

YOUTH ENTERPRISE IN NEW ZEALAND

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MINISTRY OF
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TE MANATŪ WHAKAHIATO TAIOHI

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE

To build a list of all Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives in New Zealand and, in turn, a deeper understanding of their value and impact for participants, their communities and New Zealand as a whole.

PROCESS

A small group of **providers and participants** of these programmes and initiatives were brought together for a **half-day forum** to share successes, challenges and future thinking.

Providers - those who developed and/or delivered a Youth Enterprise programme/initiative

Participants - those who took part in a Youth Enterprise programme or initiative

In depth interviews were subsequently undertaken with a larger group, focusing on three key areas identified during the forum: **value and impact, pipeline and pathways, overall learnings.**

Value and Impact - for individuals and the wider community awareness

Pipeline and pathways - knowledge of and advocacy for

Overall Learnings - from the successes and challenges in the Youth Enterprise space.

RESULTS

The findings are general and reflect the themes evident from speaking to a set of 25 providers in the youth enterprise space in New Zealand. **Data** has been analysed to show geographic reach and age of participants. **Insights** have been developed into a set of **Key Considerations**. This information might be used to assist providers with the development and delivery of Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives in New Zealand. Further, this information might be a consideration in investment decisions.

List of Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives in New Zealand*. As well as being a central source of providers and programmes/initiatives, this resource should be used to encourage collaboration between providers to build a more robust pipeline and pathways.

Further considerations are proposed based on two recurring themes which emerged but are not specifically addressed in the Key Considerations. These are a **Staged Process** to learning - relating to the age and stage of participants, and **Educating and Empowering Teachers and Parents**.

* DISCLAIMER: the list of Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives in New Zealand is not exhaustive. It should be updated as and when knowledge of other programmes and initiatives comes to light.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Youth Enterprise, and all its benefits, is not new to New Zealand. What is new is the broader application of the associated experiences and skills. As we move from developing entrepreneurs to building youth capability through an entrepreneurial mindset, this new wave of enterprise and entrepreneurship is more accessible, more broadly applicable and benefiting more young people than ever before.

Why is this important? The challenges and requirements for youth to find their place in the world and flourish are vastly different and more complex than those of the generations before them. New technologies, globalisation, digitisation, and increasing social and economic divides are all at the centre of their future reality. While traditional technical (hard) skills will always have a place, there is increasing need for a core set of transferable (soft) skills; skills which cannot be taught, but must be experienced.

In its recent **Youth Investment Strategy**, the Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) cites its vision:

To provide youth development opportunities that enable young people to acquire the skills and confidence they need to participate and contribute to the social and economic growth of New Zealand and its future.

