

# Model Anti-Racism Strategy

for Local Government

## **Guideline for councils**

How to prepare, adopt and deliver your strategy

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# 1. About this kit

This Guideline helps council officers prepare an anti-racism strategy using the **Model Anti-Racism Strategy**. It explains how to fill in each section, where to find the data you need, how to choose actions, and how to take the strategy through to adoption.

## What is in the kit

| Document                          | Purpose                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Model Anti-Racism Strategy</b> | A fully drafted, editable strategy. Replace the highlighted placeholders, delete what you don't need, and choose your actions.                       |
| <b>Guideline</b> (this document)  | Step-by-step instructions, data sources, the annotated action menu with examples from other councils, and state and territory reference information. |
| <b>Model Council Report</b>       | A ready-to-edit report seeking Council's endorsement to exhibit and adopt the strategy.                                                              |

## How the model works

- **One strategy for all communities.** The strategy covers racism against people of all backgrounds, using the Australian Human Rights Commission's definition of racism and one common definition for racism that covers and protects all communities. Councils do not need separate strategies for individual forms of racism.
- **National.** It works in every state and the Northern Territory. State-specific details are placeholders, with the information you need in Section 6 of this Guideline.
- **A menu, not a mandate.** Councils choose from 75 actions. Each is rated Essential, Recommended or Optional for metropolitan, regional, and rural and remote councils.
- **Lean.** Most actions change how existing services are delivered rather than needing new money. A rural council adopting only the Essential actions commits to 18 actions, most at no additional cost.
- **No new research needed.** All data comes from free national sources, mainly the ABS Census.
- **Durable.** Actions are embedded in council's existing planning and reporting cycle so the strategy continues beyond a change of council.

## How to use the template

| Marking          | Meaning                                                                                                               |
|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Yellow highlight | A placeholder. Replace it with local information. Numbers in measures and targets are suggestions: edit them to suit. |
| [Optional]       | Optional text. Delete it if it doesn't apply.                                                                         |
| ★                | A best-practice (excellence) option for councils choosing to do more.                                                 |
| ©                | An action that can be focused on a particular community when racism against it increases (Strategy Section 3.4).      |

Delete the "Before you start" page of the template before the strategy goes to Council.

## 2. Seven steps to an adopted strategy

1. **Get a resolution.** Use the Model Council Report to seek Council's resolution to prepare the strategy. If Council has already resolved to prepare one, go to step 2.
2. **Fill in the template.** Work through Section 3 of this Guideline. Allow about two to three days of officer time.
3. **Choose your actions.** Use the annotated menu in Section 5. Confirm lead teams, timing and costs with the managers concerned.
4. **Seek advice.** Ask council's existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural advisory committees to review the draft, where they exist. If council has none, go to step 5.
5. **Report to Council for exhibition.** Seek endorsement to place the draft on public exhibition.
6. **Exhibit and finalise.** Exhibit for your jurisdiction's usual period, consider submissions, and report back to Council for adoption.
7. **Embed.** Include the chosen actions in council's next delivery, operational or annual plan (see Section 6), and set up annual progress reporting.

Councils that want to go further can build the strategy around a community-led process. Section 8 sets out that approach. It is best practice, not a requirement, and the strategy can be adopted and delivered without it.

### 3. Section-by-section instructions

| Strategy section                        | What to do                                                                                                                                          | Tips                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Cover, document control</b>          | Insert council name, years, adoption details.                                                                                                       | Use a 10-year span, e.g. 2027–2037.                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Acknowledgement of Country</b>       | Insert council's standard acknowledgement.                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Message from the Mayor</b>           | Edit the draft message.                                                                                                                             | Keep to one page.                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Strategy on a page</b>               | Complete last. Choose 2–3 key actions per pillar and 3 headline indicators.                                                                         | Pick actions that are visible to the community and that council is confident of delivering.                                                                                           |
| <b>1.1 Background</b>                   | Insert the resolution date and number.                                                                                                              | An alternative, values-led opening is below this table. You may add one or two sentences on existing council work (a Reconciliation Action Plan, multicultural plan or campaign).     |
| <b>1.3–1.4 Scope, related documents</b> | Name council's related plans; delete lines that don't apply.                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>2.1–2.5 Understanding racism</b>     | No changes needed.                                                                                                                                  | The AHRC definition is published under a Creative Commons licence that allows reuse with attribution. Keep the citation. Optional examples for 2.2 are below this table.              |
| <b>2.6 What the law says</b>            | Insert your state or territory law.                                                                                                                 | See Section 6.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>3.1–3.2 Specific communities</b>     | Delete any communities in the list that aren't relevant locally. You may add others.                                                                | Do not add separate definitions for individual communities doing so implies a hierarchy of importance.                                                                                |
| <b>3.3 Previously adopted policies</b>  | List any policies, statements or positions council has already adopted on racism or specific forms of racism. Delete the section if there are none. | This means adopting the strategy never requires reversing an earlier resolution.                                                                                                      |
| <b>3.4 Targeted response</b>            | No changes needed.                                                                                                                                  | Keep a short contact list of local community organisations (Action 6.1) so council can act quickly.                                                                                   |
| <b>4. Our community</b>                 | Fill in the snapshot from the ABS.                                                                                                                  | See Section 4 of this Guideline. Use council's grants, venue-hire and community directory records for 4.2.                                                                            |
| <b>5. Why this matters</b>              | National figures are pre-filled. Add local evidence if council has it; otherwise delete that block.                                                 | Check for newer Scanlon and Call It Out reports before finalising. Do not commission research just for this section; Action 5.15 is the option for councils that want local evidence. |
| <b>6. Council's role</b>                | Insert state names and bodies. The staff number line is optional (use council's annual report).                                                     | See Section 6.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>7 and Appendix 1</b>                 | Insert state laws and strategies, and council's plans.                                                                                              | See Section 6.                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>8. Vision and principles</b>         | Replace LGA name. Delete optional Principle 7 unless council will build anti-racism outcomes into executive and manager performance planning.       | Principles 1–6 are adapted from those tested with 49 council representatives in the NSW local government co-design workshop (2025).                                                   |

