



## Reconciliation Action Plan

QITE Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2016 – 2018



### Our vision for reconciliation

*Our Vision: “Q.I.T.E. is committed to reconciliation, and through strong relationships we foster a culture of respect for all individuals. We aim to enhance our service delivery to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in providing better engagement what will further contribute to their lives and families and the communities in which they live”.*

### Our business

Q.I.T.E. is a local not-for-profit organisation and one of the largest providers of employment services in the Far North Queensland region. We are also proudly a Public Benevolent Institution and a registered charity. Commencing in 1987, Q.I.T.E. was formed after a group of concerned citizens sought to assist youth with high unemployment and low school retention rates in the Mareeba community through the provision of training, recruitment and employment services working with the most vulnerable clients in our communities. Since this time, Q.I.T.E. has changed immensely and grown, with a current workforce of 75 staff we work in the communities of Mareeba, Atherton, Ravenshoe, Mossman, Cairns, Yarrabah, Innisfail and Tully and we offer a diverse set of programs which work towards helping people gain skills to move into employment through a series of accredited and non-accredited training. Q.I.T.E. also owns and operates a 70-place long day care Centre with an approved kindy program, which operates with 15% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children enrolled in our Centre. We have ten (10) Indigenous children in our approved kindy program.

Q.I.T.E. is proud to be recognized as a community asset, and as an organization, we provide a wrap-around service to our clients, and work to contribute to the wider community by campaigning where possible to influence change by being members of the National Employment Service Association, National Workforce Network, Jobs Australia, QCOS and various chambers of commerce across our region. This allows us to be aware of what is happening in our local areas and to provide training for clients so they are ready for the projects that maybe happening.

Q.I.T.E. has operated continuously in the employment, training & community service industry for **28 years** in the **Tablelands** region, including **7 years** as part of the **Cairns area**.

QITE's current service area spans almost 250,000km<sup>2</sup> from Mossman to Tully. The services we offer includes:-

- jobactive and Harvest Labour Service contracts which is Federally funded by the Department of Employment;
- Recruitment Services and Labour Hire;
- Accredited and non-accredited training
- Indigenous Advancement Strategy (IAS) - As part of the IAS service Q.I.T.E operates a regular school bus for children in Mareeba to help with school attendance for primary school aged children. This initiative is funded, with the help from the Department PM&C (Prime Minister and Cabinet).
- Social enterprises of *QT's Early Learning Centre* - QT's Child Care Centre was opened in September 2009 and provides quality day care services for up to 70 children per day (from 6 weeks to 5 years).
- *Passenger Transport Services* -Q.I.T.E. Transport Services is a dedicated service providing transport from Q.I.T.E.'s offices to employees' workplaces if they do not own their own vehicle. In a community with limited public transport especially to remote farms, this service provides benefits to local employers and employees alike.

Q.I.T.E. has a diverse workforce that we are proud of. We currently have twelve (12) staff who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander throughout the organisation in roles such as Indigenous Advancement Strategy Officer, Mentor, Employment Broker, Childcare worker and Receptionist and are valued members of our ever-growing team which has a variety of roles across the organisation ranging from bus drivers, employment brokers, finance, quality assurance and childcare staff.

### **Our RAP**

Within the Q.I.T.E. service, area the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population is almost three times the state average. Therefore, we recognised that a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was a necessary and integral part of Q.I.T.E.'s business and service delivery to ensure our organisation would commit to building the capacity of supporting First Australian Peoples in Far North QLD to gain meaningful employment.

Q.I.T.E. formally committed to implementing a R.A.P. in conjunction of our Indigenous Australian Training, Employment and Supplier Plan, which was accepted by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations in 2012. Q.I.T.E. had commenced work on the R.A.P. prior to this in recognition of the communities in which we operate, and the clients whom we support. Q.I.T.E. operated a specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Job Services Australia contract up to the 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2015 and is focussed on improving employment in our region for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2013, Q.I.T.E.'s R.A.P. Working Group met for the first time to discuss the draft R.A.P. and to devise a plan around the organisation's goals for reconciliation. It was recognised that the R.A.P. Working Group could collectively draw on each member's diverse background and experience to agree to a series of goals, which would make a difference to the organisation, our clients and our stakeholders.

The R.A.P. Working Group has been re-formed with a total of 9 (nine) members, which include; General Manager (Jillian Trout) as the internal R.A.P. champion, with new members which includes an Employment Broker from Innisfail (Lisa Livingston), the Cairns Assistant Site Manager (Mark Balderson), Compliance Manager (Alita Jennings), Indigenous Broker from Cairns (David Brown) and the Tablelands Assistant Site Manager (Keely Trout) joining the previous members.

The previous members were; General Manager (Jillian Trout), Work for the Dole/Labour Hire Assistant Manager (Rae Kiro), Director of QT's Childcare (Siale Jenkins), retired IAS Mentor (Eddie Hastie) to workshop Q.I.T.E.'s second R.A.P. for 2016 – 2018. Three (3) members are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders within our RAP group.