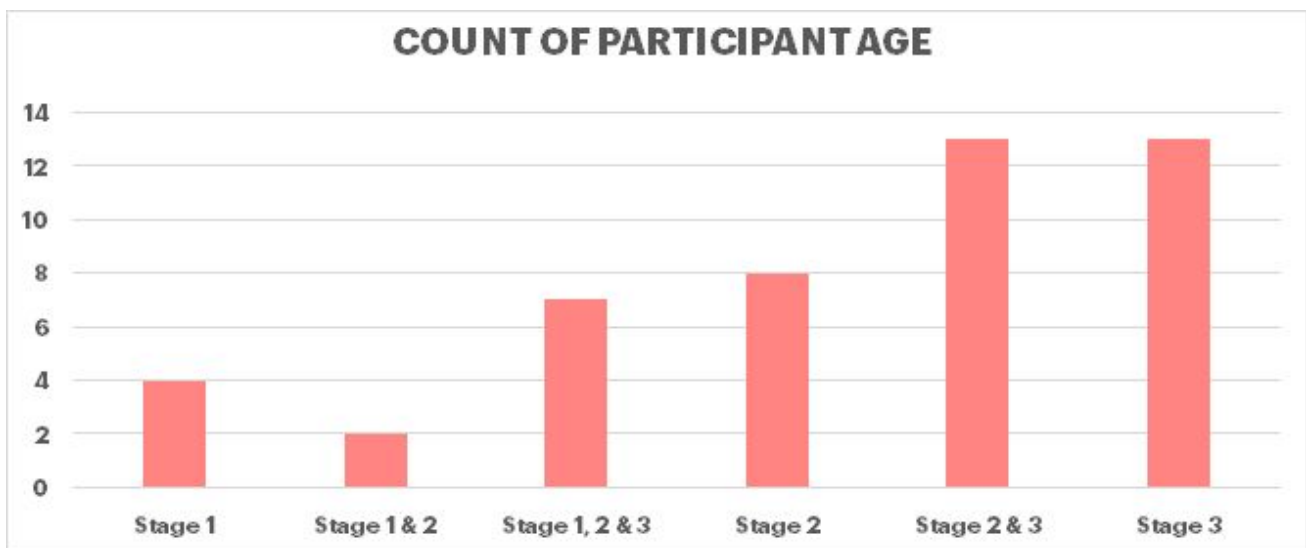
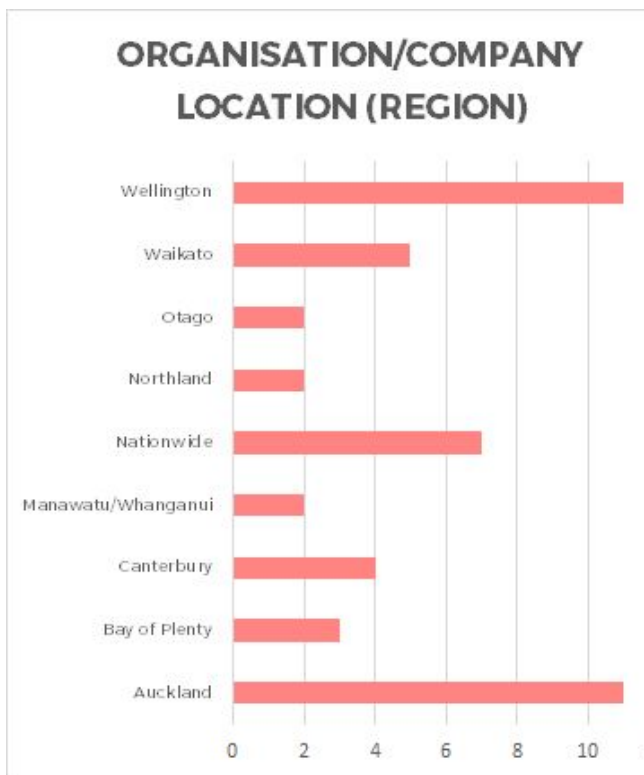
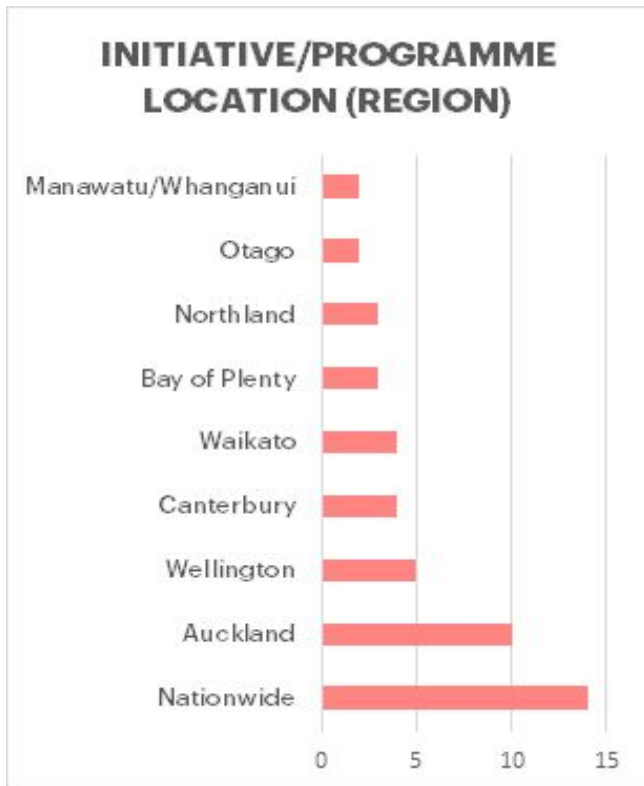
If this is to be realised, now is the time to broaden awareness of all the great things already happening in the Youth Enterprise space in New Zealand and build upon these foundations. This will ensure more young people have access to a 'future toolkit' to navigate and flourish in this new world - empowering them to make jobs, not just take jobs.

We want to build our evidence base so that all investment decisions consider how effectively the opportunities we fund support the overarching developmental outcomes of building capability and resilience.

NOTE: At this point, there are many youth development programmes and initiatives happening in New Zealand. The research undertaken for this report focuses on those with an enterprise focus or element, whether that be starting a venture, running a business, learning entrepreneurial methodologies or mindsets.

