



Tech Tāmaki Makaurau

Accelerating Auckland's Technology Industry

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TE AU HANGARAU: The Wave of Technology research

Insights summary for industry change makers

Tātaki
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A
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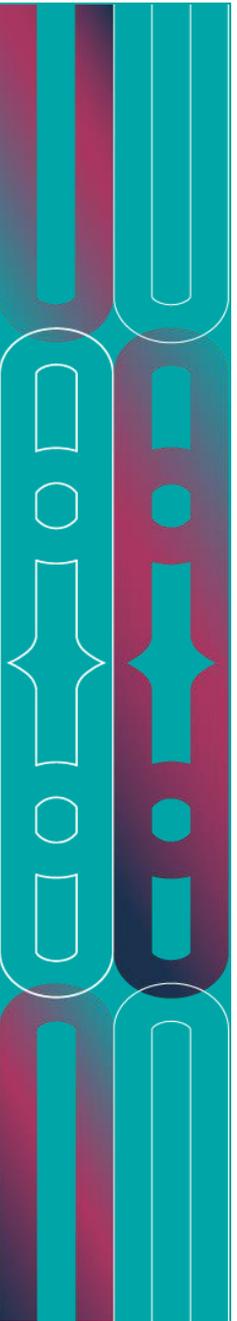
Spark
Foundation



TE MATARAU
THE MĀORI TECH ASSOCIATION

An action pack for industry change makers

- This is a summary of the qualitative research report Te Au Hangarau: The Wave of Technology. The full report can be requested by emailing wellington.tamatimu@aucklandnz.com
- It has been created specifically for organisations in the tech industry that aspire to create diverse workplaces where Māori employees will thrive.
- This pack is downloadable and editable to make it easy for industry to adapt and create awareness and action within their own organisations.
- You are welcome to use it in part or entirety, and to integrate into your own plans and presentations. However, please acknowledge the authors of the original research – AATEA Solutions and Korou Digital Agency Ltd.

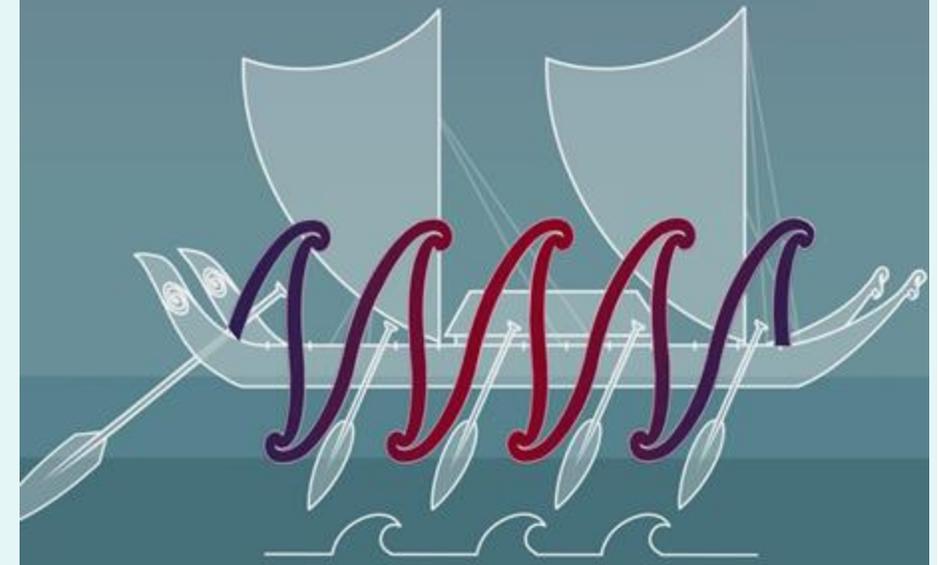


About the research

- Te Au Hangarau sought to understand what factors influence greater participation of, and success of, Māori tech graduates in Aotearoa's technology industry.
- Research comprised both literature reviews and in-depth qualitative interviews, mostly in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland.
- Qualitative interviews focussed on the experiences of Māori in higher education or employment within the tech industry. We recognise this is a small slice of the journey, and the creating of pathways needs to start earlier than this – at primary, intermediate and secondary school levels.
- Te Au Hangarau was written by AATEA Solutions and Korou Digital Agency in collaboration with Pūhoro STEMM Academy.
- The research project was commissioned by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited and Spark Foundation, in conjunction with Te Matarau, Māori Tech Association.

"The interest in this project was generated by the NZ Tech Report (2021) identifying that Māori were disproportionately represented in the tech industry. Māori were starting tech tertiary studies and then dropping out; graduating but not going on to work in the industry; getting a job in tech but leaving within 18 months. Prompting the question why?"

- Kemp Reweti



A broad view of tech careers

Many reports on diversity in the tech industry are focussed on what is considered hard or deep tech roles. This research took a broader view on what working in tech looks like and loosely categorised careers into three areas:

Hard or Deep Tech

For example, but not limited to:

- Software developers
- Hardware engineers
- Cyber-security
- Data analysts

Soft Tech

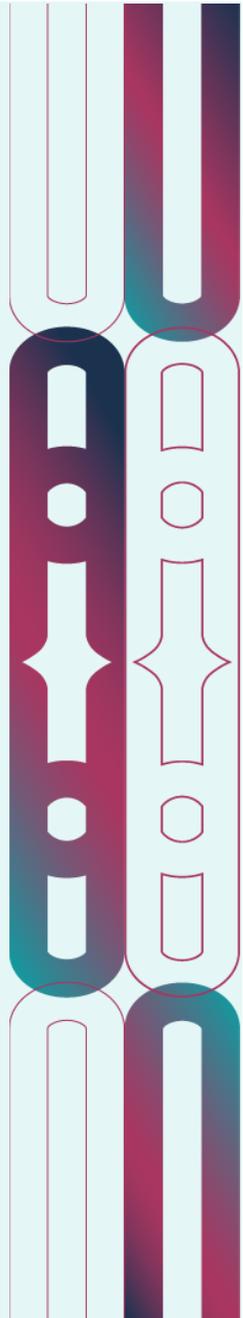
For example, but not limited to:

- Product designers
- CX/UX
- Agile coaches
- Digital marketers

Creative Tech

For example, but not limited to:

- Animators
- Game designers
- Digital story-tellers



To accommodate a diverse workforce, industry readiness is critical

NZ's tech industry is growing – it's now \$8.5B of exports; 8% of NZ's GDP, and is set to overtake dairy as the largest exporter for NZ*

It's estimated that digital technology driven solutions will be 20% of our efforts to decarbonise**

Māori currently comprise 4% of those in hard or deep tech roles***

Māori participation in tech is declining at secondary schools and higher education levels.

