

**Independent Education Union -
Queensland and Northern Territory Branch
(IEU-QNT)**

Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan

January 2023 - December 2024





Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	3
RAP Caretaker's Statement	4
Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia	5
Union Values are Reconciliation Values	6
The Fig Tree	7
Our Vision for Reconciliation	8
Our Business	9
Our RAP	10
Our Yubbah Action Group	12
RAP Actions: Relationships	14
RAP Actions: Respect	18
RAP Actions: Opportunities	21
RAP Actions: Governance	26
Artwork Credits	28
Contact	29

Acknowledgement of Country

IEU-QNT recognises First Nations people as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands and waterways where we live and work. We acknowledge that their sovereignty over those lands and waters was never ceded: Always was. Always will be.

As a union of teachers and support staff in non-government schools throughout Queensland and the Northern Territory, we pay deep respects to Elders past, present and emerging and the pivotal role they play in ensuring that First Nations histories, cultures and perspectives are passed on to future generations.

We commence this RAP in a spirit of sincere hope that we might work with our First Nations members and Elders to ensure that First Nations histories, cultures and perspectives are assigned value in education systems, policies and processes and that those systems, policies and processes are enacted in ways that ensure continuity of the oldest living culture on the planet.



RAP Caretaker's Statement

Unions are, fundamentally, about diverse groups of people working together and supporting each other to improve their lives. For our union, this commitment is about using our collective strength to make positive changes in our workplace, our community and our society.

We are proud to have progressed through two previous Innovate RAPS and even more proud that we have established strong, constructive relationships with our First Nations members and other reconciliation stakeholders.

As a union of ~16,000 teachers and support staff in non-government education institutions throughout Queensland and the Northern Territory, we clearly have a key role to play in ensuring that the contributions of First Nations education workers are recognized through appropriate, professional pay and conditions which reflect their crucial contribution to students' understanding of Australia's rich and diverse histories and cultures, and their preparedness to participate in contemporary Australian society.

We have begun this work with initiatives such as our First Nations Education Workers project, which establishes just and fair benchmarks for the employment of Language and Culture Educators, and through our public commitment to "Closing the Industrial Gap".

This, our third Innovate RAP, sets us the additional challenge of further strengthening and enhancing the mechanisms by which we receive advice from our First Nations members,

including a commitment to make First Nations representation an embedded feature of our various committees and workgroups and ensure that we work with our various stakeholders to ensure that there are opportunities for First Nations members to take on leadership roles both within our union, and in the non-government education sector more generally.

Such measures are, we believe, essential to ensure that education systems recognize broader criteria of 'success' that reflect First Nations' frames of reference, rather than expecting First Nations people to conform with norms derived from colonial constructs.

If we are able to play a role in bringing about changes that see the full richness and complexity of First Nations histories, cultures and perspectives assigned greater value within schools and education systems, we can be satisfied that we have contributed to meaningful, sustained reconciliation across generations of education workers and students.



Terry Burke
RAP Caretaker and
IEU-QNT Branch Secretary



Endorsement from Reconciliation Australia

Reconciliation Australia commends Independent Education Union QLD and NT on the formal endorsement of its third Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

Since 2006, RAPs have provided a framework for organisations to leverage their structures and diverse spheres of influence to support the national reconciliation movement.

With close to 3 million people now either working or studying in an organisation with a RAP, the program's potential for impact is greater than ever. The Independent Education Union QLD and NT continues to be part of a strong network of more than 2,200 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organisations that have taken goodwill and transformed it into action.

The four RAP types — Reflect, Innovate, Stretch and Elevate — allow RAP partners to continuously strengthen reconciliation commitments and constantly strive to apply learnings in new ways.

An Innovate RAP is a crucial and rewarding period in an organisation's reconciliation journey. It is a time to build the strong foundations and relationships that ensure sustainable, thoughtful, and impactful RAP outcomes into the future.

An integral part of building these foundations is reflecting on and cataloguing the successes and challenges of previous RAPs. Learnings gained through effort and innovation are invaluable resources that Independent Education Union QLD and NT will continuously draw upon to create RAP commitments rooted in experience and maturity.

These learnings extend to Independent Education Union QLD and NT using the lens of reconciliation to better understand its core business, sphere of influence, and diverse community of staff and stakeholders.

The RAP program's emphasis on *relationships*, *respect*, and *opportunities* gives organisations a framework from which to foster connections with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples rooted in mutual collaboration and trust.

This Innovate RAP is an opportunity for Independent Education Union QLD and NT to strengthen these relationships, gain crucial experience, and nurture connections that will become the lifeblood of its future RAP commitments. By enabling and empowering staff to contribute to this process, Independent Education Union QLD and NT will ensure shared and cooperative success in the long-term.

