

# THE IMPACT OF WHIRIA NGĀ HUA

Evaluation for Ngāti Rangi  
– Ngā Waihua o Paerangi

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Thank you to Ngāti Rangi for entrusting us with this mahi. It was a privilege to witness the aroha you have for your rohe. It was an honour to experience the passion evident amongst all your whānau and community members for creating and perpetuating a healthy, happy, thriving place to live for themselves and their tamariki and mokopuna.

# Contents

<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Whakapapa / Background</b>	<b>3</b>
Whānau Ora	
Commissioning-based approach to funding whānau	
<b>Whiria Ngā Hua Fund</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Methodology and Evaluation Design</b>	<b>10</b>
Research Questions	
Surveying the impact of the Whiria Ngā Hua investment on whānau wellbeing	
<b>Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives</b>	<b>12</b>
Spread of initiatives	
Joseph CALLAHAN - Waiouru Taekwondo Club	
Dean COOTES - 360 Rangatahi Life Skills 24	
Steve SMITH - 360 Rangatahi Carpentry Course	
Hiria HANCY - Rangatahi Think Upstream	
Gene HENARE - Chip Off the Ol' Block	
Anahera HOSE - Kaitiakitanga Hunting Wānanga	
Miriama LUCAS - Kāhui Maunga Basketball League	
Atiria PARANIHI - Wharepuni Rebuild	
Pare PUE - Whānau n Armz Headstone Restoration	
Raewyn SINCLAIR - Rangatahi Kākahu Creations	
Codie TAKITIMU - TB Beauty 23	
Te Hiiringa TANE-MAREIKURA - Burgers by Hand	
Kui TAYLOR - Tamariki Pūmanawa Wānanga	
Mark TROON Troon Butchery - Butchery processing wānanga	
Sophia WALLACE - Te Hā o Hineahuone	
Jase WELLS - TOA City Boxing Academy	
Barney WARBRICK Jnr - Rangatahi mentoring through landscaping and property maintenance	
Kiri WILSON - Te Kura Nui o Paerangi	

<b>Analysis of outcomes across the Whiria Ngā Hua II Investment</b>	<b>55</b>
Outcomes for whānau and the community	
Intended and unintended outcomes	
The impact of direct whānau commissioning	
<b>Barriers and enablers for whānau</b>	<b>60</b>
Barriers	
Enablers	
<b>Opportunities to improve the approach for whānau</b>	<b>67</b>
Advertising and Marketing	
Additional administration support for whānau	
Future of Whiria Ngā Hua	
<b>Summary</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Methodology</b>	<b>72</b>
Kaupapa Māori	
Document and Literature Review	
Interviews	
Survey	
Limitations	
<b>References</b>	<b>75</b>



# Executive summary

Ihi Research was commissioned by Ngāti Rangi - Ngā Waihua o Paerangi, with funding from Te Aka Whai Ora, to evaluate Whiria Ngā Hua II, a commissioning model designed to achieve hauora aspirations for whānau living in the Ngāti Rangi rohe.

Whiria Ngā Hua is anchored in Whānau Ora, designed to support whānau to achieve their own health, education, and wellbeing goals. The fund invests directly into whānau and community solutions to improve whānau and community wellbeing outcomes as determined by whānau.

From July 2023 to June 2024, Te Aka Whai Ora funded 29 Whiria Ngā Hua II projects, programmes, kaupapa or initiatives that are grounded in whānau voice, enhancing the quality of life and wellbeing of Taiohi Rangatahi Māori. The solutions were designed to deliver supports and services that strengthen Taiohi Rangatahi Māori leadership and voice and develop the workforce that serves Taiohi Rangatahi Māori.

The evaluation was guided by Kaupapa Māori Research (KMR) principles, emphasising collaboration with Māori communities and prioritising Māori cultural practices and aspirations. The methodology included a document and literature review to understand the objectives of the Whiria Ngā Hua fund initiatives, semi-structured interviews with 18 funded entities to gather qualitative data and reflections on their impacts, and a survey to assess subjective wellbeing among participants. The interviews were analysed using a six-step thematic analysis framework, while the survey achieved a 79% response rate. Ethical protocols were rigorously followed, including informed consent and data security measures to protect participants' information. Limitations acknowledged in the methodology include potential bias due to the likelihood that participants with more positive experiences were more willing to participate in the evaluation.

Eighteen of the 29 initiatives were interviewed, and all initiatives responded to the survey. The Whiria Ngā Hua II fund has yielded significant outcomes for whānau and the wider community. The funded initiatives have positively impacted whānau by fostering cultural connection and capability building. Activities varied, including a kapa haka rōpū qualifying for Te Matatini, rebuilding community infrastructure, and restoring historical sites. Educational wānanga equipped participants with practical skills in areas such as butchery, carpentry, hunting and outdoor survival. Sports leagues, clubs, and courses for enhancing hauora and kaitiakitanga have further enhanced physical and personal development. The establishment of small businesses providing food, firewood, and beauty services has also contributed to economic stability for many whānau. Overall, the initiatives have exceeded their stated goals. They have reached hundreds of

participants, driven positive change within their communities, and resulted in improved overall life satisfaction.

The holistic approach of Whiria Ngā Hua has achieved its direct objectives and fostered a broader sense of empowerment, self-determination, and enhanced wellbeing across the Ruapehu region. The fund has strengthened cultural identity, promoted social cohesion, and improved overall hauora, demonstrating the multifaceted impact of direct whānau commissioning.

Based on the evaluation, there are three recommendations for continually improving the Whiria Ngā Hua commissioning approach.

- 1

Continue and expand investment in direct commissioning due to demonstrated positive outcomes.
- 2

Enhance support for capability building and administrative mechanisms to help whānau effectively implement initiatives.
- 3

Provide security and assurance regarding ongoing funding to alleviate concerns and support the long-term aspirations of whānau, addressing the impediments caused by funding uncertainties.









# Background

## Whakapapa

Whiria Ngā Hua is a whānau enterprise fund through which whānau are enabled to pursue their hauora aspirations. Whiria Ngā Hua is seen by Ngāti Rangi as an important step towards activating their commitment in Rukutia te Mana towards hauoratanga, Ngati Rangitanga and mana motuhake. It is about being future focused; and upholding the teachings of their tūpuna.



Whiria Ngā Hua was funded by both Te Aka Whai Ora<sup>1</sup> and the Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency. Whiria Ngā Hua supports hauora aspirations that are iwi-led, community-driven, and by and for whānau living in the Ngāti Rangī rohe. The Whiria Ngā Hua – Hauora solution will contribute to the Te Aka Whai Ora Oranga Whānau framework outcome of “Service providers recognise Māori mana Motuhake. All health and disability services are provided in a culturally safe way that recognises and supports the expression of hauora Māori models of care.”

The target population for Whiria Ngā Hua II is Taiohi Rangatahi Māori living in the Ngāti Rangī/Ruapehu area primarily, but extends from Pureora in the North to Waiouru in the South, to Whanganui National Park in the West and Tongariro National Park in the East. The initiatives funded through Whiria Ngā Hua are embedded in the aspirations of whānau and utilise local resources and experience to enhance self-determination and effect meaningful change for whānau.

The funding model invests in ideas and initiatives to improve a broad range of wellbeing outcomes for whānau, underpinned by a whānau-centred approach. Aligned with the Whānau Ora philosophy, the Whiria Ngā Hua fund invests in hauora Māori community solutions to uplift their general health and wellbeing across seven key goals, also known as

the Whānau Ora Pou. Whiria Ngā Hua will have achieved their outcomes when whānau are:

- 1 Self-determining
- 2 Leading healthy lifestyles
- 3 Participating fully in society
- 4 Confidently participating in te ao Māori
- 5 Financially secure and wealth-creating; resilient
- 6 Cohesive and nurturing
- 7 Tāngata tiaki of the living landscape.

This evaluation focused on the second round of Whiria Ngā Hua, with a six-month contract term from 1 December 2023 to 31 May 2024. The previous and inaugural Whiria Ngā Hua benefitted the whānau of the rohe of Ruapehu with a rich diversity of opportunities. The first round was not evaluated but reports and feedback from the whānau entities presented significant positive outcomes. This evaluation has been commissioned to capture the hauora outcomes and aspirations of the whānau who participated in the second round.



<sup>1</sup> Te Aka Whai Ora, the Māori Health Authority, was established in July 2022 and commissioned this work. However, under the new National-led coalition government, Te Aka Whai Ora was disestablished in 2024, through the Pae Ora (Disestablishment of Māori Health Authority) Amendment Act.

# Whānau Ora

Whiria Ngā Hua is anchored in Whānau Ora, an approach designed to support whānau to achieve their own health, education, and wellbeing goals. The development of Whānau Ora and whānau-centred approaches in 2010 has changed the way government view and invest into whānau wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand. Whānau Ora emerged partly in response to recognition by government that standard ways of delivering health and social services were not working for whānau Māori in particular (Te Puni Kōkiri, 2017).

In the late 1980s, the Puao-te-Ata-Tū report first highlighted the inadequacies of government agencies supporting whānau Māori, and the research team noted they were inundated with requests “for Māori people to be given the resources to control their own programmes” (Māori Perspective Advisory Committee, 1988, p. 24). Researchers note there is “an evidence base that clearly demonstrates that compartmentalised, siloed, individualised approaches do not work” and that community-level Māori organisations and initiatives have for decades been operating a Whānau Ora approach through the provision of social, economic, and hauora services with whānau (Boulton, Cvitanovic, & Cropp, 2018; Dwyer et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2019, as cited in Boulton et al., 2020, p. 10).

The Whānau Ora approach recognises that whānau are the inherent architects of their own wellbeing aspirations and solutions. Direct investment into community and local initiatives seeks to enable this innovative and whānau-centred approach. Since 2010, the Whānau Ora approach has aimed for greater self-determination of health and wellbeing alongside

a decreased reliance on “state-delivered benefits and interventions,” encouraging and supporting whānau to become sustainable and self-reliant (Smith et al., 2019, p. 505). The majority of investment into Whānau Ora is dispersed across three commissioning agencies which then fund community, local, and regional initiatives and kaupapa including the Whānau Ora Navigator workforce, hauora providers, social services, small businesses, and advocacy work (Lakhotia, 2021).

Te Aka Whai Ora provides investment into te ao Māori projects, programmes and/or initiatives that seek to nurture whānau wellbeing solutions and aspirations. Investment into Whiria Ngā Hua, the Whānau Ora commissioning fund for Ngāti Rangī, seeks to improve wellbeing outcomes for whānau across seven key goals in alignment with the seven Whānau Ora Pou.

Research shows that investing directly into whānau enterprise is making a positive social impact by building cultural and community connectedness, social, health and economic development for whānau (Savage et al., 2021). The creation of Whiria Ngā Hua invests directly into whānau ideas, solutions, and innovations through a commission-based approach. This model of funding is designed to adapt to the changing needs and aspirations of whānau in the rural Ruapehu rohe, allowing for greater self-determination as whānau have more options on how they develop hauora solutions in the context of Te Whare Tapa Whā. Implementing a high-trust high-support model will support solutions that build the capacity and capability of the Ruapehu region.

# Commissioning-based approach to funding whānau

The emergence of the Whānau Ora commissioning model in recent years has garnered attention as an innovative and impactful approach to the provision and delivery of public services (Lakhotia, 2021). The direct commissioning model focuses on whānau capability development, inclusive of diverse whānau and forms of social enterprise, which sits in alignment with the Whānau Ora Outcomes Framework (Wehipeihana et al., 2016).

The commissioning model has various definitions, however, in the context of Whānau Ora, this model “is not about purchasing a commodity but delivering a service” that aligns with the policy objectives and values of an organisation (Lakhotia, 2021, p. 150). This type of whānau commissioning disperses investment at a whānau and/or community level in a way that is culturally anchored, whānau-centred, flexible, strengths-based, outcomes-driven, and that places importance on partnership, accountability, integration and a bottom-up approach (Lakhotia, 2021).

Whānau driving these invested initiatives are already embedded and well-connected in their communities and are therefore the most likely to create empowering grassroots change and momentum for development (Savage et al., 2021). The Auditor-General (2021, p. 4) noted that the “relational approach places trusted, meaningful relationships at the centre of the

commissioning process” which is noted as a contributing factor to creating “positive well-being outcomes for individuals, whānau, and communities”. Whānau Ora commissioning has been identified as a successful model of Indigenous capability-building, wealth creation, relationship and network building, increasing connection to te ao Māori, and resulting in an improved standard of living (Savage et al., 2021).

Whiria Ngā Hua seeks to invest directly into whānau and community solutions to improve whānau and community wellbeing outcomes as determined by whānau.

***“To have something that gives them that glimmer of light, that someone cares about their little kākano that they’ve thought up, is in itself empowering, mana-installing and fulfilling. I could see that with those who had just grown something from their kitchen table. Like wow, someone has seen a light in them and they’ve invested in them to give something a go.”***

***(Whānau initiative)***



# Whiria Ngā Hua Fund

The process for the funding requires an initial application to Ngāti Rangi, which is supported by the coordinator for Whiria Ngā Hua. Whānau indicate what kind of entity their kaupapa is, for example they could be; a charitable trust, whānau trust, a one-off event, a series of wānanga, developing a new business or supporting an existing business. Whānau initiatives can receive a maximum of \$10,000 per application set against the range of criteria determined to maximise whānau outcomes.

- **Impact:** the initiative will contribute to thriving whānau;
- **Viability:** the idea can be delivered;
- **Local-level solutions:** does the initiative have credibility and confidence with local landscape and/or regional environment?
- **Inter-generational transmission:** the initiative recognises the link and role of each generation both past present and future;
- **Collective identity and ownership** are the focus rather than individual needs;

Applications need to demonstrate their understanding of Ngāti Rangi Principles and Ngā Kawa o Whānau Ora. These are,

## Ngāti Rangi Principles

- 1 Ko te Kāhui Maunga te mātāpuna o te ora:** We understand that the Kāhui Maunga is the source of our origin and wellbeing as Ngāti Rangi.
- 2 Me karioi te noho:** We understand that we, as Ngāti Rangi, are here forever.
- 3 Kia mana ai ngā kōrero tuku iho:** We understand that the teachings of our tūpuna are upheld.
- 4 Ko te anga whakamua ki āpōpō:** We understand that decisions must be future-focused.

Te Kawa o Whānau Ora

- 1

**Ngakau Māori:** A Māori heart. Whanaungatanga; aroha, manaakitanga, whakapapa and wairuatanga. Ability to show and feel love, compassion and empathy for whānau.
- 2

**Mana Motuhake:** All whānau must be at the centre of all Whānau Ora work; to encourage, support and facilitate independence, self-determination and autonomy.
- 3

**Tūmanakohanga:** Hopes, dreams and desires; the values of wellness; solution-focused and strengths-based.
- 4

**Tūhono:** To join, bond, attach or connect; to create and maintain connections; to balance these relationships in a way that promotes wellness for whānau.

- 5

**Ngā Hua:** All work with whānau must be aligned to a particular outcome.
- 6

**Matataki:** The ability to advocate fiercely on behalf of whānau; to challenge, to be proactive.

An independent panel is then convened to assess applications. Successful applicants to Whiria Ngā Hua attend an ‘outcomes and reporting workshop’ as a compulsory part of receiving funding. Some boundaries of the fund exist, for example the pūtea cannot be used for large capital investments, e.g. vehicles, and wages cannot be paid for by the pūtea. Collective and whānau applications were encouraged. Ngāti Rangī also accepted video applications.











# Methodology and Evaluation Design

This section provides an outline of the methodological approach to this research. For further information on the evaluation methodology, including characteristics of participants, ethical considerations, survey questions, data collection and analysis refer to Appendix 2.

## Research Questions

This evaluation was driven by an overarching research question:

- How and in what ways is Whiria Ngā Hua achieving its stated outcomes?

In addition, four evaluative questions were used to drive continuous improvement and learning. These are,

- 1** What has the impact on whānau and the community been as a result of these initiatives being funded?
- 2** What are the intended and unintended outcomes for whānau and the community?
- 3** What have been the key barriers and enablers for whānau to achieve their aspirations?
- 4** Are there any opportunities to improve the approach for whānau?

This evaluation is primarily qualitative in nature and conducted through a kaupapa Māori research approach. There were three phases in the evaluation process.

