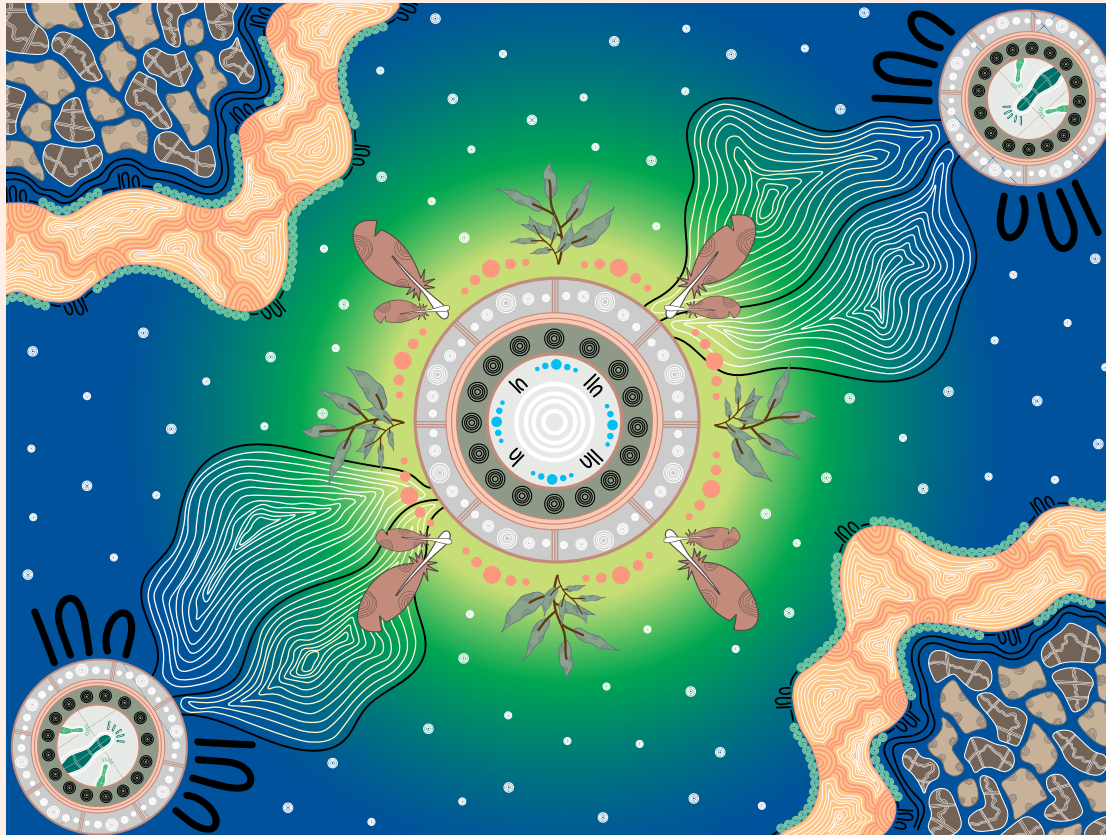




**Orygen Cultural
Strengthening Plan**
2026-2028

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This Cultural Strengthening Plan is accompanied by an original commissioned artwork created by Alex Kerr, a proud Wurundjeri artist. Orygen is grateful to Alex for sharing his knowledge, creativity and cultural perspective through this piece.

The artwork, which hangs in Orygen's Parkville home on Wurundjeri Country, reflects themes of community, connection, protection and place, and it serves as a visual thread throughout this plan. Here (right), Alex shares the meaning and symbolism embedded within the artwork in his own words.

“

This artwork is about community coming together to share a space as one, and ensuring all our young people are protected and safe throughout their journey.

At the centre of the artwork is a meeting place representing Orygen and the community that uses its services. Within this meeting place are symbols representing the young men and women who come to Orygen for support.

Surrounding the central meeting place are Waa (crow) feathers (our protector), and manna gum leaves (representing traditional medicine). These symbols represent cultural protection and safety, ensuring young people are cared for while on Country and while engaging with the service.

Connecting into the central meeting place are parallel lines that reflect the different paths young people have taken as part of their mental health journeys. In the outer meeting spaces are spirit figures representing our Elders and Ancestors who came before us, continuing to watch over and guide young people.

In the corners of the artwork are the Birrarung and rock formations representing Wurundjeri Country, where Orygen is situated. Our connection to Country, waterways and stories is strong, and these elements recognise the importance of place and belonging.

Together, these symbols tell a story of community, connection and care. They reflect a shared space where people come together, where journeys are honoured, and where young people are supported, protected and safe.

”



Orygen acknowledges and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and pays respect to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge the ongoing sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples over their lands, waters and communities.

We honour the resilience, strength and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and are unwavering in our support for their right to self-determination.

We acknowledge the profound and ongoing harm caused by colonisation, including the forced removal of children, the loss of lives, freedom and connection to Country, and the deep impacts this continues to have on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

Orygen is not a bystander. We are committed to building genuine, lasting partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organisations, particularly those working with young people.

We will actively grow and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led delivery of services, amplifying the voices of young, parents and carers and community, and build cultural capability at every level of our organisation. This is not a statement of intention. It is a commitment to action, guided by the Cultural Strengthening Plan.

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Marcus Stewart AM
Orygen Board Member,
Proud Nira illim bulluk man
of the Taungurung Nation

Foreword from Board member

Orygen acknowledges and recognises Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the First Peoples of Australia and pays respect to Elders past and present. We acknowledge the ongoing sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples over their lands, waters and communities. We honour the resilience, strength and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and are unwavering in our support for their right to self-determination. We acknowledge the profound and ongoing harm caused by colonisation, including the forced removal of children, the loss of lives, freedom and connection to Country, and the deep impacts this continues to have on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. Orygen is not a bystander. We are committed to building genuine, lasting partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and organisations, particularly those working with young people. We will actively grow and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led delivery of services, amplify young people, parents and carers, community voices, and build cultural capability at every level of our organisation. This is not a statement of intention. It is a commitment to action, guided by the Cultural Strengthening Plan.

This Cultural Strengthening Plan 2026-2028 is more than a document, it is a commitment to making real and lasting change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, families and carers to support their mental health care journey.

The plan represents an important step in that journey of Cultural Safety, creating spaces of reflection and of our shared commitment to walk alongside First Nations young people with genuine respect, accountability, and purpose. The development of the plan was delivered and led by First Nations leadership within Orygen, via cross-divisional collaboration led by First Nations Strategy and Policy Lead, Lineesha Johnson.

This project was called 'Project Nhulundu', meaning *healing* in the Gooreng Gooreng language. The key focus areas of the project were to establish governance and leadership, evaluate current work partnering with First Nations organisation Kowa Collaborations, and to rebuild the Cultural Strengthening Committee. Members were nominated and played a central role in co-designing the workshops that shaped this plan. Their knowledge, leadership and generosity throughout that process are reflected on every page.

The plan is built around three goals. The first ensures Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a genuine voice in how Orygen drives and leads the mental health care journey for young people through education, research and advocacy. The second focuses on building strong cultural governance, bringing together First Nations and senior leadership, supported by clear policies and accountability structures. The third builds Orygen's capacity to listen to and partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and communities, supporting community-led initiatives and working to address systemic barriers.

