

THE HISTORY OF RECONCILIATION IN AUSTRALIA

Since colonisation Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have been subject to government policies aimed at dispossession, oppression and assimilation. The result of these policies is a legacy of intergenerational trauma and distrust between First Nations Peoples and non-Indigenous Australians, particularly with governments and mainstream media.

In response to this history of atrocities, known as The People's Movement, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was established in 1991. The Council's task was to address Aboriginal disadvantage and aspirations in employment, health, infrastructure, and economic development – recognising the ongoing failure of government policy to acknowledge and address these issues.

In 1997 The NSW State Reconciliation Committee was formally launched as the representative body for reconciliation in NSW. In 2001 the committee incorporated and became the NSW Council for Reconciliation. Thirty years after the national response to advance reconciliation, Reconciliation NSW and the Australian Reconciliation Network continue this work. We have achieved cultural and systemic change in many areas, but we still have a long way to go.

What are the 5 Dimensions of Reconciliation?

The five dimensions include: **Race relations, equality and equity, institutional integrity, unity and historical acceptance.** To learn more about these practices and how you or your organisation can contribute to the reconciliation network, visit [Reconciliation Australia](#).

Practicing Reconciliation

Reconciliation is an ongoing practice that should be embodied by all Australians. It is about creating an equitable society that recognises the distinct and unique position of First Nations Peoples and their cultures. Our challenge, as we continue the reconciliation journey, is to maintain the momentum made by past generations who fought for systemic and cultural change.

Reconciliation Australia bases their vision for reconciliation on five interrelated dimensions. Each dimension cannot achieve reconciliation in isolation but must be considered as individual parts of a whole. A holistic approach to relationships is a part of First Nations Peoples way of life, it is an understanding of the world and how we operate in it, that recognises that all things are interconnected and work in relation to each other. Reconciliation works under this philosophy as it relies on reciprocal relationships to achieve a common goal.

*To see how Reconciliation NSW is addressing the five dimensions through our work, read 'Our Commitment to the Five Dimensions.'