**Phase One: Engage and Learn** – Evaluators engaged with whānau initiatives through Zoom or face-to-face interviews, dependent on availability and preference of whānau. Interview schedules were designed in collaboration with Ngāti Rangi – Ngā Waihua o Paerangi. Ethical procedures were followed (see Appendix 1). Milestone reports and contractual documents were reviewed.

**Phase Two: Analyse and Check** – A short evaluation framework and summary report was created for each initiative, triangulated from the contractual documents and interviews. Summary reports were returned to each whānau for additional information and confirmation.

**Phase Three: Outcomes Analysis and Summary** – Outcomes and key themes across all entities were analysed against the Whānau Ora Pou and outcomes framework.

The purpose of this evaluation is to seek to understand the barriers, enablers and impacts of Whiria Ngā Hua for whānau, their community, and Ngāti Rangi – Ngā Waihua o Paerangi. This type of evaluation is best met through qualitative design, collecting data from multiple sources, data was then generalised, and a survey created to understand the collective outcomes across the initiatives.

## Surveying the impact of the Whiria Ngā Hua investment on whānau wellbeing

A survey was integrated into this evaluation to determine the impact of funding on whānau wellbeing and to strengthen understanding of key themes that emerged from the analysis of interview data. Whānau were asked questions about their life satisfaction and the ability of their income to meet their everyday needs. The purpose of this was to establish a foundation for how whānau wellbeing and life satisfaction were during their funding period, to provide comparability to the general population in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

More details on the survey can be found in Appendix 2.

***"I appreciate the time that Whiria Ngā Hua has given to just hear our voice and just hear our initiative and kaupapa and support us to bring that kaupapa to fruition for our people, and not just our people, for Pākehā as well."***

***(Whānau initiative)***





# Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives

The next section presents evaluative summaries of the initiatives based on interviews with whānau kaupapa. Eighteen of the 29 kaupapa were available to be interviewed.



### Spread of initiatives

The inaugural round of Whiria Ngā Hua in 2022-2023 targeted initiatives that fostered the hauora of whānau. Whiria Ngā Hua I achieved remarkable success, supporting 31 kaupapa across diverse areas of expertise, including performing arts, sports and fitness, pākihi Māori, and hauora. Whiria Ngā Hua II, the subject of this evaluation, is built on this accomplishment. In 2023-2024, Ngāti Rangi shifted the focus to shine a spotlight on rangatahi, aiming to develop opportunities for rangatahi to thrive and contribute to their communities in the Ruapehu region.

Throughout the Whiria Ngā Hua II process, the staff at Ngāti Rangi and Kaihautū of Whiria Ngā Hua were heartened to see four kaupapa created and directed by rangatahi themselves. While the funded kaupapa were not exclusively rangatahi-based, several fell into the 'self-development for whānau' category, extending beyond the rangatahi focus. Notably, two kuia and four māmā stepped forward, leading their own kaupapa.

The age range of applicants was diverse, with most between 25 and 40. The kaupapa were geographically dispersed, with five based in Waiouru, nine in Ohakune, eight in Raetihi, and five distributed across Whanganui, Taihape, Whangaehu, Taupō, and Hamilton. Many of these initiatives targeted and engaged whānau from across the region, fostering a sense of community and shared growth.

*“We have four rangatahi directing their own kaupapa which is amazing. We have four māmā who are stepping out to do their own thing. We had a strong amount of wāhine, and a mix of professionals and whānau who are just starting up.”*

*(Whiria Ngā Hua Kaihautu)*

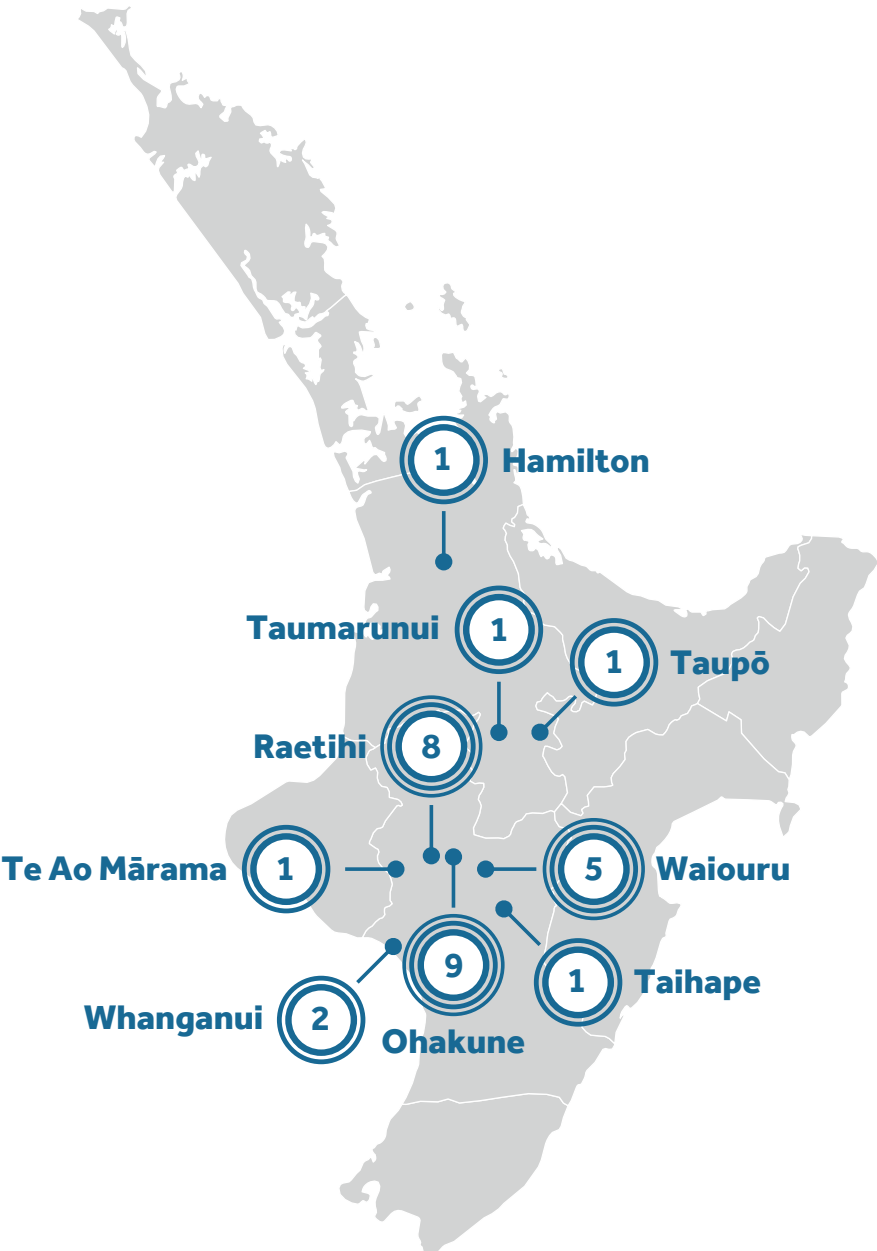
*“We found the gaps from the first round, and it's been a lot better. I probably haven't been to visit kaupapa as often as previously as a learning was that we need to let our whānau do this, we need to let them invite us into their space, we need to let them take photos if that's something they want. We need to let them be able to tell us how it goes, not us asking if it's ok for us to come. It's been a lot easier this time around, we've had some amazing things happen, they've all got something special about them.”*

*(Whānau Kaihautu)*



# Spread of initiatives across Te Ika-a-Māui

The map indicates the geographic spread of the 29 initiatives.









# JOSEPH CALLAHAN

## Waiouru Taekwondo Club



## Description

The Waiouru Taekwondo Club was established eight years ago and has been led by Joseph Callahan for the past six years. The Club provides unique opportunities for rangatahi, including full-contact sparring and participation in tournaments and training camps across the North Island.

The growth and increased engagement of rangatahi with the Waiouru Taekwondo Club are testaments to the positive, supportive environment that Joseph has created. Thanks to Whiria Ngā Hua funding, learning and participating in Taekwondo have become even more accessible to rangatahi in Waiouru, with some coming from as far as Ohakune, Raetihi and Taihape. Despite already charging affordable fees and flexible memberships, the funding has reduced barriers to participation and contributed to the club's sustainability and affordability. Additionally, Whiria Ngā Hua facilitated purchasing new gear, including paddles, shields, and extra mats, ensuring the club's training sessions are well-equipped into the future. As Joseph described, ongoing sustainability of the club is, ***"a burden that now I don't have to think about."*** The expansion of the club was demonstrated by a recent tournament in which 18 rangatahi participated. With tournament fees covered, parents could allocate their resources towards accommodation or support for the club in other ways. Joseph is looking forward to continuing the Waiouru Taekwondo Club as he sees so many positive developments in the tamariki and rangatahi he coaches.

***"We did our first tournament of the year about a month ago, and it was the largest number I've ever taken to a tournament. In fact, we were the largest group at the tournament. Eighteen kids and some competed for the first time, with all fees taken care of."***

## Reach

There is a great demand for the Waiouru Taekwondo Club, with club numbers reaching more than 30 tamariki and rangatahi, including Joseph's own children. Beginners and intermediate classes run twice a week during the school term, with occasional weekend tournaments. They break during public and school holidays, but otherwise, it is a year-round commitment.



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives



# Impact

The teachings at the Waiouru Taekwondo Club are based on old-school values that Joseph feels can be taken for granted these days. He strives to instil manners, respecting elders, politeness, and the five universal values of Taekwondo: courtesy, integrity, perseverance, self-control, and an indomitable fighting spirit. For Joseph, it's not just about short-term commitment; it's about laying the groundwork for long-term resilience and self-confidence in the lives of tamariki and rangatahi.

The positive impacts of the Waiouru Taekwondo Club extend beyond physical fitness. The club offers the rangatahi skill development, character and confidence building, emotional regulation, commitment, mental discipline, body awareness, balance, dexterity, spatial awareness, determination, and even learning how to lose well. These skills are transferable into real life, and they give the rangatahi a fun alternative to screen time and foster a healthy, active lifestyle. Joseph believes that ***“people think they're learning a martial art, but really it's all the things that come with it, commitment, life skills, a bit of discipline, a bit of goal planning, striving, that sort of thing.”***

He witnesses first-hand how the tamariki come out of their shells and become role models for younger children over time. This funding has removed many of the club's financial concerns from Joseph. The club had been run as more of a community service and less of a business, and funds have often been low over the years. The support from Whiria Ngā Hua means whānau who have more difficulty paying fees or tournament costs won't have to be chased up. They are now in a good space with their equipment and are excited for this programme to be sustained into the future.

***“It's a weight off my mind, we've got money. You just don't know where people are, and I don't want to know if someone's having difficulty buying food next week, so I don't want to chase them up.”***



## Whānau Ora Goals

With a year-round commitment to physical fitness and skills training, the club fosters a positive environment for leading healthy lifestyles. The next drop of funding will go towards a grading for the rangatahi, which they are all training hard towards. This will increase the sense of achievement for those who have been working hard and improving.

The rangatahi are given opportunities to participate in society, with everyone from all walks of life coming together, going away to tournaments and interacting with kids from other clubs. This kaupapa creates opportunities to strengthen cohesion in whānau and the community by influencing the parents who are watching and engaging in Taekwondo alongside their tamariki.

Being part of and competing in Taekwondo contributes to developing resilience and courage.

Joseph describes; ***“It's scary going onto the mat to battle it out with someone you don't know, and there's been tears, a little bit of blood here and there, nothing too bad. They feel great afterwards, and the more they do it, the easier it gets.”***

**Joseph Callahan**

021 253 5709 | jorc7@gmail.com



Waiouru Tae Kwon Do

**ihi**  
Research

# DEAN COOTES

## 360 Rangatahi Life skills 24



### Description

360 Rangatahi Life Skills, now in its second year of support by Whiria Ngā Hua, equips rangatahi aged 14-17 with essential life skills. This 23-week programme, run by Dean Cootes and Steve Smith, is committed to giving rangatahi a diverse range of meaningful experiences and activities to build character and enhance capabilities. Through the course, rangatahi develop survival techniques, including water safety, river crossing, and rescue swimming. They will also cover hunting and gathering, fishing, bush and field craft, chainsaw operation, high ropes, driver licensing and first aid. There are practical training sessions on vehicle maintenance, fire training, navigation, team-building activities, cooking, and constructing bivouacs to sleep outdoors. They also cover carpentry and butchery, collaborating with another Whiria Ngā Hua recipient Mark Troon of Troon Butchery.

The skills and experiences taught throughout the 360 Rangatahi Life Skills course will come together in an end-of-course prizegiving ceremony at the marae. A pōwhiri will be held, and rangatahi will present to their whānau and the community a hāngī with the meat they have butchered and cooked themselves. At the prizegiving, there will be awards and rangatahi will be acknowledged for their hard work.

*"We teach them water safety, rescue swimming with recovery ropes, spinal injuries in the water and all that. So, when we step into the river crossing, we know they can swim out and save someone using CPR and First Aid. They are also cooking, with cookbooks coming out this year."*

*"This year (with the funding), we purchased our GPS two-way radios for safety. We use them for the river crossings and when we're out fishing. We need to make sure safety is always a big thing. Without the funding support, we couldn't do these amazing things."*

### Reach

**10-12 rangatahi took part in the 360 Rangatahi Life Skills programme.**

**They meet on Tuesday evenings and weekends, reaching whānau from Raetihi, Ohakune, Waiouru and Taihape.**

**Although they are transitioning to fortnightly sessions due to busy schedules, the rangatahi remain committed and engaged throughout the programme.**





# Impact

It is clear the 360 Rangatahi Life Skills programme has broad and positive impacts and is well supported by the community who are seeing positive benefits of Dean and Steve's mahi. Rangatahi develop increased confidence in themselves and their capabilities, particularly in social situations such as public speaking, as well as in the outdoors. This initiative provides an encouraging place for rangatahi to uncover skills they didn't know they had. As many rangatahi are nearing the end of high school, the skills and advice they receive on preparing for their future careers are invaluable.

Dean and Steve are there for them if they have questions about the trades or going into the Army. They see this as ***"another important aspect of the programme, pointing them in the right direction."***

Several rangatahi from the previous course are returning as mentors for this year's programme. The course provides the skills and encouragement to show leadership and step up in the community, learning to be part of a team while excelling individually. Several parents reported being pleasantly surprised with the changes in confidence and independence of their rangatahi due to engaging in this course.

The funding has enabled Dean, Steve, and their volunteers to use their skills and passions to undertake the bigger projects they have always wanted to do, but previously couldn't access due to limited funding. The Whiria Ngā Hua support means they don't have to dip into their own pockets, and the rangatahi don't need to contribute to the materials they need to build the projects. Based on the current model's success, there are plans to expand and diversify this programme.

***"This is a passion. This isn't a job for me. We've all got our normal mahi. But to run something cool like that, you've got to have that support, you've got to have that funding."***

***"Our prizegiving was just next level with some of the speaking that was done. The rangatahi just blew us away coming out of their shell. A few probably wouldn't have even said hello in the first group meeting, but by the end, they're taking our talent quiz without question."***



## Whānau Ora Goals

Learning important life skills has given the rangatahi confidence in their abilities and self-determination of their own paths. Dean and Steve ensure the ideas are driven by the rangatahi, with the ultimate goal for the rangatahi to take the lead over what they want to do.

Rangatahi participate more in society by engaging and stepping up at other community events. Dean and Steve have seen the rangatahi getting on the barbecue cooking sausages or marshalling at the Weetbix TRYathlon. They are proud and excited to see this generation of leaders developing their skills and confidence into the future. Te ao Māori is at the core of the kaupapa before the course, several rangatahi had never stepped foot on a marae. Through the programme, pōwhiri and prizegiving, the rangatahi and their parents experience tikanga and connect with te ao Māori.

Support for this initiative is evident in the response from the community. For example, the NZ Army has been generous in lending gear and equipment, and giving ration packs to help prevent the funding from being soaked up in expenses. They are also able to utilise their marae as an essential facility.



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 360 Rangatahi Programme

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# STEVE SMITH

## 360 Rangatahi Carpentry Course

### Description

Steve's carpentry skills and teachings are a key part of the 360 Rangatahi Life Skills programme, which he runs with Dean Cootes. 360 Rangatahi Life Skills Programme had limited places but significant interest in the carpentry activities. Steve recognised the need for a separate programme to provide more in-depth learning opportunities for those who wanted to focus on carpentry skills. As a result, Steve has created a separate initiative focused on carpentry for 10 rangatahi outside of their 23-week course. Those involved will learn theory and practical carpentry skills through the projects they will be working on as well as gaining experience in health and safety, problem-solving and team-building.