We recognise that good intentions alone are not enough. This plan is backed by real policies, structures, and accountability mechanisms to ensure we follow through on our commitments.

It is an opportunity to clearly define how Orygen will support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and to be held to that.

We look forward to doing this work together.

Foreword from the Executive Director

Since the launch of Orygen's inaugural *Cultural Strengthening Plan* in 2021, our commitment to genuine partnership with First Nations young people and communities has grown and matured, bringing us to this important milestone in the organisation's journey: the launch of the new *Cultural Strengthening Plan 2026-2028*.

This strategy and plan has grown out of deep reflection and learning from our previous work, and sets a course for action that is shared and owned across the organisation.

Our First Nations team, with support from the Cultural Strengthening Committee and First Nations Advisory Group, have developed this plan through wide consultation, bringing diverse teams together to strengthen foundations and build cultural competency.

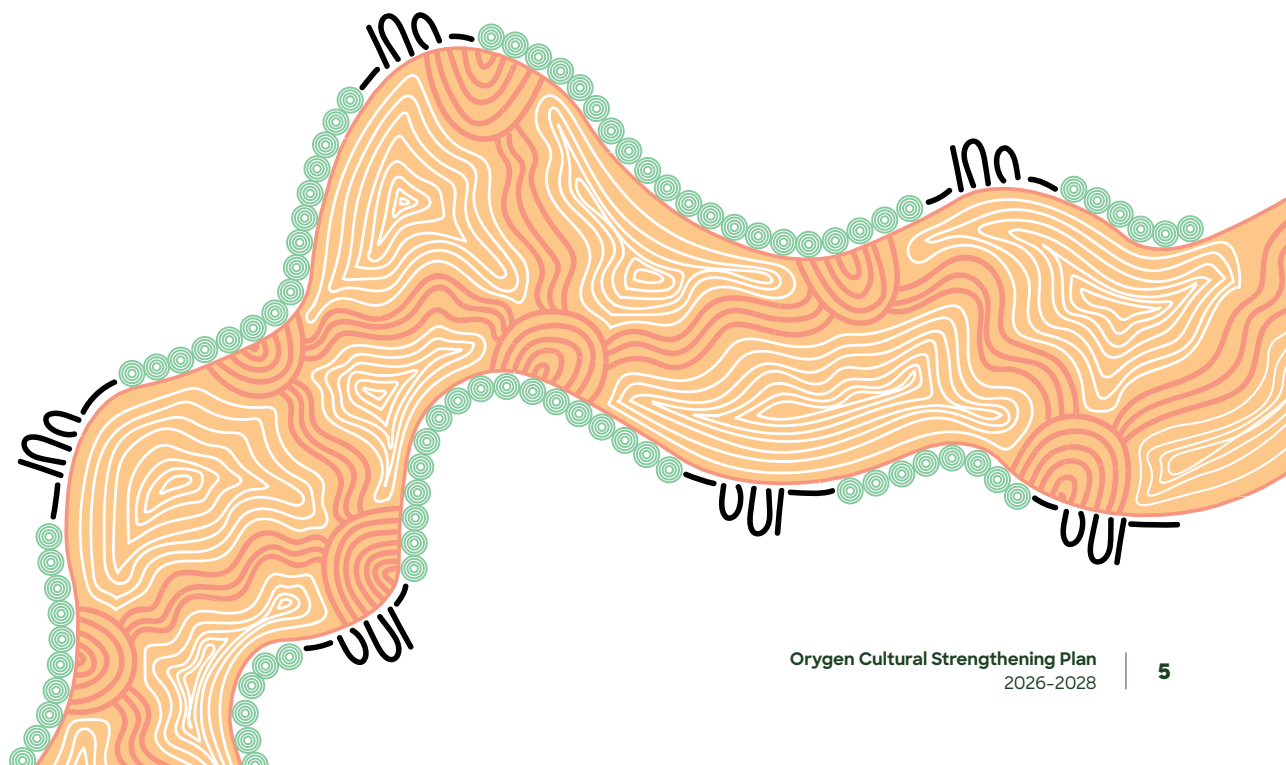
This plan is our commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, their families and communities, to listen, act on, and advocate for the perspectives, knowledge and expertise they bring – and to ensure cultural safety across the mental health service system.

Orygen's Statement of Commitment to the First Nations of Australia and our first *Cultural Strengthening Plan* were the beginning of the journey, and the lessons and insights learned in the process of implementation have been invaluable in informing the new plan, and ensuring the supporting structures are in place to turn goals into tangible action.

With this plan, Orygen is committed to strengthening and embedding cultural competency across research, mental health services and leadership and to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, and I am grateful for the commitment and care of so many across the organisation to make this project meaningful, collaborative and impactful.



Patrick McGorry AO
Orygen Executive Director



Introduction

Orygen, as a national organisation, has a role to play in supporting the mental health of First Nations young people. We can learn from the work that has already been done, such as the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework. We can also learn more about the role and value of culture and community, and from the expertise and insights of First Nations people working in mental health roles. As an organisation that provides policy advice to the Australian Government, we also have a role in working within existing frameworks and strategies, such as the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, to shape how youth mental health programs, services and policy can support improved outcomes for First Nations communities. While mental ill-health and substance use impacts the lives of young people from all population groups, the impact on First Nations young people is more severe, with 6.6 additional years of healthy life lost (DALY).¹ We must all do more to address this, and how Orygen responds and supports First Nations young people will be guided by this Cultural Strengthening Plan.

The Cultural Strengthening Plan is designed to guide Orygen in deepening its commitment and positive impact in education, research and advocacy, and to deliver better mental health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people throughout their care journey.

The plan is phased over three years across three interconnected goals. The first goal, establishing a strong foundation for Cultural Strengthening, focuses on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership to strengthen the decision-making power, representation, and leadership of First Nations young people, and to foster an environment where they feel respected, safe, heard, and valued. The second goal, building capacity and partnership, centres on removing barriers to access, ensuring services, content and processes are inclusive of diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, while growing

