

# A community-based national strategy for diversity and inclusion

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**INCLUSIVE AOTEAROA COLLECTIVE TĀHONO**

*Working to create an inclusive society in Aotearoa, New Zealand.  
founded on the partnership of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.*

# Introduction

At **Inclusive Aotearoa Collective Tāhono**, we are working to create a future for Aotearoa that builds belonging, embraces inclusion and honours Te Tiriti o Waitangi,

Our **vision** is that of an Aotearoa where everyone has a place to belong, leaving discrimination, racism, and prejudice in the past. It is a vision where everybody's mana is recognised and respected, regardless of one's background. It is a vision of upholding Te Tiriti, including tino rangatiratanga and the normalisation of te reo and tikanga Māori.

Our **mission** is to build a social movement of people, organisations, and communities across the country to achieve this vision.

## **We work through:**

- Collaborating and connecting across sectors to multiply impact and reach;
- Connecting communities within and across regions to expand common understanding of each other's experiences and histories (e.g. difficult conversations about racism, discrimination, and our shared histories);
- Educating public, private, and not-for-profit sector entities about the importance of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and how Mātauranga Māori can improve social cohesion in Aotearoa;
- Reducing the impacts by online harm through workshops, consultation and collaboration.

In early 2020, we began a research project asking New Zealanders about their experiences of belonging, and not belonging. We met with over 800 people and listened to their stories. We wanted to understand what helps people belong and what gets in the way of belonging, and find out what work is needed to create a society where everyone feels valued.

In 2022, we went back to as many regions and groups as we could to get an updated perspective on this research in light of 2021's Covid-19 events. (A full account of the research findings can be found [here](#).)

## Why a national strategy?

We have developed this national strategy as a tool for strengthening inclusion in Aotearoa, drawing from our research and engagement with communities. Our strategy offers an interpretation of how to achieve a society where everyone feels a sense of belonging, and what needs to change at a community level to achieve that ambition.

The themes that we selected from our research are those which guide our work in supporting community-based action. Out of the many themes that have emerged from our research, we have chosen not to focus on areas that we believe are tasks for central/local government.



This document identifies a set of outcomes and action-oriented objectives, which could add value to other community-based organisations across Aotearoa New Zealand who are walking the same path and working towards a society where:

- Racism and discrimination are reduced;
- The collective futures of communities are front and centre (communities determine solutions that work for them);
- Communities benefit from programmes designed to address their concerns;
- A collaborative NGO working environment allows for the sharing of ideas and resources and the co-development of programme activities for greater reach and impact;
- Civil society has access to and influence over government decision-making forums;
- Resourcing and funding support place-based and locally-led programmes.



# Learning together

Our national strategy is made up of eight pou:

- Valuing indigenous knowledge
- Participatory democracy and localisation
- Connected networks
- Social structures and values
- Media representation
- Safety and wellbeing
- Technology
- Learning from and influencing others

These are the pou that support our work in building belonging and inclusion in Aotearoa. Each of these concepts are broken down into suggestions of how they can be achieved, with examples of how we have done so at Inclusive Aotearoa Collective Tāhono.

We encourage you to use the ideas presented here to spark conversations in your organisations and communities about current and/or planned projects or programmes that support belonging and inclusion.



We also encourage you to share your experiences about which elements work, have worked, or have been difficult in your work.

This is a live document, meaning it is subject to change and grow based off feedback we receive and cultural shifts that inform it.

IACT is here to accompany you so that we can learn from one another on our collective journey towards a more inclusive Aotearoa.



# 1. Valuing indigenous knowledge

**Outcome:** Communities, organisations and institutions connect with Mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) to increase belonging.

**This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Work in partnerships to learn and apply Mātauranga Māori to achieve more equitable and empowering systems and processes
- Normalise te reo Māori and celebrate Tikanga Māori in communities, organisations and institutions
- Support the sharing of localised historical knowledge with communities
- Creating spaces and opportunities for connection between tangata whenua and diverse communities

**At our organisation this looks like:**

- Te Tiriti o Waitangi training for staff (e.g. at Papatuanuku Marae, Matike Mai book club)
- An established IACT tikanga practice
- Developing and maintaining relationships with marae across the country
- The implementation of a Co-Lead structure modelled from Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- Holding Belonging conversations as a platform for sharing Māori voices
- Holding Bridging Cultures workshops that partner with marae and offer them a platform to share local hāpū and iwi history



## 2. Participatory democracy and localisation

**Outcome:** Ensure equitable decision making supports well-being, opportunity and respect for all.

### **This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Increase representation of diverse people on committees, boards, and central and local government
- Work to change electoral systems and processes, including promoting consensus-based and collaborative politics
- Build capacity to engage in civic processes, including voting, submissions, hearings, community engagement and building social movements

### **At our organisation this looks like:**

- Working with partners to submit on legislation and government inquiries
- The delivery of Diversity and Inclusion workshops in organisations to create awareness of power imbalances and receptive environments for power-sharing (including accountability mechanisms)
- Working with partners on the Inclusive Faith Project, focused on inclusion of people with disabilities
- Developed relationships between policymakers and ethnic youth through the Ethnic Youth Voices project





## 3. Connected networks

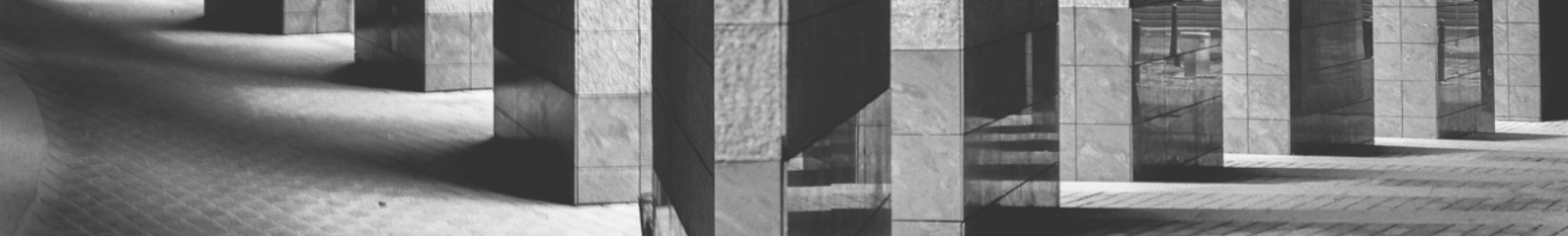
**Outcome:** Connect and empower diverse communities to create an inclusive society.

