

ZEAL

Annual Report



1 July 2024 - 30 June



2025

Kia orana, Mālō e lelei, Tēnā koutou katoa,

Zeal turned 28 this year, with our first venue established on Cuba Street in 1998. I recently had the privilege of spending time with Anthony Walton, one of Zeal's pioneers, reflecting on packed-out shows and the powerful impact Zeal had on young people and the Wellington community. It was a reminder that while Zeal has grown in reach and evolved in programming, our purpose remains the same: supporting and empowering young people to flourish.



Jesse Boyce
CEO

Today, that legacy lives on across our five youth centres. In a time when many rangatahi face increasing pressure and uncertainty, Zeal continues to provide connection, belonging, creativity, and opportunity.

Over the past year, Zeal connected with young people more than 80,000 times through daily drop-in spaces and structured youth development programmes. Our focus remains on building confidence, resilience, leadership, and a strong sense of identity. Encouragingly, 92% of young people surveyed reported feeling supported and cared for at Zeal — a testament to the commitment and heart of our youth work teams.

We continued to strengthen safeguarding practices, refine programmes in response to youth voice, and expand pathways into employment and training. Our Akonga barista training programme, delivered with support from the Ministry of Youth Development, continues to equip young people with practical skills and confidence, with many moving into employment or further study.

Like many in the youth sector, we navigated rising demand for wellbeing support alongside financial pressures. We remained financially responsible, operating within budget while working to diversify income and build long-term sustainability.

Thank you to our staff, partners, funders, board, and young people. Your trust and commitment continue to bring the Zeal kaupapa to life.

Ngā mihi nui.

Tēnā koutou katoa, Talofa lava

This is my first year serving as Chair of Zeal Youth Trust, following the thoughtful leadership of Amanda Pilbrow. Her stewardship laid strong foundations for Zeal's governance, culture, and strategic direction. This year has focused on building on that legacy while preparing the organisation for the opportunities and challenges ahead.

Now in its 28th year, Zeal has grown from a youth venue into a sustained presence in the lives of rangatahi and their communities. Our role in fostering belonging, supporting wellbeing, and creating pathways into employment, creativity, and leadership is increasingly important as young people navigate growing and intersecting pressures.

Across Aotearoa, rangatahi continue to experience disproportionate impacts from cost-of-living pressures, housing insecurity, digital harm, family instability, and mental distress. We see this reflected in the increasing complexity of need across our centres. The Board recognises these as structural challenges requiring coordinated, long-term responses.

Governance this year has prioritised organisational health and leadership stability. With support from external senior advisors, we undertook practical organisational reviews to strengthen systems, clarity, and staff support. Where improvements were identified, changes were implemented promptly, guided by the principle that sustainable impact requires strong culture and infrastructure.

We also strengthened Board capability, welcoming Trustees Sam Eden (Treasurer) and Karen Came, whose executive leadership experience complements the cultural insight brought by Amanda Pilbrow and Charles Looker. Together, the Board remains focused on disciplined stewardship and future readiness.

Financial sustainability remains a priority as funding pressures increase. We will focus on diversifying revenue, strengthening reserves, and reducing reliance on single funding sources to ensure stability for the young people we serve.

On behalf of the Board, I thank our staff, volunteers, partners, funders, and especially the rangatahi who place their trust in Zeal. Serving this kaupapa is both a responsibility and a privilege.

Ngā mihi, Fa'afetai tele lava



Andre Afamasaga
Chairperson



Empowering rangatahi

38,723

Aggregate attendance at drop-in spaces
(hangs, nights, activations)

3,084

Total drop-in sessions

Events

27,280

Aggregate attendance
at events

623

Event performers

220

Event volunteers

796

Community hires or
private events

38,097

Aggregate attendance
at community hires or
private events

78

Total events

Building skills

1,692

Total programme
sessions

16,038

Aggregate attendance
at programmes

485

Rangatahi trained and
given work experience

98%

Of programme
participants rate their
experience positively

74%

Of participants say their
life skills have improved
thanks to Zeal
programmes

73%

Of participants say they
feel like they belong
when they're in Zeal
programmes

Engaging through technology

729,090

Social media engagements

199

Rangatahi learnt to refurbish & received a
free laptop

Lives have been profoundly changed, so as you read the next few sections, take a moment to celebrate the highlights, stories, and the difference you've made. None of this would have been possible without your support.

Zeal is a not-for-profit that relies on the generous support of key partners who we're proud to call whānau.