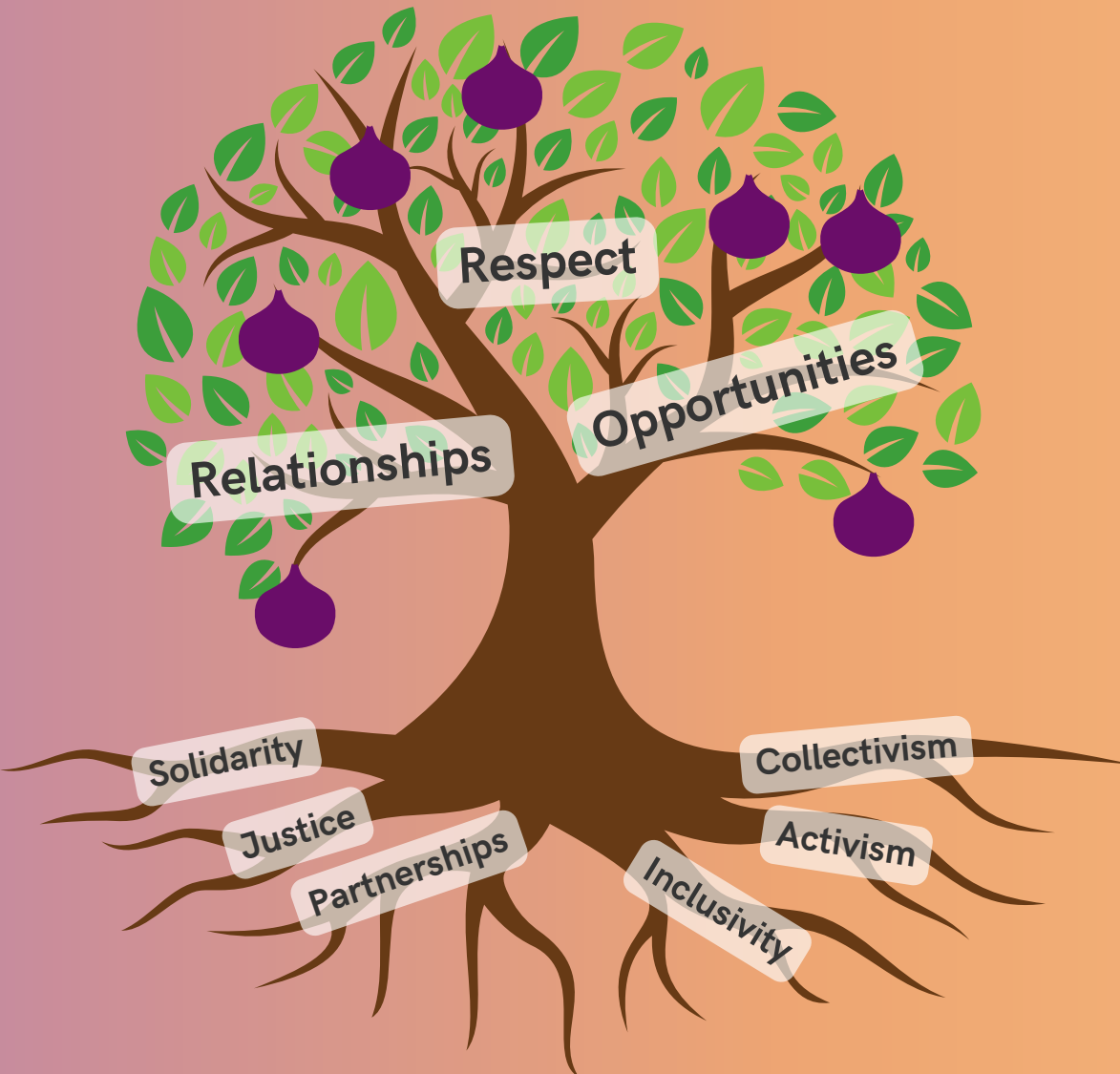
Gaining experience and reflecting on pertinent learnings will ensure the sustainability of Independent Education Union QLD and NT future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives, providing meaningful impact toward Australia's reconciliation journey.


Congratulations Independent Education Union QLD and NT on your third Innovate RAP and I look forward to following your ongoing reconciliation journey.

Karen Mundine
CEO, Reconciliation Australia





Union values are reconciliation values




 Celebrate National Reconciliation Week


 Celebrate NAIDOC Week


 Support *Narragunnawali*: Reconciliation in Education

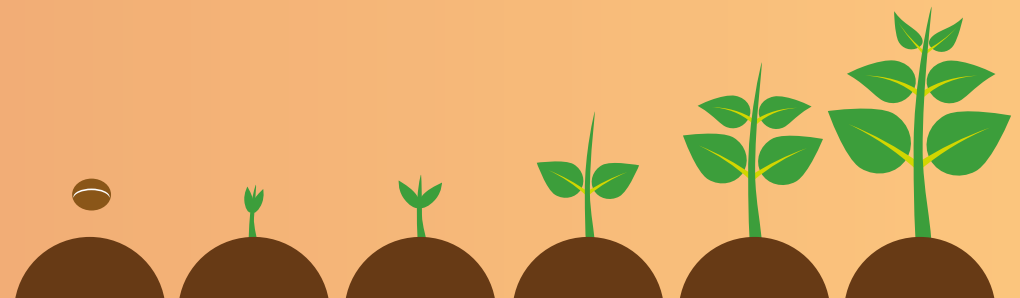
 Build our Yarning Circle

 Yubbah Action Group

 Acknowledgement of Country

 Mark Close the Gap Day

 Increase First Nations representation on union bodies



The Fig Tree

Before the arrival of Europeans, First Nations people lived in extended family groups, sometimes referred to as “clans”. Each clan formed part of a larger community of people who spoke the same language.

Each clan lived within their own territory and moved from camp to camp throughout the year as the season changed and new food sources became available. This movement was not aimless wandering, but a strategic response to changes in the natural environment.

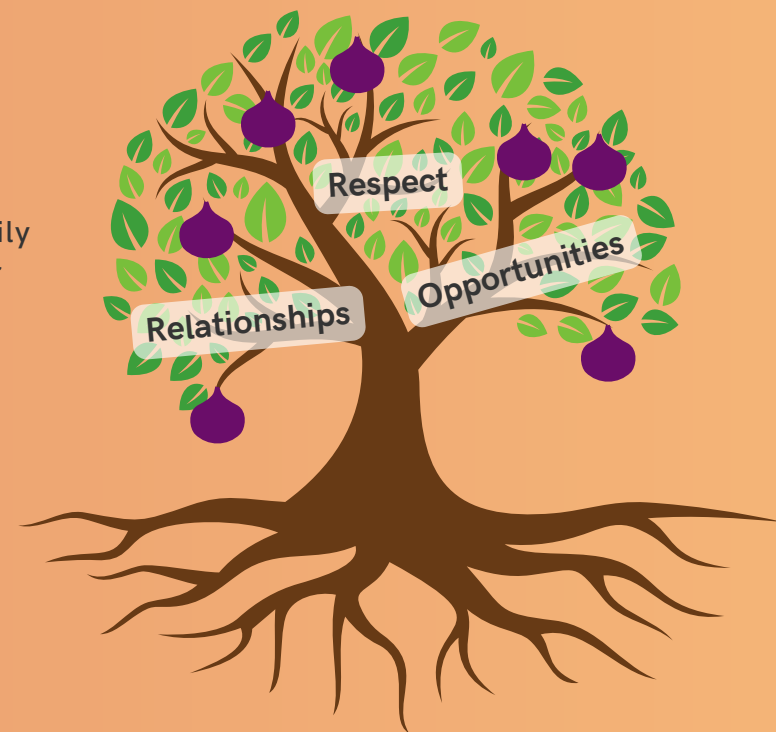
While First Nations people of Queensland and The Northern Territory traditionally made use of many different plants, in accordance with their availability in different areas, the fig tree was particularly useful.