“Not only is it the right thing to do, it is a must do. We ignore rangatahi voices at our peril.”
Te Au Hangarau

In 2021, 305 Māori completed an IT qualification, at a completion rate of 52%****

Māori career outcomes will be a significant source of the country's wealth and wellbeing in future years.

Māori are a youthful population: 1 in 4 current school leavers are Māori, and by 2040, 1 in 3 people of working age will be Māori*****

Diverse teams are better positioned to unlock innovation and solve complex problems.

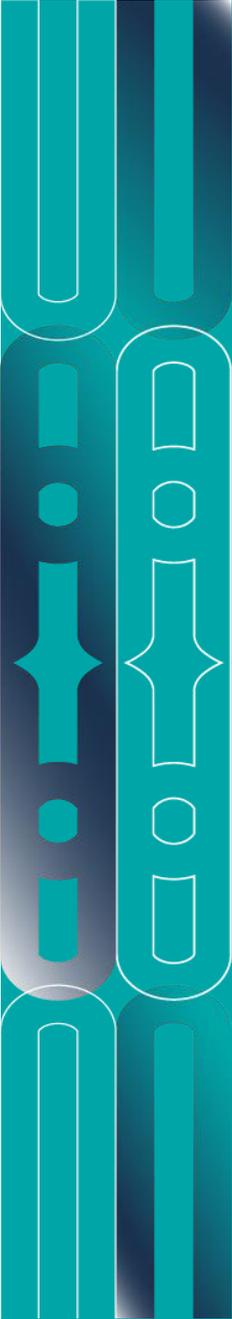
*NZ Tech <https://nztech.org.nz/info-hub/about-the-sector/>

** World Economic Forum <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/05/how-digital-solutions-can-reduce-global-emissions/>

***NZ Tech <https://nztech.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2021/11/Tech-Sector-Key-Metrics-2020-Update-1.pdf>

****Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) data and AATEA calculations – see appendix of full report

*****StatsNZ <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/national-ethnic-population-projections-2018base2043-update/>



Research findings

Key influences identified by participants

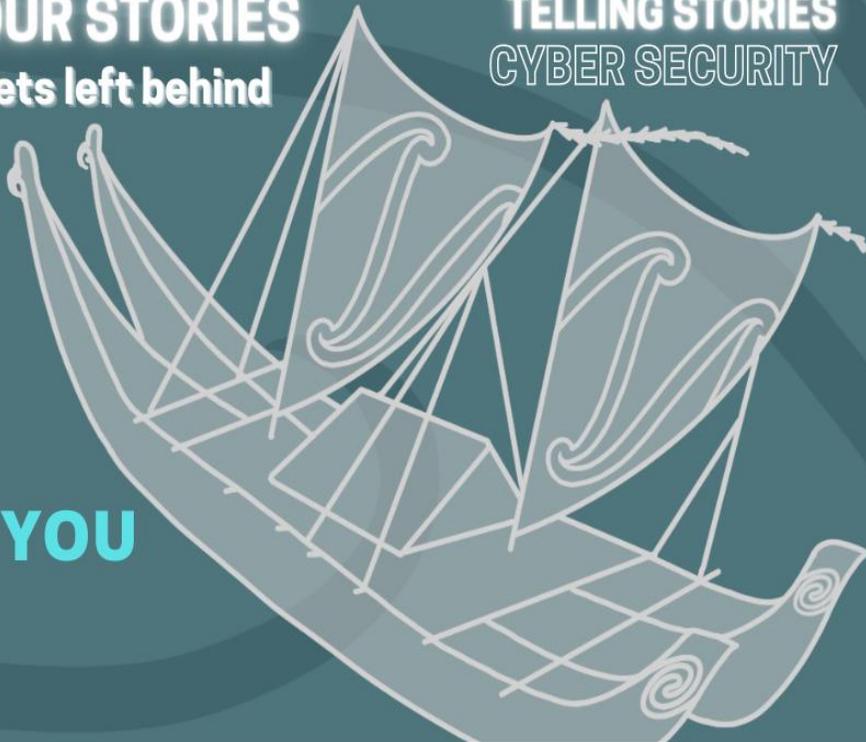
What influenced you to get into tech?



Key influences identified by participants

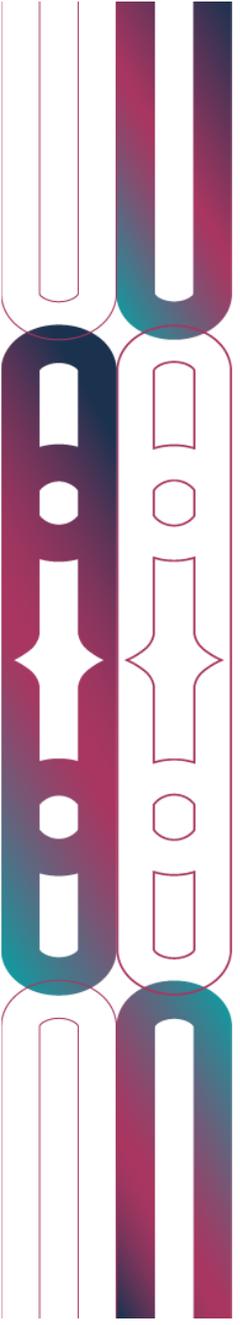
What influenced you to stay in tech?

