

Toi EDA

The Todd Foundation Youth to Employment Collaboration



- What does it take to grow placed based, locally led systems change to enable young people to achieve success in their place for their place?
- How does Toi EDA demonstrate this through their journey, and in their relationship with The Todd Foundation (TTF)?



Introduction

Since 2014, The Todd Foundation (TTF) has utilised their Special Focus Fund to invest in Youth Employment initiatives via four place-based local partnerships across Aotearoa to develop community-led approaches that enable and support pathways for youth to employment (Y2E). These partnerships were with: Toi EDA (Eastern Bay of Plenty), Trust Tairāwhiti (Tairāwhiti), Tāike Ē! (Tairāwhiti), and Youth Inspire (Lower Hutt, Wellington).

In 2017, TTF engaged The Knowledge Institute (Member of The Kinnect Group) to assist the collaborative development of an evaluation framework, in partnership with their Y2E partners.

A range of evaluative processes were facilitated with these partners to gain insight into their 'story of change', and the steps undertaken in their journey towards achieving community-led, place-based systems change for the Y2E initiative. TTF and the evaluation team also examined what attributes supported and hindered this process of change, including the role that TTF played as the funding partner. A key goal was to inform the wider philanthropic and funding sectors on what it takes to successfully support communities to achieve systems change.

One of these evaluative processes involved facilitating a half-day workshop with partners to collaboratively determine what success looks like and what is seen as credible evidence. A suite of six success-criteria for the initiative were identified:

1. Genuine, diverse community ownership and leadership
2. Collective and system focused solutions
3. Supporting youth to be work ready (hard skills, soft skills, readiness)
4. Employer engagement
5. Innovation behaviour (at the edge, social enterprise, innovation)
6. Supporting functions & processes.

These criteria will provide the general structure for the remainder of this case study, which considers the community-led systems change journey of Toi EDA based in the Bay of Plenty.

As one of TTF's Y2E partners, they received funding from 2015 through to 2019.¹



¹Noted that Toi EDA also negotiated to spread the 2019 funding across the following two years, so that some key initiatives could continue

Toi EDA

The Eastern Bay of Plenty economic development agency (Toi EDA) was created to focus on the growth and development of the Bay of Plenty region, recognising the founding Tipuna Maori for many iwi in Eastern Bay of Plenty, Toi, *Tini o Toi, kia tipu, kia puawai – to create, grow and blossom the myriads of Toi*.² The Eastern Bay of Plenty embraces the local government districts of Ōpōtiki, Whakatāne and Kawerau. It stretches along nearly half of the Bay of Plenty coastline from Otamarakau to past Cape Runaway, and far inland through forests and plains to many communities like Murupara and Minginui.

Acknowledging the unique communities, contexts, common agendas and opportunities across the Eastern Bay of Plenty, Toi EDA has attempted to build and support cross-sector partnerships that will create and support connections between education, industry, iwi, rangatahi and communities.

Funding from the TTF has helped Toi EDA to focus on several youth employability projects, such as Link Up and Licence to Work programmes in Bay of Plenty schools, drivers licencing support, and fit-for-work programmes. They have also encouraged employer engagement and connection, such as 'career showcase', local employer/school integration, and work experience.³ In addition, TTF has also funded a connector role, which has been filled by Barbara MacLennan, as the manager of workforce development. Barbara has focused on raising awareness of the youth employment crisis and helped connect youth to employers, as well as improved programmes and systems in schools to connect rangatahi to training and employment.⁴ Barbara has also had a major supporting role in the development of the Ōpōtiki aquaculture and harbour development project, with a particular focus on how to embed sustainable social benefit as well as economic outcomes.

A brief profile of unemployment and young people in the Bay of Plenty

Nationally, the Eastern Bay of plenty is one of the most deprived regions in Aotearoa New Zealand, in terms of income, employment, and opportunities. The region has high levels of deprivation, low household incomes, lower than average educational and health outcomes, and a history of inter-generational welfare dependency, linked to a lack of opportunities.

