

Rakatahi Māori Fund

Te Ōhaka Tiwhera

Mā te huruhuru ka rere te manu
Adorn the bird with feathers so it can fly



2023 Annual Report

Report by:

Te Rourou
One Aotearoa Foundation



A message from our rakatahi

Te Ōhaka Tīwhera has focused on assisting rakatahi Māori from the first-hand perspective of Māori kids. With the guidance of the Te Rourou team, a space has been created for rakatahi to critically engage and be confident in speaking without judgement.

I can't emphasise enough the importance of creating a pathway for rakatahi to express

their views, where they are at the forefront and are trusted to make valuable contributions, as has been my experience in the process.

We are not just getting an opportunity to make a 'one and done' decision. We are being presented with the tools needed to create success in life, establishing future leaders.

-Mya Kairau



IMPACT SNAPSHOT

2

Funding rounds

15

Grants made

\$240k

Allocated

A word from the Invercargill team...

What began as an initiative to empower rakatahi with the decision-making abilities to allocate funds in their own communities, has become a deeply fulfilling kaupapa which has enriched our own mahi here in Invercargill. The exchange of knowledge, experiences, and aspirations has been essential to our own team, as well as the rakatahi.

From the outset, we aimed for this kaupapa to impart decision-making and governance skills to our rakatahi,

filling their kete with the skills to achieve greater influence within their own communities. This empowerment extends to amplifying their voices across funders, communities, and the youth sector at large.

With our funding partners, Clare Foundation, Community Trust South, and Invercargill Licensing Trust Foundation, we have given this opportunity to our rakatahi - but the real taoka is the insight, expertise, and time the rakatahi have given to us.

-Mandy, Stac, and Shaz



Introduction

Over the past year, Te Rourou has been working alongside Murihiku rakatahi* to develop our Rakatahi Māori Fund, gifted the name Te Ōhaka Tīwhera by the rōpū of rakatahi who administer it.

This pool of funding is made up of pūtea from Te Rourou, One Aotearoa Foundation, Clare Foundation, Community Trust South, and Invercargill Licensing Trust Foundation. The fund has been designed by, with, and for Māori youth to make their own funding decisions and have a say in their own community.

Te Ōhaka Tīwhera originated from the desire of rakatahi Māori to be heard, to strengthen their cultural connections, and to be recognised in society.

Eight participants, nominated by Murihiku papatipu Rūnaka, underwent skills development in governance and navigating the funding process, guided by the Te Rourou community catalysts.

The fund has become a collaboration of diverse and ambitious minds, eager to ensure their voices are heard. Themes such as cultural connection, amplifying youth voices, and fostering a sense of community emerged from their discussions. Together, they strategically structured the fund, recognising the significance young people place on their own communities, challenges, and what it takes to enhance their own wellbeing.

From September 2022 to November 2023, two funding rounds has seen 15 grants allocated, and provided \$240,000 to community organisations - with all decisions made by the rakatahi rōpū.

By giving them a seat at the table and a platform to elevate their voices, we have begun to witness the next generation shaping their own success.

*Our rakatahi panel opted to use Kai Tāhu dialect for all correspondence, ie, rangatahi - rakatahi

FUNDS ALLOCATED



PROJECTS



DETAILS



OUTCOME

**Whare wanganga
Menzies College**

\$5,000
Whare wananga
concept plans

- Whare Trust formed, plans underway

Te Oriori Trust

\$25,000
Support the community
with access to
Matauranga Māori
through Mau Rākau

- 11 ākonga (students)
- Every ākonga graded to receive tipare
- Monthly wananga

Tuurama Trust

\$25,000
Rangatahi Zone 2023

- 400 rangatahi per day
- 3 day event
- 55 support orgs

Active Southland

\$2,000
Kī-o-Rahi mō te
rangatahi event

- First Kī-o-Rahi games completed
- Modules ready for term 1 2024

Active Southland

\$18,200
Rangatahi Leadership
Programme

- 14 rangatahi
- Various successes in national sports (see spotlight below)

