



Strong and Deadly Together Plan

2021

flourish[®]
AUSTRALIA

Where mental wellbeing thrives



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands, seas and waterways upon which we live and work.

We pay respects to their Elders past and present, and recognise their strong and continuing connection to land, culture and spirit.

THANK YOU

We thank the Working Group who guided the development for this Plan, made up of staff, and the Chair and Deputy Chair of our Community Advisory Council.

Grace Mumbler

Elaine Zander

Jade Ryall

Scott Gourlay

Mozzie Wilkinson

Jasmin Moradides

Fay Jackson

We are also grateful to our Yarning Group members who provided important guidance on the finalisation of the plan, its name and imagery.

We thank the Artist, Serina for permission to use her artworks in this plan.

INTRODUCTION

This plan has been developed to support the highest standard of social and emotional wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities by enhancing Flourish Australia’s cultural responsiveness to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Our focus is on more than doing things. It is on thought, action and impact.

The commitments set out in this plan embed and grow our partnership with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations. Through that partnership we seek to learn, work and grow together in a true partnership, built on mutual respect and shared understanding.

By working together, we seek to address challenges faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities across the lands on which we offer our services . We will focus on improved outcomes in areas of social and emotional wellbeing, housing, employment, education, physical health, family life, community life, cultural life, spiritual connection, respect, and decreasing suicide rates.

In doing this work we will be guided by local Elders and Community Leaders; by learning the history, spiritual and cultural significance of the lands on which we work, and by committing ourselves to continue to care for the country nurtured by local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities for tens of thousands of years.

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People’s right to self-determination and to lead, in partnership, in decision-making around programs, supports and community involvement that affect their social and emotional wellbeing.

We will commit the time required to sit and learn, to listen deeply and to co-develop responses.

Professor Elizabeth More
AM Board Chair

Mark Orr
AM Chief Executive

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In common with Indigenous peoples in many countries, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples connect their mental health to strong Indigenous identities, to participation in their cultures, families and communities, and to their relationship to their lands and seas, ancestors, and the spiritual dimension of existence.

The Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration

1. Being part of the local community

Every community is unique, from their history, culture, spiritual beliefs, social and emotional wellbeing needs and priorities. Working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to support and deliver locally led supports and services requires us to meet each community where they are at.

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Recognise and respect the role of local Elders and Leaders in each community in which we work including the role and leadership of Aboriginal led organisations in the community.	Local Managers	Immediately
Make contact with local community Elders and Leaders to learn about local history, lore and spiritual beliefs and current needs of communities so that we are better informed and prepared to deliver responsive services.	Local Managers	December 2021
Recognise significant cultural days and weeks in a culturally meaningful way for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community including NAIDOC week, Survival Day, National Reconciliation Week in every site, and ensure these are contained in our significant events calendar.	Chief Development Officer	December 2021
Pursue membership of Supply Nation or a similar organisation to assist with targeted procurement from Aboriginal businesses.	Chief Financial Officer	December 2021
Recognise and respect the importance of people taking part in Sorry Business, Women's business and Men's business and celebrations.	Local Managers	December 2021

Action	Responsible	Due Date
<p>Make contact with local Aboriginal services and supports including Aboriginal Liaison Officers/ Workers from social and human services such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment services - Education and Training providers such as TAFE - Family and Community Services (FACS) including Housing and Homelessness services - Corrective Services, Probation and Parole - Emergency services including crisis response services - Financial and Health services including Centrelink and other government agencies 	Local Managers	March 2022
<p>Ensure each site understands the services available to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in local communities and has a written directory of key contacts. Note any gaps and advocate for these gaps to be filled.</p>	Local Managers	March 2021
<p>Promote joining local community NAIDOC week celebrations across all sites.</p>	Manager, Marketing and Communications	May 2022
<p>Support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses in order to grow employment and economic opportunity within local communities.</p>	Local Managers	June 2022
<p>Ensure Flourish Australia's offices are welcoming spaces that acknowledge and respect the local people, land and language, customs, lore and provide clear visual cultural cues signifying that Aboriginal people are welcome.</p>	Chief Development Officer	June 2022

2. Respecting and valuing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff knowledge and skills

Recognising and valuing the cultural knowledge and unique skills that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff bring to their roles is an important step towards reconciliation and responsive services. Supporting staff to maintain their own social and emotional wellbeing is essential in this and to the overall health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities.

