

# Arup's Reconciliation Action Plan in Canada

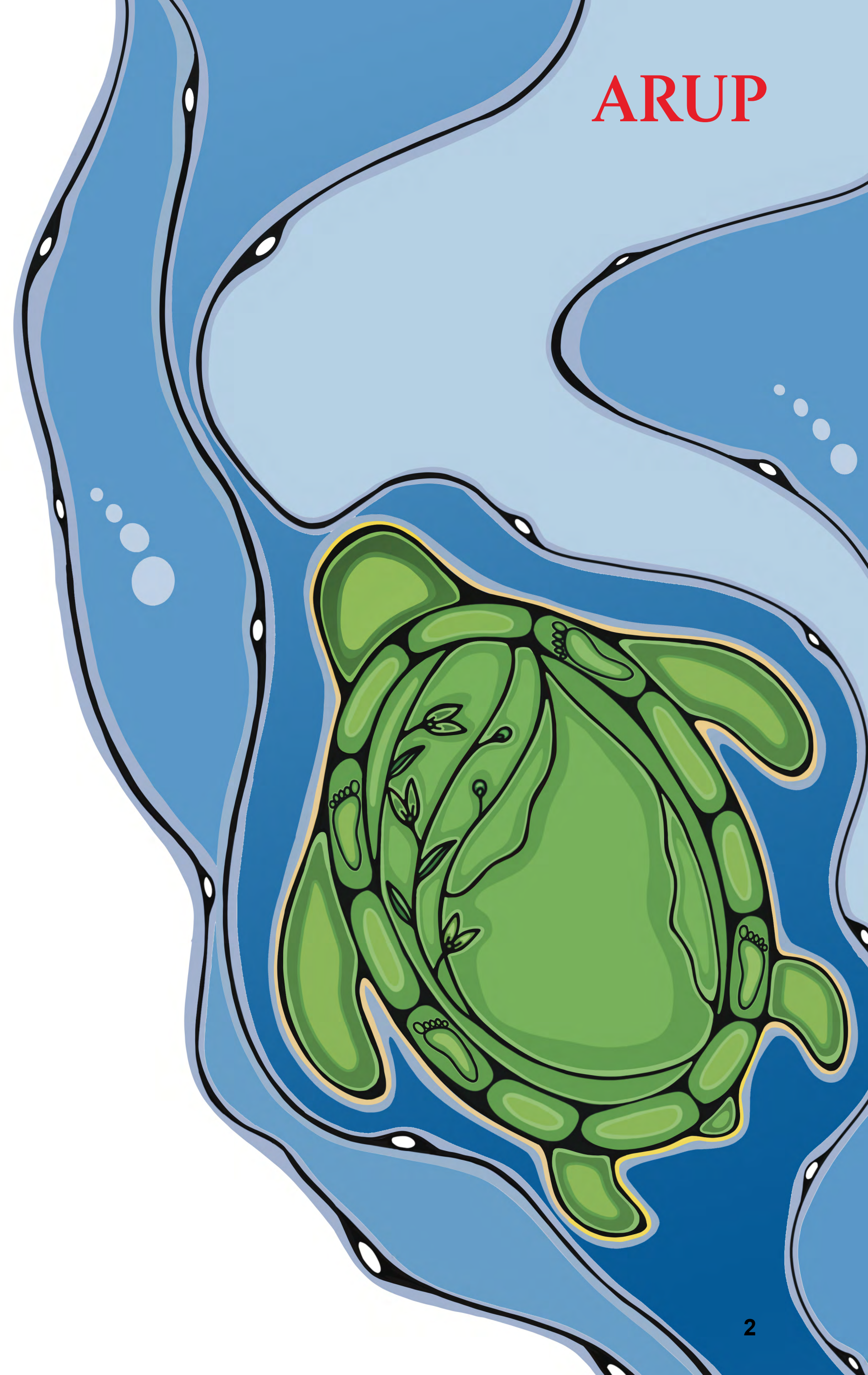


# Land acknowledgement

Arup acknowledges that our work spans many territories, treaty areas and unceded lands across North America, known as Turtle Island to many Indigenous Peoples. We recognize the land, water and air that connects us with Indigenous People and the benefits that these elements offer to us. We recognize that the Indigenous Peoples are stewards of this land, thank them for sharing their homelands with us and understand the importance of drawing on their expertise as we seek to preserve biodiversity and pursue sustainable development in these lands.