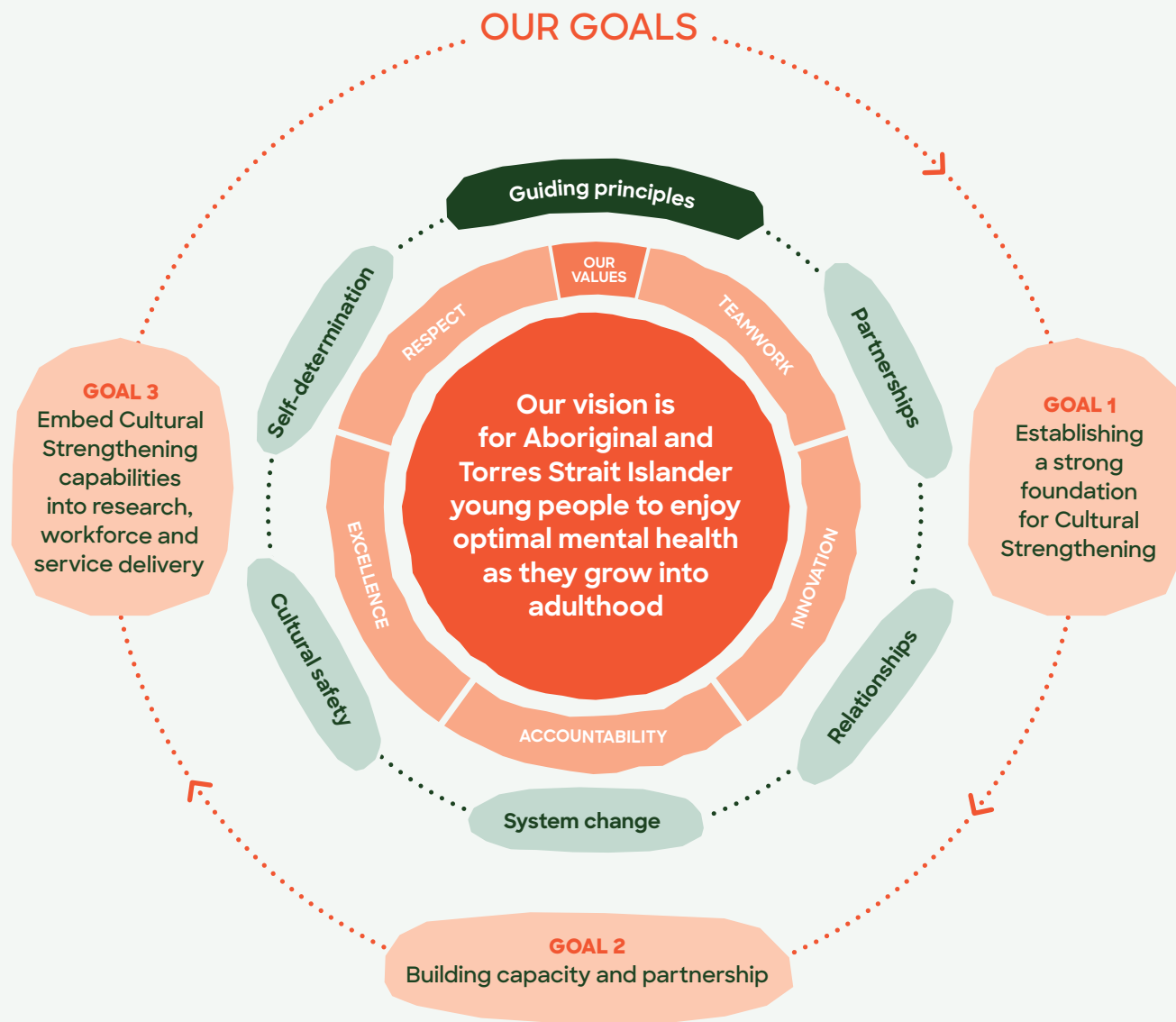
and retaining an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and building stronger formal partnerships with First Nations organisations. The third goal focuses on ensuring Cultural Strengthening is effectively and sustainably embedded across all areas of Orygen's work.

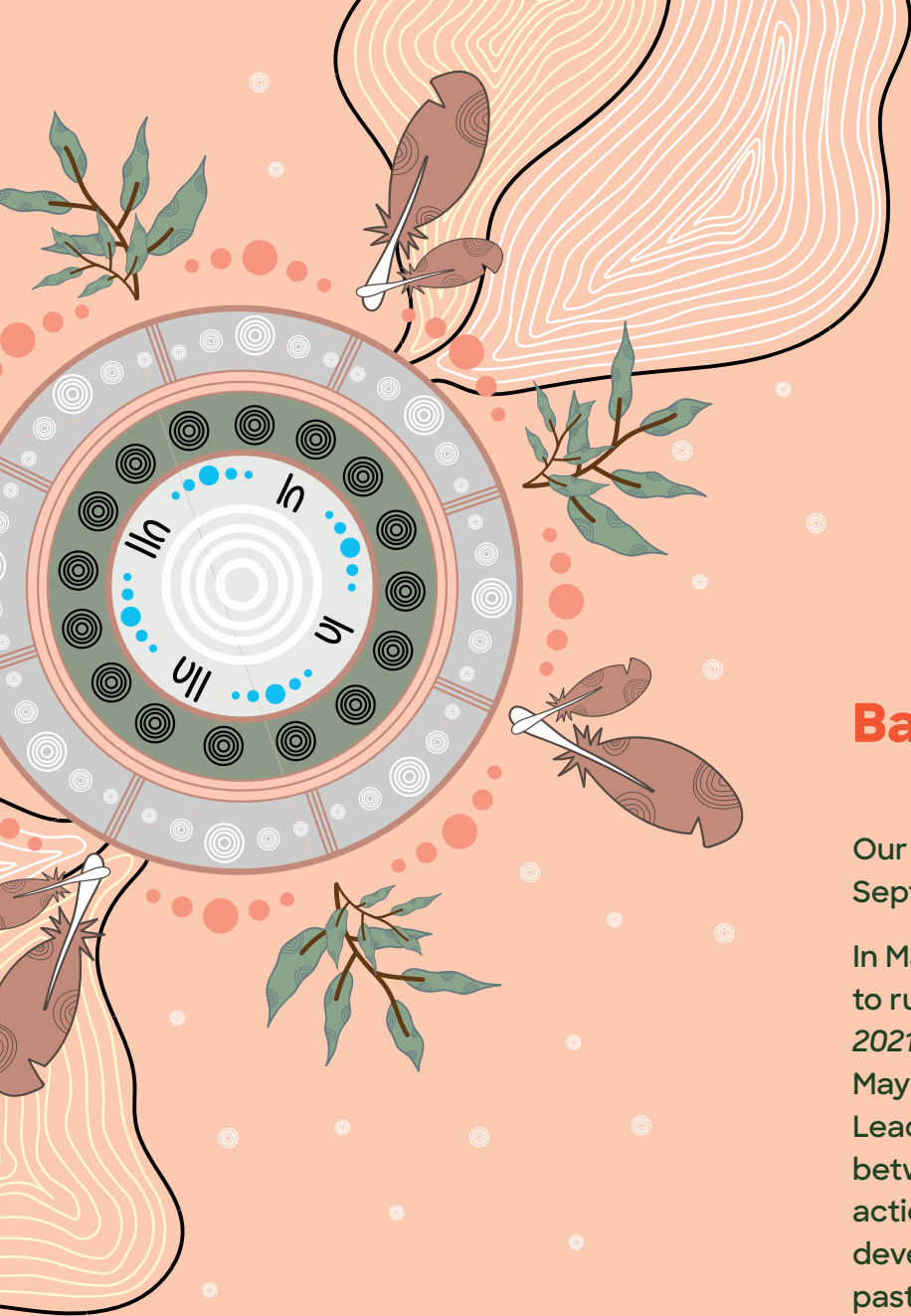
The Orygen Statement of Commitment to First Nations Australia (Statement of Commitment) provides the foundation for this work. It is the result of honest and open dialogue between Orygen and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Group, and reflects a shared commitment to working in good faith with First Nations young people, families and communities. The following guiding principles underpin the successful implementation of this plan:

- **Self-determination:** Prioritise and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership.
- **Relationships:** Build genuine relationships based on respect and trust with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, family and carers, leaders, organisations and communities.
- **Cultural safety:** Ensure Orygen's services and workplaces are culturally safe and responsive.
- **System change:** Cross-sector collaboration; implement change at all levels – individual, teams and organisational.
- **Partnerships:** Collaborate with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) and other relevant services to improve outcomes.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are protected under a range of Commonwealth, state and international laws. Orygen is deeply committed to respecting and upholding the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, including their rights to freely express, practice and enjoy their culture and cultural identity, in accordance with:

1. the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
2. the Convention on the Rights of the Child;
3. the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;
4. the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic);
5. the Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic).