Akaranga Community Trust, Ann Sinclair Charitable Trust, Aotearoa Gaming Trust, Ara Taiohi Youth Week, Auckland Council, Auckland Council - Waste Minimisation and Innovation Fund, Betty Campbell Accommodation Assistance Grants, Bluesky Community Trust, Chris and Melinda Leatham Charitable Trust, Clare Foundation, Community and Volunteering Capability Fund, Creative Communities Scheme Auckland, Creative Communities Scheme Hamilton, Creative Communities Scheme New Plymouth, Creative Communities Scheme South Taranaki, Creative Communities Scheme Stratford, Creative Communities Scheme Wellington, Creative New Zealand, David Ellison Charitable Trust, Dragon Community Trust, DV Bryant Trust, Ernest Hyam Davis and Ted and Mollie Carr Legacies, Foundation North, Gallagher Charitable Trust, Glenice and John Gallagher Foundation, Good in the Hood, Grassroots Trust Central Ltd, Hamilton City Council, Henderson-Massey Local Board, JM Thompson Charitable Trust, Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust, JR McKenzie Trust, Kapiti Coast District Council, Lion Foundation, Lottery Grants Board, Milestone Foundation, Ministry for Culture and Heritage - Creative Spaces, Ministry of Education, MYD - Akonga Youth Development Community Fund, MYD Youth Development Full-time Equivalent Youth Worker/Practitioner Pilot, New Plymouth District Council, Nikau Foundation, Norah Howell Charitable Trust, NZ Community Trust, One Good Kiwi, Oranga Tamariki, Pacific Inc Limited - Le Va Pasifika Suicide Prevention Community Fund, Police Managers Guild Trust, Potter Masonic Trust, Pub Charity, Rano Community Trust, Rule Foundation - Rainbow Wellbeing Legacy Fund, Simplicity Foundation, South Taranaki District Council, St Lazarus Charitable Trust, Stratford District Council, Tai Shan Foundation, Tasman Smith Charitable Trust, The Trusts – Your West Innovation Fund, The Trusts - Your West Support Fund, The Trusts Community Foundation, Thomas George Macarthy Trust, Toi Foundation, Trust Waikato, Vavasour Trust, Tu Manawa Active Aotearoa – Nuku Ora, Tu Manawa Active Aotearoa - Sport Waitakere, Tu Waikanae Baptist Op Shop, Wel Energy Trust, Wellington City Council, Wellington Methodist Charitable and Educational Endowments Trust, Wilberforce Foundation, Winton and Margaret Bear Trust.

Become part of the Zeal whānau

If you believe that every young Kiwi deserves to belong, be accepted on their terms, and have a real shot to thrive, you can help create change for thousands of young people. Contact hi@zeal.nz if you'd like to invest in the future of young people by donating or gifting resources or your time. Together we can change the playing field for young people across the motu.

ZEAL

Why we're here



Who is Zeal?

The Home of Young Creatives

Welcome to our safe, inclusive spaces where young people can belong, learn skills, embrace identity, and overcome the tough stuff. We believe there is a creative spark in every young person. It comes to life at our events, drop-ins and programmes – whether it's performing, creating, building resilience, getting ready for work, or healing te taiao. At Zeal, you're not just a visitor; you're part of a whānau where you're seen, heard, valued, and accepted. Our team walks alongside you with realness, compassion, and aroha – no matter what.



Mission

To make transformative spaces and experiences accessible to all young people, supporting rangatahi to connect to their mana, innate self-worth and sense of belonging.

Vision

All young people in Aotearoa living full lives of meaning and purpose.

Impact

All rangatahi feel seen, valued, safe, empowered and have an equitable shot to thrive.

ZEAL

What we do



Empowering rangatahi

Transformative spaces and inclusive communities where young people can be themselves, feel safe, valued, and seen. We walk alongside rangatahi through life's challenges, empowering them to live with mana, self-worth, and a deep sense of belonging.

Building skills, purpose & identity

We ignite young people's passions and connect them to their innate abilities – whether it's performing, creating, building resilience, getting ready for work, or healing te taiao. Our opportunities range from free programmes at schools or at Zeal to getting paid to learn on the job, all while safely exploring identity.

Equity and innovation

Meeting needs we see on the ground, whether it's filling empty stomachs, life-saving online support, or a donated laptop they refurbished themselves. Our focus is on meeting young people where they are and responding to their needs, not just the behaviours you hear about in the media.

ZEAL

2024 Zeal Survey



Feedback from young people

To assess our impact and seek improvements, we asked young people about their experience at Zeal in July 2024. We're proud to share that 286 young people participated in the survey, making this one the biggest to date.

Your impact

Thanks to our valued partners and supporters, rangatahi have a place to call home and a shot to thrive.



Said Zeal has had a positive impact on them.



Feel supported and cared for at Zeal.



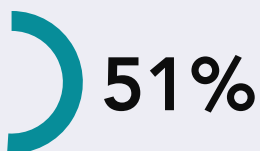
Feel they can approach staff if they have a problem.

“—
They are very understanding about everything and I feel like they won't judge me

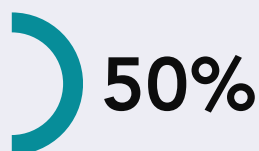
“—
I have been here consistently for 6 years, and I love the space

