



Netball Queensland

Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan Report

January 2022 – December 2022

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Netball Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, work and play. We acknowledge our Elders, past, present and emerging. In particular, we pay our respects to the Turrbal and Yuggera peoples, who are the Traditional Custodians of the land which our home office, Nissan Arena is situated.

We pay our respect to our ancestors of this land, their spirits and legacies which remain linked to traditional lands and waters. First Nations peoples give strength, inspiration, and courage to current and future generations of Queenslanders, both First Nations and Non- First Nations people.

We would also like to acknowledge and thank the Netball Queensland First Nations Advisory Group and members for their invaluable cultural knowledge and support in the creation and implementation of Netball Queensland’s first Reconciliation Action Plan.

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Netball Queensland (NQ) launched our inaugural Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in April 2022 and I am proud to report that we have made great progress on our cultural journey.

We have achieved 84% of our RAP deliverables, with the remaining 16% still in progress. The NQ Board also unanimously supported the introduction of culturally appropriate leave practices. A smoking ceremony on return to the NQ offices at the beginning of each year is also growing into a significant cultural tradition for our organization.

Our revised Netball Queensland Strategic Plan 2023-2025 also demonstrates our commitment to Reconciliation through our prioritising of transitioning diversity and inclusion from a function to a practice throughout our organisation and the commitment to develop our Innovate RAP over the course of 2023.

The Queensland Firebirds have also articulated in their four-year plan an ambition to embed First Nations cultures in the club. Yarning Circles feature regularly in their program to grow understanding and connection within the playing group.

Through a cultural awareness survey, all NQ Staff were given the opportunity to assess and provide feedback on how they are individually progressing through their cultural journey, and what further support and training they would like to receive. To support this ongoing learning and development, several education opportunities for staff have been implemented including cultural training by Mirri Mirri and a Lunch & Learn session, with ongoing sharing of resources and information, on constitutional recognition of First Nations peoples through a Voice to Parliament.

Reflecting on our first RAP has allowed us to identify learnings from the past twelve months, inspire our thinking on how we want to progress our commitment – how we want to innovate – as we move forward.

NQ isn't doing this alone and has received ongoing support and guidance from our First Nations Advisory Group. We have also learnt into the support and resources made available by Reconciliation Australia including attending RAP Learning Circles.

We look forward to taking the next step.



KATE DAVIES
Chief Executive Officer
Netball Queensland

MESSAGE FROM THE RAP ADVISOR

Netball Queensland (NQ) took a significant step in 2022 on our cultural journey by launching and delivering our first ever Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan. The reflect level of RAPs set out by Reconciliation Australia allowed for our organisation to truly reflect on our responsibility and commitment to Reconciliation within our sphere of influence - the netball community across Queensland.

The implementation of our RAP was our formal commitment to Reconciliation and was received well by many in our community. Our staff have been passionate about NQ's cultural journey throughout the implementation of our RAP and represent our cultural safety symbol 'Our Heart' with pride. 'Our Heart' represents our commitment to providing a culturally safe and supportive environment for all. It is linked to the cultural symbolism of a meeting place, meaning that when we gather, we are doing it in a way that is safe and supportive for everyone. It is designed by Aboriginal Artist Rachael Sarra, from Goreng Goreng Country.

A highlight from the year was being able to yarn with our netball community at Primary Schools Cup in Bundaberg and the First Nations Cup Carnival hosted by Cairns Netball Association. This yarning with our First Nations grassroots players, coaches, umpires and families is and will continue to be vital in building relationships along our cultural journey. We had rich discussions about the impact of culture on netball, role models, player development opportunities and barriers for First Nations players. One young 11-year-old player compared the game of netball to that of a family and the kinship system that is familiar to her, *"It's about teamwork and everyone has a part in the game in order for us to win. Like a family – everyone has their own role."* It was powerful and inspiring to see so many young First Nations kids playing and loving netball.