Background

Our journey towards this updated Cultural Strengthening Plan began in September 2024 with a focus on Looking Back, Looking Around, and Looking Forward.

In March 2025, we partnered with Kowa, a First Nations-led organisation, to run reflections and evaluation sessions on the *Cultural Strengthening Plan 2021-2025*. Insights from these sessions were captured in a report finalised in May 2025 and shared with the First Nations Advisory Group, Orygen's Executive Leadership Team, and staff. The insight report highlighted the significant gap between Orygen's stated commitment to First Nations people and the tangible actions taken to embed cultural safety through the organisation. Through the development of this new Cultural Strengthening Plan, we commit to learning from past challenges, capitalising on strategic opportunities, and embedding cultural safety across Orygen's research, services and leadership to strengthen outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and communities.

Process

Project Nhulundu was the process through which the Cultural Strengthening Plan was developed. Using a human-centred design approach, a series of tailored workshops were delivered across Orygen's core business areas between August 2025 and January 2026. A deliberately paced approach was taken throughout this process, enabling meaningful engagement across the organisation, strengthening cross-divisional understanding, hearing diverse perspectives and co-creating practical, shared actions that are aligned with organisational priorities.

The workshops explored four core questions:

- How can we create culturally safe and welcoming spaces where First Nations young people feel respected, heard and connected?
- How do we build cultural understanding within teams without placing additional cultural load on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders workforce?
- How do we establish and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders and organisations?
- How can we meaningfully involve First Nations young people as co-designers and decision-makers with genuine power and influence over mental health services, research or advocacy that affect them?

Feedback from participating Orygen staff

"Genuine, real and reflective conversation about what we can do better to support young people. It felt full of heart and the opposite of dry!"

"Great hearing from other team members/divisions."

"Really enjoyable, well planned and considered session. I really enjoyed the empathy mapping exercise."

"How do we move forward? What are the actions, and how do we stay accountable as a team?"

"I'd like to see a clearer map of where we're at in the process and understand what to expect next so we can stay accountable."

Terms and definitions

Cultural load

The invisible loads that people of the non-dominant culture carry. In this context, it is the expectation on First Nations people to educate others on cultural sensitivities. It occurs when there is only one or a small number of First Nations people to call upon to represent in various activities, generally in off-the-desk roles that go without recognition. It multiplies when misconceptions of blending community and work obligations happen. This can be never-ending and very draining on First Nations people.²

Cultural safety

Cultural safety is about overcoming the power imbalances of places, people and policies that occur between the majority non-Indigenous position and the minority Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person so that there is no assault, challenge or denial of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person's identity, of who they are and what they need. Cultural safety is met through actions from the majority position which recognise, respect, and nurture the unique cultural identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Only the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person who is the recipient of a service or interaction can determine whether it is culturally safe.³

Human-centred design

An approach to solving challenges purposefully and meaningfully by focusing on the people within a system and creating solutions that respond to their needs and aspirations.

Indigenous data

In Australia, this refers to information or knowledge, in any format or medium, which is about and may affect Indigenous peoples both collectively and individually.

Indigenous data governance

The right of Indigenous peoples to autonomously decide what, how and why Indigenous data are collected, accessed and used. It ensures that data on or about Indigenous peoples reflects our priorities, values, cultures, worldviews and diversity.⁴

Indigenous data sovereignty

The right of Indigenous people to exercise ownership over Indigenous data. Ownership of data can be expressed through the creation, collection, access, analysis, interpretation, management, dissemination and reuse of Indigenous data.

Nhulundu

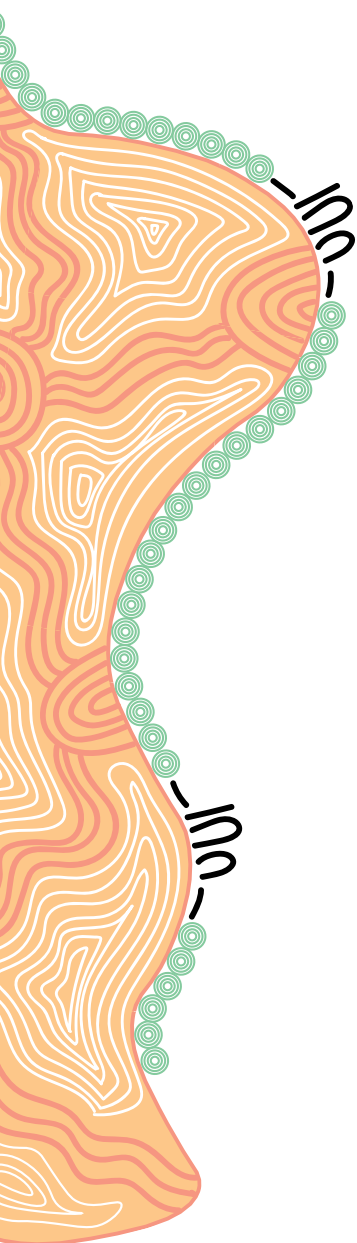
From Gooreng Gooreng language, meaning healing, caring for young and old.

Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework

A holistic framework widely used across Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sectors that recognises wellbeing as being shaped by connections to family, community, culture, Country and spirituality. The framework guides culturally safe approaches to health and wellbeing by recognising the social, emotional, cultural and collective dimensions of wellbeing.⁵

Truth-telling

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have long called for a comprehensive process of truth-telling about Australia's history to bring light to colonial conflict and dispossession, as well as to acknowledge the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. This has begun in Australia, but there is so much more to do to allow healing for First Nations people.⁶



Governance, accountability and reporting

First Nations Advisory Group

The First Nations Advisory Group provides strategic advice to Orygen, based on the collective experience and knowledge of current and emerging realities and needs in First Nations communities. The advisory group aims to promote First Nations collaboration in the development and implementation of any initiatives, policies or actions that may affect the lives of First Nations young people.

First Nations Champions

Champions provides strategic leadership at the senior executive level, driving Orygen's commitment to the First Nations Plan. This role is pivotal in maintaining high-level visibility and advocacy for cultural strengthening, securing the resources needed to sustain meaningful progress, and ensuring that reconciliation and cultural respect are embedded throughout the organisation.

Cultural Strengthening Committee

The Cultural Strengthening Committee provides centralised oversight and coordination of the Cultural Strengthening Plan. It plays a key role in co-creating foundational actions, enabling divisions to lead and embed cultural safety within their teams, monitor progress and outcomes, facilitate cross-divisional collaboration, and ensure sustainable resourcing to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander aspirations across Orygen.