| Strategy section               | What to do                                                                                   | Tips                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>9. Action plan</b>          | Select actions from Section 5. Delete the rest and renumber.                                 | Suggested plan size: rural and remote 15–20 actions; regional 20–30; metropolitan 30–40.                                                                                             |
| <b>10. Governance</b>          | Insert positions and plan names. Delete the working group and advisory blocks if not needed. | Embedding actions in council's planning documents is the single most important step for durability. Don't create new committees just for this strategy unless you choose Action 6.9. |
| <b>11. Measuring progress</b>  | Keep only indicators linked to your chosen actions.                                          | Targets are suggestions: edit them once the Year 1 baseline is known. The two survey indicators rely on Action 5.9.                                                                  |
| <b>12. Review, Definitions</b> | Insert years.                                                                                | Some terms (e.g. vilification, hate crime) have legal meanings that vary between jurisdictions; the definitions are for general understanding only.                                  |

## Alternative opening for Section 1.1 (values-led)

**[LGA name]** is a community where people of every background should feel safe, respected and able to take part. Most people in our community share this view. But racism still happens here, as it does across Australia.

Council wants to play its part in ending racism. This strategy explains what racism is, what council will do about it, and how we will measure our progress.

*[Optional]* This strategy was prepared following Council's resolution of **[date]**.

## Optional examples for Section 2.2

For example: a customer being abused at a council facility (interpersonal); a grants process that is hard to access for people with limited English (institutional); lower participation in local decision-making by some communities over many years (systemic).

## 4. Finding your data

All figures for the community snapshot (Strategy Section 4.1) come from the free ABS Census products.

**How to get there:** go to [abs.gov.au](https://abs.gov.au) → Census → Search Census data → Search by area name. Type your council name and select the **Local Government Area** result. Select **View QuickStats “All persons”**. The Excel **General Community Profile** is available from the same area page under “Community Profiles” → “General Community Profile”.

| Figure in the strategy                                             | QuickStats section                                | General Community Profile table           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| Total population                                                   | "People" (top of page)                            | G01                                       |
| Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people                    | "Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people" | G01, G07                                  |
| Born overseas (Country of birth); top countries of birth           | "Country of birth"                                | G09                                       |
| Language other than English (Language used at home); top languages | "Language used at home"                           | G13                                       |
| Top ancestries                                                     | "Ancestry, top responses"                         | G08                                       |
| Religious affiliation; top responses                               | "Religious affiliation, top responses"            | G14                                       |
| Recent arrivals (optional)                                         | Not in QuickStats.                                | G10 (country of birth by year of arrival) |

- **State comparison:** QuickStats shows state or territory figures in the column next to your council's figures.
- **Which Census:** use the most recent Census available. Results from the 2026 Census are expected to be released progressively from 2027; update the snapshot when they are.
- **Optional extras:** if council already subscribes to a community profile service, or your state has a free multicultural data portal, you may use it. These are not required.
- **Council workforce:** the ABS does not publish data on council workforces. The strategy does not require a workforce snapshot. If council already holds workforce diversity data, you may add a short summary.
- **Local experience of racism:** no free source provides racism data at council level. Action 5.9 (adding questions to council's existing community survey) builds local data over time at little cost. Councils that want a fuller local picture can commission research with affected communities (Action 5.15); Section 8 explains how several councils have done this.

## 5. Choosing your actions

### Council types and priority ratings

Each action is rated for three council types. Choose the type that best describes your council; capacity matters as much as location.

| Council type                 | Description                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Metropolitan (M)</b>      | Capital city and major urban councils         |
| <b>Regional (R)</b>          | Regional cities and larger towns              |
| <b>Rural and remote (RR)</b> | Small rural, agricultural and remote councils |

| Rating                 | Meaning                                    |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>E – Essential</b>   | Recommended for every council of this type |
| <b>R – Recommended</b> | Include if capacity allows                 |
| <b>O – Optional</b>    | Include where it suits local circumstances |

### Cost bands

| Band     | Range                 | Example                                                                                                                   |
|----------|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| \$0      | Existing resources    | Adding content to staff induction                                                                                         |
| \$       | Under \$5,000         | Joining a regional campaign                                                                                               |
| \$\$     | \$5,000–\$25,000      | Bystander training for community groups                                                                                   |
| \$\$\$   | \$25,000–\$100,000    | Traineeships; a community reporting network; a customised bystander training pilot (Inner West: \$120,000 over two years) |
| \$\$\$\$ | Over \$100,000 a year | A dedicated anti-racism officer                                                                                           |

Cost bands are indicative, drawing on published council budgets such as Inner West Council's \$15,000 and \$50,000 annual program allocations. Confirm costs locally.

### Examples from other councils

Each action lists at least one council that has delivered it, or the research that recommends it, where a precedent has been identified. Sources are listed in Section 10. "Inner West" refers to its *Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–2026* and "Darebin" to its *Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2026–30*, unless otherwise stated. Nine actions (4.13–4.15, 5.11–5.15 and 6.11) draw on four local anti-racism studies conducted by Victoria University with councils in Melbourne; these are described in Section 8.