There has been concern in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, particularly Ōpōtiki, about a declining and ageing population, with 2031 forecasts predicting a smaller available workforce.⁵ There is the opportunity to

² <http://www.Toi EDA.co.nz/About-Toi EDA.aspx>

³ <https://www.toddfoundation.org.nz/Toi EDA-eastern-bay-of-plenty/>

⁴ <https://www.toddfoundation.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/PNZArticle12.20.pdf>

⁵ *Opotiki Aquaculture and Harbour development final report 16 July 2014*

encourage young people to stay and settle in their local area, by offering better training and education for jobs with potential for growth.

In Eastern Bay of Plenty districts, the proportion of the population aged 15-19 is slightly higher than the national average, with those aged 20-24 sitting middle-range. The proportion of people aged 15 – 24 who identify as Māori is among the highest of all Territorial Authority areas. The population of Māori 15-24 years, grew significantly faster than all other ethnicities and age ranges over the period 2013-2018⁶ for the Bay of Plenty region.

Over the decade 2009-2018 in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, the proportion of school leavers who left before their 17th birthday was high compared to other Territorial Authority local board areas, especially Ōpōtiki and Kawerau, that were in the highest 10 districts.⁷ Bay of Plenty regional data also shows that as of December 2018, 2,237 people aged 18-24 were receiving job seeker support and the NEET rate for 15-24-year-olds was at 11%.⁸ Census statistics show that in the Bay of Plenty, there is a relatively high rate of unemployment, low rates of labour engagement, and low numbers of qualifications specifically in those aged 15 – 24. Rates of attainment of an NCEA level 2 qualification by 18-year-olds are low in Eastern Bay of Plenty districts compared to national averages, and in 2018, Ōpōtiki had one of the highest national averages for people aged 20 – 24 who have no qualifications.⁹

By national standards, the Eastern Bay of Plenty is a low-income area, with a high proportion of the population receiving government support. In the Ōpōtiki and Kawerau districts, the average household income is relatively low, with a high proportion earning below \$50,000 per household - this is increasing relatively slowly over time.¹⁰ Incomes for households with dependent children in the Bay of Plenty are also low, and families receive on average 9% of their income from government benefits and assistance, which is around 1.4 times greater than the national average of 6.5%.

Historically, the overall unemployment rate in the Bay of Plenty has been higher than the national average. In recent years the rate has declined to match the national rate of 4.2%, however, according to a 2018 census, the district of Ōpōtiki had an unemployment rate of 7.3%.¹¹ Overall, the largest employers in the Bay of Plenty are health care and social assistance, with agriculture, forestry and fishing only slightly behind. However, in Opoitiki and Whakatane, agriculture, forestry and fishing are by far the leading employers. There are positive signs for this trend to accelerate, as projects such as the Ōpōtiki harbour and marine farming offer opportunities and jobs to an upcoming workforce. There is even greater cause for optimism due to the help of Toi EDA and it's many partners to bridge the gap between education, training and job availability for young people.

⁶ Statistics New Zealand

⁷ Ministry of Education

⁸ <http://webrear.mbie.govt.nz/summary>

⁹ Statistics New Zealand Census 2018

¹⁰ MBIE

¹¹ Statistics New Zealand

Opotiki Harbour Development

For over 20 years, there has been substantial work and focus on the tangible expansion of aquaculture enterprise and harbour development at Ōpōtiki.

The Ōpōtiki harbour transformation project has been at the centre of this work. It will enable extensive off shore aquaculture which is predicted to bring in \$41-55 million per year and generate hundreds of sustainable long-term and skilled jobs.¹² This will offer opportunities and employment to many of the region's young people.

The team behind the project gained insight into the mussel industry after a bus ride to Nelson over 20 years ago, where a group of the Ōpōtiki community (whānau, iwi, kaumatua, council leaders and staff) were hosted by Whakatū Iwi. They saw a thriving aquaculture farm, which could provide jobs and security as well as a financial boost for the local area.

Since 2007, Barbara MacLennan, has worked alongside Ōpōtiki District Council and the Whakatōhea Māori Trust Board towards their shared aspirations for local jobs and wealth, enabled through rebuilding Whakatōhea's marine based enterprise and industry.