Active Southland

\$19,800
Waihōpai te whare tū
tauā - introudcing mau
rakau to Invercargill
kura

- 2 new schools participating in mau rākau

**Reigning Downs
Hauora Centre**

\$25,000
Education and equine
experiences to improve
hauora

- Programmes implemented for disadvantaged rakatahi
- Programme funded for first 2 schools





PROJECTS



DETAILS



OUTCOME

**Rangatahi
Tumeke
Charitable Trust**

\$15,000

Taking tuakana rangatahi on a journey to explore their whakapapa

- Trip postponed until December

**Te Wharekura o
Arowhenua**

\$25,000

partly fund Kī-o-Rāhi field

- The field is underway, coloured lights on pou being put up

Southland Help

\$25,000

Weekend wananga for rangatahi Māori

- Training completed for all staff
- Te ao Māori framework established

Te Tapu o Tāne

\$25,000

Wānanga to promote mahina kai, connection to whenua and career pathways.

- Waituna Open day due 27 January
- 2 planned youth engagement opps
- 4 schools engaged

Murihiku Matatū

\$15,000

Rangatahi Māori taken to national tournament

- 17 kōtiro taken to nationals
- 1 kōtiro selected for national team
- 3 tane squads to SI tournament

**Whānau
Consultancy
Services**

\$10,000

Rangatahi workshops for personal growth

- 5 wananga
- 10 rakatahi each session



Impact on Rakatahi Panel

Rakatahi said they...

Felt their voice was heard

“They treated us like equals – they gave us the chance to talk.”

“It’s awesome to see that rangatahi are now given the opportunity to participate in decision-making because society is realising that we are the future.”

Felt they were positively impacting their community

“You feel so good being able to do this, it made me feel good, we made these people so happy, I wish I could do that more.”

“Us being in charge of such a large amount of money, we see the problems, now we can fix it.”

Felt they had control

“This kaupapa has instilled in me the ability to make decisions and speak up with confidence.”

“It’s helped me gain a lot more confidence in decision making. I find it a lot easier to make decisions about stuff from this,”

“Obviously we’re still kids, but [we have] some responsibility and we’re actually being listened to.”

Gained valuable skills

“It taught me a lot about the rules of being on a board or being a trustee, I’ve been asked on two other ones and going into them I felt so much more confident, I knew the ropes.”

“I’ve never done anything like this, it’s good to learn about how to ask those tough questions.”





Community Partner Spotlight

Rangatahi Zone 2023



Rangatahi Zone is a three-day event in Bluff supported by funding from Te Ōhaka Tiwhera. The September event provided 8 activity areas for rangatahi, which included kai, haircuts, boxing sessions, gaming, and many more opportunities, all free to any rangatahi who attended. Transport to and from a number of locations in Murihiku was provided, free.

The event engaged rangatahi aged 10 to 18 years old and saw around 400 rangatahi through the gates each day. The event was initiated in 2022 after a tragic accident involving four Bluff rakatahi, as a way of supporting young people and bringing the community together.

This year, a focus on social support services enabled immediate help for young people facing challenges and showcased the support that was available to them and their whānau. Many of Te Rourou's community partners offered their services to the event which was an amazing display of the connectedness of our community.

8

Activity
Areas

55

Supporting
organisations

400

Rangatahi
per day



Supporting Māori Aspirations

Visit Your Pepeha - \$2,000 Scholarship

The importance of knowing where they whakapapa was integral for our rakatahi who identified that enabling their peers to experience their own haereka (journey) to their whakapapa would support their growth and cultural connection

The Visit Your Pepeha pūtea had two successful applicants in its first round, and has been implemented for the third round of funding, already proving popular with 9 applications.

“When you know your culture, you feel like you're at home, you feel like you're you.

When you connect back to where you're from, you get a feeling; your ancestors are watching over you, you can connect with them

I've climbed my maunga and felt my own water...it's a spiritual experience...the feeling can be hard to explain, but the people who have gone on that journey know it as well.

