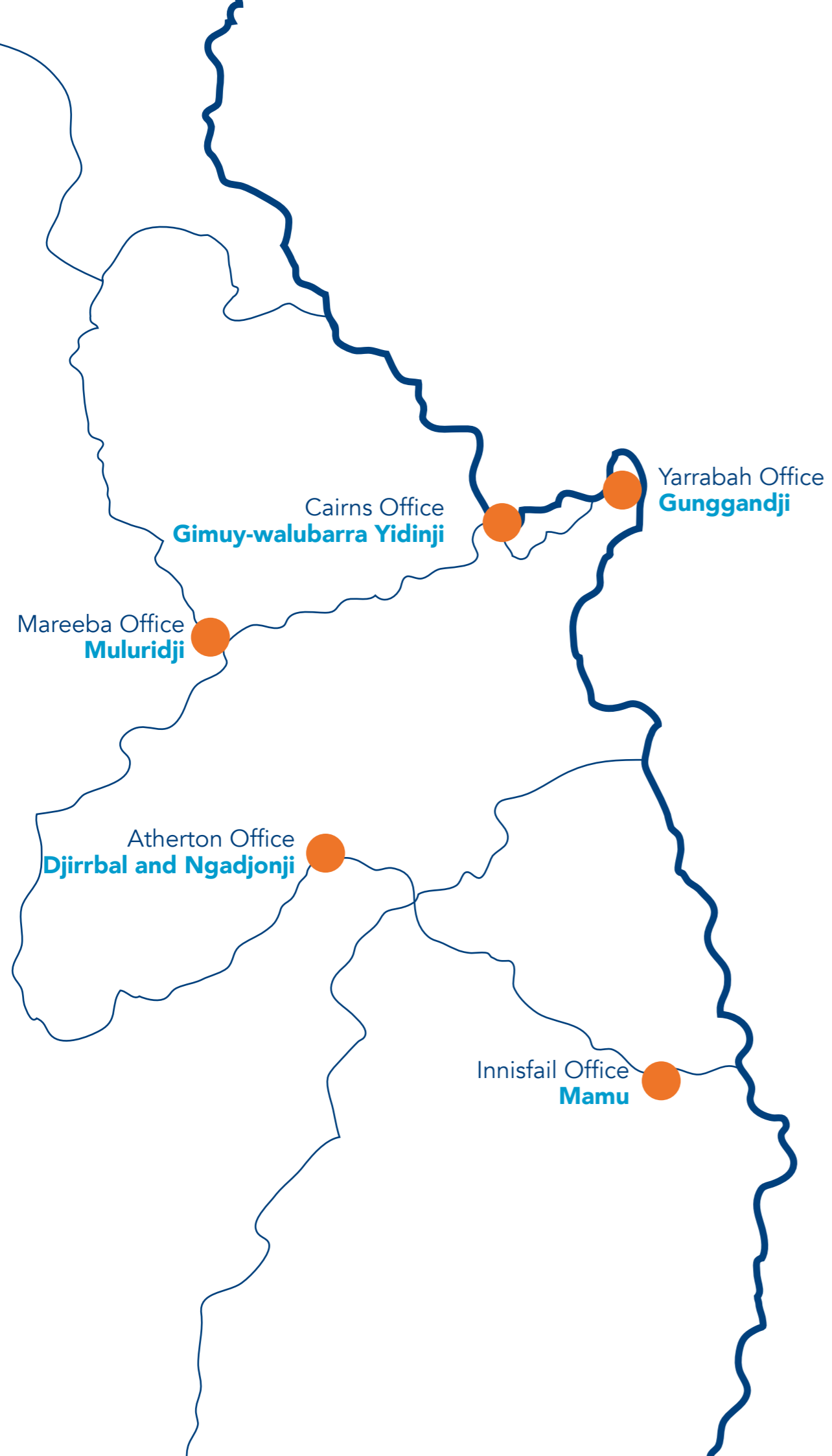




Indigenous Participation Plan





Acknowledgement of **Country**

Vocational Partnerships Group acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the lands and seas of Australia. We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land in which our regional offices are located.





ABOUT VPG

Vocational Partnerships Group (VPG) is a not-for-profit organisation that has been transforming the lives of children, young people, and families for over 20 years.

We are one of Australia's leading youth transition providers, committed to improving child and youth transitions. We proudly serve the communities of Far North Queensland from our five centres in Cairns, Atherton, Yarrabah, Innisfail, and Mareeba.

Our core services are dedicated to:

- Strengthening families and improving children's wellbeing and development
- Supporting young people transition through their adolescent years to engage actively within the community
- Building safer communities that positively influence behaviour, culture, and attitude towards violence
- Creating quality partnerships between parents, community, education, and industry
- Achieving real and sustainable outcomes for our local community

We seek to empower youth, strengthen families and build the capacity of education, industry, and communities through quality partnerships. We are committed to achieving real and sustainable outcomes for our local community members. With access to the right support, opportunities, resources, and networks, we believe everyone has the potential to lead a successful and fulfilling life.

OUR VISION

Our vision for reconciliation is a nation, workplace, and community where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people feel a sense of belonging and inclusion, and cultural differences, values and beliefs are accepted, respected and celebrated.