In the earlier years, Barbara's community support mahi was enabled through Inspiring Communities and the Ōpōtiki District Council, and funded by Tindall Foundation and JR McKenzie Trust grants. Increasingly, Barbara's focus was on facilitating a cross-sector mission-based approach to the workforce development necessary to ensure that local people would benefit from emerging training and employment opportunities. This mahi created broad ownership of the specific challenges of supporting an intergenerationally unemployed community, and recognised the roles of multiple parties in achieving success.

In time the Kaupapa was deemed important across all of Eastern Bay of Plenty by employers and other stakeholders alike, and in 2014 Toi EDA, the regional economic development agency, agreed to include a workforce development role as part of its focus, with Ōpōtiki's "twin projects" of the harbour and marine farm providing the impetus for a big lift in the region's economy and employment opportunities.

Barbara took up that role, and continued to work closely with Ōpōtiki, and also with other Iwi and community-led economic and workforce focussed initiatives in Whakatāne and Kawerau Districts as well.

After 20 years of constant perseverance by Whakatōhea and Ōpōtiki, funding was secured from the Provincial Development Unit (now Kānoa) to enable the infrastructure works to go ahead. By early 2022 the \$110m project to construct the Harbour is now over halfway, with nearly 100 FTEs directly employed on it. The confidence of this initiative proceeding has enabled Whakatōhea Mussels Ōpōtiki Limited (WMOL) to construct a state of the art mussel processing factory in the township and by early 2022 over 130 people are directly employed in that venture. The 3,800 hectare offshore marine farm has also been further developed and WMOL are currently building their third mussel boat to service the farm and bring product to Ōpōtiki for processing.



Y2E Success criteria – what did we find?

1.

Genuine, diverse
community ownership and
leadership

Belief in power of community to lead systems change and their own development

Having a long-term economic and social vision to aspire to and create critical community buy-in for a long-term strategy. This project succeeded by taking a mission-based approach, involving all members of the local community, council and iwi, as well as a **key strategic insight** championed by Barbara herself. Barbara recognised the need to develop clear pathways to employment for local rangatahi, as well as igniting aspiration in young people to realise these opportunities. The prospect of 'real work' with sustainable wages was a key driver, as was offering appropriate training and education to develop work-ready rangatahi for local employment and the enterprise of the future.

'Barbara was instrumental in saying – it's all very well attracting this new business but there has to be a pathways to work plan to partially convince new businesses that yes, there will be a workforce here for you but to also sell into the community that these are the sorts of jobs that will be coming and also to ensure that workforce will be ready with the right skills, in the right numbers, at the right time.'

The community has made the critical mind-shift from only funding programmes, to recognising that they need to take a long view about skill and capacity development. In addition, they recognise that they must have whole community representation, including whānau, schools, tertiary, industry, government and iwi. The community collaboration and **whanaungatanga** was key for the success of this project and building the social licence for action came about as a result of their transparency with the community, beginning with iwi.

"We had this significant project, fortunately people who got it started were smart enough to start with iwi and iwi are significant players but it's something that's also really environmentally sustainable and environmentally enhancing. In terms of developing social licence for that to happen has been about being really open with the community, having lots of conversations – here are the positives, negatives, what do you want? Is it worth it, do we want to do it?"

"It takes collaboration and it takes the outside organisation's realising that we do have the solutions, but not necessarily the capacity and capability right now and the strength of the success is around the collaborative effort, and everybody being open for that to happen and realising that everyone has the ability to help in the space as we help ourselves to move up and I think that's an essential part of it."

Without exception, key stakeholders talked about community ownership and leadership as one of the most important criteria for the rangatahi pathways to success being led by the Ōpōtiki community. There were many times over the past decade that different groups in the community have wanted to 'go it alone', but have been encouraged and supported – by Barbara – to come together. And most are now echoing the feeling expressed by one stakeholder that

1.

Genuine, diverse
community ownership and
leadership

"...we can do this a whole lot better if we combine our resources and recognise each other's strengths"

"Through working together, we knew we needed to do something for rangatahi."