-Rangatahi Decision Maker



Community Partner Spotlight

Rangatahi Leadership Group



The Rangatahi Leadership Group supported by Te Ōhaka Tīwhera provides Māori and Pasifika rangatahi with the tools to succeed within their chosen sport and provide them with a high-performance environment. The programme, which caters to 14 to 18-year-olds, is designed to help rangatahi become leaders within their communities, while educating them to perform to the highest of their abilities in the sporting arena.

The programme has evolved over the past year to support personal development, as well as professional. This has included assisting rangatahi to gain their license, CV workshops, and removing barriers to help them succeed. Programme lead Liam Howely of Active Southland says the personal growth of the rangatahi is a "huge" part of the programme.

"I want them to be confident in their ability to play sport, but also in the way they hold themselves personally," he says.

Achievements from the rangatahi this year include:

- Two rangatahi made the Highlanders U18
- Rangatahi made NZ Māori Ngā Whatukura Boys
- Rangatahi awarded South Island U16 Scorpions most promising female player
- Rangatahi made the te Waipounamu team for Ki-o-Rahi
- Two rangatahi awarded ILT Youth Mark Awards
- 4 rangatahi entering University/Polytech
- 4 drivers licenses



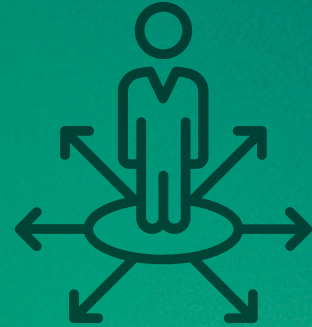
"We loved how this programme is all about empowering and motivating Māori and Pasifika rangatahi. We feel that this programme is creating a safe environment for rangatahi to be themselves, meet new friends, and express themselves."

-Rangatahi Decision Maker

Unintended Outcomes

Increased Opportunities

There has been an increase in opportunities offered to the rakatahi, including multiple board positions, youth council, and youth representative positions.



Diverse Representation

After panel members moved on, applications opened for new members of the panel. This has resulted in 4 new rakatahi to join the panel which now represents each of the 6 Invercargill high schools moving into the next funding round.

Increased Influence

The rakatahi have brought fresh eyes and ideas to the funding space which has encouraged us to review our own practices and policies. We are confident that rakatahi voice will help to shape future strategy.



Balancing Power

Our rakatahi interviewed applicants who were heads of organisations, council members, teachers, and others who might traditionally hold a power imbalance over young people. Applicants told us it shined a new light on young decision makers, while rakatahi said it humanised these applicants and created an environment where they could talk as equals



Nurturing Innovation

The fund has been vital in enabling innovative programmes and initiatives that might not have traditionally received attention or been a priority for organisations. The specific focus on supporting the aspirations of young Māori has encouraged organisations to broaden their kaupapa and foster greater inclusivity.

By backing organisations to impart culturally significant practices, Te Ōhaka Tīwhera acknowledges the profound impact of these endeavours on the holistic development of our rakatahi.

Our rakatahi panel understand embracing one's cultural heritage is a crucial catalyst for success and fulfilment among rakatahi Māori. Through its support, the fund not only preserves and promotes traditional practices but also cultivates a sense of identity, pride, and connection among the rakatahi.

Te Ōhaka Tīwhera stands as a champion for diversity and inclusion. The fund is a testament to the belief that empowering young Māori through initiatives rooted in their culture is an investment in a brighter, more enriched future for all.



Mau Rākau in schools

Kī-o-rahi in mainstream sport

Kaupapa Māori healing

First Kī-o-rahi field in Murihiku



What We've Learned

Genuine youth voice

The connection we've established with the rakatahi has significantly improved the honesty with which they share their thoughts, opinions, and ideas. While the inclusion of youth voice has become a bit of a trend, the rakatahi have expressed scepticism about its often "tokenism", where their input can feel overlooked. Our commitment to actively listening has created a genuine source of youth voice for not only this fund, but our mahi at large.



A fresh outlook

We've noticed the values of our rōpū tend to lean towards innovative funding practices. They have been much more likely to incorporate high-trust funding models, prefer in-person and roundtable reporting, and a kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) method of receiving applications. These are just some of the ways the rōpū have introduced a te ao Māori framework to their process, prioritising whakawhanaukataka and building relationships to make informed decisions.