“—
I feel as if the people accept me

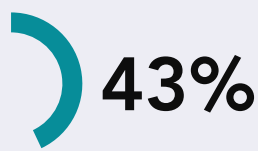
Mental health



of young people feel stressed or anxious more than once a week, most days or more



of young people feel sad or down more than once a week, most days or more



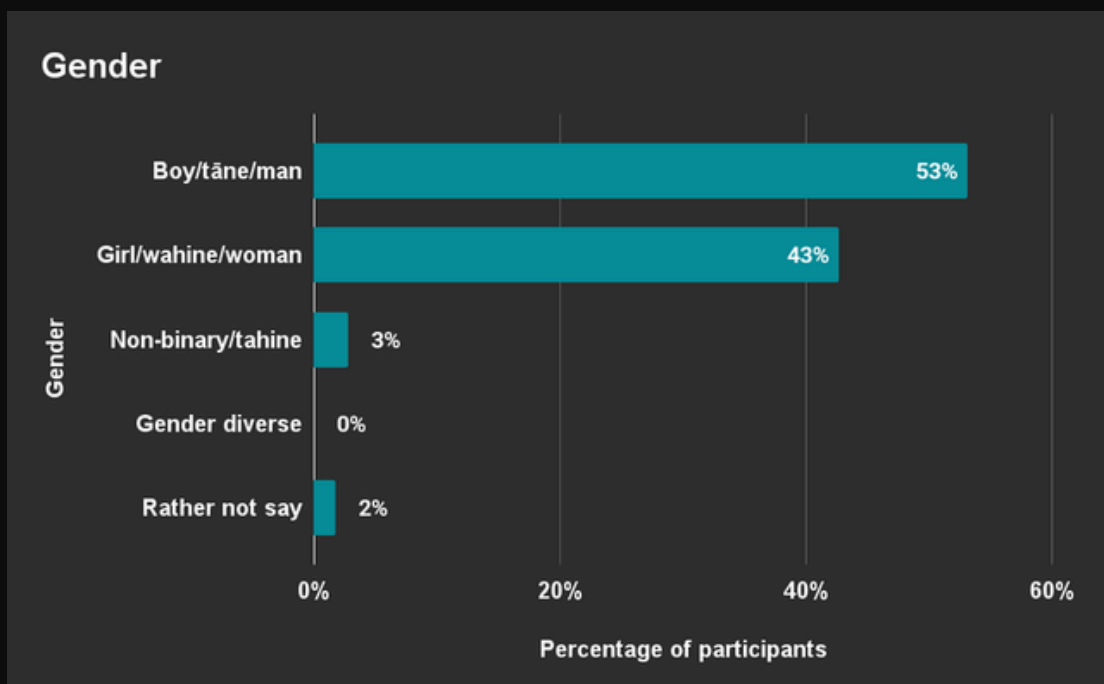
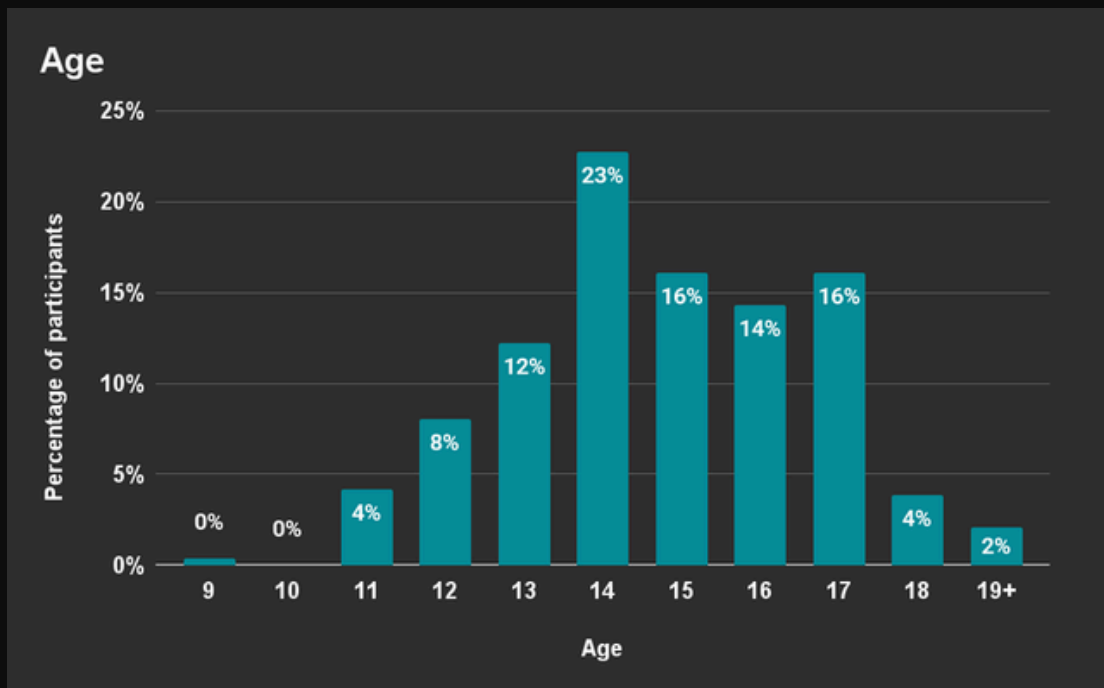
of young people feel mental health is a challenge



of young people feel hopeful about their future

Who took part in the survey

2024 Zeal Survey Demographics





With a nod to my Ulster roots,

céad míle fáilte romhaibh

- a hundred thousand welcomes. As we reflect on a year of change and growth. In April, we farewelled our West Auckland Manager, Neli Alo. Since then, I've had the privilege of supporting our Digital and West teams, and spending time alongside some incredible young people. A new core group of young leaders has emerged, bringing fresh momentum to our drop-in programme and opening up exciting opportunities ahead. This mahi is made possible through the continued support of our major funders: the Ministry of Youth Development, Auckland Council, Foundation North and The Trusts.