MAORI MY WHĀNAU RESEARCH MĀORI IN TECH
DEPARTMENT WHATEVER'S IN YOUR HEAD INVESTING IN YOURSELF
CAN BE PUT ON SCREEN SCHOLARSHIPS
MY DAD WORKING TOGETHER TUTORS KICKED MY ARSE YOOBEE COLLEGE
NATURALLY GIFTED IN BREAKING THE MOLD OF CREATIVE INNOVATION
TOUGH LOVE MY SUPERVISOR MEDIA CLASS
PŪHORO SUPPORT TE RAU TAUAWHI DIRECTING
INTERNSHIP TECH OUR STORIES TELLING STORIES
GLOBAL NETWORKING nobody gets left behind CYBER SECURITY
BEING MENTOR
NATIVE IN SO MANY
TECH OPPURTUNITIES
WHAT INFLUENCED YOU
TO STAY IN TECH?



Key insights for industry readiness

1. The 'capability gap' cuts both ways.
2. Improving access and opportunities is fundamental.
3. A sense of belonging and a community is important.
4. Need to recognise Māori aspirations, not just industry needs.

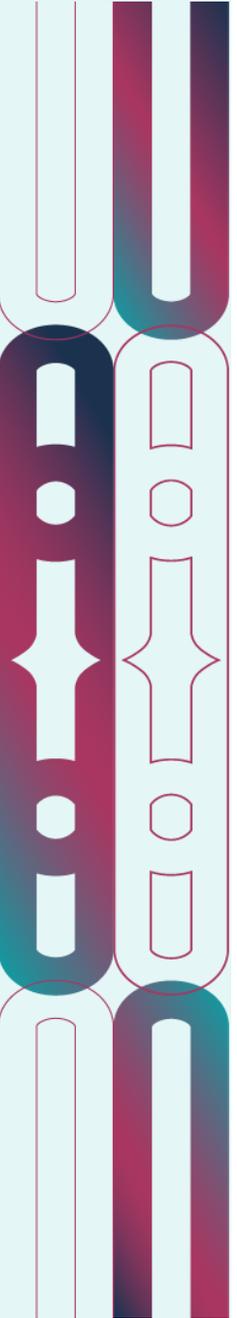


1. The 'capability gap' cuts both ways

We often hear the industry talk about the “skills capability gap”, thus placing much of the responsibility and onus back on youth and the education system.

Addressing this gap is vital, but it is equally important for the industry to assess their capabilities in relation to cultural competency. "Toxicity" was deemed a barrier. Research participants shared stories of toxic and racist behaviour and said that it was considered normal.

Becoming an organisation that is considered culturally safe, and where rangatahi would be welcomed and nurtured, is a key opportunity and area for the industry to improve on.

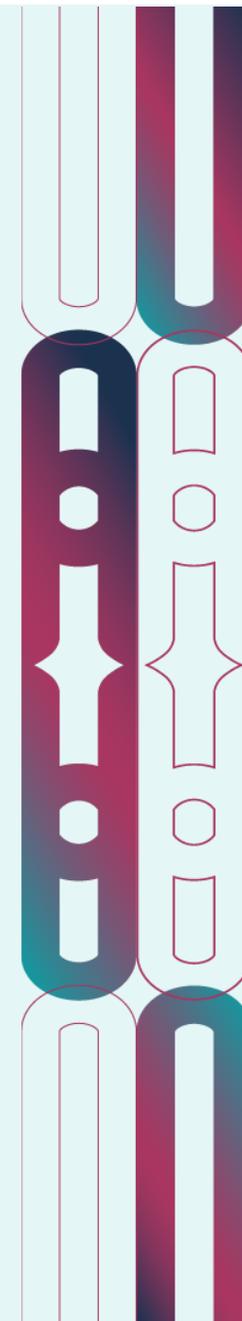


The 'capability gap' cuts both ways

“It felt really difficult working in tech ... a Māori wahine working in a very male dominated sector... I felt... especially for the first two years, it was a lot of fighting to feel like I was one of the team.”

“I think a lot of it has to do with organisations [that] aren't operationally fit. I call it operationally ready, to not only onboard, but to look after Māori talent.”

“There's racism and bias, we gotta call it what it is, man - within our recruitment techniques, within our processes. It's within the people who are doing the interviews as well. It's within the recruitment ads... And so, Māori don't even apply, let alone if they do apply they're stuck with people who don't really understand te ao Māori, they are not looking past the CV. They don't know that Māori generally have many other hats on. They'll be committed to their iwi, to their marae, to the broader community.”

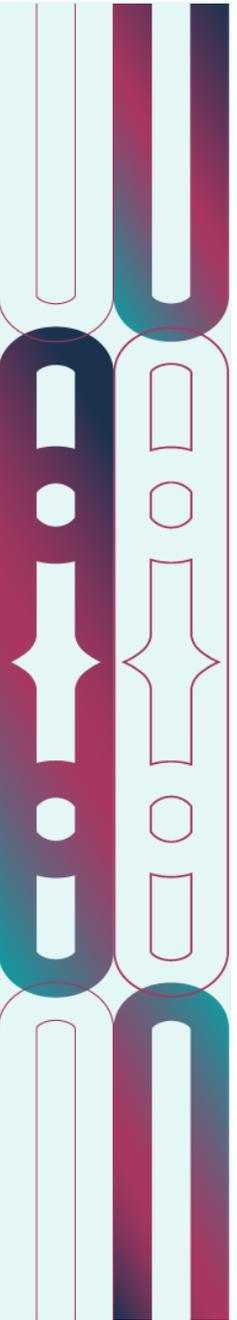


2. Improving access and opportunities is fundamental

The direct and indirect impact of poverty, and **access to resources** is a barrier to participation. For some, this includes basics like paying for public transport, internet connectivity or access to spaces without distraction at home.

