



© Kathy Arbon

INDIGENOUS LITERACY FOUNDATION

Reconciliation Action Plan



INDIGENOUS
LITERACY
FOUNDATION



Reconciliation
ACTION PLAN
REFLECT RAP

Cover artwork: permission kindly granted by Kathy Arbon, 2015

About the artwork: the area around Curdi Murka in Arabunna Country was a place where many Ceremonies were held, especially women's. There are two camps on families at this Ceremony and Bush Tucker is everywhere.



REFLECT 2015-2016

We are delighted to launch THE INDIGENOUS LITERACY FOUNDATION'S (ILF) RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN.

ILF's Reconciliation Action Plan reflects our passion and commitment to building respectful, strong and collaborative relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia, particularly in remote and isolated regions.

Our Reconciliation Action Plan outlines our organisation's core values and vision to improve the lives and opportunities of children living in remote communities through education, and in particular through our literacy programs.

In this Reconciliation Action Plan the Indigenous Literacy Foundation is committed to working together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, to take small but sustainable steps to make a positive difference in closing the gap in education.

SHARON GALLEGUILLOS
BOARD DIRECTOR
INDIGENOUS LITERACY FOUNDATION, SEPTEMBER 2015

OUR BUSINESS

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) is a national charity that draws on the skills and expertise of the Australian Book Industry. The ILF runs a diverse range of literacy programs that aim to improve the lives and opportunities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living in remote communities across Australia. In addition, our Foundation's advocacy program seeks to improve knowledge and cultural understanding of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians by actively engaging the wider Australian community, schools, libraries and workplaces through a national event, Indigenous Literacy Day. The ILF has a total of four employees, which includes one Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff member.

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation's three core activities are aimed at addressing literacy levels and work with the engagement of remote communities. They include:

- ▶ a free book supply program delivered to over 230 remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.
- ▶ an early literacy book program called *Book Buzz* delivered to a small number of communities including Warburton, Wilcannia, Manyallaluk and Yakanarra.
- ▶ a publishing program which funds the writing, development and publishing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community stories.

Book Supply

In the lifetime of the project ILF has delivered over 140,000 books to organisations in over 250 remote communities. Our book supply program provides remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and service organisations with access to new, culturally appropriate books and literacy resources.

These books are gifted to communities with no obligation; are selected by a special committee with expertise in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and children's literature; and 40% of all books chosen are written by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors. The ILF works with schools, libraries, playgroups, women's centres and youth drop-in centres in communities as well as other specific service organisations to deliver books. These organisations include Indigenous Libraries and Knowledge Centres, health departments and allied health workers from nurses to occupational therapists, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and Mission Australia.



Book Buzz

The ILF's early literacy project aims to put books into the homes of babies, toddlers and families in remote communities. These age appropriate, quality board books are selected by an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander literacy specialist, in consultation with children's book professionals as well as key contacts and elders within remote communities. We now have three sets of *Book Buzz* packs available, each with a supporting Buzz Literacy Box and organisations integrate the books into their programs such as daily story sharing sessions in playgroups, literacy experiences in preschool environments, and with child development health checks in community health clinics.

The ILF recognises that all communities are unique and their needs in literacy development vary. We work with community members on the selection of the *Buzz* books, taking specific requests into account. In 2011, our Foundation developed *Reading with Children with the Manyallaluk community* in the NT, and in 2014 we published, *Ready for School Wilcannia* with the Wilcannia community in NSW. *Book Buzz* is supported in community by local programs that engage children and their families with the joy of books and reading.