Not only are the fruits of all species edible, the inner bark of many species was used to make twine for dilly bags and fishing nets. The timber is also soft and spongy and relatively easy to work into coolamons, shields, and dug-out canoes. Fire could be made by twirling a sharpened hardwood stick between the hands against the softer dead fig wood and the milky sap was used as a natural latex to cover wounds [1].

The fig tree is unique in that several species have distributions that extend throughout both Queensland and The Northern Territory. As the Queensland and Northern Territory Branch of the Independent Education Union, we feel that this makes the fig tree a particularly apt graphic metaphor for use throughout our RAP.

The roots and trunk of the fig tree represent the shared values of First Nations People and the union movement. These include, but are not limited to: Solidarity, activism, justice, collectivism, inclusivity, social justice and partnerships.

The three main branches of the tree represent the three focus areas of the Reconciliation Action Plan: Relationships, respect and opportunities. The leaves of the tree represent the multitude of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds working together to generate the conditions and resources required for the tree to grow strong, bear fruit and set seed.



[1] The_Royal_Botanic_Gardens_and_Domain_Trust. The significance of native plants and the site of the Royal Botanic Gardens to Aboriginal culture. 2015 [2nd November 2015]; Available from: https://www.rbgsyd.nsw.gov.au/welcome/royal_botanic_garden/tours_education/self-guided_tours/aboriginal_heritage_walk.

Our vision for reconciliation

Our vision for reconciliation is one where our organisation and its members actively organise and persistently work together with First Nations People, and their communities, to articulate and act on issues of interest and significance and bring about changes in education systems, policies and practices that recognise and reward the significant and substantial contributions of First Nations education workers.

As a union, we would expect that our reconciliation work should translate to a direct improvement in pay and conditions for First Nations Education Workers and we have embedded a number of deliverables that are associated with our aim of "Closing the Industrial Gap". These deliverables challenge us to quantify the impact of our reconciliation work through ongoing monitoring of employment conditions to ensure that we are making an industrial difference.

If we can succeed in our aims, we would also expect the changes in our relationship with First Nations members to flow through to changes at an operational level. We will know we have achieved reconciliation when First Nations members are represented on all our union committees and workgroups and we routinely organise members to act on issues of relevance and significance to First Nations people through a strong and vibrant network of committed First Nations activists who set a clear agenda for union activity and, from which, leaders emerge.

If we can achieve this, we believe we can make a significant contribution to new paradigms of work and education that recognise broader criteria of 'success' that reflect First Nations' frames of reference, rather than expecting First Nations people to conform with norms derived from colonial constructs.



Our business

Unions are, fundamentally, about diverse groups of people working together and supporting each other to improve their lives. This commitment goes beyond industrial matters like wages and conditions. It is about using our collective strength to make changes in our workplace, our community and our society.

IEU-QNT is a trade union which organises over 16,000 teachers, support staff and ancillary staff in non-government education institutions in Queensland and the Northern Territory, giving them a collective voice on issues that matter. We have offices in Brisbane, Bundaberg, Darwin, Rockhampton, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Townsville and the Gold Coast and are led by an executive of 34 elected members who are supported by member committees and 60 IEUA-QNT staff, two of whom identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people.

Our core business is to provide members with the support and resources they require to raise issues of interest and significance to them, and effect change that has a positive impact on their quality of life, and that of the students under their care.

As individuals, our members have access to services and resources such as training and development programs, legal and industrial advice and services, professional indemnity insurance, and the opportunity to engage in professional development programs such as our teacher-exchange program and workshops in areas as diverse as navigating teacher registration requirements and meeting the requirements for certification as Highly Accomplished and/or Lead Teacher.

As an organising union however, we also provide members with the resources and support that they



require to act on a wide range of issues that resonate beyond the classroom. In the non-government education sector, this includes not only industrial and professional issues, but also broader sociocultural phenomena that impact on the lives of both education professionals and the students under their care.

Our union has a proud history of working collaboratively with a wide range of other non-government groups and, through our Yarning Circle and Yubba Action Group, has taken action in relation to various state and federal policy and legislation that directly and indirectly affects the work of our First Nations members, and the industrial and sociocultural environment in which they perform it.

A key example of how our union has stepped up to the challenge of Closing the Industrial Gap is our work to establish an industrial framework for First Nations Education Workers. While First Nations teachers and other staff have been undertaking Language and Culture work within schools for many decades, their crucial contribution to students' understanding of Australia's rich and diverse history and culture is often unrecognised and unrewarded.

Our RAP

As a union of education workers united by a shared desire to perform work that enhances quality of life for teachers and support staff in non-government education institutions, IEU-QNT recognises the fundamental importance of a formal commitment to reconciliation.

Respectful and constructive relationships between First Nations Peoples and Australians from other cultural backgrounds require acknowledgement that many of the challenges faced by current generations have their genesis in unfair, unjust policies and practices of colonisation and repairing the psychological, social and economic damage arising from these policies and practices is a long-term undertaking.


While our previous RAPs have focused on building initial relationships with our First Nations stakeholders, and ensuring that we have structures and processes through which they can express their goals and aspirations for our union, and direct our efforts to influence education systems, policies and practices, at this stage in our RAP journey, we recognise a need to ensure that our commitment to reconciliation is embedded within our governance structure.

This is an essential step to ensure that our reconciliation work continues to have a measurable impact on the work of our members in schools and the communities where those schools are located.