## Annotated action menu

**Type (column 3):** P = Prevent · T = Target · Rs = Respond · Rc = Recover · ☉ = suited to a targeted response.

**Priority (column 5):** 1st entry Metro (M) / Second entry Regional (R) / Third entry Rural and remote (RR).

E = Essential · R = Recommended · O = Optional

**Cost:** \$0 = existing resources · \$ = under \$5,000 · \$\$ = \$5,000–\$25,000 · \$\$\$ = \$25,000–\$100,000 · \$\$\$\$ = >\$100,000

★ = excellence option.

### Pillar 1. Respecting First Nations peoples

| No.    | Action                                                                                                                                                  | Type | Cost     | M / R / RR | Example councils or source                                                                        |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.1    | Seek advice from [council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory committee / local Aboriginal organisations] on the delivery of this strategy | P    | \$0      | E / E / E  | Inner West (strategy developed with its Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee) |
| 1.2    | Celebrate NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week with local First Nations people and organisations                                                | P    | \$–\$\$  | E / E / E  | Inner West                                                                                        |
| 1.3    | Include First Nations cultures, history and Reconciliation in staff induction                                                                           | P    | \$0      | E / E / E  | Inner West                                                                                        |
| 1.4    | Promote the Call It Out register for reporting racism against First Nations people, and share its annual findings with council's advisory committee     | Rs ☉ | \$0      | E / E / E  | Inner West                                                                                        |
| 1.5    | Include First Nations names and people in council's naming policy priorities                                                                            | P    | \$0      | R / R / R  | Inner West                                                                                        |
| 1.6    | Work with Traditional Owners to protect Aboriginal sites of significance                                                                                | P    | \$0–\$\$ | R / E / E  | Inner West                                                                                        |
| 1.7    | Support First Nations staff to reduce cultural load and build peer networks                                                                             | T    | \$\$     | R / R / O  | Inner West (\$15,000 p.a.)                                                                        |
| 1.8    | Create First Nations employment pathways, such as traineeships                                                                                          | T    | \$\$\$   | R / R / R  | Inner West                                                                                        |
| 1.9    | Encourage local businesses and organisations to develop Reconciliation Action Plans                                                                     | P    | \$0      | R / R / O  | Inner West (with Reconciliation Australia)                                                        |
| 1.10   | Support school events that bring students together to learn about First Nations cultures                                                                | P    | \$–\$\$  | R / R / O  | Darebin (Schools NAIDOC Yarning Conference, cited by AHRC)                                        |
| 1.11 ★ | Create places of recognition and learning, such as memorials or interpretive signage, in partnership with Traditional Owners                            | P    | \$\$\$   | O / O / O  | Inner West (Aboriginal Survival Memorials)                                                        |

**Delivery tip:** Check council's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and delete any duplicate actions. If council has no RAP, the Essential actions form a sound starting point.

## Pillar 2. Leading by example

| No.    | Action                                                                                                                    | Type | Cost     | M / R / RR | Example councils or source                                                                |
|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|----------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.1    | Include anti-racism information and this strategy in staff and councillor induction                                       | P    | \$0      | E / E / E  | Inner West; Waverley                                                                      |
| 2.2    | Make sure staff know how to raise concerns about racism at work, and that complaints processes deal with racism clearly   | Rs   | \$0      | E / E / E  | Brent Council, UK (Corporate Anti-Racism Action Plan 2024–28)                             |
| 2.3    | Give frontline staff clear guidance and support for dealing with racist behaviour from customers                          | Rs ☉ | \$0      | E / E / E  | <i>Precedent to confirm</i>                                                               |
| 2.4    | Provide anti-racism training for councillors and staff                                                                    | P    | \$\$     | E / R / R  | Inner West                                                                                |
| 2.5    | Invite councillors and senior managers to visit local cultural and faith organisations early in each council term         | P ☉  | \$0      | R / R / R  | Waverley (Mayor and senior staff visits to community institutions each term, generalised) |
| 2.6    | Review HR policies and procedures to strengthen anti-racism and anti-discrimination outcomes                              | P    | \$0      | R / R / O  | Inner West                                                                                |
| 2.7    | Make recruitment more inclusive, for example by advertising through community networks and using diverse interview panels | T    | \$0      | R / R / R  | Inner West                                                                                |
| 2.8    | Encourage suppliers from diverse backgrounds through procurement policies and practices                                   | P    | \$0      | R / R / O  | Inner West; Darebin (action 3.2.4)                                                        |
| 2.9    | Offer mentoring or leadership development for staff from culturally diverse backgrounds                                   | T    | \$       | R / O / O  | Inner West                                                                                |
| 2.10   | Create traineeships or apprenticeships for people from diverse backgrounds                                                | T    | \$\$\$   | R / O / O  | Inner West                                                                                |
| 2.11 ★ | Add a question about experience of racism to council's existing staff survey                                              | Rs   | \$0      | R / R / O  | Inner West (Staff Engagement Survey 2025)                                                 |
| 2.12 ★ | Create a dedicated anti-racism officer role                                                                               | All  | \$\$\$\$ | R / O / O  | Darebin (the only such position in Australia, per AHRC 2024 mapping report)               |

**Delivery tip:** 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 can be done in a single review of existing induction, grievance and customer-aggression procedures. For 2.4, consider partnering with a neighbouring council and using free material from the Australian Human Rights Commission's "There's nothing casual about racism" campaign. An Australian council precedent for 2.3 is still being confirmed.

