



# Seed Waikato

**Impact Report:**

October 2025





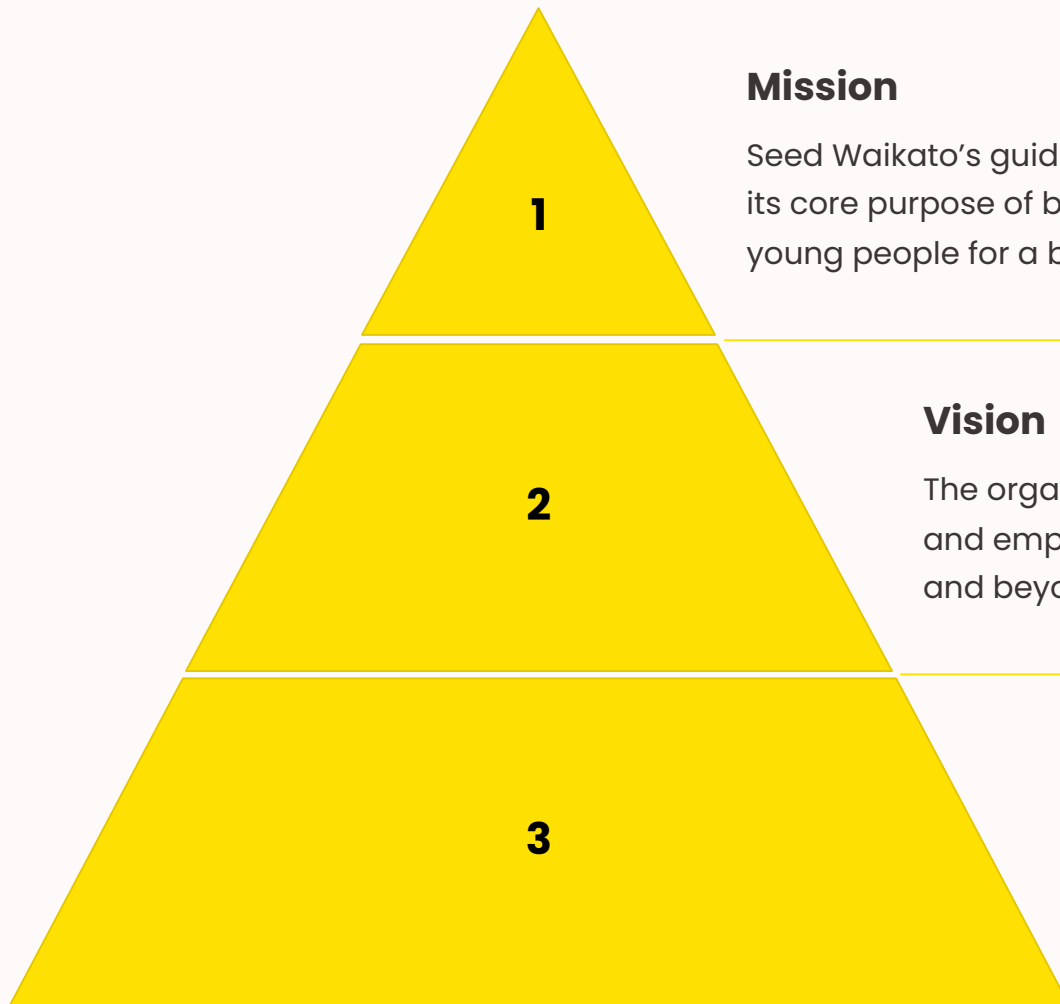
# Executive Summary

Seed Waikato has continued its journey as a dynamic youth transformation organisation, anchored by a mission to nurture young people as system innovators for an equitable, thriving Aotearoa.

In the past year, the organisation has pioneered a dual leadership model, launched innovative digital tools for the youth sector, deepened its impact through cohesive work streams, and celebrated stories of genuine personal and community transformation.

Prioritising deep, meaningful connections over surface-level metrics, Seed Waikato's achievements position it as a leader in systems change and youth empowerment.