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## About the artist



**Claire Shannon-Akiwenzie**  
Anishinaabe and Irish artist from the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation in Neyaashiinigmiing, Ontario

My name is Claire Shannon-Akiwenzie. On my father’s side, I am Anishinaabe from the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation in Neyaashiinigmiing, Ontario. On my mother’s side, I am Irish from the clan of the black dog.

The design I created symbolize the values and goals of the people within Arup who will be working toward reconciliation. This includes, moving forward toward reconciliation, and focusing on clarity, connection, healing and truth.

The footprints found within the design represent the goal of moving forward in a good way, walking lightly in this work, and alongside Indigenous youth, people and community.

The florals found within the turtle’s back, in the footprints and throughout the background, represent the beauty that is found in growth.

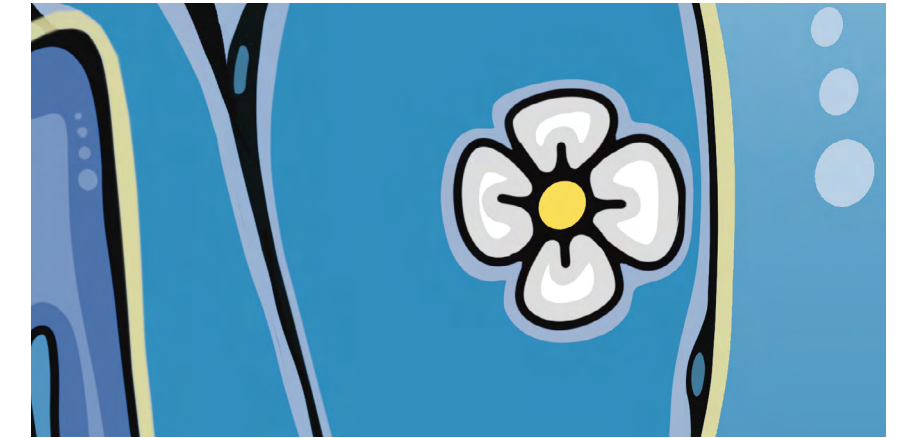
The turtle, an important animal and symbol in Anishinaabe culture, is the teacher of truth. Turtle represents truth and knowledge, and this place we call Turtle Island.

The strawberry plant is medicine for our heart and blood and represents nourishment. The stories of this medicine plant teach us about care, connection, and relationship.

The two figures seen within the turtle’s shell represent communication and relationship building.

The feathers, a symbol of love, respect, and speaking to your highest truth, are very important values in the work of reconciliation.

Finally, the water, seen throughout the design, represents healing, clarity, and movement.



## Message from Arup leadership

It is our pleasure to share the first steps in our journey toward reconciliation and to share Arup's first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in Canada. As leaders in the built environment and drivers of sustainable development supporting community goals, it is important that we integrate Indigenous knowledge into our work.

Indigenous Peoples have inhabited this land, now referred to as Canada, for many centuries with their practices woven into aspects of everyday life, such as in transportation, tools, medicine and culture.

This plan acknowledges the need to repair relationships with Indigenous communities. It outlines some of the actions we are taking to work toward reconciliation with Indigenous People in Canada and marks our first official step on the journey towards reconciliation.