DATA: LOCATIONS AND AGE GROUPS

These graphs have been put together from data in the **List of Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives in New Zealand***



STAGE 1: JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL - 12-15 YRS

STAGE 2: SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL - 16-18 YRS

STAGE 3: POST HIGH SCHOOL - 18+ YRS

INSIGHTS: VALUE AND IMPACT

INSIGHTS AROUND THE MOST SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF VALUE AND IMPACT

TRANSFERABLE + SOFT SKILLS

Exponential value and impact are possible through experiences which develop transferable and soft skills. They allow young people to think and do more for themselves and are applicable to a myriad of work and life situations - e.g. navigating increasingly complex career pathways and making sense of the information deluge they are exposed to through social media and online accessibility.

The Foundation for Young Australians (FYA) key transferable or “enterprise skills” are: **digital literacy, teamwork, presentation skills, critical thinking, creativity** and **financial literacy**.

The core soft skills commonly noted by recruitment specialists and hiring managers are: **communication skills, flexibility, time management skills, decision making skills** and **being a team player**.

Participants report being able to better understand and apply their technical learnings (e.g. from university) by using transferable skills. Providers report a dramatic difference in participants’ ability to interact and provide value in the ‘working’ or ‘adult’ world.

EXPERIENTIAL + IMMERSIVE LEARNING

It has been said that entrepreneurship cannot be taught, it must be experienced.

Almost all Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives are delivered through experiential learning – while students might be provided with tools, methodologies or frameworks, they are expected to apply them in practice themselves and experience all the success and failure that comes with it. Providers report this builds resilience, an authentic sense of self and personal capability, and ultimately improved confidence.

For some young people, this is their first opportunity to build professional skills such as time management, a professional disposition, and work ethic in a safe environment. An immersive learning experience is seen as more fun and, although disciplined, less rigid. This promotes greater engagement and a positive association with the subject matter. Providers report that participants, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are substantially more engaged when learning this way.

EXPOSURE TO THE NEW + DIFFERENT

There is significant value when a young person’s eyes are opened to something entirely new or presented in a different way -

“Bringing worlds that seemed so far away to within our reach”

AKAU WORKSHOPS participant

whether it be an industry, an individual or a career pathway. Finding themselves in new situations, different environments and with others they wouldn't ordinarily get the chance to meet, develops confidence through a sense of belonging and opens new pathways.

This also creates diversity in previously dominated industries or areas of work - when those who mightn't have access to certain industries or careers are skilled up and connected into the ecosystem. Participants report being able to apply for and perform roles they had no idea existed.

By having experts (e.g. designers, developers, Lean Startup practitioners) run these programmes and initiatives, participants experience a learning environment very different to school. They are learning from those who are right in the thick of what they are teaching - the focus is less on the method or structure, and more on the content and its application.

CONNECTIONS

When young people come together with others their own age, who share similar interests and ways of thinking, they feel validated and accepted, and empowered to cultivate their unique talents and interests. This connection becomes even more pronounced when young people haven't experienced it before.

Bringing young people together with more experienced people brings another level of validation and a new perspective to both parties. Participants gain a better sense of the responsibility involved in running their own enterprise or working for someone else and the need to have evidence and knowledge to back up their claims.

"The impact I see is in the advice from experts and mentors, constructive feedback and coaching alongside a reality check of the realities of the business world"

DIG MY IDEA facilitator

When young people are given the opportunity to connect with people who are different to them, whether through age, interests or background, it opens their eyes to other ways of doing things, and brings understanding and acceptance of diversity and different points of view.

BETTER INFORMED CHOICES

It is important to ensure our young people are as informed as possible when making study and career choices during and beyond school. Empowered decision making comes from knowledge and understanding gained through real-life experiences.

Through experiential learning young people have a more realistic idea about what the opportunities and challenges are, and are better placed to have productive conversations with parents and other adults lacking knowledge and experience in these areas.

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Individual participants, the teams they form, contributors (sponsors, stakeholders, facilitators and mentors), the local community and the wider nation are all impacted by the ripple effect of these programmes.

Young Enterprise programmes and initiatives energise and invigorate the business

community and longstanding individuals who want to give back and inspire others in the wider community to start their own business or innovate within their business.

"These people are starting businesses, creating jobs, and contributing to the economy"

CE, Te Awamutu Chamber of Commerce

MEASURING VALUE + IMPACT

With the most significant value and areas of impact identified, the question remains around how to measure these.

Quantitative

Providers report gathering quantitative data such as the number of applicants and/or participants. Work-based evidence also features - i.e. the quality and completion of work; getting to the end of the programme can be an achievement in itself and shouldn't be underestimated. Continuation beyond an initiative or programme is another common measure - ongoing employment, and extension and expansion of a venture or enterprise. This is essentially a post-programme component but offered by most providers.