# Organisation Overview (Mission, Vision, Values)



## Mission

Seed Waikato's guiding whakataukī—"Nurture the seed and it will blossom"—speaks to its core purpose of being an "ipū" or container nurturing social innovation driven by young people for a better future.

## Vision

The organisation envisions a world where young people are fully equipped and empowered to contribute to a thriving, equitable future for Aotearoa and beyond.

## Values

Seed Waikato is grounded in Te Ao Māori principles, honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi, shared leadership, collaboration, transparency, systemic thinking, and the belief that what benefits young people ultimately strengthens communities as a whole.





# Background & History

Seed Waikato emerged from a vision to support youth in meaningful, systemic change work, moving beyond short-term projects towards long-lasting impact.

COVID-19 challenges forced the organisation to reflect and pivot, sharpening its focus on intentional, purpose-driven programmes and embracing a collective leadership model.

Their evolution has included sunsetting generic programmes in favour of initiatives aligned with systems change and deep capability-building.



# Strategic Change Goals

1

Facilitate leadership development through [Ngaa Kaakano](#), a youth pilot focusing on identity, systems thinking, and community contribution.

2

Strengthen sector-wide cohesion by weaving together youth-serving providers ([Te Aka Matua](#)).

3

Build a national network and develop digital tools ([Seeds for Change](#)) to enable collaboration and knowledge sharing among changemakers.

4

Provide accessible community space ([Hive II](#)) for a diverse range of groups, fostering belonging and inclusion.

5

Focus on **scaling deep** (quality relationships and deep impact) rather than solely scaling wide (high numbers).

6

Strategically investing in communications and **impact storytelling** to share and amplify our reach to inspire change.





## Key Achievements

### Leadership Model

Successful implementation of a co-CEO, power-sharing approach, serving both as a model for sector innovation and as a foundation for internal resilience. [

### Digital Innovation

Launch of an online platform "Here to Help Youth" to connect youth providers through digital tools, including action-oriented Hui and an online Community of Practice. [

### Community Hub

Hive 11's emergence as a widely used asset for community groups ranging from environmental collectives to youth housing providers.

### Sector Collaboration

Coordination of providers through referral platforms and co-labs, addressing gaps in the youth sector, particularly for those working with vulnerable youth. [

### Event Innovation

Creative civic engagement events like early morning raves, encouraging youth participation in the democratic process and supporting inclusion of Māori, Pacific, and migrant youth.

*"It takes courage to reimagine systems - and community to transform them." – Tania Pointon, Co-CEO*



# Impact Stories & Success Stories



Deep leadership pathways are illustrated by **young leaders joining Seed Waikato’s board** after journeying with the organisation, showing the ripple effect of the internal culture. [



The **dual leadership approach**, initially met with skepticism, has modelled alternative power structures, directly benefiting both organisational sustainability and staff empowerment. [



Early **morning raves inspired youth** to enrol and engage in voting, with high online engagement and visible mindset shifts in participants evangelising the movement among their peers. [



**Hive 11 provided space** for a vast array of kaupapa, including political, environmental, cultural, and social initiatives—demonstrating broad and deep community integration.

*From the very beginning, the Hive 11 team has gone above and beyond to ensure that every workshop and hui runs smoothly. Their warmth, professionalism, and attention to detail have created a welcoming environment where everyone feels valued and supported. The venue itself is exceptional — spacious, modern, and incredibly user-friendly. It’s equipped with everything we’ve needed for our Waikato Local Network gatherings and Civics Education workshops, and our attendees have consistently commented on how comfortable and engaging the space is. — Taurikura NZ*

*"Seed Waikato has been a thread woven through so many chapters of my life. I first found Seed in 2017, walking into an event that would quietly shape my life's path. I left feeling inspired with possibility, and before long I was volunteering, helping with funding and events and discovering the power of community in action.*