The carpentry initiative is dedicated to community-oriented projects, providing rangatahi with opportunities to invest in their local area through their mahi. Last year, the carpentry module within the 360 Rangatahi Life Skills course built a pātaka for the Waiouru community, accompanied by a kōrero about the meaning and importance of pātaka and giving back. They also built tables and chairs for the basketball court and donated several tables to the local kindergarten.

This year, through the development of the 360 Rangatahi Carpentry Course, a series of weekend projects will be undertaken, intended to expand and develop further plans to invest in the community. The first major project they have undertaken is the building of timber trap boxes for possums. This was followed by a community induction evening, where participants learned how to use the traps and log their kill data on Trap.nz. Another carpentry project involves building water tanks to gift to Ngāti Rangi for rural urupā that lack running water and taps.

*"There are a few from our other 360 programme who want to join because they're keen on the carpentry side of things. Because 360 Life Skills only has positions for 10-12 rangatahi ... we thought we could engage with more youth by splitting into a carpentry programme."*

### Reach

**The 360 Rangatahi Carpentry Course is held on weekends, 10-12 rangatahi attend each week. Although Steve's course is primarily for rangatahi, he also welcomes their whānau to come along, so there are often more than 10-12 people learning new knowledge and skills.**

**The goal is to involve different community members in each project, ensuring that anyone interested in learning carpentry skills has the opportunity to participate.**

***"If mum wants to come with them, they might want to learn something as well. We're not denying them."***



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives

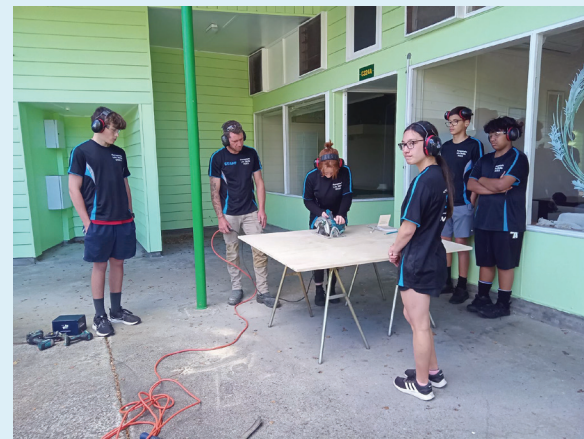


# Impact

This carpentry initiative allows rangatahi to take ownership of their projects, fostering a sense of engagement and community involvement while building their self-confidence. Participants develop a strong work ethic and learn how to interact effectively with adults as they navigate the transition into adulthood. Additionally, they're learning the skills and tools they will need to work towards getting a part-time or full-time job or their future career aspirations.

Steve has observed that by the end of the course, he has taught the rangatahi enough that they are able to do most of the projects independently. His goal is to be able to stand back, watch, and guide them.

*"If they've made it, they're not going to go around wrecking it. A lot of teenagers think, 'Oh, it's just adults who have all these groups and do things'. So, if they get involved in making adult-sized projects, but they're doing it, it makes them feel pretty special."*



## Whānau Ora Goals

Carpentry is a particularly valuable skill that can be transferable into a career or source of income in the future. From this course, rangatahi can gain experience and determine if it's something they want to carry on. Not all rangatahi have aspirations to become builders, and simply expressed they enjoyed being involved in practical and creative projects for their community.

Building water tanks for urupā provides carpentry experience while providing an opportunity to learn and discuss tikanga around urupā and learning about a cultural space the rangatahi might not be familiar with.

Through the trap-building project, rangatahi learned how to build and use traps and shared their knowledge with the community.

Pest control is an important part of caring for the environment and becoming tāngata tiaki.



Steve Smith

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# HIRIA HANCY

## Rangatahi Think Upstream

### Description

'Rangatahi Think Upstream' is an innovative project driven by Hiria Hancy, a motivated young wahine who aspires to share tūpuna mātauranga with her whānau and hapū. The inspiration for this kaupapa began when Hiria was aged 14 and went on a trip to the Karioi forest. This trip inspired her to learn more about the health of their waterways. Her aim is to increase her mātauranga of the waterways in the area and share it with her whānau, particularly rangatahi.

Fostering kaitiakitanga is at the heart of this kaupapa, and Hiria is well on her way to achieving her aspiration of restoring the hauora of the Tomotomo Ariki Stream and the surrounding lands, plants and habitats.

Hiria developed the idea for this kaupapa while doing environmental work for Ngāti Rangi. She was hearing many special stories around the Tomotomo Ariki from her nana and other whānau. Her kaupapa has so far produced one four-day wānanga that has taught water monitoring, pest and invasive weed control and mātauranga Māori to other rangatahi. They all helped clean up the puna and take out algae and duckweed. Through this first wānanga, everyone learned some of the tūpuna mātauranga about the kōura, including how to grab them in the water, tell the males from the females, and how to store and cook them.

There are now plans to collaboratively develop a six-month restoration plan to improve the hauora of the puna and the awa ecosystems. This will involve collecting data on flow, macroinvertebrates, and vegetation. The restoration plan includes ongoing Zoom hui, an information day and further wānanga with whānau, landowners, stakeholders, and the community.

*"The rangatahi enjoyed it so much. There were heaps of them who had actually never experienced it, never gone grabbing the kōura."*

### Reach

**The first wānanga attracted about 12 rangatahi, their parents, and their tamariki came along.**

**Hiria has also presented at other rangatahi environmental programmes in the area, including Te Hoeroa.**

**Future wānanga will allow whānau to get involved in more mahi clearing out the puna and riparian planting.**



NGĀTI RANGI

## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives

# Impact

Rangatahi Think Upstream is an initiative that is having an intergenerational impact, from the kaumātua Hiria is receiving the mātauranga from, to the mokopuna she is passing it on to. For Hiria, it was extremely inspiring to see how many of her Ngāti Rangi whānau were helping and supporting the kaupapa. The most meaningful part of her kaupapa has been to see that her kaumātua no longer have to worry about their teachings and mātauranga not being passed down.

For those involved in the wānanga, there was excitement and a sense of accomplishment in getting to do things they had heard their tūpuna used to do with their own hands.

*“Just knowing that our tūpuna did it and then seeing them do it was amazing. It was cool. I feel as if we are bringing back the teachings that were lost. Now we get to do it and actually learn way more about it, like how to grab them. You actually have to use two fingers to grab them. Once they grab your finger, you hold onto them and then pull them out.”*

*“Taking them to our kaumātua was pretty cool too, because they cried. It was just so heart-warming to know that their teachings would be passed down ... I think it just brought back so many memories for them.”*

Through this experience, Hiria has gained more confidence, especially speaking in front of people. It was her first time holding a wānanga, so she was feeling very shy, but she now feels like they've all become one big whānau united by the passion to be kaitiaki of their waterways and their whenua.

*“It's given me way more confidence, and by the time I had my second wānanga, when I was asked by Te Hoeroa (to speak to their rōpū), I was way more confident in speaking, and calm, didn't have that nervous, shaky feeling.”*

## Whānau Ora Goals

This initiative is a unique opportunity for rangatahi to have a hand in self-determining the future of te taiao in their own rohe. It's created a movement of energy and inspiration to get out into their own puna to make a difference to the hauora of their whenua. They are able to take on the role of tangata tiaki while also learning tūpuna mātauranga, which can then be passed on to future generations.

**Hiria Hancy**

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# GENE HENARE

## Chip off the Ol' Block



## Description

Gene Henare started Chip Off the Ol' Block with two aspirations: to support kaumātua in the community with cheap firewood while also providing a small business for himself and his family. Although he was already doing this mahi on the side of his full-time job, Gene realised that with his skills and the Whiria Ngā Hua support, he could better assist those who faced barriers to getting firewood during the colder months. Gene sources, splits and delivers affordable, dry firewood to those in need. Having done firewood since he was a teenager, Gene could see the opportunity to share and pass on his practical and business skills.

His son and his son's friends already spend time doing work on the farm. Through this kaupapa, Gene has provided his son, nephews, and their friends with forestry knowledge, safety training, building relationships with the kaumātua, and some pocket money. As Gene described, ***"He (Gene's son) loves it ... he learns to use the chainsaw, chainsaw maintenance, safety, and how to talk to the old people when we drop it off."***

Gene hopes to create future work opportunities for these rangatahi. With support from Whiria Ngā Hua, Gene acquired essential equipment such as a splitter and safety gear. Because he already had chainsaws and a truck, Whiria Ngā Hua assisted with vehicle maintenance, WOF, oil and petrol, and registration for his truck and trailer. The initiative has allowed Gene to push outside his comfort zone. He considers himself shy but is coming out of his shell and gaining confidence through getting involved in the community and talking to different people.

***"They (kaumātua) are happy, and the ones who can't stack it, me and my son stack it for them. Most of them are family anyway, the old ones. They get it real cheap."***

## Reach

Gene has had a lot of support from people to get the firewood to whānau. The biggest barrier is trying to keep the wood dry. Gene has been offered a yard to store his wood at a location just outside of town.

He has also been given some old covers that can be used to keep the wood dry, as currently, there is no shed to stockpile wood in.

**A limitation of this kaupapa is the time Gene has to run this mahi in addition to his full-time job.**

**Due to the huge demand for firewood, he has to turn people away to focus on providing firewood for kaumātua.**

**He is looking forward to continuing and expanding into other mahi that he is passionate about.**



# Impact

Chip Off the Ol' Block supports many whānau in Raetihi and beyond to have warm and dry houses. Gene's son and several other rangatahi are learning important practical and work skills, as well as responsibility and routines while serving kaumātua in a close-knit community.

Gene was initially apprehensive about applying for Whiria Ngā Hua funding but was encouraged by his daughter to apply. Ngāti Rangi supported him to fill out the application and ***"They were really helpful and made it really easy."*** He believes the experience of this initiative has helped his confidence.

***"It's good to be able to give wood to the older ones, too. It keeps me in touch with them. It's got me out there amongst the public."***

Gene has aspirations to expand further in the future, or to develop another initiative for rangatahi that he is also passionate about.

***"My daughter told me about it, she says, 'Go get it Dad, you're always doing the wood for the old people anyway, you might as well get your son going too'. It was easier than I thought; I just had to push my boundaries to get out amongst people because I usually just kept to myself."***



Gene Henare

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# Whānau Ora Goals

This kaupapa is contributing to Gene's financial security, while generating income for the rangatahi involved in the mahi, and saving money for whānau in the community who are receiving discounted firewood services.

***"It feels good to provide for the elderly, those who don't have access to firewood. It's good keeping them warm."*** This kaupapa promotes self-determination and independence among rangatahi, as they learn to undertake self-directed work while strengthening community connections.

Providing firewood to households contributes to the increased hauora of families by ensuring warmer and drier homes during the colder months.

# ANAHERA HOSE

## Kaitiakitanga Hunting Wānanga

### Description

Kaitiaki Guides is an initiative that supports and inspires whānau to embrace the roles of kaimahi and kaitiaki in their own whānau and hapū. Whiria Ngā Hua funding has supported 30 rangatahi to be equipped with valuable, transferable skills, from firearms training, licensing and target practice to hunting safety protocols and butchery experience. Whānau are taught how to use every part of an animal, from antlers for carving to hides and even dog treats, which often utilises other local processing businesses. This waste-free approach encourages kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga, enabling rangatahi to provide kai for their own households, friends, neighbours, whānau and marae.

With a lifetime of experience, director Anahera Hose found that in her home region of Ruapehu, there was an opportunity for whānau to learn valuable outdoor skills. She developed the Kaitiaki Guides kaupapa under the Te Awanui a Rua Trust, which is aimed at those living in the Central Plateau who are closely connected to their team. Beyond hunting, Kaitiaki Guides offers a range of certification courses, including guiding, helicopter operation, quad bike/LUV/4WD driving, tractor operation, food safety, outdoor first aid, fishing, and diving certification. A school-based and marae-based programme is also being developed.

*"We just want to flip it around to fit the needs and learnings for our people and our area because it's totally different to everywhere else, education as survival techniques. And who better to deliver it than haukainga."*

*"We want everyone to have their licences and certifications so they can walk their land and not be told they can't access it or get trespassed by the Health and Safety of Land and Farm Trusts."*



### Reach

**Initially, the programme was planned for 20 participants, but the overwhelming interest led to 30 rangatahi, aged 16 and over, registering for the upcoming certification testing at the end of June.**

**Prior to the testing wānanga, Anahera provides support for rangatahi to complete the 45-page firearm licence application. Following the application, participants undergo testing, familiarise themselves with firearms, and receive target training.**

**Once they have their licence, they gain access to five different hunting blocks for deer and other game or work towards Kaitiaki Guide status to teach whānau. Te Awanui a Rua Charitable Trust has a positive relationship with the Police and Mountain Safety, which works beside them to deliver the programme effectively.**

## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives



# Impact

In the firearms training and licensing process, whānau are learning essential life skills, increasing confidence and self-esteem, team building and creating meaningful memories. Kaitiaki Guides often welcome tamariki to observe safety training, providing an opportunity for them to learn alongside their whānau members. In the field, koro and mokopuna, or parents and children, hunt together, sometimes for the first time, creating lasting memories.

Mastering the skill of hunting and processing kai enhances food security and enables whānau to support themselves, their hapū, marae, and community. This increased capability instils pride in one's ability to provide kai, offers an alternative to the current cost-of-living crisis, and fosters stronger community connections. Anahera believes the initiative is building confidence and supporting whānau to believe in themselves. Many whānau think because they have a prior conviction from years ago, they would not be able to be involved. However, Anahera goes through the whole process with potential participants, and many are pleasantly surprised that they can do it.

Whiria Ngā Hua funding provided Kaitiaki Guides with an opportunity to deliver a programme at home. They usually operate out of Taumarunui, but after receiving a tono from Ngāti Rangī, they returned home and felt very satisfied to be able to do this mahi with their whānau at home.

***“We’ve had so many rangatahi who have either taken it up as a professional career, followed through to marae or hapū development, or just their own personal wellbeing knowing they can actually feed their family.”***

## Whānau Ora Goals

This initiative contributes to whānau self-determination by building confidence around firearms, giving whānau the skills to live off the land and being able to give back to their marae by providing kai. This leads to more financial security by saving on the cost of meat. This programme is also embedded in te ao Māori, as tikanga, kawa and mātauranga Māori are woven throughout the course.

***“They learn how to do mutton, deer, cows, and rabbits, understand the meat and whether it's good or not, and learn about the tikanga around it, especially around the Maramataka. We're very staunch with that, understanding the elements of the moon and how to protect your meat during the moon phases.”***



Anahera Hose

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# MIRIAMA LUCAS

## Kāhui Maunga Basketball League



### Description

Kāhui Maunga Basketball League has been developed and supported by Miriama Lucas, a māmā and teacher in Ohakune. Recognising the absence of local basketball opportunities unless they drive to Whanganui, Miriama took the initiative to create a league specifically for the tamariki and rangatahi in the area. Kāhui Maunga Basketball League enables tamariki and rangatahi who don't play mainstream sports in the area to have access to physical activity and all the positive benefits that team sport provides. Miriama saw the potential for basketball in the community, and this initiative allows rangatahi to play without the barriers of transport, money, or commitment required from whānau.

Funding from Whiria Ngā Hua was used to provide all the resources and equipment for the schools to be fully involved. From mouthguards and safety gear, to supplying the schools with basketballs, they also painted the basketball courts as there were no existing markings. With the funding, Miriama has run coaching and refereeing wānanga for the teachers and parents, increasing their interest and engagement in the sport. Coaches from Whanganui Basketball rep teams, and even the coach of Te Kāhui Ballers came along, sharing their knowledge and skills so the community could be prepared for the league before it started and have the confidence to be involved.

There are some weather-related limitations as they operate outside, and when it rains they have to compete with the other activities in the community to use the indoor gym at Ruapehu College. Other than that, with the help of Whiria Ngā Hua, they've been able to remove all barriers for whānau and for the schools to be involved. Schools only have to contribute \$10 which goes towards kai at the end of each round of the basketball league.