Some rangatahi do not have the luxury of tertiary education, even with fee-free years and scholarship programmes. For many rangatahi there is an ‘opportunity lost’ factor to consider – trading off a job immediately out of high school that can support whānau with essentials like food and heating - or taking on debt. The cost of living in Auckland in particular is a barrier. Unnecessarily losing talent to jobs that perpetuate the cycle of poverty represents a high opportunity cost for Auckland and Aotearoa.

There is a need to facilitate more affordable, inclusive education pathways to digital technologies careers, and this includes the need to address equitable access to education. Solutions to these complex issues could lie in opportunities for learners to engage in programmes that encourage learning, whilst at the same time earning income, where work and learning occur in seamless environments.



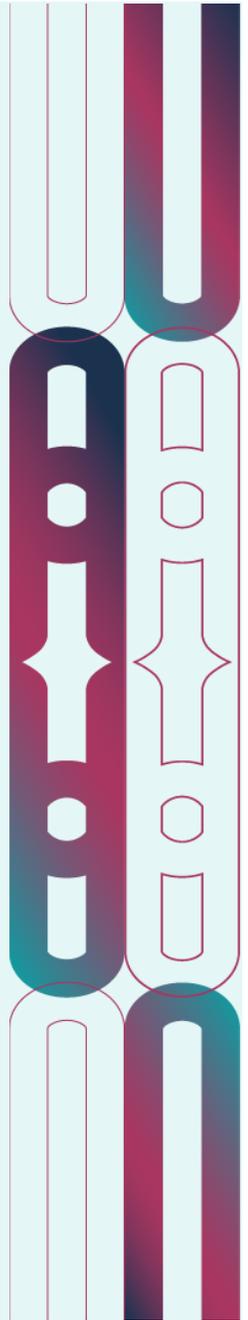
Improving access and opportunities

“I know a lot of people, they struggled financially. Māori, Pacifica you know...I see a lot of them dropping out due to family circumstances or transportation issues.”

“During COVID, I had really bad internet and I couldn't do any of my projects for the whole term.”

“I was at uni, and I found that a lot of Māori PI's had issues with...family at home, and it was really difficult to study.”

“My data is all of my nieces and nephews that I've seen, and that's honestly 12 out of 20 over the last three years, and chopped up because they're bored, the lecturing programme is just so boring for them... I can go and study someone in one week's time on YouTube better than what the university offers them and in the format that they want... That technology has got to play a role in disrupting that space because you're literally looking for an 'Uber' for universities now.”



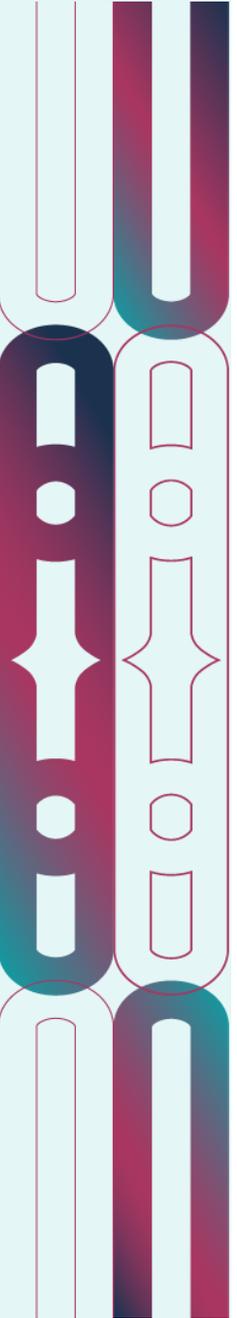
3. A sense of belonging and a community is important

The entry into tech and retention of rangatahi Māori would be strengthened by connection to other Māori, both at the same level as them, and with Māori role models within tech and te ao Māori.

Those interviewed highlighted the necessity of mentors. Participants expressed in earnest that mentors please be accessible as well as visible. Those that had access to a mentor hunted hard to find one, felt confident in their participation and success in the industry, and were able to navigate and stabilise their position in their course or workplace.

Participants spoke of finding their people, their tribe, those with whom they could share, in whom they could recognise themselves and be recognised, feel supported, develop, grow and blend.

Know that approximately 30% of rangatahi Māori are working towards careers where they know people in those jobs.



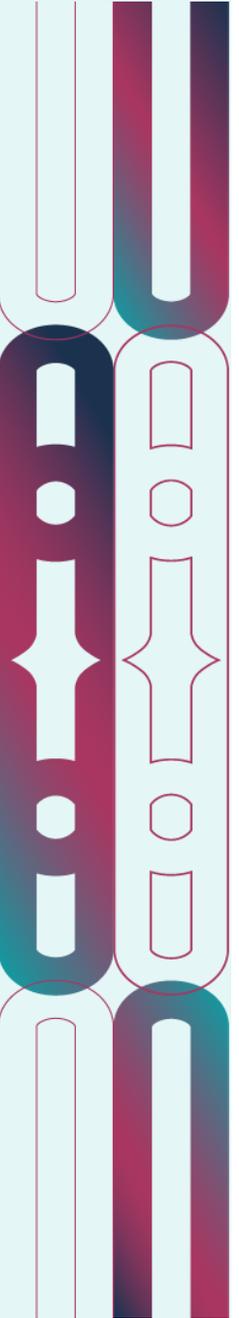
A sense of belonging and a community is important

“Every Māori / PI kid dreams of being an All Black. What kid thinks they can be CEO of a company? Try creating role models that push them into STEMM things.”

“I think you look around the room and you're like, where's my people?”

“I like being around more Māori people. Because even at work, I saw this girl... and I was like, ‘Oh thank God! There's a Māori!’ I would have to be honest, I would have liked more Māori for personal reasons.”

“We need that community. Having that community at work that can help you navigate, especially in a new job.”



4. Need to recognise Māori aspirations, not just industry needs

It is important to recognise that tech industry aspirations and expectations may often differ to Māori aspirations and expectations. In particular, participants emphasised the importance of self-determination.

