

Niho Taniwha: Services for Māori Delivery Plan



(Source: <https://my.christchurchcitylibraries.com/puawaitanga-o-te-ringa/niho-taniwha/>): Design work to match other tukutuku panels in Ngā Maihihioterā.

Niho Taniwha (he kupu whakamārama)

Niho Taniwha is a traditional pattern, often seen in tāniko (woven patterns), tukutuku panels (lattice work) and carvings, that symbolises strength, unity, and guardianship. It features a repeating pattern of triangles, which represent the teeth of the taniwha (a mythical creature), and symbolise the interconnectedness of whakapapa (genealogy), stories, and histories.

- *Symbolism:*
The individual triangles in Niho Taniwha are seen as representing different hapū (sub-tribes) or generations within an iwi (tribe), united by the pattern to signify strength and unity.
- *Visual Representation:*
The pattern is characterised by a series of pointed triangles, typically arranged in vertical rows with the apex facing upwards, resembling the teeth of a taniwha.
- *Cultural Significance:*
Niho Taniwha is not just an aesthetic design; it carries deep cultural meaning, reflecting the importance of whakapapa, the passing down of knowledge, and the protection of lineage.

There are three key aspects to increasing Māori participation contained in this Niho Taniwha delivery plan, all of which enable Māori to be more involved in the election process as tangata whenua. This traditional tukutuku panel reflects te tino rangatiratanga guaranteed by whakapapa to Māori in Te Tiriti o Waitangi/The Treaty of Waitangi.

Rārangi Take / Contents

Niho Taniwha: Services for Māori Delivery Plan.....	1
Niho Taniwha (he kupu whakamārama).....	2
1. Te Kaupapa / Purpose	4
2. Ō Tātou Mātāpono - Alignment to our purpose and strategies	5
The Electoral Act and Commission	5
Ngā Maihihioterā – TE WHARE KŌRERO	5
Alignment to Values	6
Alignment to Strategic Priorities	7
Alignment to Ngā Maihihioterā	8
3. Ngā Rohe Pōti Māori - Māori Electorates	10
4. Niho Taniwha – what does successful delivery look like?	12
5. Kia whakatutuki - Implementation steps	18
6. Whakakapi - conclusion.....	20
Appendix One: Ngā Pae – voting places horizons	21
Appendix Two: Directories, mapping tools and community connectors	22

1. Te Kaupapa / Purpose

The purpose of Niho Taniwha, the Services for Māori delivery plan, in relation to the Commission's strategic priorities is to:

- Strengthen our foundations by linking the services we will provide to Māori voters in the 2026 General Election (GE2026) to the Commission's purpose and strategies
- Strengthen our foundations by outlining the range of services we will provide to Māori and why we are providing them
- Build knowledge and trust by highlighting the importance of working in partnership across the Commission and with external parties to provide the services
- Build knowledge and trust by setting out the steps we will take to design and deliver the services for Māori voters.

It is important to note that not all Māori voters choose to be on the Māori electoral roll. The services delivered through Niho Taniwha will be able to be accessed by all voters, including Māori who vote in Māori or general electorates.

Niho Taniwha will be used by teams across the Commission to provide clarity on how we will develop and deliver services for Māori voters in the 2026 General Election, in terms of:

- what the Commission wants to deliver and why
- the resources available and potential partners
- the steps we expect our teams to take.

A risk and assurance plan will be developed for Niho Taniwha that is aligned to our strategic priorities, and that will:

- establish expectations in terms of the processes to be followed and the levels of services to be provided
- identify risk profiles and mitigations
- highlight key controls along with how they will be monitored and reported on.

2. Ō Tātou Mātāpono - Alignment to our purpose and strategies

The Electoral Act and Commission

Our statutory objective under the Electoral Act 1993 is to administer the electoral system impartially, efficiently and effectively, and in a way that:

- facilitates participation in parliamentary democracy; and
- promotes understanding of the electoral system; and
- maintains confidence in the administration of the electoral system.

Our vision is that:

New Zealanders trust, value and take part in parliamentary elections.

Why it matters

Democracy matters. It means all New Zealanders get an equal say on those making decisions on our behalf. A healthy democracy, in which everyone's voice is heard and represented, is a quintessential to public good. We want New Zealanders to understand their electoral system, to have confidence, knowledge and trust in our administration of their electoral laws, to find enrolling and voting easy, and to value and exercise their right to vote.

Niho Taniwha enables the Commission to meet its desired goals by supporting Māori participation in parliamentary democracy and their understanding, trust and confidence in how the electoral system works.

Ngā Maihihioterā – TE WHARE KŌRERO

This delivery plan reflects the mana of Ngā Maihihioterā, with key aspects of implementing voting service improvements across our seven Māori electorates and takes the form of a tukutuku panel in **Te Whare Kōrero**.



Alignment to Values

The Poutokomanawa is the central pillar for the organisational culture of Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri and guides how we should be delivering our voting services. This delivery plan aligns to each mātāpono as follows:

Ko te Poutokomanawa	Alignment with Niho Taniwha
Tūhonohono – <i>connect with iwi, hapū, whānau, Māori organisations</i>	This plan emphasises collaboration with internal teams, iwi, hapū, marae, kura, Māori service providers and all other Māori communities. Workforce, venue, and

Ko te Poutokomanawa	Alignment with Niho Taniwha
	participation actions depend on deep, ongoing hononga.
Arataki – <i>lead with integrity, elevate Māori voices</i>	Embedding te ao Māori in recruitment, onboarding, and training strengthens the Commission’s ability to lead with cultural integrity. Decision-making that is honest, transparent, and respectful of tikanga and kawa.
Uakaha – <i>bring energy, innovation, enthusiasm</i>	Initiatives such as Whare Pōti Māori, rangatahi engagement, targeted outreach services, and community programmes demonstrate Uakaha through innovation and dynamism.
Manaaki – <i>ensure accessibility, safety, and care</i>	Inclusive venues, accessible services for tangata whaikaha and tangata turi, mana-enhancing relationships, and kawa/tikanga-informed training reflect a strong culture of Manaaki.
Tika – <i>uphold equity, honesty, and fairness</i>	The plan sets clear goals for equitable turnout, embedding fairness, transparency, and integrity in all systems and services, ensuring Māori have the same opportunities as all voters

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

Our strategic priorities determine how we respond to challenges and opportunities in our operating environment and ensure we achieve our desired outcome and impacts.

Each area of this delivery plan outlines specific actions and desired outcomes or measures of success aligned to the Commission’s strategic priorities:

- Strengthening our foundations
- Modernising electoral services, and
- Building knowledge and trust

The purpose of this delivery plan is to outline how we intend to enable Māori participation in the electoral process. This plan delivers on the Commission’s commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our Ngā Maihihioterā Strategy and to the Electoral Act 1993, which includes obligations to provide services to Māori voting in both general and Māori electorates.

The plan also recognises the Whare Pōti Māori initiative and aspires to involve Māori communities directly in the development and delivery of voting services. It is a

continuation of the Commission's efforts to diversify its voting services to further meet the needs of our Māori communities and support their ability to cast their vote.

By providing these services, the Commission is promoting and protecting the rights of whānau, hapū and iwi to actively participate in our democracy, which in turn builds knowledge and trust in the administration of the electoral system.

It has been our experience that these services also appeal to voters who wish to engage in a community Māori voting service, in te reo Māori or English, regardless of ethnicity.

Alignment to Ngā Maihihioterā

Shared knowledge and dialogue are vital for fostering understanding and growth. Our organisation-wide approach aims to strengthen relationships with tangata whenua, integrate Māori cultural values and practices, and ensure meaningful participation in New Zealand's democratic processes.

The key elements of Ngā Maihihioterā include:

- Building long-term, trustworthy partnerships with iwi, hapū, and Māori communities.
- Promoting the well-being of all New Zealanders through the inclusion of indigenous knowledge and perspectives.
- Developing our organisational capability to better recognise, function and give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā
- Encouraging the co-design of delivery plans with Māori to ensure they reflect Māori values and priorities.

Anchored in the **Niho Taniwha** pattern, this plan draws on the strength, unity, and guardianship symbolised in whakapapa, storytelling and histories. The framework is structured around three focus areas:

- Niho Kōhari – Increasing participation in terms of voters
- Niho Kata – Increasing participation in terms of venues
- Niho Tapahi – Increasing participation in terms of workforce

Successful delivery of this plan relies on:

- Workforce capability uplift

- Partnerships with iwi, hapū, kura, marae, Māori service providers, and Māori communities
- Greater use of te reo Māori and tikanga in processes, policy, engagement and service delivery
- Improved accessibility and technology solutions
- Our Commission teams working collaboratively to achieve mutual benefits and outcomes.

Success means increased Māori voter turnout and voter satisfaction, greater Māori representation in the voting services workforce, **Ngā Pae** framework standardised across Aotearoa, and te reo Māori is visible and heard in all voting services.

Appendix One provides a summary of Ngā Pae – voting places horizons.

3. Ngā Rohe Pōti Māori - Māori Electorates

The seven Māori electorates are:

- **Hauraki-Waikato:** North-western North Island, including Hamilton and Papakura.
- **Ikaroa-Rāwhiti:** Eastern and southern North Island, including Gisborne and Masterton.
- **Tāmaki Makaurau:** Southern and central Auckland, and parts of western Auckland.
- **Te Tai Hauāuru:** Western North Island, including the Taranaki and Manawatū-Whanganui regions.
- **Te Tai Tokerau:** Northernmost seat, including Whangārei, northern Auckland, and parts of western Auckland.
- **Te Tai Tonga:** All of the South Island, Stewart Island, Chatham Islands, and most of Wellington.
- **Waiariki:** Includes Tauranga, Whakatāne, Rotorua, and Taupō.

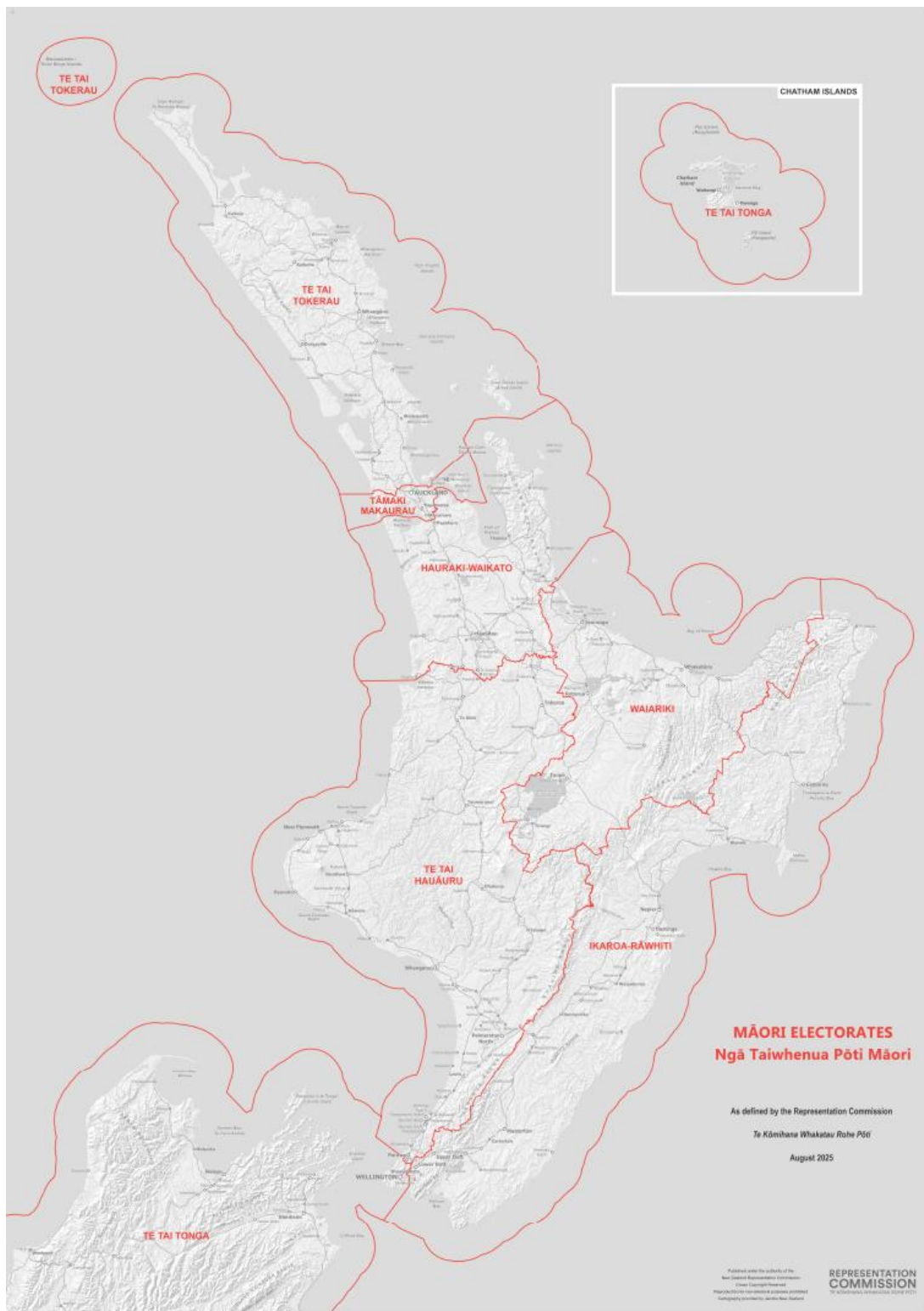
The Parliamentary Library produces profiles for all electorates including the seven Māori electorates. Each profile includes election results and statistics about people, education, housing, work and incomes, maps, and information about electorate boundaries and history. These were last updated on 27 April 2021 and will be reviewed before the 2026 General Election.

There are further Parliamentary Library statistics from the 2023 census by Māori electorate (compiled February 2025), available here:

<https://www3.parliament.nz/en/mps-and-electorates/electorate-data-2023/>

In addition to the above, staff at the Commission have access to other information sources to research and plan the services we provide to Māori, including the directories, mapping tools and community connectors provided in **Appendix two**.

The following map depicts the Māori electorate boundary changes heading into General Election 2026. They incorporate a slight shift between **Te Tai Tonga** and **Ikaroa-Rāwhiti**, and a minor technical adjustment being made to the boundary between **Te Tai Tonga** and **Te Tai Hauāuru**.



Source: https://elections.nz/assets/Boundary-Review/2025/Maps/A1-Maori-NI_Final_Image.pdf

4. Niho Taniwha – what does successful delivery look like?



Niho kōhari (crush). Increase participation as voters: *Me rēhita, me pōti. Kia rāngohia! He mana tō te kōwhiri.*

Ratonga	Tūmahi	Whāinga
Services reflect needs of Māori communities	- Voting Services (VS) & Strategic Engagement & Partnerships (SEP) work together to identify communities of low participation - VS & SEP develop a joint plan to deliver voting & enrolment services to meet the needs of Māori communities	- Increased service provision in line with population - A range of services in response to need e.g. Te Pae ki te Rangi / outreach
Māori can participate in the voting process speaking te reo Māori	- Identify potential partners that we can work with to provide services - Engage with communities on the need for & capability to provide services in te reo - Work with partners to provide the preferred level of service	Te reo can be used to cast a vote in more voting places, where there is the need & capability
Te reo Māori is seen and heard in voting places	- Public information provided in te reo - VP posters is provided in te reo dialects	More use of te reo Māori greetings & correct pronunciation in VPs

	• Voting issuing & voter assistant sheets provided in te reo dialects • All VP staff undertake training to enable correct pronunciation of te reo	• Māori names (people & locations) are pronounced correctly
Engage rangatahi & their whānau in enrolment & voting processes	• Partner with Māori organisations (incl. kura and other voting place hosts) to engage rangatahi & whānau in enrolment & voting processes • Promote Tūranga Mua, Tūranga Tika, along with our Your Voice, Your Choice resources	• Rangatahi & whānau understand & participate in enrolment & voting



Niho kata (tear). Increase participation as venue: *Community led sites of significance to Māori as voting places.*

Ratonga	Tūmahi	Whāinga
VPs within each electorate reflect the needs & aspirations of Māori communities	• Electorate Managers (EMs) provided with Service Level Expectations (SLE) & details of partners they can work with • EMs follow up with partners to develop service offering in line with population & need • EMs finalise services in discussion with RMs with reference to SLE	• Voting places at sites of significance to Māori reflect population & need
Voters can see where they can have a kaupapa Māori voting experience	• Whare Pōti Māori identified with voting place flags • Whare Pōti Māori promoted as providing a kaupapa Māori experience open to all voters through our website & communications activity • EMs work with partners to promote Whare Pōti Māori at a local level	• More voters have a kaupapa Māori voting experience
The needs of tangata whaikaha (people with disability) and tangata turi (people who are deaf) are met	• VS & SEP engage with organisations to understand the needs of people with disabilities • Improvements to staff training & services are made in response	• Needs of tangata whaikaha & tangata turi are better met within Whare Pōti Māori & through other services

All voting places are politically neutral & any conflicts of interest are managed

- Information on political neutrality & conflicts of interest provided early to potential partners & all voting places (VPs)
- All potential VPs & partners assessed for political neutrality & conflicts of interest
- Greater engagement with venues on political neutrality & treating requirements
- Venues & voters do not encounter issues with political neutrality & conflicts of interest
- The trust & integrity of the election is maintained



Niho tapahi (cut). Increase participation as workforce: *Tikanga and manaakitanga - Māori faces, in te reo spaces.*

Ratonga	Tūmahi	Whāinga
Commission's recruitment documentation & processes incorporate te ao & te reo Māori	Job listings, position descriptions & interviews incorporate te ao & te reo Māori	Increased numbers of tangata whenua applicants as Māori see themselves reflected
Māori applicants can complete recruitment processes smoothly	- Improvements made to recruitment systems, pathways & processes - Support provided to partners & applicants to complete processes	Increased tangata whenua participation in election delivery
Māori kaimahi involved in delivery of services for Māori	Onboarding & training processes enable kaimahi Māori to be allocated to Māori services	Māori experience services that reflect manaakitanga & tikanga
Embed te ao Māori in training practices	- Māori trainers recruited - Kaimahi providing services to Māori trained together - Te reo & tikanga Māori incorporated into delivery of training for kaimahi delivering services for Māori	Māori experience services that reflect manaakitanga & tikanga

Understand the experience kaimahi Māori had following their employment

- Review questions in the survey sent to kaimahi / temporary workers following the election
- Encourage kaimahi Māori to complete the survey

- Increased understanding of the experience kaimahi Māori have in working for us during electoral events

Maintain contact with kaimahi Māori between electoral events

- Kaimahi Māori encouraged to enable the Commission to send them ongoing communication
- Ongoing communications with alumni on developments & future opportunities with the Commission

- Kaimahi Māori develop their experience & move through more senior roles within the Commission

5. Ngā whakatutuki - Implementation steps

The following table sets out the steps that the Commission expects that staff will take to implement Niho Taniwha.

No.	Step	How	Who	When
1	Identify need	Access data from Te Kauhangaroa, Tableau Cloud & other mapping tools in Appendix two, & combine it with local knowledge, to assess & the need for services for Māori	Regional Managers & Regional Advisors, working with Strategic Engagement & Partnerships, in developing their regional plans	Oct-Dec 2025
2	Potential partners	Develop a plan to approach & work with partners on services for the identified communities	Voting Services and Strategic Engagement & Partnerships with input from Ngā Maihi	Oct 2025 – Mar 2026
3	Proposed service expectation	Estimate the potential mix of services that will be provided in each electorate	VS with input from SEP	Oct 2025 – Mar 2026
4	Handover to Electorate Manager	Provide each EM with the analysis of where services are needed and introductions to the partners they can work with	RMs, RAs and relevant SEP staff	Jan-Mar 2026
5	Service plan	Develop electorate plan and plan services based on information provided, and by following up with partners	EM with support from SEP and other staff as required	Jan-Jun 2026
6	Communications approach	Identify how the proposed services will be promoted locally to Māori voters, including through partners	EM & SEP with input from the Communications & Education team & partners	Apr-Jun 2026

7	Recruitment approach	Develop and execute a plan to recruit kaimahi Māori by working with partners	EM / RRM with support from SEP, People & Culture, and partners	Apr-Jun 2026
8	Training plan	Develop a plan for how training will be delivered to Māori voting place kaimahi	EM / RTM with support from the Training team and partners	Apr-Jun 2026

6. Whakakapi - conclusion

Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri (Electoral Commission) has systems and practices that have worked to deliver a reliable and accurate election result. The eligible Māori population is increasing, and those systems and practices need to evolve to meet the expectation of voters.

This delivery plan should result in GE2026 being delivered with:

More Māori faces, more te reo in spaces, and more Māori places

It will require:

- Effort to encourage early enrolment and voter turn-out by Māori and non-Māori (tangata whenua and tangata Tiriti) through the development and delivery of services that respond to the diverse needs of communities
- The ongoing ability to build and maintain mana enhancing relationships (hononga) with a range of Māori communities and entities – recognising the need for locally based kaimahi and / or partnerships who can keep the hononga real and regular (local capability)
- Build relationships and work alongside other agencies and entities at both regional and national levels to ensure they can support Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri / Electoral Commission to access and educate communities about enrolment and voting here in Aotearoa / New Zealand.

Ka nui te mihi atu e ngā hau e whā

Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri e karanga atu nei

Ngā mahi hei huarahitanga ki te ao

Haere mai e ngā iwi

(Mauria mai)

Mauria mai te āwhinatiamai

Ka tū te ihiihi, ka tū te wanawana

Hei huarahitanga ki te ao

Whāia te māramatanga e (aa hi)

Me te aroha e ngā iwi

Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri (x2)

Piki mai - Kake mai - Haere mai

Appendix One: Ngā Pae – voting places horizons

Ngā Pae¹ is an existing Māori framework that has been adapted to propose the future evolution and sustainability of voting services for Māori. It pivots on historical and current practices to inform future service offerings.

The framework is used here to identify three ‘categories’ of service that Māori and other voters will experience at voting places in GE 2026. The three categories are fluid and transformative as we evolve our voting services with and for our communities.

Te Pae Tata (whakamaua kia tina) / Secure the horizons that are close to hand

This forms part of our offering at all voting places and includes the following elements:

- All Kaimahi apply te reo Māori e.g. greetings, pronunciation of personal names/ place names/ electorate names.
- Te reo Māori collateral visible (e.g. ‘how to vote’ brochures, information posters) in the appropriate dialect for the location of the voting place.
- Training is provided as appropriate to te ao Māori/te reo Māori service expectations.

Te Pae Tawhiti (whāia kia tata) / Pursue the more distant horizons so that they may become close

This is where we locate voting places in locations of significance to the local Māori community:

- We engage with local Māori communities to identify voting place locations that will appeal to voters and encourage participation in electoral events e.g. marae, kura, kōhanga reo, iwi entity properties etc.
- We work with communities to recruit kaimahi who have connections with, or live near to, the voting place location
- The Te Pae Tata service offering is provided, along with other elements of a te ao Māori experience as appropriate for that voting place location.

Te Pae ki te Rangi (kia whai hua ai) / From horizon to the sky, for all that is possible

This is the KMVP initiative, with the ‘tikanga’ (community-led practice) and ‘manaaki’ (support structures) determined by the venue host, in keeping with current legislative settings:

- More Māori faces; more te reo spaces; and more Māori places (places of significance to Māori). A bilingual (te reo Māori and English) community-led ‘tikanga-manaaki’ service.
- Also included in the Kaupapa Māori Initiative is a bilingual te reo Māori / English outreach/pop-up voting service, which will move to selected locations (criteria based on increasing voter participation) within Māori electorates over the voting period. Ideally, we join-up with other local/iwi-led mobile initiatives.

¹ The well-known proverbial phrase, 'Ko te pae tawhiti, whāia kia tata. Ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tina' meaning to seek out distant horizons and cherish those you attain, denotes the intention to champion our 'poutokomanawa' and be innovative and future focused.

Appendix Two: Directories, mapping tools and community connectors

Alongside our Te Kauhanganaroa, Tableau Cloud there are many mapping tools in use or being developed by various entities.

Te Kāhui Māngai (Directory of Iwi and Māori Organisations) is a valuable database that gives information on iwi identified in the Māori Fisheries Act 2004, and those iwi/hapū that have begun the process of negotiating settlement of their historical Treaty of Waitangi claims; and mandated Iwi Organisations to represent these iwi/hapū that have been recognised by the New Zealand Government. Note: boundaries are indicative only, overlapping interests are intricate and complex.

You can view Te Kāhui Māngai here <https://www.tkm.govt.nz/>

Māori mapping tools include online platforms like **Māori Maps** (<https://maorimaps.com/en>) for locating marae and the **Whaitua Mapping Tool** (<https://reports.hqsc.govt.nz/whaitua/>) designed to visualise local community information. **Stats NZ** (<https://tools.summaries.stats.govt.nz/ethnic-group/maori>) provides ethnic group including Māori information.

Local Government

Many local authorities, especially where iwi have settled with the Crown, are in active relationship and formal agreements with iwi entities within their boundary. These agreements outline how the parties will work together on many matters of mutual interest including environmental, resource management and input to decision-making. These formal relationships aim to recognise the Treaty of Waitangi, foster cooperation, and ensure iwi and hapū can participate meaningfully in local governance. A search of council websites should reveal the mana whenua relationships for that place.

Many local authorities may also support a Māori advisory group representing Māori community members. **Taituarā** (local government professional membership network) and **Te Maruata** (LGNZ Māori advisory group) may also be a good source of information for localised connections and advice. Our largest city, Auckland also have the **Houkura**, the Independent Māori Statutory Board. **Community Operations** is a branch of the Department of Internal Affairs and has locations across Aotearoa, New Zealand.

Māori communities (and entities) are diverse. Accessing local knowledge of Māori hononga (connections, relationships, bonds etc) is highly recommended, particularly in high density urban locations. **Strategy, Engagement and Partnerships and Ngā**

Maihi/Māori Advisory Team are key kaimahi to work alongside. These teams also hold the relationship with Pou Tikanga, Iwi Leaders Group GE2026.

It is also important to consider the Voting Services regional and electorate leadership workforce capability and their connections with the local Māori community.

Kia mahi ngātahi – working collaboratively to achieve common purpose.

Item # 25.11-02

Item: Niho Taniwha: Services for Māori Delivery Plan

To: Electoral Commission

For: Board meeting 19 November 2025

Prepared by: Nicky Karu, Te Pouwhirinaki Māori, Manager Māori
Electoralates

Recommendations – Ko ngā Whakataunga

It is recommended that the Electoral Commission Board:

1. **note** the attached Niho Taniwha: Services for Māori Delivery Plan
2. **endorse** the implementation of Niho Taniwha for GE26 as the next stage of the Commission's commitment to the delivery of services in response to the needs of Māori voters.

Purpose – Ko Te Take

1. This paper updates the Board on the voting services the Commission proposes to provide for Māori voters in the 2026 General Election (GE26). It also seeks endorsement for Niho Taniwha, the plan for how the Commission will implement the proposed services.

Background – Ko te Tāhuhu

2. Niho Taniwha will be used by teams across the Commission to provide clarity in terms of:
 - what the Commission wants to deliver and why
 - the resources available and potential partners
 - the steps we expect our teams to take.
3. Niho Taniwha is a traditional pattern, often seen in tāniko (woven patterns), tukutuku panels (lattice work) and carvings, that symbolises strength, unity, and guardianship. It features a repeating pattern of triangles, which represent the teeth of the taniwha (a mythical creature), and symbolise the interconnectedness of whakapapa (genealogy), stories, and histories.
4. Earlier this year, the Commission delivered services in keeping with Ngā Pae for the by-election held for the Māori electorate of Tāmaki Makaurau. Niho Taniwha reflects the lessons learned from that by-election.

Discussion – Ko ngā Mahi

5. Niho Taniwha enables the Commission to meet its legislative role and strategic objectives by supporting Māori participation in parliamentary democracy and their understanding, trust and confidence in how the electoral system works.

6. In administering the Māori roll and conducting elections for the Māori electorates, the Electoral Commission has an obligation to provide services that meet the needs of Māori voters.
7. The Commission does not provide services that are exclusively available to voters on the Māori roll. Rather, voting for the Māori electorates is provided at all voting places across the country, and for voters overseas.
8. It is important to note that not all Māori voters choose to be on the Māori electoral roll. The services delivered through Niho Taniwha will be able to be accessed by all voters, including Māori who vote in Māori or general electorates.
9. Niho Taniwha has been developed to implement Ngā Pae, a suite of services developed in response to the needs of Māori voters. Ngā Pae is provided as Appendix One of Niho Taniwha.
10. Other services may be provided to meet the needs of Māori voters, in addition to those provided in voting places. An example would be a bilingual te reo Māori / English outreach service as proposed under Te Pae ki te Rangī in Ngā Pae (see Appendix One of Niho Taniwha).
11. It is also envisaged that a service delivered in response to a need of another community of voters could be delivered with consideration to Māori voters. For example, a voting service for deaf voters could be delivered with an organisation that works with Māori who are deaf.
12. Niho Taniwha represents the next stage in the Commission's journey to provide services in response to the needs of Māori by building on the strengths and learnings of the Kaupapa Māori Voting Place (KMVP) initiative piloted in GE2020 and delivered through 15 voting places in 2023.
13. The community-led approach to providing voting services at the heart of KMVPs, where community partners help the Commission identify services that respond to the needs of their communities and help the Commission recruit staff to deliver these services, is a model that the Commission is also progressing with other communities.
14. The delivery plan is attached as **Appendix A**. It specifies three categories of services Māori and other voters will experience in GE26:¹

Te Pae Tata (whakamauiā kia tīna) / Secure the horizons that are close to hand

This forms part of our offering at all voting places and includes the following elements:

- All Kaimahi apply te reo Māori e.g. greetings, pronunciation of personal names / place names / electorate names.
- Te reo Māori collateral visible (e.g. 'how to vote' brochures, information posters) in the appropriate dialect for the location of the voting place.
- Training is provided as appropriate to te ao Māori/te reo Māori service expectations.