QITE's second RAP will focus on strengthening the organisation's focus on reconciliation, and building on the achievements already made under the current RAP such as a development of a cultural leave clause for staff, cultural awareness training and anti-discrimination training. This will be achieved by continued discussions with all staff in all locations to understand the importance of these achievements.

The R.A.P will be championed by all members of the RAP Working Group by discussions with staff and will be championed externally by Edward Hastie a respected member of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in Far North QLD. Mr Hastie has been involved in all of our RAP Working Group meetings, has been since day one, and will continue to be involved in all of our Working Group meetings.

Since our first RAP launched, our organisation has changed significantly and we are a smaller organisation due to the Federal Government contract changes. What we have noticed in the journey is that staff that are still with the organisation have all been supportive of the RAP and have volunteered to attend cultural events such as NAIDOC week and have learnt a lot from the training they have attended.

We have now created a cultural leave policy for our staff as well as staff have and will continue to undertake cultural awareness training so they are enabled to be better equipped to assist with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients in a more culturally appropriate and respectful way.



## Relationships

At Q.I.T.E., we believe that Reconciliation is a two-way process; therefore, our focus is on building relationships with individuals and communities. We seek to build on our existing network to create partnerships and to share experiences with First Australian organisations, groups and individuals.

**Focus area:** *People, Performance and Culture*

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
1. The RAP Working Group (RWG) continues to actively monitor RAP development, including implementation of actions, tracking progress and reporting.	General Manager	<p>March 2016</p> <p>April, October 2016 and 2017.</p> <p>April 2016</p> <p>April 2016</p> <p>April 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ RWG oversees the development, endorsement and launch of the RAP.</li> <li>▪ Meet at least twice per year to monitor and report on RAP implementation.</li> <li>▪ Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples continue to be represented on the RWG throughout the life of the RAP.</li> <li>▪ Invite new staff to join the RAP Working Group twice a year to ensure we have new ideas generated.</li> <li>▪ Communicate Terms of Reference to all new RWG members.</li> </ul>
2. Celebrate National Reconciliation Week (NRW) by providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees and other employees to build, maintain, and strengthen relationships.	Assistant Site Managers for Cairns and Tablelands.	27 <sup>th</sup> May- 3 <sup>rd</sup> June, 2016 and 2017.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Organise at least one internal event each year, at each of QITE's full-time sites (Atherton, Mareeba, Cairns)</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify one NRW activity in the area of each of Q.I.T.E.'s full-time sites, and investigate opportunities to partner with the organisers to assist with and participate in the event.</li> <li>▪ Encourage staff, in particular RWG, to attend local events in each of QITE's communities.</li> <li>▪ Register our NRW event via Reconciliation Australia's NRW website</li> </ul>
3. Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations to support positive outcomes	General Manager and Leadership Team	December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and implement an engagement plan to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Review, update and communicate existing database of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Meet with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to develop guiding principles for future engagement.</li> </ul>
	Compliance Manager	December 2016	
	IAS Officer	February 2017	
4. Raise internal and external awareness of our RAP to promote reconciliation across our business and sector	General Manager and Leadership Team	October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implement and review a strategy to communicate our RAP to all internal and external stakeholders.</li> <li>▪ Communicate RAP achievements and progress annually at AGM.</li> <li>▪ Promote reconciliation through ongoing active engagement with all stakeholders.</li> </ul>
		September 2016	
	GM and Board	November 2016	



## Respect

Q.I.T.E. acknowledges the importance of fostering a culture of respect, and an environment where cultural awareness is encouraged, and practiced.

It is our intention to first build on this organisation's culture of First Australian Peoples respect and equality in order to create a workforce of Reconciliation Champions. We plan to contribute to reconciliation by demonstrating respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through increasing our appreciation, understanding and awareness through learning First Australian People's history, cultures, achievements and perspectives. We will actively promote cultural awareness within all Q.I.T.E. teams. We will also seek to become a mentor for other organisations and businesses to embrace reconciliation.

**Focus area:** Service Delivery and People, Performance and Culture

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
1. Engage employees in understanding the significance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols such as Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country to ensure that the two are respected appropriately.	General Manager and Compliance Manager RAP Working Group	June 2016, 2017  October 2016  October 2016  December 2016. 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify at least one significant event for which a Welcome to Country from a Traditional Owner will be included.</li> <li>▪ Review, update and communicate cultural protocol document to include broader cultural protocols for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples/communities within in the Far North QLD region.</li> <li>▪ Develop a list of key contacts for organising a Welcome to Country and maintaining respectful relationships.</li> <li>▪ Include an Acknowledgement of Country at the commencement of important external meetings.</li> </ul>