As our first year implementing a RAP came to a close, we decided to dedicate 2023 to reflecting on our RAP. We have been through an extensive reflection process, identifying the challenges and successes of 2022. Our RAP Working Group and First Nations Advisory Group provided key insights for us to begin developing our next 'Innovate' RAP. As we keep moving forward in our cultural journey, we will look to how we can further address and break down barriers for First Nations people in netball and educate and build the cultural capacity of our member associations and clubs.

This report will outline some more of our key milestones and successes of which we are extremely proud. Our Reflect RAP was an enormous success and I'm looking forward to our organisation creating another meaningful and powerful RAP.



GRACE SARRA
Netball Queensland
RAP Advisor



**"OUR NETBALL
QUEENSLAND HEART"**
Artist: Rachael Sarra
(Goreng Goreng)

RAP WORKING GROUP

Our RAP Working Group (RWG) discussed what Reconciliation means, both individually and as an organisation looking to enrich lives through netball in Queensland. The Working Group's foundation that Reconciliation is a process to honour and recognise the fullness of all parts and people of our nation and provides an opportunity to strengthen the integrity, depth, wonder and embodiment of what truly is 'our' culture in Australia.

NQ acknowledges that Reconciliation is a process of embedding First Nations culture into our lives so that Reconciliation is something we live and breathe each day by acknowledging the past and continuing to educate ourselves about all diverse cultures. Once we do this, we can celebrate everyone's differences and extinguish the stereotypes and stigma of our First Nations people. Ultimately, NQ is responsible for bravely leading the cultural and behavioural change in our direct sphere of influence.

The implementation of our first 'Reflect' RAP saw our RWG continue to create an inclusive culture of respect, understanding and empowerment within our organisation and broader community. Our RWP focused on increasing the organisation's understanding of the current landscape of First Nations participation in netball, from the grassroots level to the elite level.

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It is incredibly important for us to understand clearly the ways in which First Nations communities are engaging with our sport. This is also important in identifying where we need to do better and where more support and investment is needed to safeguard ongoing participation at every level.

GLENN DENNIS

General Manager Netball &
Member of RAP Working Group

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It has been fantastic to see NQ's progress in the engagement of First Nations community members. This solidified the aims of our group in assisting NQ to better develop the pathways from grassroots participation to elite performance level for our next generation of netballers. This first year of implementation has set the tone for NQ to continue along their cultural journey.

CHENOA STOCKTON

Netball Queensland's First
Nations Advisory Group
Member & RAP Working
Group Member

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THE PAST UNITING FLAMES

The Queensland Firebirds are more than the 7 players on the court at one time. Every step or pass you make, is ignited by those who have come before you and the people who show support. It is the strength in diversity that fuels unity, maintaining balance and harmony on and off the court. You are vessels for change, awareness and equality, each pass connecting different stories and identities. Your roots strong in the Queensland landscapes. **With every game you bring fire, and at every final buzzer, comes new growth.**

Artist: Rachael Sarra (Goreng Goreng)



THE FUTURE REIGNITED. HEALING SMOKE, UNITING FLAMES

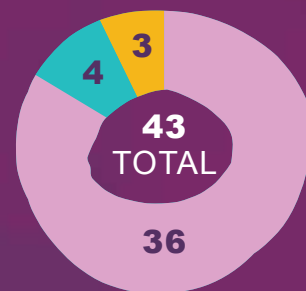
Netball is more than the 7 players on the court at one time. Every step or pass you make or action you take, is ignited by those who have come before you and the people around you. It is the strength in diversity of our communities and generations that fuels unity, maintaining balance and harmony on and off the court. You are vessels for change, awareness and equality, each pass or connection links different stories and identities. Your roots strong in the Queensland landscapes, a moment in time, a small part of a bigger history. **With every game you bring fire, and at every final buzzer, comes new growth and as the smoke settles on the past, we stand together, healing together and while connected in culture and community, we shape the future together.**