Te Pae Tawhiti (whāia kia tata) / Pursue the more distant horizons so that they may become close

This is where we locate voting places in locations of significance to the local Māori community:

- We engage with local Māori communities to identify voting place locations that will appeal to voters and encourage participation in electoral events e.g. marae, kura, kōhanga reo, iwi entity properties etc.

¹ Refer Plan Appendix 1, p.21

- We work with communities to recruit kaimahi who have connections with, or live near to, the voting place location
- The Te Pae Tata service offering is provided, along with other elements of a te ao Māori experience as appropriate for that voting place location.

Te Pae ki te Rangī (kia whai hua ai) / From horizon to the sky, for all that is possible

This is the KMVP initiative, with the 'tikanga' (community-led practice) and 'manaaki' (support structures) determined by the venue host, in keeping with current legislative settings:

- More Māori faces; more te reo spaces; and more Māori places (places of significance to Māori). A bilingual (te reo Māori and English) community-led 'tikanga-manaaki' service.
- Also included in the Kaupapa Māori Initiative is a bilingual te reo Māori / English outreach/pop-up voting service, which will move to selected locations (criteria based on increasing voter participation) within Māori electorates over the voting period. Ideally, we join-up with other local/iwi-led mobile initiatives.

15. The KMVP initiative remains a bilingual te reo Māori, community-led (host) offering and is captured in Te Pae ki te Rangī (Ngā Pae). It will continue to be provided in GE26 under the umbrella of the term 'Whare Pōti Māori'.

Next steps – Ko te Ara Tiatia

16. With the endorsement of the Board, Commission staff will progress with planning for and the delivery of Niho Taniwha: Services for Māori Delivery Plan.

Appendices – Ko ngā Whakapiringa

A: Niho Taniwha – Services for Māori Delivery Plan

2026 Māori Electoral Option

Public Information & Education strategy

Electoral Commission
December 2025



Ngā ihirangi | Contents

- **Horopaki** | Context
- **Rangahau** | Research
- **Rautaki** | Strategy
- **Ngā kaimātakitaki** | Audiences
- **Te whakaaro matua** | Creative idea
- **Te toro atu ki te iwi** | Media & engagement
- **Te ine** | Measurement
- **Ngā tūraru** | Risks
- **E whai ake nei** | Next steps



Horopaki | Context

Purpose

The Māori Electoral Option (MEO) is a chance for all eligible voters of Māori descent to choose which electoral roll to be on – the general roll or Māori roll. Māori can choose to change rolls at any time except 3 months before an election. This is a recent change introduced in 2023.

The MEO is a democratic feature unique to Aotearoa and its indigenous people, but not all Māori understand its whakapapa. Additionally, while many Māori are aware of the MEO and the choice they need to make, only 1 in 3 understand the power their choice holds.

For the 2026 General Election, this means ensuring Māori have enough time to not only be aware of the MEO but also equipped with the right level of understanding to make an informed choice. This is the core job of the Māori Electoral Option campaign.

This Strategy provides a framework for our campaign. Grounded in the overarching Public Information and Education Strategy and the strategic priorities of the Electoral Commission, it maps out an approach to maintain a high level of awareness amongst Māori and deepen understanding. It will ensure our campaign delivers the right messages at the right time to Māori, giving them the information they need to make a choice that works for them, their whānau, and their community.

Current context

1. Electoral Commission

- Committed to delivering the Māori Electoral Option as a trusted, accessible process.
- Focused on compliance, neutrality, and ensuring all eligible voters understand their choices.
- Resourcing and systems are in place, but engagement relies heavily on partnerships and community reach.

2. Wider Aotearoa

- Growing awareness of Māori representation and the importance of choice in electoral rolls.
- Public discourse includes debates on equity, participation, and the role of Māori seats.
- Digital platforms and mainstream media shape perceptions, but messaging can lack cultural nuance.

3. Māori communities

- Diverse needs and contexts: urban, rural, kaupapa-based networks.
- Trust and visibility matter, particularly with current political discourse.
- Barriers include limited understanding of the process, competing priorities, and digital access gaps.
- Strong appetite culturally grounded approaches.

Reframing key tensions as opportunities

There's a spectrum of audiences with distinct needs, including at a messaging level.



We need to be acutely aware of that spectrum and **what Māori really need** to participate.

Māori communities are overwhelmed and fatigued – there are so many kaupapa for our people to carry.



MEO **needs to feel easy**. It can't feel like another big kaupapa. It needs to meet them where they are and equip the mobilised to help.

Promoting the Māori Electoral Option holds political risk.



Keep it **balanced**, apolitical and honour our unique history for **all of Aotearoa**.

Reminder of our key job

We're **informing Māori about their choice** in a roll and the impact of that choice.

This isn't about promoting one roll over the other.

Our campaign objectives

1

Raise **awareness** of the Māori Electoral Option amongst Māori.

- a) Aware there are two types of electorate rolls – the Māori Roll and the General Roll, from **93%** (95% in 2025 LE).
- b) Aware Māori can change from one roll type to another, from **85%** (80% in 2025 LE).
- c) Aware Māori can change roll type anytime except three months prior to an election, from **53%** (31% in 2025 LE)
- d) Aware Māori can go on either the Māori Roll or the General Roll, from **91%**.
- e) Māori are aware of Māori and General electorates, from **86%**.

2

Ensure Māori **understand** the Māori Electoral Option, what the choice means for them, and how to make that choice.

- a) Māori feel highly informed about the steps to take to enroll and vote in the general election, from **53%**.
- b) Māori feel highly informed on how to change roll types from **34%**.
- c) Understanding that being on the Māori roll means you can only vote for a candidate in a Māori electorate, from **57%**.

Rangahau | Research

Weaving a korowai of evidence

Our strategy was inspired by a korowai of evidence drawn from four key puna (sources of information).

Strategic foundations

- Electoral Commission Statement of Intent 2025/26 – 2028/29
- Ngā Maihihioterā: The Electoral Commission's Māori Strategy
- 2026 General Election Public Information & Education Strategy

Campaign learnings

- MEO Qualitative Report (Kantar, 2022)
- MEO Quantitative Report: Post-Campaign Survey (Kantar, 2023)
- Local Elections – Enrolment Campaign 2025: Summary Report (Verian, 2025)

Four expert interviews

- Community Engagement and Māori Advisors Workshop
- Interview with Run (previous creative agency for MEO)
- Iwi communications practitioners
- Māori systems change expert

Seven wānanga

- Urban pakeke (n=6)
- Urban rangatahi (n=6)
- Rural rangatahi (n=7)
- Rural pakeke (n=6)
- Tāngata whaikaha (n=6)
- Māori with low levels of participation (n=5)
- Culturally connected (n=15)

n=51

Grounded in strategic foundations

Our strategy is grounded in three strategic documents: your Statement of Intent, Ngā Maihihioterā, and the overarching Public Information & Education Strategy.

Electoral Commission Statement of Intent

- Building on the successes and learnings of past campaigns to strengthen foundations
- Ensuring our campaign team works in collaboration with internal teams
- Providing confidence in the Electoral Commission's shift to digital
- Building trust in the Commission and understanding in the MEO

Ngā Maihihioterā: Māori Strategy

- Working with Māori communities, for Māori communities
- Strengthening the Commission's relationships with Māori
- Being guided by and grounded in Māori values and principles
- Following a kaupapa Māori approach to campaign development
- Equipping whānau with the information or support they need

2026 Public Information & Education Strategy

- Focusing on behaviour change not just distribution of information – using the EAST model, but reframing through a kaupapa Māori lens
- Focusing on choice and enrolling
- Being proactive with communications
- Including Māori communities at the heart of our mahi
- Increasing understanding of the MEO and the impact of choice

Building from campaign learnings

Learning from the 2023 MEO campaign and the 2025 Local Elections, there are four key insights to inform our work for 2026.

Knowing is not understanding

- Despite high awareness of both rolls (95%) and improved awareness of MEO (48%), only 35% fully understood what it meant during the local elections.
- The campaign needs to move beyond simply informing Māori that the option exists, and its urgency, to clearly explaining and showing what it means for voting rights and representation.

Rangatahi Māori have the most opportunity

- While 70% of Māori found changing rolls easy in 2023, rangatahi Māori were notably less confident in the process with lower engagement with local elections too.
- We need to address to enhance the ease and relevance of the process through tailored messaging.

Digital channels are key but traditional methods are still where it's at

- Māori prefer vote.nz for MEO info, with online, social, and video proving highly effective, especially for rangatahi.
- However, digital hesitancy persists. We need to focus on traditional methods too (mail, print-outs, phone).

Show don't tell

- While the sandart resonated strongly with older Māori, rangatahi Māori felt disengaged by the lack of information. Seeking more impact, recognisable people in diverse settings, and more human interaction.
- We need straight-up step-by-step instructions to emphasize the process.
- Answering their questions by showing them!

Expert insights

We met with your team, the former MEO agency, iwi comms practitioners, and Māori systems change experts to uncover the key challenges and opportunities for our kaupapa.

What we heard

Whakapapa matters

People want the campaign to feel rooted in history and identity.

Simplicity is key

Oral and visual storytelling works better than text-heavy messaging.

Past gaps

Previous campaigns lacked a clear link from MEO to enrolment and voting, and messaging was sometimes confusing.

Fatigue and distrust are real

Political exhaustion, racism, and inherited disengagement are major barriers.

What this means for 2026

Make MEO a whānau kōrero

Position the MEO as a kaupapa for discussion at home, kura, and mahi.

Make it feel easy

Use short, straight-up messages, strong visuals, and spoken kōrero.

Create a seamless journey

Connect the dots from choosing a roll to enrolling and voting.

Plan for continuity

Think beyond the three-year cycle. Embed a long-term view that builds participation over generations.

Opportunities

Equip Māori movements already doing the mahi, amplifying and supporting rather than duplicating.

Amplify tamariki **voices** and whānau **narratives** to reignite pride and participation.

Celebrate democracy **authentically**, balancing neutrality with emotional resonance.

Build **partnerships** with media and community networks for deeper reach and trust.

Wānanga insights

A summary of kōrero with over 50 Māori from across the motu.

Māori are already mobilising and need to be equipped.

So, we need to show up and be relevant in their lives.

Resources for Māori: There's a strong call for "resources to teach our people" and "tools to prep marae for next year." People will lead the kōrero, they just need to be equipped.

Community spaces: "Marae event days," "Rātana, Waitangi, Matariki, Puanga," "Sports events like league games, waka ama, kapa haka," and "Community events to safely wānanga with local music, rohe competitions."

Accessibility: Voting locations should be "at kōhanga, places where we already are," rather than places Māori "don't go."

The whānau table is a perfect space for impactful kōrero.

When whānau are together, the MEO needs to be on the agenda.

Table talk: This came up frequently as a primary way information is shared and decisions are made.

Relaxed settings: Instead of formal settings, whānau want to engage in kōrero at relaxed, community settings.

Encouraging collective action: Recommendations from whānau like "Helping kaumātua to know if they're enrolled" or "For everyone that voted, take someone who didn't vote. Pass it on and double it!" reflect the value Māori place in collective action. This has to be a core part of our campaign approach.

Trusted whānau members and community champions for trusted messaging.

Whānau are looking to trusted places and known faces (kanohi kitea).

Intergenerational influence: Many Māori first hear about MEO through whānau – "Whatever Mum did, I did," "My mum told me to," "My old lady taught me," "Kaumātua you listen to". This highlights the crucial role of parents, kuia and kaumātua as messengers.

Māori influencers: "Influencers that feel involved, that care about us" are seen as highly credible. The preference is for "familiar faces" and the "most trusted people."

Range of voices required: We need different messengers for different messages. One person can't carry the entire kōrero.

Māori want straight-up, honest kōrero.

In the absence of trusted information, many Māori have been left to guess.

Misconception of difficulty: "I thought it was trickier to enrol. But now that I've heard you speak, I know it's as easy as 1, 2, 3."

Conspiracies abound: With people being taken off rolls and not knowing why, incorrect information has begun to circulate.

Craving honesty: "Just be straight up. Tell us the consequences of not engaging."

But also...

Show, don't just tell: We can't just rely on straight up kōrero to get cut-through. Māori respond well to emotive visuals and messages. It's about finding the perfect mix.

Rautaki | Strategy

A framework for change

Developed by the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) in 2012, EAST distils the core drivers of behaviour into four clear principles: Easy, Attractive, Social, and Timely (EAST). These four principles offer a practical framework for creating change.

Building on the EAST model, we've developed our own Māori framework.

- Kia mārama (te mahi) -> Easy
- Kia Māori (te āhua) -> Attractive
- Kia kotahi (te haere) -> Social
- Kia hāngai (te kōrero) -> Timely

These four principles give us the **Kia Kaha Māori Mā | We Got This** framework.

At each phase of our strategy, we need to ensure aligning with these four principles.

Kia mārama | Make it easy

- Simple messaging with a clear CTA
- Reduce the hassle
- Break down complex steps/info
- Be straight up!

Est. 30% of Media Spend

Kia Māori | Make it feel like us

- Use language and visuals that appeal to use
- Speak to whakapapa
- Display manaakitanga
- Address concerns

Est. 10% of Media Spend



Kia kotahi | Bring us together

- Events and activations
- Equip the mobilised
- Build social norms
- Choose the right messengers

Est. 30% of Media Spend

Kia hāngai | Make it relevant

- Time messaging to create relevance and expectation
- Highlight cost and benefits
- Meet people where they are

Est 10% of Media Spend

A multilayered strategic approach

1. Build intrigue for all

Inviting Māori to get ready, igniting curiosity and pride.

National hook to generate awareness of MEO.

- Celebrating our democracy
- Building awareness on the MEO
 - The choice
 - Why
 - When

Media \$ weight: \$1,660,000

Timings: March 31-June 18

2. Generate understanding

Educating and creating sense of urgency.

Tailored social content and media partnerships to drive understanding and urgency.

- Info on both rolls
- Impact of choice
- How to participate
 - Deadline

Media \$ weight: \$207,500

Timings: March 31-June 18

3. Equip the activated

Supporting and enabling collective action through-out.

Community events + hubs + collective networks + information packs to tautoko.

- Action-oriented
 - How
 - Deadline

Media \$ weight: \$207,500

Timings: March 31-June 18

Ngā kaimātakitaki | Audience

Who are we talking to?

Our campaign will reach all eligible voters of Māori descent. But we're building a strategy with a specific focus on people with the following mindsets as they represent the biggest opportunity.

Interest Level

Low

High

Manu Pī First time flyers

First time flyers with little knowledge of what to do.

Life is pretty hectic; they're navigating big changes in and feel a degree of anxiety.

"Enrolling, voting, politics. It's all too much. I don't know what I'm supposed to know, and I don't know if I care to know. Māori, general, another roll, it doesn't resonate with me either way."

- 17-20 years old
- Never participated
- Broadly located

Toroa Navigators

Somewhat aware of the history and value the choice but aren't sure whether it's worth the effort.

There's a level of mistrust about the information they've had to date. They know their choice has mana, and sometimes that means not partaking at all.

- Don't believe the govt is doing a good job
- Higher fluency of te reo Māori
- Higher mistrust and disengagement.

Pīwaiwaka Free spirits

Thinking about politics just isn't a priority for them.

Thinking about politics just isn't a priority for them. That is, until someone they love tells them to do something.

Likely participating in sports, kapa haka, hanging with mates, and tend to switch off about govt related kaupapa.

- More likely tāne
- Aged 21-34
- Rural skew
- Don't believe the govt is doing a good job nor care
- Trust whānau

Kōkako Connected

MEO reflects their commitment to others.

It's easy making a choice when you feel connected, confident, and accepted. But what about when you're craving connection?

These people will talk about the choice to avoid being left out. This means they're vulnerable to peer pressure.

- More likely wāhine
- Believes Māori culture is important
- Broadly urban

Pūkeko Community champions

Whānau oriented, and driven by what makes life easier for whānau.

They role model civic duty because they know their choices affect others.

They're in the know about social media, the news, and likely someone familiar with community leadership.

- Active in sports and fundraisers
- Highly involved in the community
- Skews rural

Kārearea Cultural pride

Honouring whakapapa and legacy of tūpuna.

Enrolling part their identity. Choosing what roll to be on is a way to show pride, leadership, and tino rangatiratanga.

For them, the MEO is about honouring those tūpuna who fought for our democratic rights.

- Promotes and participates in cultural events.
- Promotes voting
- Highly involved in community.
- Strong connection to culture.

Est. size 64,400

175,000

82,000

76,000

103,000

63,000

Qualifiers
Māori +

Age

Today's govts isn't doing a good job + Don't know who to trust

Age + Life is full on + Talk to whānau when making decisions

Female + Connected to te ao Māori + Important to be involved in local community

Quite or Highly Involved in local community + I put my kids' needs before my own

Quite or Highly Involved in local community + fluent or conversational te reo

What this means for our use of channels

Interest Level



Manu Pī
First time flyers

Toroa
Navigators

Tīwaiwaka
Free spirits

Kōkako
Connected

Pūkeko
Community
champions

Kārearea
Cultural
guardians

Direct messages with straight up information, short-form content, supported by those they respect.

Authentic community influencers will play a key role, particularly tuākana when it comes to social and radio.

Mainstream with an urban skew, creating a role for OOH.

Time-poor so they're going to need multiple channels in familiar places where whānau already are. This means regionalising resources with whānau, marae, kura etc.

Ensuring our campaign is accessible for whānau hauā

We need to infuse accessibility across the campaign for Tāngata Whaikaha Māori and Tāngata Turi Māori / Whānau hauā.

The evidence tells us 32% of Māori are disabled, and they are also 8% more likely to experience disability from injury than non-Māori. Māori are also overrepresented in the New Zealand Deaf population, and their mortality rate is 4x that of hearing non-Māori.

Our role is to implement accessibility in a Māori way. This requires an approach shaped by Tāngata Whaikaha Māori and Tāngata Turi Māori themselves, that brings together their lived experiences and supports them to fully participate.

We expect to achieve this through:

Consistent Dialogue

Tāngata Whaikaha and Turi Māori will be consistently engaged with throughout the campaign – we have already begun this with our wānanga.

Culturally Appropriate Translation

Sign Language Translations and other alternative formats for disabled communities need to be trilingual and culturally appropriate. This includes ensuring Tāngata Turi have access to messaging at events and making sure reo Māori Sign Language is visible and present, in the right dialects.

Local Partnerships

Programmes like Te Roopu Waiora and He Aha (by Eddie Hokianga) are leading mahi with disabled whānau. Whaikaha champions are core to community access, mobilising these is critical, so communities understand the decisions they're being asked to make regarding MEO.

Tangible Accessibility

Creative, copy and production will be developed in alignment with accessibility principles;

- reducing jargon,
- support understanding, and
- facilitating engagement through this.

"I grew up one foot in Māori world and one foot in the Deaf world – can I jump between worlds, or is there a place in between?"

Wai 2575 Collective Statements.

Te whakaaro matua | Creative idea

2.0

5

Creative Concepts

Before we begin...

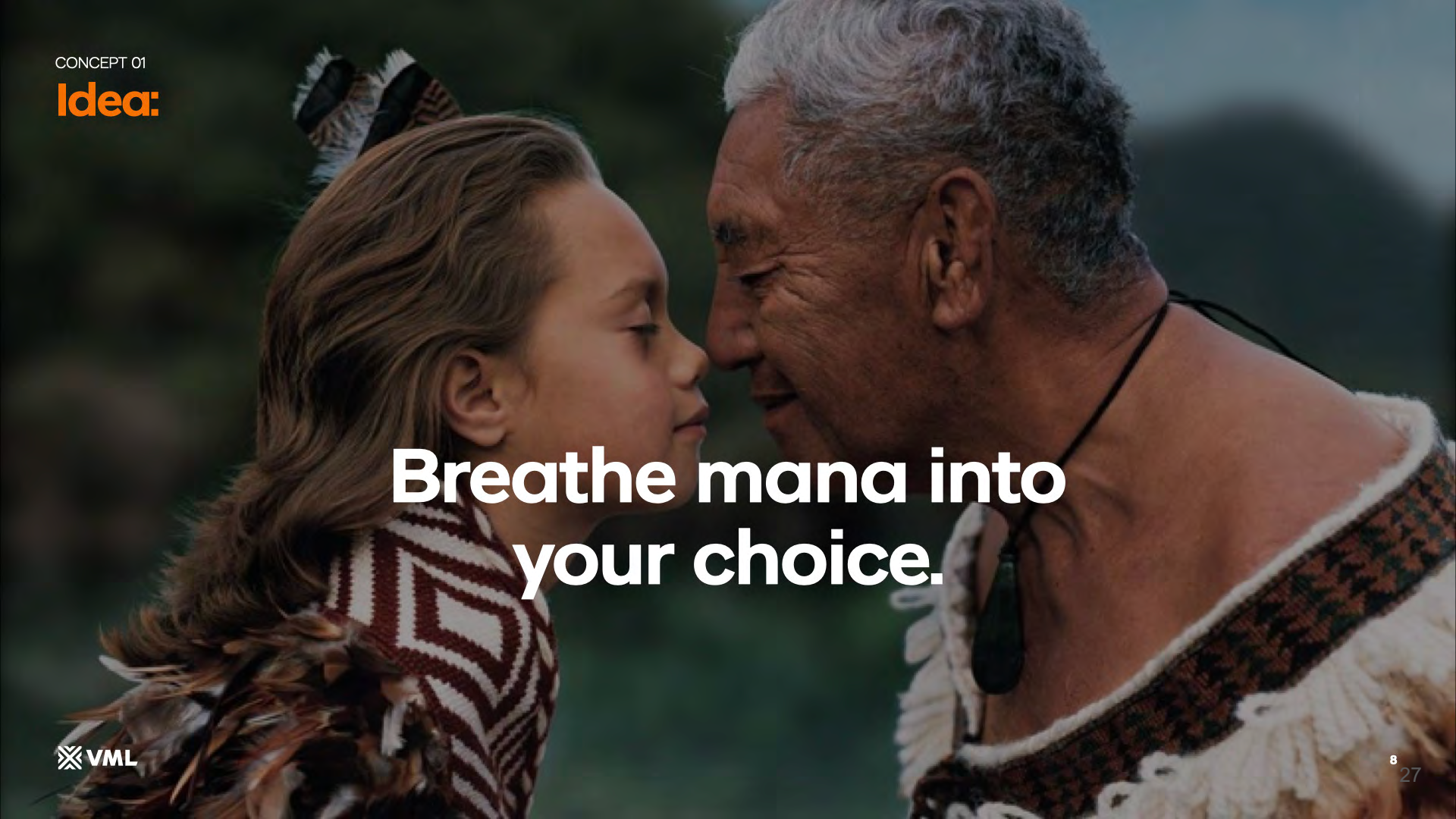
- **'Kei a tātou te mana'** will become the core campaign CTA, replacing *'he mana tō te kōwhiri'*, as all concepts were built from this shared foundational whakaaro.
- We will develop a bespoke lock up for **'Kei a tātou te mana'** based on the selected concept, ensuring the design aligns with tikanga, remains cohesive, and carries longevity across the campaign.
- The colour palette is likely to remain, as data shows it resonates strongly with key audiences; we will continue exploring secondary colours and maintain accessibility standards to ensure an inclusive and inviting kaupapa.

Concept 1

Our stories, like that of Tāne shaping Hine-ahu-one from breath, remind us that every beginning is an act of intention, and every choice we make carries that same power to move our future forward.

CONCEPT 01

Idea:

A young girl and an elderly man, both dressed in traditional Maori clothing, are shown in profile, facing each other and sharing a hongi (a traditional Maori greeting where they press their foreheads together). The girl is on the left, wearing a patterned shawl and a feathered headpiece. The man is on the right, wearing a patterned shawl and a necklace. The background is a soft, out-of-focus natural setting.

**Breathe mana into
your choice.**

Manifesto:

From the moment Tāne Mahuta shaped Hine-ahu-one and breathed life into our beginning, we were taught that all things start with intention. That lesson lives in us still.

Every Māori carries the power, the mana to make choices that reach beyond today, choices that extend through whānau, through whakapapa, and into the generations of those yet to come.

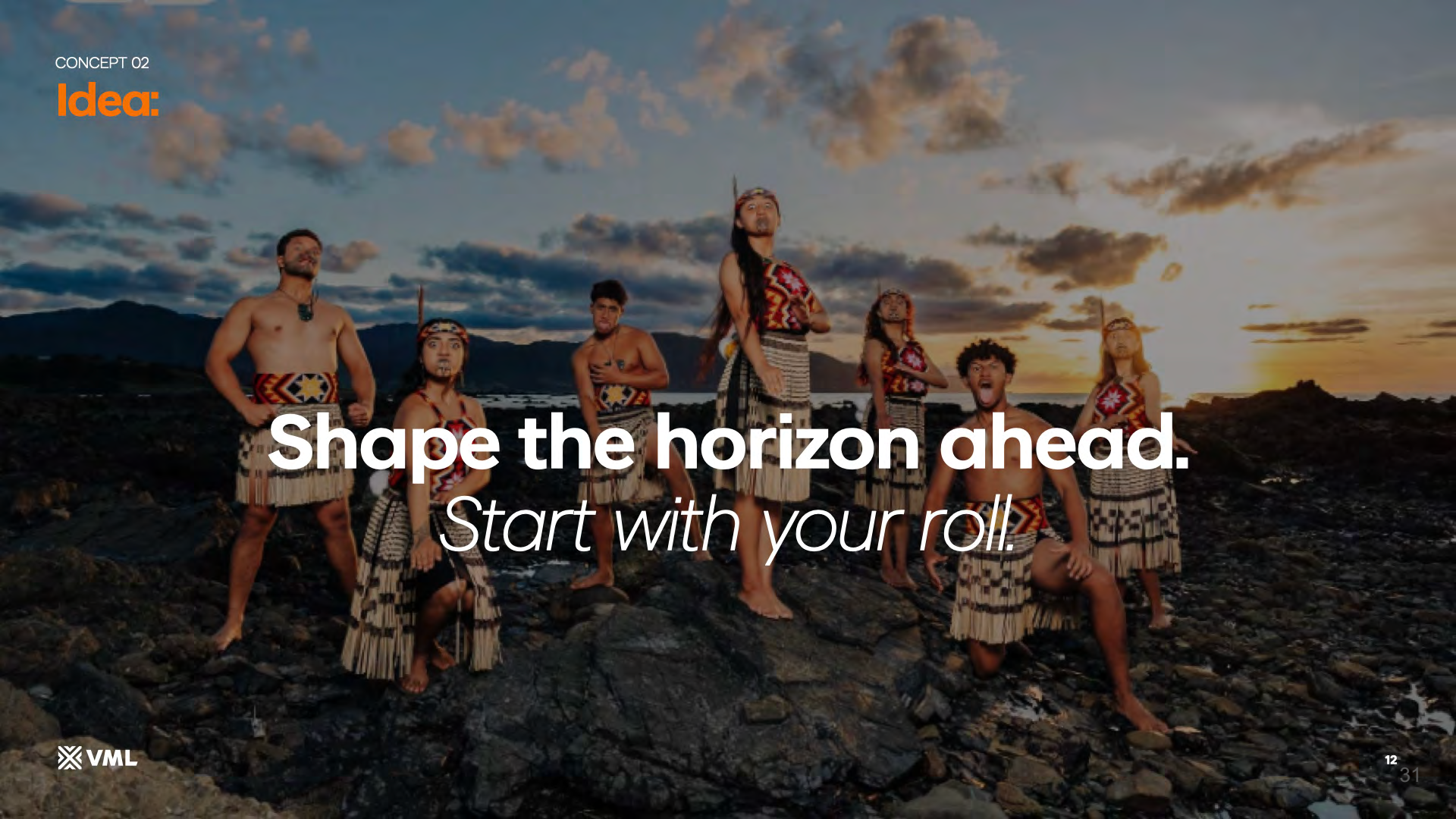
To choose with intention, we first need space to understand, to learn, to ask and to explore. This kaupapa is that space: a place to return to the stories that formed us, to watch the sand rise again, guiding us toward the knowledge we need to decide what feels right: Māori Roll or General Roll.

Our choice is not small. It is a continuation of that first breath, a moment to honour where we come from and influence where we must go.

So, breathe mana into your choice. For yourself and for your people.
For the future waiting to be shaped.

Concept 2

Māori think **beyond** the moment and our choices today help guide the future our whānau will one day look toward.