### Pillar 3. Fair and welcoming services

| No.    | Action                                                                                                      | Type | Cost    | M / R / RR | Example councils or source                                                 |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.1    | Review council's written communications for plain language and accessibility                                | P    | \$0     | E / E / E  | Inner West                                                                 |
| 3.2    | Make grants criteria and application processes accessible to groups of all backgrounds                      | P    | \$0     | E / E / E  | Inner West; Darebin                                                        |
| 3.3    | Make sure venue hire is fair and accessible for community groups of all backgrounds                         | P ☉  | \$0     | R / R / R  | Darebin (action 2.4.3); Inner West                                         |
| 3.4    | Make library collections and programs reflect the community's diversity                                     | P    | \$0     | E / R / R  | Inner West                                                                 |
| 3.5    | Improve access to translated information and interpreting                                                   | P ☉  | \$–\$\$ | E / R / O  | Darebin (action 2.1.1: Language Aid, multilingual web content); Inner West |
| 3.6    | Plan community engagement so the language, place, format and timing work for diverse communities            | P    | \$0     | R / R / R  | Darebin (engagement action 2.1.1)                                          |
| 3.7    | Make sure sporting ground allocation supports groups of all backgrounds                                     | P    | \$0     | R / R / R  | Inner West (Good Sports and sporting grounds allocation policies)          |
| 3.8    | Consider diverse users when designing parks and open spaces                                                 | P    | \$0     | R / R / O  | Darebin (action 2.4.2)                                                     |
| 3.9    | Promote inclusion and diversity in council's early learning and children's services                         | P    | \$0     | R / R / R  | Inner West                                                                 |
| 3.10   | Use images in council communications that reflect First Nations peoples and the community's diversity       | P    | \$      | R / O / O  | Inner West                                                                 |
| 3.11 ★ | Check new policies, programs and services for their impact on different communities before they are adopted | P    | \$0     | R / O / O  | Darebin (Equity Impact Assessment, <i>Towards Equality</i> framework)      |

**Delivery tip:** Councils without children's services should delete 3.9.

## Pillar 4. Connected communities

| No.    | Action                                                                                                                                                           | Type | Cost        | M / R / RR | Example councils or source                                                                                                          |
|--------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|-------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4.1    | Include celebration of local cultures and faiths in council's existing events program                                                                            | P    | \$0         | E / E / E  | Inner West                                                                                                                          |
| 4.2    | Share national anti-racism campaign material, such as the Australian Human Rights Commission's "There's nothing casual about racism", on council channels        | P ☉  | \$0         | E / E / E  | Inner West                                                                                                                          |
| 4.3    | Mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) with community partners                                                       | P    | \$–\$\$     | R / R / R  | Inner West (\$15,000 p.a. grants)                                                                                                   |
| 4.4    | Support community-led events that celebrate diverse cultures and faiths, through existing grants                                                                 | P ☉  | \$0–\$\$    | E / R / R  | Darebin (action 3.1.3); Inner West                                                                                                  |
| 4.5    | Work with communities to develop simple resources explaining racism, its effects and how to report it and get support after an experience of racism              | P    | \$–\$\$     | R / R / R  | Inner West; Darebin, Hume and Merri-bek (shared multilingual anti-racism booklet, 2025)                                             |
| 4.6    | Offer bystander ("upstander") training to community groups, sports clubs and businesses                                                                          | P    | \$\$–\$\$\$ | R / R / O  | Inner West (with Western Sydney University's Challenging Racism Project; \$120,000 over two years)                                  |
| 4.7    | Work with local schools to promote evidence-based anti-racism programs                                                                                           | T    | \$0–\$      | R / R / R  | Inner West                                                                                                                          |
| 4.8    | Run or support a youth program that builds understanding across cultures and faiths                                                                              | T ☉  | \$\$–\$\$\$ | R / O / O  | Waverley ("Culture Waves", funded by a state social cohesion grant)                                                                 |
| 4.9    | Provide or promote business workshops for First Nations and culturally diverse entrepreneurs                                                                     | T    | \$0–\$      | R / R / O  | Inner West                                                                                                                          |
| 4.10   | Join a regional anti-racism campaign with neighbouring councils                                                                                                  | P    | \$          | R / R / R  | Greater Hobart councils ("We Stand Together Against Racism", 2025, per council audit)                                               |
| 4.11   | Install anti-racism signage, such as Racism Not Welcome, in consultation with local community groups                                                             | P    | \$          | O / O / O  | City of Sydney; Inner West; Burwood (per council audit)                                                                             |
| 4.12 ★ | Run a multi-year local anti-racism campaign with community-designed content                                                                                      | P    | \$\$\$      | R / O / O  | Sunshine Coast, Qld ("Shine a Light on Racism", per council audit); Greater Dandenong ("Racism. Get Up. Speak Out.")                |
| 4.13   | Run workshops with communities on what racism is, people's rights, and how to report it and get support                                                          | T ☉  | \$–\$\$     | R / R / R  | Casey and Greater Dandenong roadmap (rec. 2); Whittlesea roadmap (rec. 10)                                                          |
| 4.14   | Work with local employers and business groups to prevent racism in local workplaces                                                                              | T    | \$–\$\$     | R / R / O  | Casey and Greater Dandenong (employment the most common setting, 58%); Whittlesea (49%)                                             |
| 4.15   | Brief shopping centres, transport operators, health services and security providers on local support services, so their staff can refer people who report racism | T    | \$0–\$      | R / R / O  | Whittlesea roadmap (rec. 7, "conduit" stakeholders); shopping centres the most common setting in Wyndham (54%) and Whittlesea (51%) |

**Delivery tip:** Symbolic campaigns such as signage (4.11) work best alongside practical actions and with community support. Actions 4.13–4.15 target the settings where racism is most often reported – employment, shopping centres, public transport, schools and health services. Councils cannot regulate those settings, but can brief and connect the organisations that run them.