Together, the community has developed a **shared kaupapa** for building local pathways for their rangatahi into worthwhile jobs that have a future. Drawing from the insights of rangatahi themselves, the community is achieving better transition rates from school and kura, into training and employment for their rangatahi than they previously were. Rangatahi are engaged in the design process and this is igniting their investment in the projects. The many different community members who support rangatahi are now working together to achieve better outcomes. Whānau are more involved, schools, training providers, employers, industry, government, the district council and iwi are collaborating, drawing on the strengths of each to create a new, future -focused world of work in the Bay.

"The work that has been done as a collective has enhanced the reach, than if we had done individually."

"We have learned here that the whole joined up approach is the only way to go."

"Learned a long time ago, it's better to do together; can't do it on your own, you have to have shared experiences because it's too small a community to not speak and work with each other"

There are key leaders who have stayed the course, over more than 20 years. Iwi and Council leaders, as well as key industries, have worked through the process together. Ōpōtiki now has a Whakatōhea woman as their Mayor, which is significant for the community. It has not always been easy progress, but over time, they have developed the kind of **trusted relationships** that mean they are now more connected, share information willingly and collaborate better.

"Developed trust takes a while. It's always a few steps forward and then whoops it's a bit of a slip back and so on but it's about having the relationships.."

2.

Collective and system
focused solutions

Collective action and trust in each other was key – developing the capacity so that the diversity of stakeholders could form a shared vision and work together effectively. However this was not always the case.

In the early years, many services did not talk to each other – the contracting environment was competitive, and relationships were not always productive across the community, including with the high- school. This meant that there needed to be a significant amount of relationship building. In addition, it took perseverance by Barbara to get buy-in for a collaborative process, but she

"persevered about pushing for a joined-up approach, sometimes knocking heads, some of us kicking and screaming; we all get on now and happy to admit"

2.

Collective and system focused solutions

Most stakeholders now believe that they have the key ingredient of collective infrastructure in place - **trust in each other**. This means that they can achieve the systems change needed to realise long-held aspirations for their community and rangatahi through their collaboration.

"What will maintain that momentum of realising dreams - collaboration will keep us going and I believe we have trust in each other to work alongside each other"

Several felt thankful that they had spent the time and effort over previous years working on building their collective visions and infrastructure before COVID, as this left them better able to respond to the pandemic.

"Fortunate to be thinking about this stuff before Covid hit – only just realised that that's what got us through Covid, continuous labour force, focusing more on local. Thankfully we did"

The focus on local employees, collaboration among businesses, as well as Barbara's understanding of the multi layers of the funding policy system has been invaluable, and helped them access funding and opportunities to maintain momentum.

"Good relationships take the competitiveness out, safe space for people to come in, value each other's contribution – Barbara helped us to understand the value of the contribution we each make"

3.

Supporting youth to be work ready (hard skills, soft skills, readiness)

Supporting youth to be work-ready and transition smoothly into employment has been the most significant focus point for Barbara in her role with Toi EDA. She has advocated for and supported several programmes such as YEP licence-to-work and fit-for-work programmes in schools and colleges, as well as connecting employers directly with schools to offer work placements and experience. Barbara works with schools to **connect rangatahi education and the world of work** and helps whānau understand the future of work to ensure a smooth transition, and ensure that motivation to work is instilled in their young people.

Barbara is keen to emphasise how important it is to offer this encouragement and support to young people while they are still in school. It helps to encourage rangatahi to stay in education and move on to worthwhile employment to ensure a more prosperous future for all.

"...what happens in communities like ours in the Eastern Bay of Plenty that have been depressed for so long, is that more young people become long-term beneficiaries and they never enter the world of work. They never step up to higher learning or higher education. We're at risk of starting another generation like that because of Covid."

One of the key factors for this is being able to offer 'real' work that motivates and inspires rangatahi, as well as making the pathway from education to training and employment as smooth as possible.

3.