We have also noticed the rakatahi themselves mitigate the risks of high-trust funding by ensuring robust conversations about each application, a thorough interview of each applicant, and by developing a criteria checklist to ensure each application fits the purpose of the fund.

Valuing their time and expertise

Honouring participants' time and expertise is crucial. We are acknowledging these rakatahi as the experts in their communities and asking for their knowledge, skills, and expertise. We have made sure to offer compensation to our rakatahi to ensure they feel their time and resources are valued.





What We've Learned *Cont.*

A resource-heavy undertaking

We have found this approach to funding can be resource-intensive for both funders and participants. Facilitating meetings, collecting and analysing input, and managing the decision-making process require dedicated resources, particularly in terms of personnel. Our Community Catalysts have dedicated a larger portion of their time to the fund than initially intended.

The average age of the rōpū is 16, which is a crucial time in young people's lives. They are navigating NCEA at school, employment, and the general difficulty that can come with being rakatahi.

Even practical challenges like transport to/from meetings can pose obstacles that require time and resource to overcome.



Scalability and intended duration

There has been increased interest in the fund since its inception and we are aware of organisations who are eager to see the learnings as they unfold, potentially to recreate the funding model or to compare practices.

There has been a lot of interest generating around the Visit Your Pepeha scholarship and a case study to determine the impact of such an opportunity. It is still early days for the scholarship, but this is in the pipeline for next year when there is a larger number of scholarships completed.



Looking to the Future



Funding round 3:

Nov 2023 - Feb 2024

\$165,000

3 New Funding Pools

Visit Your Pepeha

After a general contestable fund in round 2, they opted to bring back the Visit Your Pepeha scholarship, recognising the importance of having a physical connection to your roots.

4 New Rakatahi

When some of our rakatahi moved on to the next stage of their lives (university, careers, and other pathways), we opened applications to be part of the fund. Our existing members elected four new members which has resulted in increased diversity, more schools being represented, and an opportunity for more robust conversation about the vision of the fund.

Rakatahi Led: Innovation in Schools

An opportunity for rakatahi to apply for the fund through their school, enabling initiatives run by, with, and for rakatahi Māori

Te Ōhaka Tiwhera Contestable Fund

This fund is about connecting rakatahi to culture and uplifting the aspirations of rakatahi in Murihiku. As a rōpū, rakatahi interview applicants to hear from them and understand what they are wanting to achieve.

"The whole idea behind kaupapa Māori is physically being in touch with a place while you're learning those stories. For so long Māori haven't been able to learn that way because of underfunding and the stuff that gets in the way. I think it's important to find new ways to get back to that learning."

-Rakatahi

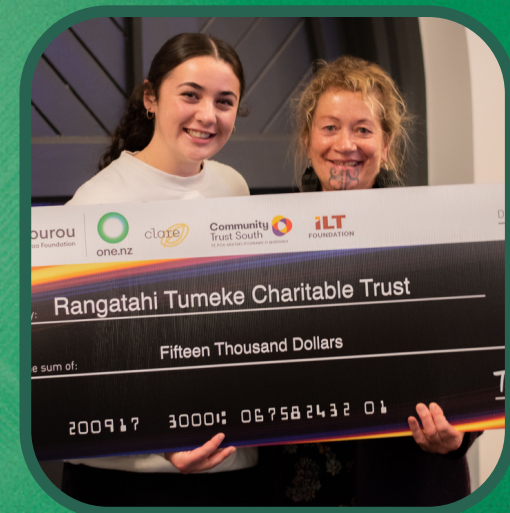




Celebrating Success



After every round, the rakatahi have held awards nights to celebrate the new initiatives and organisations supported by their fund



To our funding partners



**Community
Trust South**

TE POU ARATAKI POUNAMU O MURHIKU



iLT FOUNDATION

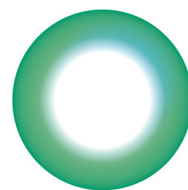
Our community organisations, and
our rakatahi decision makers

Kā mihi nui

THANK YOU!

Te Rourou

One Aotearoa Foundation



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