<p>2. Engage employees in cultural learning to increase understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories and achievements.</p>	<p>General Manager RAP Working Group General Manager and Leadership team</p>	<p>June 2016 and 2017</p> <p>June 2016</p> <p>June 2016 and 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and implement a cultural awareness training strategy for QITE staff which defines cultural learning for employees.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for RWG members, RAP champions, HR Managers and other leadership staff to participate in cultural awareness training.</li> <li>▪ Investigate opportunities to work with local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultants to develop a specialised cultural awareness training for all staff.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Provide opportunities for QITE Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to engage with their culture and community through NAIDOC Week events.</p>	<p>General Manager and Compliance Manager Assistant Site Managers</p>	<p>May 2016</p> <p>July, 2016 and 2017</p> <p>June 2016 and 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review HR policies and procedures to ensure there are no barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC events.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to participate in local NAIDOC Week events.</li> <li>▪ Identify local community NAIDOC events which Q.I.T.E. could contribute to by organising a QITE stall or other agreed contribution to assist with the celebrations.</li> </ul>
<p>4. Display an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language map within each Q.I.T.E. office</p>	<p>General Manager</p>	<p>August 2016</p> <p>August 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Purchase and display Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language Map at each site in the front office area.</li> <li>▪ In consultation with the First Australian staff, educate staff about the meaning of the map and the importance of Country.</li> </ul>

<p>5. Continue to provide opportunities for all staff to attend training with the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland</p>	<p>General Manager and Quality Manager</p> <p>Quality Manager and Employment Services Area Manager</p>	<p>April, 2016</p> <p>June 2016 and 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop and implement a policy to ensure Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland training is mandatory for all staff to participate in.</li> <li>▪ Review and update calendar of training to ensure Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland training is included as mandatory exercise to participate in each year.</li> </ul>
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## Opportunities

At Q.I.T.E. our aim is to create sustainable employment opportunities through various services for individuals in Far North Queensland with a focus on closing the employment gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and other Australians in the region.

**Focus area:** People, Performance and Culture.

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Target
1. Investigate opportunities within QITE to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment opportunities.	General Manager and Compliance Manager	<p>June, 2016</p> <p>June, 2016</p> <p>July 2016</p> <p>July 2016</p> <p>July 2017</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review HR procedures and policies to ensure barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees can be addressed.</li> <li>▪ Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment and retention strategy.</li> <li>▪ Engage with existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to consult on employment strategies, including professional development.</li> <li>▪ Commit to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff employment within QITE (by developing and implementing training pathways, apprenticeships, internships, cadetships, work experience).</li> <li>▪ Advertise all vacancies in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media such as Koori mail and Our Mob.</li> </ul>
2. Investigate opportunities to increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity within QITE.	General Manager	July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review procurement policies barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses</li> </ul>



		August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and communicate to staff a list of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses that can be used to procure goods and services.</li> </ul>
		July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigate the development of at least one commercial relationship with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business.</li> </ul>
		Sep 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain membership to Supply Nation to link with Certified Suppliers</li> </ul>
3. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Early School Leavers in attending QITE information sessions about training and employment opportunities post leaving school.	Assistant Site Managers	November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with local Schools in QITE service areas to promote information sessions and opportunities to the early school leavers and students who are finishing high school explaining our services and the benefits available.</li> </ul>
		November 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage with students who may wish to be referred to Transition to work programs in the area for assistance with ongoing study/training</li> </ul>
4. Explore opportunities to improve employment outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Far North QLD through QITE services.		August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders to identify service gaps to supporting employment for First Australian Peoples.</li> </ul>
		September 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, organisations and stakeholders Q.I.T.E. to develop guidelines to investigate gaps in services to effectively engage with First Australians clients.</li> </ul>
		October 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement guidelines and ensure resources for effectively engaging with First Australian clients</li> </ul>

<b>Tracking progress and reporting</b>			
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Target</b>
1. Monitor the progression of Q.I.T.E. RAP commitments	General Manager and RAP Working Group	April, October 2016 and 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Establish the requirements and process for reporting against the RAP's targets for Q.I.T.E. staff and Board</li> <li>▪ Seek guidance and Feedback from Q.I.T.E. General Manager and Board on implementation of RAP.</li> </ul>
2. Report achievements, challenges and learnings to Reconciliation Australia for inclusion in the Annual Impact Measurement Report	General Manager and R.A.P. Working Group	By September 2016 and 2017.  Biennial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Complete and submit the RAP impact measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia annually.</li> <li>▪ Investigate participating in the RAP Barometer.</li> </ul>
2. Report RAP achievements, challenges and learnings internally and externally.	General Manager and R.A.P. Working Group	October 2016 and 2017.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Publically report QITE's RAP achievements, challenges and learnings.</li> </ul>
4. Review, refresh and update RAP	General Manager and RAP working group	April 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review, refresh and update RAP based on learnings, challenges and achievements.</li> <li>▪ Send draft RAP to Reconciliation Australia for formal feedback and endorsement.</li> </ul>

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