Shape the horizon ahead.
Start with your roll.

Manifesto:

Māori have always looked beyond the moment in front of us.
We engage in forward-thinking and make decisions with the generations in mind.

Our choices don't end with us they become the direction our whānau will one day look toward. That is why understanding this choice matters. Not because anyone is telling us what to do, but because our future deserves our attention.

When we know our options, we choose with confidence and when we choose with confidence, we help create the vision our tamariki and mokopuna will inherit.

This is a moment to look inward, to look outward, and to look ahead so we can learn what each roll means. To gather the kōrero that helps Māori decide what feels right for us, for our people, and for those who will continue this legacy.

Shape the horizon ahead.
Start with your roll.

Concept 3

Māori make decisions with their whānau and community in mind, but uncertainty about the Māori Electoral Option can leave them unsure of **how** their choice contributes to the collective.

Kia mōhio. Kia mau.
Know it. Own it.

Idea:

Kia mōhio. Kia mau *ki tō kōwhiri.*

Kia mōhio, kia mau *ki tō whānau.*

Kia mōhio, kia mau *ki tō whakapapa.*

Kia mōhio, kia mau *ki tō whenua.*

Manifesto:

Māori stand strongest when we stand informed.

When we take the time to understand what's in front of us, we carry that knowledge with certainty, and that certainty becomes confidence. The Māori Electoral Option is one of those moments, a chance to learn what each roll means, to ask the questions that matter, and to hold firm in a choice that reflects who we are and who we stand with.

This kaupapa is here to give Māori that space. A place to feel empowered to explore, a desire to discover and an urge to understand the options that belong only to us.

Because when we know more, we move with mana.
For our whānau, our rohe, and the collective strength we carry.

Your choice is yours to make. Your knowledge is yours to hold.

Kia mōhio. Kia mau.
Know it. Own it.

PR Opportunity



Reuben Paterson
Auckland, New Zealand
Ngāti Rangitihī, Ngāi Tahu, Tūhourangi, Scottish

We propose partnering with celebrated Māori artist Reuben Paterson to create a national art piece that embodies the collective vision of our people. This artwork would be formed using sand as a koha, gifted by iwi across the motu, each contribution representing whakapapa, identity and the shared responsibility we hold for the future our whānau will one day look toward.

The gathering of sand becomes a unifying act. Communities, iwi/hapū and hāpori are invited into the kaupapa, each playing a role in building a piece that is bigger than any one of us. As Reuben shapes the sand into a single shimmering horizon, the artwork becomes a symbol of our collective intention, a promise toward a future where Māori are empowered to understand their roles and make informed choices in the Māori Electoral Option.

The creation of the piece forms the heart of the MEO launch TVC, showing fragments of the artwork being created. Micro-photography allows us to turn the artwork into the visual canvas of the wider campaign, revealing that every grain, like every Māori, holds power when gathered together. The completed artwork is unveiled only when the time to enrol or switch rolls arrives, travelling the country as a living testament to unity, identity and future-focused decision-making.

Through Reuben's artistry and the contributions of the many, this campaign becomes not just a message but a movement grounded in shared vision, shared creation and shared future.

Te toro atu ki te iwi | Media & engagement

Overarching approach

National and regional media reach channels

- TV
- Online Video
- Online Display/Banners
- Social Media
- Radio
- Streaming
- Outdoor
- Search

Paid and owned

Māori media partnerships

- Māori Media Network
 - Whakaata Māori
 - Māori podcasts
- Māori social media channels
- Māori influencers/KOLs
 - Marae Network

Shared

Kanohi kitea

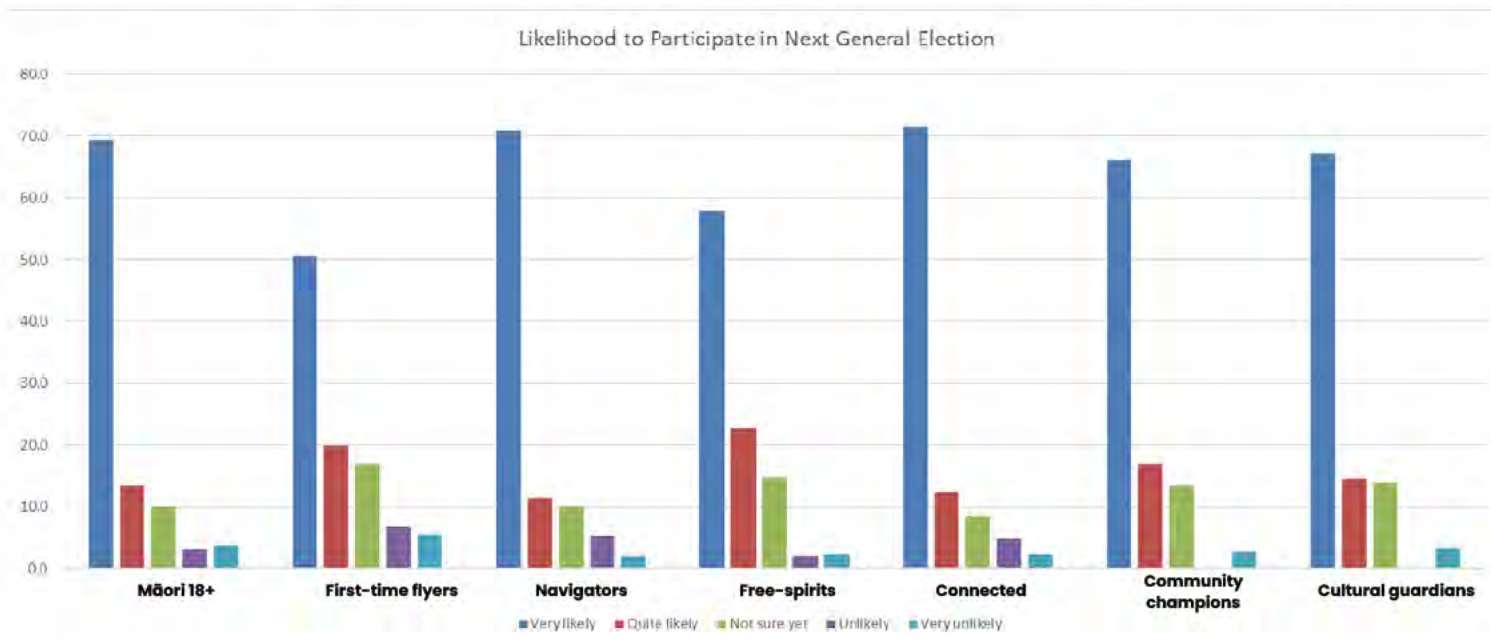
- Engagement with iwi comms practitioners
- National Iwi Chairs Forum
- Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust
- Te Rūnanga Nui o ngā Kura Kaupapa Māori
- Marae
- Local champions at regional events

Earned

National and regional reach channels

Defining the audience

Taking the question of likelihood to participate in the next General Election as an indicator of participation in the Māori Electoral Option, we can see that most of our audiences are very likely to take part. As such, they will require a predominantly reach-only approach with enough weight to create awareness for the Māori Electoral Option key messages.

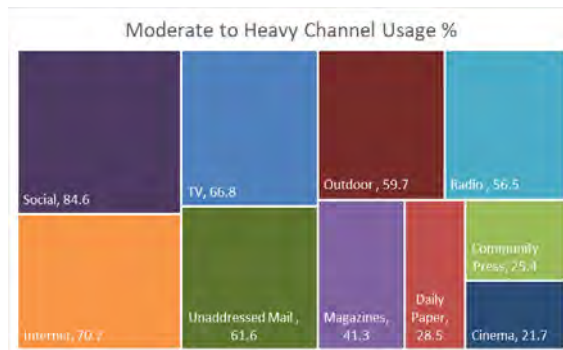


Source: Nielsen CMI

National and regional reach channels

Determining the channel mix

To achieve the awareness levels needed for each of the key messages at specific times throughout the campaign, the channel mix will include those that deliver the highest possible reach for our audience.



Message	Media Budget Weight	April					May				June			
		7	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16	23
Enrolment Pack	20%	Start 31st												
General Awareness	20%													
Digital Comms	20%													
Urgency/Last Chance	20%												End 18th	

Within the awareness-driving, reach layer (Build Intrigue), targeting tactics will be used to get as close to the audiences as possible. These will include:

- Specific location targeting Online and Outdoor to areas and hot spots with comparatively higher population size.
- Upweights into audience specific channels (i.e., iwi radio, Pou Tiaki & Ātea websites).
- Interest targeting online into environments that over-index to Māori (i.e., sports, health, whānau, entertainment)

While this approach will deliver the necessary reach for the key messages (est. 75% reach per message), additional layers of activity (Generate Understanding & Equip the Activated) will be needed to drive engagement to audiences needing more context or where there are barriers of low trust, low interest or low understanding.

The channel mix to drive this engagement are integrations or partnerships with audience specific media providers, the use of Influencers, long-form content and bespoke Social Media content.

Māori media partnerships

An approach to drive trust

Through integrations with media partners who deliver exclusive reach to Māori audiences, we will be able to amplify their voices to give context to and help explain the importance of the Māori Electoral Option, and of the changes happening with digital enrolment and potential implications of being enrolled or not being enrolled before the date close off time.

Activity will include the likes of interviews, integration into programming, extension on social platforms and on-the-ground activations, linked in with the activity the Electoral Commission's Community Engagement teams will already be doing.

Trusted figures in Māori communities...



Examples include:

- Māori Media Network & their 21 iwi radio station brands (interviews, social extension, event attendance, etc.)
- Whakaata Māori programming integrations (i.e., Ahikaroa) and bespoke content leveraging personalities (i.e., Luke Bird)
- Māori Content Podcasts (i.e., Tahi)
- Marae Network (long form content distribution, etc.)
- Tangata rongonui (influencers) like Scotty and Stacy Morrison, Pere Wihongi, Stan Walker, Te Aorere Pewhairangi, Dr Rangi Mātāmua, Che and Kahurangi Milne, Sonny Ngatai etc.

Kanohi kitea

Community champions and networks

What is a kanohi kitea?

A kanohi kitea (“a seen face”) is present and visible in the community. They are trusted, have credibility, and are connected.

Importantly, these people aren’t just “influencers”. They are less likely to be traditionally famous, and more likely to be regionally known.

How do we measure success?

A consistent feedback loop through kanohi kitea lets us know our communities are responding to the campaign. When whānau can report back that they are more aware and have more understanding, we’ll know this specific engagement approach is working.

How will we recruit them?

We bring our own ‘aka kūmara’ that spans the breadth of Aotearoa. We are confident in our ability to recruit kanohi kitea that can connect with each of our audience groups.

Where we are unable to do so, we’ll lean on trusted organisations and your own networks.

Ensuring efficacy

Kanohi kitea are relationships founded on mutual reciprocity. We will equip them with resources and messages – some will want a fact-sheet of changes. Others will want a full info pack. Ongoing engagement means we can provide live updates from whānau and communities. Our role includes equipping kanohi kitea with all that they need over time, to do their mahi.

The holistic approach to media and engagement

Reaching Māori requires a multifaceted approach. By viewing all elements of the campaign across Paid, Owned and Earned channels as interconnected, we will deliver a campaign that is greater than the sum of its parts.



Putting Electoral Commission at the centre of partnerships and integrations

Our holistic approach to partnerships – where we bring together Cultural Partners, Community Engagement Teams, Kaupapa Champions and Media Partners – will all be working to a well-designed brief with clear objectives, including emphasising the role Electoral Commission plays.

Teine | Measurement

Our measures of success

In addition to increasing awareness and understanding, as per slide 8, success for our campaign will also look like:

- **Feeling inclusive** of all Māori: mokopuna and whānau see it as their option
- **Sparking intergenerational kōrero** at home, kura, mahi, marae and community
- **Strengthening the link** between MEO, enrolling, and voting
- Finding the **balance** between function and emotion.
- **Celebrating democracy** and Māori choice: authentic, empowering tone
- **Building Aotearoa pride** in the history of the MEO
- Building **long-term engagement** for whānau beyond one cycle
- **Building with Māori movements** and whānau voices for authenticity
- **Hearing** from whānau and communities about **the power of the campaign and its impact on them.**

From a media perspective

A combination of information sources will indicate how the campaign is progressing and will identify what, if any changes need to be made to ensure its continued success.

Media Metrics	Onsite Actions	Enrolment Data	Research & Sentiment
Reach Impressions Clicks Completed Views Listens Engagements	Engaged Sessions Enrolment Details Checks & Updates Time Spent Onsite Content Views Link Clicks	Enrolments Tracker (vs. planned levels) Digital Enrol Actions - Open Rates - Time Spent - Enquiries	Verian monitor: <i>Recall, Awareness, Understanding</i> Social Sentiment: <i>Positive, Neutral, Negative</i>
Optimised to achieve or exceed government category averages	Optimised to Quality Visits - Enrol Action Takers excluded from further advertising	Monitored in collaboration with EC data team to determine best insights	Results captured as soon as available in order to be responsive as possible

All captured within the tracking dashboard for fast correlation, and attribution of activity to outcome, using realtime and automated data feeds

Ngā tūraru | Risks

Key risks to our campaign

1. Low understanding despite awareness

Awareness of MEO is improving, but only 35% fully understood its meaning in past elections.

- Risk: People know about MEO but don't grasp its impact on voting rights and representation.

2. Rangatahi Māori engagement gap

Younger Māori are less confident and engaged in the process.

- Risk: Low participation among rangatahi could undermine long-term goals.

3. Digital hesitancy

While online channels are effective, some Māori still prefer traditional methods.

- Risk: Over-reliance on digital could exclude key audiences.

4. Fatigue and distrust

Political exhaustion, racism, and inherited disengagement are major barriers.

- Risk: Messaging may not cut through due to distrust and misinformation.

5. Misconceptions and conspiracies

Incorrect information and perceived difficulty in enrolment persist.

- Risk: Misconceptions could discourage participation.

6. Perceived bias or political influence

Risk of being seen as promoting one roll over the other, attracting negative attention from stakeholders.

- Risk: Distraction from the kaupapa.

Mitigation strategy

1. Move from awareness to understanding

- Use clear, step-by-step instructions and visual storytelling.
- Show the process and consequences of not engaging.

2. Target rangatahi Māori

- Tailor messaging for relevance and ease.
- Use familiar faces, influencers, and interactive formats.

3. Blend digital and traditional

- Maintain strong presence on vote.nz and social media.
- Complement with print-outs, phone, and community events.

4. Build trust through whānau and community

- Position MEO as a whānau kōrero at home, kura, and marae.
- Engage trusted messengers (kanohi kitea): kaumātua, parents, friends.

5. Counter misconceptions

- Provide honest, straight-up kōrero.
- Address conspiracies proactively with transparent messaging.

6. Maintain neutrality and transparency

- Emphasise choice, not preference.
- Use factual language.
- Audit messaging for neutrality with key stakeholders.

E whai ake nei | Next steps

Where to from here?

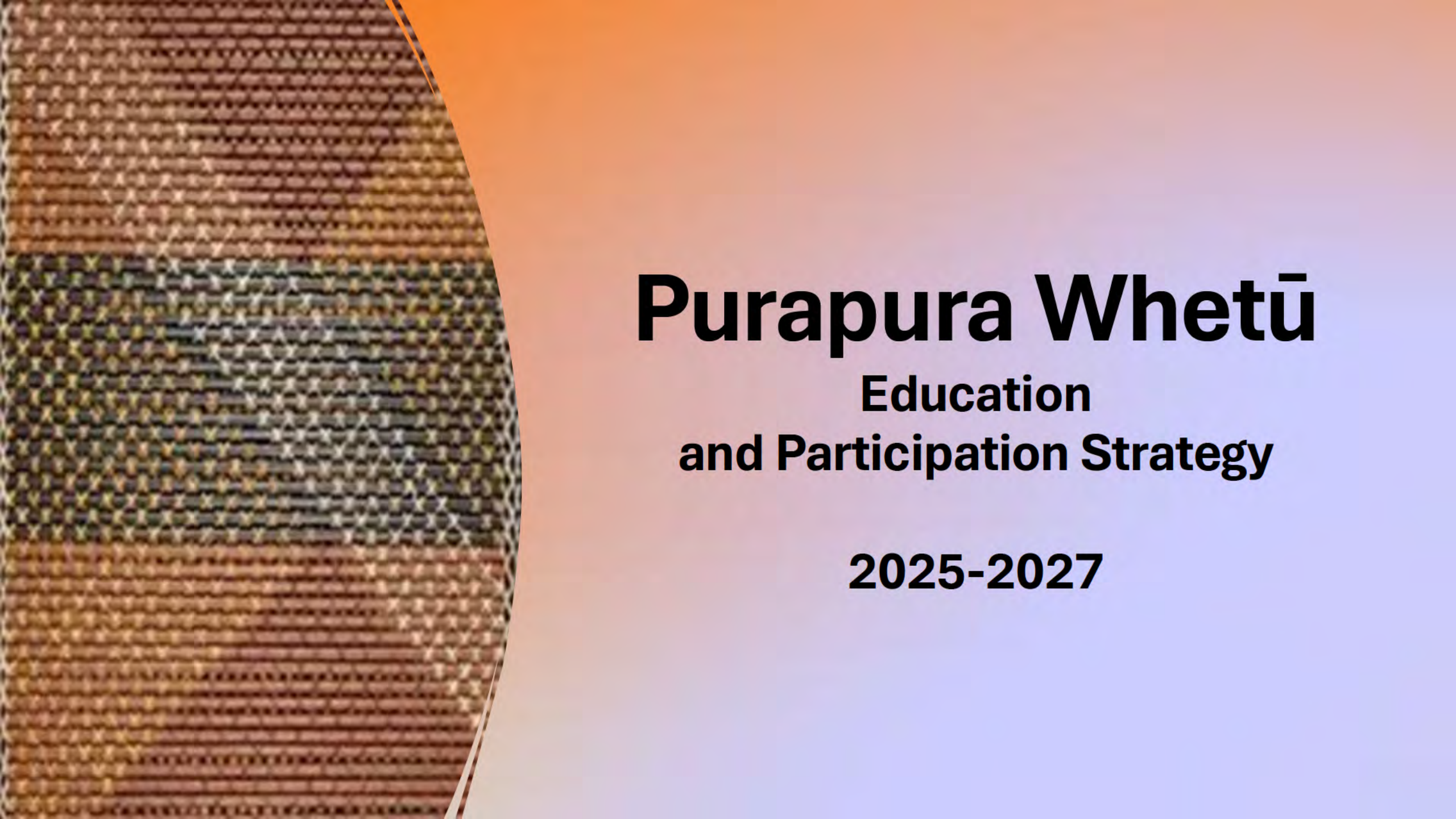
We're using our own co-creation framework, Te Haerenga ki Tua, to guide this campaign's development.



Key milestones

- Select creative idea and finalise strategy by Friday 12 December
- Mail out pack due 19 Dec
- Co-creation of creative assets in January and February
- Media partnerships finalised in February
- Production with Māori partner in February and March
- Campaign goes live end of March

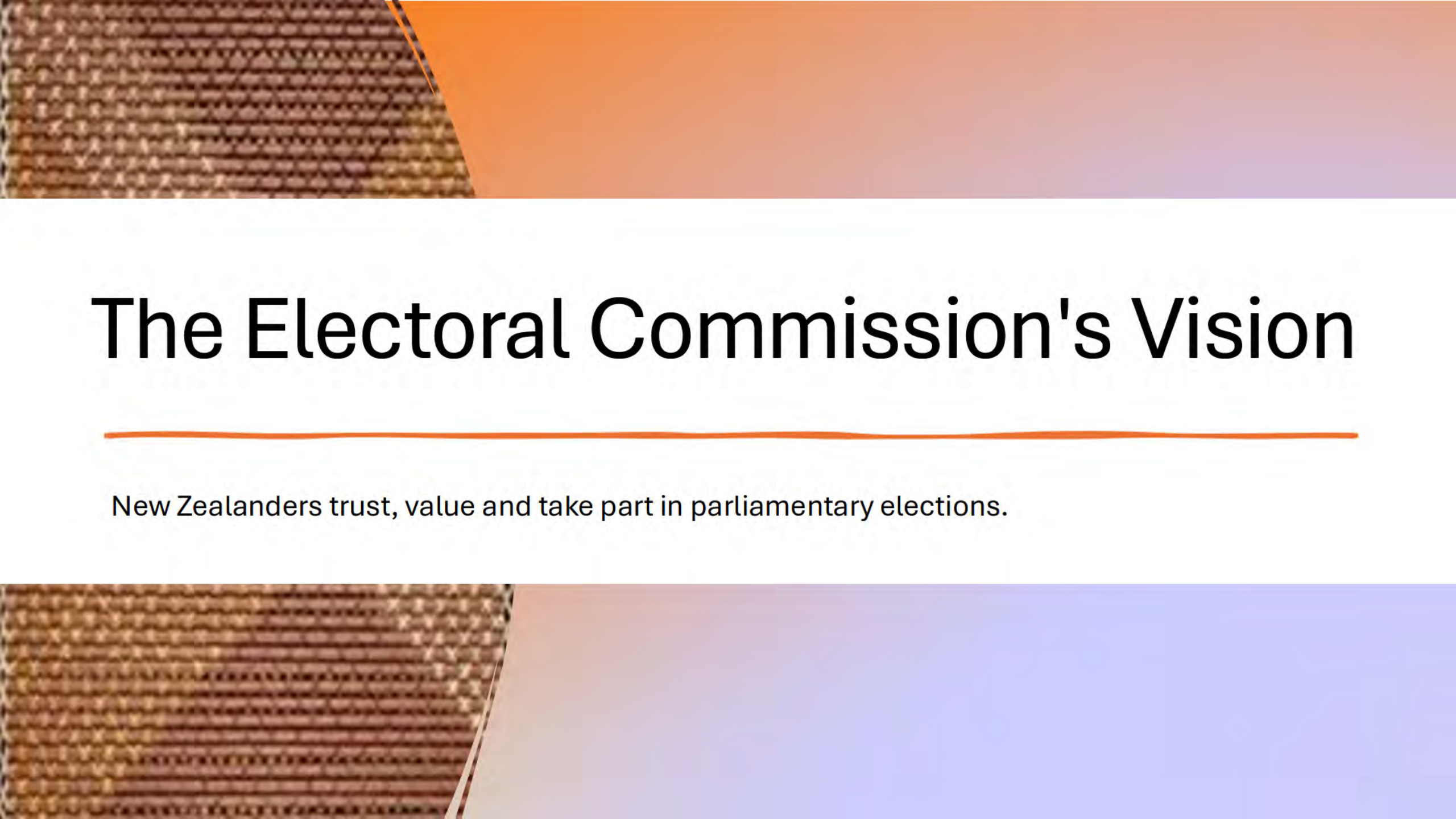
Ngā mihi nui
Thank you



Purapura Whetū

**Education
and Participation Strategy**

2025-2027



The Electoral Commission's Vision

New Zealanders trust, value and take part in parliamentary elections.

The Electoral Commission's Purpose

To administer New Zealand's electoral system impartially, efficiently, effectively, and in a way that:

- facilitates participation in parliamentary democracy
- promotes understanding of the electoral system, and
- maintains confidence in the administration of the electoral system.



Strategic Engagement and Partnerships Tīma

OUR PURPOSE

To strengthen democracy by providing communities and individuals with the knowledge and opportunities they need to participate fully and confidently in electoral events.

At the heart of our work is a commitment to building trust and championing locally-led initiatives and solutions within communities that have historically experienced lower rates of participation.

MANAAKI– (n) hospitality, kindness, generosity, support. Power transfer

He Purapura Whetū Tukutuku Kōrero

Purapura whetū is an analogy which reinforces the interconnectedness of the Education and Participation Strategy, Te Pātikitiki and Te Kete, and consolidates the importance of each one working cohesively in unison.

In isolation “purapura” typically means seeds, a collation of lots of small things. Whetū simply means star(s). In the context of this specific tukutuku pattern/lattice work, it means a myriad of stars.

The symbolism of this tukutuku pattern is one that represents the many stars in our celestial skies (often attributed or immortalised as our loved ones who have passed on) and their relationship to the multitudes that exist terrestrially here on earth. It also speaks to the duality of te hunga mate (the deceased) and te hunga ora (the living), but more importantly to the collective wellbeing and prosperity of us as people.

There are also other key connections to how Māori, practice, perceive and live by our stars. Some examples being: as a tool of navigation, a tool to forecast weather and environmental changes and simply, as aspiration fixtures in the sky that we can visually look to for guidance, hope and counsel.

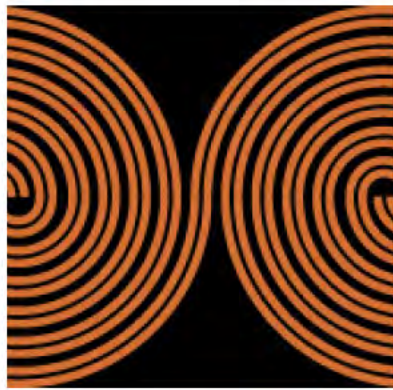
Aim

To build trust and increase democratic participation by improving access to education, supporting electoral preparedness, developing and sustaining partnerships, and committing to continuous learning.

Our Pou/Objectives



**Facilitate
education**



**Support electoral
preparedness**



**Develop and
sustain partnerships**



**Continuous
improvement**

Facilitate education

To increase access for all New Zealanders to accurate and relevant information about the electoral system, associated matters, and how to participate in electoral events.

To increase access for Māori to accurate and relevant information about the electoral system, associated matters, how to participate in electoral events, and timely information and education on the Māori Electoral Option.

ARATAKI–(v) to conduct, lead, point out, guide.
Knowledge transfer.



Facilitate education – Actions and measures



Action: Deliver the "always on" MEO messaging through multiple channels to reach all relevant communities.

Action: Deliver in-person and online sessions about democracy, the electoral system, how to enrol, the unpublished roll, provisional roll, and voting – focusing on communities with lower rates of participation and Māori.

Action: Build awareness within the Commission and champion the educational and communication needs of communities with lower rates of participation.

Action: Provide approved resources and information that enable communities to share information with each other in a relevant and relatable way.

Action: Create and implement a Youth Action Plan.

How do we know we have been successful?

of people reporting an increased understanding of **current campaign** [after an engagement]

of people reporting they know where to go to get accurate information about a **current campaign** [after an engagement / session]

Increase in enrolment activity in communities we have recently engaged with.

The provisional roll daily average will increase to match the rolling ten year average.

Support electoral preparedness

To build and strengthen the capacity of the Strategic Engagement & Partnership teams' readiness to support the delivery of electoral events.

UAKAHA—(n) vigour, energy, dynamism, enthusiasm
Energy / dynamism / innovation



Support electoral preparedness - Actions and measures



Action: Contribute to the development and implementation of any redeployment strategy set up for the by-election and GE26.

Action: Support measures to improve the quality of voter information provided on enrolment forms and provide targeted enrolment support to eligible groups.

Action: Contribute to training and the creation and implementation of regional and electorate plans for the by-election and GE26.

Action: Connect Regional and Electorate Managers with local communities, including iwi/hapū, rūnanga, urban authorities and other Māori organisations and government agencies to aid recruitment and identification of voting place locations for GE26.

How do we know we have been successful?

of SEP trained to support enrolment processing and voting place activities.

of completed expressions of interest to work for us [at an event / session / by matching SnapHire data]

Develop and sustain partnerships

To develop sustainable relationships and partnerships with communities that have lower rates of participation and the governing bodies, organisations and community groups that service these cohorts.

To develop mana-upholding relationships and partnerships with iwi/hapū, rūnanga, urban authorities and other Māori organisations and government agencies.

TŪHONO –(v) to join, bond, attach, connect.

Connecting/ building and maintaining relationships.



Develop and sustain partnerships – Actions and measures



Action: Build and sustain relationships with communities that have lower rates of participation, as well as with service providers supporting these groups, both during and between elections.

Action: Build and sustain partnerships with central government agencies and councils across the motu.

Action: Build and sustain relationships with iwi, hapū, rūnanga, urban authorities, and other Māori organisations and government agencies.

Action: Build and sustain internal relationships with operations groups and across the wider Commission.

Action: Contribute to cross-Commission workstreams.

How do we know we have been successful?

of stakeholders/communities who approach us from a referral or provide us with a referral

of people who indicate they want to work with us or for us [after an engagement / session]

of new relationships established with Māori organisations, groups or service providers

of new relationships established with community organisations, groups or service providers

Continuous improvement

To continuously learn, improve and innovate to remain effective and efficient in our service delivery for all New Zealanders.

To continuously learn, improve and innovate to remain effective and efficient in our service delivery for Māori.

TIKA – (adj.) be true, valid, honest, genuine, sincer.
Integrity and honesty



Continuous improvement – Actions and measures



Action: Continuously monitor and assess our relationships, partnerships, and the effectiveness and risks of our activities using Te Kete tools.

Action: Conduct annual and end of campaign SEP reviews.

Action: Produce a minimum of one case study per region focused on changes in understanding, voter behaviour or trust to partner with us.

Action: Refocus rōpu to grow our understanding of communities with lower participation rates.

Action: Give effect to internal strategies and frameworks in all areas of planning, delivery and reporting.