Arup is committed to providing learning opportunities and scholarships for Indigenous students, and to continue partnering with Indigenous businesses. That is why, in 2021, Arup became a member of the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Businesses (CCAB). This membership has enabled us to increase Indigenous participation in our offices and on our projects. We also appreciate the ongoing collaboration with several certified Indigenous businesses, including Aubin Consulting and Innovation Seven (I7), who have been invaluable partners on projects as well as supporters of internal educational programs dedicated to increasing Indigenous knowledge for Arup members.

As Arup starts this new journey, we recognize that this is an ongoing commitment towards repairing relationships with Indigenous communities. As the leaders of this organization, we look forward to seeing our members engage with Indigenous communities throughout this journey of healing.



**Fiona Cousins**  
Americas Region  
Chair



**Sean Meadows**  
Canada Leader



**Eric Euting**  
Americas Region EDI  
Director



**Jo Balmer**  
Canada RAP  
Development Leader

# Our Reconciliation Action Plan

This document marks a milestone for Arup’s reconciliation journey as the firm’s first RAP in Canada. As a document that represents the goal of moving forward, like footprints, it has been developed with input from senior leaders and in consultation with Indigenous consulting firm, Aubin Consulting.

Our vision for reconciliation is to create safe, inclusive and resilient communities, infrastructure and cities for all; working alongside Indigenous communities to grow and thrive. This vision will be achieved by walking alongside stewards of this land to shape a more sustainable future.

Reconciliation aligns with our values as a humane organization; one with a social conscience wishing to do “socially useful work, and to join hands with others fighting for the same values.” The actions set out in our RAP will increase the Indigenous membership at our firm, create opportunities for partnerships with Indigenous People through our daily work, as well as foster greater respect and understanding of Indigenous Peoples and traditions.

## Leadership and Governance

The RAP steering committee exists to lead and govern our approach to reconciliation.

This committee is tasked with implementing our RAP and guiding our journey to reconciliation. The role of the group is to provide appropriate support for effective implementation of RAP commitments and build accountability and transparency through reporting RAP achievements, challenges and learnings, both internally and externally.

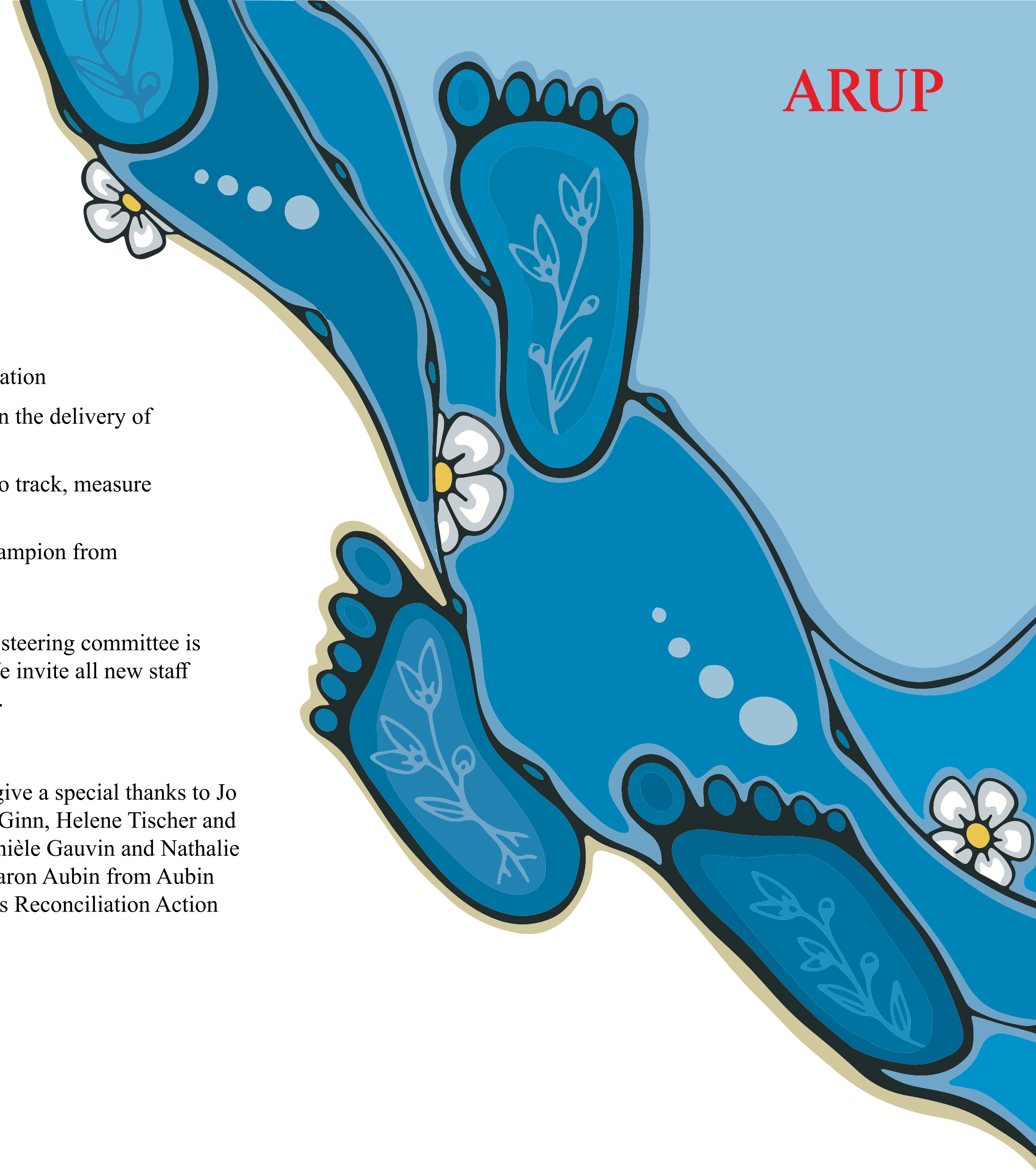
The members seek to:

