

RAP development process

Before you start

Is a RAP right for your organisation?

Any organisation, community group or individual can take action toward reconciliation, however, Reconciliation Australia's [Reconciliation Action Plan \(RAP\) framework](#) is specifically designed for workplaces. Before you commit to developing a RAP, the first crucial step is to ensure the workplace framework is suited to your organisation.

Key characteristics of organisations who can develop RAPs

To develop a *Reflect*, *Innovate*, *Stretch* or *Elevate* RAP, first and foremost your organisation must be a workplace, i.e. have paid employees. In addition, your organisation requires a degree of autonomy to ensure you have the capacity to turn good intentions into action. A workplace RAP is well suited for organisations that:

- have employees
- have operations in Australia
- are completely autonomous with their own governance structure (e.g. have a CEO, Board)
- have the authority to create and modify organisational policies and procedures
- have the authority to allocate funds for projects
- have the ability to form a RAP Working Group.

Ideally, a workplace RAP should cover the entire organisation, i.e. sit at the parent entity within Australia. If your organisation has international operations, the RAP should sit at the Australian subsidiary level.

You are encouraged to discuss your organisation's unique circumstances and capacity to develop a RAP with Reconciliation Australia, however, some of the common characteristics of organisations that we find a workplace RAP is not well suited to are:

- Organisations that are part of a larger organisation that leads the decision making process (e.g. a HR department within an organisation, or the NSW office of a national organisation).
- Organisations with corporate services, including human resources, that sit with a larger, central organisation.
- Organisations that do not have paid employees, i.e. volunteer organisations, faith groups, network groups or clubs.
- Organisations established for a temporary purpose, i.e. a project or campaign.

Please note: Tailored RAP frameworks have been developed to cater for the specific needs of some organisations, as follows:

- If you are a school, pre-school, child care, before/after school care, or early learning service, visit the [Narragunnawali platform](#) to access professional learning, curriculum resources and the online RAP builder.
- If you are a church, download the [Walk Alongside Church Toolkit for Reconciliation](#) to develop a Church Action Plan.

What to do if a RAP is not right for you

A workplace RAP is just one of many ways that organisations can get involved in reconciliation. If you think the workplace RAP framework is not for your organisation, consider getting involved in some of the following alternative ways:

- Utilise the [RAP framework](#) (i.e. *Relationships, Respect, Opportunities*), resources and templates for ideas of reconciliation initiatives you can implement without developing a RAP.
- Organise a National Reconciliation Week event between 27 May and 3 June each year, and register your event on the [website](#).
- Develop a business case for your parent/national/central organisation to develop a RAP.
- Pledge your support to national campaigns supporting social justice outcomes amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, e.g.:
 - Commit to take action against racism through [Racism. It stops with me](#) campaign.
 - Join 200,000 Australians committed to [Close the Gap](#) in health equality by 2030.
 - Take the pledge to [Change the Record](#) on soaring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander imprisonment rates and levels of experienced violence.
 - Join [Family Matters](#) to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people grow up safe and cared for in family, community and culture.

Still unsure?

We are working on adapting the RAP framework to be more applicable to a wider range of stakeholders. In the meantime, if you are unsure if the workplace RAP framework is right for your organisation, or if the program currently does not apply to you but you would like to register your interest, please email raps@reconciliation.org.au.