The Committee provides centralised coordination of all activities associated with the Cultural Strengthening Plan 2026–28. It is responsible for developing the foundational actions that empower individuals to lead and drive cultural safety and reconciliation within their respective divisions. The Committee also serves as a cross-divisional forum, fostering shared understanding of cultural safety, supporting collaboration on reconciliation efforts, and encouraging collective problem-solving. In addition, it actively advocates for, and secures, the funding and resources needed to sustain the Cultural Strengthening initiative and demonstrates Orygen's organisational commitment to meaningful and lasting change.

The Cultural Strengthening Committee

First Nations Champions

Professor Eóin Killackey, Chief of Research and Knowledge Translation

Cultural Strengthening Committee members

Andrew Thompson, Consultant Psychiatrist, Secondary Consultation, Research

Anna Knight, Media and Communications Manager, Communications and Fundraising

Caroline Crlenjak, Director, Workforce Development and Services Implementation, Knowledge Translation

Chris Bolden, General Counsel, Governance, Planning and Performance

Courtney Waters, Talent Acquisition Business Partner, People, Experience and Wellbeing

David Baker, Senior Manager, Policy

Isabel Zbukvic, Senior Research Fellow, Knowledge Translation

Kate Landolina, Clinical Services Manager, headspace Melton

Kirra Greaves, Education Sector Lead, Finance

Lauren Vera, Head of Governance, Strategy and Risk, Governance, Planning and Performance

Magenta Simmons, Youth Partnership in Research Coordinator, Research

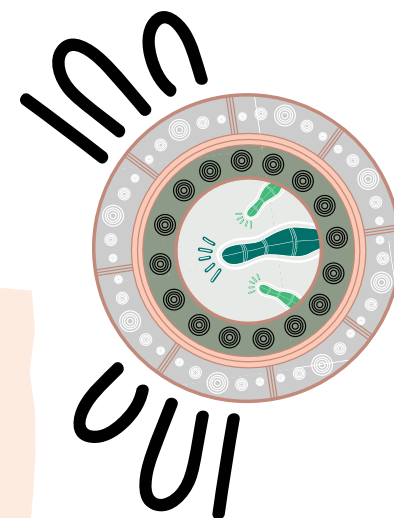
Michelle Armstrong, Clinical Implementation Lead, Orygen Digital

Priya Hastak, Clinical Service Manager, headspace Werribee

Sophia Tipping, Manager – Youth Participation, Office of Executive Director

Stephanie White, Learning and Development Advisor, People, Experience and Wellbeing

Tamsyn Gilbertson, Head of Product and Service Development, Orygen Digital



GOAL 1 | Establishing a strong foundation for Cultural Strengthening

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and governance

Real change can only happen when we honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, history, and the many contributions First Nations peoples have made in shaping a better world for their communities and young people. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are not only recipients of support, they are also leaders, knowledge-holders, and drivers of change. In seeking guidance and cultural knowledge from Elders, community members and young people, Orygen can play a meaningful role in supporting both social and emotional wellbeing and mental health outcomes, not just for this generation, but for those that follow.

	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE
Build and maintain a strong governance foundation for Cultural Strengthening	1.1 Establish a formal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Youth Advisory Council providing youth-led advice related to Orygen's strategy, Cultural Strengthening Plan, governance and evaluation and monitoring.	Jan-June 2027	Youth Participation and Lived Experience and First Nations Team
	1.2 Maintain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation on the Orygen Board and Youth Advisory Council, and prioritise First Nations applications within the Youth in Governance program (aligned with the Board Skills Matrix).	Ongoing	Governance, Planning and Performance, Youth Participation and Lived Experience
	1.3 Define resource needs for Cultural Strengthening activities, including training, across Orygen's governance.	June 2027 with implementation of activities ongoing.	First Nations Team and Governance, Planning and Performance
Demonstrate commitment and build momentum across Orygen's senior leadership	1.4 Invest in an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Executive/Director role that is represented at Executive and Leadership meetings and which manages the First Nations Team and provides direction and oversight for Orygen's implementation of the Cultural Strengthening Plan 2026-2028.	Jan-June 2027	Executive Leadership Team
	1.5 Orygen leaders attend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander conferences, seminars and strategic forums with the purpose of increasing leadership awareness and enhancing Orygen's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander rights and social and emotional wellbeing outcomes.	Ongoing	Executive Leadership Team and Senior Leadership Team
Support and grow an external Cultural Governance mechanism	1.6 Further develop the First Nations Advisory Group and membership to have governance and decision-making power regarding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and evidence, and to allow for more meaningful guidance on Orygen's work.	Dec 2026	First Nations Team and ELT



GOAL 1 | Establishing a strong foundation for Cultural Strengthening (continues)

	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE
Align communication strategies with cultural leadership priorities	1.7 Develop guidelines for culturally appropriate communication, both internally and externally, that support the diverse Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures throughout Australia.	July-Dec 2026	First Nations Team
	1.8 Ensure Orygen's visible presence and communications (including branding, website and publications) reflect and respectfully represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.	Ongoing	Communications and Fundraising
	1.9 Increase visibility and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, leaders and advocates across the organisation.	Ongoing	ELT, SLT and Communications and Fundraising
Embed organisational commitment and accountability through the Cultural Strengthening Committee	1.10 Ensure the Cultural Strengthening Committee is linked to the Executive Leadership Team and is empowered with a mandate, adequate resources and dedicated time to deliver tangible outcomes.	Ongoing	First Nations Champions
	1.11 Embed accountability mechanisms, so areas across the Orygen are required to demonstrate how outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people are being considered in their work.	Sep 2026, Quarterly	Governance, Planning and Performance, Cultural Strengthening Committee and First Nations Team
Embed Cultural responsibility through Orygen policy and procedures	1.12 Review and revise organisational policies and procedures to ensure they align with Cultural Safety, Child Safe Principles, Gayaa Dhuwi Principles.	Ongoing	People, Experience and Wellbeing
	1.13 Establish new policies and procedures to support appropriate practice across all areas of Orygen. This may include, but is not limited to, an Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance policy, a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment policy, a First Nations Procurement policy, etc.	Dec 2026	First Nations Team, People, Experience and Wellbeing, Governance, Planning and Performance, Finance
	1.14 Conduct a research survey to assess staff knowledge, confidence, barriers, and support needs related to First Nations research and culturally safe practices, and use the findings to map capability gaps and inform targeted training, resources, and organisational supports.	Dec 2026	Research

GOAL 2 | Building capacity and partnership

Cultural awareness, safety, participation and engagement

Orygen will strengthen its internal capacity by embedding culturally safe, transparent, and inclusive practices across the organisation. We partner with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and centre the voices of young people in the design of our services and systems. Through culture-led, strengths-based, and trauma-informed approaches, we are committed to fostering belonging, safety, and sustainable wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.