Chris Foster-Winder
West Auckland Manager



Meet Gary

(Name altered for privacy)

We first met Gary a few months ago when a friend brought him to Zeal after school. Quiet at first, he stuck close to familiar faces, but showed real courage joining activities outside his comfort zone. Encouragement from youth workers and peers quickly helped him feel welcome.

During Youth Week, Gary came every afternoon so he wouldn't miss out, joining an e-sports tournament, sharing his views on community needs, connecting with new people, and enjoying the sense of belonging that emerged. A highlight came when he stayed back after our Twilight Takeover event to help prepare signage for the next day's one; the pride and ownership he showed were clear.

At our West Block Party he stepped naturally into a hosting role, helping with setup, welcoming guests, assisting with the sausage sizzle, and learning about live sound production alongside a youth worker.

Since then, Gary has become a core young leader at Zeal. He's now organising friends who need laptops so they can join our refurbishment programme, already passing that belonging on to others.



Highlights

- We completed the final year of our MYD Youth Mentoring Pilot, journeying alongside a total of 179 young people over the past two years, supporting them to build confidence, resilience and positive next steps.
- We had our biggest Youth Week in years, with back-to-back events hosted at Zeal throughout the week and over 750 young people coming through our doors.
- We re-launched Zeal Nights, with over 100 rangatahi staying on for a safe space after hangs on Fridays, where our core crew of rangatahi forged lifelong friendships and started to dream up amazing things for the year ahead.

Looking ahead

- We'll give over 30 rangatahi the keys to Zeal to run our biggest event of the year in collab with SkyCity Community Trust, including a big holiday wānanga to unleash the next generation of creatives
- We're excited to partner with The Trusts, the Henderson-Massey Local Board and Auckland Urban Development Office to step up our Street Youth Work Kaupapa, with a weekly presence outside the main transport hub in Henderson, bringing a vibe to thousands of rangatahi in a space that hasn't felt like a safe space for them for a long time.
- We're stepping up our ambition and youth-leadership, thanks to our partnership with Ministry of Youth Development, taking learnings from this year to create more transformative opportunities for our rangatahi.

Impact in numbers

Aggregate attendance at drop-in spaces (hangs, nights, activations):

6,272

Total sessions:

1,128



Aggregate attendance at programmes:

5,865

Total sessions:

492



Aggregate attendance at events:

885

Event volunteers:

51

Event performers:

12



Total events:

5

Aggregate attendance at community hires or private events:

29,869

Community hires or private events:

488

Young people trained and given work experience:

42



ZEAL

Hamilton



What a year it's been

at Zeal Hamilton. We've seen a huge expansion in the range of our programmes, deeper connections within our school partnerships and most importantly, real growth in our rangatahi's understanding of whakapapa, identity and community. Even as our team navigated big shifts, including working with fewer staff, we continued to show up with creativity, heart and an unwavering commitment to holistic care.

From widening our mentoring groups, to introducing new programmes supporting mental, physical and emotional wellbeing, to strengthening our relationships with kura across Kirikiriroa, our centre has become a place of intentional, wraparound support.

Whether you've supported us through funding, resources, kai, volunteering, partnerships, or simply by backing us from the sidelines, you have played a real part in shaping positive outcomes for Hamilton's rangatahi. Your support has carried us through a challenging and deeply rewarding year, and we are incredibly grateful.

A special thank you to Le Va, SkyCity Hamilton Community Trust, Wel Energy Trust, Trust Waikato, and all our other funders. We're excited to show you the impact your support has made, and the futures you're helping to shape.



Tessa Tangaera
Hamilton Manager



Meet Alice

(Name altered for privacy)

Alice first came to Zeal through one-on-one mentoring, referred by her mum who was worried about her severe anxiety, functional depression, and disengagement from school. At first she was very quiet, but slowly opened up to her mentor and eventually asked if she could try some of our programmes. To her mum's surprise, Alice joined both singing and dance in the same term. Her tutors were so proud of her growth and commitment that they honoured her at the end-of-term showcase. Since then, Alice has started coming to hangs on her own, even bringing friends, and has gone on to complete our photography programme. She is now part of our girls' group, Ūkaipō, where her confidence continues to grow. Watching Alice move from isolation into creativity, friendship, and community has been a huge privilege and a powerful reminder of the impact of safe, supportive spaces for young people.



Highlights

- This year we launched holistic programmes supporting whakapapa, mental health awareness, and rangatahi wellbeing, including Pacific theatre, a Whakapapa and Identity photography project, leadership and life-skills development for young wāhine with Kuracares Trust, and a Youth Week Cultural Night celebrating Pacific cultures and the diversity of Kirikiriroa.
- Our Community Closet has expanded to include books, children’s clothing, and sanitary products. Since July, 75% of books and 80% of clothing have been taken, with stock regularly replenished through donations.
- We also partnered with more than eight schools and community groups, strengthening rangatahi engagement and ongoing connections.