### Reach

**Kāhui Maunga Basketball League ran for six weeks in term four of 2023. It involved six schools with two teams in each year group (4-6 and 7-8) with around 100 participants.**

**The kaupapa is now coming up to week five of the league in term one, but engagement has decreased due to the overlap with other sports.**

**Resulting in only four schools involved with one team in each year group and 86 players registered.**



# Impact

Playing sports creates positive impacts for individual tamariki as well as increasing the connection and capabilities within the Ruapehu community as a whole. The tamariki benefit from social connection, team building, physical fitness and learning new skills. Miriama has found that more children are more active, and those who wouldn't necessarily have played a sport have been keen to give basketball a go. She has also seen more whānau engagement with the schools and students from the college coming to referee and being the tuakana to the younger tamariki. This provides leadership opportunities for the older rangatahi while learning how to be positive role models. The exposure to basketball as tamariki also means that as they go off to high school, they will be able to play or referee basketball, thereby broadening their future opportunities. The feedback has been very positive, with students asking for the next basketball league or to be involved in other sports. Miriama also receives encouraging comments from school principals and teachers.

With support from the schools, Miriama is now focused on developing the programme to be sustainable long-term for the community. Future goals for the programme are coming to fruition and generating interest from teachers and parents, with one team set to compete in the bigger leagues in Whanganui in term three. This is a positive kaupapa for the basketball scene in the Ruapehu region, and with the well-thought-out organisation from Miriama, schools will know what they need moving forward to keep the momentum going. Miriama's own self-determination has increased through Whiria Ngā Hua, to be able to provide such an opportunity for her tamariki and for others.

***"Lots of whānau support during the evenings, that's been huge. I think that's been the biggest impact. And seeing the parents coaching their kids' teams, giving back to the community."***

***"The main long-term goal was to get a team from here to go to Whanganui to play in the leagues so they can see we're not just this little community, that they can do it, they can go away to play basketball, and they can see their potential and their strengths."***



## Whānau Ora Goals

This basketball initiative has been so much more than just providing the sport, it has also contributed to the confidence, pride and self-determination of the community, including the tamariki, parents and schools. Through sports, they are also contributing to leading healthy lifestyles, with many more tamariki being active and girls getting involved. This kaupapa is bringing the community together while also giving the schools an opportunity to fundraise every week.



**Miriama Lucas**

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 Kahui Maunga Basketball League

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# ATIRIA PARANIHI

## Wharepuni Rebuild

### Description

Wharepuni Rebuild is about restoring connection to whānau, wharepuni and whenua for the hapū Tupoho ki Te Ao Mārama. After losing their whare tūpuna to a devastating scrub fire in 2022, Atiria Paranihi recognised the need to physically rebuild the wharepuni and to rebuild whānau connections to each other, their whakapapa and identity. This kaupapa represents the journey of rebuilding following a tragedy and has provided opportunities for whānau to explore identity, build confidence, and contribute to hapū survival. Whiria Ngā Hua funding has enabled several wānanga covering topics such as rongoā, pōwhiri, raranga harakeke, mahi urupā, empowering men, and piharau. The first wānanga at Paraweka Marae focused on whānau reconnecting to their whakapapa and who they are.

The second wānanga was about whenua, with whānau returning to their roots and reconnecting with where they come from. These wānanga were very successful, and more are planned along the journey towards rebuilding the wharepuni. This hands-on initiative has encouraged kaitiakitanga and whanaungatanga in many different ways. One of the wānanga included a hunting component, where some of the men went into the ngahere, gaining knowledge of their whenua and providing food for their whānau. They were also able to start the process of regaining their mātauranga around the piharau and learned how to harvest and protect this food source that their whānau were once kaitiaki of.

Before this funding, whānau wanting to return to their marae had to use jet boats - unless they were going to pay for a helicopter, which Atiria describes as ***“Like asking for permission to see our own marae, which is a very humbling process.”*** However, through this kaupapa, they didn't have to charge their whānau to ***“Attend wānanga to access their own mātauranga, their own whakapapa, their own whānau, their own rohe, iwi, hapū.”*** This was very fulfilling for Atiria ***“To be able to whakamana them like that.”***

***“We go around and collect that knowledge, who we are, where we come from, and fill our baskets up with that and revitalise ourselves and our whānau and our hapū and our marae, and so, by the time we return home, we're ready to go, ready to build.”***

***“Whiria Ngā Hua funding enabled us to provide the wānanga to help rebuild our whānau. By rebuilding our whānau, we rebuild our hapū, and by rebuilding our hapū, we are giving essence to the final physical outcome of establishing our wharepuni again ... so when we come to the end, it's full. And not just with people, but with knowledge, with love, with presence.”***

### Reach

**Each wānanga has seen around 100 whānau attending, with the numbers increasing from the first to the second wānanga.**

**Atiria had high expectations for these wānanga and was very happy with the reach and impacts, particularly after receiving such positive feedback.**



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives



# Impact

For many whānau involved in this initiative, discovering or rediscovering their connections to their marae has brought positive benefits closely tied to self-discovery and confidence. Learning about the resting place of their tūpuna and understanding their whakapapa has had a profound impact. Participants feel the wānanga have ignited a spark within them that continues to grow.

Feedback from whānau has been overwhelmingly positive, with those travelling from Australia remarking that the wānanga was a valuable investment. There are further aspirations for increased confidence, particularly among the men taking on roles at the marae and on the pae. A significant impact is relearning how to be kaitiaki of the piharau. Part of their feelings of disconnection to the piharau stemmed from temporarily handing this role to another whānau. Through the wānanga, they are reaching out to the whānau currently using the weir, the traditional piharau catchment, to learn their knowledge and techniques.

With this foundational knowledge, they plan to hold a mini wānanga at the weir when the piharau are running in May, allowing them to learn and retain their mātauranga for future generations. Atiria believes that teaching their whānau about their tūpuna, whakapapa and mātauranga is a huge win for their kaupapa and for building a confident people, ***“That impact of knowing who you are and where you come from makes for a very strong people.”*** Atiria feels empowered after directing this kaupapa and bringing it to fruition without having to charge whānau.

She sees that ***“Enabling their ability to access their own whakapapa, their own knowledge, their own knowing of from whom and where they come from, was a huge mana instalment for me. He tino whakamana tērā ki a au. Being able to be the provider for that, the vessel for that to happen, was a privilege. Words don’t even suffice.”***

## Whānau Ora Goals

Through this initiative, the hapū Tupoho ki Te Ao Mārama were able to learn about who they are and who they come from. Atiria discussed that there is significant empowerment in knowing ***“Nō wai koe and nā wai koe,”*** contributing to their collective strength and their journey towards being an even stronger people.

During the wānanga, various aspects of healthy lifestyles were explored, including rongoā, mirimiri, talking to each other, working in the urupā, having and getting into the ngahere, and hunting. Atiria saw this as an important part of Te Whare Tapa Whā.

***“When you are confident in yourself, and when you are confident as a people, you can hold your head up high.”***



# PARE PUE

## Whānau n Armz Headstone Restoration

### Description

Whānau n Armz is run by Pare Pue, who cleans and restores headstones for her whānau, hapū and iwi. Visiting both urupā and community cemeteries, Pare is committed to being a kaitiaki of these spaces. Pare was already doing this mahi before the funding, using her own money for petrol and cleaning supplies. Whiria Ngā Hua funding allowed her to source more cleaning equipment, travel to different urupā and cemeteries, and network with local marae. Although she aspires to turn this into a small business, the driver for Pare's mahi is the love of her whānau, both living and passed.

Pare's passion for this mahi stems from her strong spiritual connection to her whānau and a desire to share stories and tikanga with the next generation. Her mahi helps her connect with her mokopuna, whom she takes to the urupā. She sees this as an opportunity for her to impart mātauranga Māori and foster an understanding of Māori traditions, tikanga and values surrounding death and urupā. Moreover, Pare shares her knowledge and inspiration on how best to clean and restore headstones, ensuring their longevity and preserving the memory of those who have passed.

*"I went up to the Māori urupā and my cousin was there, asking what I had been doing, working there all morning. I was weeding, removing all of the moss and that. And I went to get him a scraper and a bucket of paint. He wanted to do his mum's grave."*

*"This funding has opened my eyes to a lot. I can go further, I can do way more, and now I've got all the tools and everything I need."*

### Reach

**Pare has cleaned and restored around 15 headstones and has plans for more. Each headstone is different, and the time taken depends on the condition. As Pare was already doing this mahi, there were few barriers for her to expand her current services. The funding just meant she could go further and reach more people.**

**When she received the funding, her first thought was, "Man, I can do every one! Not just at the urupā, but also at the Pakehā cemetery!"**

**Eventually, Pare hopes to turn this into a small whānau business, as she enjoys the mahi, is good at it, and has other plans, such as doing photos for the gravestones.**

*"It gives me peace, I talk to them, we laugh and then we cry."*



# Impact

Through her mahi, Pare perpetuates the intergenerational transfer of invaluable cultural knowledge and practices. For Pare, knowing the whānau are being remembered has been positive for her mental and spiritual wellbeing.

She is nurturing her own connection with those who have passed while honouring them with stories and knowledge for future generations.

Her mahi also has a really special impact on her whānau. She takes her grandchildren to the urupā and lets them help with the restoration of the headstones or just get familiar with the urupā without being scared. She also tells her mokopuna the stories of her family members who have passed away and teaches them about their whakapapa.

*“Hopefully, when I’ve finished with my initiative, I plan to maybe make a business out of it, I’ve got the base of everything to move forward. I’ve got a heart though, so if they can’t pay, it’s all good. I’m learning too. And if I can share that with them, then maybe they will go back to their whānau, and they will share it. We’ve all got time, it’s just how we use it.”*

## Whānau Ora Goals

This initiative has enabled Pare to provide a very special service to her whānau for free. She is engaging in te ao Māori by supporting connections to those who have passed and transmitting traditions and knowledge of te ao Māori to her mokopuna.

# RAEWYN SINCLAIR

## Rangatahi Kākahu Creations

### Description

Rangatahi Kākahu Creations was developed by Raewyn Sinclair, who wanted to hold creative design workshops for rangatahi. Working from her own business, Ruapehu Signs, this was a unique opportunity to gain an experience and learn new skills. Raewyn held several workshops with rangatahi from different schools, working through the creative process from start to finish. From brand research to using a Cricut machine, participants were able to watch a DTF (Direct to Film) printer and were able to print their own kākahu with an automatic press. The programme ended with a presentation ceremony where the rangatahi were able to give back to their whānau by presenting their kākahu creations to a special person in their lives.

All rangatahi received a workbook that they used to research who they were, what they were passionate about, and what they wanted to get out of the course. Raewyn taught the rangatahi a range of skills, starting with using the Cricut to print their names on their books, how to cut vinyl, how to create a brand or start a business plan. She also shared with them how to understand the basics of marketing, including learning about copyright and target audiences and an introduction to GST.

During the presentation ceremony at Te Pae Tata, the rangatahi proudly showcased their personalised hoodies or t-shirts, printed with their unique designs, which they then gifted to their special person. Many of the rangatahi were shy at the presentation ceremony, but Raewyn supported them by presenting a kōrero and their pepehā, which one of them had never done before. The rangatahi also had to discuss what their design meant to them and why their special person was so special, bringing much emotion to the ceremony. Following the presentations, everyone enjoyed a kai, and to the surprise of the rangatahi, Raewyn had thoughtfully printed their designs onto t-shirts as gifts back to them.

*"The little girl who got up and said her pepehā for the first time did it amazingly."*



### Reach

**Over four to six weeks, 12 rangatahi from three different schools came together for workshops with Raewyn.**

**The length of the course varied depending on the time the rangatahi could be there, but they all managed to achieve a lot in their time together.**

**Of the 12 rangatahi, 10 attended the community presentation, and the other two will have school-based presentations.**



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives



# Impact

Raewyn saw changes in the confidence and the independence of the rangatahi. They were excited by the idea of creating their own brand or selling their kākahu if they wanted to. With Raewyn's intentions to foster a positive learning environment, the rangatahi were supportive of each other.

This was especially important for those with learning difficulties or different ways of thinking, with the programme enabling their creativity to flow. Raewyn said the initiative was a big learning curve for herself, especially trying to teach an age group much older than her own tamariki.

For the rangatahi of the smaller rural schools, who often experience limited resources, this initiative was a positive opportunity to try something new. Now, even some adults in the community want to give it a try, ***"They got to learn how I run my business ... I told them no matter who you are and what you look like, you can do what I do."***

The experience of running this kaupapa has given Raewyn more self-confidence, and an opportunity to advertise her own business rather than relying on word of mouth. She believes it's not just about putting her business out there, ***"it's more than that, it's about trying to get more people to help kids."***


***"It's been good for me. It's been cool ... scary but cool. I've probably invested a bit more time than I thought I was going to, like the two months I pretty much haven't been working to my normal capacity, but what's two months when I got so much more out of it than two months work ever could."***



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## Whānau Ora Goals

An important part of this kaupapa was believing in the kids and making them feel proud of themselves and their achievements. This kaupapa was also grounded in te ao Māori.

One of Raewyn's aunts at the marae acknowledged that Raewyn was passing on the old ways in the tikanga of giving back of their first kākahu creation.

***"Like how you give your first fish back to Tangaroa, you give your first kākahu back, that was my thought. The tikanga behind that ... just trying to embed in their brains that they can do anything they put their minds to and there are people who believe in them, which is a big thing."***



# CODIE TAKITIMU

TB Beauty 23

## Description

Codie Takitimu has taken the plunge by creating and developing her own business from home.

Already a stay-at-home mum of five boys and one puppy, Codie added to the busyness of her life with a nail certification from The Gel Bottle. She is now well on her journey towards becoming a qualified beauty therapist, developing all the skills and knowledge required to offer a range of quality beauty services in the community.

To gain experience on real hands, friends and family became the test subjects, until the business began from the end of January. Whiria Ngā Hua funding has enabled Codie to transform a room of her house into a small salon that is a professional, fresh new space for TB Beauty 23 to operate from.

The inspiration for this business came from several people in the community encouraging her to apply for Whiria Ngā Hua. Codie had always been interested in hair and nails, especially when her mum was going through chemo, and she used to paint her nails for her.

Codie is also completing a course in business management through Thrive Whanganui. She feels equipped to grow her business and is looking forward to future training towards other skills and services that she can offer.

## Reach

**So far, Codie has completed at least 14 people's nails.**

**She is looking forward to being able to reach more people as she expands the services that she can offer.**



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives



# Impact

Although still in the early stages, this business is providing an additional income supporting Codie and her whānau. She is committed to educating people about how to look after their nails, and how to make their nails stronger for chemo, or for daily wear. Codie believes this opportunity has encouraged her to take some time for her own passions, sparking motivation for self-care and particularly in getting her out and about and being more social. Before, she felt that she **“Didn’t really want to be committed”** or to have anyone in her own space, but that was her own **“personal whakamā.”**

Now, Codie is looking forward to more opportunities to learn and build her business, and, **“The more people talk positively about it, the more it’s taking me further.”**

**“I used to stay home, do the mum thing, and not have people in my space. But since I’ve had people in my space and got good feedback from my clients, I’m feeling a little more confident in myself.”**

**“It’s still moving, and I’m excited to see what else happens through this whole process. I’ve definitely built more confidence in myself. I’m definitely getting better at being put on the spot ... I guess the main help for me is just self-confidence, just backing myself a bit more.”**

## Whānau Ora Goals


Confidence and self-determination are two significant outcomes of this business. Along with some of her own fundraising to get some more products, the business is growing steadily, contributing to the financial security of her whānau. Codie feels that TB Beauty 23 is helping her to participate more in society as she is being more social.

The business also means she is creating a space to do the things that she wants to do with her life.



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# TE HIIRINGA TANE-MAREIKURA

## Burgers by Hand

### Description

Te Hiiringa Tane-Mareikura's 'Burgers By Hand' business has always been his dream, driven by his vision to provide good food, good vibes, and good times. Learning from an entrepreneur in Auckland several years ago, and following a resurgence of smashed burgers, Te Hiiringa was inspired to start his own burger business. This journey began with pop-ups in markets and gaining some business experience. Now, the funding support from Whiria Ngā Hua has provided a solid foundation to establish the business in the Ruapehu region.

Currently set up as a mobile pop-up, Te Hiiringa eventually wants to move into a food truck and then open a shop in Ohakune, bringing economic value to the Ruapehu region. His aspiration is to be self-employed and for the business to be self-sustaining and provide jobs for his whānau. He also aims to inspire others in the community by setting a good example and creating unique, fit-for-purpose burgers inspired by the land and sea.