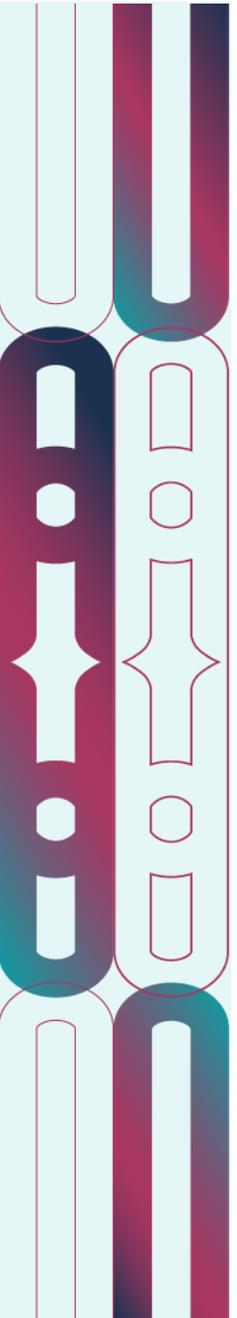
Industry is typically driven by things such as filling immediate and forecast labour shortages, building a more diverse workforce and improving the skills capability gap of domestic talent.

These don't necessarily align to Māori aspirations, which may include things such as growing the Māori tech economy, career pathways that protect and nurture culture and environment, and improving overall wealth and wellbeing.

There was a strong desire to work for organisations that have a clear purpose beyond making money, and that have values that align to people personally, and importantly, are upheld in the workplace.

The desire and responsibility to serve and uplift iwi, hapū and whānau is an influencer in career pathway decisions. This could mean anything from flexibility to work around these additional commitments through to being able to work closer to ancestral lands, which can be in the regions and not in the main tech centres.

Mana Motuhake (self determination) is a kaupapa that emerged through this research.



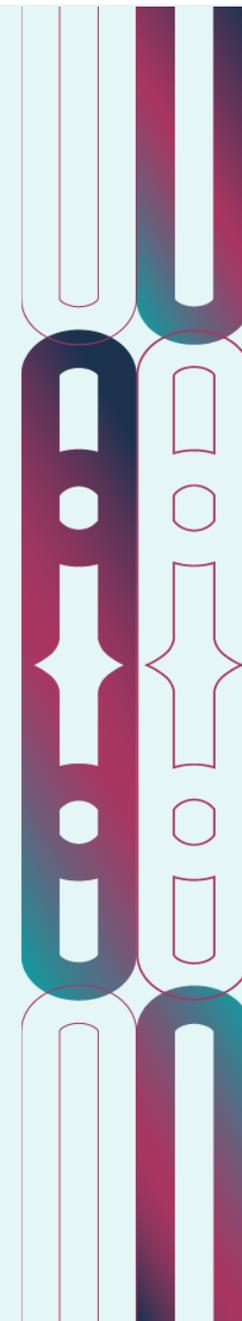
Need to recognise Māori aspirations, not just industry needs

“The best thing I've ever done is to create my wairua statement.”

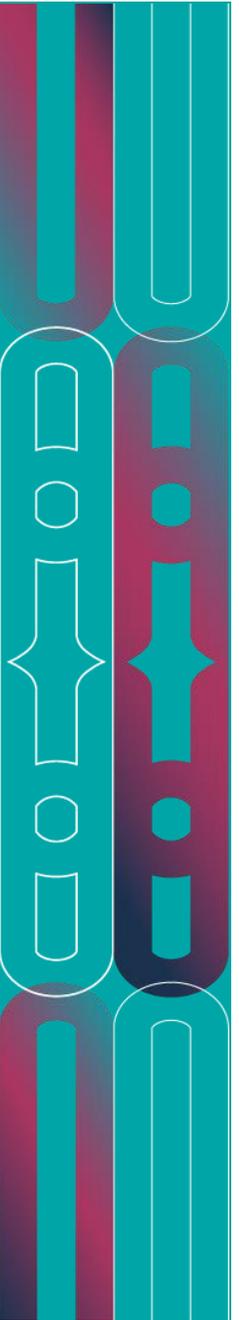
“How would we then invest and take that Māori world view and apply it to developing the industry? I'd like New Zealand to be the place where we come up with game changing products and services in tech, that actually genuinely impact the world in a better way.”

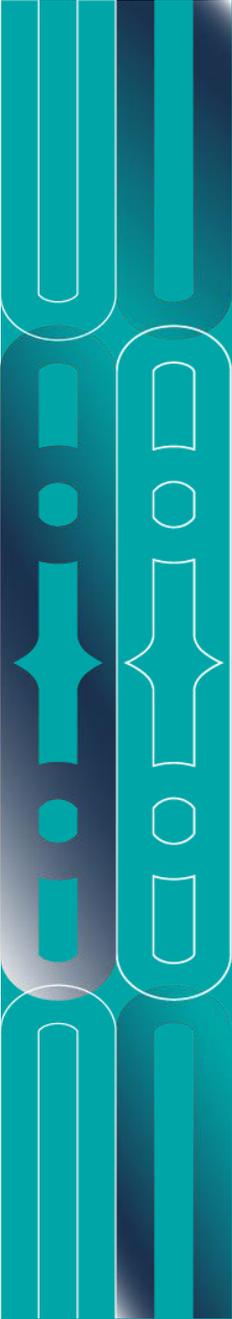
“I think until we see more Māori-led technology companies, [rangatahi graduates leaving the sector] is likely going to be the case. When I get back to that mātauranga Māori, the way that we think and feel, this is tactile stuff. It's not just here. It's stuff we actually do and we take responsibility for it. Because we hold ourselves responsible for our level of integrity, as far as what is this product for? [Are we] going to create a product that's going to harm people in a social way, or an emotional way?”

“Making Mana not just money.”