Action: Attend all ongoing learning opportunities provided by Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri to upskill in te reo Māori and mātauranga.

How do we know we have been successful?

% of SEP kaimahi reporting they are confident implementing Te Pātikitiki into their everyday mahi.

% of kaimahi that report they have access to the right tools and resources to do their job.

Delivery of annual and end of campaign lessons learned report.

UPDATE ON ROADMAP FOR DIRECT DIGITAL COMMUNICATION FOR MEO AND GE 2026

Presentation to Programme Board

4 December 2025

Context

New Zealand's evolving voter behavior, and rising costs are placing increasing pressure on the efficiency and accessibility of the electoral system.

While the manual, paper-based election model provides important integrity advantages, its heavy reliance on postal services—which face reduced delivery frequency and rising expenses—has become a significant constraint.

This dependence highlights the need for an integrated channel approach that includes digital to support accessible, timely, and cost-effective voter communications.

There are two main enablers of this change:

1. The procurement of a digital communications provider to deliver e-mail and SMS for the MEO and 2026 General Election with a view to having the service available in March 2026.

2. The Electoral Amendments Act will enable direct communication through digital channels where previously it was only allowable by post.

These changes will also support our value of Arataki and the Enrolment Strategy through increase direct engagement encouraging early enrolment and changes to personal details.

By combining traditional and digital methods we can ensure maximum reach, clarity, and trust across all segments of the population.

This approach addresses the evolving needs of New Zealand's electoral system by enhancing accessibility, timeliness, and cost-efficiency in voter communications.

Furthermore, this establishes a foundation for modernization where we can evolve our technology with changing voter expectations.

61%

2,195,223 enrolled people with an email address.

72%

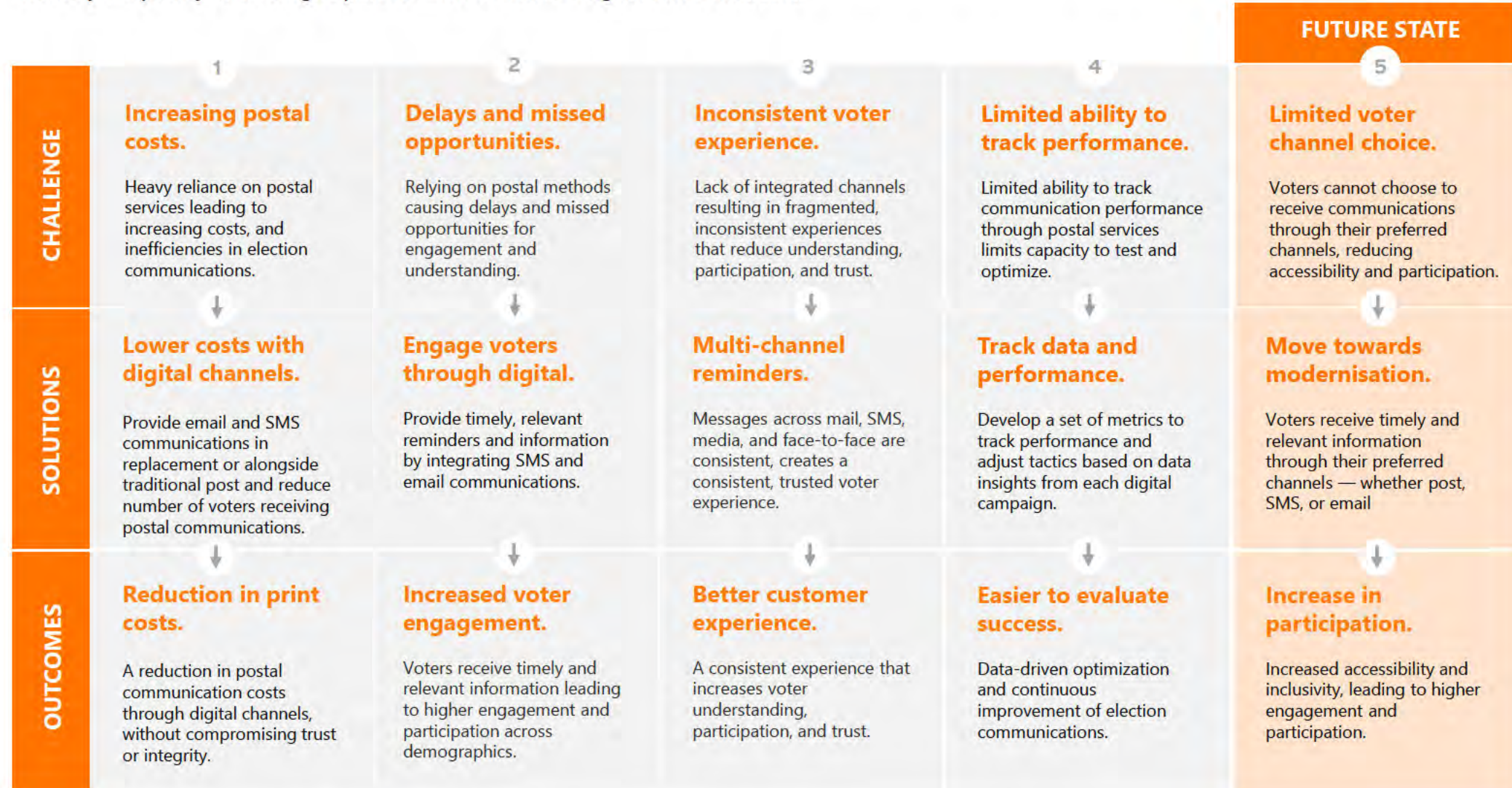
2,588,744 of people enrolled have mobile.

71%

When it comes to preferred channels for enrolling and updating enrolment details, New Zealanders are increasingly saying they want to do it all online.

What success looks like?

While the manual, paper-based election model provides important integrity advantages, its heavy reliance on postal services—which face reduced delivery frequency and rising expenses—has become a significant constraint.



Our direct channels

Our communication channels connect New Zealanders to the electoral system. A direct channel is any communication pathway that allows us to interact directly and at some personally with voters – without intermediaries. It is important we understand how these channel operate in unison as voters will often move between channels. When managed well, the combination of direct channels create a consistent and trusted experience . When managed poorly it can lead to mixed messages, confusion or lost trust.

Inbound Channel	 Post Voters can send completed enrolment forms or updates back to us via mail, ensuring accessibility for those who prefer traditional methods	 Email This channel offers a direct, convenient way for voters to request information, update their enrolment details, or seek help with voting.	 Phone Our staff offer assistance and support to voters, answering questions about enrolment, voting options, and election processes.	 Web Our official websites offer forms that enable voters to enroll, update details, and submit queries through these platforms.	 Face When voters arrive at a voting place, our staff will welcome you and answer any questions you might have at our voting places.	 Social Voters can contact us via our social channels to ask questions or provide feedback about enrolment, voting, and anything else about the election process.
Outbound Channel	 Post We use post as a channel for sending enrolment materials, voting cards, and other election information to voters	 Email We use email to provide targeted, actionable information.	 SMS We use text messages to send direct, time sensitive updates, alerts and reminders	 Phone We use phone as an outbound channel when we need to fix issues or communicate with specific segments.	 Face We rely on face-to-face to build trusted, enduring relationships in ways that digital or mass media channels cannot replicate.	 Social We respond directly to voters if they initiate contact through a social channel.

Design and Implementation Principles

The purpose of these principles is to provide a clear, consistent foundation for how the processes and solutions are design and delivered. These principles act as a guide to decision making to ensure the design and implementation are purposeful, efficient and aligned with intent. They also act as guardrails to trigger an escalation if they are breached.



The service will be designed with the elector at the center (trusted, essential, informative)



The service will be secure, accessible, user friendly and meet our legal obligations (including privacy).



The communication must be delivered in a time to be useful for its purpose.



The service will not disproportionately impact any groups of electors.



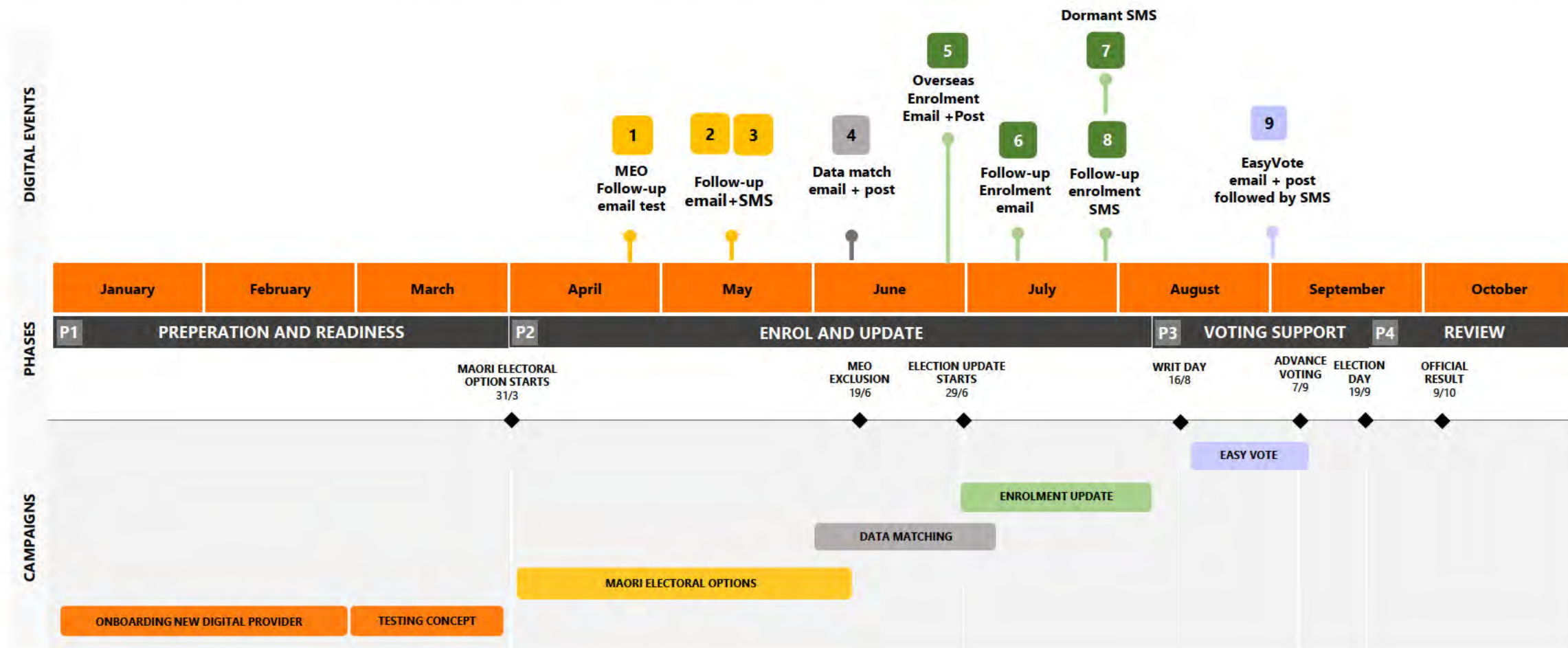
The solution must meet the needs of business stakeholders to achieve organisational outcomes.



We will take a “channels” view to ensure inbound channels are prepared and appropriately resourced.

High Level timeline of digital communication events

There will be a number of direct digital comms events leading up to the paper/digital EasyVote just prior to the start of the voting period. Each event will be different in terms of size, channels used and messaging. It is important we have robust planning in place to ensure each events elector/voters with the information they need at the right time to assist them to participate.



Phase 1: Preparation and Readiness January - March

We only have a few months, post the signing of the contract, to onboard the new provider, undertake a proof of concept and complete a readiness assessment. We will use a small EC onboarding team to work with the new provider to ensure the design and technical set up is well managed and any key decisions are quickly escalated for consideration.

	December	January	February	March
Onboarding Provider	- Contract Signed - Initiate EC Onboarding Team - Agree onboarding schedule with Provider - Risk Assessment	- Consider first draft of C&A (if required) - Agree secure data transfer protocols - Confirm data disposal protocols - Agree template framework - Agree design specifications. - Weekly sessions with provider project team - Agree design of prototype	- Finalise C&A (if required) - Finalise design or technical set-up - Agree testing plan for proof of concept - Weekly sessions with provider project team	- Undertake proof of concept - Finalise schedule of digital prompts (including key deliverables and milestones). - Weekly sessions with provider project team
	Proposed EC Onboarding Team - Justin [REDACTED] (Channels) - Lead - Jarrod [REDACTED] (Comms and Ed) - Jeff [REDACTED] (IT) - Siska [REDACTED] (Business Enablement) - Dan [REDACTED] (Channels) - Emma [REDACTED] (Information and Security) - Campbell [REDACTED] (Privacy) - Janna [REDACTED] (Snr PM)			
Project	- Project schedules baselined - Finalise EasyVote High level Requirements	- Approach to Continuous Improvement Finalised - Status report through to EC Governance - Finalise EasyVote Detailed Requirements	- Finalise approach to tracking elector behaviour post output - Status report through to EC Governance - Finalise EasyVote Design	- EC monitoring dashboard available - Submit proof of concept results and Readiness Assessment through to EC Governance.

Readiness Assessment for Phase 2

Phase 2: Enrol and Update - Māori Enrolment Option April-June

Outbound Channels

352K

Emails sent to voters of Māori descent.

131K

Text messages sent to voters of Māori descent.

Objective

Ensure that people of Māori descent are able to choose the electoral roll they are on.

Plan

Voters who have indicated they are of Māori descent are sent a letter allowing them to choose which roll type they want to be on.

This will be supplemented with an email reminder. If they do not have an email address or an email bounces back, an SMS will be sent.

Audience

Voters who have indicated they are of Māori descent will receive a follow up email and SMS reminder.

Metrics

- Engagement metrics (open rate, click through rate, website visits)
- Number of people who enrolled or updated their MEO status.
- 65% of people of Māori descent surveyed have a good understanding of the Māori Electoral Option compared to 60% in 2023.

Elector Response from Prompt

3,700

Public enquiries received over the phone, e-mail or webform as a result of the digital reminder.

3% of people will enrol or update their information before writ day as a result of the campaign.

Timeline of key dates and deliverables

19 February		Data export for post.
31 March		Mailout sent to approx. 561,000 enrolled voters of Māori descent.
11 April		All postal packs delivered.
21 April		Data export for email.
28 April	1	Follow-up email sent to small test group as pilot
19 May	2	Follow-up email sent to enrolled all voters of Māori descent.
24 May	3	Follow-up SMS sent to voters if they do not have an email or the email bounces.
19 June		Restriction on MEO changes starts.
15 October		MEO exclusion period finishes.

Phase 2: Enrol and Update - Data Matching May - June

Channels

176K

Emails sent requesting voters to enrol or update their enrolment information

Objective

To provide an additional opportunity for electors to ensure their enrolment details are up to date by targeting people who have recently updated their details with other agencies.

Plan

The Electoral Commission will be provided with files from government agencies to identify voters who may have recently changed their information. The results of this match are then used to send an email asking voters to enroll or update their information. If they do not have an email address, then a letter will be sent.

Audience

Based on information from other government agencies, potential new voters, new provisional electors, and voters successfully matched against the electoral roll who have changed their address, will receive an email, or postal letter where there is no email.

Metrics

- Engagement metrics (open rate, click through rate, website visits)
- The number of people enrolled to vote who were not previously enrolled.
- The number of people with updated information because of data matching.

Elector Response from Prompt

Public enquiries received over the phone.

9,030

People who will enrol or update their information as a result of data matching

Timeline of key dates and deliverables

March	•	Data matching
April	•	Visual design completed
9-16 May	•	Boundary changes
June	4	Email or letter sent.
	•	
	•	

9

Phase 2: Enrol and Update - Enrolment Update July-August

Channels

2.17M

Reminder emails sent to everyone who is enrolled.

782K

Text messages sent to everyone who does not have an email or the email bounces

Objective

To increase the number of people who are enrolled and ready to vote before Writ day by getting voters to check and update their enrolment information.

Plan

Voters are sent an enrolment postal in the post so they can check their details are correct. This will be supported by an email encouraging voters to make sure their enrolment details are correct before Writ day. If no email address or email address bounces back, an SMS will be sent.

Audience

New Zealander's who are enrolled to vote and have a valid e-mail address and/or mobile number will receive a follow-up email and SMS reminder.

Metrics

- Engagement metrics (open rate, click through rate, website visits)
- Percentage of eligible population enrolled before writ day.
- Number of people who update their enrolment information online before writ day.

Elector Response from Prompts

Public enquiries received over the phone.

15,087

3% of people will enrol or update their information before writ day as a result of the campaign.

Timeline of key dates and deliverables

15 May		Data export for postal pack.
29 June		Enrolment update mailout produced and lodged for delivery.
29 June	5	Overseas enrolment email to all overseas voters with valid email addresses.
30 June		Data export for follow-up email.
8 July		All enrolment update postal packs delivered.
13 – 16 July	6	Email prompt sent to all enrolled voters
17 July	7	SMS sent to all dormant electors.
17 July	8	SMS sent to voters if they do not have an email or the email bounces.
16 August		Writ Day.

Phase 3: Voter Support - Digital Easy Vote August-September

Channels

2.0M

55% of enrolled voters will receive an easy vote pack by email.

1.6M

45% of enrolled voters will receive an easy vote pack by post.

Objective

All eligible voters can participate in the electoral process and supported those who may face barriers.

Plan

This will be a **digital first** multi-channel campaign. If voters have an email address, we will send this by email. Those without an email will receive a postal pack.

We will likely follow this up with an SMS reminder

Audience

All electors enrolled by Writ Day receive an Easy Vote pack. We anticipate that 45% of enrolled voters will receive the postal pack, while 55% will receive the email.

Metrics

- 55% of eligible population receive EasyVote pack by email.
- Percentage of people who vote with their EasyVote card split by print and digital.

Voter Response

Public enquiries received over the phone

1.08M

34% of voters will use the Easy Vote card to vote.

Timeline of key dates and deliverables

28 February	Validate Detailed Design
31 March	Confirm EasyVote implementation plan with digital provider
20 May – 26 May	EasyVote simulation for post and email.
30 June	Readiness assessment
20 August	Data extract from MIKE for post and email.
25 – 27 August	Easy Vote postal packs sent if we do not have an active email address.
3 – 6 September	EasyVote email sent to voters with an active email address. "Advance voting starts on the 7 September."
7 September	Advance voting starts.
11 September	Delivery of postal Easy Vote postal packs complete.
18 September	Advance voting ends.

Phase 4: Review

- Check on data disposal, etc.
- Lesson's Learned – including session with digital provider.
- Document information to inform RFP for a future digital provider.
- Document information useful for modernisation.

Tactics to Building Trust in Digital Channels

Public trust is the cornerstone of the electoral system. As we evolve our communications to include new digital channels, maintaining this trust is our highest priority. To achieve this, we are embedding a 'Trust by Design' approach, underpinned by methods used by the new digital provider, managing content/tone and ensuring our inbound channels are set up to support customers.

Tactics from New Digital Comms Provider

- ✓ Warm up service providers to avoid e-mails being flagged as spam or suspected spam.
- ✓ Robust quality assurance approach to ensure output is accurate and aligned.
- ✓ Rules based orchestration to manage authentication and throttling.
- ✓ Monitoring dashboard to track delivery success.
- ✓ Robust escalation and incident management process.

Managing Tone, Content and Intent

- ✓ E-mail and SMS are always sent from a trusted source (for example noreply@vote.nz)
- ✓ Ensure language and tone matches the audience.
- ✓ Ensure content is relevant, useful and explains why they are receiving the message.
- ✓ EC has robust sign-off processes for any content.

Managing Support Channels

- ✓ Single view of activity across inbound channels to track customer behavior and failure demand.
- ✓ Create consistent elector experience by ensuring inbound channels are sufficiently resourced and they are well trained to provide support.
- ✓ Have a landing page on the EC website to provide information on what we are sending out and why.

Digital Communications Risks and Mitigations Risks

Core to the Digital Communications Request for Quote (RFQ) is selecting a supplier that best manages the risks associated with digital channels. Electoral Commission subject matter experts representing security, privacy, communications, and information technology were enlisted to provide requirements to provide capability and manage risk in each of their respective areas. Priority was given to selecting a supplier with a clear strategy and testable approach to delivering trusted communications at scale.

The recommended supplier has provided a robust approach to mitigate risks associated with sending communications as a government agency. The referees noted the proactive nature of the supplier in front-footing issues and “looking out” for their customer’s needs. The recommended supplier was the highest scoring respondent which reflected their attention to critical risk factors noted in the RFQ.

In conjunction with the Risk & Assurance team and, as part of establishing the digital communications service, there is work underway to address other considerations. This will include change management (e.g., voting place operations), voter behaviour, targeted disruption from external parties, and reputational risks.

Monitoring and Metrics

Our performance metrics can be presented in two main frameworks: by individual campaign (e.g., MEO, Enrolment Update, Easy Vote) or as a broader funnel that provides an overview of overall election impact. For reporting, include both campaign-based engagement metrics and the overall funnel for enrollment and voting outcomes.

Campaign Dashboard

A report or dashboard for each campaign, listing channel metrics and change in actions during windows following communications activities.

Channel metrics

- Open Rate (email/SMS)
- Click-Through Rate (CTR)
- Assistance seeking rate (ASR)

Response metrics

- Negative channel feedback
- Increase in public enquiries

Result Metrics

The outcome linked to the campaign, for example for EUC the measure would be the number of people who updated enrolment details.

As we cannot attribute these actions directly to a specific campaign activity, we would use the campaign window to correlate results against campaign delivery dates, using graphs of enrolment timestamps vs. email/SMS dates to show correlation (for example, spikes after messages are sent)

Funnel based metrics

This report provides a holistic view that looks at each campaign as a series of steps each dependent on the other, providing a more complete view of our impact across our election activities.

Reach (Top of Funnel):

- Hard bounce
- Spam complaint rate
- % contacts with valid channel

Engagement (Middle of the funnel):

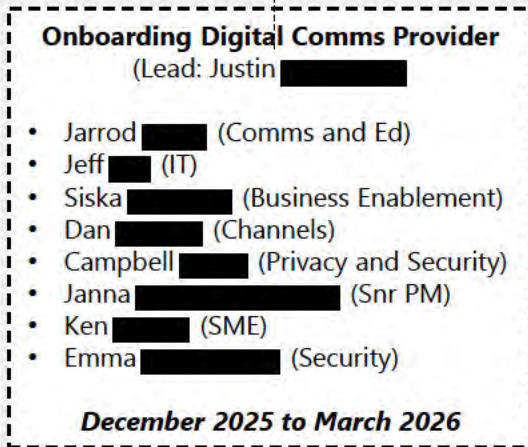
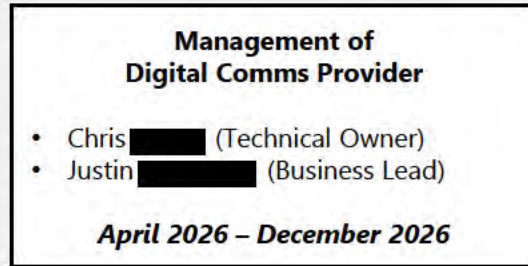
- Open rate
- Click-through rate
- Negative Channel Feedback
- Increase in public enquiries
- Assistance seeking Rate (ASR)

Conversion (Bottom of funnel):

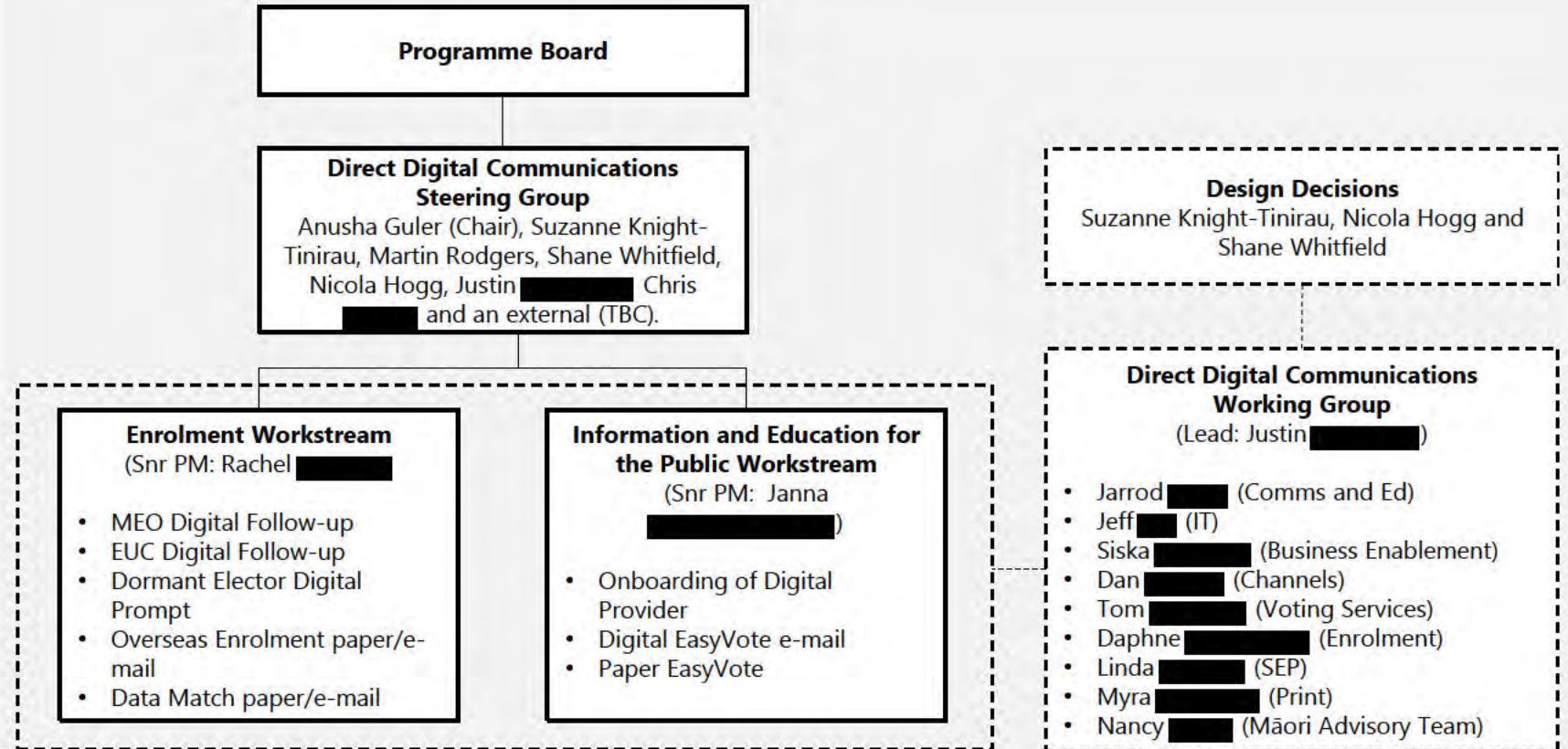
- Enrolment updates
- % of voters who use the digital EasyVote card to vote

Oversight and Governance

Provider Oversight



Governance



Change Plan

Change Objective

Ensuring customer and staff are supported throughout the start to transition to a digital first approach to direct communications.

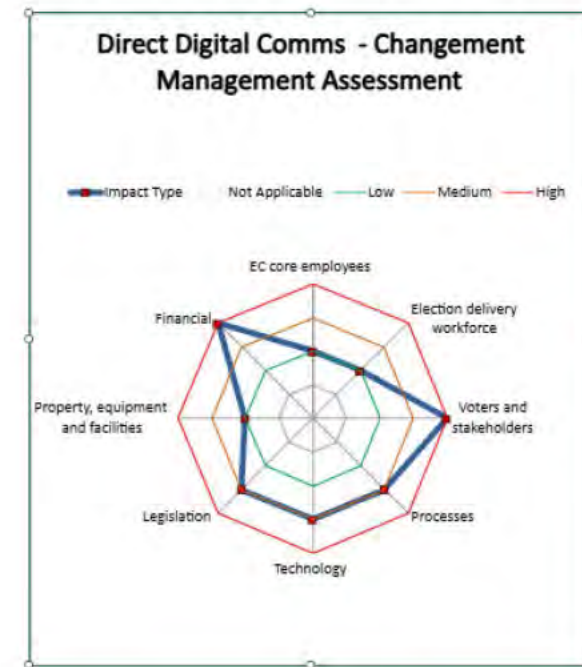
Who will be impacted?

Internal

- Voter facing teams - adjust training and job instructions to help them support electors
- Information Technology Team – responsible for technical support for new service provider and security.
- Communications and Education Team – ensuring tone, template and brand guidance for digital comms.
- Legal, Regulation and Policy – ensuring digital channel meet regulatory and legal obligations.
- Manager and Leaders – reinforce cultural change

External

- Electors/Voters – will receive information digitally and must trust the authenticity of EC's messages.
- Community Partners – including the change in their service offerings.



Implementation

Feedback Loops:

Gathering insights across channels, including post event.

[Working with Data and Insights]

Staff Training and Support:

Reflecting changes in training, FAQs and job instructions.

[Working with Business Enablement]

Public Information Campaign:

Messaging change, emphasising how it benefits voters.