*In 2022, I joined the Board, and this year I've had the privilege of serving as Chair. Through Seed I've learnt so much about shared leadership, where ideas become action and purpose grows into lasting change. I've been given the opportunities to experience spaces like the Aspiring Leaders Forum, Rotary Youth Leadership Awards, and Festival for the Future, each one shaping how I see myself and the world around me.*

*Seed Waikato has given me friendships, growth, and experiences and connections that have helped shape who I am. It has stretched me, supported me, and reminded me of the good that happens when people come together with intention. That is the true essence of Seed Waikato, creating space for young people to grow, to thrive, and to see what's possible when community lifts you up."*

***Abby Van De Ven, Chair, Seed Waikato***





# Programmes & Measurable Outcomes



## Ngaa Kaakano Leadership Pilot:

Targets 10 to 12 young adults, focusing on customised capability-building and leadership development for systemic thinking and action. In 2024–25, the programme facilitated 20 stakeholder and project development hui, connecting with 152 rangatahi and community stakeholders.



## Te Aka Matua:

Onboards 40–50 youth providers annually to an online referral platform designed to streamline support for vulnerable youth. During 2024–25, the programme held 29 hui, engaging 134 project participants and stakeholders—representing a 67 percent increase in engagement compared to the previous year.



## Seeds for Change:

Facilitates national-level change through digital mapping, communities of practice, and shared learning. In 2024–25, the initiative launched 3 new projects, delivered 32 Hapori hui, and engaged 429 stakeholders nationwide. Digital infrastructure also expanded with 4 new digital maps and 59 Hapori members onboarded.



## Hive 11:

Hosts monthly Hui and various community events, emphasising qualitative outcomes such as collaboration and creativity over quantitative output alone. The space recorded 48 hosted events, served 9 permanent groups, and welcomed 1,225 casual attendees—reflecting strong community utilisation and ongoing engagement.

*"Hapori has helped me connect with amazing do-gooders across Aotearoa from the Far North down to Te Waipounamu South Island, in small towns, big cities, and everything in between. It's given me a real sense of belonging and optimism, seeing that there are so many people quietly doing incredible mahi across all kinds of sectors. I love getting to see what others are working on, what inspires them, and having a space to contribute my own reflections and energy into that shared pool."*

*"Through Hapori, I've built relationships that now extend beyond the online space – meeting people in person at regional gatherings and being invited to join other community events. There's a growing sense of resilience and togetherness that comes from knowing we're not simply sitting idle while the world feels chaotic. We're connecting, collaborating, and breaking down barriers so that more people can join in. I'm deeply grateful to be part of this movement of aroha and good mahi, and I can see it only continuing to grow stronger and more connected."* – **Kai J. Lee**



## Future Directions



### Expand Youth Leadership

Increase the number and depth of Ngaa Kaakano leadership journeys, providing follow-on support to alumni for sustained impact.



### Integrate Digital & In-Person Collaboration

Deepen the use of digital tools with in-person collaboration to enable the Seeds for Change community to drive tangible system-level projects nationwide.



### Strengthen Dual Leadership & Te Tiriti Practice

Further strengthen Te Tiriti-honouring practice and dual leadership to inspire sector-wide governance and systemic change.



### Broaden Inclusive Access

Explore new partnerships and streams to broaden reach, especially engaging youth currently outside existing networks.

*"We'll continue to support taiohi, champion young communities and fuel ecosystems of change and collaboration." – Dujon Cullingford, Pou Aarahi Tuuhono | Co-CEO, Connections & Impact*



# Conclusion

Seed Waikato exemplifies what is possible when an organisation pursues mission-aligned innovation, prioritises deep belonging and meaningful impact, and bravely steps into new models of leadership and partnership.

**The year's progress and stories highlight not just achievements but an ongoing journey—rooted in care for young people and the communities they call home.**

# Acknowledgements

**Acknowledgement is given to all partners, funders, and supporters, including the youth leaders, sector providers, community organisations, board members, and funders who believe in and champion Seed Waikato's kaupapa.**

Special thanks to the dedicated staff and the wider Waikato and national networks whose collaboration and aroha continually nourish the seed for collective thriving.