Qualitative

As reported by educators, facilitators, contributors, and the participants themselves, these measures might include an increase in confidence, informed risk-taking and resilience, and ability to work in a team. Most providers survey participants before and after to self-assess their soft skills and progress. Collecting stories and case studies from participants and contributors is another common measure.

INSIGHTS: PIPELINE AND PATHWAYS

INSIGHTS AROUND THE AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY OF PIPELINE AND PATHWAYS

There is better awareness and advocacy in more established programmes and initiatives, often leading to collaboration and co-design between different providers to develop opportunities.

EXAMPLE: Venture Up was initially a collaboration between Young Enterprise Trust and Creative HQ to develop a programme to meet the gap identified when YES alumni left high school.

The entrepreneurial and startup ecosystem is strong in many parts of New Zealand, and is almost entirely open and available to young people, though this could be better leveraged.

EXAMPLE: Auckland University's Velocity and University of Canterbury's Centre for Entrepreneurship report benefitting hugely from connections to the wider startup and business community, feeding students through various ongoing opportunities.

Participants would benefit from respective regions being more aware and better connected to what's going on outside their patch. A New Zealand Inc approach opens more pathways for young people.

Existing and established organisations often offer an entire section of the pipeline themselves.

EXAMPLE: Young Enterprise Trust provides programmes from primary through to secondary levels. Inspiring Stories Trust works across age groups and various early stages of the entrepreneurial pathway.

Schools are an obvious place to start but not often accessible without teacher champions. Year 12 and 13 students are virtually a no-go zone because of NCEA and other school commitments.

EXAMPLE: All providers expressed the difficulties they faced getting into schools, and if they did, having to plan up to a year in advance to secure time with students.

Social media is a hugely useful, and often free, tool to build awareness and join up the pipeline.

EXAMPLE: 'Young Changemakers Tribe' has regional FB groups across the country, and New Zealand Tech Startups Eco-System FB group has a large representation of young people,, all sharing information and opportunities.

Alumni play a powerful ambassadorial and connector role for the flow of the pipeline. They also take on assistant, intern or leadership roles in ongoing versions of the programmes.

EXAMPLE: Almost all providers reported that Alumni were key in building awareness and uptake of programmes and initiatives, yet could be empowered to do so even more.

INSIGHTS: OVERALL LEARNINGS

INSIGHTS AROUND KEY SUCCESS CRITERIA AND OBSTACLES OR CHALLENGES

CO-CREATING

Working with young people to develop the content, or at the very least the way it is delivered. If young people are the customer it's critical, and at the heart of entrepreneurial methodology, to work with them to develop the product.

Similarly, if Youth Development is about getting young people into jobs, the employer should be involved from the start to be specific and realistic about their requirements to hire someone into a role, and the learning programme developed around those requirements.

PASTORAL CARE

A critical element of working with young people, and gaining top results, is pastoral care - no matter their backgrounds or capabilities.

Almost all providers talk of the benefits of providing youth with one-on-one support and coaching. Whether it comes from the facilitators or dedicated mentors, this approach allows young people to take greater risks and push themselves further than they might on their own. An environment of trust, care and positivity contribute enormously to the success of youth development initiatives and programmes. It is critical the provider is able to offer this.

VARIETY

Different ways of presenting information for different styles of learning and retention is key. Visuals, speakers, and monitored practical activities (as individuals and in teams) should all feature. Also, regular check-ins and self-reflection sessions to identify learning objectives and measure progress are important.

Having different people deliver the content encourages diversity of thought and inclusivity of different approaches and ideas.

CUTTING EDGE CONTENT

Content has to be fresh and new to engage young people. They will often have access to anything and everything providers do - being one step ahead or presenting content in a unique way is important. This can also be achieved through careful curation, where the value is extracting the best material from a sea of available content.

AUTHENTICITY

What also sets an educator apart is how they impart the information and learning, and their ability to relate to and engage with young people. Many providers expressed the importance of using the right language when getting their message across to young people. Authenticity is critical in building up trust and meaningful relationships, and ensuring ongoing interest and attention from young people.

WELLBEING COMPONENTS

There are many ways to incorporate wellbeing practices into programmes and initiatives. Whether it be daily self-reflection sessions, yoga in the morning or healthy choices if meals are provided - the point is that providers are increasingly offering holistic learning experiences and young people have an increasing need and appreciation of practices which recognise wellbeing.

RESOURCING

It takes substantial, and often underestimated effort, to enlist participants and deliver successful outcomes with young people, particularly groups from a disadvantaged background. Simply gaining access to lower decile schools takes considerably more time and energy than higher decile schools.

Furthermore, when it comes to delivery, the best people don't often come cheaply. Even with mentors and speakers offering their services in-kind, and alumni or other young people contributing to the overall delivery, those delivering programmes to large groups are often stretched.