**Therefore, the fundamental proposition is..
to create an industry where Māori feel a deep sense of
belonging, which will lead to a greater desire to
participate and to thrive.**

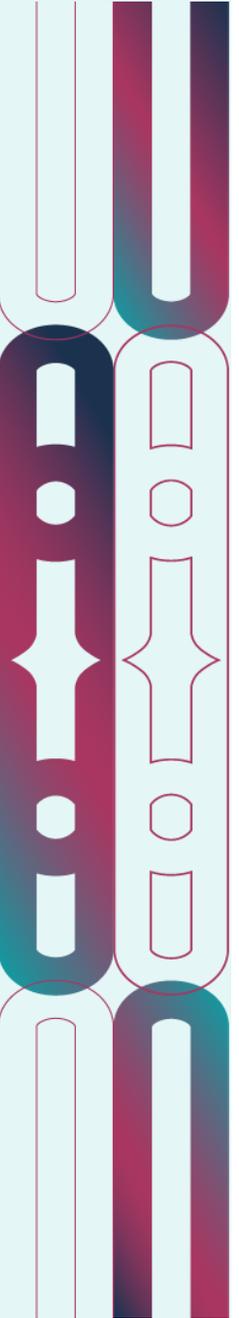




Suggested Actions & Enablers

Four actions and enablers that can create belonging

- 1 Create culturally safe workplaces and develop culturally literate leaders
- 2 Re-think access to education and employment in the tech industry, recognising whānau as an influencer
- 3 Enhance Māori leadership and profile in your organisations
- 4 Enable Māori employees to connect into culturally anchored support networks

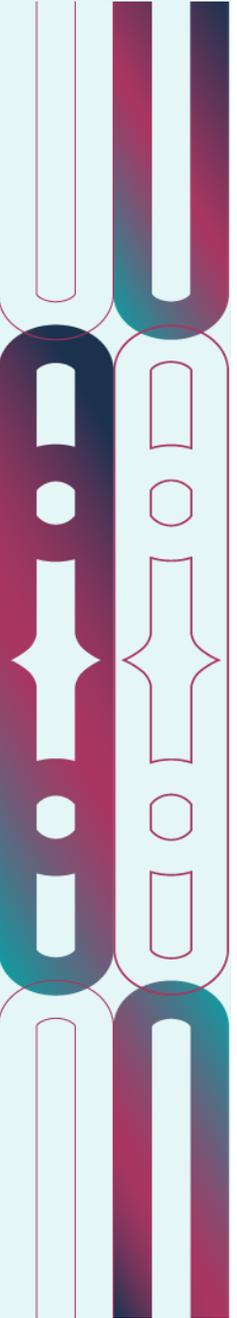


Before you begin...

Laying the foundation for success

Do you have a mandate and resources to be successful in creating change in your organisation?

- Identify who you need to take on this journey within your organisation
- Create a clear mandate for action with leadership buy-in
- Along with this mandate, secure resources (money, people, time) to be able to effectively develop and execute a plan.
- Build the team to support you on this journey and partner with external experts
- Understand that some Māori do not come from homes and whānau where te reo Māori or Māori world views thrive. Don't ask them to be your experts, but do ask them if they'd like to be involved, and create the space within their workload to contribute.

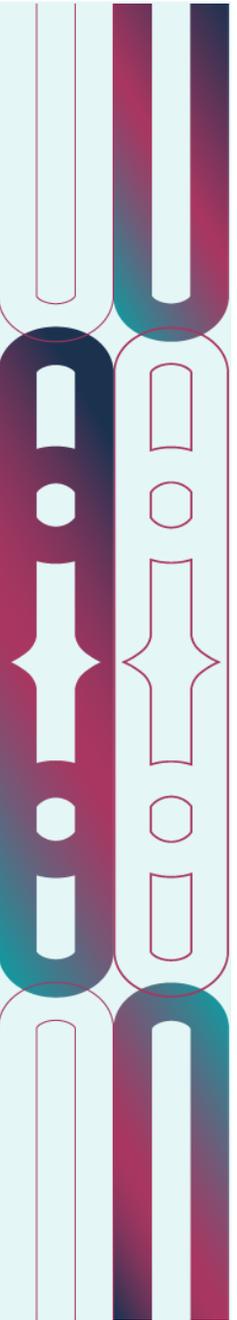


Actions and enablers

1. Create culturally safe workplaces and develop culturally literate leaders

Do you know what your organisational cultural maturity is? Do you have a cultural competency plan? If so, how are you tracking your progress?

- Work with your cultural development team if you have one or seek a cultural advisor to design and measure collectively.
- Undertake a cultural maturity/competency assessment to understand where your organisation is at. You might start with one area of the organisation first.
- Create a plan for change. Depending on your organisation size and maturity, this could be 1-10 year plan – rushing is not always the best way to create meaningful change.
- Set organisational objectives that track cultural maturity – this might include things like recruitment practices, HR policies, wellbeing and safety measures, as well as well as increasing Māori representation at different levels and targets like pay parity.
- Contribute to wider sector growth by sharing your plans and experiences with other organisations.

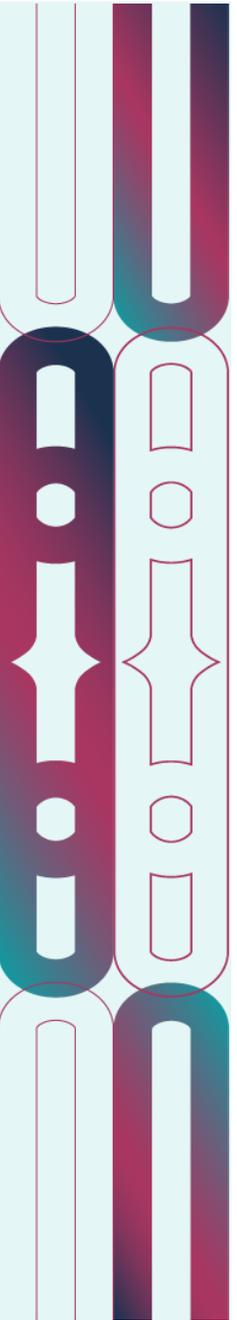


Actions and enablers

2. Re-think access to education & employment in the tech industry, recognising whānau as an influencer

What does your recruitment approach look like? Is it passive or active? Is it employee centric - do you adapt your approach to best support rangatahi to be successful?

