

PROGRAMS REPORT

2026 QUARTER 3 JUL - SEP



TE KARANGA
CREATIVE COMMUNITY



OVERALL SUMMARY

Prepared by Will Mark-Brown

During July–September, Te Karanga continued providing welcoming social, creative and mentoring spaces across Tāmaki Makaurau. A clear theme was the relationship between belonging and participation: as young people became more comfortable with peers and facilitators, they were more willing to share ideas, try unfamiliar activities and take responsibility for their learning. Creative progress sat alongside growing confidence, connection and independence.

We had one of our busiest winters to date – over the months that normally have reduced attendance.

Across Navigators, group talanoa and shared creativity helped new participants find their place and returning participants support others. Facilitators described stronger communication and creative confidence, including younger participants volunteering to lead sessions. These developments show the programme’s value as a place for connection and emerging leadership, not simply music-making.

Talaloto, formerly Talanoa Tuesdays, continued fortnightly at Taro Patch Creative in Papatoetoe, with a distinct focus on emotional wellbeing and culturally grounded conversation. Participants shared experiences, listened to different perspectives and maintained respect through difficult discussions. Conversations moved between the wider circle, smaller groups and pairs, offering different ways to engage. Shared facilitation also supported continuity while recognising the wellbeing needs of the team.

Bridge the Gap focused on developing independence and the practical skills involved in taking a creative project forward professionally. Current work included first solo projects progressing through recording, mixing and mastering, with show and merchandise planning underway, alongside a collaborative album being developed by participants responsible for its production and recording. These projects connect creative interests with project management and enterprise-related learning. At the time of reporting, these projects remained in development, with progress evident in participants’ preparation, commitment and ownership.

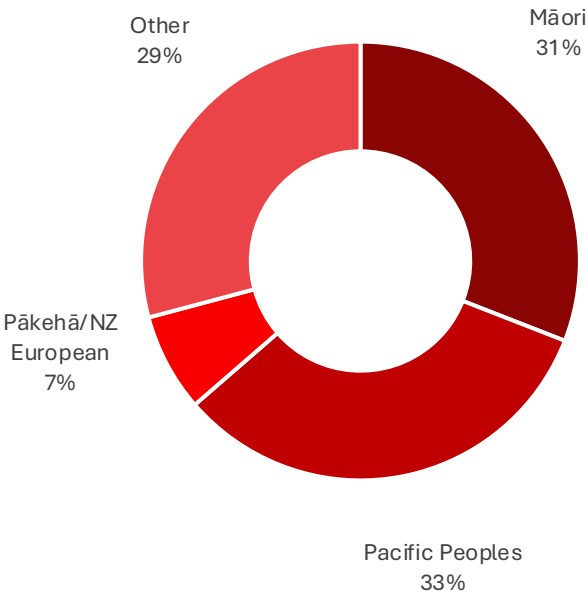
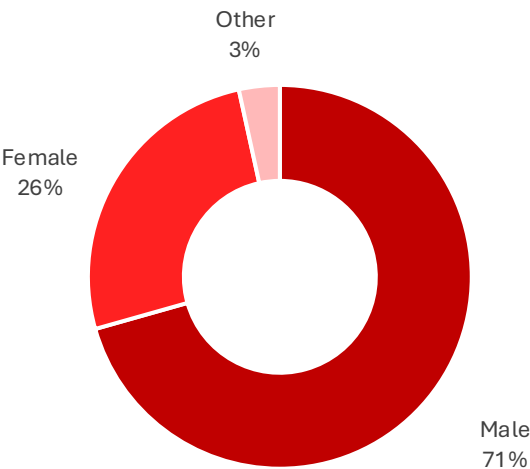
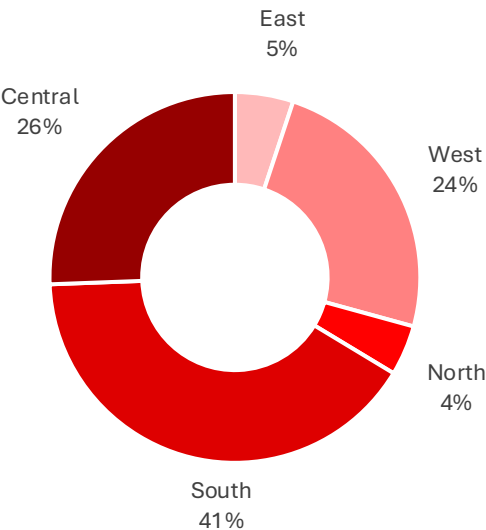
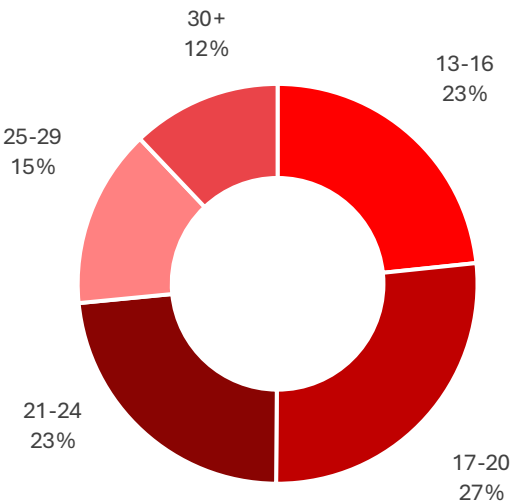
Across our wider work, Creative Pathways responded to participant requests by offering music and DJing alongside design, while Homestead Navigators, formerly Spoken Word Navigators, developed into a fortnightly space combining studio access, beat-making and group connection. Wāhine Navigators supported a new cohort to build trust and begin working more independently in the studio. Creative Labs continued providing supported studio access, with greater self-sufficiency at West and a participant recording and releasing a full album through the Central studios. Tuakana provides personalised mentoring to support young people’s wider growth and wellbeing.