	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE
Continually improve staff cultural awareness and understanding	2.1 Provide access to cultural awareness, privilege, unconscious bias and decolonising practice training, information and resources, including within induction processes.	Ongoing	People, Experience and Wellbeing
	2.2 Include requirements within Performance Development Cycles for staff to engage in activities that build their cultural awareness.	Ongoing, commencing June/July 2027.	People, Experience and Wellbeing and managers
	2.3 Continue to provide and update resources within the First Nations Hub.	Ongoing	First Nations Team and Communications and Fundraising
Embed culturally safe practice	2.4 Conduct a review of cultural safety needs within Orygen, identifying what policies, processes, training and resources are currently in place and what needs to be developed or improved.	Jan–June 2027	People, Experience and Wellbeing and Governance Planning and Performance
	2.5 Develop a Cultural Safety Framework to increase knowledge of social and emotional wellbeing concepts and improve cultural competence and capabilities for clinical services, research and other Orygen programs. Provide training and support to staff on implementing this framework.	June–Dec 2027 with ongoing promotion and training.	First Nations Team and Governance, Planning and Performance
	2.6 Review and revise organisational policies and procedures to ensure they align with Cultural Safety, Child Safe Principles and Gayaa Dhuwi Principles.	Ongoing	People, Experience and Wellbeing
	2.7 Embed and monitor cultural safety learning and practice into Performance Development Plans and performance frameworks, particularly for roles with direct engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.	Ongoing from July 2027	People, Experiences and Wellbeing and all team managers



GOAL 2 | Building capacity and partnership (continues)

	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE
Embed culturally safe practice (continues)	2.8 Implement training in trauma-informed care for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander young people for relevant organisational areas, services and staff.	Ongoing	Knowledge Translation, People Experience and Wellbeing and Clinical Services
	2.9 Strengthen researchers' capability in culturally safe design, co-design, evaluation and measurement.	Ongoing	Research
	2.10 Develop skills in culturally appropriate data collection, evaluation and knowledge sharing. Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research and program staff to complete Kowa Collaborations Two-Worlds UMEL immersion in line with a project. This will support understanding how to decolonise practice while achieving key project deliverables.	July 2026 – Dec 2027	Research, National Programs, Policy and Engagement and Knowledge Translation
	2.11 Ensure Orygen staff, particularly in direct service roles, practice in a manner consistent with relevant guidelines on working with people from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities (e.g., Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid Training and Research Programs).	Ongoing	Clinical Services
Establish and build partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations	2.12 Map existing internal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships, stakeholders and organisations.	June 2026 – Dec 2026	First Nations Team and Cultural Strengthening Committee
	2.13 Develop and create a culturally safe partnerships guidelines which focus on building trust.	Ongoing	First Nations Team and Policy and Engagement
	2.14 Seek out and support Aboriginal-led campaigns that promote safety, protection and social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people.	Sep 2027	Policy and Engagement and Communications and Fundraising
	2.15 Promote the role of Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation in delivering family social and emotional wellbeing support programs and services providers, relationship counselling and parenting programs.	Oct 2027	First Nations Team and Clinical Services
Attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff	2.16 Establish and implement an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce strategy focused on attraction, recruitment and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employment at all levels of Orygen, including leadership.	Strategy developed by June 2027	People, Experience and Wellbeing and First Nations Team
	2.17 Develop service partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to provide ongoing cultural supervision and support during employment.	Ongoing	First Nations Team and People, Experience and Wellbeing

GOAL 3 | Embed Cultural Strengthening capabilities into research, workforce and service delivery

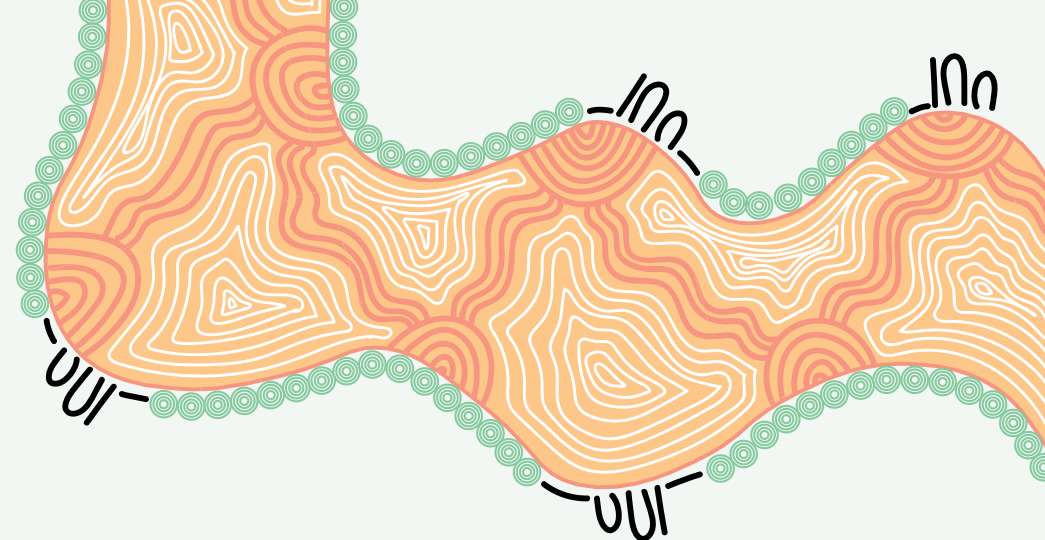
Ongoing organisation capacity building and improvement

We are committed to investing in ongoing learning across all levels of the organisation. This includes building cultural understanding, knowledge of relevant legislation and Indigenous rights, the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Framework, anti-racism practice, and best-practice engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE
Establish mechanisms for feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people and communities	3.1 Regularly monitor the implementation of the Cultural Strengthening Plan and use findings to inform ongoing improvement.	Ongoing	Cultural Strengthening Committee
	3.2 Build organisational capacity through a UMEL approach for evaluating the Cultural Strengthening Plan, embedding reflection in ways of working and sharing practices across teams.	Ongoing	Research, National Programs, Policy and Engagement, First Nations Team
	3.3 Measures of success and impact in our clinical care and research programs are defined and reviewed in partnership with First Nations young people and communities.	Ongoing	Clinical Services and Research
Share knowledge and expertise	3.4 Capture, share and amplify learnings, stories, and successes across the organisation.	June 2028	Communications and Fundraising with support of all teams.
	3.5 Contribute to policy development and advocacy efforts to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth mental health outcomes.	Ongoing	Policy and Engagement and ELT
Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led Initiatives	3.6 Develop and communicate opportunities for the procurement of goods and services from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to staff.	Jan-June 2027	Finance
	3.7 Provide support and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led research and service delivery initiatives within Orygen.	Dec 2028	Research and Clinical Service
	3.8 Advocate for increased funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led programs and services.	2027-28	Clinical Service



