

Thrive Whanganui Expo 2018

Summary Report

Purpose

The Thrive Whanganui team, under the umbrella of Ngā Tai o Te Awa, partnered with the Ākina Foundation and the Whanganui Chamber of Commerce & Industry to kick-start social enterprise in Whanganui through the inaugural Thrive Whanganui Expo.

Held on Wednesday-Thursday 21-22 February 2018, the two-day expo showcased successful local and national social enterprises at the Whanganui War Memorial Centre and Ngā Tai o Te Awa's headquarters.

This report provides a summary of the expo's achievements.



Julia Milne, Panapa Ehau (Hikurangi Enterprises), Charlotte Melser, Levi Armstrong (clockwise from top left)

Overview

The first day involved 13 inspirational speakers from around New Zealand and locally, sharing their journey through an opening key note address then a series of panel discussions on:

- Rural enterprise, including tourism and the primary sector
- Health and hospitality; and
- Arts and innovation.

Key note speaker:

- Julia Milne of Common Unity Project Aotearoa, operating from The ReMakery in the Hutt Valley, supporting Beeple Honey Collective, the Sew Good Cooperative (repurposing fabric into new products), Unity Kitchen and Catering, ReCycled Rides (refurbishing and providing bicycles) and The Common Grocer (a low cost, plastic-free grocery co-op).



Julia Milne opening day one

Rural enterprise panel:

- Eliz Ngarimu, Hikurangi Enterprises, researching native plant extracts, honey technologies, micro-loans for rural enterprise and more: www.hikurangi.enterprises
- Melita Farley, Double Farley, a Whanganui-based creative company covering adult education and film-making: www.doublefarley.com
- Dan Steele, Blue Duck Station, a working farm integrating conservation, preserving heritage, adventure tourism, accommodation, and environmental protection through diverse land management: www.blueduckstation.co.nz
- Warren Furner, Ruapehu District Council, economic development and transport manager who has created opportunities for local jobs through social procurement thinking

Health and hospitality panel:

- Levi Armstrong, Patu Aotearoa, a whanau-friendly exercise movement with franchises around NZ: www.patunz.com
- Jess Ducey, PledgeMe, a crowdfunding and equity facilitation platform: www.pledgeme.co.nz
- Sonia Tiatia, DINE Academy, an enterprise focused on upskilling young people with a passion for the culture of people, food and service, building a strong hospitality industry: www.dineacademy.co.nz
- Charlotte Melser, The Citadel, a café bringing life and energy to Castlecliff: www.castlecliff.nz/citadel

Arts and innovation panel:

- Taaniko Nordstrom, Soldiers Rd Portraits, a photography service, operating globally, using cultural imagery to strengthen identity and self-esteem: www.soldiersrd.nz
- Kendal Collins, Sisters United, a creative mentoring programme for young Māori and Pasifika women: www.sistersunited.co.nz
- Marilyn Vreede, Pakohe Papers, a Whanganui-based Māori kaupapa-based art flax paper and educational resources business: www.pakohe.co.nz
- Alex McLeod, an IT professional returned home to Whanganui, offering advice on how to access free or low-price Cloud-based services for NGOs, marae and social enterprises.

The first day concluded with networking at Frank Bar + Eatery.

The second day offered a case study analysing a social enterprise in action, coaching and mentoring sessions for those seeking to start or further develop their social enterprise ideas and existing initiatives, and a workshop on starting a social enterprise. There were also two lunchtime tours to local social enterprises.

Attendance fees for the Expo were kept affordable thanks to sponsorship:

- General admission Day 1: \$80 (\$60 early bird)
- Concession Day 1: \$40 (\$20 early bird)
- Student Day 1: \$20 (\$10 early bird)
- Starting a social enterprise workshop Day 2: \$20/\$10

Attendance

More than 200 attended day one of the expo. The team set percentage targets for attendance, which were all exceeded, with a specific focus on the following categories:

- 66% Female
- 31% Youth
- 29% Māori, and
- 14% Artists.

Day two attracted the following participants:

- 55 at the social lean canvas case study
- 50 attended mentoring slots with nine mentors
- 22 took part in lunchtime tours to Pakohe Papers and The Citadel Café, and
- 21 participated in the Starting a Social Enterprise workshop with Ākina.



Day two case study

Public Profile

We achieved a wide range of news media coverage, including front page of the Wanganui Chronicle and a supportive editorial. We also featured in The Midweek and the Rivercity Press. The Chronicle also provided quarter-page advertising nine times without charge as part of their support for the event.

- Chronicle coverage x5
- Midweek coverage x2
- Rivercity Press coverage x2

Additionally, we had wide reach with our Facebook page through organic reach and some promoted posts. We also we reached people through our Twitter and Instagram accounts.

- Facebook: 421 page followers, highest reach post went to 4,100 with 377 engaged

We established a monthly MailChimp-based e-newsletter directly contacting interested parties, with 185 subscribers, and more than 50% open rate.

