



STRATEGIC PLAN

2025 – 2029



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Our Vision

A just, safe and inclusive society that is working towards decriminalisation and decarceration.

Our Purpose

CRC works to enhance the lives of people affected by the criminal legal system and contribute to a fairer, more just and equitable society. We provide practical and emotional support and information to individuals and their families, create sustainable pathways out of prison and into community, support diversion from custody, and advocate for systemic change within the criminal legal system, guided by the voices and experiences of those directly impacted.

What We Stand For

People, Not Prisons

- We believe imprisonment is an overused, failed response to crime. We reject punitive responses to crime that often lead to further imprisonment and cause harm to individuals, families and communities.
- We support effective diversion for people at risk of incarceration, community-based alternatives and advocate for systemic reform of the criminal legal system rooted in care, justice and healing.

Punishment should not be perpetual

- We recognise that punishment does not stop at the prison gate. It continues over a lifetime through the exclusion from services, limited opportunities and persistent stigma that restricts full participation in society.

Equity and Self Determination

- We are committed to addressing the underlying social determinants of justice on an individual, community and systems level.
- We support the right of all people, including First Nations communities, to make decisions about their own lives and futures.

Justice and Dignity

- We believe every person deserves respect, healing and fairness within the criminal legal system and beyond. We work to restore dignity and promote pathways that support inclusion and long-term wellbeing.

Anti-Colonialism and Anti-Racism

- We actively oppose colonialism, systemic racism and all forms of discrimination that drive the over-representation of marginalised communities in the criminal legal system.
- We acknowledge that Australia incarcerates its First Nations people at a higher rate than any other country on the planet.

Community Partnership

- We value authentic collaboration with the people and communities we serve, co-creating solutions that build stronger connections beyond incarceration.

Accountability and Courage

- We commit to speaking out against injustice, holding systems to account and being bold in our pursuit of transformative change.

What We Do

Working with individuals and their families

CRC works with individuals and their families who are involved in the criminal legal system, providing holistic, long-term, trauma-informed, culturally safe services via an outreach model to address the systemic issues that place people on pathways to imprisonment and cycles of reoffending.

We support people as individuals with capabilities and strengths rather than as individuals with deficits and as 'risks to be managed'.

Our frontline workers are unapologetically advocates for social and system change.

Training and Capability-building Unit

CRC works to build the capacity and capability of the service sector to better support criminalised people, their families and communities, increase access to generalist services, reduce the impact of perpetual punishment by providing specialist training packages.



Advocacy Research and Policy

The Advocacy Research and Policy Unit exists to achieve better outcomes for people impacted by the criminal legal system on both a service delivery and systemic level through reviewing, conducting and translating research and evidence to guide CRC's work, as well as advocating for broader policy and sector reform. The Unit works to ensure that operational, community and lived experience expertise is included in evaluation, research, analysis, systemic advocacy and service delivery design.

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Our Position

CRC is a leader in the field of addressing the impacts of the criminal legal system.

We understand the criminal legal system in its broader social, economic and political context and are therefore committed to both providing support to negatively affected individuals, families and communities, as well as to working for system-wide transformative change.

Whilst our principled position is both complex and challenging for our organisation, it is the essence of our competitive advantage. It enables us to hold three mutually reinforcing foci of providing support services to clients, working on systemic issues to address underlying challenges and operating as a point of reference in the sector.

We work in an increasingly competitive operating environment where large players seek to deliver low-cost standardised post-release support processes to individual clients.

Our position differentiates CRC within the sector as credible, principled sector leaders. Stakeholders such as policy makers, government agencies and donors understand the scale and complexity of the challenge and that an individual focus, whilst valid and necessary, does not address underlying issues and will not result in systemic change.

Our position as a credible sector leader with proven models of support and the capacity to innovate, advocate and to go to the most challenging areas enables our future sustainability, as it is this position that attracts funders, partners and diverse board and staff members.

Strategic Priorities

Actions



Transformative services and advocacy



Strengthen the interconnection between service delivery, advocacy, research and policy to support our goal of transformative system-wide change informed by the voices of criminalised people and communities.



Expanding and upscaling our service delivery



Expand and upscale our service delivery to better support our existing client base and extend our operations to areas and cohorts with significant unmet needs.