Supporting youth to be work ready (hard skills, soft skills, readiness)

Having employers collaborate and be at the table was critical, as training is often not well connected to employers or industry. Toi EDA assisted in taking practical steps and introducing programmes and initiatives such as the LinkUp programme. This works alongside 'Licence to Work' to connect school leavers with work experience and full time employment, and helps to develop real work opportunities.

ToiEDA also has their 'career showcase', which exhibits EBoP businesses careers and jobs that local young people can be and are employed in. The showcase highlights the range of employment available, and what the reality of those careers looks like to future employees. This kind of exposure is important, as it gives rangatahi scope to imagine what the future of work might look like and to be inspired by the possibilities.¹³

4.

Employer engagement

Putting pressure on employers to create positive change has been a central focus, especially for seasonal workers. As a result, a major employer has changed their seasonal workforce strategy to focus on local employment for local people. This has been achieved through opening a dialogue and connecting with people in the industry, deepening the organisation's connection to their local history, to local people, and local places. Creating a connection between those in the industry and the community has meant that people feel more positively about their work, as they feel a sense of belonging, and are committed to their organisational mission of growing great communities. For some, these are new experiences and there is some unlearning to do, but the benefits are beginning to flow into the local economy.

"Connecting with people, opening up a dialogue...and making sure management are across it so that they can help to display the right behaviours, reinforce the right things... Little bit of unlearning for managers and a whole lot of learning for people leaders"

"Looking to reduce the number of Regional Seasonal Employees (RSE's) we bring into OPAC. We're committed to bring in more locals and happy we have been able to clean up our own back yard to be able to work with community to do this."

The organisation now feels that they are part of the community with all parties working together on a worthwhile kaupapa. Through communication and accountability, many local employers, especially in the kiwi fruit industry, have switched to paying living wages. This sets a precedent for future employers and the local community of employees.

"Casual contract work, part time work doesn't cut it and that just increases the distance between the haves and the have nots, so they've jumped from minimum wage to living wage. If kiwifruit are doing it then the mussel industry will do that and now we're getting people with a whole year's worth of work at a higher rate of pay"

4.

Employer engagement

Barbara reflects that one of the most powerful tools she learned about during this period was when she contributed as part of the tender development team for the Ōpōtiki Harbour Project.

"We had to really think through the mechanisms that would result in local people, local young people, and local businesses winning roles and jobs as part of the Harbour Development. What we ended up with is now part of Ōpōtiki District Council's 'DNA' when they're putting out big tenders. It is all about local communities growing their own workforce, their own businesses and resilience – for sure alongside and with external companies when that's an essential part of the mix – but they have to win that right by thinking through and describing their commitment and experience as part of winning tenders."

5.

Innovation (at the edge, social enterprise, innovation)

Shifting the community from a competitive mindset to a collaborative one, where diverse perspectives become part of the breakthrough thinking, was one of the most significant and successful innovations on this project. This shift took real work and constant communication to ensure that each member felt heard and valued.

Trusted relationships were built over time, working on tangible issues together - exploring and creating a shared kaupapa has built a 'fabric of connectedness'. It needed everyone to come together - business owners, the employers, the service providers, training providers, "onramp" providers, the high school, and the District Council, who bought an economic development perspective. All parties came together to develop a shared vision of building a local pathway for rangatahi – valuing and utilising the strengths of each local stakeholder.

Shifting from a programme mindset to a transformational mindset means creating a long-term strategy of preparing rangatahi for work, so that new industries and enterprise can source their skilled workforce locally. Barbara was instrumental in ensuring that this long-term vision was realised. By getting all community members and organisations involved for the duration of the journey, they could utilise these opportunities for local rangatahi to be prepared and succeed. By doing the groundwork and building momentum – with "a group of people just heading in the same direction" they were ready to seize opportunities – e.g. TOI EDA advocated strongly for the Eastern Bay to be a surge region under the provincial development unit and policies and for workforce Kaupapa to be essential ingredients to any funding. When Te Ara Mahi and He Poutama Rangatahi funding became available, Barbara facilitated conversations among the three local potential competitors in Ōpōtiki for the funding, and (after much negotiation!) they each gained complementary and well linked multi-year funding.