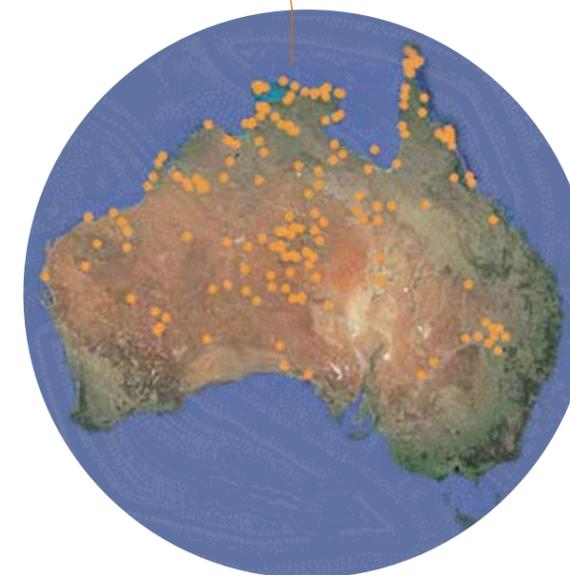


Community Literacy Projects

ILF funds and publishes literacy projects that are initiated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including stories written by children and educational and parenting books. To date we have funded and published, in many partnerships, 43 books, 11 of which have been published in the first language of the communities. Community Literacy Projects meet strict criteria of improving literacy, recognising the importance of community stories and promoting positive literacy outcomes.



Where we work



"It is impossible to measure the differences that have been effected with the access to books.

We have children now who love reading and will hopefully encourage others.

Their writing has improved and I believe along with the improvement in these skills, their self-esteem and self-respect have increased."

Helen Unwin, Principal, Yakanarra Community School, Yakanarra, WA



Field Trips and Workshops

To support our programs, the ILF travels to a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities with ambassadors, including musicians, authors and illustrators and run workshops with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. During the past five years, these communities have included Manyallaluk, the Tiwi Islands and Yakanarra (WA), Warburton and Tjuntjuntjara (WA), and Broken Hill, Wilcannia and Menindee (NSW).

In addition, for the past two years we have run mentoring workshops in Sydney with nine young women from Tiwi College on Melville Island. In Sydney the senior girls' class has had the opportunity of writing, illustrating and learning how to publish their story in a book.

Pamela Lofts Bequest

In 2014 our Foundation launched the first writing workshops in Alice Springs as part of the Pamela Lofts Bequest for Literacy and Learning. This program provides a mentorship program for eight Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in remote communities in NT and WA. During a week-long camp, mentors Ali Cobby Eckermann, Lionel Fogarty and Lorna Munro helped the students develop short stories, pictures and poems. Working in partnership with Yirara College and HarperCollins (Chren Byng) we were very proud to publish a compilation of their work called *The Yirara Mix Book*.

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN JOURNEY

Our RAP working group has a total of six members, which comprises staff including Karen Williams (Executive Director, ILF) Tina Raye (Program Manager, ILF), Emily Wiech (Marketing Coordinator) together with our Board member, Sharon Galleguillos, and two external Aboriginal advisers (including our Cultural Adviser and an Aboriginal Teacher who works on the Tiwi Islands). The development of a RAP will formalise our Foundation's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and outlines the values that underpin how we work and engage with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

For the past eleven years our Foundation has been engaging with and travelling out to a small number of remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We began our journey as a small volunteer organisation, and in 2006 partnered with The Fred Hollows Foundation [FHF] which was responsible for the programming and direct engagement with remote communities. In 2011 we became an independent Foundation, conducting five field trips a year to various communities across Australia in WA, NT and also north-west NSW.

FHF provided important protocol and knowledge about respectful engagement with Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Islander communities but our knowledge and understanding has grown with not only our field trips but through our three core programs. Today we strive to embed a culture of two-way learning in our daily business. Listening, Respect and Engagement, three of our Foundation's core values, are essential to how we work as an organisation.

The Indigenous Literacy Foundation acknowledges that it is critical to reflect on and develop our cultural knowledge and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. One of the key factors in undertaking our RAP is to formalise our Foundation's ongoing commitment to reconciliation and to the values and ways we work with communities to deliver our programs.

In developing our RAP we consulted with Debra Dank, a former ILF Program Manager and now Cultural Ambassador. Debra also works in a voluntary capacity to assist our Book Supply Selection committee each year. Dianne Moore was also an invaluable consultant. She is an Aboriginal teacher at Tiwi College on Melville Island where our relationship has grown enormously during the past two years with our visits to their College and their visits to Sydney.