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Ensure local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are valued and appropriately recognised as an important source of connection with local community.	Local Managers	Immediately
Hold annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff forums where staff can come together to find support, to learn and to celebrate culture.	General Manager, People & Culture	December 2021
Support Aboriginal staff to attend the Annual NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Forum.	Chief Operating Officer	December 2021
Provide regular opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the organisation to connect using technology.	General Manager, People & Culture	December 2021
Support Aboriginal staff to practice self-care, and to meet and support each other consistent with the Gayaa Dhuwi Declaration.	General Manager, People & Culture	December 2021
Ensure new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are aware of opportunities to connect with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff through online meetings and the Annual Forum.	General Manager, People & Culture	December 2021

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Develop a poster to advertise the Yarning Group to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff know of the opportunity to connect regularly with other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff across the organisation.	Manager, Marketing and Communications	December 2021
Recognise and support the accountability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders and staff to their communities and to the wider Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, including by allowing them the time required to meet and listen to their communities and wider constituents and exercise culturally informed leadership among them consistent with the Gayaa Dhuwi Declaration.	Chief Executive Officer	March 2022
Review our record keeping to ensure Flourish Australia's records are accurate and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff understand why this information is collected and the benefits that flows from it.	General Manager, People & Culture	March 2022
Explore and action opportunities for the establishment of identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander positions with their own position descriptions.	General Manager, People & Culture	June 2022
Review position titles in order to remove unnecessary barriers to connection and support by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities.	Chief Operating Officer	June 2022

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are supported to undertake their roles according to and aligning with cultural protocols and responsibilities. Such as protocols around working with men and women.	Chief Operating Officer	June 2022
Review how Flourish Australia advertises to increase the opportunity and possibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people applying for positions, including through the use of Aboriginal Community Media, Aboriginal Interagencies and word of mouth in local communities.	Local Managers	Immediately
Review how applications for positions and interviews are organised to remove any unnecessary barriers to increasing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.	Local Managers	December 2021
Investigate how we can measure the impact of cultural responsiveness training on our practice from the perspective of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we support.	Chief Development Officer	December 2021
Explore and action opportunities to grow the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing Traineeship program.	Local Managers	December 2021

3. Supporting staff

The impact of dispossession, colonisation and forced removal continues to be felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities today.

Understanding the historical and lived experience of the people and communities we work with, and recognising their strength and resilience as a peoples, helps to build authentic and genuine relationships and partnerships that will deliver culturally responsive and safe services.

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Make training in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness and responsiveness mandatory for all staff.	General Manager, People & Culture	Immediately
Educate ourselves about the impact of the stolen generations and intergenerational trauma, so as to ensure our supports are culturally responsive and safe.	General Manager, People & Culture	June 2021
Ensure our orientation program provides a sound introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and achievements.	General Manager, People & Culture	March 2022
Develop and implement training for managers and supervisors that enables them to better support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff working in community and the cultural approaches that support that work.	General Manager, People & Culture	June 2022

4. Promoting cultural responsiveness

Recognising and promoting publicly our respect for cultural protocols, the right to self-determination, and the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership in the development, delivery and ongoing evaluation of this plan.

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Ensure there is an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of all meetings.	Chief Executive Officer	Immediately
Publish this Plan on our public website and promote it on our social media channels.	Manager, Marketing and Communications	Immediately
Include discussion of this plan on the Senior Leadership Team Meeting monthly agenda.	Chief Executive Officer	Immediately
Establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Reference Group, with agreed terms of reference.	Chief Executive Officer	March 2022

5. Delivering culturally responsive services

Culture, Country and Spirit continue to be central to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives will be recognised and privileged in every aspect of the supports we offer for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their families and communities.

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Ensure staff working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities' access cultural supervision and mentoring from local community Leaders and Elders.	Local Managers	December 2021
Review the tools we use to assist people to identify what they wish to focus on and to celebrate their achievements to ensure they are culturally relevant and meaningful.	Chief Operating Officer	June 2022
Investigate best practice Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention training, developed by Aboriginal communities and continue our commitment to training for staff and local communities.	General Manager, People & Culture	December 2022
Develop and/or connect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we support with opportunities to strengthen their knowledge, skills and connection with their country and culture, and which support strengthening identity and healing.	Chief Operating Officer	December 2022
Co-develop resources that assist sites to signify that Flourish Australia's supports are culturally responsive.	Manager, Marketing and Communications	December 2022
Identify opportunities to improve our trauma-informed practice in current programs to ensure it is culturally responsive and safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.	Chief Operating Officer	March 2023

6. Delivering on commitments

Understanding and measuring the impact of this plan on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, families and communities who we work with will be done in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and will reflect their health and wellbeing priorities.

Action	Responsible	Due Date
Establish a Plan Implementation Working Group to provide oversight.	Chief Executive Officer	December 2021
Include a question on our staff exit survey to provide opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to provide feedback about Flourish Australia's cultural responsiveness and support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.	General Manager, People & Culture	December 2021
Promote the achievements related to implementation of this plan.	Chief Executive Officer	December 2021
Identify partner organisations to support the actions in this plan that support reconciliation and culturally responsive practice.	Chief Executive Officer	June 2022
Report progress against this plan publicly in our Annual Report.	Chief Executive Officer	Annually
Provide a report on this plan's implementation to the Board every six months.	Chief Executive Officer	Six Monthly

[APPENDIX 1: Healing Foundation – Glossary of Healing Terms](#)

[APPENDIX 2: Gayaa Dhuwi Declaration](#)