Whiria Ngā Hua funding supports Te Hiiringa's vision by purchasing equipment and funding training courses. He has acquired a mincer, new barbecue, containers, and sauce bottles, attended food safety courses, developed a food control plan, and registered with the Ruapehu District Council.

He already has a logo, uniforms, and signage, and marketing will be part of the next stages of business development. Recently, he had a very successful event at a gig in Rangataua, he was supported by his whānau and learnt a lot about catering for large events.

### Reach

**With limited catering and event opportunities in Ohakune outside of the ski season, Te Hiiringa plans to start travelling to share his burgers.**

**His mobile pop-up, and eventually his food truck, will be handy for events in the region, such as the Carrot Carnival and Mardis Gras, which he intends to attend this year.**





# Impact

Te Hiiringa is paving the way for himself and showing his whānau and community what is possible when you take the first step to follow your dreams. He aspires for the impact of this business to be for his immediate family, uplifting whānau and cousins and nurturing their own whakaaro around their dreams and aspirations.

*"If I do get this business up and running, I would definitely look to employ my whānau and get them trained up. Hopefully, the bigger picture is to try and cultivate their own dreams and aspirations."*

*"It made me realise that someone actually believes in this dream of mine. That was the biggest one. When I received the email saying I had successfully cracked it, I was quite happy because I had applied twice before. I applied for the first one, and I applied for some funding in Whanganui. And I cracked it this time."*

# Whānau Ora Goals

Although he is still establishing the business, Te Hiiringa believes that self-determination will be a significant outcome for this initiative. As 'Burgers By Hand' builds capability and financial security for Te Hiiringa and his whānau, it will also provide an opportunity to create wealth.

Although Te Hiiringa is already participating in his community with mobile pop-ups and in-house catering for Ngā Waihua ō Paerangi, he is looking forward to getting out among the community more and sharing his burgers at local events and festivals.



Te Hiiringa Tane-Mareikura

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# JAMIE (KUI) TAYLOR

Tamariki Pūmanawa Wānanga

## Description

Tamariki Pūmanawa Wānanga is designed for whānau with gifted children. Jamie's aim is to provide a space for whānau to come together, share their perspectives on giftedness, and support one another. Born out of Jamie's own challenges in accessing support for her gifted tamaiti within the health and education systems, this initiative is connecting Māori whānau and their gifted children. Its overarching goal is to develop resources and narratives that highlight the gifts of tamariki pūmanawa and offer strategies for whānau navigating their upbringing.

Being part of the kohanga and kura Māori system in the area, Jamie identified a need in the community to advocate and support whānau with gifted children. She found that even as a teacher and being familiar with the health and education systems and processes to get support, she still found it difficult to navigate without frustration.

The first wānanga was about gathering whānau experiences with the support systems for their tamariki, and testing Jamie's assumptions about limitations and challenges in the system. Whānau often have diverse understandings of giftedness and face barriers in articulating their children's needs to schools, GPs, or other services.

The next wānanga are about developing a resource for whānau to articulate their needs to schools and other spaces. They have kept in contact online and are planning two more wānanga to develop other resources, including an informational template for parents to advocate for their children in these spaces, recognising the challenges faced by Māori whānau.

## Reach

**This initiative supports 8-10 whānau and their tamariki pūmanawa in wānanga and activities to establish their definition of giftedness and share meaningful support strategies.**

**One kanohi-ki-te-kanohi wānanga has already been held, with whānau registering from as far as Whanganui, Ohakune, Waiouru, Taihape, and Palmerston North.**

**This is a lot bigger scope than was originally planned, however they are maintaining ongoing online contact, and planning two more in-person wānanga.**

**This mahi also helps the schools and other places to change the narrative around gifted tamariki.**



# Impact

Understanding giftedness in a different way can help whānau to advocate for their tamariki and how they can articulate and share that with others. These wānanga helped whānau to understand and recognise the value of their whakaaro and what they know about their own tamaiti.

Jamie is also using this funding to work towards developing a storyboard in the wānanga, and to work towards publishing a children's book. This aims to provide representation for tamariki pūmanawa, highlighting key messages about giftedness that are not commonly seen in children's literature. This has quite an ongoing impact.

*“One of the māmā who joined our group said, ‘I didn’t really think that my kid is that gifted, but thinking about what you’ve shared, I think they are.’ She didn’t realise that her tamaiti is really gifted in whatever way the whānau wants to describe it. I guess that highlighted the messaging around it for us as adults. We are only really taught or hear about giftedness in an academic way. Whereas this kind of changes that narrative.”*

## Whānau Ora Goals

This initiative is allowing whānau to participate more fully in society. This is an extremely positive outcome, particularly considering that many whānau with tamariki pūmanawa face barriers to participation in society.

This kaupapa also helps whānau to understand their tamariki better and see their giftedness through a te ao Māori lens, leading to more cohesive whānau participating in te ao Māori.

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# MARK TROON

## Troon Butchery - Butchery processing wānanga

### Description

Mark Troon of Troon Butchery is sharing valuable butchery skills with whānau in Waiouru. Mark was a recipient of the first round of Whiria Ngā Hua and this year has continued to expand the course, providing workshops on animal processing. Butchery is a valuable life skill, particularly in Waiouru, where many in the community rely on living off the land. Teaching butchery skills means more people can access home-kill or hunted meats rather than relying on store-bought meat.

Mark's workshops include food safety practices, cutting techniques, and processing an animal into various cuts of meat, sausages, and smallgoods. Mark's workshops also strengthen family bonds and community connections and involve meeting many different people. Mark now has access to a permanent location and chiller in Waiouru, where he bases his courses. Mark makes sure to break down the whole process part by part, ***"Right from skinning through to boning, which way to cut your steak, mincing, packaging, cleaning, the whole thing."*** These skills give whānau the knowledge to feed their own whānau and their marae.

*"The times I'd come up here after hunting down in Whanganui, got the family in tow, come up to Waiouru, get in the chiller, go to hang my deer up, and there's someone standing there looking at the deer with no idea. And I say to the wife, 'Sorry, I'm going to be half an hour', and I help the person cut up their deer, saving them hours. And they'd go home with a bit of skill."*



### Reach

**Due to the popularity of the workshops, over 50 people have applied for the next intake.**

**There is now increased interest from wāhine and rangatahi, demonstrating the huge demand for this skill in the community.**





# Impact

Learning a skill like butchery means whānau can have more control and self-determination over their food and finances, especially in the current cost-of-living crisis. Improving food security by being able to process home-kill or hunted foods at home saves \$100-200 per animal, as well as being much more time efficient. This initiative also means whānau connected to the marae are more comfortable and confident doing the butchery mahi for events or hui rather than needing to call upon Mark. With the funding, he was able to show people how to process and make smallgoods, encouraging whānau to utilise the whole beast

An unintended impact for Mark was getting stopped on the street by people interested in his courses. Mark left butchery 16 years ago and never thought he would go back to it. However, the interest has been phenomenal, and he has been pleasantly surprised by the number of people who want to learn. For example, Mark shared a story about how he was stopped by a woman and thanked for the impact that he had on her son and his stepfather. They had both been in one of his workshops, and now were able to go hunting and process the animals together. ***“That was a win for me, from skinning through to breaking down and packaging. That’s putting money in their pocket.”***

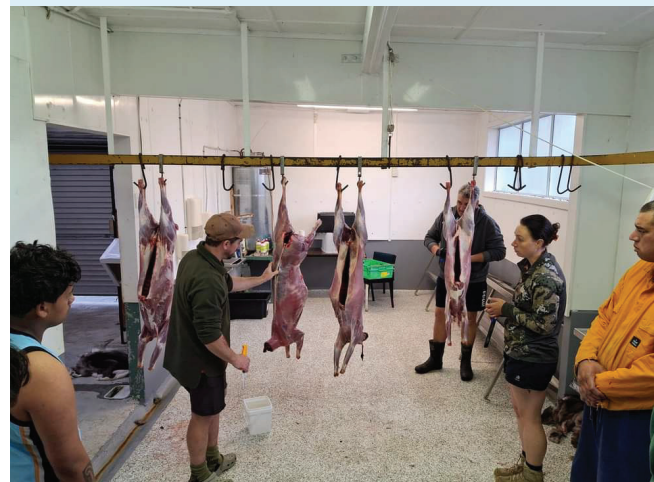
Now that he has a permanent location to operate out of, the interest in this initiative is pushing him to get going and get back into his trade and start his own business that fits in with his lifestyle. Running these wānanga have also been an affirmation for Mark that his skills are valuable, and he is a positive contributor to his community; ***“I left school at 15. School wasn’t for me, but here I am teaching people.”*** Mark recognises a market for this kind of mahi in the area, which could eventually lead to employing others, and he attributes Whiria Ngā Hua as the catalyst.

***“We’d have a tangi here, and because I’m a butcher people would ask me to do it, but now I’ve got my little army behind me who I can call upon, and they’re confident ... when there is a tangi on, all these animals get dropped off and they can now put their hand up and say ‘Ok I know where to start’.”***

## Whānau Ora Goals


This kaupapa contributes to self-determination, financial security, and healthy lifestyles. Mark sees this work as an opportunity for people from all walks of life to work together and go through the same process of learning skills together.

Mark enjoys facilitating the time for whānau to be together and strengthen their connections. It also facilitates more people getting out hunting, enjoying the outdoors and increasing their physical fitness and mental wellbeing.



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 Mark's Butchery Workshop

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Research

# SOPHIA WALLACE

Te Hā o Hineahuone

## Description

Sophia Wallace's kaupapa 'Te Hā o Hineahuone' is dedicated to supporting the growth and hauora of kōtiro rangatahi. She aims to support the development of these young women, helping them to recognise their potential and share it with others. Run through after-school wānanga, the programme is structured by the four phases of Te Whare Tapa Whā. It includes team-building activities, traditional kēmu Māori, pūrākau, kōrerorero and creative arts to explore emotions, feelings, and cultural heritage.

The kōtiro, aged between 12 to 18, come along after school and have a kai, as well as some learning time, sharing kōrero, feedback on their week and what they have implemented from the previous week. For example, in the phase of te taha tinana, they all explored ikura through the lens of te ao Māori. Typically, from a non-Māori or Western perspective, the topic of menstruation can carry a narrative of shame or is considered unhygienic or gross. The conversations they were able to have in this kaupapa reframed their understanding of ikura. By sharing the story of Hineahuone and Tāne, the kōtiro were guided to understand the Māori perspective that ikura is about the mana and tapu of wāhine. This was an encouraging and uplifting kōrero with the kōtiro, watching them go from cringing at the topic of periods, to hearing the pūrākau of Hineahuone, and understanding the specialness of ikura in te ao Māori, that it is human nature to have an ikura, enabling wāhine to produce life.

The phase on te taha tinana will be followed by a phase about te taha whānau, where Sophia will introduce body movement and exercise. They will discuss the importance of physical exercise to hauora and introduce different ways to take care of their tinana, whether it's walking, yoga, mindfulness, or breath work. The last phase will be te taha wairua, celebrating identity, whakapapa, and exploring things like pepehā. The kaupapa will conclude with a celebration, where kōtiro will present their pepehā, and their progress and potential will be honoured, they are currently awaiting the completion of designs for their hoodies before proceeding with their awaited celebration.

*"So it changes their perspective on how they see ikura, and it's cool for them to understand that you are a sacred vessel. You can produce babies. You are a gift."*

## Reach

After starting in February, Sophia had planned to run three eight-week rounds, with two wānanga per week and each round aimed at different age groups. For the first round, 12 kōtiro initially registered, but due to other commitments, about eight kōtiro consistently attended.

**"This is something that I wanted to do a while ago, because, for me and my daughter, we have a really good relationship ... She's honest and open with the good and the bad, and I want that for our kōtiro and their mums and parents too ... but also, I want them to be confident in knowing who they are and accepting that. Everyone's different and it's okay."**



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives





# Impact

The kōtiro have responded positively and enthusiastically engaged in this kaupapa. Learning about yoga, mindfulness, breathwork, about the pūrākau of ikura, is allowing them opportunities to develop who they are and learn about how to take care of their hauora. Sophia is particularly happy that they are becoming more confident, opening up, trusting each other and sharing their ups as well as their downs. The impact of this kaupapa is reaching back into the homes and whānau of these kōtiro, with mums and sisters and aunties getting curious about the course.

Sophie always aspired to run a rōpū like this, and funding from Whiria Ngā Hua allowed her to purchase resources that could be gifted to the kōtiro to support the phases of Te Whare Tapa Whā that they are working through. These included ikura products such as period underwear and or moon cups that allow kōtiro to have choices about their bodies. Sophie is seeing this environment as having a positive effect on the kōtiro.

For Sophie, ***“the biggest impact is the girls are stepping forward confidently and talking about their issues, problems, thoughts, and feelings ... it's really cool just to see them stand up and be able to share how their week was, especially if it was a shit week.”***

***“For me it's knowing that my idea, my dream, has come to fruition, and through Whiria Ngā Hua it's been possible. And now it's like, ‘What other avenues can I explore?’ I know we're in the early days, but I believe in this so much that I'm like, ‘What's next? Where can we go?’”***

## Whānau Ora Goals

This kaupapa has encouraged the kōtiro to engage with te ao Māori, providing a space where they can learn karakia, say their pepehā, and practise their Māoritanga without judgement. The curiosity of whānau members in the journey that their kōtiro are on is also an indicator that whānau are becoming more closely connected, cohesive and nurturing.

The foundation of this kaupapa is teaching kōtiro how to lead healthy lifestyles according to all aspects of health and hauora through Te Whare Tapa Whā. They are understanding that living healthy lifestyles is about consciously making decisions about having a healthy mind as well as a healthy body.

***“One in particular which stands out to me is a mum who asked me, ‘What's this kid up to? She's bought a yoga mat home.’ I'm like, ‘This is the phase of te taha tinana, and she's exploring if yoga is something she wants to implement outside of this programme in her life. And she's like, ‘Okay, well, if she's doing it, got another yoga mat for me?’ So, that's really cool that the girls are going home with their new resources and tools, and if mum hasn't come with them to the programme, they've seen them and grown a curiosity around what their daughter's doing.”***



Sophia Wallace

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# JASE WELLS

## TOA City Boxing Academy



## Description

Toa City Boxing Academy was established to provide rangatahi in the Waiouru/Ohakune region with boxing skills while promoting health and wellbeing without any transport or financial barriers.

Having run the Linton Army boxing gym for four years, Jase Wells saw Whiria Ngā Hua as an opportunity to use his experience to reinvigorate boxing opportunities in the region. This kaupapa has developed a safe, supportive environment for rangatahi to let off some steam and a positive avenue for learning discipline, self-awareness and mindfulness.

At the Toa City Boxing Academy, all rangatahi learn fitness regimes, attend skill sessions, sparring, wellness sessions, and will receive their own boxing wraps, gloves, and focus pads at the end of the programme. Alongside Jase, two professional boxers run the classes, with a focus on novice boxers. Their aspiration is for this programme to provide a platform for participants to confidently further their journeys in the sport of boxing.

Through the funding from Whiria Ngā Hua and the support of the NZ Army, Jase was able to take over a previously unused building near the Linton Army Camp and fit it out for the boxing course. They were able to purchase and set up six big boxing bags, a couple of reflex bags, gym equipment, and support the running of the facility. Jase believed the funding *“helped to frame the vision of the club and the gym that we want to do for the youth.”*

The support for this kaupapa means none of the rangatahi have to pay fees, and they are able to be supplied with all the equipment they need for training.

## Reach

Jase initially anticipated working with about 12 rangatahi and recruiting primarily from Ohakune and Raetihi.

However, from the initial muster, numbers have been growing steadily due to the snowball effect of word of mouth.

There are now 32 rangatahi involved, with eight on the waiting list, and their biggest class so far is catering for 24 rangatahi at a time.

*“One unintended impact is the growth, which is cool, but man it’s a bit hard to try and run so many in the classes.”*

Based on the success of the first nine weeks, they have had to shift the way they operate slightly and now run three sessions a week for a range of novice and more advanced students.

The huge interest and their dedication to not turning people away has meant some of the resources have been spread thin. However, the club remains committed to keeping its doors open to all who turn up and even providing transport to ensure barriers are limited.





## Impact

The impact on the rangatahi is physical, social, mental, and emotional. They are tired after each session from the physicality of the training while also building confidence, learning new skills, and learning how to be a team player in an individual sport. Older students are also given the opportunity to help develop the younger students using a tuakana-teina approach, which gives the older students a sense of purpose.

