



Vodafone  
Aotearoa  
Foundation



# Thriving in Murihiku

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Funding brighter futures  
through The Invercargill  
Initiative

# Our goal

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At Te Rourou – Vodafone Aotearoa Foundation – we are committed to creating a more equitable Aotearoa for our rangatahi.

We have a vision of a future where all young people have access to the resources and opportunities they need to thrive. We want to see each and every young person living a life they value – with a bright future ahead.



Our goal is to halve the number of rangatahi who experience exclusion and disadvantage by 2027 – starting in Murihiku.

# The Invercargill Initiative

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Building a brighter future for Murihiku rangatahi.

As a foundation, we've shifted to a targeted, place-based approach because we believe it will allow us to create real impact. We're focusing on funding initiatives based in Murihiku – with a focus on Waihōpai (Invercargill) and Awarua (Bluff). This approach will allow us to create the conditions for Murihiku young people to thrive – and significantly reduce exclusion and disadvantage amongst the region's rangatahi.

Murihiku rangatahi are living within a unique local context – a place with its own histories, and complexities. And so, we believe that the best solutions to these young people's challenges will come from the local community. We're here to enable and accelerate local solutions through long-term layers of support.

# Our approach

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We've taken the time to build relationships in Murihiku, and have listened carefully to what the community believes is needed. We've brought this local wisdom together with quantitative data, and explored where our funding, skills, technology and relationships might help create better outcomes for the region's rangatahi.

We've landed on an approach which aims to address both the drivers and symptoms of inequity in Murihiku. We'll build strong relationships with iwi and community; fund local initiatives; and form collaborative partnerships with those who share our vision. The power of Vodafone's relationships, skills, and tech will address digital exclusion in the area, and boost the impact of local initiatives.

These local relationships will be supported by other aspects of our work. Our national-level systems change partnerships will help address upstream drivers of inequity like income inequality, the care and protection system, and underinvestment in Māori. To help us ensure our efforts are, year on year, leading to genuine improvements in the lives of the young people, we have developed the Thriving Rangatahi Population Explorer. This interactive digital data tool provides us with precise information on how a region's rangatahi are faring in areas like education, health, housing, income, and employment; how often they are interacting with protective services or the justice system; and how they perceive their own level of wellbeing.

As we work in Murihiku, we will document what we and our partners are trying and learning, and track the impact. By doing so, we hope to develop a case study for change – a model which can be replicated and scaled in other communities across Aotearoa.



# Funding brighter futures

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Our approach in Murihiku will see us fund initiatives which supercharge the sector; build future pathways; support Māori aspirations; and create connection.

Our funding strategy is built around four focus areas or pou (posts). These pou are the result of our approach to date, and have been developed and tested with community stakeholders. We'll be investing in people, projects, and partnerships who can help us...

## 1 Supercharge the sector

The youth sector in Murihiku is made up of passionate people doing great work. When we met with them, they told us they wanted to connect and collaborate so they could achieve even greater impact but lacked the time, support, and resourcing to do so. We are exploring how we might overcome these obstacles and supercharge the sector. This will include employing community catalysts to lead the mahi.

## 2 Build future pathways

The rangatahi of Murihiku aspire to meaningful careers. However jobs can be hard to find, and difficult to retain. Together with our partners, we are exploring how we might catalyse inspiring career opportunities for Murihiku young people. We want to help rangatahi explore career pathways which feel meaningful to them and build skills which can unlock their aspirations.

## 3 Support Māori aspirations

Rangatahi and community leaders told us that connecting young people with their whakapapa, identity, and culture helps them thrive. However, many young people can't access these opportunities. We're exploring how we might support those who guide young people on journeys of cultural reconnection. We have also established a Rangatahi Māori Fund. This fund will see rangatahi make decisions about where funding goes – creating better outcomes for young people just like them.

## 4 Create connection

Physical and digital connection helps rangatahi participate in work and education, access opportunities, and stay in touch with their whānau and wider support networks. We'll be taking a proactive approach in this area – establishing our own digital equity programmes in addition to funding community initiatives. We want to remove the barriers that stand in the way of connection and participation, and improve young people's access to the digital world.

# Want to chat?

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If you want to know more, are interested in partnering with us, or have a Murihiku-based service, initiative, or idea which feels aligned with our approach, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you!

You can reach our Head of Foundation, Lani Evans at [Lani.Evans@vodafone.com](mailto:Lani.Evans@vodafone.com)

More information about Te Rourou – the Vodafone Aotearoa Foundation – is available on our website: [foundation.vodafone.co.nz](http://foundation.vodafone.co.nz)



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