RAP development process

The RAP lifecycle

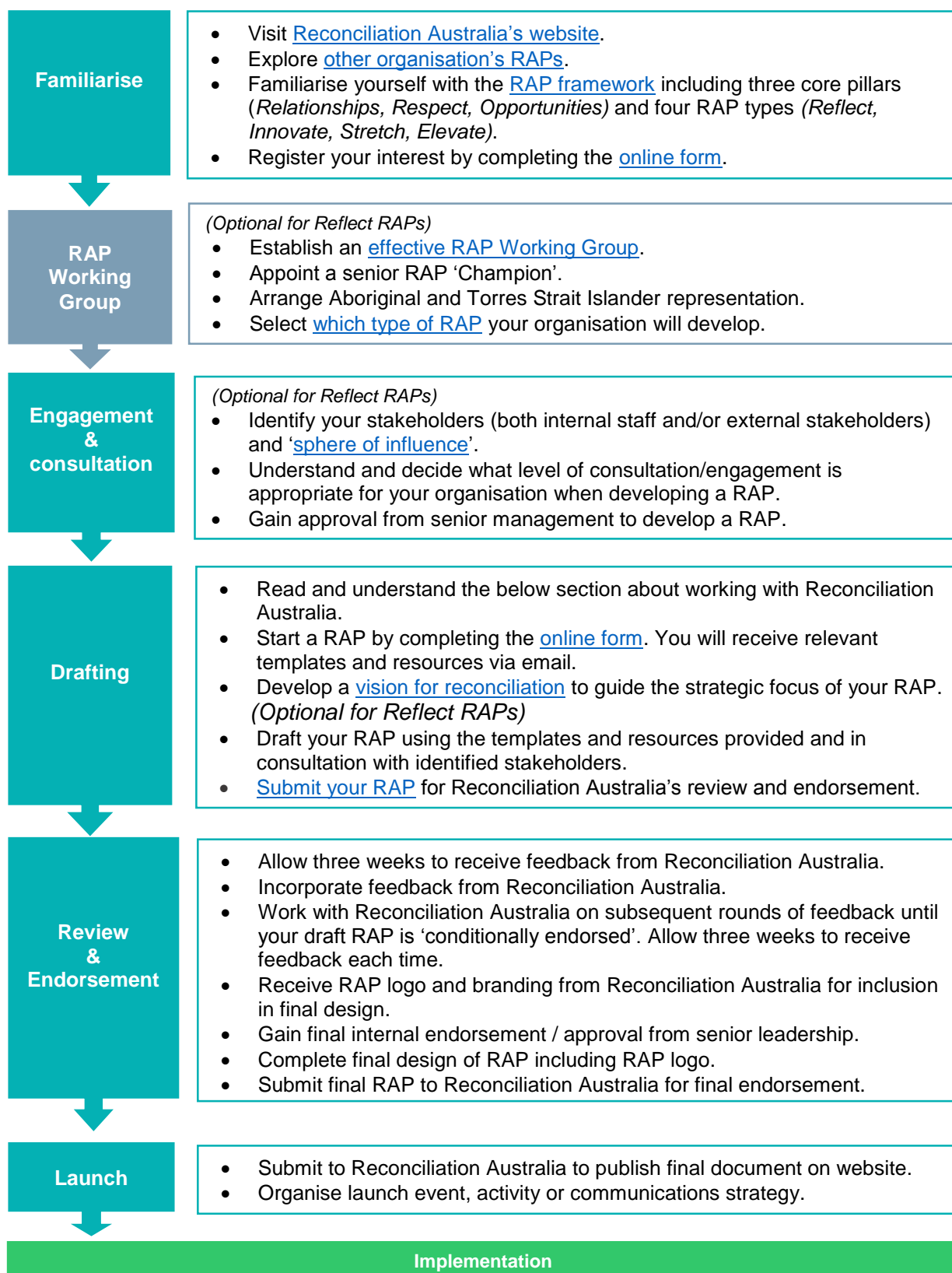
It is important to remember that developing a RAP is just the first step in your organisation's reconciliation journey. After developing a RAP, implementation and continuous improvement are what committing to a reconciliation journey is all about. The RAP Working Group is the foundation of this journey. Reconciliation is an ambitious goal, so it is helpful to think of the journey as having no beginning or end, rather it is a cycle of continuous learning-by-doing and always aiming to improve.

Once you have developed, endorsed and launched your RAP, your organisation's focus should turn to the implementation and reporting cycles of the RAP journey.



Key steps for developing a RAP

Please note: If your organisation chooses to develop a *Reflect* RAP, you are not required to establish a RAP Working Group, develop a vision for reconciliation, nor conduct extensive engagement and consultation in the development phase of your RAP journey. For *Reflect* RAPs these activities occur during the implementation phase of your organisation's RAP journey.



Working with Reconciliation Australia

RAP program support staff

Reconciliation Australia supports over 1,000 organisations across Australia to develop, implement and review RAPs. Whilst the RAP framework is designed to provide workplaces with 'self-serve' tools, templates and resources to begin their reconciliation journey, a dedicated program team exists at Reconciliation Australia to provide tailored assistance to organisations throughout the development, endorsement, launch, implementation and reporting phases of the RAP journey. A RAP team member will also assist with the review and endorsement process outlined below.

If you need to speak with a RAP team member prior to submitting a draft RAP for review and endorsement please contact the RAP team via raps@reconciliation.org.au.