[Comms and Education]

Internal Comms

Executing Internal Comms Plan (see Slide 18)

[Working with Comms and Education]

Senior Leader Sponsorship:

Supporting change early and often

[Working with DCE – Operations]

Internal Support Network;

Clarity of role and responsibilities.

[Working with Project Managers]

Supporting Community Partners:

Supporting partners and community groups

[Strategic Partnership and Engagement]

Reporting

Type	Name	Frequency	Purpose	Author	Endorsment	Final Approver
Management	Update on progress of Digital Comms RoadMap	Bi-monthly	Provide a full update on progress against the roadmap, including issues and risks.	Strategic Lead - Channels	Director – SEP and Manager – Comms and Education	ELT and The Board
Workstream	Enrolment Workstream Status Report	Monthly	Update progress against wrkstream performance indicators, including "Enrol and Update" Phase digital events	Senior Project Manager	Director - Enrolment	Programme Board
	Information and Education for the Public Workstream status report	Monthly	Update progress against workstream performance indicators, including onboarding of digital provider and EasyVote.	Senior Project Manager	Director – SEP and Manager – Comms and Education	Programme Board
Operational	Readiness Assessment – Enrol and Update Phase	End of March 26	Seeking decision to progress based on readiness assessment and risk profile	Strategic Lead – Channels	Direct Digital Comms Steering Group	DCE – Operations with update to Programme Board
	Readiness Assessment – Voting Support Phase	End of May 26	Seeking decision to progress based on readiness assessment and risk profile	Strategic Lead – Channels	Direct Digital Comms Steering Group	DCE – Operations with update to Programme Board
	Post Event Review	2 weeks after each event	Provide insight into the effectiveness of the digital event and what lessons we can use for future events.	Senior Advisor - Channels	Strategic Lead - Channels	Director – SEP and Manager – Comms and Education

Item # [Reference number assigned by Board Secretary]

Item: **Board update on Enrolment Strategy**

To: Electoral Commission

For: Board meeting 18 February 2026

Prepared by: Shane Whitfield, Director Strategic Engagement & Partnerships

Recommendations / Ko ngā Whakataunga

It is recommended that the Board:

1. **note** the progress of design of activities that underpin the enrolment strategy to date and intended next steps toward delivery.

Purpose / Ko Te Taki

2. This paper is a follow-up from the advice provided to the Board in November 2025 and provides an update on the design and implementation of the enrolment strategy that will help address the earlier close of the roll for the 2026 general elections (GE26).

Background / Ko Te Tāhuhu

3. The Electoral Act amendment bill passed in December 2025, coming into effect from the 20th of that month. One of the key changes in the legislation is the earlier close of enrolments ahead of an electoral event which is now set at 13 days prior to election day. For GE26 this date is midnight, Sunday the 25th of October
4. This change will require the public to enrol or update their enrolment details earlier than they would have done in previous campaigns, failing to do this may impact their eligibility to vote.
5. The Commission is designing and implementing an enrolment strategy to ensure enrolment rates remain high.

Discussion / Ko ngā Mahi

6. The enrolment strategy will include a public facing statement that describes the actions we are undertaking to enable and encourage enrolment, the role of the Commission and how we will work with partners and stakeholders, political neutrality, and general advice on enrolment.
7. Work is underway with the Communications and Education team to design this statement and have it available on our website in time for the launch of the Māori Electoral Option (MEO) campaign in late March. This will also coincide with proactive media engagement by the Chief Electoral Officer and Board Chair.

8. Budgetary implications are still being worked through with Finance with further consideration needed in light of the election date announcement, funding reprioritisation, forecasting impacts, and identification of budgetary implications.
9. It is anticipated that trade-offs may be required to deliver on some of the activities which are likely to be high impact but also resource intensive. For example, establishing enrolment hubs in high traffic locations such as malls has shown to be an effective method for attracting activity however comes with high lease and staffing costs which may impact our ability to effectively resource other engagement activity.
10. Close alignment with the MEO and Enrolment Update campaign timelines as well as Digital Communication and our Public Information campaign will be critical, as these complement and support the delivery of enrolment messaging at key points in the lead up to Writ Day.
11. Early engagement with communities across the motu has anecdotally shown growing levels of interest in the earlier roll close with stakeholders expressing concern about access to the education and resources they need to encourage and facilitate enrolment.

Activities

12. This section will briefly describe the activities we will deliver to implement the strategy. Some of these are existing platforms that will be leveraged to enhance enrolment activity whilst others are being designed and implemented in direct support of the enrolment strategy.
13. Public Information Campaign – this encapsulates all the pathways that help us engage and communicate with the public. It will include multi-format key messages, instructions and guidance for voters and community groups, and stakeholder packs that will support community champions to share the correct messages at the right time. The key messages will be focused on the dates and actions required.

- Community education – this is our face-to-face educational approach with schools, education providers, community groups, iwi/hapū and other stakeholders. Our engagement will focus on areas with lower rates of enrolment and participation and with population cohorts most likely to be impacted by the changes including Māori, Pasifika, youth, disability, and ethnic communities.
- Enrolment hubs – these will be established in two phases, firstly in the 4-6 weeks before Writ Day (Sunday 4th of October) we will establish up to ten hubs, staffed by SEP kaimahi, across the country in high traffic public spaces such as malls. Secondly in the two weeks before advance voting begins, we will utilise existing voting places with extended leases in malls to facilitate ‘mop up’ hubs (noting these enrolments will result in special votes).

The locations for these hubs will be determined by data, community and internal insight, and availability. We will also explore options for low/no cost enrolment hubs to be set up utilising community partners such as Councils.

- Mobile enrolment – these mobile hubs will operate across more sparsely populated areas where the need for enrolment support is still high, but the numbers may not require a longer-term presence. These will be staffed by SEP kaimahi and set up as pop-up

facilities in smaller locations. We will also consider options for tapping into existing networks such as mobile health hubs.

Both enrolment hubs and mobile enrolment will draw on location specific communications support targeting social media and other mediums.

- Community education fund – the CEF will provide short term funding for community-led projects focused on enrolment uptake. The fund will be facilitated across two phases with the first focused on MEO and the second on the Enrolment Update Campaign. The project lead for this mahi has been appointed and sits within SEP.
- Digital communication – this will be used at key points during the campaign to communicate information to the public using SMS and email. It will include key messages and information about enrolment.
- Partner networks – we will engage with public sector partners to utilise their networks to connect with people. This will include Councils, population agencies, service providers such as MSD and other public facing agencies as appropriate.
- Customer Services – this platform is a key pathway for the public to communicate with the Commission to problem solve issues and get access to information and resources.
- Youth action plan – this plan will guide engagement with youth across the country focusing on locations where youth gather and get support including schools, education providers, sports clubs, community groups and service providers. We will be recruiting Youth Advocate roles to deliver on this plan.

Supporting mechanisms

14. Following delivery of GE23, the Commission has conducted a thorough review of our systems and processes to help support our readiness to deliver GE26.
15. The review has helped strengthen mechanisms that will support the delivery of key enrolment messages and enrolment activity as well as uphold our role in maintaining trust and confidence in the electoral system. These mechanisms include quality assurance and risk management, training development, ongoing IT maintenance, and the utilisation of forecasting to inform delivery and planning.

Risk considerations

16. A project team has been established in early February, and the first order of business will be a more fulsome risks analysis and the development of a timeline (in alignment with revised timelines for other projects and campaigns). Many of the activities will already have risk profiles established though may not have given full consideration to the enrolment strategy specifically.

Financial implications

17. Further forecasting and cost analysis is required for some of the activities, specifically the enrolment hubs and mobile enrolment. This analysis may indicate financial and resource implications for areas such as Strategic Engagement & Partnerships, Customer Services and training.

Consultation

18. Some consultation has been undertaken in the development of the public information campaign and youth action plan. As noted earlier the general community sentiment is that of concern about access to resources resulting in vulnerable communities being disenfranchised.

Next steps / Ko te Ara Tiatia

19. In preparation for the MEO campaign and media engagement we will continue to develop a more fulsome project plan and intervention design which will include:
- Consolidation of the delivery timeline which needs to be aligned with adjusted GE26 timelines
20. Forecast the impacts and resource implications of the activities and take necessary steps to manage these
21. Begin work on measurement definition and how the Commission can speak to the impacts that the approach has had on enrolment and participation. While this will be closely aligned with work already underway for digital communications, community engagement, and the public information campaign, it must also articulate the specific impact of new activity such as enrolment hubs, mobile enrolment and the community education fund.

Appendices / Ko ngā Whakapiringa

Nil



Enhancing Services to Māori

Overarching workstream brief

V.05

Document purpose

The purpose of the Workstream Brief is to describe a workstream at a high-level to enable key decision-makers to understand the workstream's objectives, benefits, scope, etc. prior to it being approved to proceed to more detailed planning.

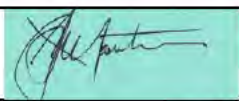
The Workstream Brief needs to be signed by both the Project Owner and the Programme Director. The Workstream Brief will then be presented and considered by the relevant governance body and decisions will be recorded in meeting minutes.

Once a Workstream Brief is approved a Workstream Management Plan (WMP) will be developed by the Project Manager for approval. The WMP will provide the next level of detail needed to show how the workstream will be managed to ensure successful delivery of the Workstream Brief.

Document review

Name	Position	Ver
Emily Redmond	Programme Director, Office of the CE	0.5
Hone Matthews	Chief Advisor, Māori	
Shane Whitfield	Director, Strategic engagement and partnerships	0.4/ 0.5
Merekānara [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Māori	0.4
Nancy [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Māori	0.4
Hone [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Strategic engagement and partnerships	0.3
Erin [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Strategic engagement and partnerships	0.3
Suzanne [REDACTED]	Manager, Communications and Education	0.4
Richard [REDACTED]	Information and Education lead, Communications and Education	0.4
Carol Slappendel	Manager, Project Management office	0.3

Document sign-off

Name / Position	Signature	Date	Version
Shane Whitfield/ Business Lead		23.8.24	0.5
Hone Matthews / Business Owner		26.8.24	0.5
Emily Redmond / Programme Director		23.8.24	0.5
Programme Board			

Contents

Document purpose	2
Document review.....	2
Document sign-off.....	2
1. Workstream purpose.....	4
2. Recommendations	4
3. Background	5
4. Strategic alignment	5
5. Objectives.....	6
6. Benefits	6
7. Scope	7
8. Timeframes	8
9. Deliverables	8
10. Resourcing (including vendors and procurement).....	9
11. Costs	10
12. Assumptions and constraints.....	11
13. Dependencies /Risks/Issues	11
14. Change impact assessment	12
15. Tolerances	14
16. Assurance	14
17. Lessons learned review	15

1. Workstream purpose

The Enhancing Services to Māori workstream (the workstream) serves as a crucial support system within our organisation, focused on enhancing services for Māori and enabling the Electoral Commission (the Commission) to support Māori participation in the electoral process.

The workstream's primary focus is on defining the enhancement of services to Māori for the Māori Electoral Option Campaign 2026 (MEO26), the 2026 General Election (GE26), defining and designing modernised services to Māori beyond 2026, and in the case of the te reo regional dialect approach project, will deliver a universal approach that can be used across the range of materials the Commission provides to the public.

While this workstream has some direct outputs, it primarily helps guide and support other workstreams to design and deliver enhanced services to Māori that are framed by a te ao Māori lens and aligned with best practice and cultural competencies.

The cornerstone of supporting enhanced services for Māori is implementing Ngā Maihihioterā, and supporting the other workstreams to give effect to the three pou of: Kaupapa Kōhere (Operational Policy), Kaupapa Kōtuitui (Quality Engagement) & Kaupapa Kōtuakiri (Cultural Identity).

Modernisation and changes to the Commission's core functions sit outside of scope of the workstream, though it is acknowledged that some changes made to enhance services for MEO26 and GE26, and any future transformational aspects, could be reflected into our core functions.

In summary, our initiative is a behind-the-scenes force that strengthens the Commission's overall ability to deliver impactful services to Māori, creating a positive change and supporting the Commission's vision of creating trust, confidence and value in taking part in parliamentary elections.

2. Recommendations

- 1. Note** this brief assumes the Commission will be funded to deliver to similar service levels that were delivered in GE2023, with necessary fixes applied.
- 2. Approve** work contained in this brief to progress to detailed design.
- 3. Note** this workstream should have direct input into the management plan of other workstreams to support their delivery of enhanced services for Māori. This approach supports the premise that these workstreams hold delivery responsibility for their but will benefit from our guidance to achieve this.

3. Background

The impact of colonisation has had far reaching impacts on Māori, including increased levels of mistrust regarding the Crown, democracy and parliamentary elections. This has led to lower rates of participation for Māori electors.

For the 2023 General Election, the Commission prioritised tangata whenua and other priority audiences with historically low levels of engagement and participation in the electoral process. Prioritisation initiatives to improve trust and confidence included partnership with Māori community's and providers, community engagement, the use of te reo Māori dialects and expanding the GE20 Kaupapa Māori voting place service pilot from one location to 15 across the motu to support increased education and participation and improving accessibility for electors of Māori descent.

To further enhance services to Māori this workstream will work with all workstreams to provide support and guidance, ensuring enhanced service opportunities are identified and are understood. Priority areas for our workstream are the temporary workforce, temporary accommodation, services for voters, election delivery workforce, information and education to the public, and enrolment workstreams.

Following delivery of GE2023, several reviews were undertaken. Reports were produced on the delivery of Kaupapa Māori voting places: [He Tātaritanga o Te Whare Pōti Kaupapa Māori i te Pōtitanga ā Motu 2023](#) [He Tātaritanga o Te Whare Pōti Kaupapa Māori i te Pōtitanga ā Motu 2023.pdf](#) and a general report on voting experiences for Māori commissioned through the National Iwi Chairs Forum [Pou Tikanga feedback.pdf](#). This workstream has taken the learnings from these reports into consideration and will continue to do so in the detailed design phase.

Along with feedback from Commission employees and the above reports the workstream identified three areas of work required to enhance service to Māori:

- support for the implementation of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy including the development of a tool for workstreams to report how they give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā and the launch of a Commission tangata whenua network,
- the development of a Commission wide approach to the use of Māori mita (dialects) and co-development of a list of materials that need to be translated into mita; and
- identifying opportunities and providing support and advice for service enhancement in the delivery of MEO26 and GE2026, as well as longer term development for GE2029 and beyond.

4. Strategic alignment

This project will ensure alignment to the strategic priorities by:

Strategic priority	Alignment
1 – Building our capability We will have enough people in the right place at the right time and be clear about how we will work together. Our core systems and processes will be fit for purpose, and we will continue to deliver high quality services.	Ensuring we are supporting the implementation of Ngā Maihihioterā through the workstream initiatives and activities. Reviewing services provided to Māori so that they are fit for purpose and encourage participation.

Strategic priority	Alignment
2 – Preparing for an election We will be prepared to deliver GE2026 earlier, reduce pressure on staff in the election year, and become less reliant on individual people for maintaining knowledge of what we do.	Developing an organisational-wide approach for application of a te reo Māori regional dialect approach.
3 – Preparing for the future We will look at how best to deliver our functions in five- and ten-years' time and incorporate the needs into design thinking and development.	Enhancing services for Māori through modernized defining and designing helps ensure they maintain relevance and a fit for future purpose and supports the maintenance of enduring relationships with community.
4 – Building relationships and understanding We will strengthen relationships with the people and groups who support us to deliver elections. The conversations we have with Māori, our community partners, government agencies, and voters help build understanding of the electoral system and the work we do, as well as foster trust and confidence in the integrity of our democracy.	Through engagement with other teams and providing advice using a te ao Māori lens, the workstream will focus on strengthening relationships and empowering other workstreams to enhance current and future services for Māori that in turn build trust, confidence and relationship opportunities with Māori communities.

5. Objectives

The table below outlines the objectives of the workstream.

Workstream Objectives
Support the delivery of relevant KPIs outlined in the 2026 Election Design and any performance expectations set by the Commission related to the increase in enrolment and participation for people of Māori descent.
Develop and implement a mechanism by the end of tranche 1 for GE 2026 Programme (programme) workstreams to report on how they are giving effect to Ngā Maihihioterā work programmes and enable programme governance to monitor compliance.
Develop and deliver a Commission-wide te reo Māori dialect approach and identify the agreed suite of materials to be translated into the various mita.
Provide advice, support and identify opportunities for service enhancement to Māori with GE26 Programme workstreams.
Define, identify and design modernised services to Māori for beyond GE26.

6. Benefits

The benefits of this work are organisation wide. By supporting other workstreams, the Commission can achieve better outcomes, fostering an environment that respects and incorporates a te ao Māori lens. This leads to enhanced services that are more culturally appropriate and effective, ultimately benefiting the communities we aim to serve.

Initial benefits for the outputs of the workstream, and that the workstream supports, are outlined below noting that this workstream contributes to overall benefits but is not directly responsible for delivering these. Benefits and measures of the workstream will be further defined in the detailed design phase.

Benefits	Measurement
Create a reporting tool for how programme workstreams will give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā, allowing programme governance to monitor application and compliance.	Quantitative: through monthly reporting
Initiate a tangata whenua network for kaimahi at the Commission to engage and support each other on work they are undertaking.	Quantitative: Set up the tangata whenua network
Increase in the number of Kaupapa Māori voting places for GE2026 for Māori and communities to support engagement in the electoral process	Quantitative: Increase in the number of Kaupapa Māori Voting places.
Create a Commission wide te reo Māori dialect approach to formalise processes and support Commission staff to deliver appropriate materials for Māori.	Qualitative: Delivery of approach with processes that work to support Commission staff to deliver
Develop an agreed list of materials that require translation into mita to understand what work can be completed now and reduce workload closer to MEO26 and GE26	Qualitative: Deliver an agreed list of materials that need to be delivered by the Commission for translation.
Support the increase of cultural capability of Commission employees for MEO2026 and GE2026 by identifying opportunities for service enhancement to Māori and through workstream and project activities.	Qualitative: Provide workstreams with opportunities to enhance current service to Māori

7. Scope

The scope of the project is outlined below:

In Scope
Supporting implementation of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy.
Design, develop, deliver and implement a tool to measure how workstreams give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā.
Define, design, develop and deliver an organisational wide te reo Māori regional dialect approach document and an agreed list of materials to be translated for the Commission.
Define service enhancement opportunities for current Commission services for MEO26 and GE26, including Kaupapa Māori voting place(s) and services, and communicate these to workstreams for integration into their plans.
Define, design and (where needed) develop transformational change across the: Kaupapa Kōhere (Operational Policy), Kaupapa Kōtuitui (Quality Engagement) & Kaupapa Kōtuakiri (Cultural Identity) beyond 2026.
Support the development of the Kaupapa Māori Voting places and services work.

Out of scope	Rationale why it is out of scope
--------------	----------------------------------

Support and delivery of initiatives or services for Māori related to Local Body Elections, Representation Commission or by-elections	The programme this workstream was developed for is specific to the MEO26, GE2026 and GE2029 electoral campaigns/ events.
Implementation, management, measurement, reporting and monitoring of the Ngā Maihihioterā work programmes.	Ngā Maihihioterā is a cross organisational, core strategy for the EC and while support for application and alignment within the MEO2026 and GE2026 workstreams is within scope, management and responsibility for delivery of the work programmes within the strategy sit outside of scope.
Implementation of Ngā Maihihioterā strategy initiatives within the Māori Advisory team business plans.	Ngā Maihihioterā is a cross organisational, core strategy for the EC and while support for application and alignment within the MEO2026 and GE2026 workstreams is within scope, management and responsibility for delivery of the work programmes within the strategy sit outside of scope.
Modernisation or changes of/to core functions	This is work that sits within business-as-usual.
Note that there currently needs to be a joint owner for Kaupapa Māori Voting places and services. Currently the locations sit within the Temporary Accommodation workstream, but the services component hasn't yet been addressed. This is currently being worked through.	

8. Timeframes

The workstream will follow the tranches set by the GE2026 Programme.

Timeframes for workstream deliverables are outlined below.

9. Deliverables

The workstream will deliver the outputs outlined below:

Work area	Description	Output	Est Delivery date
Support for Ngā Maihihioterā	Reporting tool developed to show how workstreams for programmes will give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā	Ngā Maihihioterā measurement tool	28 February 2025
	Agreed Terms of reference for the Electoral Commissions Tangata Whenua network	Tangata Whenua network terms of reference	28 February 2025
	An implementation plan for the Electoral Commissions Tangata Whenua network	Tangata Whenua network implementation plan	28 February 2025
Te reo Māori regional dialect approach and MEO26	Design documentation will be developed after further discussion with the working group (assuming the te reo Māori regional dialect approach project brief is agreed by the Programme Board)	Te reo Māori regional dialect design documentation	28 February 2025

	A cross-organisational, documented, universal approach that will be released for application across the EC.	Te reo Māori regional dialect approach (the approach)	28 February 2025
	Guidance document with advice on areas that can enhance services for Māori, but which sit within the relevant project/workstream scope of other workstreams	Enhancing Services for Māori planning tool (document)	28 February 2025
Project	The overarching workstream brief outlining the workstream purpose and the project brief	Workstream and project briefs	29 August 2024
	An assurance and quality plan that will outline how we will ensure assurance and quality for those things that the workstream is directly responsible for delivering.	Assurance and Quality plan	28 February 2025
	A PMP developed for the workstream and overarching	Project Management plan	28 February 2025

10. Resourcing (including vendors and procurement)

Project support| Business Analyst

There is currently no business analyst (BA) supporting the workstream.

While work such as support for Ngā Maihi, the Tangata Whenua network can be delivered without a dedicated BA, the project will be unable to deliver a modernisation service design, which is currently in scope of the project to look at.

The workstream will require a BA to undertake service design work for a minimum of 30 hours per week from 1 March 2025 through to 30 September 2025.

Role	Project allocated	Hour per week	From - To
Business Analyst (Service Design)	Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	30 hours	1 March 2025 – 30 September 2025

A BA is also being requested in the te reo Māori dialect approach to support the design and development of the approach.

There is a requirement for business groups to support Tranche 1 of this workstream as indicated in the table below.

The amount of time needed for resources per week will vary dependant on the planning approach taken. i.e. finalisation stage of the te reo Māori dialect approach is based on 1-3 hours per week for review whereas development and design the working group may be needed for between 3-4 hours per week.

The below table outlines the estimated resource requirement based on high level draft planning and the working group has not yet been consulted or engaged on the proposed planning approach so requirements may change:

Role	Project allocated	Estimated hours per week	From - To
Business Analyst	Te reo dialect approach	5-10	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Māori Advisory team SMEs	- Te reo dialect approach - Enhancing Services - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	10 - 15	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Voting Services SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Enrolment SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Comms and Education SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	4 - 8	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
SEP SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Procurement SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025

Once the SME lead is confirmed for the te reo Māori dialect approach additional hours will be required. This is still to be confirmed.

11. Costs

There is little to no costs for support for Ngā Maihihioterā. Costs to enhancing services to Māori, sits within each workstream. Costs to deliver these could be medium-high and will be further investigated in the detailed design phase.

The te reo Māori dialect approach and plan has the largest identified area of expenditure. This is explained further in the te reo Māori dialect approach and plan project brief. It is also recognised that there may be additional costs associated with delivery of Kaupapa Māori voting places and services. These costs are outlined in the GE26 Kaupapa Māori voting place service project brief.

Have you identified components of cost?	N	Some costs will be incurred for the te reo Māori regional dialect approach identified outputs.
---	---	--

Have you identified savings to fund/partially fund the option?	N	
Is your recommended option an invest to save initiative?	N	

Years of funding needed for the te reo Māori regional dialect approach (with further information identified in the te reo Māori dialect approach project brief) will be in FY24/25 and FY25/26.

12. Assumptions and constraints

Assumptions

The workstream has identified the following assumptions:

Assumptions
The 2026 Election Design will outline KPIs relevant to Increasing enrolment and participation figures for people who are of Māori descent.
For GE26 there will be one Te reo Māori dialect per electorate based on an agreed criteria (yet to be developed).
Any additional Māori electorates to be announced by the Government Statistician may require additional dialects.

Constraints

Constraints to the workstream delivery are:

Area	Constraints
Launch of Ngā Maihihiotērā	The delayed launch of Ngā Maihihiotērā has caused delays to progressing of work to support Ngā Maihihiotērā but also to Enhancing Services for Māori work.
Resource	The advice, guidance and co-design activities of the Māori Advisory team are pivotal to the enhancement of services for Māori. There is considerable effort required by the Māori Advisory team to be across and involved in all workstreams.
Budget	Budget constraints impact what can be enhanced and the level to which the service can be enhanced E.g. the implementation of a manaakitanga allowance for Kaupapa Māori Voting places to support the Kaupapa Māori Service.

13. Dependencies /Risks/Issues

Dependencies

Below is a table of dependencies and how they are currently being managed.

Dependencies	Dependency Management
Enhancement of services to Māori are dependent on application on the advice and guidance of the Māori Advisory team and broader workstream by each Programme workstream.	The Māori Advisory team is engaged in workshops and discussions across the Programme workstreams where services to Māori can be enhanced.

The workstream is dependent on the launch of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy to all teams at the Commission. Part of their delivery will be reporting on how they are giving effect to the strategy.	A launch of Ngā Maihihioterā strategy occurred on 19 August with workstream leads and the project managers. A date has been set for the organisational wide launch of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy.
--	--

Risks

The workstream identified the following risks:

Risks
IF activities that support the development and delivery of services to Māori are not prioritised, resourced, or funded adequately THEN there will continue to be low levels of trust, confidence IMPACTING participation and engagement of the democratic process.
IF the te reo Māori dialect approach is not developed cross organisationally and adequately implemented THEN this will lead to an approach that is not fit for purpose and an inconsistent application of the dialects, this in turn will IMPACT delivery and the same comments will be made by field staff after the GE2026.
IF there is no alignment in planning and processes across the Commission related to services for Māori THEN this will lead to inconsistent service levels and incorrect information being provided IMPACTING trust and confidence in the service being delivered and the information being provided.

Issues

No issues have been identified to date

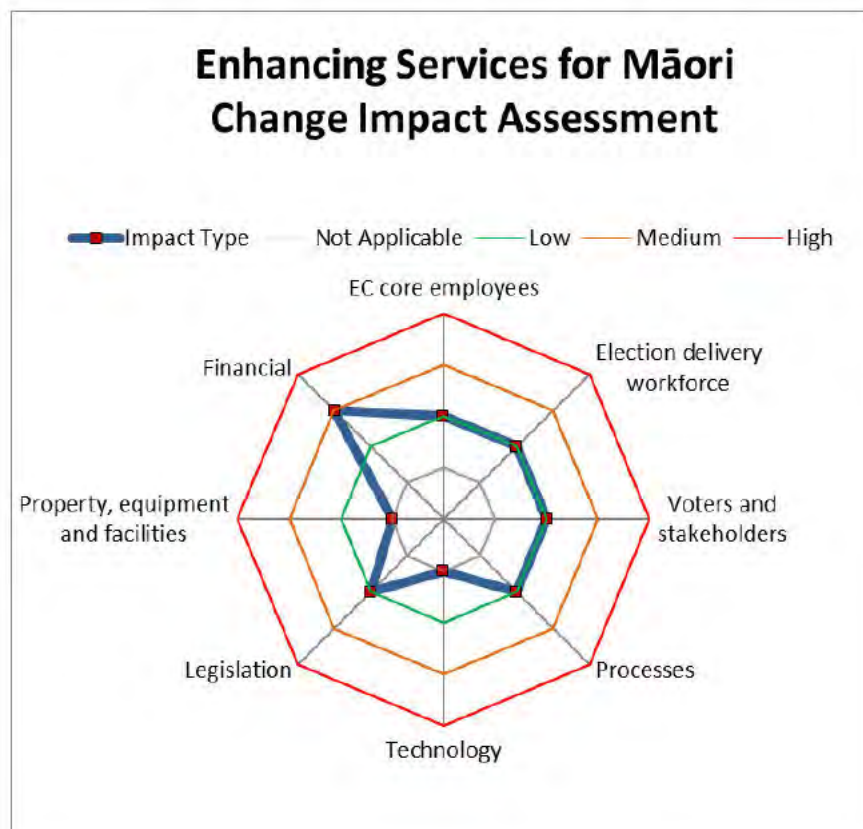
14. Change impact assessment

A detailed Change Management Plan will be completed as part of the Workstream Management Plan for deliverables that sit within delivery control of this workstream.

There is a **low** level of change that sits within this workstream for MEO2026 and GE2026. The level of change post GE2026 is not yet known as work has not begun on understanding what transformational service change for Māori looks like.

Impact Type	Description	Rating
The Commission's core employees Changes that impact core employees in the Commission's national office and regional offices	There will be little to no impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026	L
Election delivery workforce Changes that impact employees hired temporarily to deliver the election.	There will be little to no impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026	L
Voters and stakeholders Changes that impact users of electoral services, and/or partners who we work with to deliver electoral services.	There will be little to no impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026.	L

Processes Changes to business processes, including data collection, reporting and decision making	There will be some changes to business processes however these have little to no change impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026.	L
Technology Changes to the functionality, usability, availability and reliability of technology systems.	There will be no changes to technology for MEO2026 and GE2026.	N/A
Legislation Changes to legislation, regulations, or internal policies.	Possible internal policy changes and impacts from Legislative change however these changes will be low.	L
Property, equipment and facilities Changes to the location, type and availability of property, facilities and (non-IT) equipment.	Changes to the location, type and availability of property, facilities and (non-IT) equipment.	N/A
Financial Changes to project costs over and above baseline.	There will be additional costs over and above the baseline as dialects were not budgeted for during MEO2023 and GE2023.	M
Overall Impact Rating	<i>(Calculated automatically)</i>	Low



15. Tolerances

This project will operate within standard Programme Tolerances.