Jase had a vision for what he wanted and what he felt would come out of it, but he was pleasantly surprised with the growth and the level of engagement from the rangatahi. The Toa City Boxing Academy has been a positive way for Jase to give back to his community. He is planning to keep and sustain this initiative. The only limitation that Jase faced was that his initial aspiration was to use the funding to fully kit out 12 rangatahi with 'all the bells and whistles.' However, there was so much interest from the rangatahi that they had to spread that equipment around.

***"I don't think I would be in the position to go and buy those six big heavy bags at about \$500 each just to support the vision. The funding has helped me make sure we've got all the gears and stuff for the kids."***

***"It's not a daycare centre, it's a boxing gym. I'm here to grow fighters and grow discipline.... Some of the kids who came through at the start were jacking cars six months earlier. And this provided a safe space for them to take away that time for them, to do something else."***

## Whānau Ora Goals

Some of the rangatahi enjoy boxing training so much that they find gym spaces outside of the club to practise the skills they're learning in the classes. The club has brought them all closer and had a positive effect on the rangatahi and their whānau, ***"I can see it in their faces and just their behaviours, they call us all uncles now."***

In times when transport for the rangatahi hasn't come through, Jase and the other trainers have driven their own vehicles to Ohakune and Raetihi to pick them up, take them to Waiouru and then take them home again. This is another supportive space where the rangatahi have an opportunity to spend time with positive role models.

***"Just the conversations and banter you share with them are rewarding enough. You can feel it, you can sense it, there's a feeling of accomplishment there."***

**Jase Wells**

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 Toa City Fight Club

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# BARNEY WARBRICK JNR

Rangatahi mentoring through landscaping and property maintenance

## Description

Barney Warbrick is a hardworking rangatahi who has established his own thriving landscaping business in the Ruapehu area. Barney's landscaping services meet the different needs of whānau and include lawn care, garden maintenance, green waste removal, and tree care. The motivation for Barney's mahi is youth development, which provides an avenue for younger rangatahi to learn essential life skills, develop a work ethic, and spend time outdoors.

Barney was 17 when he entered the workforce and he established his own business in his early 20s. This has given him the experience and the relatability to guide the younger rangatahi. Through hands-on experience, Barney imparts invaluable lessons on punctuality, preparedness, safety protocols, and practical skills like machine operation, gardening, and chainsaw safety. This lays the groundwork for rangatahi to transition into adulthood and employment.

With the support of funding and promotion from Whiria Ngā Hua, Barney has successfully expanded the client base for his business and invested in new equipment, health and safety gear, chainsaw gear, fuel, and new machinery for future work. Barney is also working to diversify his business. As his lawnmowing work slows down in winter, he focuses more on gardening and tree work.

Now, with the capacity to expand, Barney is looking to provide firewood to help people in the community with heating. Giving back to those who are less financially or physically able to do their own landscaping mahi is a significant part of the work ethic that Barney tries to instil in the rangatahi. The funding has covered the extra costs associated with supporting the kaumātua. It gives him the means to spend time teaching and developing the rangatahi without worrying about the time involved or covering the costs.

***"My kaupapa was really just to get my business going and help pass on the knowledge around running a business that I've learned along the way. It's hard out mahi, but I love the job, I love being outside."***

***"It's been good. We did a couple of jobs a week ago for one of my nannies in town, and we just did lawns and cleaned up her gardens - just to give back. No charge, just to teach the boys to look after our elderly as well, the people who can't physically get out there and do this sort of mahi, I like to see that sort of work done. She loved it."***

## Reach

**Barney provides work for his younger brother or his friends. They will work for a day and are paid for their time which gives them pocket money and an incentive to work.**



**Whiria Ngā Hua II  
Initiatives**



# Impact

The impact of giving back is the most important part of this mahi for Barney. He is teaching the rangatahi to look forward to doing mahi and giving back to others without expecting anything in return. He believes this quality is essential for the next generation to learn. Barney provides his services for those who cannot physically or financially afford to do it themselves, which is a beautiful part of his kaupapa. He hopes that his impact is ***“to help the rangatahi build a good work ethic before they get into the workforce and be able to give back to those who can’t physically do stuff or don’t have the money or the means to do so. Really, it’s trying to help build our community back.”***

The future is looking positive for Barney who has taken on new contracts, such as the grounds at Ruapehu College, and more holiday homes and baches. As he expands his business, there may be an opportunity to take on more rangatahi who are interested in further developing their skills. With the next drop of funding, he is looking to set up more marketing material and social media to promote his business further.

***“It’s made a huge difference. Financially, just for extra stability, to help me be a bit more free when it comes to extra ongoing costs, whether for additional gear or investments to help my mahi go further, it’s been pretty good.”***

Barney has not faced any barriers in this process. He has been able to invest in developing his business while supporting others. He credits his parents and whānau with providing significant support and wanting him to build something that he loves doing. ***“If it weren’t for my parents being the backbone to this, I wouldn’t know where I would be right now.”***

Barney also appreciates Frances and Ngāti Rangi for supporting him in putting his name out there and building contracts to get more mahi.

***“Everything is good, business is good, things are going good, our younger rangatahi are loving the mahi, our elderly are loving the work being done, yeah nah, everything’s been going good.”***

## Whānau Ora Goals

Barney’s initiative is a successful example of building self-determination and independence in rangatahi through flexible work experience. Learning to give back as part of their work ethic is a big part of participating in society. Rangatahi are also being equipped with skills to be financially secure and create their own wealth. With a passion for the whenua and te taiao, Barney teaches others how to be tāngata tiaki.

**Barney Warbrick**

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**ihi**  
Research

# KIRI WILSON

Te Kura Nui o Paerangi

## Description

Te Kura Nui o Paerangi is a newly established kapa haka roopu uniting Te Kāhui Maunga. The rōpū aims to participate and compete in local, regional, national, and international kapa haka competitions and promote and enhance participation in te ao Māori. Te Kura Nui o Paerangi was established just six months before the regional competitions and still qualified for Te Matatini, a huge achievement.

Before the funding period began, earlier wānanga had established a need and desire for a new rōpū, and that the rangatakapū were committed. From there, a plan was made, and funding was applied for. Twelve wānanga were held during the campaign, with the final four focused on preparing for Te Matatini and supported by Whiria Ngā Hua. For this initiative, kapa haka brought everyone together, from Whanganui to the iwi on either side of the Rangitikei River and southern Taranaki whānau. The wānanga that Whiria Ngā Hua supported became a space for learning about the significance of the places they were connected to, understanding connections between each other and exploring important things for the participants as a people. As an administrator, Kiri Wilson found that the space became an opportunity for tamariki to grow up in a place where they could be uniquely themselves as Māori, outside of kohanga and kura reo.

## Reach

**A total of 12 wānanga have been held, with the last four supported by Whiria Ngā Hua and held in Rangitikei, Whanganui and two in Ruapehu.**

**The rōpū now has a membership of around 300 people, including tamariki.**

**Around 80 people consistently attended each wānanga, including whānau, who came in and out to support the 40-plus performers of the kapa haka rōpū. The biggest challenge was finding a venue big enough for everyone, as in the first few wānanga, 120-200 people turned up.**

Photography credit to Ngahuia Ormsby.



## Whiria Ngā Hua II Initiatives





# Impact

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many people saying that without the kaupapa, they wouldn't have had the opportunity to spend quality time with each other. There were reported increases in connection and whanaungatanga. Although it was a risk to pull the rōpū together in such a short timeframe, qualifying for Te Matatini was a huge achievement, which everybody is proud of.

One unintentional impact that was noted was the rōpū had become a place where whānau could come to relax and take a break from difficult things that were going on in their lives. As Kiri shared, *"Some of the impacts that I wasn't expecting when we had our debrief post-regionals was how many people were going through some really hard stuff. Everyone's got their own things going on. So having a place they could come to, where they could leave it at the door, or talk about it if they wanted to. I didn't realise how important that was for people or that it would be an impact to come out of this."* The kapa haka practices and performances provided a safe haven for participants, offering a supportive environment where they could find respite from their challenges or openly discuss their struggles, ultimately contributing to improved mental health.

Another unintentional outcome was starting a kids' club. A group of aunties decided to take the kids swimming, to the moana, or up to Maunga Ruapehu. It meant that *"they can have a space to exist as Māori and spend time together, get to know their cousins."* The whānau found it made the experience much more comfortable and special knowing they could bring their kids, and it was a whole whānau experience.

For Kiri's immediate whānau, it meant she and her partner could participate, with her partner being a head tutor and Kiri being able to provide administration skills. Kiri said the rōpū has changed the trajectory of their lives, and they hope their tamariki can take over their legacy. For their wider whānau, the experience has built confidence on the stage, transferring to confidence back home on the marae.

*"My kids wake up in the morning singing the songs and thinking that all their aunties and uncles are the most famous people in the world ... our whānau has expanded."*

*"We had nothing to lose, we were brand new, had no name, had no kākahu. To make Matatini - it felt like we won the competition. One of the things they said was, 'Thank you for trusting us'. They trusted the leadership and the tutorship. With no real reason to trust each other. That was a massive thing for us to trust ourselves, to be brave."*

Kiri Wilson

tekuranuiopaerangi@gmail.com

 Te Kura Nui o Paerangi



## Whānau Ora Goals

The kaupapa was supported by a local gym, the rōpū are able to use the gym for free. This has facilitated additional opportunities for whanaungatanga.

*"The boys particularly built a really strong bond. Sometimes you'd see 10, 12 boys at the gym, finding some space to talk and come together and work out together. It was quite amazing to see because they're all strong Māori men who got on like a house on fire."*

This kaupapa created opportunities to strengthen connections to te ao Māori, as many participants reflected that they hadn't engaged in kapa haka since secondary school, despite going to kura Māori, kura kaupapa or kura-a-iwi. Several of the male participants expressed an interest in sitting on the pae on their marae, and now the rōpū is looking forward to running wānanga in the off-season to stay connected and support those aspirations.

Kiri saw this as a huge success for the future of their connections to their marae and te ao Māori, *"At the end of the day, kapa haka is just a stage, but if you get people wanting to go home and participate, then that's where the real wins happen."*

The following initiatives were unable to be interviewed, but their kaupapa descriptions in their Whiria Ngā Hua application are as follows:

**Shiro BROWN**  
**Mai Lens, Astrophotography**

Mai Lens kaupapa plans to create astronomy visuals that align with local narratives and support local researchers. The initiative will benefit the whānau through self-development of professional photography and to support Uncle Che Wilson's star research. The aim is to capture star constellations with local geographical features, representing mana motuhake and connecting people with their land and sky. The initiative hopes to revitalise Indigenous astronomy, contribute to self-wellbeing, and provide a visual resource for the community.

**Justin CHAPMAN**  
**Kawakawa business development and training**

Justin Chapman has a strong desire to create a successful rongoā business and plans to take self-development training and workshops to enhance his skills. He is determined to develop a comprehensive business plan, acquire computer skills, and expand his pūkenga. Justin already has a home practice where he cultivates kawakawa, develops rongoā, and handles production and transportation. He intends to focus on creating labels, networking, and administration and to grow more.

**Leiana HATA**  
**Toi Mahara, mindfulness art wānanga for kōtiro**

Leiana Hata is passionate about developing a small mindfulness colouring book that incorporates the artistic talents of rangatahi kōtiro. Her goal is to organise a series of wānanga where young women can create unique designs and illustrations that reflect their personal experiences and overall wellbeing. This process will involve exploring patterns and designs that are specifically tied to te ao Māori and hold deep meaning for their whānau and whakapapa.

Leiana dreams of seeing the finished product on the shelves of local stores.

**Caleb LUCAS**  
**Te Pikomata o te Ao, rangatahi vlog wānanga**

Te Pikomata is a group that aims to empower rangatahi through arts and whakapakiri tinana. They provide consistent workshops and wānanga for rangatahi to engage in throughout the year, incorporating Te Whare Tapa Whā health model. Their goal is to create a safe space for rangatahi to thrive in all aspects of their lives. They have already held three wānanga this year, where rangatahi wrote, recorded and released a single. They plan to introduce videography, content creation, podcasting, and performance to up the ante with music. Their primary goal is to grow Te Pikomata within their rohe, fostering unity and hononga that will resonate for generations to come, through a partnership with the iwi and council sectors.

**Matt Shane MAREIKURA**  
**Whanake Rangataua, marae-based karate**

Revitalisation of "Whanake Rangataua - The emergence of warriors." Matt Mareikura plans to create a karate club for all ages and he aims to help previous members achieve black belts while expanding the club's classes and offering karate as a means of self-development for youth in the area. The writer hopes to honour family members who were experts in the field by continuing their legacy and passing it on to the next generation.

**Tihioteora MAREIKURA**  
**Mahi Toi, Māori art revival and teaching**

Tihioteora Mareikura is a creative man with an aspiration to teach modern Māori the language of symbols and patterns in Māori design through presentations, discussions, feedback, Q&A, and tailored art exercises. His goal is to connect with the old people and equip people with the tools to design Māori art with intention and understanding. Tihioteora is an experienced



individual who will deliver the main parts of the programme. His kaupapa is important to him because it enhances Māori identity by correctly utilising the Māori symbols and patterns. The programme will create a safe, non-judgmental, practical, fun, and communicative environment for all ages and levels of experience.

**Brendon MORGAN**  
**Te Kāhui Kaumātua, wānanga, haerenga, rongoā**

Te Kāhui Kaumātua focuses on providing advice to the marae and connecting kaumātua to the marae through various programmes and activities related to the wellbeing, social, and cultural aspects of their lives. The forum follows a kaumātua centric model with services and support brought to them. The programmes and activities are guided by Te Whare Tapa Whā and aim to prioritise the wellbeing of kaumātua.

**Rahari PAKAI**  
**Pahnikz Skyline Maintenance Services, Local Property Maintenance**

Rahari Pakai aims to achieve whānau sustainability through sustainable landscaping services for the Ngāti Rangi community over the next 25 years. He wants to prioritise the needs of whānau and offer eco-friendly, efficient, and professional services to a diverse range of clients, including kaumātua, kuia, working whānau, beneficiaries, and disabled whānau. Rahari will prioritise Health and Safety and risk mitigations, hoping to support the community and achieve whānau sustainability goals.

**Alice POA**  
**Te Rau o Nuku, karanga wānanga**

This initiative aims to revive the art of karanga among Ngāti Rangi by building the capacity of kaikaranga for marae and other areas that require this tikanga. Local kuia of Ngāti Rangi will support this space. A group of 20 wāhine Māori will participate in three wānanga to strengthen their knowledge base, reo, and

confidence, thereby enhancing the mana of wāhine to carry on this cultural practice. The initiative aligns with Whānau Ora and priorities for activities that strengthen the community through empowering wāhine, who will, in turn, empower whānau.

**Santanna RAPANA**  
**Mana Tūpuna, Mau Rākau**

Mau Rākau: Keeping Our Traditions Alive

Santanna Rapana has a passion for Mau Rākau, and for good reason – by practising this art form, we can uphold tikanga and honour the dreams of our tūpuna and kaumātua. She believes it's crucial to pass knowledge and traditions down to the younger generation to ensure they're preserved. *“By reconnecting with our marae, we can foster a sense of belonging and purpose. He kākano āhau. I ruia mai i Rangiatea – I am a seed, born of greatness. Descended from a line of chiefs. Imagine a beautiful garden; how did it become so? By nurturing it from seed to flower. By educating our rangatahi in the art of Mau Rākau, we keep our marae, tikanga, kaupapa and whakapapa strong.”*

**Kerri-Anne TUATINI**  
**Coffee on Queens Rangatahi barista trade mentoring**

Kerri-Anne Tuatini is a professional barista expert with 15 years of experience. She aims to empower and support young people in the area to advance their education and pursue employment opportunities. Her key activities include one-to-one tutoring in a group setting, teaching health and safety requirements, basic barista knowledge and skills, latte art, and troubleshooting. She also helps in seeking employment opportunities and networking with local cafes and the hospitality industry. Kerri-Anne will look into ways to become accredited so she can provide credits for rangatahi who complete barista courses.



# Analysis of outcomes

across the Whiria Ngā Hua II Investment

This section discusses the key themes of the outcomes of the Whiria Ngā Hua II investment, across the 29 initiatives that were funded. This analysis highlights how and in what ways Whiria Ngā Hua has achieved its stated outcomes.