Local industry and employers have changed their practice and mindsets about their role in the community. One of the biggest employers – OPAC¹⁴ – has moved to paying a living wage and is transitioning out of having a mostly casualised workforce. They recognise that they share a local workforce with the new mussel industry and are preparing to begin partnering for better long-term outcomes for workers, including rangatahi.

¹⁴ Noted OPAC has subsequently been taken over by SEEKA.

5.

Innovation (at the edge, social enterprise, innovation)

"We have needed to clean up our back yard, and learn what is happening, next piece is to share e.g., with mussel factory being built next to us on our land, they bought it off us so it's about taking some of the work that we're doing and sharing it with the mussel factory because we all share the same labour resource."

Another example was the innovation and enterprise Barbara spearheaded to establish the "Ōpōtiki Community Driver Mentoring Programme and persistently get it funded year on year since 2017. Each year at least 75 local young people achieve their Restricted or Full, and Learners and Defensive Driving options are being added."

6.

Supporting functions & processes

The importance of a connector, activator, enabler

Funding from TTF helped fund Barbara's position with Toi EDA as workforce development manager - the backbone function - to kickstart a collective impact strategy across the region.

As a community activator / enabler / backbone, Barbara helped to get *"all the right people in the room"* to discuss the central issues, such as key industries paying living wages, rather than continuing to operate a fully casualised workforce. Industry had an *"aha moment"* and realised they could do something about this; they could create work conditions for local workers that meant they could stay in the community and have income security.

Across the board, work colleagues, partnering businesses, and community members view Barbara's impact as fundamental in the success of the project so far. It is clear that the 'communication' and 'collaboration' that Barbara has instigated has made a significant difference when creating an environment in which the project could thrive. This has also had a positive impact on the future of employment for BoPs' young people.

"Everything would be different without the roleBarbara has been the driving force behind me, the mayor, Whakatōhea to get together well before the money arrived. With no structure, no talking no relationships if the money arrived, we would not have been ready."

"Not quite sure where we would be without Barbara - if we didn't have someone hold the message about stronger together. Iwi is a dominant partner, even more so, Barbara showed us the value to the funder to see people working together"

*"If there was a descriptive word for Barbara apart from what she brings, it would be **cohesion** because so many times, even within in Ōpōtiki, there were times when different groups wanted to do their own thing and protect their patch and at times they were almost determined to go it alone, they really were, and then went to different Govt departments with that message that we can do it ourselves and it was Barbara that just kept saying - look, we can do this a whole lot better if we combine our resources and recognise each other's strengths"*

Barbara brought an ability to listen to ideas and weave them into opportunities, networks and, funding that was missing in much of the work done to date.

6.

Supporting functions & processes

Finding sources of funding for each step – Barbara was able to connect people to systems and structures where they could find funding to support action.

Because of a trusted relationship with Barbara, a key stakeholder said that they were able to present and discuss their concepts and ideas to see how viable they were:

“...before giving them a structure or know what was going to happen; she would plug that concept into networks and feed them with connections to help flesh out ideas or, say - if you are going to go down that track, would you like to get some seed funding just to get things underway?”

“It was probably just trust that created the ability to kōrerō about projects that I was involved with or hoping to get involved with; Barbara was able to make connections for me with providers or find funding to get things going, seed funding”

One principle Toi EDA maintained for the Y2E initiative under Barbara's leadership was that while the funding would support the “backbone” co-ordinating role, the majority of it would fund new pilot initiatives, often led by partner organisations. One example, still going today, is Tū Rangatahi¹⁵ – a joint initiative by Whakatōhea, Ōpōtiki College and Whakaatu Whanaunga Trust which creates an ongoing tuakana -teina structure within the College, wrapped around by competent and experienced youth and social practitioners, and also offers holiday experiences and programmes which broaden the horizons and experience of around 50-80 rangatahi each year. Visioning and trialling this ground-breaking programme came out of a November 2017 conversation about the pressure being felt through increased gang presence locally, the rising rate of disengagement from school, and the risks of that trend accelerating over the long summer break.