## Pillar 5. Reporting and responding

| No.    | Action                                                                                                                                                                        | Type | Cost    | M / R / RR | Example councils or source                                                                                                                      |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5.1    | Publish clear information on where to report racism and get support (police, human rights bodies, community services) on council's website and at service centres             | Rs ☉ | \$0     | E / E / E  | Waverley; Hume (anti-racism reporting and support page, per council audit)                                                                      |
| 5.2    | Work with communities to develop a list of local support services and community organisations for referral for support                                                        | Rs ☉ | \$0–\$  | E / E / E  | Darebin (action 2.3.1); Waverley (community organisation database)                                                                              |
| 5.3    | Prepare a short plan for how council will respond to a serious racist incident in the community                                                                               | Rs ☉ | \$0     | R / R / R  | Waverley (emergency response plan)                                                                                                              |
| 5.4    | Work with communities to develop a local racist incident reporting framework (e.g. graffiti, abuse at facilities) and report trends to Council                                | Rs   | \$0–\$  | R / R / R  | Waverley (six-monthly reporting)                                                                                                                |
| 5.5    | Remove racist graffiti from public places quickly and report it to police                                                                                                     | Rs ☉ | \$0     | E / E / E  | Waverley (reporting through established channels)                                                                                               |
| 5.6    | Hold listening sessions with communities affected by a rise in racism                                                                                                         | Rc ☉ | \$0–\$  | R / R / R  | Waverley                                                                                                                                        |
| 5.7    | Work with police on safety for community places affected by racism and improving their referrals to other agencies where racism does not reach a criminal threshold           | Rs ☉ | \$0     | R / R / R  | Waverley (security assessments with police); Whittlesea and Wyndham roadmaps (police referral to support services)                              |
| 5.8    | Provide clear information about approvals and rules for public gatherings in council spaces                                                                                   | P    | \$0     | R / R / O  | Waverley                                                                                                                                        |
| 5.9    | Add questions on feeling safe and welcome to council's existing community satisfaction survey                                                                                 | Rs   | \$0–\$  | E / R / R  | Woollahra (community satisfaction survey belonging and safety results, used in its Diversity Strategy 2025)                                     |
| 5.10 ★ | Establish or join a community-led racism reporting and support network, led by organisations the community already trusts                                                     | Rs   | \$\$\$  | R / O / O  | Wyndham Anti-Racism Support Network (2021); Whittlesea; Casey and Greater Dandenong; Hume, Merri-bek and Darebin                                |
| 5.11   | Promote reporting and support pathways through trusted community organisations and in community languages, not only on council's website                                      | Rs ☉ | \$–\$\$ | E / R / R  | All four Victoria University roadmaps: not knowing where to report is the largest single barrier (68% Casey and Greater Dandenong; 71% Wyndham) |
| 5.12   | Make sure people can report racism to council anonymously, and promote anonymous options                                                                                      | Rs   | \$0–\$  | R / R / R  | Casey and Greater Dandenong roadmap (rec. 3)                                                                                                    |
| 5.13   | Train staff in community-facing services (libraries, neighbourhood houses, customer service) to receive a report of racism, listen, record it and refer the person to support | Rs ☉ | \$0–\$  | R / R / R  | Wyndham and Whittlesea roadmaps (first-contact organisations; libraries and neighbourhood centres as trusted local venues)                      |
| 5.14 ★ | Publish an annual summary of racism reported locally, with the community organisations involved                                                                               | Rs   | \$0–\$  | R / O / O  | Whittlesea roadmap (rec. 8); Wyndham support network (coordinating centre role)                                                                 |
| 5.15 ★ | Research local experiences of racism with affected communities, using peer facilitators from those communities                                                                | All  | \$\$\$  | R / O / O  | Maribyrnong, Casey and Greater Dandenong, Whittlesea and Wyndham (each with Victoria University)                                                |

**Delivery tip:** Actions 5.3 and 5.6 support the targeted-response process in Strategy Section 3.4. Councils that expect to face community tensions should consider both. Across four local anti-racism studies, the largest barrier to reporting is not knowing where to report, and the second is believing nothing will change: Actions 5.11 and 5.14 address these barriers.

## Pillar 6. Partnerships and advocacy

| No.    | Action                                                                                                                  | Type | Cost    | M / R / RR | Example councils or source                                                                                     |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|---------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6.1    | Keep a contact list of local cultural, faith and First Nations organisations, and meet them regularly                   | P ☉  | \$0     | E / E / E  | Waverley                                                                                                       |
| 6.2    | Mayor meets leaders of local cultural and faith communities at the start of each council term                           | P ☉  | \$0     | R / R / R  | Waverley (generalised)                                                                                         |
| 6.3    | Work with neighbouring councils to share resources and coordinate responses                                             | P ☉  | \$0     | R / R / E  | Waverley (proposed resilience alliance); Darebin, Hume and Merri-bek                                           |
| 6.4    | Take part in state or national local government anti-racism networks                                                    | P    | \$0     | R / R / O  | Inner West (engaged with AHRC on the National Framework)                                                       |
| 6.5    | Advocate to state and federal governments for anti-racism funding and action on local priorities                        | P    | \$0     | R / R / R  | Inner West                                                                                                     |
| 6.6    | Seek state and federal grants to fund actions in this strategy                                                          | P    | \$0     | E / E / E  | Waverley (state social cohesion grant)                                                                         |
| 6.7    | Provide free or low-cost venue access to organisations working against racism or discrimination                         | T    | \$0–\$  | R / R / O  | Inner West                                                                                                     |
| 6.8 ★  | Work towards the Welcoming Cities Standard                                                                              | P    | \$–\$\$ | R / R / O  | Darebin (Welcoming Cities "Excelling" accreditation, 2024)                                                     |
| 6.9 ★  | Set up a community advisory group to guide and oversee the strategy                                                     | All  | \$–\$\$ | R / O / O  | Sunshine Coast (Multicultural Advisory Group, per council audit); Brighton & Hove, UK                          |
| 6.10 ★ | Publish an annual anti-racism scorecard and hold a public progress session                                              | All  | \$–\$\$ | O / O / O  | Liverpool City Council, UK (Citywide Anti-Racism Strategy, 2026)                                               |
| 6.11   | Pay community members for their time and expertise when they take part in co-design, peer facilitation or advisory work | T    | \$–\$\$ | R / R / R  | Welcoming Cities and Victoria University guide (payment, certificates and vouchers for community contributors) |

**Delivery tip:** For rural and remote councils, working with neighbouring councils (6.3) is often the most practical way to deliver actions that would be hard to resource alone. Action 6.11 reflects a consistent finding across the local studies: community members who contribute their time and expertise should be paid or formally recognised.