Looking ahead

- With support from DV Bryant Trust, we’re launching tech-based programmes, beginning with a laptop refurbishing pilot at Mangakōtukutuku College. Alongside this, we’ll continue holistic programmes focused on wellbeing, leadership, and whakapapa, using creative outlets like theatre and photography to help rangatahi explore identity, culture, and community.
- We’re also planning an on-site internet café to provide a safe space for connection, learning, and online engagement.
- You can help by donating devices, volunteering, or supporting our programmes — together we empower Hamilton rangatahi.

Impact in numbers

Aggregate attendance at drop-in spaces (hangs, nights, activations):

2,486

Total sessions:

753



Aggregate attendance at programmes:

1,183

Total sessions:

201



Aggregate attendance at events:

2,194

Event volunteers:

12

Event performers:

363



Total events:

26

Aggregate attendance at community hires or private events:

8,228

Community hires or private events:

308

Young people trained and given work experience:

77





What a massive year!

Nearly five years into our journey as a local alternative education provider, we feel incredibly privileged to walk alongside rangatahi and see where their paths lead. Nothing beats the moments when former students drop in to share their next chapter. Many are now in fulltime work, building careers and supporting their whānau after navigating some seriously tough circumstances. One young person who once found it overwhelming just to walk through our doors is now fully qualified and working in early childhood education, a reminder of why this mahi matters.



Luke Galley
Taranaki Manager



Chrissie Galley
Youth Development Manager

This year, our young creatives led and delivered major events across the district, reaching thousands of rangatahi. Our creative and barista programmes continue to grow, supported by strong demand and local businesses offering work experience and employment. We've welcomed new youth workers and tutors who, alongside our young people, make Zeal the lifegiving space it is.

A special thanks to New Plymouth District Council and Toi Foundation, and to everyone who has invested their time, energy and aroha to make this mahi possible.

Note: A huge thank you to Luke and Chrissie for their leadership of and commitment to Zeal Taranaki. Since the writing of this report, they have now moved on from Zeal. We wish them well!



Meet Jamie

(Name altered for privacy)

When Jamie first came to Zeal, school felt really hard. Anxiety made it tough to stay in class, and most days they'd avoid lessons altogether, sometimes hiding in the bathrooms instead of asking for help. The team at Zeal noticed pretty quickly and wrapped support around them. With patient encouragement, practical tools and people who genuinely cared, things slowly started to shift. Jamie began finishing their work, gaining credits and turning up more often. Just as importantly, they started to open up, feel more confident, and ask for help both with learning and with what was going on in their life.

A big moment came when Jamie spoke on behalf of Zeal at the council, in front of about 100 people. A year earlier, that would have felt unthinkable. Standing up and sharing their story showed just how far they'd come. Now, Jamie feels hopeful about what's ahead. They're discovering what they enjoy, feeling more motivated to study, and starting to picture a future job they'll actually like. Zeal has helped turn a really tough chapter into a much brighter one.



Highlights

- Kaitiaki Community Care expanded this year, with a five-strong youth team delivering garden maintenance, clean-ups and basic property support for whānau in need. They're now working across the district four days a week in response to growing demand. It's a real privilege to offer these incredible rangatahi paid mahi while supporting them to grow their skills and confidence.
- We expanded our creative programme lineup again this year, offering DJ, videography, barista, hip hop, visual art, live sound, lighting, photography and more — all completely free for local rangatahi.
- Seeing three of our DJ students move into paid work across a range of events was incredibly rewarding, especially with one of these talented young people securing their first paid gig at just 13 years old.

Looking ahead

- We look forward to continuing to empower young people through our Alternative Education programme, ensuring they get the support they need to progress their education.
- We will continue to engage rangatahi across the district through regular, multi week creative and work readiness programmes, alongside community events that build skills, confidence and strong connections.
- We will support rangatahi into sustained leadership roles through youth led event committees by working with NPDC to establish a co-designed Youth Advisory Group that grows belonging, confidence, voice and influence.

Impact in numbers

Aggregate attendance at drop-in spaces (hangs, nights, activations):

15,759

Total sessions:

735



Aggregate attendance at programmes:

4,712

Total sessions:

461



Aggregate attendance at events:

2,108

Event volunteers:

41

Event performers:

47

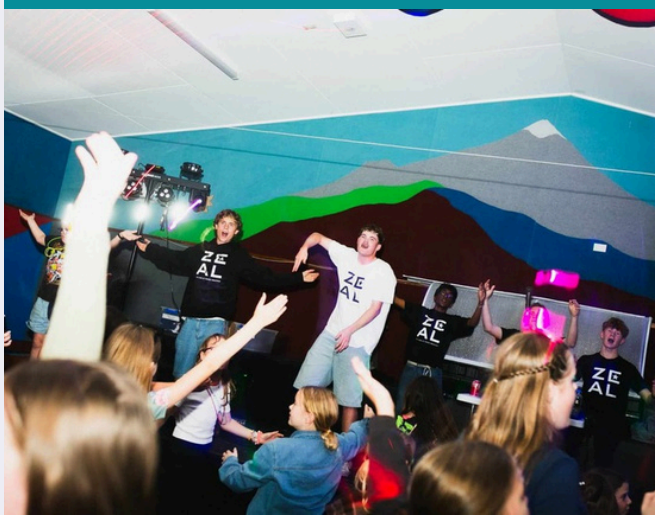


Total events:

14

Young people trained and given work experience:

111



ZEAL

Kāpiti



This past year has seen Zeal Kāpiti thrive through a rich mix of programmes, from Afternoon Hangs and Musicians' Lounge to creative arts, dance and work-readiness training, each contributing to greater belonging, wellbeing and opportunity for local rangatahi. We've seen more young people than ever walk through our doors, with attendance steadily growing and new faces arriving each term. Rangatahi have taken the lead on stage and behind the scenes, performing at local festivals, running events and gaining real-world experience through our barista programmes.