16. Assurance

Assurance and quality will be managed within the workstream using several different mechanisms.

Assurance and quality plan

An assurance and quality plan will be developed and delivered alongside the project management plan (**PMP**). This will reflect the programmes approach to quality assurance and will outline in detail how the workstream will ensure assurance and compliance steps are built into processes and implemented.

Monitoring and reporting

The purpose, objectives and detailed benefits of the workstream will be monitored and measured throughout the workstream life cycle and reported on at close out of the workstream. Assurance reporting will also be included in steering committee reporting.

Risk management

Risk workshops will be held every 6 weeks and will also sit as a standing agenda item at weekly meetings to ensure risks are being reported and mitigated or raised to the appropriate level. Risks will be reviewed regularly, and mitigation/ treatments will be tracked and scheduled and monitored as part of schedule management.

A risk management plan will be developed for the workstream with delivery of the plan by the end of tranche 1 and continuous monitoring through the workstream duration.

Processes, communications and feedback loops

Any changes to processes will be designed cross-organisationally with relevant teams to ensure a process is developed that works for everyone involved.

It will be important that any process changes are designed with an assurance/compliance component

It will also be vital that any processes are communicated well and change management best practice is applied to ensure the processes are properly imbedded.

17. Lessons learned review

Several lessons came out of the lessons learned sessions and post-election reviews

Area	Lessons Learned
Cultural capability of the Commission staff	Cultural capability of staff (field staff) came up as a consistent area for improvement. While there were improvements on GE20, Māori names of electors and areas were pronounced incorrectly.
Kaupapa Māori Voting place/ Services	Kaupapa Māori Voting places were a successful service that was rolled out across the motu with 15 locations in 2023. Requests and recommendations were made in post-election reviews to have additional services for GE2026.
Regional te reo Māori dialects	The absence of a te reo Māori strategy, not being aware of how to apply the dialects and what the Commission's approach to regional dialects came up repeatedly during the lessons learned review. This is being addressed through the development of a te reo regional dialect approach for the Commission
Forms	Forms such as enrolment forms and ballot papers were not available in te reo Māori



Enhancing Services to Māori

Overarching workstream brief

V.05

Document purpose

The purpose of the Workstream Brief is to describe a workstream at a high-level to enable key decision-makers to understand the workstream's objectives, benefits, scope, etc. prior to it being approved to proceed to more detailed planning.

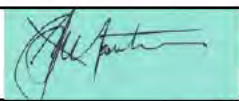
The Workstream Brief needs to be signed by both the Project Owner and the Programme Director. The Workstream Brief will then be presented and considered by the relevant governance body and decisions will be recorded in meeting minutes.

Once a Workstream Brief is approved a Workstream Management Plan (WMP) will be developed by the Project Manager for approval. The WMP will provide the next level of detail needed to show how the workstream will be managed to ensure successful delivery of the Workstream Brief.

Document review

Name	Position	Ver
Emily Redmond	Programme Director, Office of the CE	0.5
Hone Matthews	Chief Advisor, Māori	
Shane Whitfield	Director, Strategic engagement and partnerships	0.4/ 0.5
Merekānara [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Māori	0.4
Nancy [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Māori	0.4
Hone [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Strategic engagement and partnerships	0.3
Erin [REDACTED]	Senior Advisor, Strategic engagement and partnerships	0.3
Suzanne Knight Tinirau	Manager, Communications and Education	0.4
Richard [REDACTED]	Information and Education lead, Communications and Education	0.4
Carol Slappendel	Manager, Project Management office	0.3

Document sign-off

Name / Position	Signature	Date	Version
Shane Whitfield/ Business Lead		23.8.24	0.5
Hone Matthews / Business Owner		26.8.24	0.5
Emily Redmond / Programme Director		23.8.24	0.5
Programme Board			

Contents

Document purpose	2
Document review.....	2
Document sign-off.....	2
1. Workstream purpose.....	4
2. Recommendations	4
3. Background	5
4. Strategic alignment	5
5. Objectives.....	6
6. Benefits	6
7. Scope	7
8. Timeframes	8
9. Deliverables	8
10. Resourcing (including vendors and procurement).....	9
11. Costs	10
12. Assumptions and constraints.....	11
13. Dependencies /Risks/Issues	11
14. Change impact assessment	12
15. Tolerances	14
16. Assurance	14
17. Lessons learned review	15

1. Workstream purpose

The Enhancing Services to Māori workstream (the workstream) serves as a crucial support system within our organisation, focused on enhancing services for Māori and enabling the Electoral Commission (the Commission) to support Māori participation in the electoral process.

The workstream's primary focus is on defining the enhancement of services to Māori for the Māori Electoral Option Campaign 2026 (MEO26), the 2026 General Election (GE26), defining and designing modernised services to Māori beyond 2026, and in the case of the te reo regional dialect approach project, will deliver a universal approach that can be used across the range of materials the Commission provides to the public.

While this workstream has some direct outputs, it primarily helps guide and support other workstreams to design and deliver enhanced services to Māori that are framed by a te ao Māori lens and aligned with best practice and cultural competencies.

The cornerstone of supporting enhanced services for Māori is implementing Ngā Maihihioterā, and supporting the other workstreams to give effect to the three pou of: Kaupapa Kōhere (Operational Policy), Kaupapa Kōtuitui (Quality Engagement) & Kaupapa Kōtuakiri (Cultural Identity).

Modernisation and changes to the Commission's core functions sit outside of scope of the workstream, though it is acknowledged that some changes made to enhance services for MEO26 and GE26, and any future transformational aspects, could be reflected into our core functions.

In summary, our initiative is a behind-the-scenes force that strengthens the Commission's overall ability to deliver impactful services to Māori, creating a positive change and supporting the Commission's vision of creating trust, confidence and value in taking part in parliamentary elections.

2. Recommendations

- 1. Note** this brief assumes the Commission will be funded to deliver to similar service levels that were delivered in GE2023, with necessary fixes applied.
- 2. Approve** work contained in this brief to progress to detailed design.
- 3. Note** this workstream should have direct input into the management plan of other workstreams to support their delivery of enhanced services for Māori. This approach supports the premise that these workstreams hold delivery responsibility for their but will benefit from our guidance to achieve this.

3. Background

The impact of colonisation has had far reaching impacts on Māori, including increased levels of mistrust regarding the Crown, democracy and parliamentary elections. This has led to lower rates of participation for Māori electors.

For the 2023 General Election, the Commission prioritised tangata whenua and other priority audiences with historically low levels of engagement and participation in the electoral process. Prioritisation initiatives to improve trust and confidence included partnership with Māori community's and providers, community engagement, the use of te reo Māori dialects and expanding the GE20 Kaupapa Māori voting place service pilot from one location to 15 across the motu to support increased education and participation and improving accessibility for electors of Māori descent.

To further enhance services to Māori this workstream will work with all workstreams to provide support and guidance, ensuring enhanced service opportunities are identified and are understood. Priority areas for our workstream are the temporary workforce, temporary accommodation, services for voters, election delivery workforce, information and education to the public, and enrolment workstreams.

Following delivery of GE2023, several reviews were undertaken. Reports were produced on the delivery of Kaupapa Māori voting places: [He Tātaritanga o Te Whare Pōti Kaupapa Māori i te Pōtitanga ā Motu 2023](#) [He Tātaritanga o Te Whare Pōti Kaupapa Māori i te Pōtitanga ā Motu 2023.pdf](#) and a general report on voting experiences for Māori commissioned through the National Iwi Chairs Forum [Pou Tikanga feedback.pdf](#). This workstream has taken the learnings from these reports into consideration and will continue to do so in the detailed design phase.

Along with feedback from Commission employees and the above reports the workstream identified three areas of work required to enhance service to Māori:

- support for the implementation of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy including the development of a tool for workstreams to report how they give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā and the launch of a Commission tangata whenua network,
- the development of a Commission wide approach to the use of Māori mita (dialects) and co-development of a list of materials that need to be translated into mita; and
- identifying opportunities and providing support and advice for service enhancement in the delivery of MEO26 and GE2026, as well as longer term development for GE2029 and beyond.

4. Strategic alignment

This project will ensure alignment to the strategic priorities by:

Strategic priority	Alignment
1 – Building our capability We will have enough people in the right place at the right time and be clear about how we will work together. Our core systems and processes will be fit for purpose, and we will continue to deliver high quality services.	Ensuring we are supporting the implementation of Ngā Maihihioterā through the workstream initiatives and activities. Reviewing services provided to Māori so that they are fit for purpose and encourage participation.

Strategic priority	Alignment
2 – Preparing for an election We will be prepared to deliver GE2026 earlier, reduce pressure on staff in the election year, and become less reliant on individual people for maintaining knowledge of what we do.	Developing an organisational-wide approach for application of a te reo Māori regional dialect approach.
3 – Preparing for the future We will look at how best to deliver our functions in five- and ten-years' time and incorporate the needs into design thinking and development.	Enhancing services for Māori through modernized defining and designing helps ensure they maintain relevance and a fit for future purpose and supports the maintenance of enduring relationships with community.
4 – Building relationships and understanding We will strengthen relationships with the people and groups who support us to deliver elections. The conversations we have with Māori, our community partners, government agencies, and voters help build understanding of the electoral system and the work we do, as well as foster trust and confidence in the integrity of our democracy.	Through engagement with other teams and providing advice using a te ao Māori lens, the workstream will focus on strengthening relationships and empowering other workstreams to enhance current and future services for Māori that in turn build trust, confidence and relationship opportunities with Māori communities.

5. Objectives

The table below outlines the objectives of the workstream.

Workstream Objectives
Support the delivery of relevant KPIs outlined in the 2026 Election Design and any performance expectations set by the Commission related to the increase in enrolment and participation for people of Māori descent.
Develop and implement a mechanism by the end of tranche 1 for GE 2026 Programme (programme) workstreams to report on how they are giving effect to Ngā Maihihioterā work programmes and enable programme governance to monitor compliance.
Develop and deliver a Commission-wide te reo Māori dialect approach and identify the agreed suite of materials to be translated into the various mita.
Provide advice, support and identify opportunities for service enhancement to Māori with GE26 Programme workstreams.
Define, identify and design modernised services to Māori for beyond GE26.

6. Benefits

The benefits of this work are organisation wide. By supporting other workstreams, the Commission can achieve better outcomes, fostering an environment that respects and incorporates a te ao Māori lens. This leads to enhanced services that are more culturally appropriate and effective, ultimately benefiting the communities we aim to serve.

Initial benefits for the outputs of the workstream, and that the workstream supports, are outlined below noting that this workstream contributes to overall benefits but is not directly responsible for delivering these. Benefits and measures of the workstream will be further defined in the detailed design phase.

Benefits	Measurement
Create a reporting tool for how programme workstreams will give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā, allowing programme governance to monitor application and compliance.	Quantitative: through monthly reporting
Initiate a tangata whenua network for kaimahi at the Commission to engage and support each other on work they are undertaking.	Quantitative: Set up the tangata whenua network
Increase in the number of Kaupapa Māori voting places for GE2026 for Māori and communities to support engagement in the electoral process	Quantitative: Increase in the number of Kaupapa Māori Voting places.
Create a Commission wide te reo Māori dialect approach to formalise processes and support Commission staff to deliver appropriate materials for Māori.	Qualitative: Delivery of approach with processes that work to support Commission staff to deliver
Develop an agreed list of materials that require translation into mita to understand what work can be completed now and reduce workload closer to MEO26 and GE26	Qualitative: Deliver an agreed list of materials that need to be delivered by the Commission for translation.
Support the increase of cultural capability of Commission employees for MEO2026 and GE2026 by identifying opportunities for service enhancement to Māori and through workstream and project activities.	Qualitative: Provide workstreams with opportunities to enhance current service to Māori

7. Scope

The scope of the project is outlined below:

In Scope
Supporting implementation of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy.
Design, develop, deliver and implement a tool to measure how workstreams give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā.
Define, design, develop and deliver an organisational wide te reo Māori regional dialect approach document and an agreed list of materials to be translated for the Commission.
Define service enhancement opportunities for current Commission services for MEO26 and GE26, including Kaupapa Māori voting place(s) and services, and communicate these to workstreams for integration into their plans.
Define, design and (where needed) develop transformational change across the: Kaupapa Kōhere (Operational Policy), Kaupapa Kōtuitui (Quality Engagement) & Kaupapa Kōtuakiri (Cultural Identity) beyond 2026.
Support the development of the Kaupapa Māori Voting places and services work.

Out of scope	Rationale why it is out of scope
--------------	----------------------------------

Support and delivery of initiatives or services for Māori related to Local Body Elections, Representation Commission or by-elections	The programme this workstream was developed for is specific to the MEO26, GE2026 and GE2029 electoral campaigns/ events.
Implementation, management, measurement, reporting and monitoring of the Ngā Maihihioterā work programmes.	Ngā Maihihioterā is a cross organisational, core strategy for the EC and while support for application and alignment within the MEO2026 and GE2026 workstreams is within scope, management and responsibility for delivery of the work programmes within the strategy sit outside of scope.
Implementation of Ngā Maihihioterā strategy initiatives within the Māori Advisory team business plans.	Ngā Maihihioterā is a cross organisational, core strategy for the EC and while support for application and alignment within the MEO2026 and GE2026 workstreams is within scope, management and responsibility for delivery of the work programmes within the strategy sit outside of scope.
Modernisation or changes of/to core functions	This is work that sits within business-as-usual.
Note that there currently needs to be a joint owner for Kaupapa Māori Voting places and services. Currently the locations sit within the Temporary Accommodation workstream, but the services component hasn't yet been addressed. This is currently being worked through.	

8. Timeframes

The workstream will follow the tranches set by the GE2026 Programme.

Timeframes for workstream deliverables are outlined below.

9. Deliverables

The workstream will deliver the outputs outlined below:

Work area	Description	Output	Est Delivery date
Support for Ngā Maihihioterā	Reporting tool developed to show how workstreams for programmes will give effect to Ngā Maihihioterā	Ngā Maihihioterā measurement tool	28 February 2025
	Agreed Terms of reference for the Electoral Commissions Tangata Whenua network	Tangata Whenua network terms of reference	28 February 2025
	An implementation plan for the Electoral Commissions Tangata Whenua network	Tangata Whenua network implementation plan	28 February 2025
Te reo Māori regional dialect approach and MEO26	Design documentation will be developed after further discussion with the working group (assuming the te reo Māori regional dialect approach project brief is agreed by the Programme Board)	Te reo Māori regional dialect design documentation	28 February 2025

	A cross-organisational, documented, universal approach that will be released for application across the EC.	Te reo Māori regional dialect approach (the approach)	28 February 2025
	Guidance document with advice on areas that can enhance services for Māori, but which sit within the relevant project/workstream scope of other workstreams	Enhancing Services for Māori planning tool (document)	28 February 2025
Project	The overarching workstream brief outlining the workstream purpose and the project brief	Workstream and project briefs	29 August 2024
	An assurance and quality plan that will outline how we will ensure assurance and quality for those things that the workstream is directly responsible for delivering.	Assurance and Quality plan	28 February 2025
	A PMP developed for the workstream and overarching	Project Management plan	28 February 2025

10. Resourcing (including vendors and procurement)

Project support| Business Analyst

There is currently no business analyst (BA) supporting the workstream.

While work such as support for Ngā Maihi, the Tangata Whenua network can be delivered without a dedicated BA, the project will be unable to deliver a modernisation service design, which is currently in scope of the project to look at.

The workstream will require a BA to undertake service design work for a minimum of 30 hours per week from 1 March 2025 through to 30 September 2025.

Role	Project allocated	Hour per week	From - To
Business Analyst (Service Design)	Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	30 hours	1 March 2025 – 30 September 2025

A BA is also being requested in the te reo Māori dialect approach to support the design and development of the approach.

There is a requirement for business groups to support Tranche 1 of this workstream as indicated in the table below.

The amount of time needed for resources per week will vary dependant on the planning approach taken. i.e. finalisation stage of the te reo Māori dialect approach is based on 1-3 hours per week for review whereas development and design the working group may be needed for between 3-4 hours per week.

The below table outlines the estimated resource requirement based on high level draft planning and the working group has not yet been consulted or engaged on the proposed planning approach so requirements may change:

Role	Project allocated	Estimated hours per week	From - To
Business Analyst	Te reo dialect approach	5-10	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Māori Advisory team SMEs	- Te reo dialect approach - Enhancing Services - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	10 - 15	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Voting Services SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Enrolment SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Comms and Education SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	4 - 8	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
SEP SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025
Procurement SMEs	- Te reo Māori Regionald dialect approach - Modernisation/transformational change post GE26	5-7	September 2024 – 28 February 2025

Once the SME lead is confirmed for the te reo Māori dialect approach additional hours will be required. This is still to be confirmed.

11. Costs

There is little to no costs for support for Ngā Maihihioterā. Costs to enhancing services to Māori, sits within each workstream. Costs to deliver these could be medium-high and will be further investigated in the detailed design phase.

The te reo Māori dialect approach and plan has the largest identified area of expenditure. This is explained further in the te reo Māori dialect approach and plan project brief. It is also recognised that there may be additional costs associated with delivery of Kaupapa Māori voting places and services. These costs are outlined in the GE26 Kaupapa Māori voting place service project brief.

Have you identified components of cost?	N	Some costs will be incurred for the te reo Māori regional dialect approach identified outputs.
---	---	--

Have you identified savings to fund/partially fund the option?	N	
Is your recommended option an invest to save initiative?	N	

Years of funding needed for the te reo Māori regional dialect approach (with further information identified in the te reo Māori dialect approach project brief) will be in FY24/25 and FY25/26.

12. Assumptions and constraints

Assumptions

The workstream has identified the following assumptions:

Assumptions
The 2026 Election Design will outline KPIs relevant to Increasing enrolment and participation figures for people who are of Māori descent.
For GE26 there will be one Te reo Māori dialect per electorate based on an agreed criteria (yet to be developed).
Any additional Māori electorates to be announced by the Government Statistician may require additional dialects.

Constraints

Constraints to the workstream delivery are:

Area	Constraints
Launch of Ngā Maihihiotērā	The delayed launch of Ngā Maihihiotērā has caused delays to progressing of work to support Ngā Maihihiotērā but also to Enhancing Services for Māori work.
Resource	The advice, guidance and co-design activities of the Māori Advisory team are pivotal to the enhancement of services for Māori. There is considerable effort required by the Māori Advisory team to be across and involved in all workstreams.
Budget	Budget constraints impact what can be enhanced and the level to which the service can be enhanced E.g. the implementation of a manaakitanga allowance for Kaupapa Māori Voting places to support the Kaupapa Māori Service.

13. Dependencies /Risks/Issues

Dependencies

Below is a table of dependencies and how they are currently being managed.

Dependencies	Dependency Management
Enhancement of services to Māori are dependent on application on the advice and guidance of the Māori Advisory team and broader workstream by each Programme workstream.	The Māori Advisory team is engaged in workshops and discussions across the Programme workstreams where services to Māori can be enhanced.

The workstream is dependent on the launch of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy to all teams at the Commission. Part of their delivery will be reporting on how they are giving effect to the strategy.	A launch of Ngā Maihihioterā strategy occurred on 19 August with workstream leads and the project managers. A date has been set for the organisational wide launch of the Ngā Maihihioterā strategy.
--	--

Risks

The workstream identified the following risks:

Risks
IF activities that support the development and delivery of services to Māori are not prioritised, resourced, or funded adequately THEN there will continue to be low levels of trust, confidence IMPACTING participation and engagement of the democratic process.
IF the te reo Māori dialect approach is not developed cross organisationally and adequately implemented THEN this will lead to an approach that is not fit for purpose and an inconsistent application of the dialects, this in turn will IMPACT delivery and the same comments will be made by field staff after the GE2026.
IF there is no alignment in planning and processes across the Commission related to services for Māori THEN this will lead to inconsistent service levels and incorrect information being provided IMPACTING trust and confidence in the service being delivered and the information being provided.

Issues

No issues have been identified to date

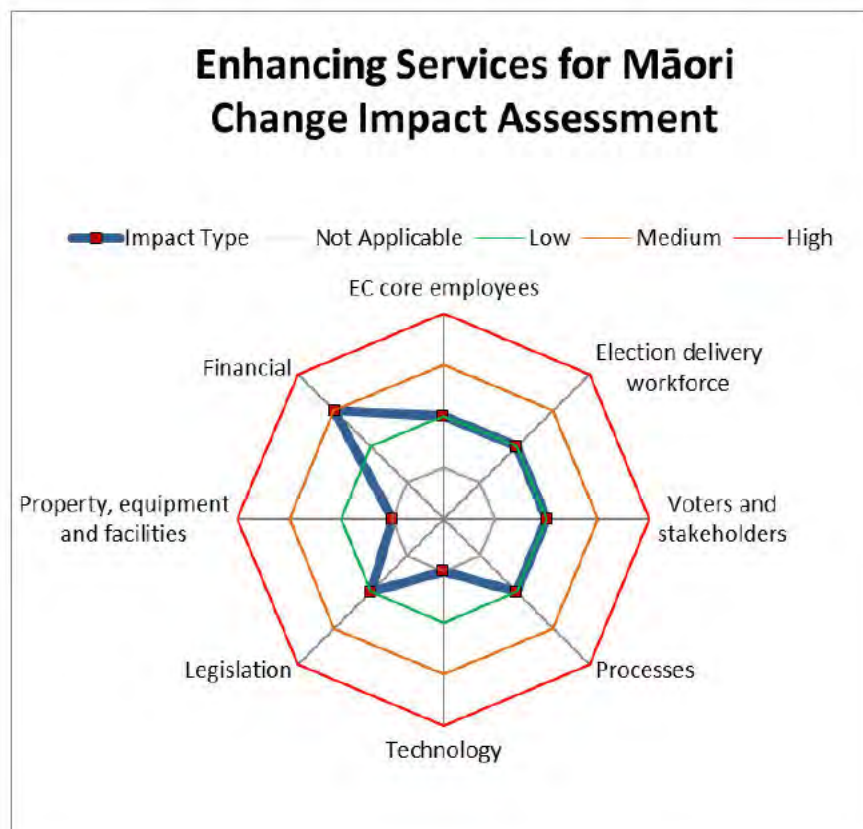
14. Change impact assessment

A detailed Change Management Plan will be completed as part of the Workstream Management Plan for deliverables that sit within delivery control of this workstream.

There is a **low** level of change that sits within this workstream for MEO2026 and GE2026. The level of change post GE2026 is not yet known as work has not begun on understanding what transformational service change for Māori looks like.

Impact Type	Description	Rating
The Commission's core employees Changes that impact core employees in the Commission's national office and regional offices	There will be little to no impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026	L
Election delivery workforce Changes that impact employees hired temporarily to deliver the election.	There will be little to no impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026	L
Voters and stakeholders Changes that impact users of electoral services, and/or partners who we work with to deliver electoral services.	There will be little to no impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026.	L

Processes Changes to business processes, including data collection, reporting and decision making	There will be some changes to business processes however these have little to no change impacts for MEO2026 and GE2026.	L
Technology Changes to the functionality, usability, availability and reliability of technology systems.	There will be no changes to technology for MEO2026 and GE2026.	N/A
Legislation Changes to legislation, regulations, or internal policies.	Possible internal policy changes and impacts from Legislative change however these changes will be low.	L
Property, equipment and facilities Changes to the location, type and availability of property, facilities and (non-IT) equipment.	Changes to the location, type and availability of property, facilities and (non-IT) equipment.	N/A
Financial Changes to project costs over and above baseline.	There will be additional costs over and above the baseline as dialects were not budgeted for during MEO2023 and GE2023.	M
Overall Impact Rating	<i>(Calculated automatically)</i>	Low



15. Tolerances

This project will operate within standard Programme Tolerances.

16. Assurance

Assurance and quality will be managed within the workstream using several different mechanisms.

Assurance and quality plan

An assurance and quality plan will be developed and delivered alongside the project management plan (**PMP**). This will reflect the programmes approach to quality assurance and will outline in detail how the workstream will ensure assurance and compliance steps are built into processes and implemented.

Monitoring and reporting

The purpose, objectives and detailed benefits of the workstream will be monitored and measured throughout the workstream life cycle and reported on at close out of the workstream. Assurance reporting will also be included in steering committee reporting.

Risk management

Risk workshops will be held every 6 weeks and will also sit as a standing agenda item at weekly meetings to ensure risks are being reported and mitigated or raised to the appropriate level. Risks will be reviewed regularly, and mitigation/ treatments will be tracked and scheduled and monitored as part of schedule management.

A risk management plan will be developed for the workstream with delivery of the plan by the end of tranche 1 and continuous monitoring through the workstream duration.

Processes, communications and feedback loops

Any changes to processes will be designed cross-organisationally with relevant teams to ensure a process is developed that works for everyone involved.

It will be important that any process changes are designed with an assurance/compliance component

It will also be vital that any processes are communicated well and change management best practice is applied to ensure the processes are properly imbedded.

17. Lessons learned review

Several lessons came out of the lessons learned sessions and post-election reviews

Area	Lessons Learned
Cultural capability of the Commission staff	Cultural capability of staff (field staff) came up as a consistent area for improvement. While there were improvements on GE20, Māori names of electors and areas were pronounced incorrectly.
Kaupapa Māori Voting place/ Services	Kaupapa Māori Voting places were a successful service that was rolled out across the motu with 15 locations in 2023. Requests and recommendations were made in post-election reviews to have additional services for GE2026.
Regional te reo Māori dialects	The absence of a te reo Māori strategy, not being aware of how to apply the dialects and what the Commission's approach to regional dialects came up repeatedly during the lessons learned review. This is being addressed through the development of a te reo regional dialect approach for the Commission
Forms	Forms such as enrolment forms and ballot papers were not available in te reo Māori

Te Pātikitiki

ENGAGEMENT PRACTICE FRAMEWORK

STRATEGIC ENGAGEMENT &
PARTNERSHIPS



Te Pātikitiki

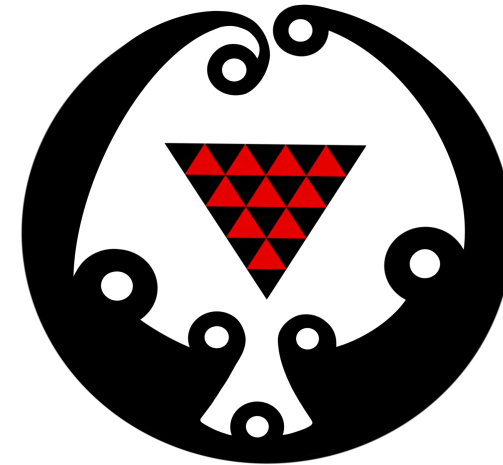
KO WAI TŌ INGOA?

Te Pātikitiki is the name of our new Engagement Practice Framework. *Pātiki* is the Māori word for the fish ‘flounder’.

The Pātiki is a uniquely flat fish that lies flat on the ocean floor providing an excellent camouflage against predators. The Pātiki can also quickly change directions as well as its colour to blend into their surroundings to be unobtrusive, observant, quiet, reflective, listening and exceptionally aware of who and what was in their environment.

Inspired by the features of the Pātiki we built a framework where all kaimahi could be guided in an open, flexible way that enabled them to still bring their own authentic selves to any engagement while being purposeful in creating sustainable relationships and connections.

Te Pātikitiki helps to guide kaimahi to engage and interact with tangata whenua and diverse communities in a respectful, responsive and reflective way.



IMAGERY:

We have used the outline of a flounder fish (pātiki) swimming in an upward direction while protecting and supporting the community within its protective walls. At the heart of the pātiki are the people and community shown by the red & black triangles. The outline of the Pātiki has seven circles that represent the seven phases of our te ao Māori engagement approach.

DESIGN:





Ngā Maihihioterā Kaupapa Kōhere, Kaupapa Kōtuitui and Kaupapa Kōtuakiri have been utilised to create a robust Practice Framework that supports what good quality engagement looks like for our organisation internally and externally.

The Te Pātikitiki Practice Framework will help improve our engagement practices to cater for the growing and increasingly diverse population in Aotearoa.

The Te Pātikitiki Practice Framework is a guide to how we engage and educate communities by delivering accessible, meaningful information to provide a deeper understanding of democracy and the electoral system.

The Te Pātikitiki Practice Framework is an essential and helpful guide for all Commission staff who are involved with delivering elections to our communities.

The Te Pātikitiki Practice Framework embraces Nga Maihihioterā enabling staff to engage Tikanga Māori practices and principles.

1316 face to face & online engagements nation-wide to build understanding and trust in the electoral processes. In 2024 we are currently sitting at approximately 655

The Te Pātikitiki Practice Framework upholds Ngā Mātāpono Values as the measure of how to successfully engage with people and how this is experienced by others.