## Menu summary

| Pillar                              | Actions   | \$0 or \$0-\$ | Essential:<br>Metro | Essential:<br>Regional | Essential:<br>Rural and<br>remote |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Respecting First Nations peoples | 11        | 5             | 4                   | 5                      | 5                                 |
| 2. Leading by example               | 12        | 8             | 4                   | 3                      | 3                                 |
| 3. Fair and welcoming services      | 11        | 9             | 4                   | 2                      | 2                                 |
| 4. Connected communities            | 15        | 5             | 3                   | 2                      | 2                                 |
| 5. Reporting and responding         | 15        | 12            | 5                   | 3                      | 3                                 |
| 6. Partnerships and advocacy        | 11        | 7             | 2                   | 2                      | 3                                 |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>75</b> | <b>46</b>     | <b>22</b>           | <b>17</b>              | <b>18</b>                         |

## 6. State and territory reference

Use this table to fill in the state-specific placeholders in Strategy Sections 2.6, 6.2, 7, 10.2 and Appendix 1.

| Jurisdiction              | Anti-discrimination and vilification law                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Human rights / anti-discrimination body                   | Council planning and reporting documents                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>New South Wales</b>    | <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1977</i> ; criminal offences in the <i>Crimes Act 1900</i>                                                                                                                                                       | Anti-Discrimination NSW                                   | Integrated Planning and Reporting: Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan, Annual Report                                               |
| <b>Victoria</b>           | <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> (civil vilification protections from 15 April 2026); <i>Crimes Act 1958</i> (serious vilification offences from 20 September 2025). The <i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001</i> has been repealed. | Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission   | Community Vision, Council Plan, Financial Plan, Annual Budget, Annual Report                                                                                 |
| <b>Queensland</b>         | <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1991</i> . Amendments passed in 2024 have been paused and have no commencement date.                                                                                                                             | Queensland Human Rights Commission                        | Five-year Corporate Plan, annual Operational Plan, Annual Report                                                                                             |
| <b>South Australia</b>    | <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</i> ; <i>Racial Vilification Act 1996</i>                                                                                                                                                                     | Equal Opportunity SA (Commissioner for Equal Opportunity) | Strategic Management Plans (including long-term financial plan), Annual Business Plan, Annual Report                                                         |
| <b>Western Australia</b>  | <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</i> ; racist harassment and incitement offences in the <i>Criminal Code</i>                                                                                                                                   | Equal Opportunity Commission (WA)                         | Council Plan (replacing the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan under recent reforms; some councils are still transitioning), Annual Report |
| <b>Tasmania</b>           | <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1998</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Equal Opportunity Tasmania                                | Strategic Plan, Annual Plan, Annual Report (confirm against current local government reforms)                                                                |
| <b>Northern Territory</b> | <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1992</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Northern Territory Anti-Discrimination Commission         | Municipal, Regional or Shire Plan (including service delivery plan and budget), Long-Term Financial Plan, Annual Report                                      |
| <b>ACT</b>                | Not applicable: the ACT has no local councils.                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                           |                                                                                                                                                              |

**Commonwealth law applies everywhere:** *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (including the racial hatred provisions in section 18C) and *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986*. Complaints can be made to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

**Laws are changing.** Several jurisdictions have changed their hate, vilification and anti-discrimination laws since 2025. Confirm the current position with your state or territory body before finalising the strategy. This table was checked in September 2026.

## State and national strategies to reference (Appendix 1)

| Jurisdiction        | Examples                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| National            | National Anti-Racism Framework (AHRC, 2024); <i>Towards Fairness: A multicultural Australia for all</i> (2024); National Agreement on Closing the Gap (2020) |
| New South Wales     | Anti-Racism Strategy for NSW Local Government: Guidelines and Template (NSW Premier's Department, 2026)                                                      |
| Victoria            | Victoria's Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–2029                                                                                                                    |
| South Australia     | South Australian public sector Anti-Racism Strategy 2023–2028                                                                                                |
| Queensland          | Queensland Multicultural Action Plan (current edition)                                                                                                       |
| Other jurisdictions | Check with your state or territory multicultural affairs agency                                                                                              |

## Where people can report racism (for Action 5.1)

| Situation                                                   | Where to go                                                                                                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Immediate danger or a crime in progress                     | Police: 000                                                                                                                                |
| Other crimes, including suspected hate crimes               | State or territory police non-emergency line                                                                                               |
| Discrimination or vilification complaints                   | Australian Human Rights Commission ( <a href="https://humanrights.gov.au">humanrights.gov.au</a> ) or your state or territory body (above) |
| Racism against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people | Call It Out register ( <a href="https://callitout.com.au">callitout.com.au</a> )                                                           |
| Serious online abuse                                        | eSafety Commissioner ( <a href="https://esafety.gov.au">esafety.gov.au</a> )                                                               |
| Community-specific support                                  | Local and state peak organisations for affected communities <b>[add local contacts]</b>                                                    |

## 7. Consultation and adoption

The model is designed to be adopted without new studies or large consultation programs.