- Define resource needs for RAP implementation
- Engage our senior leaders and other staff in the delivery of RAP commitments
- Define and maintain appropriate systems to track, measure and report on RAP commitments
- Appoint and maintain an internal RAP Champion from senior management

Increasing Indigenous representation on the steering committee is crucial to “move forward in a good way.” We invite all new staff members who identify as Indigenous to join.

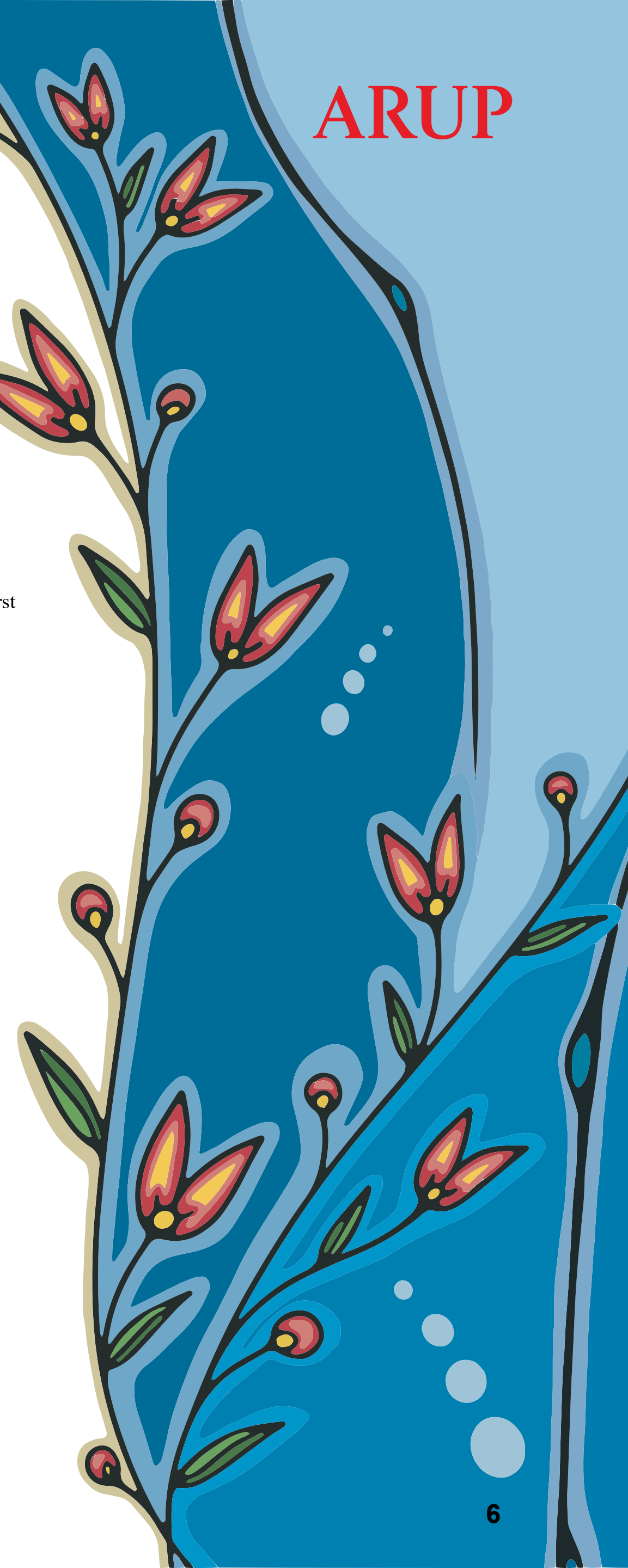
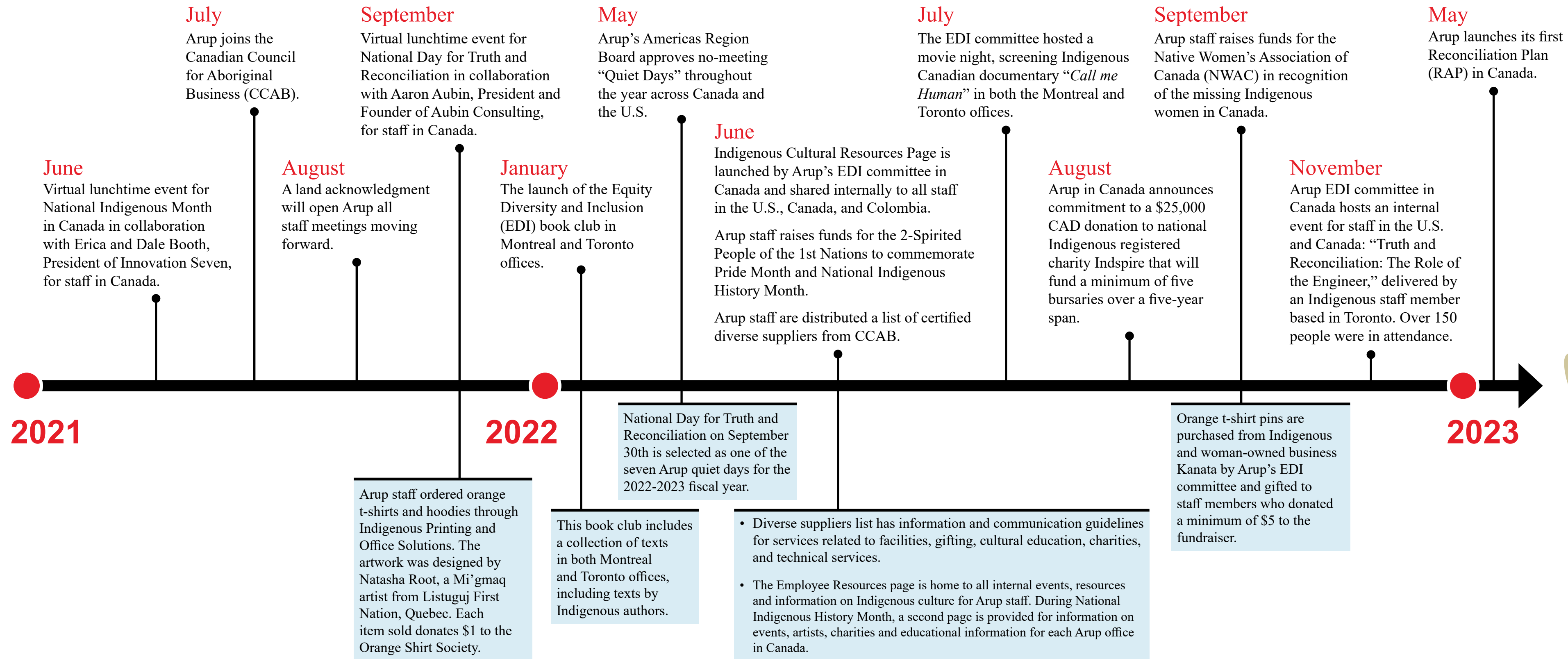
## Acknowledgments