Te Pātikitiki Engagement Practice Framework



What are Engagement Principles?

Our engagement principles serve as foundational guidelines to help kaimahi effectively engage and interact with all people internally, externally and in the community.

Our Kaupapa Kōtuitui help to broaden our insight into building enduring, mana enhancing strategic relationships with tangata whenua and diverse communities.

Our principles help to guide and enable quality engagements practice that is inclusive, values driven, transparent and impactful.

Our Engagement Principles

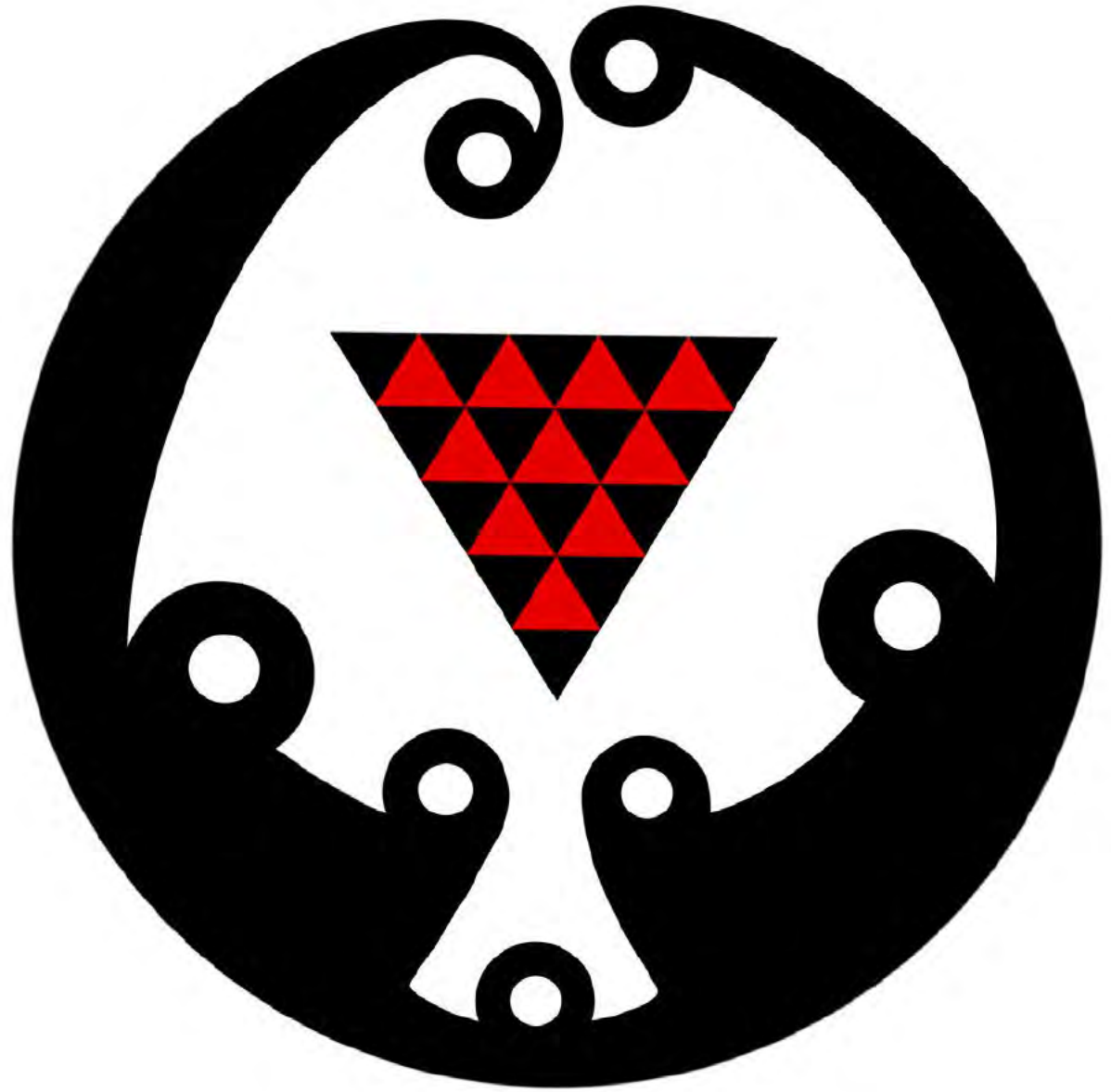
WE BRING GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

WE BUILD, CONNECT AND MAINTAIN RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS

WE EMBRACE CHANGE AND SEEK TO LEARN, ADAPT AND IMPROVE EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

WE TREAT PEOPLE WITH RESPECT AND DIGNITY

WE USE DATA & INSIGHTS TO ENSURE INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY



Principle 1

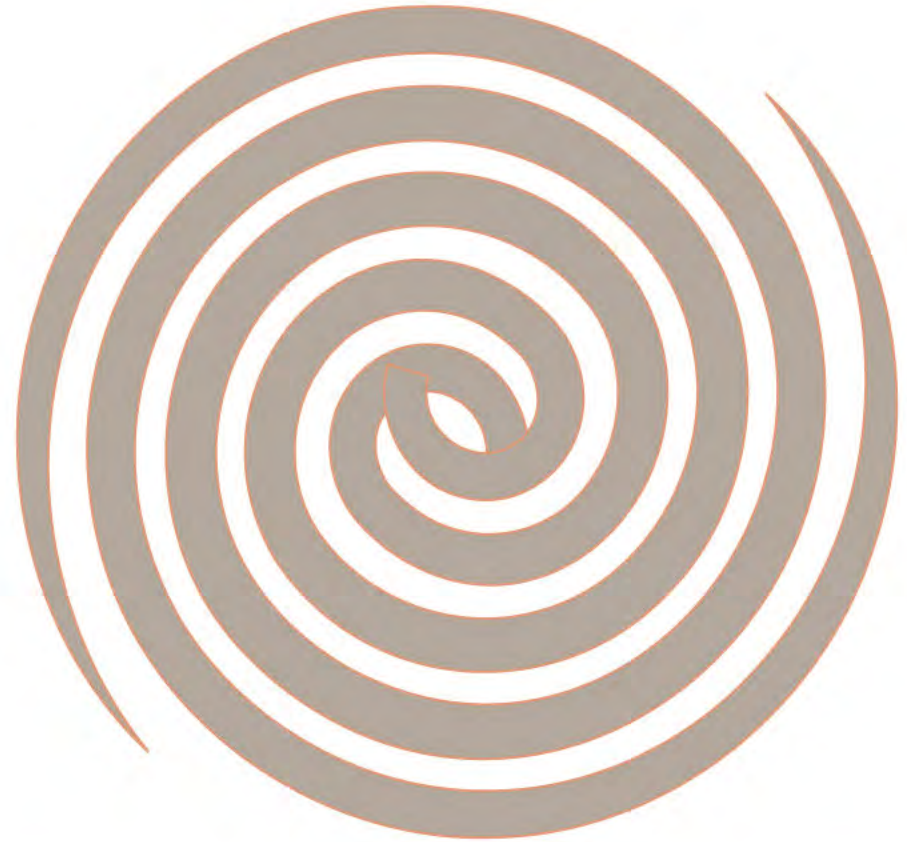
We bring greater understanding to the Electoral System

This Principle supports a multi-faceted approach encompassing education, transparency and purposeful engagement.

We are focused on increasing the accessibility of the electoral process and democracy for all New Zealanders.

We have a responsibility to promote public understanding and build confidence of the electoral system and to facilitate participation in our democracy.

We empower others to educate and inform their own communities. We deliver accessible, meaningful information, share multi-lingual collateral, attend events and encourage civic participation.



Principle 2

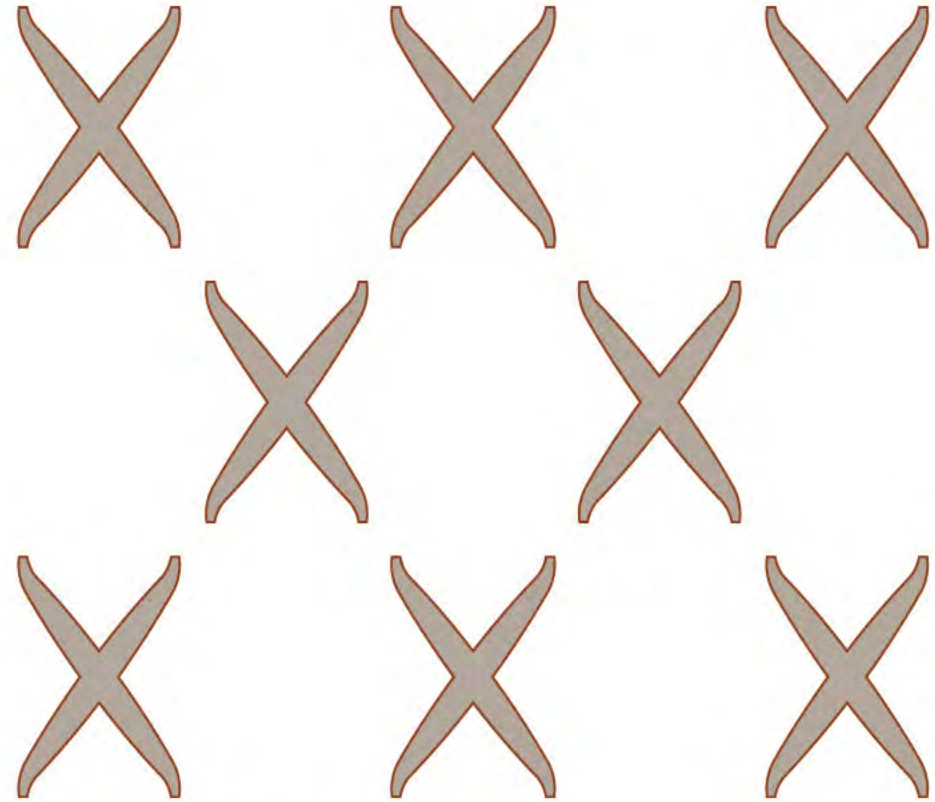
We Build, Connect and Maintain Relationships

This principle emphasises the importance of mutual respect and collaboration among individuals and groups.

We build strong relationships with groups with low participation in the electoral system to help increase their understanding and gain their trust.

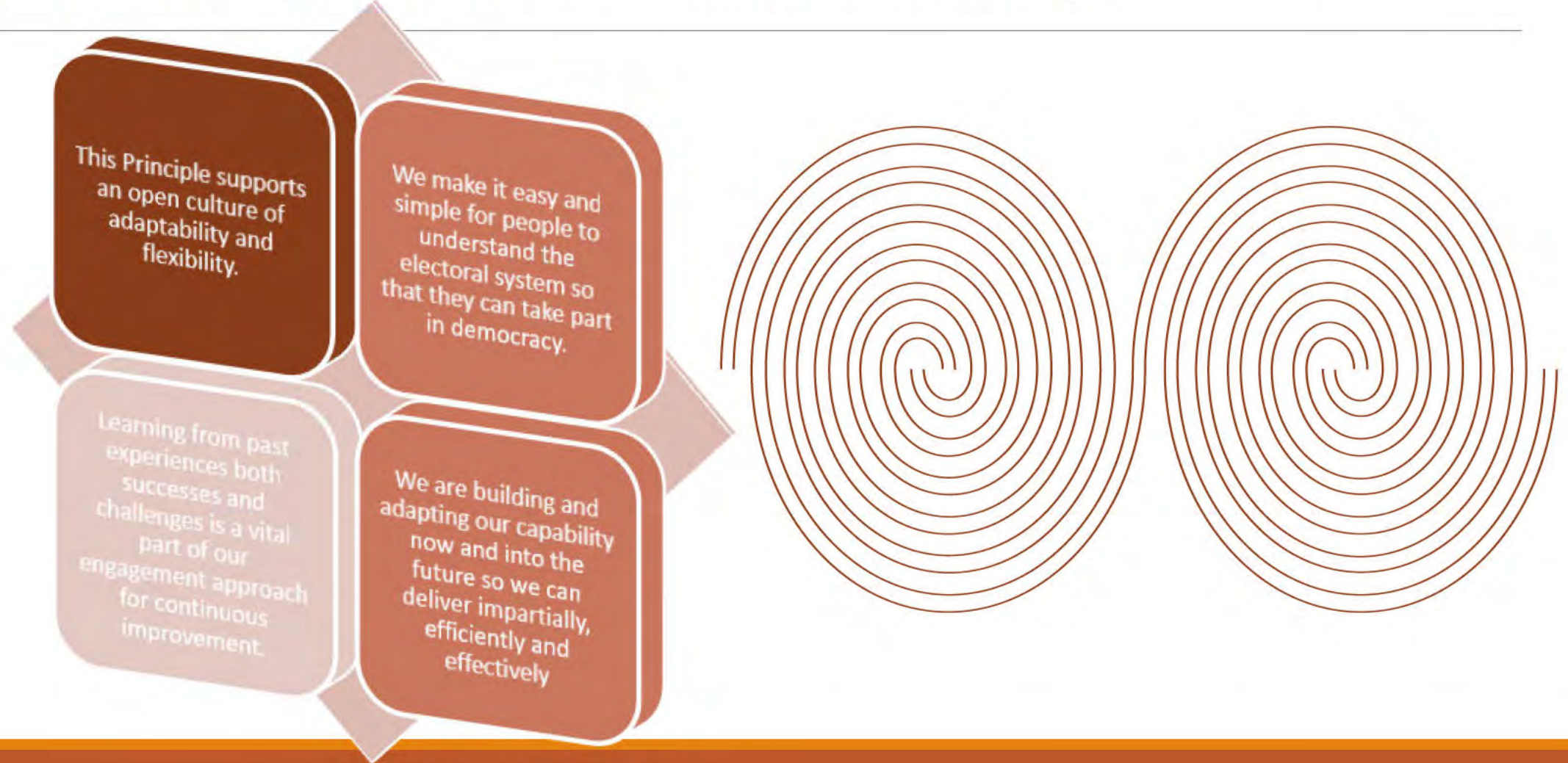
We strive for open communication, trust, and support among stakeholders and people in the community.

We create 'whare kōrero' or opportunities for dialogue, encouraging sharing of knowledge, feedback.



Principle 3

We embrace change and seek to learn, adapt and improve equitable access to democracy.



Principle 4

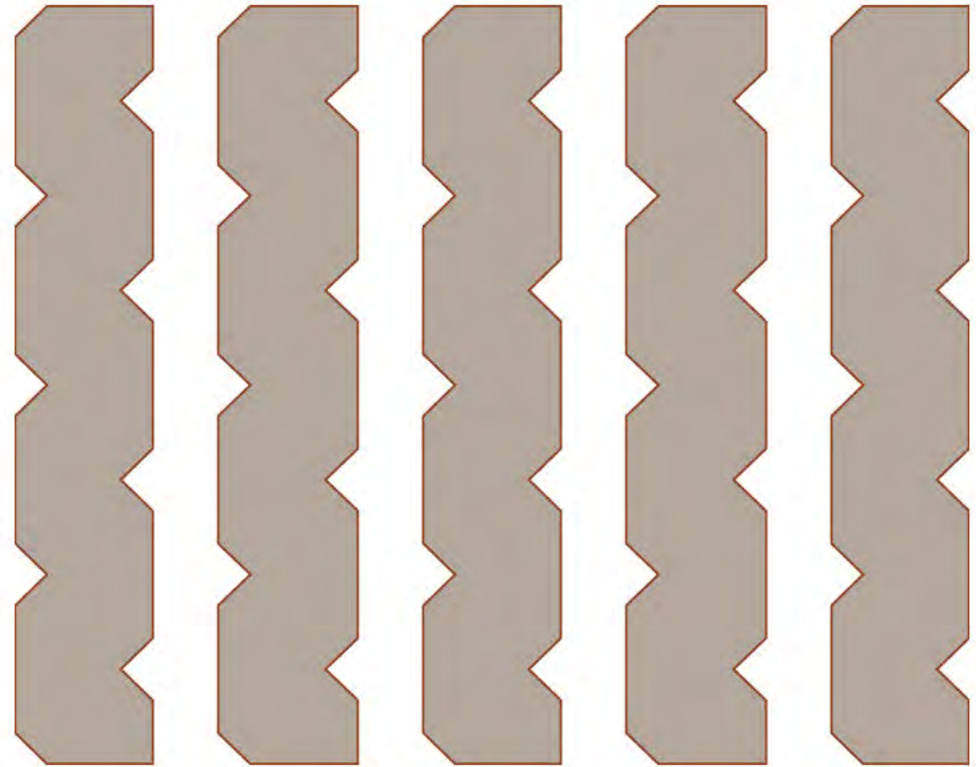
We treat people with respect and dignity

This Principle highlights the importance of ensuring all eligible voters can participate in the electoral process and support those who may face barriers.

We have a clear code of conduct and code of ethics that promote political neutrality, diversity and inclusive practices.

We want people to have a positive experience when they interact with us.

We want people to feel that their voice has mana, and they know how to use it.



Principle 5

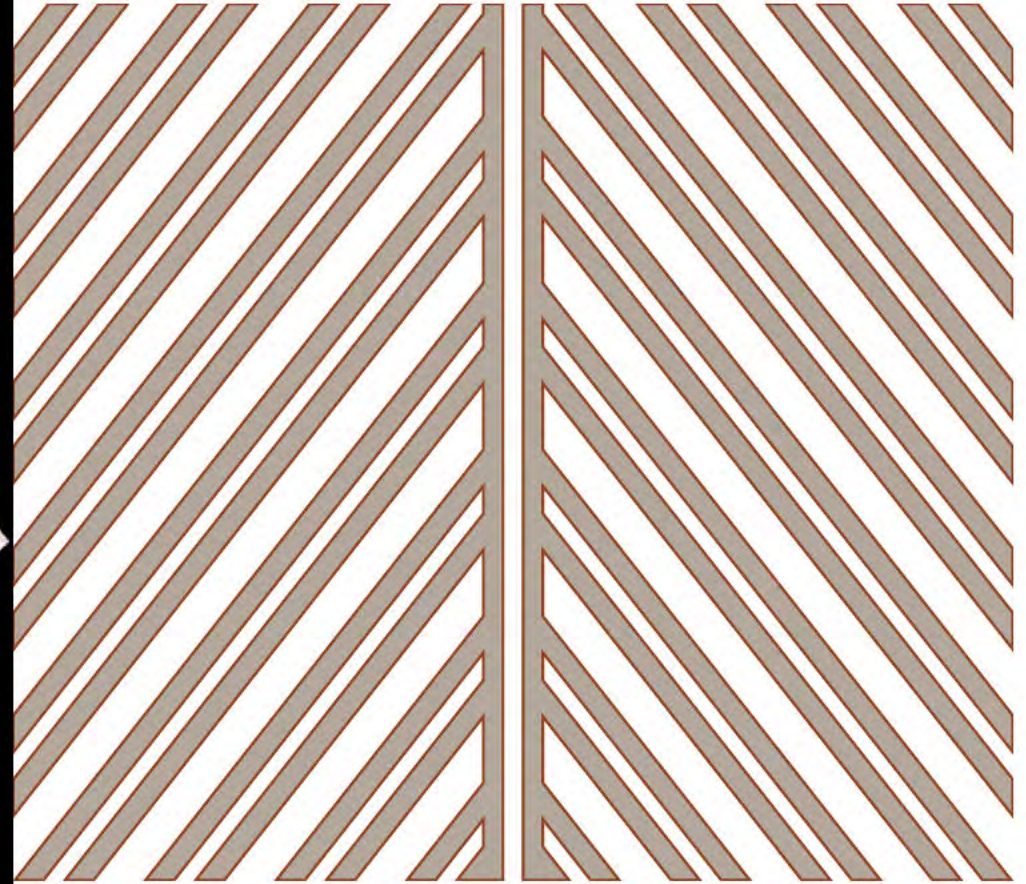
We use data and insights to ensure integrity and

The use of data driven insights is critical for informed decision making.

This principle ensures we are collecting relevant data to guide where, and how we engage while ensuring transparency.

We want people to have a positive experience when they interact with us and to trust and rely on us to deliver with integrity.

We observe ethical practices for data sovereignty which helps to build trust in our electoral system



Our Practice Standards

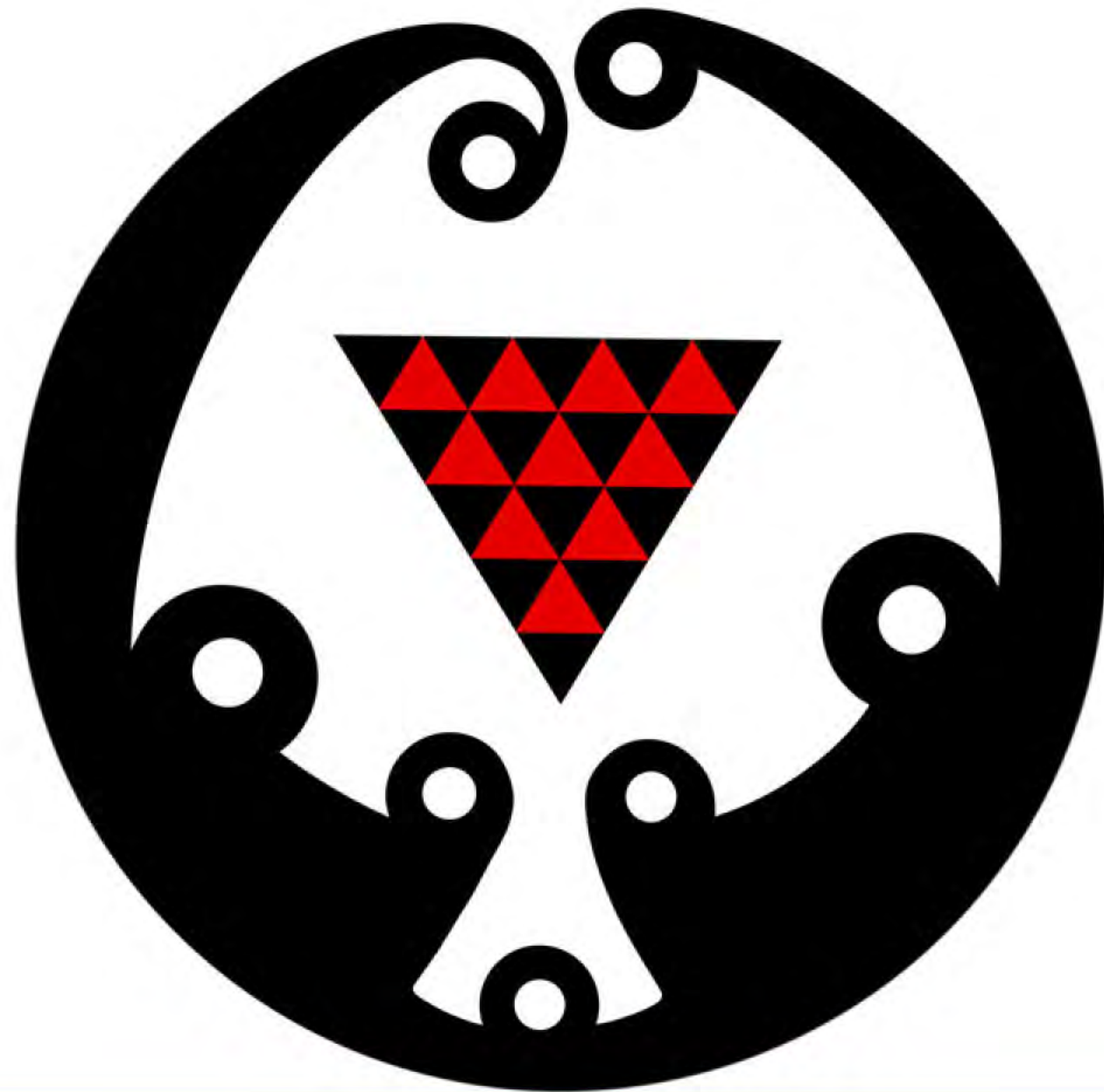
“Ko te Poutokomanawa”

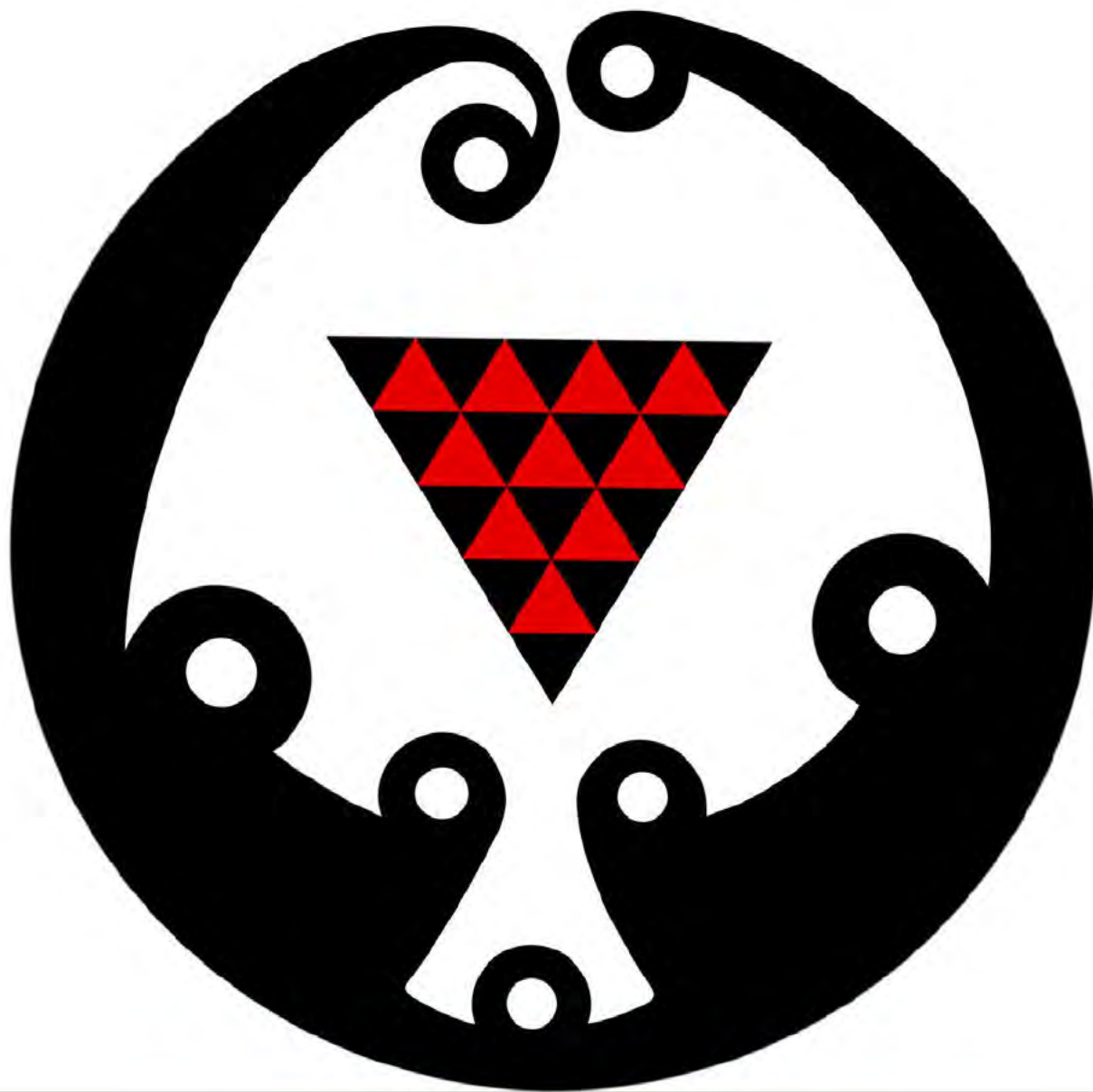
Our values help guide us in building relationships and credibility in our work with everyday New Zealanders in our communities.

We have used the Commission's Ngā Mātāpono Values to measure what good practice should look like, sound like and feel like.

Our Practice Standards play a crucial role in guiding our community engagements by establishing clear expectations and promoting consistency in practices across diverse settings.

We know that if we provide, deliver and execute good practice that people will be able to feel, hear and see our values in action which builds trust and value in the communication, support and service we provide.





Practice Standards

Help define what our practice should look like

Guide kaimahi to engage well in the community

Ensure compliance with legislation

Align to Organisational goals and Strategic Priorities while maintaining quality assurance

Facilitate continuous improvement for our practice.

Tūhonohono

Practice Statement

We will build and foster connections, establish partnerships and cultivate sustainable relationships in places where people meet and come together. Eg, schools, community events and government and non-government agencies.

Successful

We reach prospective voters through community-based information and education and build active partnerships with our communities while sharing ideas, resources, and tools to help promote democracy together.

Work Examples

- During LBE we collaborated with local government to develop a shared education workplan to improve voter enrolments, education and participation.
- Seeing diversity in our voting places builds inclusivity and can encourage and appeal to all New Zealanders to enrol, vote and participate in democracy.
- We continue to work with schools, businesses and community providers to deliver our campaigns on MEO, enrolment and voting.



Arataki

Practice Statement

Through education, sharing knowledge and information we will help communities to understand and navigate the electoral system.