Reconciliation Australia logos and trademarks

The RAP framework and RAP logos signify a unique, nationally recognised approach to reconciliation, which is the result of extensive and ongoing consultation between Reconciliation Australia and its partners. It is in the interest of all organisations to maintain the integrity and value of the RAP framework and RAP logos through compliance with Reconciliation Australia's endorsement process. In addition, the Reconciliation Australia and RAP logos, as well as the words 'Reconciliation Action Plan' or 'RAP' are registered trademarks owned by Reconciliation Australia through IP Australia. It is a breach of copyright law to use these logos or wording without Reconciliation Australia's permission.

Review and endorsement process

Reconciliation Australia is committed to supporting workplaces develop meaningful, effective and sustainable RAPs whilst maintaining the standards and reputation of the RAP framework and logos.

As such, Reconciliation Australia supports workplaces through a quality assurance process to ensure each and every RAP that is endorsed meets the mandatory requirements of the RAP framework, as well as value-add advice and support. This quality assurance process is divided into two steps.

1. Review

When you register to [start a RAP](#) on Reconciliation Australia's website, you will receive the relevant templates and resources you need to draft your RAP. Once you have drafted your RAP, you will need to return to Reconciliation Australia's website to [submit your draft RAP](#) for review. After this stage, a RAP team member will be in touch to provide feedback and tailored assistance within three weeks. This feedback will:

- Ensure you have complied with the mandatory requirements outlined in the RAP framework, templates and resources.
- Identify optional value-add feedback to enhance and strengthen your RAP.
- Advise if further drafts should be submitted for review before proceeding to endorsement.
NB: The waiting time for feedback is three weeks each time a draft RAP is submitted for review.

2. Endorsement

When a RAP team member is satisfied your draft RAP is ready to proceed to endorsement, you will receive 'conditional endorsement' of your draft RAP along with RAP logo and branding to include in the final design of your RAP. At this stage you will need to:

- Address any final feedback provided alongside the 'conditional endorsement'.
- Gain final internal endorsement or approval of the RAP from your senior leadership.
- Complete the final design of your RAP including the appropriate RAP branding and logo.
- Return to Reconciliation Australia's website to [submit your final RAP](#) for endorsement.

A RAP team member will notify you of the outcome of final endorsement within one week, and upload your final RAP to [Reconciliation Australia's website](#).

How long will it take to develop the RAP?

Key timeline considerations

The time it takes to develop a RAP varies greatly from organisation to organisation, and depends on the type of RAP your workplace chooses to develop. We recommend finding a balance between taking the time necessary to develop a meaningful RAP, while not taking so long as to lose momentum and motivation. Some of the key considerations to keep in mind when setting your workplace's timelines for the development of the RAP include.

- The time required to set up an effective [RAP Working Group](#) (optional during development of a *Reflect* RAP).
- The level of consultation/engagement that is appropriate to conduct with stakeholders in your [sphere of influence](#) (both internal staff and/or external stakeholders).
- Your workplace's internal review and approval process.
- Reconciliation Australia's review and endorsement process.
- The design, communications and marketing strategy that sits behind your RAP. E.g. Will you plan a large launch event, or will you have a 'soft' launch of your RAP only?
- The time of year that your workplace chooses to develop and launch a RAP. E.g. If you plan to launch your RAP during National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June) or NAIDOC Week (1st to 2nd Sunday of July) you will need to allow for longer timeframes as these are Reconciliation Australia's peak periods.
- The type of RAP (*Reflect*, *Innovate*, *Stretch* or *Elevate*) your workplace chooses to develop.

As a rough guide, the following table provides indicative timeframes and key expectations for developing each RAP type. For *Elevate* RAPs, please contact the RAP team: rap@reconciliation.org.au.

Timeframes and key expectations for RAP development			
	REFLECT	INNOVATE	STRETCH
Timeframe	1 – 2 months	3 – 6 months	6 – 12 months
Key expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Optional to establish a RAP Working Group to oversee development of the RAP. ▪ Must gain senior level approval to develop a RAP. ▪ Limited internal consultation and engagement needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RAP Working Group must oversee the development of the RAP. ▪ Must conduct internal consultation and engagement. ▪ Must conduct consultation and engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders. ▪ External consultation and engagement recommended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RAP Working Group must oversee the development of the RAP. ▪ Must conduct thorough consultation and engagement with internal, external and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.

Do you think this resource can be improved?

Email rap@reconciliation.org.au