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

Our vision for Reconciliation is

- to empower people living in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, through improving literacy levels and building sustainable and lasting relationships.
- to build national acknowledgement and respect of the unique place of Australia's First Peoples. We work to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children living in remote communities have every opportunity, early in their lives, to do well in their school years.
- to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples a voice through our community publishing program so that all current and future generations of Australians can appreciate and share the culture, the language and history of Australia's First Peoples.



“Literacy is a fundamental human right and the foundation for lifelong learning. It is fully essential to social and human development in its ability to transform lives. For individuals, families, and societies alike, it is an instrument of empowerment to improve one's health, one's income, and one's relationship with the world.” UNESCO

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Where we work and what we do

Building and developing partnerships within local, regional and remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other Australian communities

Through our book supply and Buzz programs we have formed many diverse partnerships with libraries and health and service organisations to help us distribute and reach remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Across Australia, some of these organisations include:

► **NSW** Maari Ma Health Corporation based in Broken Hill in north-west NSW which has helped distribute books through its early literacy program in Menindee and Wilcannia and through its health clinic in Broken Hill;

► **QLD** Qld Indigenous Knowledge Centres (21 centres located across Queensland); Flying Doctor Service (Qld); Wuchopperin's early literacy programs;

► **NT** NT Libraries & Knowledge Centres (17); the Smith Family (NT); Central Australian Aboriginal Congress in Alice Springs through their Family Partnership Program; Manyallaluk Remote School; Tiwi College (Melville Island); Milikapiti Remote School (Melville Island);

► **WA** Yakanarra Remote Community School; Warburton Playgroup Centre; Tjuntjuntjara Remote Community

Building an appreciation and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures through nurturing young writers, established authors and through our publishing program

Through our advocacy and field trips we have promoted the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander writers to both remote and urban audiences in schools, libraries and at other venues in cities such as the Sydney Opera House, MCA, State Library of NSW, WA State Library and Museum, National Library of Australia, State Library of Victoria and the Wheeler Centre. Sally Morgan, May O'Brien, Samuel Watson, Dub Leffler, Tara June Winch, Bronwyn Bancroft, Faith Baisden, Ali Cobby Eckermann, Lionel Fogarty, Lorna Munro, Anita Heiss, Lorraine McGee-Sippel, and Michael O'Loughlin are some of the authors who have worked with us.

Our community publishing program publishes books written and illustrated by children and other members of remote communities. In the past 4 years we have launched, in many partnerships, community books in Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne as well as Cherbourg (*When the Floods Came to Cherbourg*) and Thursday Island (*Don't Let Thursday Island Burn*); Alice Springs (*Growing Up in Nyrippi* and *A Yirara Mix Book*); and recently, in Manyallaluk

(*Mystery at Manyallaluk*), NT.

In Western Australia, we've worked with members of two communities, Yakanarra in the Kimberley and Warburton in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, to organise the translation of stories into local language. In Warburton these translations have helped develop early literacy skills in both children and families, in both English and the first language. In Yakanarra, two books were translated by local elders into Walmajarri and launched at the National Library in Canberra. In addition, a number of board books have been translated for children aged 0–4 years old.

As part of our advocacy, we have organised students from remote schools to visit Sydney — including Wilcannia (NSW), Tjuntjuntjara (WA), Yakanarra (WA) and the Tiwi Islands (NT) — to write, promote and tell their stories to school and other audiences in Sydney and Canberra.

This has brought about a deeper understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures within the general community. On one occasion the local community at Nyrippi in NT travelled almost eight hours to attend the launch at Alice Springs Public Library of a book written by the local students at the school. This was the first time that many of the students spoke in public and it brought an enormous sense of achievement and pride for the entire community and school. Through the book's publication and media coverage, a wider audience heard and appreciated this story.