Our commitment to reconciliation is a natural extension of our broader commitment to social justice



and this is evident at some levels of our operation, such as formal Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners at the commencement of meetings through to engagement with issues that affect First Nations members in endeavors as broad as enterprise bargaining and as personal as providing legal advice to an individual, there is a compelling need to ensure that First Nations members and their communities see our union as a safe and supportive organisation that is committed to use its power and resources to improve education systems, policies and practices.



The first stages of this campaign have seen our union lead the development of a unique first-of-its-kind industrial framework which sets out best practice pay and conditions for First Nations Education Workers in all sectors. Similarly, a current project of the Yubba Action Group seeks to enhance clarity of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property provisions and protect the rights of First Nations education workers and their communities through collaboration with recognised experts.

We are also committing to a program of work designed to identify other industrial and professional challenges faced by First Nations Education Workers. This includes an ongoing commitment to develop the Cultural capacity of union officers, so that they can meaningfully engage with First Nations members and their communities, to identify organising opportunities.

Our working group consists of a combination of members, union officers and other interested individuals.

Our collective goal with this RAP is to translate the outcomes of our previous RAPs into broader collective actions that resonate beyond our union. Inherent within this is a challenge to ensure that our reconciliation work extends beyond the Yubba Action Group and helps guide and inform the activities of all of our committees and working groups.

For this reason, we have given deep consideration to our governance structures and processes and committed ourselves to the implementation of new cross-communication actions that will ensure the voice of First Nations members is heard at all levels of our union operations.



Given our sphere of influence, we also believe that we have an ethical and professional responsibility to positively influence the perceptions and behaviors of future generations by working with members to support the process of reconciliation within their own school communities.

While our RAP is championed internally by our Branch Secretary, our third RAP recognises that all staff have a role in enactment of our RAP and making reconciliation work as a key task of all union officers is a necessary prerequisite to increase awareness of First Nations issues among our members and bring about meaningful change through our linkages with the broader union movement and the wider Australian community.

For this reason, deliverables listed in our RAP are also accompanied by a tag which identifies the sphere of influence targeted by that action: Internal (within our union, among staff, committee members and the Branch Executive), Members (among members in schools), the union movement (e.g. effecting changes within, and in response to, the collective union movement) and in the broader Australian community.

Our Yubbah Action Group

When we wrote our first RAP in 2016, we formed a RAP Working Group. That group oversaw development and implementation of our 2016-2018 RAP and became a formal union committee in 2018. To mark the transition, the group adopted the name Yubbah Action Group.

“Yubbah” is the Noonuccal word for “message stick” and was adopted to reflect the history of IEU-QNT’s message stick (*pictured, right*) donated by Aunty Thersa Nunn (Noonuccal woman, Quandamooka Elder and Working Group member) and passed throughout our range of operation as a means of launching our inaugural RAP.

In 2022, members of our Yubbah Action Group met with Reconciliation Australia to express their interest in taking the next step on our RAP journey and committed to a course of action that would consolidate our relationship with our First Nations members through successive and progressive union campaigns in the fight for the rights of working people, which must incorporate the rights and inclusion of First Nations members and their communities.

The Group and, by extension, our union is committed to actions that are consistent with a sentiment of “Closing the Industrial Gap” for First Nations education workers through the inclusion of First Nations practices and cultural law within industrial frameworks.





Our Yubbah Action Group

In developing this Reconciliation Action Plan, the Yubbah Action Group has also considered matters of relevance and significance to First Nations education workers and students, as influenced and enacted by bodies such as (but not limited to) the state and territory governments, curriculum and assessment authorities, teacher registration authorities and individual employing authorities.

We are committed to considering the impact of changes on the work of teachers and school officers in terms of the tasks they perform and are directed to perform; the impact on learning outcomes for students; the dynamics of various social, economic, cultural and education systems and sub-systems; and the protection of Indigenous Intellectual and Cultural Property rights of First Nations members, communities, and businesses.

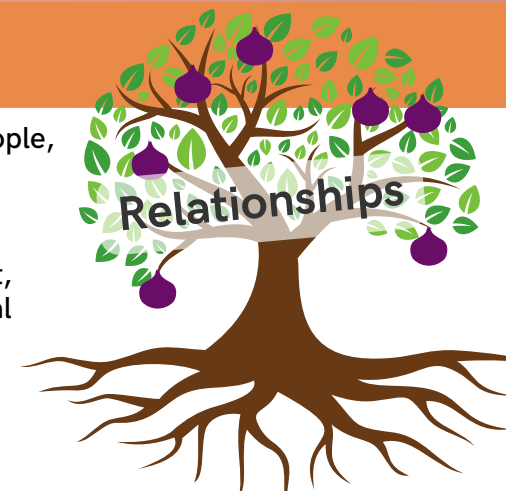
An example of how work initiated by our Yubbah Action Group has found its way into industrial instruments can be found in the successful negotiation of a clause designed to safeguard Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property within an industrial agreement (*The Hymba Yumba Independent School Collective Agreement 2021*), which has been certified by the Fair Work Commission.

This sets an important precedent for First Nations Education Workers and community members who undertake work within schools and, as part of our new RAP, our union plans to expand on this win by seeking inclusion of similar clauses in other industrial agreements, and by educating our broader membership on the need to adequately and appropriately consult with First Nations people and communities when deploying First Nations resources and programs within schools.

Current Yubbah Action Group members are:

- Terry Burke, Branch Secretary and RAP Caretaker, IEU-QNT
- John Anderson, Executive Director, Pi-CaTS, Nywaigi and Mamu man
- Emily Campbell, Communications Officer, IEU-QNT
- Barbara Dewis, IEU-QNT Member and Teacher, Torres Strait Islander woman
- Patrick Meikle, Organiser, IEU-QNT
- Jengis Osman, Organiser, IEU-QNT
- Adele Schmidt, Research Officer, IEU-QNT
- Aaron Watson, Growth Organiser, IEU-QNT and Nyoongar man

Relationships








For our union, building and maintaining relationships is a way in which to connect and engage with First Nations People, whose voices are a permanent, essential, and characteristic element of our organisation's values and core work.