Artist: Rachael Sarra (Goreng Goreng)

DELIVERABLES

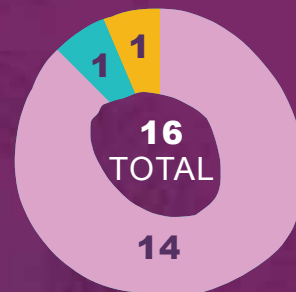
WHOLE RAP

84% COMPLETE



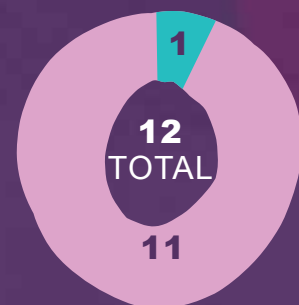
RESPECT PILLAR

87.5% COMPLETE



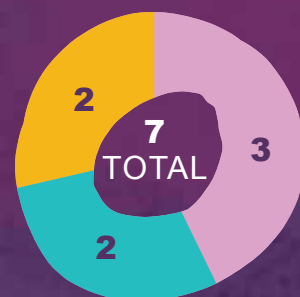
RELATIONSHIPS PILLAR

92% COMPLETE



OPPORTUNITIES PILLAR

43% COMPLETE



GOVERNANCE PILLAR

100% COMPLETE



● Completed ● In Progress ● Not Started

OUR STORIES



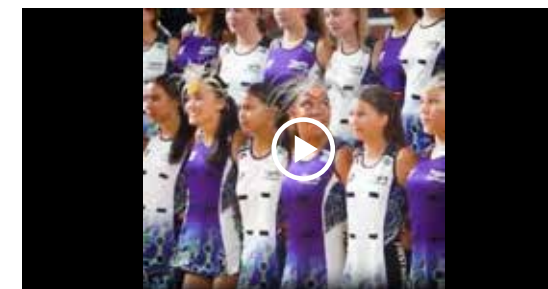
RAP LAUNCH APRIL 2022

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UNITED BY VANA APRIL 2022

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watch video



VICKI WILSON CUP/ SHIELD TEAMS

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watch video



OUR HEART

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watch video





KEY MILESTONES & FINDINGS

DEADLY DATA

Action	Deliverable
Investigate participation rates of First Nations peoples to identify existing trends and gaps impeding netball participation	Conduct targeted research to identify and address barriers to First Nations peoples participating in netball

Of our playing population in Queensland 5.1% are First Nations peoples, compared to First Nations peoples making up 4.6% of the Queensland population.

Age Bracket	Number of First Nations Players	Total All Players	% First Nations Players
NetSetGO (5-10)	753	15074	5.00%
11-17 years	1305	24468	5.33%
18-24 Years	229	3907	5.86%
25-29 Years	102	1727	5.91%
30-39 Years	125	2776	4.50%
40+ Years	85	2979	2.85%
Total	2599	50931	5.10%