Quantifying outcomes can reduce the impact of the work when it is read in isolation. It is important to understand that each initiative has achieved a variety of outcomes that are not necessarily quantifiable. This is a unique feature of commissioning; the outcomes and impacts tend not to be siloed like traditional investment programmes aimed at providing solutions to a single issue. Instead, these outcomes are interdependent, acting in ways that achieve whānau, hapū and iwi aspirations, both tangible and intangible.

*“Whiria Ngā Hua provided the opportunities that kids don’t normally get here. I mean, what country towns do vinyl printing? Do you go to any country towns that just make teams that go to Matatini? Or that have programmes that support autistic children?”*

*(Whiria Ngā Hua Kaihautū)*

### Outcomes for whānau and the community

The outcomes achieved through Whiria Ngā Hua II showcase the far-reaching influence of the initiatives and a diverse range of initiatives targeting different ages, genders, and abilities. From a kapa haka rōpū qualifying for the prestigious Te Matatini kapa haka festival, to the rebuilding of a hapū and wharepuni, to the restoration and cleaning of headstones, the initiatives have touched upon various aspects of te ao Māori, tikanga and reconnection to whakapapa.

Wānanga have been held, imparting knowledge and skills in areas such as butchery, carpentry, rangatahi life skills, kaitiakitanga, and the intergenerational transfer of mātauranga. Additionally, Whiria Ngā Hua has supported the establishment and growth of basketball leagues, boxing academies, and a Taekwondo club, promoting physical activity and personal development. Outdoor skills, such as hunting and obtaining firearm licences, have been fostered, while a dedicated carpentry course has equipped participants with valuable trade skills.

Whiria Ngā Hua has facilitated the creation and support of businesses across food, firewood, landscaping, and beauty, all contributing to financial security. Moreover, initiatives have been undertaken to support tamariki pūmanawa and the creation of kākahu for tamariki, nurturing the next generation and preserving cultural traditions.

All 18 initiatives interviewed directly impacted at least 10 individuals, with some reaching hundreds of participants. Furthermore, all those interviewed achieved their stated outcomes and exceeded their initial aspirations, highlighting the transformative power of Whiria Ngā Hua and its ability to catalyse positive change within the community.

### Intended and unintended outcomes

A research question in this evaluation is ‘What are the intended and unintended outcomes for whānau and the community?’ Two particular outcomes resonated in the data analysis; greater whānau and community interest in kaupapa than was planned for, and the importance of skill and capability building as part of the funding process.

The process of developing Whiria Ngā Hua initiatives alongside whānau involves ongoing support and capability building. Prior to receiving funding, whānau work closely with the Whiria Ngā Hua kaimahi to develop clear project plans, articulate their aspirations, and identify target demographics. This collaborative approach ensures the initiatives are well-planned and aligned with the community's needs. While most of the interviewed initiatives reported their programmes, wānanga, or activities ran as intended, the most significant unintended outcome reported across the range of kaupapa was the underestimation of the community's interest in their initiatives. Many whānau discussed the need to organise additional resources, space, or personnel to accommodate the unexpected number of whānau turning up to their kaupapa, which they described as “A good problem to have!”

Another reported unintended outcome was the capability that whānau built through the process of engaging with the funding. Whiria Ngā Hua has provided an opportunity for whānau to develop skills in various areas, including administration, writing funding applications, utilising technology for reporting, understanding agreements and contracts, being accountable for funding, budgeting, and business management. Whānau are acquiring these valuable skills and building financial literacy within the community

even before their kaupapa begins. The process of applying for and receiving funding through Whiria Ngā Hua has equipped them with essential skills and knowledge that extends beyond the specific initiatives they proposed. This capacity-building aspect has been an unintended yet invaluable outcome, contributing to the overall resilience and self-determination of the community.

## **The impact of direct whānau commissioning**

Whānau commissioning is a highly participatory approach that empowers whānau by giving them power and agency in each step of the process. Commissioning allows whānau to enact the change and achieve the outcomes that they see as most effective for themselves, their whānau, and their community. The process of Whiria Ngā Hua has created a pathway for self-determination of outcomes and aspirations from the grassroots, rather than funder-driven outcomes and aspirations (McMeeking, 2019).

While the Whiria Ngā Hua initiative provides a platform for whānau to articulate their specific aspirations, the broader influence of Whānau Ora commissioning extends far beyond the anticipated outcomes outlined in their applications. The outcomes achieved by each Whiria Ngā Hua initiative contribute to a collective hauora impact across the Ruapehu region. Several significant themes have emerged from this evaluation that demonstrate the impact of direct whānau commissioning in the Ruapehu region through Whiria Ngā Hua. These are increased self-determination and agency, improved hauora, financial security, strengthened cultural identity and connections to te ao Māori, social cohesion and community participation, and increased social cohesion (stronger whānau).

## **Increased self-determination and agency**

Funding is directed towards projects that are designed and led by whānau, promoting self-determination and community-specific solutions. This allows whānau to identify and address their unique needs and aspirations. The process of applying for funding and developing their kaupapa encourages whānau to reflect on their collective strengths, values, and goals. This introspective

journey itself can be transformative, reinforcing their cultural identity and nurturing a sense of pride and purpose (Whānau Ora Commissioning Agency, 2023). For example, one whānau initiative highlighted that this approach was much different to mainstream funding opportunities or community initiatives that rely on a trickle-down system. He recognised that under the whānau commissioning approach, "People are doing it for themselves and for the community. The system often promotes learned helplessness, people go through a department or a bureaucracy, but this is doing it yourself and going through the process yourself." (Whānau kaupapa)

Self-determination is supported when whānau participate in Whiria Ngā Hua, including the ability to realise their aspirations, access resources to accelerate their initiatives, and the belief instilled in them by others that their ideas are valuable, and they are capable of seeing them through to fruition. The collective journey of pursuing their aspirations has been a powerful catalyst for growth in the Ruapehu region as a result of the individual contributions of each of these initiatives

## **Improved hauora**

Whiria Ngā Hua, as a fund, has significantly improved the hauora of whānau, both for those leading the kaupapa and those benefiting from them. Hauora encompasses a holistic view of wellbeing, encompassing physical, mental, spiritual, and social aspects. The impact of Whiria Ngā Hua is evident in the range of hauora benefits that have been reported and recorded across each kaupapa.

For those leading the kaupapa, the process of developing, planning, and implementing their initiatives has fostered a sense of purpose, self-determination, and cultural pride, contributing to their spiritual and mental wellbeing. Additionally, many initiatives have involved physical or outdoor activities, promoting physical hauora. Moreover, the collaborative nature of these kaupapa has strengthened whānau relationships and connections within the community, enhancing social hauora. The transfer of intergenerational knowledge and the revitalisation of cultural practices have also nurtured spiritual wellbeing, fostering a deeper connection to te taiao me te ao Māori.

For those benefiting from the kaupapa, the impacts on hauora are equally profound. Initiatives centred



on cultural practices, environmental stewardship, and community engagement have fostered spiritual and social wellbeing, nurturing a sense of belonging and connection to the community. Furthermore, the economic empowerment and skill development opportunities provided by Whiria Ngā Hua have enhanced financial stability and self-sufficiency, positively impacted overall wellbeing and reduced stress associated with financial insecurity.

The holistic approach of Whiria Ngā Hua empowers whānau to pursue their aspirations and address their unique needs, which has resulted in a multifaceted improvement in hauora.

### Impact for value

Whānau commissioning is centred around the aspirations and capabilities of whānau, allowing for a highly context-specific and relevant response to community needs. As discussed by McMeeking (2019), “increased personal agency and command over one’s life contributes to positive health and social outcomes.” Therefore, the level of self-determination achieved through Whiria Ngā Hua has resulted in an impact far beyond the outcomes that were able to be measured and reported on.

***“For communities like Ruapehu, there are not many ways you can get funding being a start-up idea, or an idea that doesn’t have two years of financials. This is a real grassroots initiative. No amount of Whānau Ora support, GP support or clinical support could have got us these outcomes. It’s another reminder that grassroots Whānau Ora kaupapa are still trailblazing. I don’t have any major improvements for this process, I just hope it can continue.”***

***(Whānau initiative)***

***“If you think about it, if we never had that funding over the last two years, all the people who were affected, what would they have been doing? And I think it’s cheap. What we got out of it, it’s massive.”***

***(Whānau initiative)***

### Strengthening social cohesion and increased wellbeing

Evidence demonstrates the Whiria Ngā Hua fund fostered social cohesion by bringing communities together to work towards common goals. This was demonstrated by whānau who, in their interviews, discussed the interactions and accountability between initiatives in the community. Whiria Ngā Hua Kaihautū of the Whiria Ngā Hua fund said;

***“I love it. I love Whiria Ngā Hua, I love people who are creative, I love to see people be creative, and share that. A lot of this encompasses the concept of being raised by a village and shows you that you’ve probably got it all in your own backyard.”***

The impact of direct whānau commissioning through Whiria Ngā Hua has encouraged participation in community change, empowering whānau to be agents of positive transformation within their respective communities.

As part of the data collection, Ihi Research conducted a survey that included questions on subjective wellbeing, based on the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by Stats NZ. This allows for a comparison to Māori population and the general population in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Figure 1 shows the response of the sample to the survey’s main subjective wellbeing question: How satisfied are you with life as a whole; where 0 is completely dissatisfied and 10 is completely satisfied? The figure also shows a comparison with previous GSS surveys, presenting data for the Māori population and for the whole population.

As Figure 1 illustrates, the life satisfaction of those who have received Whiria Ngā Hua funding is higher than both the Māori and general population for every year measured since 2016. This data provides compelling evidence of the positive impact the Whiria Ngā Hua fund has had on the wellbeing of its recipients. By supporting various kaupapa and fostering a sense of community and connection to te ao Māori, among a range of other impacts and outcomes, the fund has contributed to an enhanced sense of life satisfaction among its recipients, surpassing the national averages.

Interestingly when asked ‘How satisfied do you expect to be with life as a whole, in five years’ time, where 0 is completely dissatisfied and 10 is completely satisfied? the average response was 9.57. Indicating whānau felt significant hope for improved life satisfaction in the five years ahead.

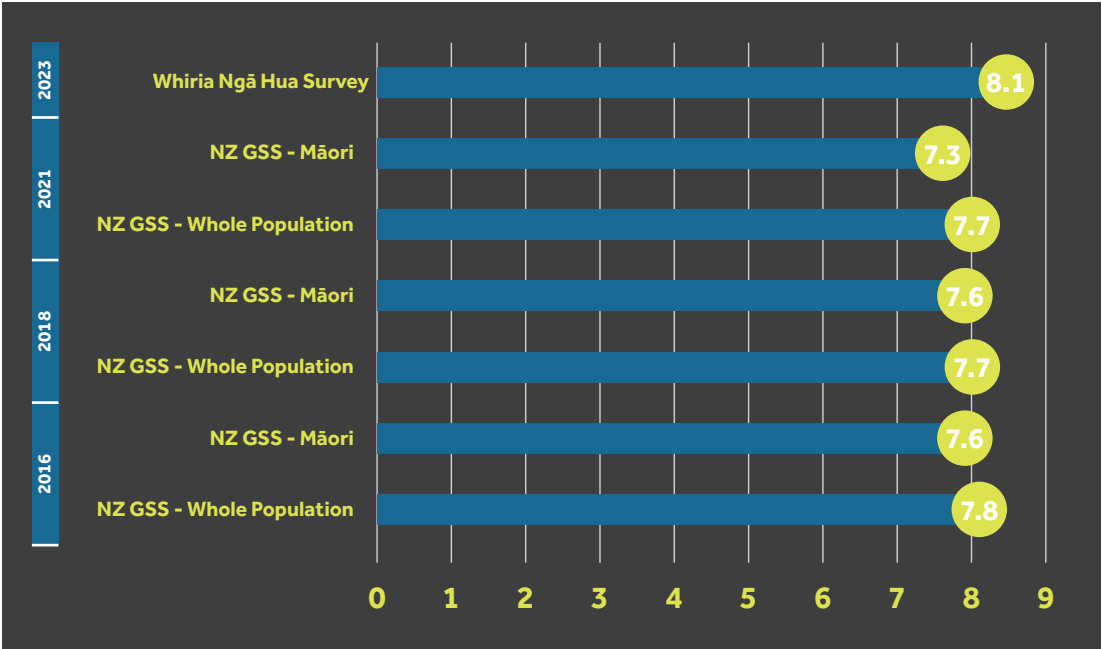


Figure 1: Life satisfaction of Whiria Ngā Hua recipients in comparison to the Māori population and general population of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The qualitative comments from the surveys were overwhelmingly positive, further reinforcing the positive impact of the Whiria Ngā Hua fund. Out of the 30 survey responses that provided comments in response to the question 'Anything you would like to say about your experience with Whiria Ngā Hua so far?', every single response expressed a positive sentiment. Five of these comments directly reflected gratitude towards Whiria Ngā Hua, with participants expressing their appreciation for the opportunity and support provided.

Other survey comments highlighted the transformative impact of the fund,

*"I am absolutely loving the path I'm on today, thanks to Whiria Ngā Hua."*

Another participant expressed their hope for the fund's continued growth, saying,

*"It has been a privilege receiving this funding, I hope they allow more funding for others who*

*want to chase their dreams."*

One positive comment encapsulated the empowering nature of the fund stating,

*"Ka Rawe, such an amazing kaupapa that is giving power back to whānau to dream and succeed."*

This sentiment underscores the fund's ability to foster self-determination and enable whānau to pursue their aspirations.

While the feedback was positive, one comment provided constructive criticism, highlighting the need for additional support in areas such as organisation, time management, project management, and finances.

This feedback presents an opportunity for the fund to consider providing additional resources and support to ensure participants have the necessary skills to maximise the success of their kaupapa.









# Barriers and enablers for whānau

The following section identifies the barriers and enablers reported by whānau during data collection. These are identified to inform continuous improvement in the administration and support of the development of the Whiria Ngā Hua fund.



## Barriers

The majority of the interviewed whānau who received funding, did not report any barriers that were detrimental to the operation of their initiative. At least three kaupapa were already existing before receiving the funding. The support enhanced their existing services with no new barriers becoming apparent. For the kaupapa that were established as a result of the funding support, none experienced insurmountable barriers. Whānau reported they felt a 'can-do' attitude and effective communication with Ngāti Rangi when support was required, which ensured any barriers experienced were quickly dealt with.

Due to the initiatives being spread out over Ohakune, Raetihi and Waiouru, for some, distance and travel were issues. Several initiatives took some of the responsibility for transport, particularly in picking up or dropping off rangatahi, but it was mentioned there may have been some whānau unable to attend kaupapa due to travel barriers.

For three of the whānau in particular, balancing their initiative alongside mahi, school, or existing commitments was a limitation, reducing the time they could spend on developing their kaupapa or running wānanga. A few whānau reported challenges navigating and balancing whānau relationships, or managing whānau expectations of how the initiative would run. However, it was noted by whānau that this wasn't necessarily considered a barrier, "Just a challenge to ensure good communication."

Two initiatives identified weather-related limitations. Finding space for wānanga due to the unexpected numbers of whānau turning up was more of a challenge than a barrier for some of the whānau, but they were very pleased with the interest in their kaupapa.

In one initiative the ongoing costs of training and completing qualifications were proving to be a barrier. Being able to pay for courses, professional learning and development would have increased the services the whānau kaupapa was able to offer. Additionally, Council regulations and the associated expenses to meet the regulations presented a restriction. However, with support from Whiria Ngā Hua, this entity believed they would be able to navigate through the Council 'red tape'.

For several whānau, the application process was considered challenging, although they

acknowledged they received sufficient support from Whiria Ngā Hua to complete their applications. Particular barriers included dyslexia, lack of computer literacy and not understanding the language on the application forms. One initiative said because they were not proficient in te reo Māori, they had to do a bit of googling; however, they did not consider that a barrier.

Three whānau indicated they felt it was hard to write to the particular style in the funding application, that *"You couldn't just give them the short answers."* Others believed that filling out the application was a good challenge, and that *"It's the right amount of hard and easy, because you don't want it to just be too easy, otherwise people just take it for granted, there's got to be a bit of work involved."* They acknowledged that it meant Whiria Ngā Hua only received applications from those who really wanted to follow their initiative through.

These barriers were reflected in the qualitative comments of the survey. In response to the question *'Can you tell us the most challenging part of receiving funding for your initiative so far?'*, six responses responded with 'nothing challenging' and eight responses mentioned either the application, or the administration of the funding as being the most challenging. The remaining comments included trying to find the right time to run their initiatives (two comments), having to plan around the three stages of being funded (two comments), and uncertainty of not knowing the future of funding.