Zero Waste

Our commitment to aim for a Zero Waste event was undertaken through some key actions:

- Partnering with Plastic Bag Free Whanganui and the Whanganui Prison to produce recycled fabric lanyards, which are available for reuse at other events

- Minimising the event programme paperwork, which was combined with the name tag and printed on recycled light card and recycled after the event
- Choosing a caterer with commitment to plastic-free and avoiding plastic drinking cups
- Advising Ngā Tai o Te Awa is a Wai Māori venue – water-only

Day 1
Whanganui War Memorial Centre, Watt St

8.30AM REGISTRATION

9.00AM OPENING
Kaumatua John Maihi
Mayor Hamish McDouall
Thrive co-founders Andre Taylor & Nicola Patrick

9.20AM KEY NOTE ADDRESS
Julia Milne, Common Unity Project Aotearoa

10.00AM BREAK

10.20AM PANEL - HEALTH & HOSPITALITY
Levi Armstrong, Patu NZ
Jess Ducey, PledgeMe
Sonia Tiatia, DINE Academy
Charlotte Melser, The Citadel Cafe

12.00PM LUNCH

1.00PM PANEL - ARTS & INNOVATION
Kendal Collins, Sisters United
Taaniko Nordstrom, Soldiers Rd Portraits
Marilyn Vreede, Pakohe Papers
Ash Patea, Whanganui River Tours

2.40PM BREAK

3.00PM PANEL - RURAL ENTERPRISE
Panapa Ehau, Hikurangi Enterprises
Dan Steele, Blue Duck Station
Melita Farley, Double Farley
Warren Furner, Ruapehu District Council

4.40PM WRAP UP

5.00PM NETWORKING
FRANK BAR + EATERY, VICTORIA AVE

Day 2
Ngā Tai o Te Awa, 142 Guyton St

8.30AM REGISTRATION

9.00AM CASE STUDY
Social Lean Canvas tool with a real social enterprise case study, led by Ākina and Taaniko Nordstrom

10.00AM BREAK

10.30AM MENTORING
Sharon Bryant – investment & digital
Andrew Tripe – strategy
Taaniko Nordstrom – creative success
Andre Taylor – startup & feasibility
Sera Lilly – social media & health/fitness
Julia Milne – community development
Chris O'Neill – arts & governance
Cindy Hoskin – finance

10.30AM OPEN SPACE FOR COLLABORATION
We'll have facilitators available to help you work with others to progress ideas together

12.30PM LUNCHTIME TOURS
Pakohe Papers - bookings essential, numbers limited
The Citadel Cafe

2.00PM WORKSHOP
Starting a social enterprise - with an arts twist!

4.30PM CLOSE
BOOK ONLINE: THRIVENOW.ORG.NZ

Expo programme and name tag

Connections & Feedback

Multiple connections were made through the event, some of which are still developing now. Examples are:

- DINE Academy has offered four scholarships for Whanganui youth, valued at up to \$800 each, to attend their April holiday training programmes in Auckland or Wellington
- Soldiers Rd Portraits connected with the Whanganui Prison manager
- Conversations with Ruapehu District Council on their social procurement approach in restructuring a major contract for tender have been initiated
- Alex McLeod is hosting a Tech Week event at Ngā Tai o Te Awa to help social enterprises and others leverage cloud-based IT services
- St Georges School has made connections to the Thrive team for its studies into social enterprise, connected to the Young Enterprise Scheme
- Matipo Street Gardens is making plans to visit with Common Unity Project Aotearoa in the Hutt Valley

- A Whanganui chapter of Patu Aotearoa is progressing, and
- Two Whanganui community members have formally agreed to volunteer their professional services with the Thrive team to support emerging enterprises.

Overwhelmingly positive feedback has been received from participants with no complaints received.

- Taaniko Nordstrom: “I enjoyed Thrive Whanganui so much! What an amazing event you put on. I left there feeling really energised about some of my projects and ideas to improve the life of our people here in Aotearoa and I think there was truly a special wairua that you created. I felt a buzz!”
- Sonia Tiatia: “I hope you've all had a good rest and can bask in the glow of a successful event with great energy and social enterprise spirit. Every component of the event was great and a pleasure to attend... Everyone recharged my soul and energy for a new week/month of oomph and motivation!”
- Charmaine Meyers: “An inspirational day Thrive Whanganui Expo – looking forward to day two!” Then on day two “It was a great session!”

While there were some minor areas of event administration that could have been tighter, including getting out a post-event survey more promptly, overall it was a highly successful and smooth experience. The next event will benefit from these learnings.



Day two participants

Sponsors

We brought together a wonderful set of sponsors, partners and supporters for the inaugural Thrive Expo, as well as mentors who gave their time freely and enthusiastically.