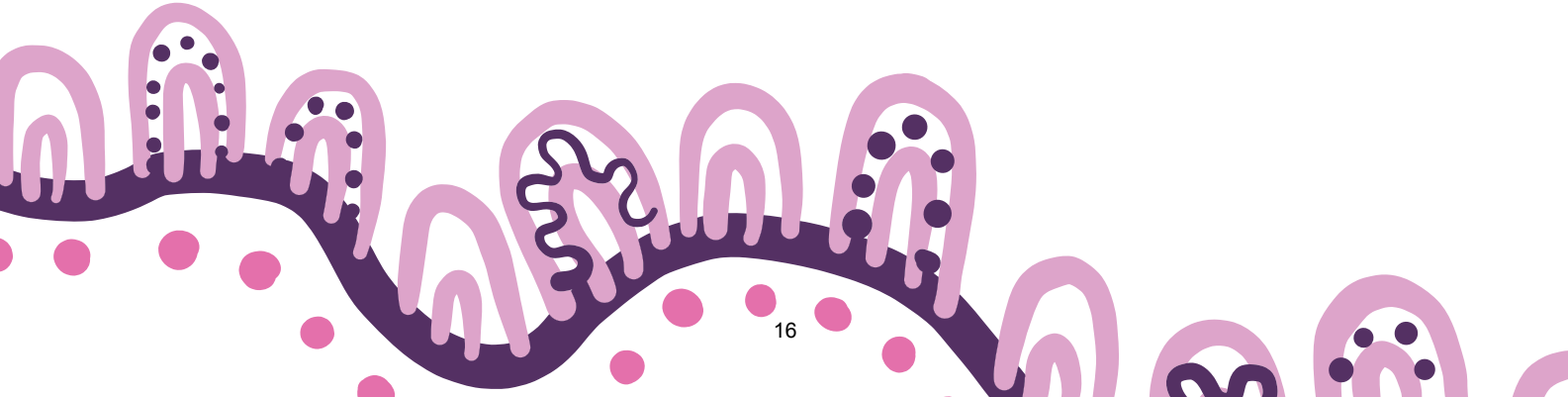


HART SAPPHIRE SERIES

	Number of First Nations Players	Total All Players	% First Nations Players
Sapphire Series 2022	4	102	3.92%
Sapphire Series 2023	3	95	3.15%
Ruby Series 2022	9	155	5.80%
Ruby Series 2023	12	112	10.71%



“OUR SAPPHIRE SERIES HEART”
Artist: Rachael Sarra
(Goreng Goreng)



CAIRNS FIRST NATIONS CUP CONSULTATION

Action	Deliverable
Investigate participation rates of First Nations peoples to identify existing trends and gaps impeding netball participation	Conduct targeted research to identify and address barriers to First Nations peoples participating in netball

Cairns Netball Association hosted their annual First Nations Cup in October 2022. The carnival included 176 participants across 16 teams. This event enabled NQ to hear from our grassroots community about their experience in the Netball community as a First Nations person, for us to understand how to create a safe playing environment for mob. The following conclusions were drawn from a variety of conversations with players, coaches and families.

IMPACT OF CULTURE ON NETBALL

Often, the inclusion of culture within netball creates a culturally safe playing environment and a sense of belonging within the community to First Nations players.

One 11-year-old player has said being First Nations doesn't impact their ability to play, *"everybody's capable of doing anything they want and just because we are Indigenous doesn't mean we are bad. We are just exactly like everyone else."*

Another 14-year-old player added that connecting with our First Nations players is a positive impact of playing netball, *"We create connections when we play with people we know who are connected to culture"*.

Another 11-year-old player has said she feels her culture is accepted *"because we all talk our culture to each other"*. The ability to comfortably speak culture or use cultural slang and idioms within the context of sport grows sense of pride and belonging to the game.

ROLE MODELS

In most of the conversations conducted, discussion around the importance of role models naturally arose. Players and coaches recognise First Nations role models and employees are extremely important to encourage First Nations players to start playing or continue playing. Role models include professional players, community members and players' own family members. A 17-year-old player affirmed that, *"Players would definitely be inspired and encouraged if there were more First Nations ambassadors and role models within the sport."*

A 13-year-old player agreed, *"Yes – providing role models from our culture for young kids to see would inspire them to play."*

LACK OF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES (METROPOLITAN VS REGIONAL)

Community feedback indicates that there are less development opportunities for players to improve their own playing style and skills which may propel them into a netball pathway. There is a large playing population of First Nations people in North Queensland, however compared to metropolitan areas, opportunities for development are lacking. This is demonstrated within the netball pathway population currently, as most players come from South-East Queensland Clubs.