PARTNERSHIPS

There is much value and benefit to working with partners e.g. through funding, co-designing, providing space, equipment or supplies, helping to promote and raise awareness. Partnerships are an increasingly common way for providers to deliver programmes and initiatives successfully and sustainably.

AGE AND STAGE

Get them early! As noted previously, Year 12 and Year 13 students are very difficult to get to and it's perhaps too late to introduce new pathways. Young Enterprise Scheme is the exception to this - its programmes can be integrated into the NCEA curriculum and it has built a strong reputation and relationships with New Zealand schools over 35 years.

Many providers, working with young people in high schools, have moved to target Years 8, 9, 10 and 11, reporting that not only are they much easier to access, but they are often more open to learning new things and alternative pathways.

MINDSETS

Many providers and most participants expressed fixed mindsets as being one of the most significant barriers to the uptake of Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives. Older generations, including parents, and long standing institutions often lack knowledge and understanding of alternative opportunities and pathways outside their own experiences.

There is a huge opportunity to build awareness and understanding among those who haven't been exposed to enterprise and entrepreneurial thinking, it's benefits and pathways. Educating parents, teachers and community leaders should be part of any Youth Enterprise initiative.

CONCLUSION AND FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Focusing on three key themes - **value and impact, pipeline and pathways, and overall learnings** the following set of KEY CONSIDERATIONS have been identified:

VALUE AND IMPACT

- Does the programme/ initiative develop **transferable and soft skills**, alongside technical skills?
- Does the programme/ initiative develop young people to **think and do things for themselves**, rather than just showing and telling. Does it **build resilience and confidence** alongside capability?
- Does the programme/ initiative offer something **materially different** to what's already available to young people - either an industry, people or toolset?
- Does the programme/ initiative **connect** participants with others their own age who have a similar drive and ambition? And to those with experience who can facilitate and accelerate capability building and career pathways?
- Does the programme/ initiative provide participants with more knowledge, experience-based understanding and **confidence to make life and career choices**?
- Does the programme/ initiative provide **impact beyond the participant**? Does it have the potential to impact local community, national and global communities?

PIPELINE AND PATHWAYS

- Is the programme/initiative **measurable** in both a **qualitative and quantitative** way, and immediately/longitudinally?
- Does the programme/initiative flow from one opportunity to another? Do providers demonstrate **awareness and advocacy for existing and ongoing opportunities**?

OVERALL LEARNINGS (from previous programmes and initiatives)

- Does the provider have a solid grasp of **success factors and challenges** working in the Youth Enterprise space?

A STAGING PROCESS

It was also identified that providers often cater to more specific age groups within the 12-24 age bracket, further narrowing to three unique stages. The earliest of these is the least catered for.

It is suggested consideration be given to breaking up programmes and funding by a STAGING PROCESS for participants as outlined below:

Stage 1 - EXPOSE + AWAKEN

12-15 Years Old

- Year 8-10, junior high school
- Introduction and rev-up phase of Youth Enterprise
- “These opportunities, industries and pathways are available and this is what they look like...”
- Help make informed choices for final years of school

Stage 2 - EXPERIENCE + ACCELERATE

15-18 Years Old

- Year 11- 13, senior high school
- Deeper learning and startup phase of Youth Enterprise
- “This experience will ensure you know how things look and feel for real...”
- Help make informed choices for after school

Stage 3 - GROW + EXPAND

18-24 Years Old

- Post high school, possibly in or about to enter tertiary education
- Progress and scale-up phase of Youth Enterprise
- “Get a leg up into the adult world, get connected, and get scaling...”
- Help make informed choices if this is your full-time venture

EDUCATE + EMPOWER TEACHERS AND PARENTS

Finally, it was identified that while parents and teachers have the most influence on young people, they are often the least informed or open to the opportunities of Youth Enterprise.

It is suggested that this might be an area of focus for ongoing consideration, and incorporated into the development and delivery of programmes and initiatives.

THE LIST AND FURTHER RESOURCES

LIST OF YOUTH ENTERPRISE PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES IN NEW ZEALAND*

* The List of Youth Enterprise programmes and initiatives in New Zealand is not exhaustive. It should be updated as and when knowledge of other programmes and initiatives comes to light.

MYD YOUTH INVESTMENT STRATEGY

YFA REPORT: UNLIMITED POTENTIAL - A Commitment to Young Australians

YFA REPORT: THE NEW BASICS - Big data reveals the skills young people need for the New Work Order

Creative HQ would like to thank all individuals and organisations that contributed to the research for this report.



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