The RAP steering committee would like to give a special thanks to Jo Balmer, Mikaela Coello Mena, Rebecca McGinn, Helene Tischer and the wider EDI committee, Loulwa Elali, Danièle Gauvin and Nathalie Lessard from Arup and James Mazak and Aaron Aubin from Aubin Consulting for their dedication in getting this Reconciliation Action Plan launched as a living document.



# Growth

While we have been on a path of reconciliation for the last few years, this RAP is a significant milestone in recognizing our growth and capturing our commitment. There is beauty in this work, and it is important to reflect on our journey and see how it has expanded our understanding of care, connection and relationships.



# Actions

The actions set out in this Reconciliation Action Plan are a shared responsibility. Through respect, outreach and communication, all Arup staff are encouraged to contribute and respond to these next steps.

## Understanding

Increase understanding, value and recognition of Indigenous cultures, histories, knowledge and rights through cultural learning.

- Organize at least two education-based internal events annually, one in June and the other in September, that partner with an Indigenous organization.
- Update the internal Indigenous cultural resources page annually.
- Provide an internal educational learning-module to our staff by Summer 2023..

## Respect

Demonstrate respect to Indigenous Peoples.

- Place a land acknowledgement in all Canadian offices via signage by Summer 2023.
- Ensure that all Canadian staff have access to a land acknowledgement to add to their email signature by Summer 2023.
- Purchase art from local Indigenous artists to display in our Canadian offices.

## Relationships

Build relationships with Indigenous businesses and organizations.

- Develop a target for catering orders from Indigenous suppliers by Spring 2024.
- Fill the internal role of Social Procurement champion by Summer 2023. This champion will lead committee meetings with staff from various departments to plan and implement relationship building strategies for project work.
- Develop an implementation plan for supplier diversity by Spring 2024.

## Recruitment

Improve employment outcomes by increasing Indigenous recruitment, retention and professional development.

- Establish an action plan to increase the percentage of Indigenous staff employed in our workforce that will be implemented by Spring 2024.
- Review recruitment procedures and policies with an Indigenous organization to remove barriers to Indigenous participation in our workplace.
- Advertise job vacancies to effectively reach Indigenous People.