***"For me applying was really hard, because I know what I want to say in my head, but getting it into words is hard, lucky I had somebody to help me. And the numbers side of it, sending the invoices was hard."***

***(Whānau initiative)***

# Enablers

Analysis of data indicates there were several key enablers that were identified by whānau who received funding.

## Reinvestment experience

The experience gained from the first round of Whiria Ngā Hua was evident in both the coordination and organisation of the funding, as well as the community being more aware and experienced of what Whiria Ngā Hua is, and the expectations around the initiatives.

Six of the kaupapa were reinvestments from Whiria Ngā Hua I. A significant enabler was the experience they had from their involvement in the previous year. They understood the application and reporting requirements, as well as being aware of the budgeting process, keeping receipts, and the commitment required. One of the reinvestment initiatives described that this year had gone faster and more smoothly as they felt much more prepared for the process.

## Support from Whiria Ngā Hua kaimahi

The Kaihautū of the Whiria Ngā Hua fund, and other staff at Ngāti Rangī were consistently mentioned as helpful, accessible, approachable and responsive. Whānau described the process as smooth, and the funding drops were punctual. For many, the funding process was a new experience, they spent time building new capabilities and skills. The Whiria Ngā Hua Kaihautū was mentioned positively by whānau, as she provided advice, gave feedback and guidance. The Kaihautū, based in Ngāti Rangī offices, was consistently mentioned by the initiatives as being supportive, helpful and having clear, consistent communication and contact. As an example, a whānau described the Kaihautū, “(She) is really supportive. If I have a problem or if there’s anything I can’t figure out, she’s pretty much on it straight away.” (Whānau initiative)

Having approachable and helpful staff has been a significant enabler for all initiatives. Whānau reported they felt confident they would be supported through any barrier or challenge without judgment. As an example, one initiative highlighted that throughout the planning and development

of their initiative the right supports were there for her, eliminating the logistical barriers that she came up against. Another initiative appreciated that the kaimahi “Work within the timeframes of those running the kaupapa”, especially as they see that working around mahi can be quite hard, the flexibility and adaptability of Whiria Ngā Hua are much appreciated.

*“I really like (kaimahi), her communication, clear communication, what they say they will do, they do, which is cool. The timings, the drops of the pūtea, perfect. Everything is really good.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*

*“Being able to talk to (kaimahi) when I needed to (was an enabler) ... It’s been good interacting with Ngāti Rangī, it’s just a cool group, and you can always go there and talk to them if you need to, one of the kaimahi will always help you. And if you stuff up, it’s not a big deal because they’re supporting you full-on.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*

*And (kaimahi), she was lovely, she gave me time to process the balancing of life and this Whiria Ngā Hua, and she wasn’t too pushy, she was just calm about it and that helped a lot.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*

*“It’s been really well set up. The supports I’ve needed and asked for I’ve had offered to me. It’s simple as, I had a venue option fall through, so I reached out and was offered support with that... All kinds of barriers I’ve faced, I’ve been reaching out to the right people.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*



## Whānau and community support

The initiatives that were interviewed consistently mentioned that their whānau and the community around them had been extremely supportive. Reducing overheads for the operation of these kaupapa allowed many to be able to subsidise or remove fees and financial barriers. For example, the local school offered a space for Waiouru Taekwondo to use free of charge, and the defence force offered an unused building to be fitted out for Toa City Boxing Academy to operate out of. Several of the business-based kaupapa mentioned their whānau as being key encouragement for them to take the leap and have confidence in themselves and their ideas.

Parents and teachers have also been pivotal in the success of these kaupapa. Without the parents' involvement and support, particularly for travel and transport, coaching, refereeing, it would have been much more difficult to access the tamariki and rangatahi that the programmes were aimed at supporting.

Whānau and community support was provided by a range of people in the Ruapehu region. A key aspect of Whiria Ngā Hua was that the funding was not just restricted to Māori, or to descendants of Ngāti Rangi. Applicants just had to be residing in the Ruapehu region. This resulted in a mixture of tauiwi, Māori and uri o Ngāti Rangi, with kaupapa serving a diverse range of people, while centering te ao Māori and providing equitable, positive impacts.

*“During our wānanga, lots of the adults were able to help prepare the food and stuff while we were out learning, and that was pretty helpful.”*

*(Rangatahi-driven initiative)*

*“Our programme wouldn't be so awesome if we didn't have all those other things, like the support from the Army and getting packs. If I was going to go out and buy 10 packs so the kids could have a pack for navigation, your money's all gone.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*

*“The most crucial part of community development is that people believe in what they're doing and share the vision. If everyone plays their part, then beautiful things will happen. To me, this kaupapa reflected that, and it came to life.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*

*“Huge amounts of koha that people gave, whether that was meat, time or energy, sharing mātauranga, tapestry skills, sewing skills, it was a machine. Everyone from all of the different groups gave their time, their weekends, to come and help in the kitchen. It didn't go unnoticed, and we continue to be so grateful that people gave their time because they believed in us and believed in the kaupapa.”*

*(Whānau initiative)*



## Outcomes Workshop

Before any of the Whiria Ngā Hua funding recipients signed their contracts, Ngāti Rangī held an outcomes workshop, which outlined the expectations, responsibilities, and process of the funding and the reporting. Several initiatives described the outcomes workshop as a positive part of the commissioning process for them. The success of the outcomes workshop was partly attributed to getting the different initiatives together, so they could all meet and discuss their different ideas.

This set the scene for ongoing discussions and collaboration throughout the process of Whiria Ngā Hua, leaning on each other and working together. Despite having different initiatives, the interaction between initiatives facilitated by this initial period of learning and whakawhanaungatanga, allowed whānau to generate momentum and to think outside the box, while also having accountability to each other.

*"I enjoyed the outcomes workshop, not just to hold us accountable, but to hear the awesome initiatives that are going on from our people, and to know they could access funding to give it a go. If it fails, that's not a failure because you gave it a go, you might critique it and give it a go another way. It's giving our people a chance to give it a go, it's just power installing itself."*

*(Whānau initiative)*

*"The outcomes workshops and the hui they ran before the outcomes workshops to promote the kaupapa – they were good drivers to set the scene and put you in the right frame of mind."*

*(Whānau initiative)*









# Opportunities to improve the approach for whānau

This evaluation found that the process is a positive, empowering experience grounded in te ao Māori. The support from Ngāti Rangi to navigate the application process and the contract co-design was noted as enabling. In addition, those who had previous experience and were funded for a second time had the ability to confidently navigate the application process and understand reporting requirements.



The re-investment initiatives note that it would be helpful if they were able to keep the same application as the previous year. One initiative mentioned they would prefer to be able to make slight amendments instead of writing a whole new application, as the concept of the programme is going to be pretty much the same, *"It took a day to bloody fill it out."*

Three areas of potential improvement were identified: increasing advertising and marketing for both Whiria Ngā Hua as well as the individual initiatives, additional administration support, and ensuring stability of the funding long-term.

### Advertising and Marketing

Advertising and marketing of Whiria Ngā Hua in the community was highlighted as a potential area for improvement, as well as supporting the initiatives to advertise what they are doing in the community. One initiative highlighted that initially, they were not sure what the funding was for, the criteria for applying, or who could access the funding. They believed that for whānau who were unsure, this lack of understanding could put them off from even beginning the application, highlighting an opportunity to develop sharing of information.

Advertisements for the individual initiatives were also seen as an opportunity to reach more whānau without just relying on social media or word of mouth. One initiative had created its own posters, and even put an advertisement on the local radio station but hadn't seen much advertising about the other kaupapa happening in the community. They believed there were more ways to get the knowledge of Whiria Ngā Hua out to the whānau, particularly for those who don't follow social media.

***"Bit more advertising, a longer period of time so more people can apply. Making the public more aware there is this funding."***

***(Whānau initiative)***

### Additional administration support for whānau

As Whiria Ngā Hua is still relatively new in the Ruapehu community, for many, building capability in planning skills, budgeting and wānanga facilitation was crucial. While many of the successful kaupapa initiatives said they were familiar with funding applications, they had heard it was challenging for some other whānau. They discussed that support "Might include identifying people's skillsets as they set up their initiative and making sure they have the administrative skills to do the application." Another described that holding a pre-application course for those who were not accomplished in computer technology or writing might have been helpful. Although they acknowledged there were staff available to ask for help, being shy or not wanting to ask for help or "Be a pain in the behind" was a barrier. Whānau wanted to ensure that access to the fund was inclusive for all and that those who may not have the ability to apply could apply with support. As this whānau member describes,,

***"The hardest part was to put the ideas in my head on paper so that you know what I'm thinking ... I'm so passionate about what I do but need the help to write it like that. It would be good if you had someone you could just tell 'this is what I want to do for our kids,' and then they put it into the format, especially for (dyslexic) people like me."***

***(Whānau initiative)***

Only one person highlighted they would have liked to be able to spend the funding on wages.

### Future of Whiria Ngā Hua

The success and positive impact of Whiria Ngā Hua have inspired a desire for its continuation and expansion. Several whānau mentioned their desire to see Whiria Ngā Hua expand further in the community, as they see the current model is working well. One participant expressed gratitude, saying, *"It's a blessing in itself, and I'm grateful. So, I can't really say there's a way to improve."*

Another initiative, which had initially been apprehensive about applying to the fund, found the process much easier than expected. They were

satisfied with the support they had received for their kaupapa and were planning future initiatives to reach more rangatahi with other passions and skills they had to share.

*"I would probably go through them again if I found a business that I'd really love to do. Maybe with young people. Take them hunting or fishing or eeling or something."*

The sentiment of wanting to ensure that other whānau had the opportunity to benefit from the funding was echoed by comments from other whānau initiatives. Another initiative gave advice to future potential applicants, saying;

*"My advice is not to be scared to apply and do the application ... I hope everyone does come through and do it."*

When asked about opportunities for improvement, whānau often expressed concern regarding the potential change of government and the risk it posed to their funding or future rounds of Whiria Ngā Hua. One initiative stated, *"I certainly want it to continue, whether they change the theme annually, as long as it's there."* Others were determined for Whiria Ngā Hua to continue in their community so more people could experience the

opportunities, experiences, and positive outcomes it provides. As one initiative shared, *"I wish more people would put their hands up (for Whiria Ngā Hua). There are a lot of people out there with skills that people don't think they can teach others, but they can."*

***"This kind of funding should be across the country. It shouldn't just be in certain locales. When they put a million dollars into health or whatever, we don't see where it goes. Whereas this is visible. I think the way this is running is great for communities, it's healing. I don't know why we don't do this as a standard thing."***

***(Whānau initiative)***



# Summary

**The Whiria Ngā Hua II fund has successfully met the objectives by investing in hauora Māori community solutions that uplift the health and wellbeing of the wider Ruapehu community.**

The comprehensive approach has fostered self-determination by empowering whānau to design and lead their own initiatives, promoting community-specific solutions that reflect their unique needs and aspirations. Initiatives such as sports leagues, outdoor skills training, and wānanga focused on practical trades and cultural knowledge have encouraged healthy lifestyles and increased participation in society. These activities have provided opportunities for physical activity, personal development, and social engagement, contributing to overall wellbeing.

The fund has also strengthened participation in te ao Māori by supporting initiatives that reconnect individuals with their cultural heritage and practices. Projects like kapa haka rōpū, cultural wānanga, and the restoration of significant sites have reinforced cultural identity, pride, and enhanced connections to whenua, whānau and whakapapa. Financial security has

been enhanced through the establishment of small businesses and the development of financial literacy skills among whānau. The collaborative nature of the initiatives has fostered social cohesion and nurturing environments, with community members working together towards common goals. Additionally, the emphasis on environmental stewardship and kaitiakitanga has promoted the role of tangata tiaki, ensuring the living landscape is cared for and preserved for future generations.

Overall, the Whiria Ngā Hua II fund has achieved its key goals by promoting self-determination, healthy lifestyles, societal participation, cultural engagement, financial security, social cohesion, and environmental stewardship.

# Recommendations

**Based on the findings of this evaluation, three key recommendations have been identified to enhance the Whiria Ngā Hua commissioning approach:**

1

The evidence from this evaluation underscores the significant positive outcomes achieved through direct commissioning. It is therefore recommended that continued investment in this type of commissioning be maintained and expanded, as it has demonstrated substantial benefits in achieving desired outcomes.

2

There is a recommendation for ongoing and increased support for capability building and administrative mechanisms. An unintended yet beneficial outcome of the commissioning approach has been the development of capabilities necessary for implementing initiatives. While this has presented challenges for some whānau, it has also been a valuable outcome. Enhancing support in these areas will facilitate better implementation and sustainability of initiatives.

3

To address concerns regarding the continuity of funding and the broader context of government investment in communities, it is recommended to provide as much security and assurance as possible for whānau. Uncertainty around ongoing funding is impeding the aspirations of some whānau, and mitigating this uncertainty will support the sustained success and impact of the initiatives.









# Appendix 1

## Methodology



The following section describes the evaluation methodology, data analysis and ethical protocols.

## Kaupapa Māori

This qualitative evaluation was informed by kaupapa Māori research (KMR) principles and tikanga (Smith, 2012). It is not a prescribed set of methods, rather a way of thinking about and doing research (Smith, 2012). Ethical principles and frameworks of Western research approaches have not protected Indigenous peoples where research has typically been done ‘on’ or ‘to’ communities (Kelly, 2007; Cram et al., 2015). Therefore, it is important that KMR is undertaken ‘with’ communities and achieved with meaningful collaboration with the participants (Kelly, 2007). Such research also needs to be conducted in culturally appropriate ways - prioritising Māori cultural preferences, practices and aspirations (Bishop & Glynn, 1999). Kaupapa Māori research seeks to centre Māori realities, and undertake research that will benefit Māori communities (Pihama, 2011; Smith, 2012). As a methodology, it contains a notion of action and commitment to change, and to Māori development (Penetito, 2010).

## Document and Literature Review

The evaluation process began by reviewing the contractual documents and previous reports on Whiria Ngā Hua. The purpose was to understand what the Whiria Ngā Hua initiatives had been commissioned to achieve.

## Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were held with 18 of the funded entities between March and April 2024, towards the end of their funding period. Interviews were primarily conducted kanohi-ki-te-kanohi, or by Zoom. The interviews were designed to provide:

- An opportunity for initiatives to clarify and articulate their kaupapa, mission or purpose
- A space for reflection on their impact on their community and those around them (individually, as a whānau or as a collective)

- A process for gathering and analysing outputs, outcomes and impact
- An opportunity to discuss the commissioned funding approach they have experienced with Ngāti Rangi.

All interviews were transcribed and then analysed using an inductive method. A six-step framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was employed to generate themes. This meant; becoming familiar with the data; generating initial codes; searching for themes; reviewing themes; defining themes and finally, writing these up.

## Survey

A short survey was sent out to the Whiria Ngā Hua entities, open for two weeks from the 6th February-18th February, approximately two months into the contract term. The survey included questions about subjective wellbeing, based on questions in the General Social Survey (GSS) operated by Stats NZ. Of the 29 initiatives that received funding, 23 viable responses (those that answered 90-100% of the survey) were collected and analysed. This is a 79% survey response rate.

To recruit survey responses, whānau were emailed with an online link. No demographic questions were asked.

## Ethics

This evaluation followed clear ethical procedures, including informed consent and avoidance of harm. A participant information sheet and consent form were provided for all interview participants. The participation form was discussed prior to all interviews and participants were able to ask questions and have their questions answered. Written consent was also obtained by the researcher at the interview, or verbal consent was given if the interview was being conducted over the phone or by Zoom. Transcribing was done by Ihi Research, so a confidentiality agreement for a third-party transcriber was not required.

At the start of each survey, survey participants were provided with information about the evaluation. They could only proceed with each survey once their consent had been given.

All contact and research data are considered sensitive information; therefore, Ihi Research ensures it is physically and electronically secure with industry-standard protection, including password protection on all computers from which it can be accessed. Access was limited to only the necessary personnel. At the conclusion of a research project, raw data is stored electronically for one year and then destroyed unless otherwise agreed with the participants or the clients.

**Limitations**

A limitation of this research is that the most accessible participants who are more interested in being evaluated are likely to be the ones who had a more positive experience of Whiria Ngā Hua and have the outcomes of their kaupapa that they were aspiring towards. This causes a potential bias in the data.



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