- **Advisory committees.** Use existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural advisory committees, where they exist, to review the draft (Step 4).
- **Public exhibition.** Exhibit the draft for your jurisdiction's usual period. Invite submissions from local cultural, faith and First Nations organisations directly, using council's community contact list.
- **Considering submissions.** Summarise submissions in the final report to Council, and note any changes made.
- **After adoption.** Publish the strategy on council's website, include actions in council's planning documents, and brief lead teams.

Councils taking the community-led approach in Section 8 should allow considerably longer: the four Victoria University projects each ran over 12 to 24 months.

## 8. Best practice: community-led responses to racism

**This section is best practice, not a requirement.** Every action in the menu can be delivered without it, and a council with limited capacity should not delay adopting a strategy in order to do this first. It is included because the strongest Australian local anti-racism work has been built this way, and because several of the actions in the menu (4.5, 4.13, 5.2, 5.4, 5.10–5.15, 6.11) come from it.

### Why it matters

Four local studies conducted by Victoria University with Melbourne councils between 2021 and 2026 found a consistent pattern:

|                                          | Wyndham (2021)                                    | Whittlesea (2022)                     | Casey and Greater Dandenong (2023)    | Maribyrnong (2026)                     |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Experienced racism in the past 12 months | 64%                                               | 59%                                   | 61%                                   | 81%                                    |
| Reported it to an organisation           | 13%                                               | 17%                                   | 18%                                   | 15%                                    |
| Most common settings                     | Shopping centres, public transport, public spaces | Shopping centres, employment, schools | Employment, shopping centres, schools | Employment, education, public settings |

The Wyndham, Whittlesea, and Casey and Greater Dandenong figures are for the 12 months before each survey. The Maribyrnong figure is from the council's public summary of its 2026 study, which does not state a reference period (access via: <https://antiracismvictoria.com.au/resources/>).

The reasons people gave for not reporting were also consistent: not knowing where to report, believing nothing would change, fearing they would not be taken seriously or would face consequences, and not trusting the organisations involved. Several studies found that people who had reported were often left worse off, and less likely to report again.

The practical implication for councils is that publishing a reporting page is necessary but not sufficient. People report to organisations they already trust, in languages they speak, close to where they live, and only when they believe something will follow.

## The six-step approach

The approach is set out in *Empowerment through community-led responses to racism: A practical guide for local governments* (Peucker, Claridge and Clark; Welcoming Cities and Victoria University, 2022). Its six steps overlap rather than run strictly in sequence:

1. **Understand the local population.** Use Census and other data on ethnic, cultural and religious composition, language proficiency, where people live and how the population is changing. Section 4 of this Guideline covers the data sources.
2. **Engage local organisations.** Identify service providers and community groups, connect with existing networks, and survey organisations about their capacity to support someone reporting racism and what they would need.
3. **Engage communities.** Hold information sessions, create safe spaces for people to share experiences, and build relationships with community leaders and grassroots groups.
4. **Understand what communities need.** Use several parallel methods: an anonymous community survey, focus groups facilitated by peers from each community, and informal conversations for people who will not take part in either.
5. **Analyse and report publicly.** Publish what was found, including service gaps and community recommendations.
6. **Establish support structures.** Co-design a roadmap that matches community expectations to organisational capacity, identify first-contact organisations, designate a coordinating body, train participating staff, and plan promotion and funding.

## What communities asked for

Across the four studies, people consistently asked that support services be:

- provided by organisations they already trust, and located close to where they live
- culturally appropriate, and available in community languages
- staffed by people from their own communities
- better promoted, because low awareness was the single largest barrier
- advocacy-focused rather than purely investigative
- able to accept a report without requiring the person to prove racism occurred
- clear about what will happen next, with a named contact who follows up
- under the control of the person reporting, who decides what happens with their report

## What a support network looks like

In response to these needs and expectations of local communities, three community-led local anti-racism support networks have been set up in Melbourne's outer west (Wyndham), north (Whittlesea) and south-east (Casey, Greater Dandenong and Cardinia). While these networks are structured differently, they all offer qualified and advocacy-oriented anti-racism support and referral advice in a culturally safe environment and record reported cases of racism to develop local evidence on racism (<https://antiracismvictoria.com.au/support-services/>).

## Council's role

Councils in these projects generally did not run the support network themselves. Their contributions were:

- partnering with a university or research organisation, and helping fund the work
- providing demographic data and analysis
- opening the door to local organisations through existing relationships
- hosting the first meeting and convening partners
- paying for training for first-contact organisations
- supporting the coordinating body, sometimes financially, over the long term
- lending institutional legitimacy so organisations and communities would take part
- promoting the network through council channels

## Risks to plan for

The Welcoming Cities guide is direct about potential pitfalls and what to avoid:

- **Consultation that goes nowhere.** Not acting on what communities say deepens cynicism and makes future engagement harder. Do not start unless council intends to follow through.
- **Putting the burden on the people affected.** Communities should shape the response without becoming responsible for fixing racism.
- **Relying only on established networks**, which can miss newer or informal community groups.
- **Consultation fatigue** among organisations already asked to contribute to many processes.
- **Under-resourcing**, especially expecting community organisations to absorb new work without funding.
- **Re-traumatising people** through reporting processes that are procedural rather than supportive.
- **Unpaid contribution.** Pay peer facilitators and community contributors, or recognise them formally (Action 6.11).

Two further points from the guide: Census data is five years old at its oldest and may not reflect a fast-changing population; and running a local project does not mean a council has more racism than its neighbours, since racism exists everywhere. Say so publicly at the outset.