- Review and renovate your recruitment approach to eliminate bias and make it as equitable as possible.
- Engage with specialist recruiters and/or build long-term partnerships with organisations developing STEMM talent who could, in years to come, help with filling roles.
- How does your organisation purpose and values show up?
- This might be the first time rangatahi have interviewed for a role, be very clear about the interview process – who will be there, what to bring, how to prepare, ask if there’s anything they need to help with the interview experience.
- Take time to get to know them on a personal level but also share back so it’s reciprocal (in te ao Māori this is called whakawhanaungatanga).
- Whānau play an important role in stabilising rangatahi, offer whānau/support to be present during the interview process.

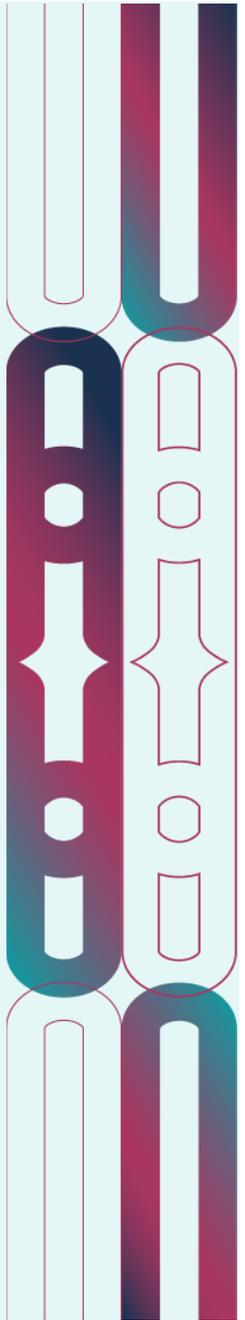


Actions and enablers

2. Re-think access to education & employment in the tech industry, recognising whānau as an influencer

Do you actively remove barriers to participation in the workplace?

- Think about how you can go beyond university scouting and recruitment strategies.
- Could you provide paid in-job training or build digital apprenticeships with a set curriculum that is based on getting a qualification and having external supports to do assessments and checking-in so it is not fully reliant on the employer.
- Have a robust career planning and transitioning programme from secondary school to tertiary and tertiary to employment to eliminate system shock.
- Work with others who can share their experiences of developing paid internships from a kaupapa Māori lens, including Digital Natives Academy (DNA) in Rotorua, and Korou Digital Agency in Te Wairoa.
- Many jobs in the tech industry can be conducted remotely which is a plus for the sector in attracting newcomers. Look for opportunities to distribute work and create localised jobs or hubs so people could work in tech from their home (kāinga).



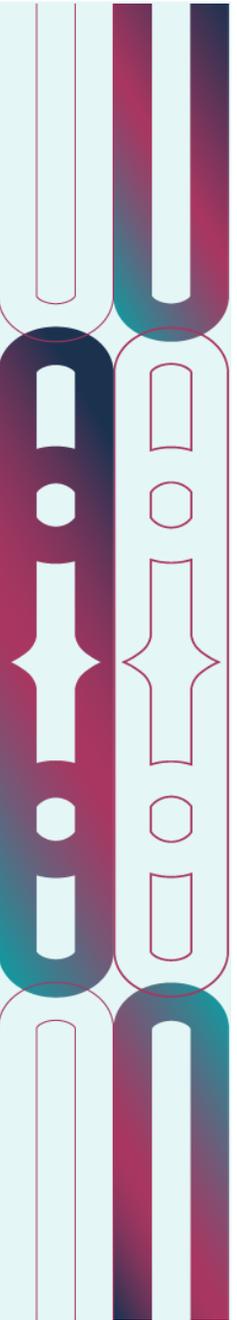
Actions and enablers

3. Enhance Māori leadership and profile in your organisations

What is your talent development plan for Māori employees?

What do you do to lift awareness of and celebrate the success of Māori in your organisation?

- Build your bench: develop personalised plans with opportunities, goals and milestones with time frames to develop skills and build experience and expertise.
- Consider what non-monetary ideas could better support Māori in your organisation.
- Build the profile of Māori in your organisation to encourage others and incoming rangatahi to see themselves in the sector.
- Enable your Māori employees to participate in rangatahi mentoring programmes as part of their workload (not on top of).
- Be intentional - consider setting ambitions at all levels of your organisation, especially leadership.

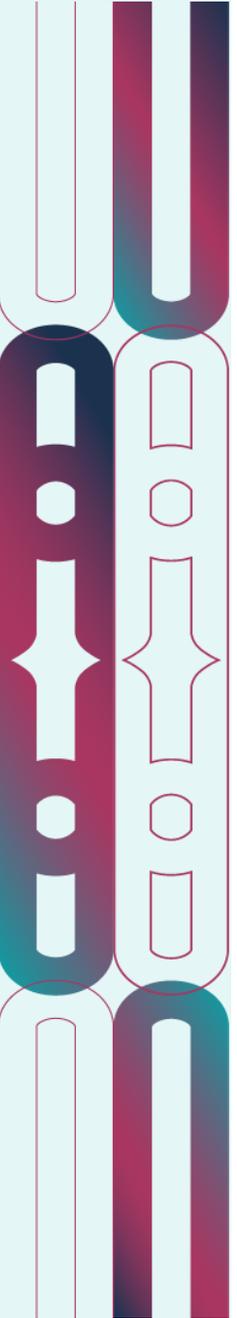


Actions and enablers

4. Enable Māori employees to connect into culturally anchored support networks

How do you currently support Māori employees to connect with their culture in the workplace? How do you enable them to connect with others in the tech industry?

- Provide holistic mentoring that is culturally adjusted for new joiners through to experienced employees so they feel supported and challenged both with their work and personal well-being.
- Support and develop connections to other Māori with related interests, to support their well-being, and self-esteem and reduce the feeling of isolation.
- Fund networking opportunities and/or partner with recommended Māori businesses or organisations that develop informal and formal kaimahi (employee) networks in your organisation.
- Enhance support for cultural activities and moments of significance or other initiatives as determined by Māori employees.