Organisational Strength



Build organisational capability through cross-sector engagement and collaboration in order to strengthen our reputation, affirm our position as a sector leader and broaden the reach of our activities.



People and Culture



Develop a people and culture strategy to support diversity, inclusion and intersectionality, ensuring our workforce is skilled and capable of meeting our organisational objectives.



Funding and fundraising



Refine our funding strategy and diversify funding streams with the aim of supporting the sustainability and independence of the organisation.

01 Transformative services and advocacy

Strategy

CRC services and advocacy are grassroots-focused in a manner that fosters long-term, community-led, systemic change. We seek to realise this transformative perspective in all our work by strengthening and interconnecting direct service delivery, advocacy, research and system-wide engagement.



Outcomes

- We will have strengthened the connection between our service delivery and the Advocacy, Research and Policy Unit so that ARPU is playing a lead role in client and community engagement, gathering information to deepen understanding about our work and outcomes, and translating learnings into best practice.
- We will have cultivated a practice and development framework increasing connection between ARPU and service delivery, strengthening our ground level service delivery and informing our advocacy, research and system-wide engagement about transformative system-wide practices and services.
- There will be greater consistency across the organisation in respect of the quality of our services.
- We will be a sector training provider.
- We will be raising awareness and changing society's narrative about incarceration.
- We will be positioned as a leader in the field with respect to models of practice and quality of service delivery.

02 Expanding and upscaling our service delivery

Strategy

CRC will expand and upscale our service delivery to both strengthen our position in the sector and enhance our social impact. Our growth will be purposeful, and we will not grow for growth's sake. CRC expansion and upscaling will take care to ensure that our services: are aligned with our principles and values; aim to improve outcomes through service enhancement and/or innovation; and that service quality and organisational stability are maintained and improved.



Outcomes

- We will encourage innovation by giving permission for risk-taking and failure, in order to improve outcomes and enhance services.
- We will upscale the reach of CRC's current proven services and diversify the client segments we support. Client groups to target might include people who sexually offend; people in remote areas; First Nations people; First Nations women specifically; people with cognitive impairment or intellectual disability; families; young people; diverse communities; and urban and rural areas where unmet need is greatest.
- We will expand the service types and models we offer to diversify the needs we address. This will include exploring the development of new services with reference to: outreach counselling, increased pre-release engagement, specialist role within larger (or place-based) services, becoming an NDIS provider, participation in larger consortia to bid for federal funding; maintaining client social and economic engagement; short sentence and on-remand clients; tenancy management partnerships with providers of rental accommodation.

03 Organisational Strength

Strategy

CRC seeks to build organisational capability and impact through externally focused cross-sector collaboration.



Outcomes

- We will have clarified precisely how we would like to position ourselves as a leading player within our sector. Perhaps as a Centre of Excellence or a point of reference, and working in line with this more precise understanding, CRC will continue to strengthen our position within, and leverage, our network.
- We will have an externally focused cross-sector engagement and communications strategy that strengthens our positioning as a leading cross-sector collaborator through building our reputation and relationships and broadening our reach.
- We will be enhancing our impact through cross-sector collaboration.

04 People and Culture

Strategy

CRC will develop and deliver a people and culture strategy to build a skilled workforce, which reflects the principles of diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality to meet the overall business objectives.



Outcomes

- Our structures will be reflective of diversity and inclusion at all levels of the organisation including senior roles and board level.
- We will have a staff engagement and connection strategy in place which ensures that staff have voice in CRC and builds collective culture that is inclusive and reflects our diversity and our values.
- We will have reviewed the recruitment, induction, staff development and retention policies and processes from beginning to end, to focus on attracting and retaining a diverse, inclusive and skilled workforce.

05 Funding and fundraising

Strategy

CRC will develop a funding and donations strategy that enables our sustainability and independence through diversification of funding streams, elimination of dependence on specific funders or programs and funding of service delivery on-costs.



Outcomes

- We will set and be working towards specific goals to increase funding to 'pay what it takes'.
- We will be working with other agencies to advocate for consistency of acquittal reporting and funding for NGO infrastructure.
- We will have established a social enterprise which creates jobs for our clients whilst generating income for CRC.
- We will have established a training arm which could broaden the impact of our sector knowledge and experience whilst simultaneously generating income.
- We will have gathered and compiled client stories, service data and engagement material to support our funding and fundraising activities.