As part of this RAP, we commit to the retention and renewal of various policy and position documents that underpin our communications and interactions with First Nations members and their communities, but we also recognise that, as a trade union, we have a fundamental responsibility to perform work that will contribute to "Closing the Industrial Gap" by ensuring that the rights and needs of First Nations Education Workers are underpinned by meaningful and relevant industrial provisions. This concept of "Closing the Industrial Gap" will be introduced to our members at the commencement of this RAP and further defined and refined as part of key deliverables listed under the Opportunities heading.



At the commencement of this RAP, we will also embark on a renewal of our relationships with our First Nations members and stakeholders and seek to explore new ways of listening to, and supporting, causes of relevance and interest to First Nations members and their communities. We also commit to a process of distributing our reconciliation work more evenly across our various working groups and committees, to ensure that First Nations voices become integral to all of our organising and campaigning activities.

A crucial element in achieving these goals is the establishment of effective professional networking and development opportunities for First Nations activists and, for this reason, our RAP commits us to not just maintaining existing channels of communication, but also working with First Nations members to co-develop a specific First Nations Communication Strategy.

Action	Sphere of Influence	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
 <p>1. Establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with First Nations members, stakeholders and organisations.</p>	Community	 Continue to meet with local First Nations stakeholders and organisations to inform future engagement.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary Support: Branch Executive/ Committee of Management Branch Secretary
	Internal Members Union movement Community	 Establish the phrase 'Closing the Industrial Gap' as an ongoing IEU-QNT campaign (consisting of numerous smaller campaigns) to improve working conditions for First Nations members	Jan 2023	Branch Secretary
	Community	 Develop and implement an Engagement Plan to work with First Nations stakeholders and organisations, consistent with the broader goal of "Closing the Industrial Gap"	Jun 2023	Research Officer

	Members	1.4 Continue distribution of personal letters of welcome to new First Nations members inviting their participation in our Yarning Circle and Yubbah Action Group	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Membership Co-ordinator
	Members	1.5 Continue to host regular Yarning Circle gatherings for IEU-QNT First Nations members	Nov 2023 Nov 2024	Research Officer, all Officers
	Members	1.6 Plan yearly Yarning Circle sessions with First Nations members	Feb 2023 Feb 2024	Research Officer, Organisers
 <p>2. Build relationships through celebrating National Reconciliation Week (NRW).</p>	Internal	2.1 Circulate Reconciliation Australia's NRW resources and reconciliation materials to our staff.	May 2023, 2024	Clerical Officer
	Community	2.2 RAP Working Group members to participate in an external NRW event.	27 May- 3 Jun 2023, 2024	Research Officer
	Internal Community	2.3 Encourage and support staff and senior leaders, including Branch Executive and Committee of Management to participate in at least one external event to recognise and celebrate NRW.	27 May- 3 Jun 2023, 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal Members	2.4 Organise at least one NRW event each year	27 May- 3 Jun 2023, 2024	Clerical Officers
	Internal Members	2.5 Register all our NRW events on Reconciliation Australia's NRW website.	27 May- 3 Jun 2023, 2024	Clerical Officers
	Members	2.6 Distribute NRW Chapter Briefing to members encouraging them to support a First Nations campaign with relevance to industrial/educational matters	27 May- 3 Jun 2023, 2024	Yubbah Action Group
	Members Community	2.7 Encourage members to organise NRW events in their schools and report on these in member communications.	May 2023, 2024	Communications Manager
	Members	2.8 Publish an article in <i>Independent Voice</i> promoting our union's NRW activities.	Jul 2023, 2024	Communications Manager
	Members Community	2.9 Promote National Reconciliation Week and other significant days or events through our website and other member communications.	May 2023, May 2024	Communications Manager

 <p>3. Promote reconciliation through our sphere of influence.</p>	Internal Members	3.1 Develop and implement a staff Engagement Strategy to raise awareness of reconciliation across our workforce	Dec 2024	Lead: HR Officer Support: Yubbah Action Group
	Members Community	3.2 Communicate our commitment to reconciliation publicly.	Dec 2023, Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP caretaker Support: Communications Team, Organisers
	Union movement Community	3.3 Explore opportunities to positively influence our external stakeholders to drive reconciliation outcomes.	Dec 2023, Dec 2024	Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker
	Community	3.4 Collaborate with Reconciliation Queensland, RAP organisations, and other like-minded organisations to develop ways to advance reconciliation.	Dec 2023, Dec 2024	All Officers
	Members	3.5 Publish articles of interest to First Nations members in member publications	Nov 2023, Nov 2024	Communications Manager
	Community	3.6 Meet with Reconciliation Queensland and other organisations and businesses to broker partnerships in our work toward reconciliation	Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker, Support: Assistant Secretaries
	Community	3.7 Participate in Reconciliation Queensland's regular Reconciliation Industry Network Group (RING) meetings	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Members	3.8 Promote reconciliation by encouraging current and new members to read our RAP and associated resources.	June 2023 June 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker Support: All Officers
	Internal	3.9 Include a copy of our RAP as part of new staff induction material	Dec 2023, Dec 2024	HR Officer
	Members Community	3.10 Review our Calendar of First Nations Significant days/events and redistribute to staff and members	Jan 2024 Jan 2025	Lead: Communications Manager Support: Communications Officers
 <p>4. Promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.</p>	Internal	4.1 Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	HR Officer