Indigenous Participation

Our Indigenous Participation Plan is structured according to the three broad pillars of Reconciliation:

1.

RELATIONSHIPS

Through a shared understanding and respect for cultural differences, VPG recognises building and maintaining positive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their immediate and extended families, employers, industry leaders, education and training institutions, external service providers and other First Nations young people and stakeholders, to grow and learn together through shared cultural experiences, and create healthy positive relationships.

2.

RESPECT

VPG recognises, that respect for cultural differences within workplaces, schools, industry and across community, benefits all Australians. Showing respect towards young people is valuing each individual together with their cultural, social and personal identity.

Respect for cultural difference, is achieved by strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people and non-indigenous peoples and understanding how valuable cultural identity contributes to individual self-worth, resilience, altruism, and community engagement.

3.

OPPORTUNITIES

VPG is committed to providing genuine opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to be employed, to develop life-long skills that support First Nations people, families, and community, and to develop the leadership and cultural safety and security of all staff.

Employing First Nations staff, mean First Nations young people feel safe to speak in language, to share their stories, and feel accepted. First Nations staff are role models and First Nations young people learn about their own culture and personal identity and feel proud of who they are and who they aspire to be.



RELATIONSHIPS

Initiative	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Status
Build relationships through shared experiences	First Nations Leadership Team create a cultural introduction presentation to share with employers and staff to reduce possible stereotyping of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples	First Nations Leadership Team, Communications Officer	In progress
	VPG to host a family and community BBQ for young people and their families to build relationships within the community	First Nations Leadership Team	In Progress
	Host regular yarning circles with guest speakers	First Nations Leadership Team	In Progress
	Young people lead a yarning story with VPG Staff	First Nations Leadership Team	In Progress
Hold a co-design workshop to develop the VPG RAP	Invite First Nations young people to be involved in the design and planning of the RAP	First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved
	Host a co-design workshop with the First Nations Leadership Team to contribute to the content design, planning and implementation of the RAP	First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved

RESPECT

Initiative	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Status
Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners across all VPG Centres	An acknowledgement of the local Traditional Owner group is posted on the entry doors to each VPG office.	CEO, Operations Manager, First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation that contribute to creating a culturally safe and culturally secure place for First Nations young people, their families and community to engage	First Nations Leadership Team, CEO	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
	Consult local Traditional Owners and/or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors on the development and implementation of a cultural learning strategy	First Nations Leadership Team, CEO	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
	Provide opportunities for the RAP working group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured cultural learning, via experiential learning activities and adventure – based activities and cultural conversations learning program	First Nations Leadership Team, CEO	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
Demonstrate respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by observing cultural protocols	Increase staff understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, included Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols via the Cultural Conversations Learning program	First Nations Leadership Team, CEO	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
	Invite a local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year at each location in Cairns, Yarrabah, Atherton, Mareeba and Innisfail	First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
	Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings and events	First Nations Leadership Team, CEO	Achieved – Ongoing commitment

Build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by celebrating all significant cultural dates and events	RAP working group to participate in external NAIDOC week event in all or either of the following locations, Cairns, Yarrabah, Innisfail, Atherton and Mareeba	First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
	RAP working group hosts local NAIDOC week activities for First Nations young people to connect and learn about the shared history and cultures	First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – Ongoing commitment
	RAP working group design and implement NAIDOC week events at each centre in Cairns, Yarrabah, Innisfail, Atherton and Mareeba	First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – Ongoing commitment

OPPORTUNITIES

Initiative	Action	Responsibility	Implementation Status
Improve employment outcomes by maintaining Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development	Employ and maintain at a minimum 10% percent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in our workforce	CEO, Operations Manager, First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – Ongoing Commitment
	Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to inform on future employment and professional development opportunities	CEO, Operations Manager First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – ongoing commitment
	Advertise identified positions to effectively reach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander candidates	CEO, Communications Officer, First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – ongoing commitment
	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander recruitment, retention and professional development strategy	CEO, First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – ongoing commitment
Increase Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes	Develop and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander procurement strategy, promoting local buy across the Far North and Queensland region by a minimum of 1%	First Nations Leadership Team, Corporate Services team	In Progress – ongoing commitment
	Utilise Supply Nation Indigenous Supplier Register to source new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	First Nations Leadership Team, Corporate Services Team	In Progress – ongoing commitment
	Develop commercial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses	First Nations Leadership Team, Corporate Services Team	In Progress – ongoing commitment
	Engage local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to deliver pre-employment workshops to First Nations young people to develop their employability skills and awareness	CEO, First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – ongoing commitment
	Engage local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to deliver professional development workshops to employees	CEO, First Nations Leadership Team	Achieved – Ongoing Commitment

Governance

An Indigenous First Nations Leadership Team has been established with senior representation to:

- Oversee implementation of VPG's Indigenous Participation Plan
- Monitor and report progress to all board members, staff and senior leaders
- Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on First Nations Leadership Team and in the First Nations young people reference group
- Conduct quarterly First Nations Leadership Team meetings to drive and monitor the Indigenous Participation Plan
- Define resources required for implementation
- Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on the Indigenous Participation Plan





Phone: 07 4032 1677

Email: info@vpginc.com.au

vpginc.com.au