ILF ambassadors and their reconciliation role

Our lifetime ambassadors, such as Andy Griffiths, Alison Lester, Kate Grenville, David Malouf, Josh Pyke and Anita Heiss have played a key role not only in travelling out to communities to share their writing and song writing skills but also by participating in major festivals such as Barunga and GARMA in the NT. The ambassadors also play a key reconciliation role through their media work, at many events that include literary festivals, fundraising events, concerts, libraries, talking about their travels and reading stories that children in communities have written.

Every year our Foundation partners with the Yothu Yindi Foundation as part of GARMA Festival. The ILF brings key ambassadors to work in the youth forum, and conduct adult writing courses, and provides literacy prizes for the Yolngu Heroes Awards. In the past four years we've taken the following ambassadors there: Josh Pyke, Alison Lester, Sharon Galleguillos and Andy Griffiths. In 2014 we launched and gifted 500 copies of *Ganbulapula Story* (created at GARMA in 2013) to the Garma Institute and Yolngu People.



ILF respect for local language and culture

Wherever possible our Foundation works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to publish books in their language. In the past four years, we have published books in eleven languages for communities including: Western and Central Arrernte, Warlpiri, Luritja, Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Kriol, Ngaanyatjarra, Karrawa, Paakantji, and Walmajarri.

In one community in Warburton WA, women at the local playgroup have undertaken the translations of many children's stories; in Central Australia, we funded the translations and publishing of *The Honey Ant Readers* into six languages; in Borroloola, our program manager worked with local translators to translate *GRUG* into the first language; in Yakanarra, we funded two local elders, Mary Vanbee and Jessica Moore, to translate *Yakanarra Dogs* and *Yakanarra Day* into Walmajarri.

Building relationships with local communities in Queensland

From 2011 to 2013 the ILF worked in partnership with the Indigenous Support Unit, Education Queensland on the literacy online learning project known as IDREAM. The project centred around celebrating cultural differences and as part of this project we supplied over 50 schools, with high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander enrolments, with sets of free literacy resources which included Kylie Dunstan's *Same but Little Bit Different*; Jeannie Baker's *Mirror* and *Our World - Bardi Jaawi - Life at Ardiyooloon* by One Arm Point Remote Community School.

Building community partnerships for Advocacy

In 2006 our Foundation initiated Indigenous Literacy Day (ILD), a national event celebrated by members of the Australian Book Industry including publishers, booksellers and authors, schools, libraries, businesses and individuals across Australia. This is an advocacy and fundraising event that aims to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and to raise awareness that children living in remote communities do not have access to books

and other opportunities that kids living in cities and urban areas do.

On ILD, our Foundation also raises funds which assist our Foundation to run its programs. Over the past ten years, our Foundation has enlisted the support of our Patron and ambassadors, authors and other high profile VIPs such as Archie Roach, Samuel Watson, Leonie Norrington, Felix Riebl, Sally Morgan, Kim Scott, May O'Brien, Tara June Winch, Michael O'Loughlin and Patrick Johnson. Our Foundation has also enlisted the support of prominent Australians and key dignitaries such as the former Governor General of Australia the Hon. Quentin Bryce AD CVO, premiers and chief ministers including the Governor of WA, His Excellency Malcolm McCusker AO QC, the Governor of NSW Marea Bashir and the Chief Minister of ACT Jon Stanhope.

In 2015 the Hon. Quentin Bryce AD CVO became our Patron and we gained six new ambassadors, including author Richard Flanagan and performers Jessica Mauboy, Deborah Cheetham, Ursula Yovich, Justine Clarke and William Barton. They join our lifetime ambassadors Andy Griffiths, Alison Lester, David Malouf, Kate Grenville, Anita Heiss and Josh Pyke.

