cultural workshops. The event was a success with large numbers of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples attending. Nairm Marr Djambana – Frankston Aboriginal Association – were the official sponsors on the day, donating their time and resources for cultural walks and a free BBQ. Similarly, an Indigenous representative from HeadSpace helped establish a clear, culturally respectful space for people to take time out on the day and to assist organisers in understanding First Nations trauma responses to such an emotion-provoking day.



LINE OF REMEMBRANCE VIGIL (BLAK LIVES MATTER)

Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group and Others

In the middle of the COVID pandemic in July 2020, Shepparton Region Reconciliation Group in partnership with 7 Aboriginal and community organisations, and in response to the Blak Lives Matter protests across Australia, held a line of Remembrance Vigil along the popular 4km walking track at Victoria Lake, Shepparton. Both directions of the walking track were each lined with 437 garden stakes nine metres apart to which placards and powerful hand-painted posters were attached. These posters represented the (at the time) 437 deaths in custody since the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. The poster '437 Deaths' was repeated over and over – a number that could not be ignored. It was a powerful statement and a form of Truth-telling.



CONFINED EXHIBITION

The Torch

The Torch provides art, cultural and arts industry support to Indigenous offenders and ex-offenders through its Indigenous Arts in Prisons and Community program. The program is delivered to participants across 15 Victorian prisons and continues to support them on their release and journey back into community. The program supports the development of self-esteem, confidence and resilience through cultural strengthening and artistic expressions, assisting artists to reconnect with culture, earn income from art sales, foster new networks, educational and creative industry avenues upon their release.

Each year, The Torch curates a public exhibition called "CONFINED" that provides a platform for artists to showcase and sell their artwork, as well as share stories. The Torch aims to improve the social and emotional wellbeing of its participants and reduce re-offending rates.



VICTORIAN ABORIGINAL REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee

The Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Committee (VARC) was born through an act of reconciliation. The late Aunty Dot Peters AM, whose father had perished as a POW on the Thai Burma railway in World War Two had met resistance to including elements of Aboriginal culture into remembrance ceremonies. Aunty Dot soon joined forces with RAAF Flight Sergeant (retired) Mr Sam Halim, the then President of Healesville RSL sub-branch, to have the didgeridoo played during the reading of the Ode. Inspired by this act of reconciliation, the Shire of Yarra Ranges helped organise the first Remembrance Service in 2006.

Together, Sam (of Egyptian heritage) and Aunty Dot (an Aboriginal Elder and community leader) began what continues today as the Victorian Aboriginal Remembrance Service and VARC. Over the past 15 years, VARC has always had Aboriginal and non-Indigenous volunteers working together. Hundreds now attend the state services at the Shrine of Remembrance on 31 May each year.



WANYARA

Wanyara Pty Ltd

Wanyara bring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander games, art, dance, language, history, ceremonies, songs and stories into schools and businesses to help participants understand and embrace an Aboriginal perspective of our country. Students who participate in the Wanyara programs develop genuine connections with Aboriginal culture and people. The sessions delivered through the Wanyara program give all students something to connect with, encouraging students to broaden their knowledge of Aboriginal culture, people and our perspectives. Wanyara have worked with over 4000 students in 3 years.



wanyara

ABOUT US

reconciliation



victoria

Reconciliation Victoria was established in 2002, the product of a people's movement for reconciliation in Victoria. We are a small not-for-profit organisation governed by a Board of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members, with a Cultural Council of First Peoples who guide and inform our work.

We are the statewide body promoting reconciliation and act as a focal point for advancing deeper understanding, respect and justice for and with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

We work with the 97% of Victorians who are non-Aboriginal to increase support and action on Aboriginal self-determination, Truth-telling and Treaty. Our work strengthens local relationships between Aboriginal Peoples and local governments, schools and early years centres, and community organisations like Local Reconciliation Groups.

Victoria leads the nation in self-determination and Reconciliation Victoria is here to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voices to be heard and aspirations to be implemented in a range of sectors right across the state.

Visit our websites for information on our programs and for opportunities to get involved in reconciliation in Victoria.

www.reconciliationvic.org.au
www.maggolee.org.au



The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) is an independent organisation that supports councils in good governance to progress the vision that our communities are inclusive, sustainable and dynamic, and characterised by strong leadership and effective local governance.

Our role is to support, mentor and develop the knowledge and practice of councillors in good governance. We advocate for sustainable sector reform and deliver projects and develop tools that assist councils to connect to, and meet the needs of, their communities.

The VLGA, through its seat on the Implementation Partnership Group for the Victorian and Aboriginal Local Government Action Plan (VALGAP) – which was launched in 2016 by the state government as a step forward towards reconciliation and self-determination – and through our partnership with organisations such as Reconciliation Victoria, is well placed to work with the local government sector, local communities and others to ensure that information is shared and knowledge is built as Victoria moves through the process of Treaty – or multiple Treaties – following the passing of the Advancing the Treaty Process with Aboriginal Victorians Act in 2018.

www.vlga.org.au

MAGGOLEE: Here In This Place

We encourage local governments to access and utilise the Maggolee website which celebrates good practice in Victorian local government, Aboriginal engagement and reconciliation and aims to bring together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, local communities and the councils that serve them.

The Maggolee website has been developed by Reconciliation Victoria, with funding from the Victorian Government, as a resource for local councils to work more closely with Aboriginal communities. The site includes information on policy and programs, protocols and cultural awareness, key contacts, relevant local data, news and events.

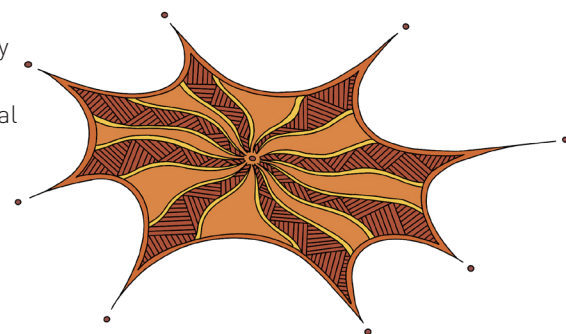
It contains information about each of the 79 Victorian local government areas, and about actions councils can take across key function areas to build closer relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and to progress reconciliation.

The website is a place where councils can find ideas and resources to enable:

- Stronger partnerships between Aboriginal communities and local government
- More Aboriginal employment in local government
- Wider use of council services by Aboriginal Peoples
- Stronger council and community support for reconciliation
- Greater involvement of Aboriginal Peoples in the development of council policies
- Deeper appreciation and understanding of Aboriginal cultures
- Engagement with the Victorian Government's Aboriginal Local Government Action Plan.

Maggolee also allows councils to showcase their work through their own dedicated space where they can detail services, policies and other initiatives that support Aboriginal communities.

www.maggolee.org.au





We-akon Dilinja 26 January 2020 – City of Port Phillip and Boonwurrung Land and Sea Council, recipient of Acknowledgment for Continued Leadership HART Awards 2020.

2021 HART Awards

HELPING ACHIEVE RECONCILIATION TOGETHER

The VLGA and Reconciliation Victoria created the HART Awards as a way to promote the impressive reconciliation initiatives happening across Victoria as well as to encourage and inspire community groups, schools, early learning centres, and local governments to work in partnership with their local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We believe the HART Awards strengthen the reconciliation movement in Victoria through recognising and celebrating the work of individuals, schools, early learning centres and organisations committed to truth, justice, healing and equity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Victoria.