## Partnerships

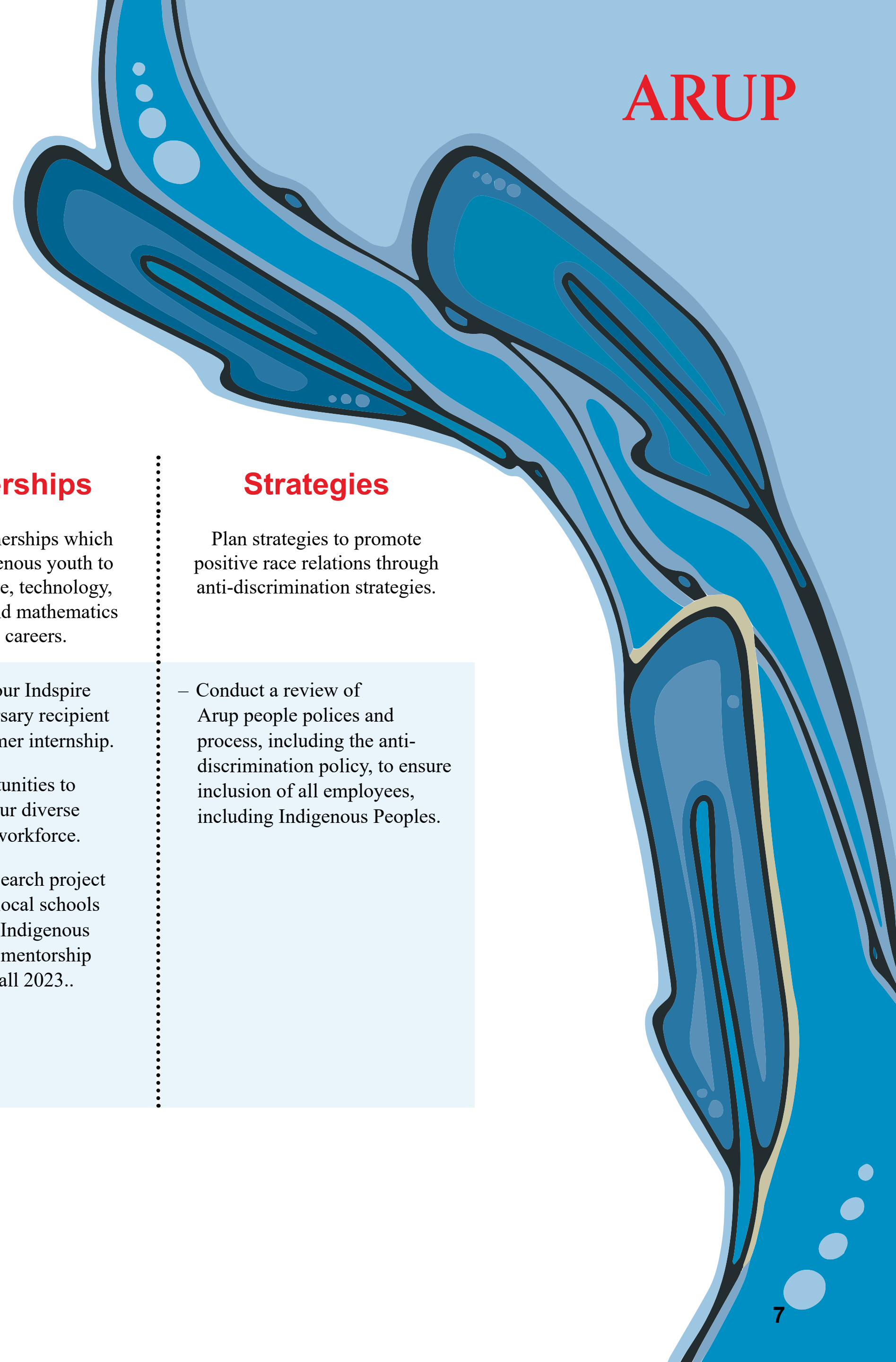
Develop partnerships which support Indigenous youth to pursue Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers.

- Connect with our Indspire 2022-2023 bursary recipient to offer a summer internship.
- Explore opportunities to expand upon our diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Complete a research project that identifies local schools that have high Indigenous population for mentorship programs by Fall 2023..

## Strategies

Plan strategies to promote positive race relations through anti-discrimination strategies.

- Conduct a review of Arup people policies and process, including the anti-discrimination policy, to ensure inclusion of all employees, including Indigenous Peoples.



Our vision for reconciliation is to create safe, inclusive and resilient communities, infrastructure and cities for all; working alongside Indigenous communities to grow and thrive.

**For further information**

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