Terry Poko
Kāpiti Manager

This year also marked a leadership transition. After six years of dedicated service, we farewelled Hamish Campbell, whose creativity, care, and steady leadership have shaped the heart of Zeal Kāpiti. We now welcome Terry Poko as our new Manager, bringing fresh energy and deep community connection.

A big thank you to the Kāpiti Coast District Council, our other funders, supporters and the local community — ngā mihi nui. Your support makes it possible for Zeal to keep creating spaces where young people in Kāpiti can belong and reach their potential.



Meet Kai

(Name altered for privacy)

Kai first started coming to Zeal Kāpiti in 2023, when life felt overwhelming. Their parents were separating, home life was unstable, and at school they struggled to build connections. Living with a hearing disability made communication difficult and often led to bullying, leaving Kai feeling isolated and defensive. Encouraged by their older sister, who had already found friendship and support through Zeal, Kai began attending Afternoon Hangs. At first, they found it hard to settle into the group and often reacted to situations without realising how their actions affected others. But through patience, consistency, and care from youth workers, Kai began to find their place.

Now a regular face at Hangs, Kai has built trusting relationships both at Zeal and at school. They've become known for their warmth, humour, and willingness to help, welcoming new young people, sharing food in the kitchen, and contributing positively to the environment around them. Kai's journey shows the power of belonging and connection. With steady encouragement and a safe space to grow, a young person once struggling with isolation is now thriving as part of a supportive community.



Highlights

- Our creative and employability programmes saw strong engagement this year, with young people gaining practical experience through barista training, live sound, and performance learning. Many progressed into leadership, volunteering at events, mentoring peers, and helping run programmes.
- Partnerships with organisations including Work Ready Kāpiti and Te Puna Oranga o Ōtaki strengthened local employment pathways, connecting rangatahi with training, mentoring, and real work opportunities while maintaining youth worker support.
- Zeal Kāpiti also increased its community presence through events such as the Kāpiti Food Fair, Strawberry Festival, and Ōtaki Kite Festival, where youth-led crews provided event support and entertainment.

Looking ahead

- Maximise utilisation of our youth facility, hosting programmes, workshops and events that bring together rangatahi, community groups and creative practitioners to strengthen local connection and collaboration.
- Expand village-based youth activations across Waikanae, Paraparaumu, Raumati and Paekākāriki, bringing creative, recreational and wellbeing experiences to young people in their own neighbourhoods.
- Establish a Stakeholder Advisory Group to strengthen collaboration, amplify youth voice, and ensure services remain connected to local priorities and diverse communities.

Impact in numbers

Aggregate attendance at drop-in spaces (hangs, nights, activations):

10,947

Total sessions:

189



Aggregate attendance at programmes:

1,504

Total sessions:

259



Aggregate attendance at events:

21,289

Event volunteers:

101

Event performers:

187



Total events:

17

Young people trained and given work experience:

101





Kia ora fam!

This year at Zeal Wellington has been all about showing up, building trust and walking alongside rangatahi as they take real steps forward. Our space has continued to be a place where young people can belong, feel safe, share kai and just be themselves. For many, Afternoon Hangs and Zeal Nights have been a constant through some pretty tough seasons, offering connection, support and a place of belonging. We've seen young people grow in confidence, reconnect with whānau, re-engage with education, and in some cases step into work or new responsibilities like parenthood. Our mentoring, Rainbow Hangs, camps, and creative and work readiness programmes have all played a part in creating space for young people to explore who they are, build skills and imagine different futures. What stands out most is the courage and resilience.



Tavā Malolua
Wellington Manager

Thank you to our supporters including Wellington City Council, MYD, Clare Foundation, Le Va and Vavasour Trust - your contributions empower us to continue making a real difference in the lives of Wellington's young people, Fa'afetai tele lava!



Meet Greer

(Name altered for privacy)

Greer first walked through our doors three years ago and has been part of our Zeal whānau ever since, often dropping in for a feed, yarns with youth workers and taking part in the activities on offer. At first, Zeal was simply a safe place to be. Over time, she began to share some of the challenges she'd carried growing up, experiences that made it hard for her to find motivation or see value in committing to things like school, sports or other responsibilities. A real turning point came when Greer chose to come to camp. Through shared experiences and talanoa, her confidence grew and her connections deepened. Since then, we've seen a noticeable change in her energy and belief in herself. She allowed that small window of trust to open, giving us the opportunity to walk alongside her more closely through one-on-one mentoring and gentle encouragement to connect with counselling support. Greer recently shared that "Zeal feels like a home away from home." Her journey reflects what Zeal Wellington represents for so many rangatahi - a place where they can feel heard, seen, and supported, finding belonging and belief in themselves at their own pace.