CULTURALLY SAFE POLICIES

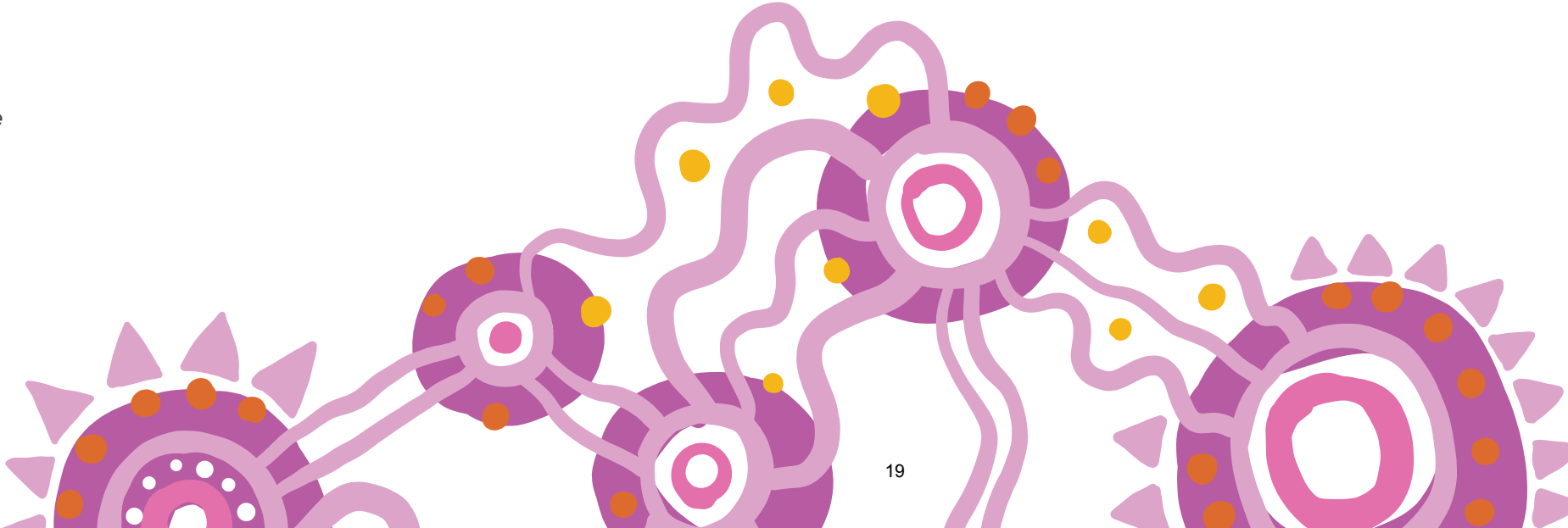
Action	Deliverable
Promote positive relations through anti-discrimination strategies	Conduct a review of HR policies and procedures to identify existing anti-discrimination provisions, and future needs

With unanimous support from the board, NQ introduced culturally appropriate leave policies, which were developed working closely with the NQ First Nations Advisory Group to ensure they were culturally informed.

Our new policies recognise that we are made up of people with diverse cultural identities and allow First Nations employees to participate in cultural and community-based activities and enable First Nations employees to reconcile culture with work responsibilities.

We provide paid leave for all First Nations employees to participate in cultural and community-based activities and broadened the Fair Work Australia definition of immediate family, as it relates to carers leave, to include kinship responsibilities.

NQ also recognises January 26 is not a day of celebration for all and allows employees (who do not want to observe the public holiday) to substitute the day off for an alternative day of cultural significance.



CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS SURVEY

Action	Deliverable
Increase understanding, value and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness into onboarding training for all new staffConduct a review of cultural learning needs within our organisation

In September 2022, we conducted a cultural awareness survey for all staff at NQ to gain insight into where the opportunities lie for more education and engagement for our staff with First Nations peoples, histories, cultures and organisations.