### **This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Create meaningful connections between people from diverse groups
- Support collaboration, led by communities, to take action that will support inclusion
- Provide opportunities to celebrate difference and connect to our common humanity
- Connect young people with leadership opportunities
- Strengthening consultative mechanisms that contribute to social cohesion

### **At our organisation this looks like:**

- Conversations about Belonging - delivering hui with diverse community groups about belonging/not belonging
- Building connections with others to amplify impact through the constellation model
- Connecting ethnic communities and Pasifika with mana whenua through our Bridging Cultures project
- Providing leadership opportunities to ethnic youth through the Ethnic Youth Voices project
- Working with government agencies and community leaders to strengthen engagement processes



## 4. Social structures and values

**Outcome:** Ensure social structures reflect inclusive values and equitable power sharing.

**This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Promote values-based ways of relating, where we are in “right” (tika) relationships with one another and the environment
- Name and rebalance power dynamics within institutional and civil society structures
- Support people and communities to ask for and receive help
- Increase awareness of alternative worldviews to materialism and consumerism

**At our organisation this looks like:**

- Facilitating book clubs and conversations about Matike Mai and constitutional reform
- Contributing to conferences and opinion pieces in media to raise awareness of power imbalances
- Internally share power through collective and consensus decision-making approaches
- Using the constellation model in our projects, supporting causes through a secretariat capacity and deferring power and decision-making to the community



## 5. Media representation

**Outcome:** Bring about fair and equitable media representation.

**This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Increase representation of marginalised voices in media
- Support collaboration between communities and media organisations
- Ensure current accountability systems (eg Broadcasting Standards Authority, Media Council) are accessible to all communities
- Education on how to be effective in media

**At our organisation this looks like:**

- Developing relationships between media and diverse communities to support fair and equitable representation (Media As Allies)
- Media training for diverse community representatives
- Providing advice to StuffNZ for their training modules on improving representation in their media
- Engaging with communities to hear whose voices are being left out and sharing this research with media representatives



## 6. Safety and wellbeing

**Outcome:** All people feel safe and are equipped to support the safety of others.

**This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Offer education and training in positive self-esteem and overcoming trauma
- Educate communities on the connection between trauma and injustice
- Offer bystander intervention training
- Build neighbourhood relationships for safety and wellbeing
- Provide programs and education for the perpetrators of bullying

**At our organisation this looks like:**

- Link people to organisations that provide these training and support services
- Local anti-racism constellations in Nelson and Whakatane
- Deliver workshops on online harm, educating audiences on how to improve the safety of vulnerable communities online



## 7. Technology

**Outcome:** Create online spaces that are safe and accessible for everyone.

**This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Promote digital literacy across all ages and diverse communities, and this education is accessible in multiple languages (including NZSL) and formats
- Support community-based organisations to create safe spaces for people to come together for dialogue and consensus-building
- Allow people to recognise robust sources of information and to evaluate sources critically

**At our organisation this looks like:**

- Developing a coalition focused on collaboratively reducing the impacts of online harm
- Delivering workshops that educate groups on the impacts of online harm
- Christchurch Call Advisory Network: holding co-chair position and advocating through multi-stakeholder forum at international level
- Contributing of the Independent Advisory Committee of the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism, also advocating at the international level
- Meetings with the Classifications Office and DIA online safety team



## 8. Learning and influencing others

**Outcome:** Engage with institutions and organisations to build understanding and actions that will increase inclusion.

### **This can be achieved by initiatives that:**

- Engage with policymakers around systemic barriers to a fairer world and effective responses to achieve equity
- Generate change stories based on research and evaluation data to demonstrate what works
- Implement strategies to scale out good practice models across the country
- Learn from and influence others through contributions to forums and conferences

### **At our organisation this looks like:**

- Participating in, advising and facilitating government working groups, such as the Social Cohesion Working Group at MSD, the National Action Plan Against Racism by MoJ, and DPMC's Working Group for the Strategic Framework for Preventing and Countering Terrorism
- Documenting and sharing our processes for others to use
- Educational workshops with other organisations, such as YWCA, English Language Partners, and ChangeMakers Resettlement Forum
- Drawing on and disseminating the work of others
- Presenting at conferences and other public speaking engagements

This strategy is a tool for those that are looking to contribute in strengthening belonging and inclusion in Aotearoa. We encourage you to think about how this strategy could fit within your workplace, community group, or whare, and to share it with those that might find it helpful.

This strategy is *not* a one-size-fits-all, as inclusion demands us to be open-minded to a wide range of situations and circumstances that require different approaches.

We encourage you to share your initiative with us and describe how these concepts fit within your kaupapa. We will be launching a second national strategy early 2025, which has gathered feedback and success stories from community organisations, and we would love you to be a part of that.

Lastly, if you would like to know more about our services and projects or discuss potential collaboration, we would love to kōrero. Our kaupapa is centred in supporting community work, and we are always looking to develop new partnerships.

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