Highlights

- The Youth Decision Makers (YDM) represented Zeal at both the It's Giving: Youth Funding Symposium and the INVOLVE Conference in Christchurch. With support from the Clare Foundation, YDM continues to fund and champion creative, youth-led initiatives and is now expanding its membership through a more interactive, discussion-based recruitment approach.
- Our new programme, Roots, exceeded expectations by connecting ākonga with their culture and identity through photography, storytelling and visual arts. The programme empowered young people to build confidence, pride and self-expression through creativity.
- In response to growing demand for practical work readiness support, we launched a new programme focused on CV writing, interview preparation and workplace skills. Several participants have already progressed into part-time work or further training, demonstrating strong early outcomes.

Looking ahead

- We're strengthening relationships with funders, partners and communities to build more connected pathways for rangatahi and grow our presence where young people and whānau gather. This includes participating in festivals like CubaDupa, Newtown Festival and Out in the City to expand opportunities and deepen impact.
- In the year ahead, we'll grow hands-on work experience placements and partnerships that support young people to step into real-world environments, build practical skills and discover their potential through volunteering, leadership and employer pathways.
- We'll continue investing in our YDM crew, supporting them to lead with confidence, influence change and amplify youth voices across Wellington. Their leadership journey is just getting started, and we look forward to what's ahead.

Impact in numbers

Aggregate attendance at drop-in spaces (hangs, nights, activations):

3,259

Total sessions:

279



Aggregate attendance at programmes:

1,420

Total sessions:

155



Aggregate attendance at events:

472

Event volunteers:

4

Event performers:

14



Total events:

8

Young people trained and given work experience:

87



ZEAL

Stories Espresso Bar



Over the years, Stories Café has trained hundreds of young people, many of whom have gone on to secure work as baristas and build meaningful pathways in hospitality. More than just a training programme, Stories is a welcoming and accessible space where rangatahi grow in confidence, learn real world skills, and take their first steps toward employment. It remains true to its purpose of opening doors for young people who are eager to explore the hospitality industry and shape positive futures for themselves. A huge mihi and heartfelt thanks to the Ministry of Youth Development, whose support over the past five years has made this mahi possible.

Highlights

- 64 young people completed barista training this year, with most achieving their certificates. Through real café service, they built practical hospitality skills and gained genuine insight into a fast paced work environment.
- Many young people began with low confidence and limited experience, and finished with stronger customer service skills, improved teamwork, greater independence, and a clearer belief in their own potential.
- Several graduates have since moved into employment, while others continue developing their skills through Zeal's ongoing work readiness sessions.

Looking Ahead

- In Term 1 2026, we'll refresh and relaunch the Stories Café brand to build a stronger presence and closer connection with the community.
- We will revitalise the Coffee2U initiative to grow visibility, increase sales, and create more opportunities for youth development.
- With Zeal's MYD Ākonga contract ending in December 2025, securing new funding will be a high priority to sustain and grow this mahi.

Meet Sara

(Name altered for privacy). When Sara first joined the programme, she was quiet and hesitant to engage. She often kept to herself, avoiding conversations with youth workers and feeling uncomfortable in situations that involved interacting with customers or new people. It was clear that Sara had potential but needed time, encouragement, and the right environment to build her confidence.

Through regular one-on-one mentoring and job-readiness sessions, Sara began to identify what motivated her and the type of work she could see herself thriving in. Together, we focused on developing her CV, exploring her interests, and setting small, achievable goals to help her step outside her comfort zone. These sessions also provided a safe space for Sara to express herself, build trust, and gain a sense of accomplishment with each milestone reached.

As the weeks went on, Sara's growth became evident. She started engaging more openly, sharing her thoughts, laughing during sessions, and showing genuine excitement about her progress. With her growing confidence and improved skills, Sara successfully secured a position at Bed Bath & Beyond as a Christmas casual, a huge step in her employment journey.



Tēnei te mihi o te ngākau ki a koutou katoa

Zeal Digital put in a massive shift in 2024/25. We gifted our 650th laptop, started scaling up our Texpo event series and levelled up our Tech Cafe space with some state-of-the-art tech for making. Hundreds of rangatahi got to kick start their tech journey and discover skills they can launch into from home, all thanks to our valued partners - The Trusts, JR McKenzie Trust, Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust, Foundation North and Auckland Council. We can't wait to hit 2026 hard and Reboot digital equity in West Auckland and beyond.



Chris Foster-Winder
Digital Director



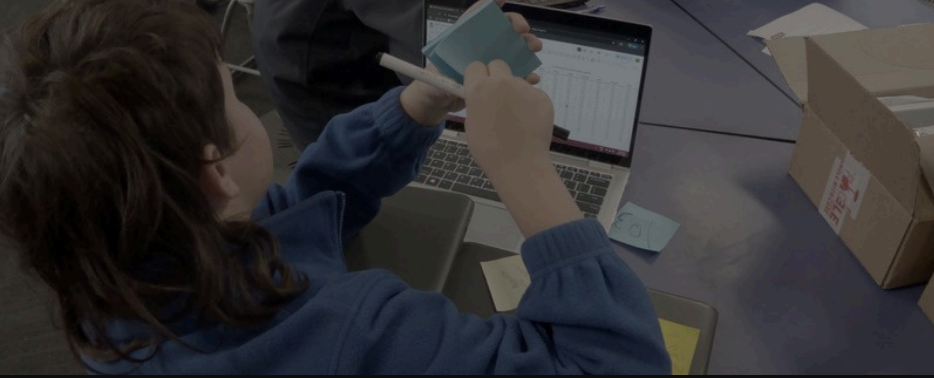
Meet Mika

(Name altered for privacy)

One of our rangatahi, Mika, recently shared how much a single day at Zeal's Texpo event meant to them. Mika moved through three different activities — graphic design, e-sports and digital media — each offering new challenges and moments of confidence.