On average our staff rated themselves as a 5 on a scale of 1-10, suggesting as a whole staff have a foundational knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture but require opportunities for continued learning to build awareness and confidence. To compliment this, on average our staff rated themselves as an 8.5 on a scale of 1-10, of how important it is to them to be culturally competent and committed to expanding their knowledge and understanding of First Nations histories and cultures. This shows strong commitment to our cultural journey as an organisation and each staff member's individual journey.

To support this ongoing learning journey, several education opportunities for staff have been implemented including cultural training by Mirri Mirri, and a Lunch & Learn session on constitutional recognition of First Nations peoples through a Voice to Parliament. Cultural Competency and RAP training is also now embedded into our onboarding training for all staff.



Embedding culturally safe policies has been an important step in making NQ an inclusive and culturally safe workplace. Despite still being in infancy, the uptake for our new leave options has been strong, particularly the Substitution for 26 January Leave. I anticipate as our cultural journey continues and the cultural competency of our people develops this number will continue to grow.

EMILY SHAW

Head of People and Capability
& RAP Working Group Member



FIREBIRDS FIRST NATIONS ROUND

Action	Deliverable
	Review our previous First Nations round operations to ensure continual improvement
Build respect for and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and histories by hosting an annual First Nations Round	Form a working group to coordinate the 2022 Firebirds First Nations Round
	Deliver a First Nations round at our home stadium Nissan Arena which includes a Welcome to Country

In 2022 NQ held a deadly First Nations round that celebrated our First Nations players and communities all across Queensland.

In the lead up to the game, the Queensland Firebirds playing group was immersed in conversations with Bo De La Cruz and Tracey Thompson from Deadly Choices about the pride that First Nations players have in their culture and why First Nations round is an important celebration for mob. For the first time, our 2022 First Nations players Jemma Mi Mi and Donnell Wallam painted up in traditional ochre for the dress reveal. Ochre is what First Nations people traditionally painted themselves in for special ceremonies, with each marking having a different meaning.

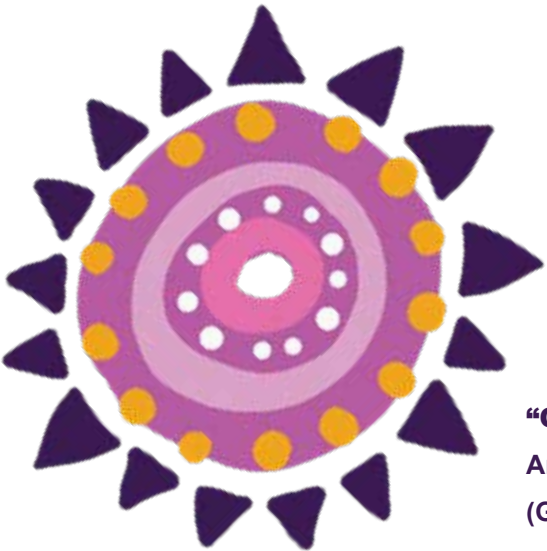
On the day Tommy from Tribal Experiences delivered the Welcome to Country and the Wagga Torres Strait Islander Dance group performed a beautiful traditional dance. NQ's Diamond Spirit students created the tunnel for both teams to run out of, and the players were introduced by name and the country on which they grew up on.

Sharon Finnan White OAM, former Firebirds and Diamonds player who commentated the game said, *"she felt completely immersed in culture"*.