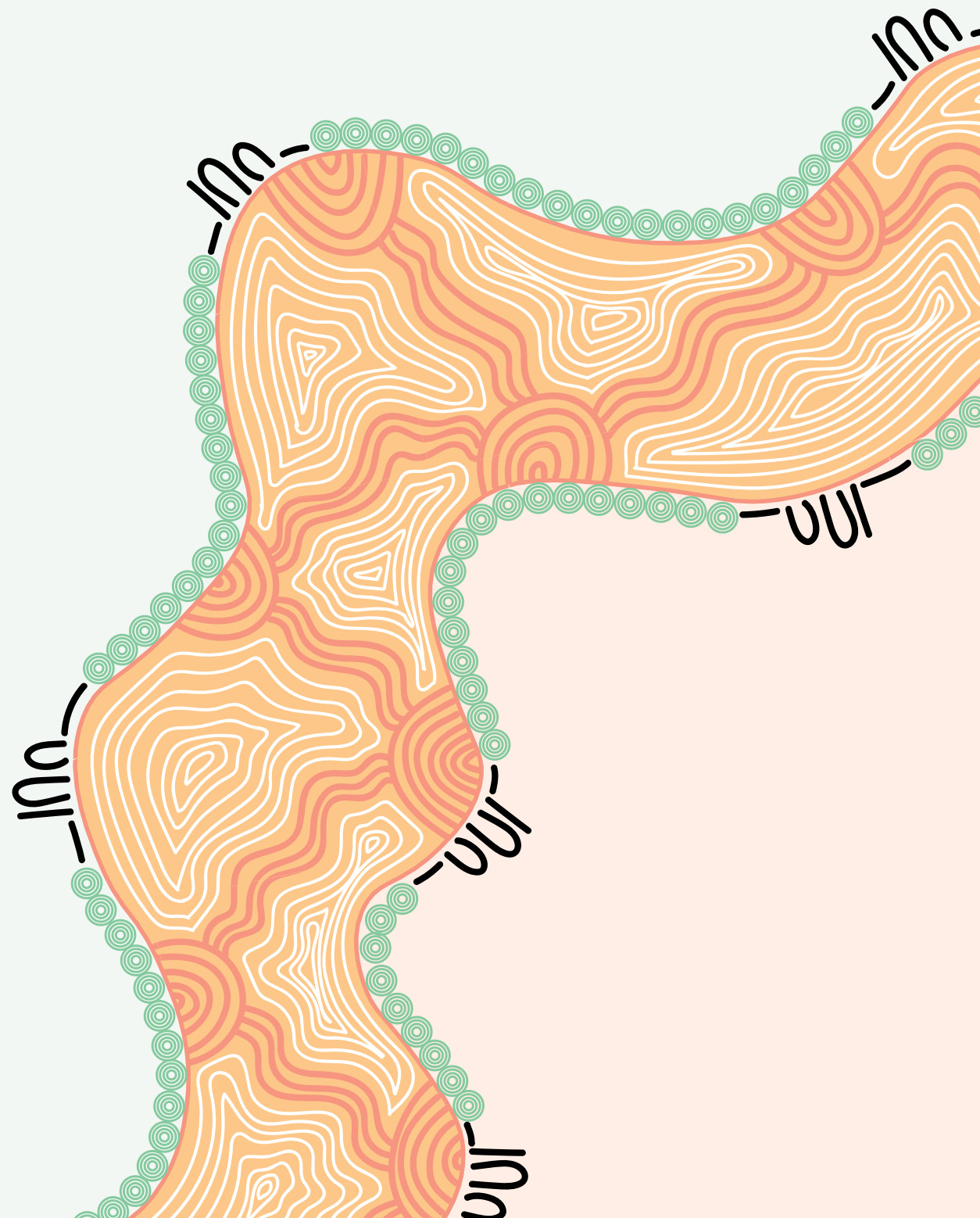
GOAL 3 | Embed Cultural Strengthening capabilities into research, workforce and service delivery (continues)

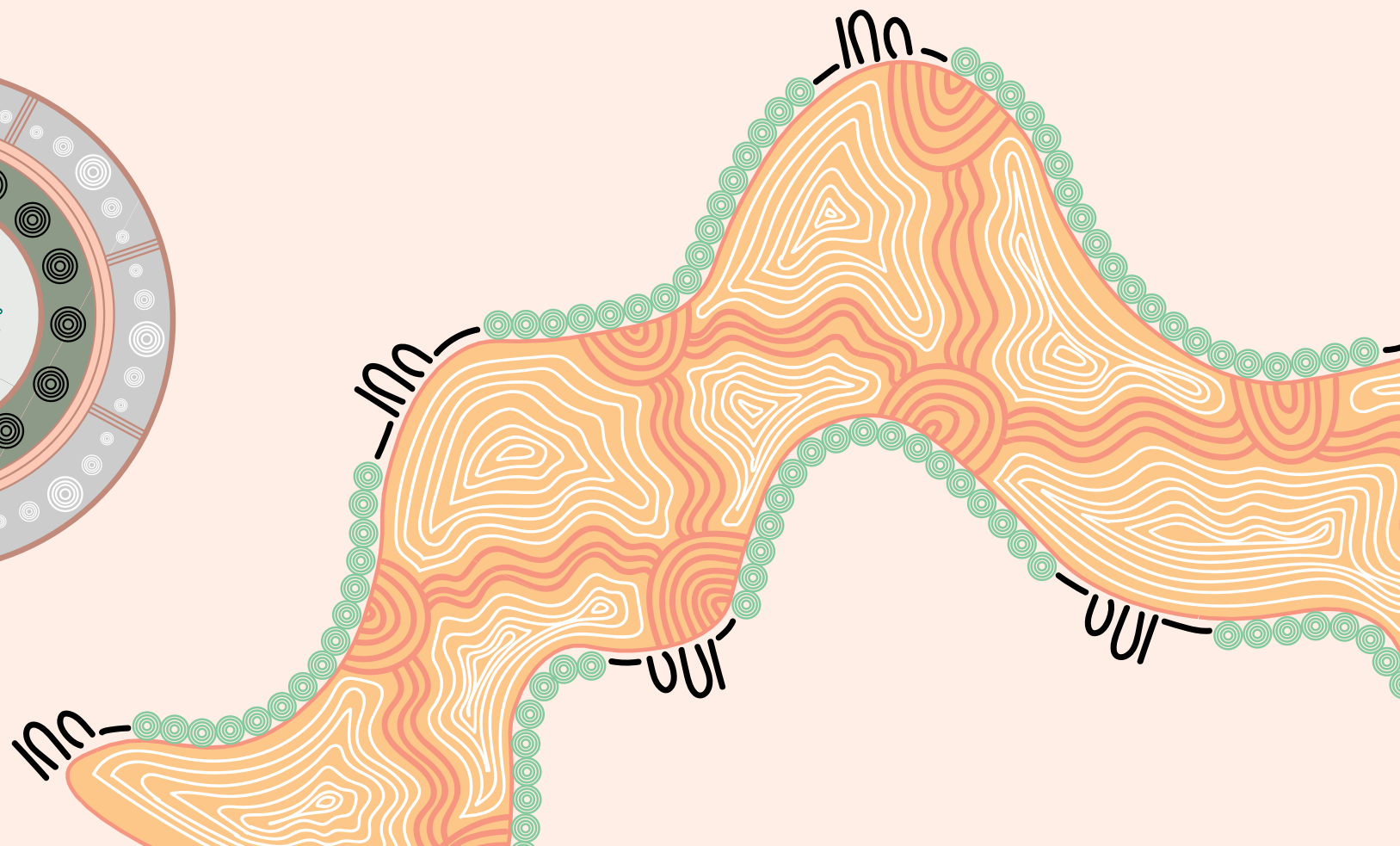
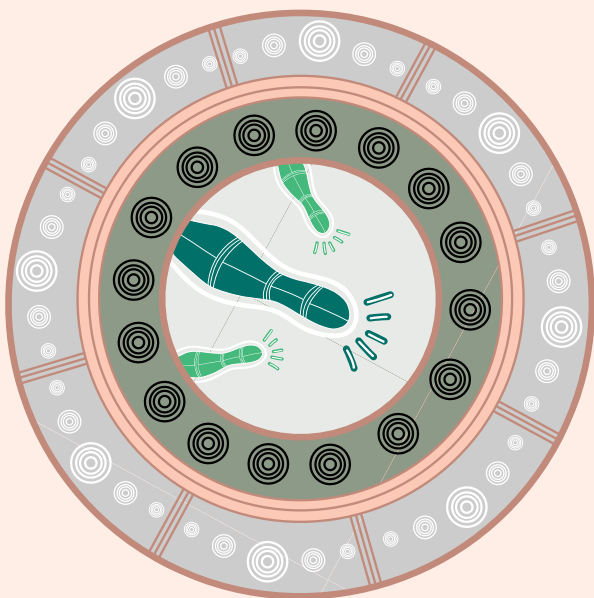
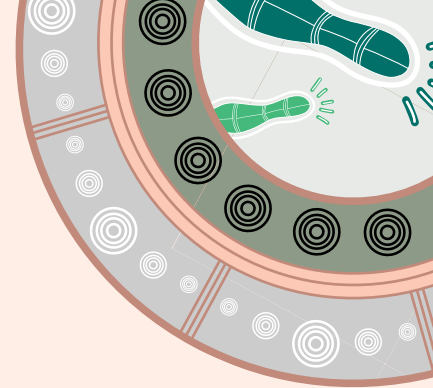
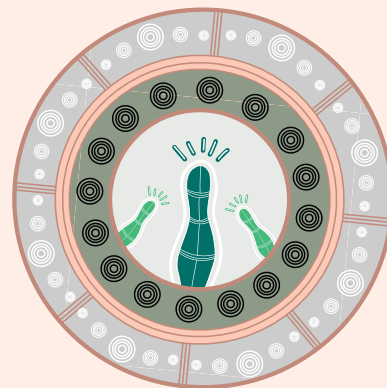
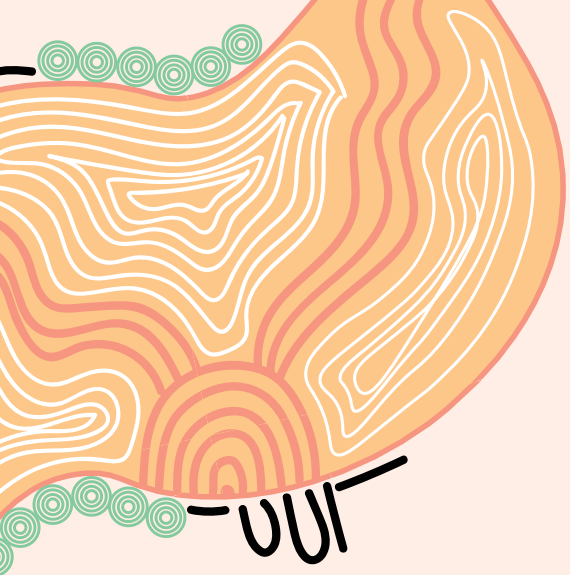