Barbara asked “so why don't you think about what you all have, and need, to enable trial programmes to avert this challenge. We can all agree to use some of the Todd Foundation Y2E funding”. The programme that resulted for summer 2017-2018 was highly successful and continues today. During January 2022, one of Toi EDA's WE3

Toi EDA's WE3 grants helped enable over 30 senior Ōpōtiki College students travel and explore the world of work possibilities through the eyes of older local people who had moved away and are now working and studying in diverse fields of mahi in Te Waipounamu and Whanganui-a-tara. For many it was their first time travelling out of the Bay of Plenty.

¹⁵ Initially called Te Manawaroa, the name changed to Tū Rangatahi the following year

What can other communities and funders learn from Toi EDA's journey?

For Toi EDA and their community collaborators in the Bay of Plenty the key ingredients that have enabled them to create positive change for their young people have included:

- Acknowledging and exploring reasons why the BoP and their rangatahi have suffered with unemployment and poverty, and isolating the causes and systems which led to these statistics.
- A passionate and focused vision of a better future for the local community and rangatahi of the Bay of Plenty, as well as the future of business in the district.
- Appointing (a person like Barbara MacLennan) a committed, passionate and caring individual to a 'connector role' in their community, with experience and drive to work alongside local businesses and schools and make better decisions that will impact the future of the community's rangatahi.
- Instigating and facilitating the introduction of courses and training to bridge the gap between education and employment
- Starting at the grassroots and encouraging local schools and tertiary education to come on board with a shared vision for the future of BoP's rangatahi, and introduce work experience programmes such as Licence to Work and Link Up.
- Bringing in passionate and supportive staff to work with rangatahi to run work experience programmes through local businesses and give the young people understanding of what is out there in the world of work.
- Engaging with the future projects and employment opportunities for the next generation of employees in BoP and ensuring that rangatahi are ready and experienced for these new diverse roles.
- **Highlighting local employers, businesses and the roles available within them through programmes such as Career Showcase, to provide whānau, educators and trainers, and rangatahi with ideas of the potential of work available.**
- **Reaching out to local businesses and large community employers to acknowledge their role in the revitalisation of the district and their responsibility to their employees and local community.**
- **Campaigning for better work and payment conditions for local employees to create a more appealing work environment to attract young people to work in their local area.**
- **Igniting a shared vision of collaboration and communication within the local community to achieve success for local rangatahi and their whanau.**

The entirety of this work and vision has been quietly supported by a funder who:

- Acknowledges the importance of community-led enterprise and their scope for exploring and achieving the best success for their young people and local regions from within.
- Invests heavily in the relationships and timescale they have with their benefactors to allow better communication, trust and respect for the duration of their partnership.
- Creates an environment of respect and trust, and proactively invests in local people and regeneration. This gives communities freedom and space to explore their complex needs and allows communities and organisations to be both innovative and aspirational.
- Creates an environment that communities and organisations describe as fundamentally different to any funding relationship they have previously experienced.
- Understands the importance of multi-year funding commitments to achieving the shifts in community understanding and the will to collaborate necessary for change in this challenging Kaupapa.

Other ways that funders can help is by :

- Taking the focus away from a time-scaled, top-down approach of introducing external solutions, expertise, resources and power, and instead allow communities to explore their own solutions from within and to employ their own local professionals and systems.
- Funding specific roles such as that of a 'backbone function', helping to canvas the system and identify stakeholders and their respective needs, support connection and assist with funding.
- Advocating within the system with other funders to demonstrate how this way of funding can work, resulting in positive changes for communities across the country.

This is a commissioning model that works, and one that other funders should look to when considering how to best support community-led development, or community-led systems change. As demonstrated in this case study, it is particularly well suited to the philanthropic sector. When all this comes together, as it has done with Toi-EDA and Barbara's impact in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, the promise of a thriving financial boost to the local economy in the form of a new progressive industry, can be strategically and operationally linked to better outcomes for local people. In this case with the right connections and supports in place, local rangatahi can seize these opportunities and make the most of their future in their local area.





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