Silver Sponsor

- Whanganui District Council

Bronze Sponsors

- Archibald & Co
- Bank of New Zealand
- NZME and the Wanganui Chronicle
- PIF Foundation
- Ruapehu District Council
- Silks Audit
- Whanganui & Partners
- Whanganui District Council Youth Committee
- Whanganui River Market Trust

Partners

- Ākina Foundation
- Ngā Tai o Te Awa
- Whanganui Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Supporters

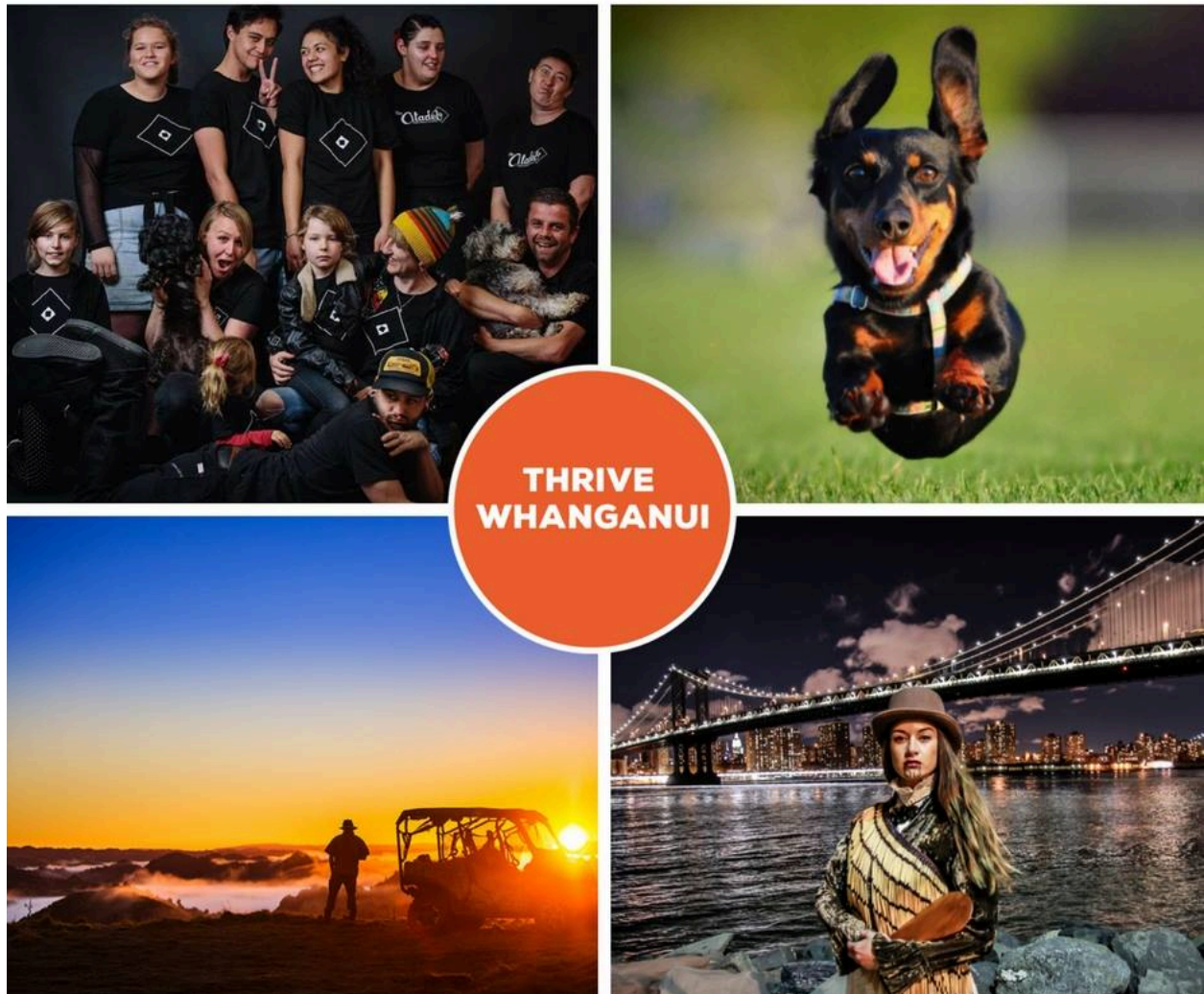
- 100% Sweet
- Double Farley
- PAUA Print
- Plastic Bag-Free Whanganui
- Restorative Practices Trust
- Tamaūpoko
- Whanganui Prison
- Whanganui Resource Recovery Centre

Mentors

- Sharon Bryant, investment
- Jess Ducey, crowdfunding
- Cindy Hoskin, finance
- Sera Lilly, social media
- Julia Milne, community development
- Taaniko Nordstrom, marketing
- Chris O'Neill, governance
- Andre Taylor, startup
- Andrew Tripe, strategy

All these parties made the Thrive Expo an inclusive and connected experience, and many have proactively contacted us asking to be involved in the future. Our intention is that this becomes an annual event, involving a similarly diverse mix of social entrepreneurs and inspiring speakers from around NZ and locally, and perhaps even internationally!

We welcome your continued support both for future expos and for our ongoing Thrive programme, helping people set up and run businesses that make a positive impact socially, environmentally and culturally.



The Citadel Café, PledgeMe enthusiasm in action, Taaniko Nordstrom, Dan Steele (clockwise from top left)

To discuss Thrive Whanganui, please contact Nicola on info@thrivenow.org.nz or 027 871 6459.