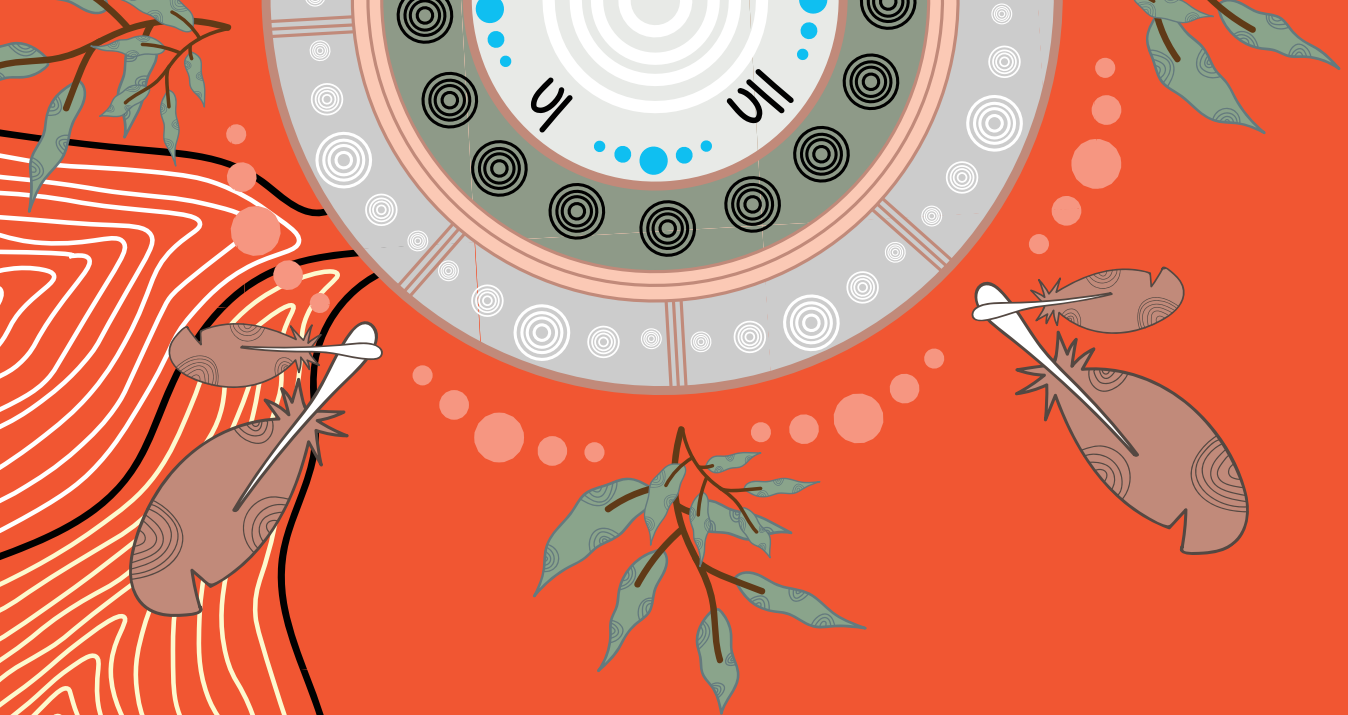
	ACTIONS	TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE
Celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures	3.9 Organise events and activities to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and promote understanding within Orygen.	2027-28	Cultural Strengthening Committee
	3.10 Support staff in participating in community cultural events.	Ongoing	People, Experiences and Wellbeing
Address systemic issues	3.11 Actively work to address systemic barriers that prevent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people from accessing appropriate mental health care.	Ongoing	Cultural Strengthening Committee
	3.12 Increase equitable access to digital mental health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people across urban, rural, regional and remote communities.	Ongoing	Orygen Digital
	3.13 Implement Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander programs and responses that are aligned to the Social, Emotional and Wellbeing Framework, which includes healing and spirituality.	Ongoing	Clinical Services and First Nations Team
Take the next steps for the future of cultural strengthening at Orygen	3.14 Engage a First Nations-led organisation to evaluate the outcomes of the Cultural Strengthening Plan (one year from the end of the plan).	2028	First Nations Team
	3.15 Work in partnership with an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander national body to facilitate a conversation with community, First Nations young people and First Nations organisations on how Orygen can further support efforts to close the health gaps.	2028	Orygen ELT and First Nations Team

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