In graphic design, Mika experimented with style and creativity, discovering that trying something outside their usual taste could still be fun and rewarding. During esports, they celebrated an early win in a Marvel Rivals tournament, while also noticing that both winning and losing were part of the enjoyment and the connection with others.

The highlight came while filming and editing a short clip with one of our creative tutors. Mika described feeling supported, encouraged and seen, with staff checking in regularly and affirming their progress. That encouragement boosted their confidence and motivation to keep learning. Moments like this show how safe, youth focused spaces can spark creativity, build self-belief and create positive social connections, helping young people discover their strengths and where they belong.



Highlights

- 199 rangatahi graduated our laptop refurbishment programme with their own free laptop.
- We kicked off our Texpo event series, supported by The Trusts, for graduates of our laptop refurbishment programme. 81 young people across two schools gave 3-4 tech circuit stations a go, having their first crack at design, podcasting, green screen film/photography, editing and AI. The next day they picked their favourite station and smashed out a full project to take home to their whanau.
- Our rangatahi hosted their first ever multi-city E-sports tournament for Youth Week over two nights. Rangatahi from all over West Auckland and Hamilton came to Zeal or competed online from home, creating an inclusive vibe with great banter.

Looking ahead

- We've got seven more Texpo's lined up in our Texpo series, a chance for hundreds more rangatahi to discover new tech pathways on their free graduation laptops.
- We're excited to be partnering with Echo Tech to level up our laptop programme with a series of modules on E-waste reduction, supporting our young leaders to run their own E-waste drives at school. This has the potential to divert a further 10-20+ tonnes of E-waste from landfill per year.
- We're piloting a new initiative called Marketplaces of the Future, in partnership with Te Rau Puawai Trust, to support young makers through playful creativity. The initiative aims to give rangatahi the space, time, support and free resources to create the next generation of youth enterprises using tech.

Impact in numbers

Aggregate attendance at 'Reboot' drop-in space (hangs, nights):

2,406

Total sessions:

205



Aggregate attendance at programmes:

1,354

Total sessions:

124



Learnt to refurbish & received a free laptop:

199

Aggregate attendance at events:

332

Event volunteers:

11



Total events:

8

Devices donated to Zeal:

300

Kilos of e-waste diverted:

497.5



Young people trained and given work experience:

3

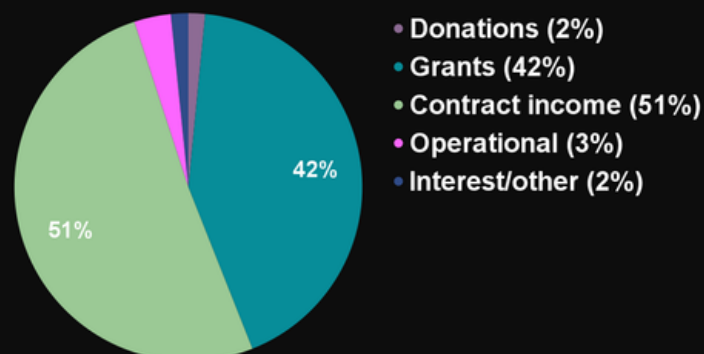


Profit and Loss Account

Revenue	FY25	FY24
Donations	56,224	52,668
Grants	1,583,176	1,702,504
Contract income	1,847,554	1,912,838
Operational	123,758	148,306
Interest/other	58,568	100,730
Total	3,669,280	3,917,046
Expenses	FY25	FY24
Volunteer/employee costs	2,793,916	2,963,884
Operational	806,396	883,094
Other expenses	52,494	66,674
Total	3,652,806	3,913,652
Surplus/(Deficit) before depreciation	16,474	3,394
Depreciation	214,994	252,160
Surplus/(Deficit) after depreciation	(198,520)	(248,766)

Note: though this report shows an annual loss in our profit and loss, when you add back depreciation in 2025 Zeal operated with a net surplus of \$16,474.

Income sources



Balance Sheet

Assets	FY25	FY24
Current assets		
Bank accounts/cash	982,968	1,014,202
Debtors/prepayments	55,382	61,706
Investments	0	0
Total current assets	1,038,350	1,075,908
Non-current assets		
Property/plant/equipment	896,442	1,087,744
Total Assets	1,934,792	2,163,652
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	252,490	260,340
Unused donations/grants with conditions	807,590	830,080
Total current liabilities	1,060,080	1,090,420
Non-current liabilities		
Loans	0	0
Total liabilities	1,060,080	1,090,420
Net Assets	874,712	1,073,232
Accumulated Funds		
Accumulated Funds	874,712	1,073,232
Total Trust Funds	874,712	1,073,232



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