	Internal	4.2	Implement and communicate an Anti-discrimination Policy for our organisation.	Jun 2023	Equity Committee
	Internal Members	4.3	Engage with First Nations staff and/or First Nations advisors to consult on our draft Anti-discrimination policy.	May 2023	HR Officer
	Internal	4.4	Educate senior leaders, including Branch Executive and Committee of Management, on the effects of racism.	Dec 2023, Dec 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
 <p>5. Mark National Close the Gap Day</p>	Internal	5.1	Organise and register a staff morning tea event for National Close the Gap Day to raise awareness among staff of the issues faced by First Nations people.	Mar 2023, Mar 2024	Clerical Officer
	Members	5.2	Publish an article in member publications showing members' activities on National Close the Gap Day	Mar 2023, Mar 2024	Communications Manager, Organisers
	Internal Members	5.3	Host a screening of <i>Take Heart: Deadly Heart</i> for staff	Aug 2023	HR Officer
 <p>6. Interrogate member database to identify geographic locations and membership characteristics of First Nations members</p>	Members	6.1	Review geographical mapping of First Nations members with the goal of better understanding how to work with communities	Jul 2023	Lead: Research Officer Support: Yubbah Action Group
	Members	6.2	Co-design, with First Nations members, a First Nations Communication Strategy to underpin our interactions with First Nations members and to encourage First Nations activists within our membership	Dec 2024	Yubbah Action Group


Respect



Our first two RAPs have seen our union incorporate, as standard, processes and procedures for acknowledgement of First Nations people and cultures and their contribution to union activities and events. This is an important commitment to grow the cultural capacity of our staff, and our broader membership.




By engaging with Cultural Awareness programs and including articles regarding issues of relevance to First Nations people in all of our member communications, we have increased awareness of First Nations histories, cultures and perspectives among our membership and are committed to continuing to follow the advice of our First Nations stakeholders regarding practices and initiatives that contribute to greater respect in education systems, policies and practices.

In keeping with our belief that genuine reconciliation requires translation of positive engagement of First Nations members into concrete action around industrial and social issues, our new RAP also commits us to a broad and ongoing campaign to "Close the Industrial Gap", which sees First Nations Education Workers shouldering a unfair cultural load within schools, without adequate recognition and reward. Taking action that enhances awareness and support of First Nations Histories, Cultures and Perspectives both in the formal curriculum, and in the education system more broadly, is essential to progress an agenda of true respect and our union is committed to ensuring that our resources are made available to First Nations members, and their communities in ways that allow them to bring about the changes they want to see in education systems, structures and practices.



Action	Sphere of Influence	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
 <p>7. Increase understanding, value and recognition of First Nations cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.</p>	Internal	7.1 Conduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation.	Dec 2023	HR Officer
	Internal	7.2 Consult local Traditional Owners and/or First nations advisors of the implementation of a Cultural Learning Strategy	Dec 2023	Lead: HR Officer
	Internal	7.3 Review and renew our Cultural Learning Strategy.	Dec 2024	Lead: HR Officer Support: Research Officer
	Internal	7.4 Provide opportunities for RAP Working Group members, HR managers and other key leadership staff to participate in formal and structured Cultural Learning.	Feb 2023 Feb 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal	7.5 Offer the Australian trade Union Institute's <i>Voice. Treaty. Truth.</i> Advocacy training to all officers and members of Branch Executive	Jun 2023	HR Officer

	Internal	7.6 Offer Union Officers a PD session that will encourage and support them to take an active role in our reconciliation work, rather than relying solely on the Yubbah Action Group	Jan 2024	Lead: HR Officer Support: Yubbah Action Group
	Members	7.7 Offer Union Officers a PD session that will encourage and support them to take an active role in our reconciliation work, rather than relying solely on the Yubbah Action Group	Feb 2023 Feb 2024	Lead: Communications Manager Support: Education Committee
	Members	7.8 Investigate opportunities to share historical truth with members through articles in member publications and professional development sessions	Dec 2024	Lead: Yubbah Action Group Support: Research Officer
 <p>8. Demonstrate respect to First Nations peoples by observing cultural protocols.</p>	Internal	8.1 Continue to increase staff's understanding of the purpose and significance behind cultural protocols, including Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country protocols.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker Support: Yubbah Action Group
	Internal	8.2 Review and communicate our Cultural Protocol document pertaining to protocols for Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country.	Dec 2023	Research Officer
	Internal Members	8.3 Invite local Traditional Owner or Custodian to provide a Welcome to Country or other appropriate cultural protocol at significant events each year.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal	8.4 Include an Acknowledgement of Country or other appropriate protocols at the commencement of important meetings.	Feb 2023 Feb 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker, All Officers
 <p>9. Build respect for First Nations cultures and histories by celebrating NAIDOC Week.</p>	Internal Members Community	9.1 Encourage members and staff to participate in an external NAIDOC Week event.	July 2023 July 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal	9.2 Review HR policies and procedures to remove barriers to staff participating in NAIDOC Week.	Dec 2024	HR Officer

	Community	9.3	Contact local NAIDOC committees to organise IEUA-QNT participation in local celebrations	May 2023 May 2024	Research Officer
 <p>10. Provide support on issues of relevance to First Nations members</p>	Members	10.1	Encourage First Nations members to raise matters of significance to them at regular Yarning Circle gatherings	Mar 2023 Mar 2024	Lead: Research Officer Support: All officers
	Members	10.2	Progress matters of interest to First Nations members identified during Yarning Circles for consideration by the Yubbah Action Group	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Union movement	10.3	Work with other like-minded unions to advocate on First Nations issues	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	All Officers
 <p>11. Enhance our work to secure Indigenous Intellectual and Cultural Property Rights for First Nations Education Workers and their communities</p>	Members Community	11.1	Establish dialogue with experts in Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property law, including Terri Janke and IP Australia	Feb 2023	Lead: Research Officer Support: Communications Officer
	Members	11.2	Publish articles about Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property issues and best practice in member publications	Dec 2023	Lead: Communications Manager Support: Communications Officers
	Members Union movement Community	11.3	Seek inclusion of Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property clauses in enterprise bargaining negotiations	Feb 2024	Lead: Industrial Officers Support: Yubbah Action Group
	Members Union movement Community	11.4	Work with Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property experts to refine relevant provisions for First Nations Education Workers and their communities	Dec 2024	Lead: Industrial Officers Support: Yubbah Action Group
 <p>12. Commit union resources to support the campaign for government to adopt The Uluru Statement from the Heart</p>	Members Community	12.1	Include an educative article on The Uluru Statement in every issue of the <i>Independent Voice</i>	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Communications Manager
	Members Community	12.2	Publicly communicate our support for The Uluru Statement in communications with members and stakeholders	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	All officers

Opportunities







The ideal of a fair, just and equitable society based on unbiased interactions between individuals is an inextricable element of unionism. In acknowledging that many of the challenges faced by First Nations people and communities have their genesis in unfair and inequitable practices of colonisation, the union movement in general, and our union in particular, is confronted with the challenge of articulating, and committing to, a course of action that is consistent with the broader goal of reconciliation.