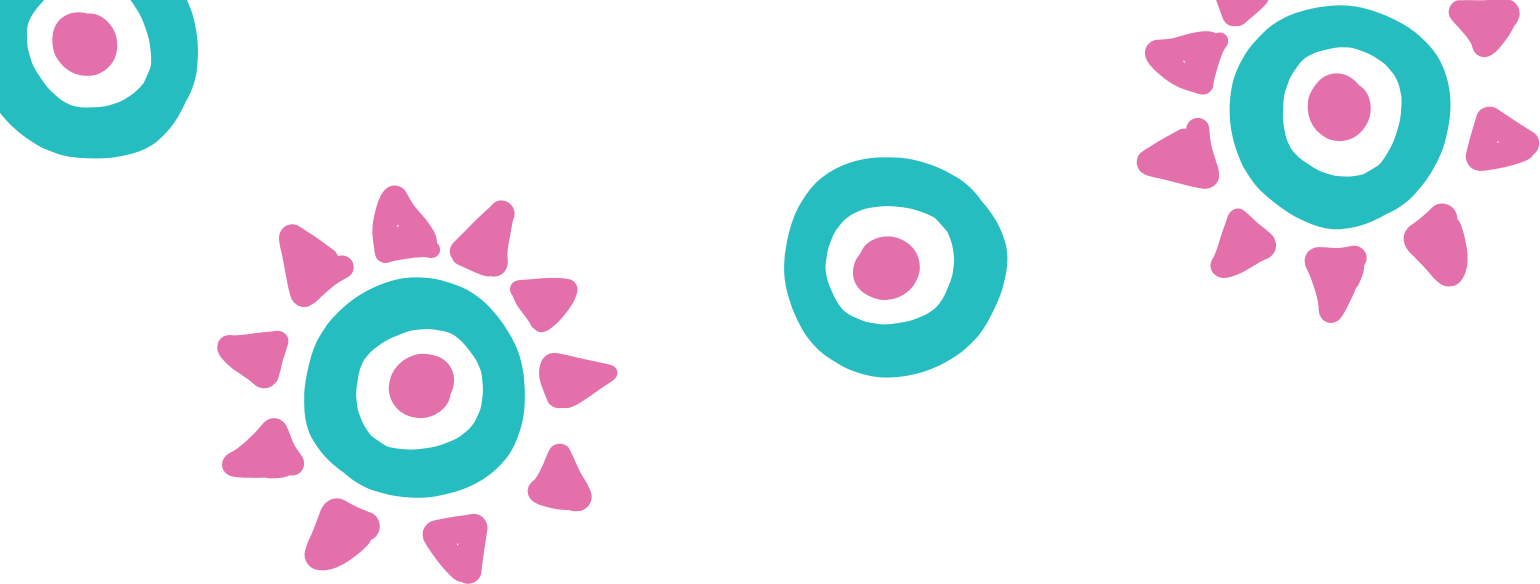
**FIRST NATIONS
DRESS REVEAL 2022**

Scan code to watch video



"OUR FIREBIRDS HEART"

Artist: Rachael Sarra
(Goreng Goreng)



VICKI WILSON FINAL SERIES 2022

Action	Deliverable
Establish and strengthen mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations	Identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations within our local area or sphere of influence

In partnership with Deadly Choices, NQ introduced a First Nations team into our Vicki Wilson Finals Series in both the Shield (Years 7-9) and Cup (Years 10-12) division.

First Nations athletes who were enrolled in schools from around the state were able to trial at Nissan Arena for selection. The interest was incredible with over 100 EOI's submitted for the Shield and Cup teams. The girls were chosen to compete at the Finals from schools across the state that did not qualify for the Finals Series. This provided an additional opportunity for our First Nations athletes to compete at the highest level of a schools-based competition. First Nations Queensland Firebirds alumni Jemma Mimi and Beryl Friday were part of the selection panel.

Deadly Choices coordinator and Deadly Choices First Nations assistant coach Brendon Cook said the introduction of the First Nations teams to the competition was inspired by NQ's RAP.

"What we want is our communities to be represented, communities from all over Queensland, and a safe space for our athletes," Cook said.

NQ General Manager Glenn Dennis said the Vicki Wilson Championship provides an incredible opportunity to participate in a challenging and also rewarding environment. It also helps players progress in their netball careers.

He said *"Netball Queensland is committed to developing First Nations representation. We are committed to ensuring that each step of our pathway is strong and also has accessible opportunities for everyone within our community."*

This initiative will continue in the 2023 Vicki Wilson Finals Series.