We are guided by communities to identify barriers to participation and reduce their impact.

Successful

Tangata whenua and other communities can successfully navigate the electoral system and lead bespoke solutions and approaches in their communities that increase participation.

Work Examples

When the community ask us to provide knowledge or an educational session about the electoral system and how it works, we provide a tailor-made presentation entailing key messages about enrolling and voting to help them understand and take part in elections.



Manaaki

Practice Statement

We will engage and demonstrate generosity and respect in a mana enhancing way that builds trust and integrity in the electoral system.

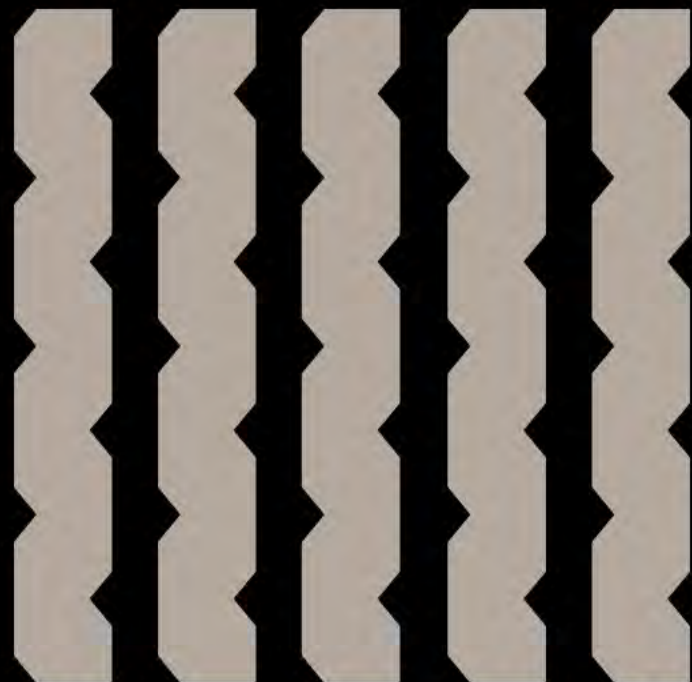
Successful

We have created reciprocal relationships and mutually beneficial partnerships that lead to open collaboration and connection to tangata whenua and other diverse communities. We have been able to build our cultural capacity and capabilities.

Work Examples

We are engaging early with local councils to build relationships and partnerships to prepare for the upcoming LBE.

We are co-planning and sharing a stall with Taranaki councils (local and regional) at Te Matatini as a partnered approach to LBE including sharing our knowledge of MEO, enrolment and participating in elections.



Uakaha

Practice Statement

We are committed to reducing barriers that hinder equitable access to the electoral system. We are open-minded and dynamic in our approach to engaging well in the community.

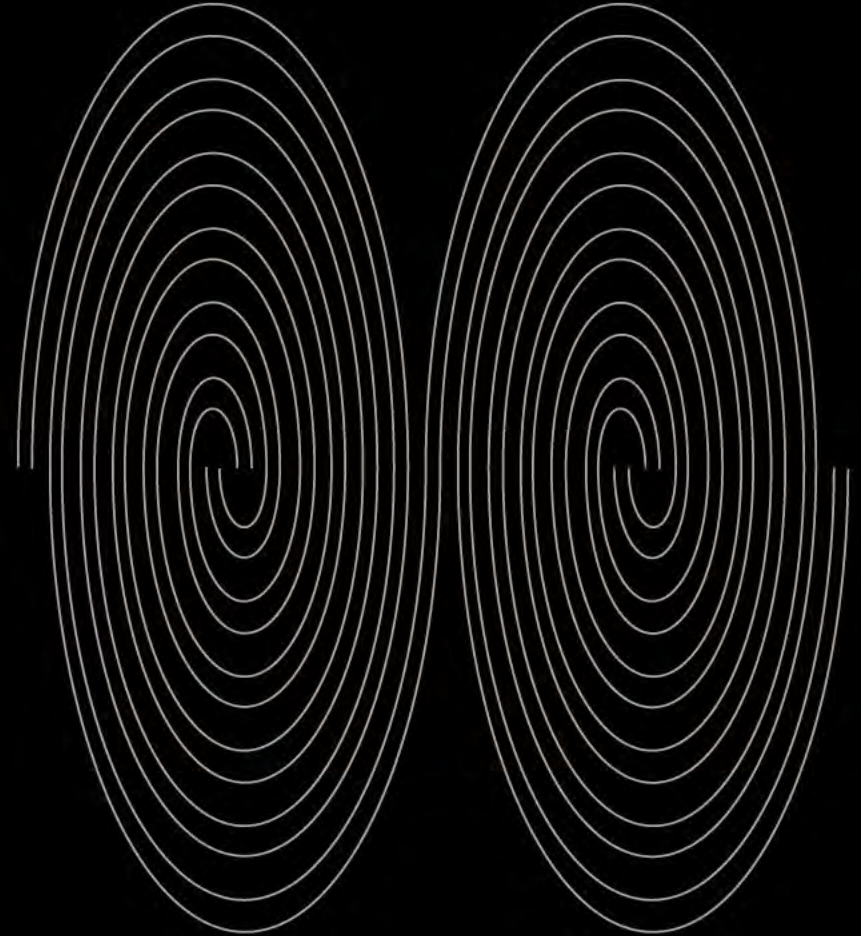
Successful

We are establishing and maintaining enduring relationships with a diverse range of people that have low participation in elections. We support and encourage them to support their communities to have their say. We use research, ask curious questions and use data and insights to help us understand what our communities need to access the electoral system.

Work Examples

Our connections with diverse communities often gives us the opportunity to work in collaboration with them to help educate their communities about participating in the electoral system.

We offer multi-lingual collateral that reflects different cultures and enables more people to interact and engage with the material.



Tika

Practice Statement

We are dedicated to engaging in an authentic, knowledgeable and mana enhancing way. Our information is neutral, transparent, reliable, accurate and easily accessed.

Successful

Our communities are prepared, organised, and well-informed to participate in democracy and have access to trustworthy Commission resources, collateral and information on enrolling, voting and the electoral system.

Work Examples

When we became aware of inaccurate or misleading information in the community, we responded immediately by providing correct information and multi-lingual resources and a variety of formats that could be easily shared across digital channels.



1993

1994

1995

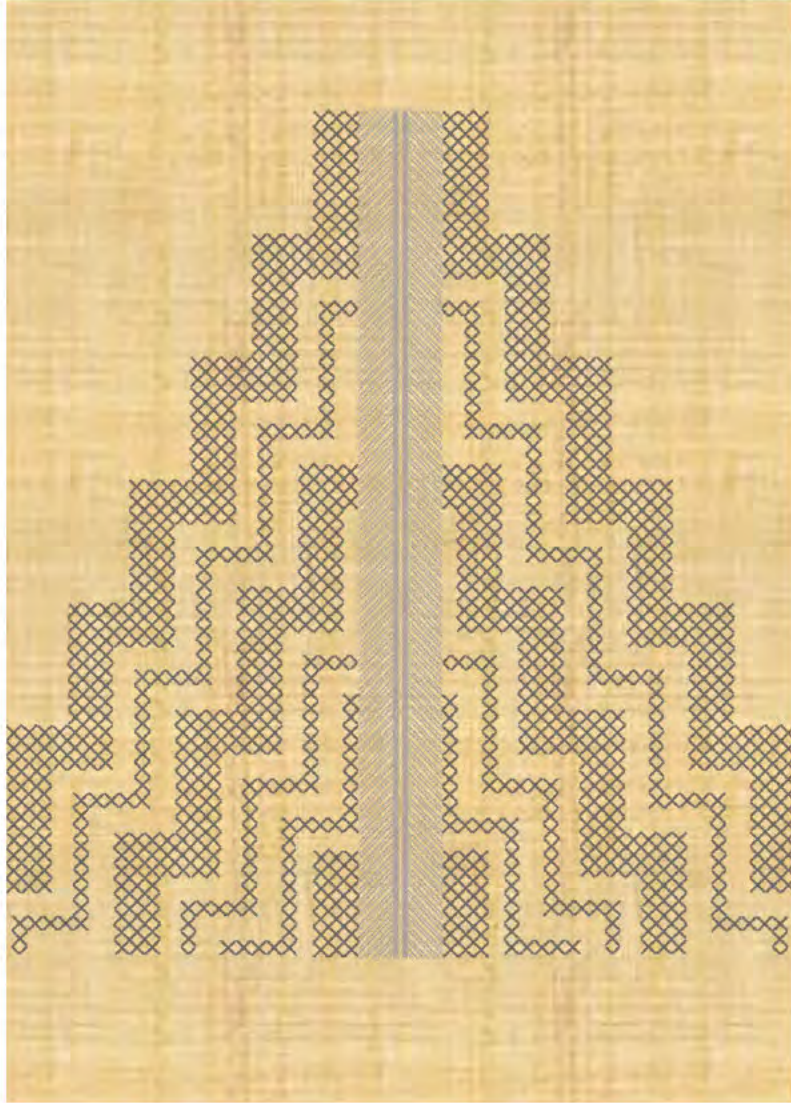
1996



What is a Pōwhiri?

Traditionally the Pōwhiri is a Māori ceremony that serves as a formal welcome for manuhiri (guests) to a marae, the communal and sacred place of the tangata whenua (local people). This ceremony is rooted in Māori customs (tikanga) and protocols (kawa), which guides the respectful engagement between host and guests.

The pōwhiri steps provide a structured framework that guide kaimahi through a process of deliberate reflective practice. Each step enables kaimahi to plan, act and reflect on how they engage and how others are receiving or experiencing their interaction.

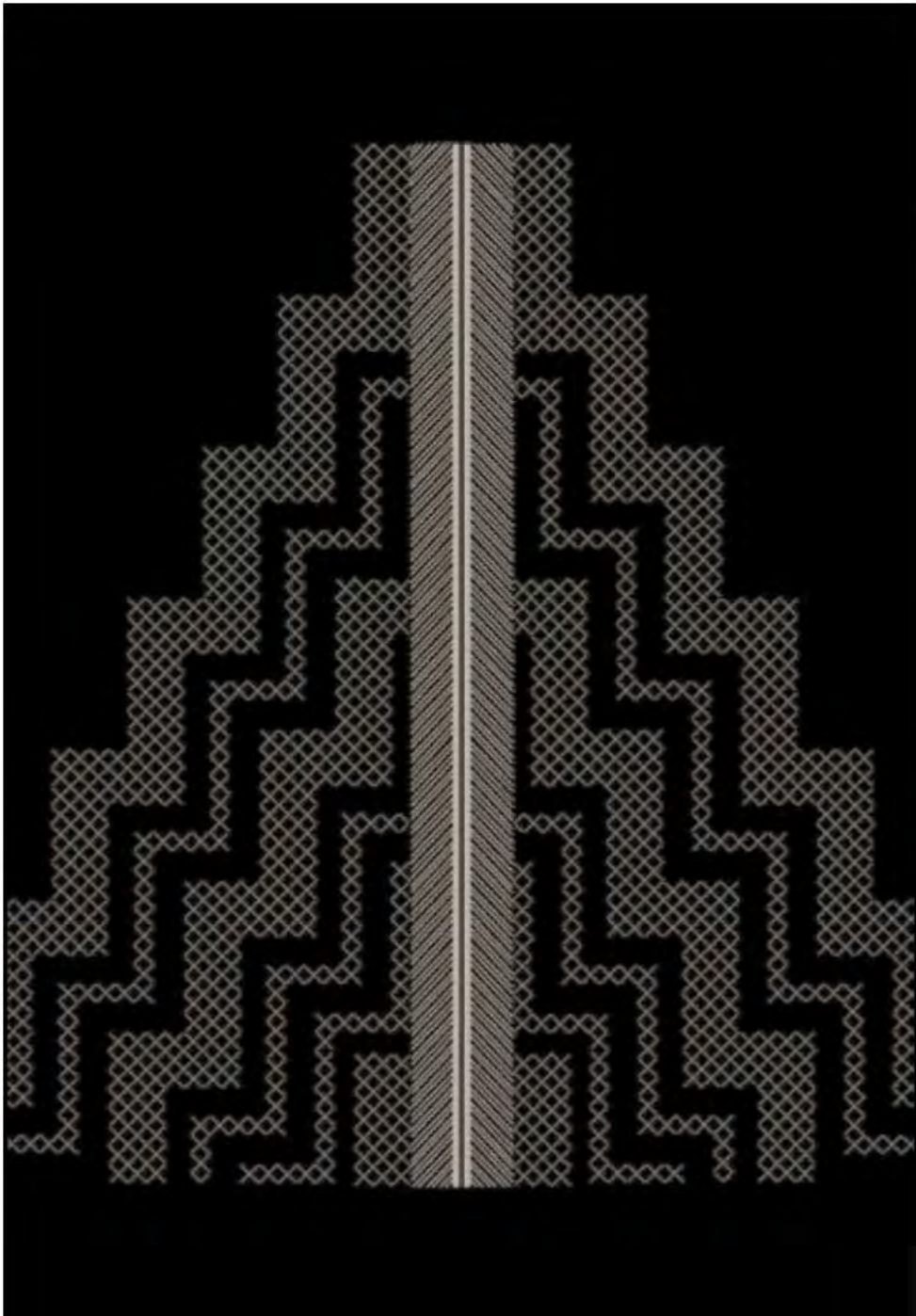


What is a Poutama?

The Poutama represents the Māori narrative (pūrakau) about Tāne Mahuta, the god of forests and birds and the perilous yet successful journey he took to ascend to the heavens to bring back 3 baskets of knowledge.

Each step in the pattern signifies the obstacles Tane encountered such as spiritual, physical and emotional challenges he faced.

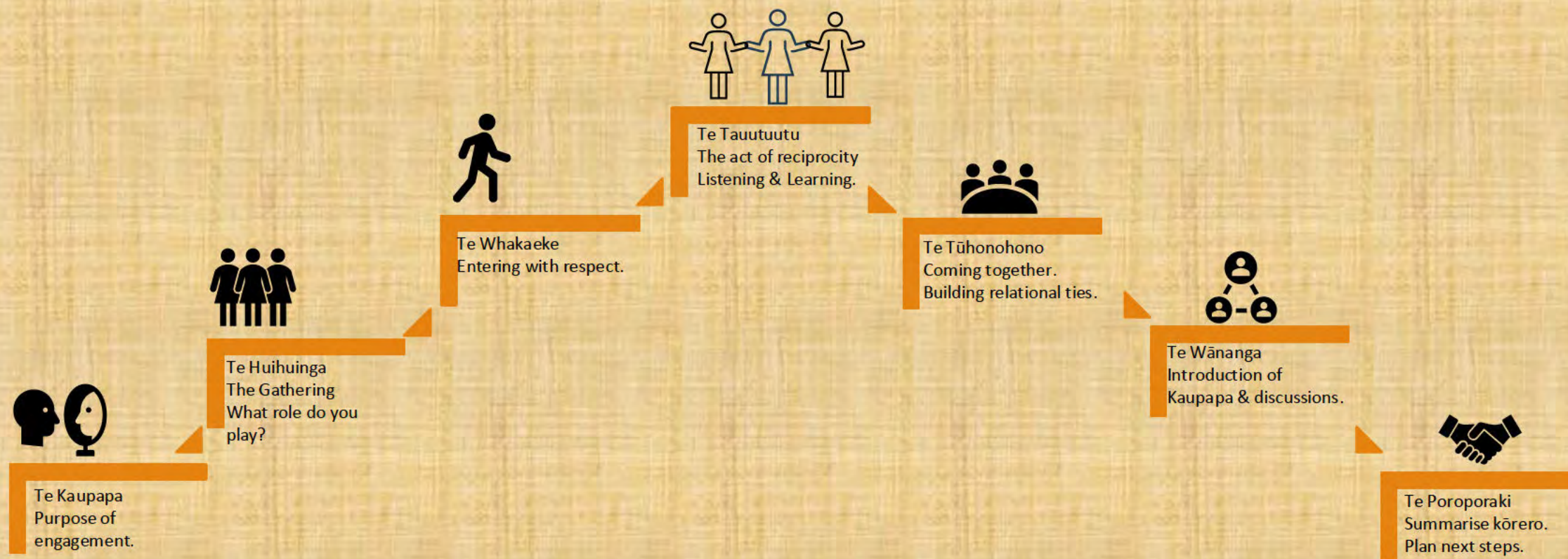
The Poutama serves as a reminder not only of Tane and his arduous journey but also the multi-faceted challenges he faced with each successful step requiring discipline, reflection and resilience.



Te Pātikitiki Pōwhiri Poutama

The Pōwhiri Poutama shows the 7 steps that guide kaimahi to engage well with tangata whenua and diverse communities.

The Pōwhiri Poutama seven steps enable kaimahi to pause at each step to consider and reflect on how their engagement is being received or experienced.





Our
Pōwhiri Poutama
Kawa &
Tikanga

Our Pōwhiri Poutama

Kawa & Tikanga

1. Te Kaupapa
2. Te Huihuinga
3. Te Whakaeke
4. Te Tauutuutu
5. Te Tūhonohono
6. Te Wānanga
7. Te Poroporoaki



Te Kaupapa Kawa

- TRUST AND INTEGRITY ARE KEY TO FOSTERING CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS. WE ENGAGE IN A VALUES DRIVEN WAY THAT IS PURPOSEFUL, RELEVANT AND WELL-PREPARED.



Te Kaupapa Tikanga

WHEN WE ARE INFORMED,
WE ARE PREPARED,
RESPONSIVE AND
RESPECTFUL IN HOW WE
ENGAGE

When we engage, we want people to feel seen, heard and respected. By preparing well for our engagements, we demonstrate our commitment to honouring those we engage with. We seek to establish trust and mutual relationships by purposely learning about the people we meet and their back stories, current priorities and their future aspirations.

We use data and insights to inform engagement strategies and meaningful conversations that open doors to future connections, while building potential relationships and partnerships.

As part of our preparation, we will check and reflect on any past interactions and engagements to ensure that we take our learnings from these experiences to help support and re-connect us.

We know that engaging in a 'tika' way helps us to be culturally aware, respectful and guides how we engage to uphold traditions, protocols, expectations tikanga and kawa. We make every effort to ensure that the mana and integrity of others are held in high regard and kept intact.

Prompts

- What can we find out, historic engagement, current and future aspirations?
- Do we have any historical connection? What did we learn from our past contact?
- What values, beliefs, traditions, languages or cultural practices could support us to engage respectfully and effectively?
- Have we practiced, asked for help in pronouncing names or words correctly?

Te Huihuinga Kawa

- TE HUIHUINGA IS ABOUT READINESS TO ENGAGE. WE KNOW OUR ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES. WE ARE DRESSED APPROPRIATELY AND ACT ACCORDINGLY.



Te Huihuinga Tikanga

- FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE CRITICAL AS THEY SHAPE PERCEPTIONS OF TRUST. WE ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR MANAGING OURSELVES IN A SENSITIVE, RESPECTFUL AND RESPONSIVE WAY.

There will always be a time to pause and reflect prior to any engagement. Whether it is:

- online, in person or with a group of kaimahi
- at a community event
- a follow-up meeting or a regular catch up
- building a new partnership or relationship
- meeting a community organisation or information sharing
- celebrating groups in the community
- attending a pōwhiri, mihi whakatau

We are on time, have the right tools and resources for the engagement and know what is expected of us. Our kaimahi meet community where they're at. We are open and responsive to community priorities, and where appropriate, we let community determine the pace of the relationship. We are open to being guided by our community on how to engage authentically. We are resilient and can pivot to accommodate changes.

Prompts:

- Are we all on the same page around our approach and roles?
- Are we aware of how we carry ourselves and what this communicates to others?
- How do we adapt to the environment?
- Is our approach respectful? What does it look like, feel like and sound like to those receiving/experiencing our engagement?

Te Whakaeke Kawa

- AS WE ENTER THE SPACE OF OUR COMMUNITY, WE CONNECT IN A WAY THAT IS AUTHENTIC, MEANINGFUL AND RESPECTFUL.



Te Whakaeke Tikanga

- WE BUILD OUR KNOWLEDGE AROUND APPROPRIATE PRACTICES AND SOCIAL ETIQUETTE. WE UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF NEUTRALITY.

Kaimahi must understand the environment, protocols, customs of our communities to respectfully enter their space. We demonstrate professionalism, cultural sensitivity, humility and patience. Additionally, we are observant of our surroundings and aware that others will be watching what we say and how we act.

We want people to see that we are open to building sustainable and lasting relationships. Some communities may take longer to trust us and welcome us in their space. Kaimahi should have empathy, be guided by the community and align ourselves with what best suits their needs, particularly when planning times and dates to meet. When kaimahi are entering the space of our community, we need to be well planned, understand the kawa and any associated tikanga. We wait to be asked to continue across the threshold into their space.

Prompts:

- Where should we stand? What is the signal that we can enter a space?
- Do we leave shoes on or off?
- Who goes first? Is there a hierarchy of entering the space e.g. gender preference enter first, elders first,
- Is the setting a place of worship, marae, office or someone's home?
- How can we demonstrate respect, humility, professionalism and cultural competence?
- Are we using appropriate body language and tone of voice?
- Are we rushing?
- Social/cultural etiquette observed?

Te Tauutuutu Kawa

- WHEN WE ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY WE ARE LISTENING AND LOOKING FOR THINGS THAT HELP US CONNECT.



Te Tauutuutu Tikanga

- LISTENING IS A POWERFUL TOOL FOR UNDERSTANDING OTHERS AND FINDING COMMONALITIES THAT CAN SECURE OUR RELATIONAL CONNECTIONS.

We want our kaimahi to be confident in their whaikōrero (discussions, perspectives) and how they interact with people in the community. For example, at a pōwhiri this can be done through recitation of the connections we have, and the commonalities we share. Kaimahi could share common focus, goals, and outcomes. It is equally important that kaimahi are active listeners, responsive to what is being said and looking for ways to build reciprocal or shared discussions. We can take guidance from the community throughout this process as we learn to understand where our kaitiaki can make the biggest impact in the lives and wellbeing of our community.

Principles

Do I have enough cultural capabilities to understand the kaupapa of today's kōwhiri?

Am I committed to speak into this space?

Is there an āhaukōwhiri (pū) I can ask for guidance and advice, practicing with someone beforehand?

How do I balance the impact and integrity of the process I am engaged in?

What tikanga and values are important for me to know?

Have I got an appropriate kōwhiri to give? And do I know the correct way to give the kōwhiri depending on the group receiving?

Te Tūhonohono Kawa

AS WE MOVE THROUGH THE
INTRICATE DANCE OF
BUILDING A RELATIONSHIP,
WE ARE MINDFUL OF HOW
WE PROGRESS IN A TIMELY
AND MANA ENHANCING
WAY.



Te Tūhonohono Tikanga

- TO STRENGTHEN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH, TANGATA WHENUA, KEY PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITIES WE NEED TO FIRST ENGAGE IN A WAY THAT IS TIKA.

We want our kaimahi to be confident in how they establish relationships, interact and engage with the community in all encounters. As we move into a new phase of our relationship, after observing and participating in the initial social etiquettes, tikanga and kawa, we are guided by our hosts in how they would like to take the next steps into our kōrero.

We can reaffirm our engagements through a simple smile, words of encouragement, positive and open body language. In a te ao Māori context, we may acknowledge or embrace in different ways depending on the kawa of that marae/organisation/host

E.g.

- Hongi
- Shake hands
- Offer a cheek
- Elbow to elbow touch
- Cup of tea/coffee
- Sharing of food or a drink

Prompts

- What type of embrace would be suitable in this situation? E.g. verbal, eye contact, handshake etc?
- Are there things they have mentioned already that I can leverage off to continue building the connection?
- Do I know anyone they have connections to that I can bring into the conversation?
- What do I have to share e.g. biscuits, koha etc.

Te Wānanga Kawa

- CREATING A SAFE AND
MANA-ENHANCING
SPACE FOR DEEPER
CONNECTION AND
ROBUST KŌRERO



Te Wānanga Tikanga

- WE WILL BE LED BY THE VOICES OF THE COMMUNITY, LISTENING TO THEIR STORIES AND ASPIRATIONS. FINDING WAYS TO CONNECT AND ENHANCE THEIR KAUPAPA

In te ao Māori, the act of wānanga is about coming together with others to engage in respectful and robust discussions about various kaupapa and topics. It is a time to reflect, hear different perspectives and listen for understanding. Our Commission opening karakia also refers to the house of dialogue (a whare kōrero) where we invite others to gather in a space to talk freely, gain inspiration and have meaningful conversations.

When we wānanga with the community, we are active listeners and participants. We are agile, fully present and always considering ways we can engage, uphold and provide support. We can have honest and courageous conversations knowing that we do so in a way that shows our Ngā Mātāpono values.

We are responsive to suggestions made by the community to work together in a way that is authentic, inclusive and culturally affirming.

Prompts

- Are you ready to listen, learn and understand the stories and voices of the community?
- How can I show that I am actively listening?
- Am I sharing relevant information that support the mahi, goals and aspirations to those I am engaging?
- Have I prepared to being challenged on what knowledge I have?
- Do I have a plan in place to come back to wānanga if we run short on time?

Te Poroporoaki Kawa

THIS KAWA AIMS TO VALIDATE
OUR KŌRERO, REINFORCE
OUR COMMITMENTS,
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT & HOPE
FOR FUTURE CONNECTIONS
AND COLLABORATION.



Te Poroporoaki Tikanga

WE ARE COMMITTED TO
ENSURING A THOUGHTFUL
CONCLUSION TO OUR
ENGAGEMENT, BOTH LEAVING
SATISFIED WITH THE FUTURE
DIRECTION OF OUR
RELATIONSHIP AND OUR
SHARED MAHI AND KAUPAPA.

We want our kaimahi to feel confident in how they close and wrap up their engagements with the community. We want the community leaving the engagement feeling heard, informed and motivated to meet again.

If you are the facilitator or host of the engagement here are key steps to consider when you close an engagement:

- Review key concepts, ideas and discussion points
- Acknowledge and summarise points of agreement
- Leave time for questions and clarification
- Provide potential next steps
- Thank attendees
- Encourage feedback
- Make sure you have an appropriate karakia or words to close – Offering the community to do this is also an option.

Kaimahi should keep in mind that the next steps in the relationship can be guided by the community. It's also essential to respect the time that the community has dedicated, making sure both sides are satisfied with the next steps and understand what that entails.

Ultimately, we want our communities to recognise the benefits and value of collaborating with us as an organisation.

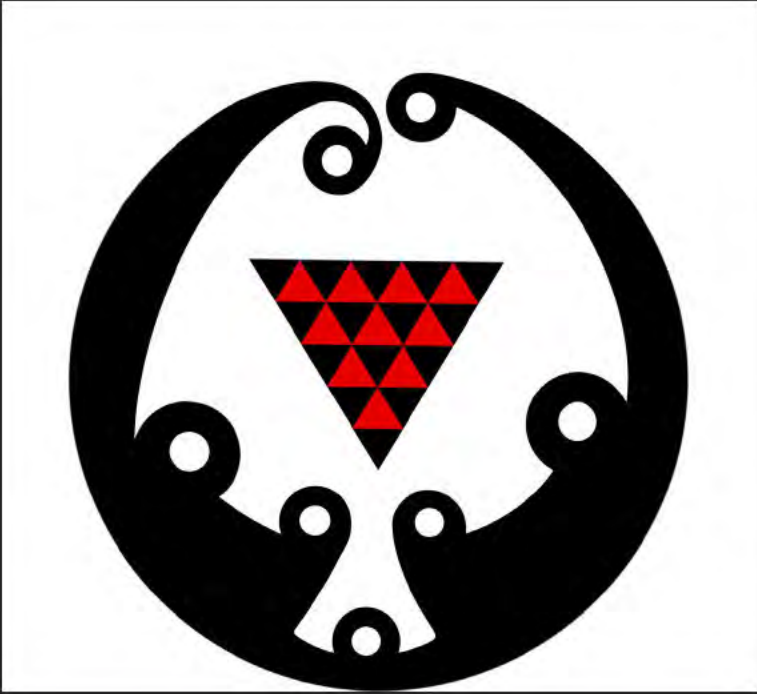
Prompts to support this phase:

- How do I show gratitude for the community gifting time and insights
- Who do I need to acknowledge?
- What contact details do I have to stay connected and to follow up with?
- What next steps are we agreeing to?
- Am I the right person to be the conduit or connector going forward? Do I suggest another kaimahi who you will connect them to?

Te Arotakenga : Reflection

Reflecting after an engagement, event or meeting contributes to both personal and professional development. It provides:

- Continuous learning and improvement opportunities
- Enhances our insight into our own professional practice
- We can improve our service delivery
- Provides opportunities to reflect, review and problem solve challenges
- Strengthens team dynamics, communication & collaboration
- Identifies needs, supports and resources required to build our capabilities in our mahi.
- Consideration for future engagements





Te Arotakenga Kawa

After every visit, engagement and event we review who we spoke to, what we did, any outcomes or follow ups that need to be made to support future engagements.





Te Arotakenga Tikanga

All kaimahi are required to capture and record their engagements into te Kete. Post engagement conversations are encouraged to evaluate your practice, discuss your outcomes and opportunities to leverage off your engagements and interactions.