This means finding ways to not just harness the skills, experience and insights of our current First Nations members and staff and increase their numbers to representative levels (4%), but also finding ways to provide non-members with opportunities for personal and professional development.










We have a responsibility to all of our members to ensure that First Nations voices are activated within our collective and that First Nations members see value in union. This requires explicit attention to organising methods and techniques that allow us to work constructively and collaboratively with First Nations members and their communities and to support First Nations activists to access career opportunities both in their current workplaces, and within the union movement.


As a trade union, we also have a clear responsibility to ensure that our collective is actively working toward improved pay and conditions for First Nations Education Workers, and we have set ourselves two key challenges:



1. To produce a measurable improvement in pay and conditions and;
2. To work with our members to incorporate First Nations practices and cultural law within industrial frameworks, thereby compelling employers, and society more generally, to recognise, and assign value to, First Nations own law, lore and customs.

Action	Sphere of Influence	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
 <p>13. Improve employment outcomes by increasing First Nations recruitment, retention and professional development.</p>	Internal	 <p>Build understanding of current First Nations staffing to inform future employment and professional development opportunities.</p>	Dec 2023	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker HR Officer
	Internal	 <p>Engage with First Nations staff to consult on our Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy.</p>	Jul 2023	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker HR Officer
	Internal	 <p>Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach First Nations stakeholders.</p>	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	HR Officer

	Internal	13.4 Increase the percentage of First Nations staff employed in our workforce to 4%.	Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker Support: HR Officer
	Internal	13.5 Revise First Nations Employment and Retention Strategy to produce Recruitment, Retention and Professional Development Strategy and alert all staff to its application.	Aug 2023	HR Officer
	Internal	13.6 Identify First Nations activists among our members and promote them to union committees	Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker Support: All Officers
	Internal Community	13.7 Identify First Nations activists among our members and promote them to represent our union on external stakeholder bodies	Dec 2024	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker Support: Assistant Secretaries
	Internal	13.8 Identify First Nations activists among our members and promote them to represent our union on external stakeholder bodies	Dec 2023	Branch Executive
	Internal Community	13.9 Offer a biannual school-based traineeship for a First Nations Senior high-school student from our members' schools	Aug 2023	HR Officer
	Members	13.10 Continue to award annual Thersa Nunn First Nations Member Award	Nov 2023 Nov 2024	Lead: Assistant Secretary Support: Yubbah Action Group
 <p>14. Increase First Nations supplier diversity to support improved economic and social outcomes.</p>	Internal	14.1 Develop and implement a First Nations Procurement Strategy.	Dec 2023	Research Officer
	Internal Community	14.2 Develop and communicate opportunities for procurement of goods and services from First Nations businesses to staff.	Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Community	14.3 Develop new commercial relationships with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander businesses.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Lead: Treasurer Support: Finance Officer
	Community	14.4 Engage with and invite four First Nations businesses to at least two IEU-QNT events/activities per year	Sept 2023	HR Officer Assistant Secretaries


 <p>15. Promote <i>Narragunnawali</i>: Reconciliation in Education to staff, members and external stakeholders.</p>	Members	 <p>Encourage teachers in schools and early learning centres to procure goods and services from First Nations businesses</p>	Sep 2023	Communications Manager
	Members Community	 <p>Refer members to Reconciliation Australia's <i>Narragunnawali</i>: Reconciliation in Education resources and encourage them to develop their own RAP</p>	Dec 2024	Organisers
	Members	 <p>Encourage members to engage with the professional learning (including webinar) resources available via Reconciliation Australia's <i>Narragunnawali</i>: Reconciliation in Education online platform.</p>	Jul 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Members	 <p>Host an appropriate link to Reconciliation Australia's <i>Narragunnawali</i>: Reconciliation in Education platform on our website.</p>	Dec 2024	Communications Manager
	Members	 <p>Encourage members in schools and early learning services in our network to sign up to the <i>Narragunnawali</i> News mailing list.</p>	Dec 2024	Lead: Organisers Support: Research Officer
	Members	 <p>Collaborate with Reconciliation Australia's <i>Narragunnawali</i> team to identify opportunities for strengthening the connections between <i>Narragunnawali</i> professional learning/RAP development processes.</p>	Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Members	 <p>Encourage members to access the <i>Narragunnawali</i> Reconciliation in Education webinar series</p>	Dec 2023	Communications Team
	Members	 <p>Publish an article outlining the various <i>Narragunnawali</i> resources and programs in The Independent Voice and online, encouraging members in schools to engage with the program</p>	Jun 2024	Communications Team















	Members Community	15.8 Help promote and encourage schools and early learning services within our network who have shown exceptional commitment to reconciliation to apply for the 2021 <i>Narragunnawali</i> Awards	Dec 2024	Lead: Communications Manager Support: Organisers
	Members	15.9 Provide support to Schools and Early Learning Centres to meet the targets contained in their <i>Narragunnawali</i> RAPs through invitation to regular meetings and distribution of useful information/resources.	Dec 2024	Lead: Organisers Support: Research Officer
	Members	15.10 Refer members in schools to <i>Narragunnawali</i> resources to support them in developing their own RAP.	Dec 2024	Lead: Organisers Support: Research Officer
 <p>16. Provide opportunities for First Nations members to form professional networks</p>	Members	16.1 Establish a targeted section of our website for First Nations.	Dec 2023	Communications Manager
	Members	16.2 Progress matters of interest to First Nations members identified during Yarning Circles for consideration by the Yubbah Action Group.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Members	16.3 Identify and nominate candidates for the Queensland Council of Unions NAIDOC week awards for members demonstrating outstanding work supporting the lives of First Nations Queenslanders.	Sep 2023 Sep 2024	Research Officer
	Members	16.4 Map member schools with RAPs and make contact with members in those schools to form a new network and/or working groups.	Jun 2023	Yubbah Action Group
	Members	16.5 Review materials for Just and Fair Workplaces training to facilitate greater understanding of, and commitment to, our reconciliation work.	Dec 2023	Yubbah Action Group