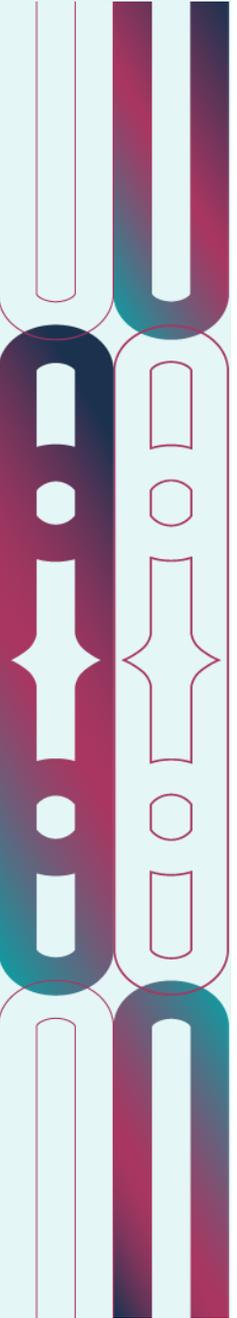


Actions and enablers

Other ways to support Māori in the tech industry

How do you demonstrate the concepts of manaakitanga and reciprocity?

- Consider partnering with Māori tech organisations on Request for Proposals and contracts to 'skills swaps' and share resources.
- Second staff to Māori community initiatives that train rangatahi.
- Recommend trusted Māori partners to your networks.
- Partner with kaupapa Māori organisations that are encouraging school aged tamariki and rangatahi into digitech pathways. This could be through funding/donations, skills sharing or industry visits.



Industry resource directory

Here are some links to kaupapa Māori organisations that can help you get started. This list will evolve.

If you would like to recommend an organisation that is led by Māori that could support the tech industry's cultural growth, please contact:

Wellington Tamatimu:

wellington.tamatimu@aucklandnz.com

An industry body for Māori working in the tech industry

[Te Matarau](#)

Kaupapa Māori organisations that can support industry cultural competency reviews and strategic cultural support

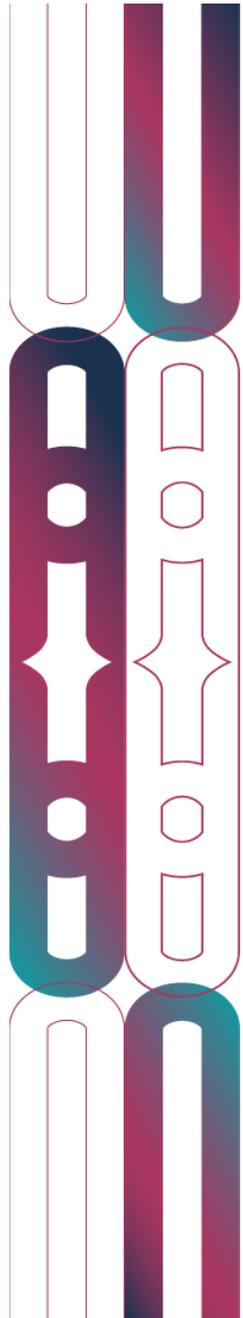
[AATEA Solutions](#)
[Tūmanako Consultants](#)
[Indigenous Growth](#)
[Maurea](#)
[3BagsFull](#)

Kaupapa Māori organisations working with rangatahi on digital pathways that industry could partner with and/or fund

[Pūhoro STEMM Academy](#)
[Korou Digital](#)
[Ko Māui Hangarau Digital Natives Academy](#)
[3BagsFull](#)
[Hihiko Te Rawa](#)
[Auaha](#)
[Tōnui Collab](#)
[Huiterangiora](#)

Social procurement

[Whāriki](#)
[Amotai](#)



The exciting opportunity ahead

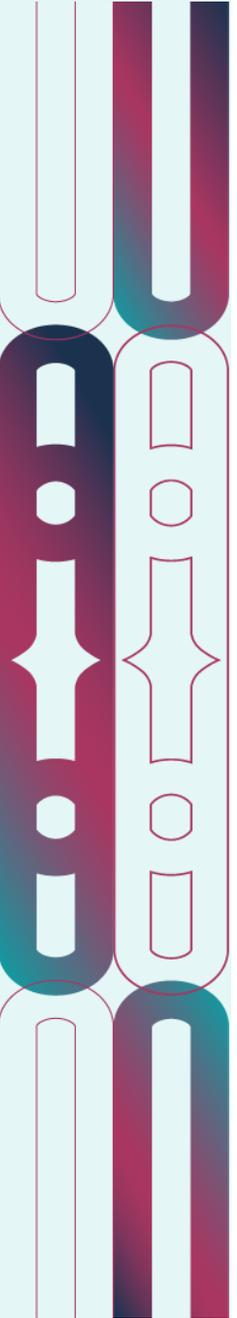
The opportunity for the sector to attract and retain diverse talent is huge. NZTech states that by 2040, New Zealand's tech industry is set to create 137,000 new jobs for women, 93,000 new jobs for Māori and 48,000 new jobs for Pacific people with an average salary of over \$100,000.

Growing Māori exponents in soft tech, hard tech and creative tech careers starts with having a plan, and being organisationally fit to attract such taonga to join or stay.

In addition, giving space for Māori tech to thrive, in and of itself is also beneficial for the wider tech industry.

This is a collective responsibility, but Auckland's tech industry in particular has a critical role to play in realising the exciting opportunity that lies ahead; to create thriving, diverse organisations that are ready for the next generation of thinkers and creators.

He waka eke noa: we are all in this together.



Tech Tāmaki Makaurau

Accelerating Auckland's Technology Industry

Visit aucklandnz.com/techakl

Contact us:

wellington.tamatimu@aucklandnz.com

Ngā mihi

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