## Scaled-down options

A council that cannot run a full process can still take parts of it:

| If council has                                  | Consider                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| No capacity for research                        | Actions 5.11 and 5.13: promote existing pathways through trusted organisations, and train council's own frontline staff to receive a report of racism |
| Some capacity                                   | Actions 4.13 and 5.12: community workshops on reporting, and an anonymous reporting option                                                            |
| A neighbouring council with similar communities | A joint project (Action 6.3). Hume, Merri-bek and Darebin produced a shared multilingual anti-racism booklet this way                                 |
| Research and partnership capacity               | Actions 5.15 and 5.10: a local study with peer facilitators, leading to a community-led support network                                               |

## 9. Measuring progress

- **Set baselines in Year 1.** Record the starting point for each indicator in Strategy Section 11, then edit the suggested targets.
- **Use existing surveys.** Add one or two questions to council's existing community satisfaction survey (Action 5.9). Suggested wording, to adapt to your survey's format:
  - "I feel welcome and that I belong in [LGA name]" (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
  - "I feel safe in public places in [LGA name]" (strongly agree to strongly disagree)
- **Report annually** through council's existing reporting cycle. A one-page public summary is optional.
- **Keep it consistent.** Using the same questions and indicators as other councils using this model will allow comparison and shared learning over time.

## 10. Sources

### Examples from other councils

| Council                                           | Source                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Inner West Council (NSW)                          | Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–2026                                                                                                                                                                   |
| City of Darebin (Vic)                             | Cultural Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2026–30; <i>Towards Equality</i> framework 2019–2029 (Equity Impact Assessment); <i>Mapping government anti-racism programs and policies</i> (2024) |
| Darebin, Hume and Merri-bek (Vic)                 | Shared multilingual anti-racism support booklet (March 2025) media release, 21 March 2025                                                                                                        |
| Hume City Council (Vic)                           | Anti-racism Reporting and Support Services                                                                                                                                                       |
| City of Greater Dandenong and City of Casey (Vic) | Racism. Get Up. Speak Out.; anti-racism support network                                                                                                                                          |
| Wyndham City Council (Vic)                        | Wyndham Anti-Racism Support Network (2021): <a href="http://welcomingcities.org.au">welcomingcities.org.au</a>                                                                                   |
| City of Maribyrnong (Vic)                         | New roadmap to tackle racism in Maribyrnong (August 2026)                                                                                                                                        |
| Waverley Council (NSW)                            | Model Antisemitism Strategy for Local Councils (2025)                                                                                                                                            |
| Woollahra Council (NSW)                           | Our Diversity Strategy (October 2025), using community satisfaction survey results                                                                                                               |
| Sunshine Coast Council (Qld)                      | Shine a Light on Racism                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Greater Hobart councils (Tas)                     | We Stand Together Against Racism (2025)                                                                                                                                                          |
| City of Sydney and Burwood Council (NSW)          | #RacismNotWelcome signage                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Brent Council (UK)                                | Corporate Anti-Racism Action Plan 2024–2028: <a href="http://brent.gov.uk">brent.gov.uk</a>                                                                                                      |
| Liverpool City Council (UK)                       | Citywide Anti-Racism Strategy (2026): <a href="http://liverpool.gov.uk">liverpool.gov.uk</a>                                                                                                     |
| Brighton & Hove City Council (UK)                 | Anti-Racism Strategy 2023–2028                                                                                                                                                                   |

### Community-led practice and local studies (Section 8)

| Source                                                                                                                                                                               | Use                                                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Peucker, Claridge and Clark, <i>Empowerment through community-led responses to racism: A practical guide for local governments</i> , Welcoming Cities and Victoria University (2022) | The six-step approach; council's role; risks to plan for                                                                      |
| Peucker, Clark and Claridge, <i>All in this together: A community-led response to racism for the City of Wyndham</i> , Victoria University (2021)                                    | Support network structure; 96 community survey responses and 8 peer-facilitated focus groups                                  |
| Peucker, Clark and Claridge, <i>Speaking out against racism: An anti-racism roadmap for Whittlesea</i> , Victoria University with Whittlesea Community Connections (2022)            | Briefing “conduit” organisations (Action 4.15); annual public reporting (Action 5.14); 97 survey responses and 6 focus groups |

| Source                                                                                                                                                        | Use                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Peucker and Clark, <i>Towards improved anti-racism support in Casey and Greater Dandenong</i> , Victoria University (2023)                                    | Community workshops (Action 4.13); anonymous reporting (Action 5.12); 112 survey responses and 11 focus groups |
| <i>Maribyrnong Anti-Racism Project: Community Voices and a local anti-racism roadmap</i> , Victoria University with Maribyrnong City Council (2026)           | Six priority areas; 102 survey respondents                                                                     |
| Anti-Racism Victoria, support services directory: <a href="https://antiracismvictoria.com.au/support-services">antiracismvictoria.com.au/support-services</a> | The three Victorian community-led support networks described in Section 8                                      |

## Data and research

| Source                                                                                                          | Use                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census QuickStats and Community Profiles                                       | Community snapshot                            |
| Australian Human Rights Commission, <i>National Anti-Racism Framework</i> (2024)                                | Definition of racism; key terms               |
| Scanlon Institute, <i>Mapping Social Cohesion 2024 and 2025</i>                                                 | Experience of discrimination; views on racism |
| Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, <i>Social cohesion and social connection</i>                        | Reports Scanlon 2024 figures                  |
| Jumbunna Institute (UTS), <i>Call It Out Annual Report 2024–25</i>                                              | Racism against First Nations people           |
| Peucker and others, <i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i> (2025), Victoria University                                | Under-reporting of racism                     |
| NSW Premier's Department, <i>Anti-Racism Strategy for NSW Local Government</i> co-design workshop report (2025) | Origin of the six principles                  |
| Western Sydney University, Challenging Racism Project                                                           | Bystander training partner (Inner West)       |
| Welcoming Cities                                                                                                | Welcoming Cities Standard (Action 6.8)        |