 <p>17. Use union database to quantify and define The Industrial Gap and monitor progress toward closure</p>	Internal	17.1 Interrogate union database to investigate quantitative definition of "The Industrial Gap" (pay rates, employment status) and review this annually, reporting to all officers and Branch Executive.	Jun 2023	Lead: Research Officer Support: Membership Co-Ordinator
	Internal	17.2 Establish a record of agreements with clauses from Industrial Guidelines for First Nations Education Workers and review this annually, reporting to all officers and Branch Executive.	Dec 2024	Lead: Research Officer Support: Project Officer
	Members	17.3 Grow overall numbers of First Nations members (review annually).	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Internal	17.4 Interrogate database to determine career trajectories of First Nations Education Workers and review this annually, reporting to all officers and Branch Executive.	Oct 2023 Oct 2024	Lead: Research Officer Support: Membership Co-Ordinator
	Members	17.5 Produce a biannual report (poster) on progress toward Closing the Industrial Gap for circulation to members.	July 2023	Lead: Communications Officers Support: Research Officer
 <p>18. Deploy industrial guidelines for First Nations Education Workers in collective bargaining</p>	Members Union movement	18.1 Promote publication of Industrial Guidelines for First Nations Education Workers to members and the union movement	Nov 2022	Research Officer Industrial Officers
	Members	18.2 Trial industrial guidelines with selected employers of First Nations Education Workers, in collaboration with other unions with coverage of Education Workers	Jul 2023	Industrial Officers
	Members	18.3 Table provisions for First Nations Education Workers in enterprise bargaining	Dec 2024	Bargaining Teams
	Internal	18.4 Secure proprietary rights to the phrase "Closing the Industrial Gap"	Dec 2022	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker

	Union movement	18.5 Initiate discussion with ACTU and affiliates regarding collective issues for progression (e.g. role of RTOs, supervision of professional placements)	Jul 2023	Research Officer
	Internal Members	18.6 Produce position papers and/or fact sheets summarising the elements of the Industrial Gap (regarding Closing the Industrial Gap).	Feb 2024	Yubbah Action Group
	Employers	18.7 Identify opportunities to work collaboratively with employers where this can enhance conditions for First Nations Education Workers.	Dec 2024	Yubbah Action Group

Governance

Action	Sphere of Influence	Deliverable	Timeline	Responsibility
 19. Maintain an effective RAP Working Group (Yubbah Action Group) to drive governance of the RAP.	Internal	19.1 Maintain First Nations representation on the RAP Working Group.	Dec 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal	19.2 Review Charter for the Yubbah Action Group.	May 2024	Yubbah Action Group
	Internal	19.3 Meet at least four times per year to drive and monitor RAP implementation.	Feb 2023 May 2023 Aug 2023 Nov 2023 Feb 2024 May 2024 Aug 2024 Nov 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal	19.4 Invite all members of Branch Executive to periodically attend Yubbah Action Group meetings to enhance awareness and understanding of our reconciliation work within our governing body.	Jan 2023	Lead: Branch Secretary Support: Yubbah Action Group
	Internal	20.1 Define resource needs for RAP implementation.	Sep 2023	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker

 <p>20. Provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments.</p>	Internal	 Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments.	Dec 2023 Dec 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal Members	 Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments.	Aug 2023 Dec 2024	Research Officer
	Internal	 Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Caretaker from senior management.	Jan 2024	Branch Secretary
	Internal	 Establish an identified First Nations position on our Branch Executive	Dec 2023	Branch Executive
	Internal	 Review existing Chapter structure to include a representative for First Nations matters or make this an explicit part of the Equity representative role.	Dec 2024	Branch Executive
 <p>21. Build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings both internally and externally.</p>	Internal Community	 Complete and submit the annual RAP Impact Measurement Questionnaire to Reconciliation Australia.	Sep 2023 Sep 2024	Research Officer
	Internal	 Continue to maintain RAP report as a standing agenda item for all regular union committee and union officer meetings.	Jan 2023 Jan 2024	Branch Secretary/RAP Caretaker
	Internal	 Invite all committees to move beyond reporting on RAP outcomes to actively involving themselves in the realisation of various actions and deliverables.	Feb 2023	Lead: Branch Secretary/ RAP Caretaker Support: Yubba Action Group
	Internal	 Publicly report our RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, annually.	Nov 2023 Nov 2024	Communications Manager
	Internal Community	 Investigate participating in Reconciliation Australia's biennial Workplace RAP Barometer.	May 2024	Research Officer
 <p>21. Continue our reconciliation journey by developing our next RAP</p>	Internal Community	 Register via Reconciliation Australia's website to begin developing our next RAP.	Jul 2024	Research Officer

Artwork credits



Banjo Short
Winner, IEU-QNT Awards for Excellence in Art Design
First Nations Category, 2020



Tamara Piva
Highly Commended, IEU-QNT Awards for Excellence in Art Design
First Nations Category, 2020

Independent Education Union - Queensland and Northern Territory Branch (IEU-QNT)

Contact details

Name: Adele Schmidt

Position: Research Officer

Phone: 3839 7020

Email: aschmidt@ieuqnt.org.au

Find out more about us:

Visit www.ieuqnt.org.au or find us on social @IEUQNT #IEUnionStrong



General enquiries

Email enquiries@ieuqnt.org.au or

FREECALL 1800 177 938 (QLD) | 1800 351 996 (NT)