The ILF has worked with over 300 bookshops across Australia, over 40 publishers and key businesses as well as thousands of school children aged from 5 to 18 years old. Our Foundation has formed relationships and worked with the Sydney Opera House, Taronga Park Zoo, NITV, the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS), the University of Sydney, the Powerhouse Museum, State Library of NSW, State Library of Victoria, NT Libraries and Adelaide, Sydney, Brisbane and Byron Bay Writers Festivals. In addition, our Foundation has worked with and enlisted the support of prominent professional bodies and associations within the Australian Book Industry and which include: the Australian Publishers Association, the Australian Booksellers Association, the Australian Society of Authors, the Children's Book Council of Australia, ALIA, Australian Children's Laureate Program, and National Literacy & Numeracy Week.

RELATIONSHIPS

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1. Establish a RAP Working Group	Executive Director	March, July, November 2015, March 2016	Form a RAP Working Group to support the development of our RAP, comprising of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.
		November 2015	RAP Working Group to meet three times a year to review progress of the RAP.
2. Develop relationships with key stakeholders	Executive Director	July 2015	Develop a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders within our local area or sphere of influence for potential partnerships.
		December 2015	Foster and build on relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community organisations Partnership organisations in remote communities Fundraisers such as schools, libraries, businesses and the Australian Book Industry.
3. Support National Reconciliation Week (NRW)	Program Manager Marketing Coordinator	27 May – 3 June 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a community organisation through donations and celebrations during National Reconciliation Week. Launch a book written and illustrated by children in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Hold a book giving and story telling celebration in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities Advocate the work the ILF does by visiting and talking to local NSW schools who hold fundraising events Donate books and our time to do shared reading with Indigenous children in the Sydney region.
		May 2016	
		May 2016	RAP Working Group to attend a community NRW event to establish relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the local community.
4. Raise internal awareness of the RAP	Executive Director	September 2015	Develop and execute a plan to raise awareness across the organisation about the RAP commitment, particularly with key internal stakeholders including our Board, ambassadors, volunteers and part time staff.
		September 2015	Complete a printed and electronic presentation outlining our RAP commitment to give to all areas of our business.

RESPECT

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1. Investigate cultural development	Program Manager	September 2015	Capture baseline data on our employee's current level of understanding around Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and achievements.
		September 2015	Encourage the use of the Share our Pride website.
		November 2015	Investigate opportunities to attend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness workshops or training sessions.
		September 2015	Develop opportunities for cultural exchanges when on our major Field Trips to remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. For example Tiwi cultural exchange on the Ambassador trip to the Tiwi Islands.
2. Celebrate NAIDOC Week	Executive Director	July 2016	RAP Working Group to participate in local NAIDOC Week celebrations.
3. Raise internal understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols	Program Manager	November 2015	Staff to participate in workshops to gain understanding around the meaning of Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country and its importance to Traditional Custodians.
		September 2015	Develop an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols document for ILF.

OPPORTUNITIES

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1. Consider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment	Executive Director	October 2015	Scope a business case for employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff within the ILF.
		October 2015	Explore opportunities to increase paid employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the ILF.
		December 2015	Identify opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and artists to work with our Foundation.
2. Consider supplier diversity	Marketing Coordinator	October 2015	Prepare a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses for the procurement of goods and services.
		October 2015	Identify other areas where we can use Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers in our marketing and merchandising.
		October 2015	Determine ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors and publishers can more easily contribute to our book supply program.
		December 2015	Develop at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander business.

TRACKING PROGRESS

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Deliverables
1. Report on progress	Executive Director	May 2016	Include progress made on RAP in our 2015 Annual Report.
		May, July, November 2016	Document progress and challenges for RAP Working Group meetings.
		September 2016	Report progress to Reconciliation Australia in the form of a RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire.
2. Review, refresh, and update ILF's RAP	Executive Director	May 2016	Engage with Reconciliation Australia to develop a new RAP based on achievements and key learnings from this Reflect RAP.
		June 2016	Submit draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for review and formal endorsement.



Contact details

Indigenous Literacy Foundation
Karen Williams, Executive Director
Phone: 02 9280 0644
Email: Karen@iflf.org.au
Website: indigenoussliteracyfoundation.org.au