Delivery also faced practical challenges. Seasonal staff illness and unavailability, intermittent studio access, equipment problems and participants’ competing commitments interrupted some sessions and projects. These experiences reinforced the need for reliable resources, appropriate facilitator cover and flexible planning that protects both participant wellbeing and creative progress. Overall, this quarter demonstrated the value of sustained relationships and practical opportunities: young people were developing skills while becoming more confident to contribute, collaborate and shape their own next steps.

DATA TOTALS



Participant stats: 844



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Weekly program for 13-17-year-olds not in education or employment, fostering positive learning experiences, creativity, and career exploration.

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Free weekly music workshop connecting & engaging young people through shared experiences, stories, and creativity. Open to young people aged 16-24.

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Empowering young people with local resources, equipment, and guidance. Fostering creativity, connecting like-minded individuals, and nurturing the next generation of artists and musicians.

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BRIDGE THE GAP

Bridge The Gap is an intensive programme where young people create and release original work while building the skills and confidence to shape their own creative pathways.

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TUAKANA TEINA

Offering personalised support through mentoring sessions, creative guidance, personal and professional development, whānau support, and community connections.

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Highlighting participant achievements, memorable moments, and feedback that reflect the growth and impact of our programmes.

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CREATIVE PATHWAYS

OVERVIEW

Creative Pathways delivers 8–10 week creative programs within alternative education settings, designed to re-engage young people aged 13–17 who are not currently in school or employment. Through hands-on creative projects, cultural activities, and exposure to industry role models, participants are encouraged to explore their identities, discover new passions, and develop transferable skills. The program provides an inclusive, supportive environment that builds confidence, inspires personal growth, and opens pathways toward meaningful futures.

PERSONAL OUTCOMES



Increased confidence and self-expression through creative and cultural activities



Strengthened sense of identity and personal pride



Improved social skills and peer relationships within inclusive learning spaces



Greater self-awareness and openness through transformative moments of growth

CREATIVE OUTCOMES



Development of transferable creative and technical skills across multiple artforms



Exposure to industry professionals and creative career pathways



Experience designing, producing, and showcasing original work



Increased motivation and readiness to engage in future education or employment opportunities



CREATIVE PATHWAYS



Facilitated by Albert Purcell, Hariata Makiha, Lincoln Keepa, Noah Brown & Thomas Steed
Report by Albert Purcell

In this term of Creative Pathways we decided to respond to requests from participants and change things up from our usual approach of having one selected art form, such as graph or design, to offering both design AND music. Rather than working towards one specific intended outcome, the focus was more on upskilling our participants, expanding on skills we had already developed with them in Procreate and design, while also offering something new through music which we had not yet explored. On the design side, we continued starting sessions with games such as Pictionary or Bus Stop using Procreate, allowing participants to get a better understanding of the programme and become more confident using their Apple Pencils. participants worked on exercises such as creating mood boards, t-shirt designs and posters, utilising our iPads and Procreate as much as possible. On the music side, participants experimented with GarageBand or BandLab for those already familiar with it, as well as beat-making and writing with Noah and I. The most popular activity was definitely DJing, with Smoove and Lincoln overseeing that part.

HIGHLIGHTS

The best parts of Term 3 was seeing participants thrive in the design side of the programme, especially as it was something they were already familiar and comfortable with. participants became more confident with our usual session structure and started taking more initiative in their own learning. Holly, a participant at Papakura, would arrive to session and immediately ask for her iPad so she could get straight into her work, sometimes even grabbing it before saying anything! Creatively, it was awesome seeing participants use skills and knowledge from previous terms alongside their own creative thinking and problem-solving. Rather than relying on us for every step, they were becoming more independent and finding their own ways to bring their ideas to life. Having both design and music also gave participants different ways to participate, express themselves and connect with others. While design allowed them to strengthen skills they had already developed, music introduced a completely new creative outlet through beat-making, songwriting and DJing. It was great seeing participants share ideas, work together and become more comfortable participating in different activities, including our group games like Pictionary. Overall, the term gave us a chance to build further on the relationships we already had with participants while encouraging more independence, confidence and creativity.

CHALLENGES

One of the main challenges we faced during Term 3 was maintaining consistency with our sessions. Participant absences made it harder to keep everyone progressing at the same pace. At times we had to revisit previous work rather than moving forward with planned activities, and some participants were unable to finish projects they had started.

As this term involved both design and music, we were also learning how to balance introducing new experiences with continuing to build on the design skills participants had developed in previous terms. With interruptions to our schedule, we weren't able to get through everything we had planned. However, I feel like we did well at providing what we could and adapting our sessions so participants could continue learning and creating regardless of the time we had with them.

LEARNINGS

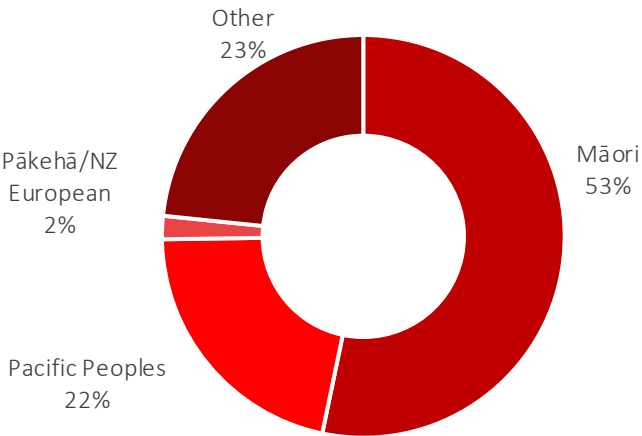
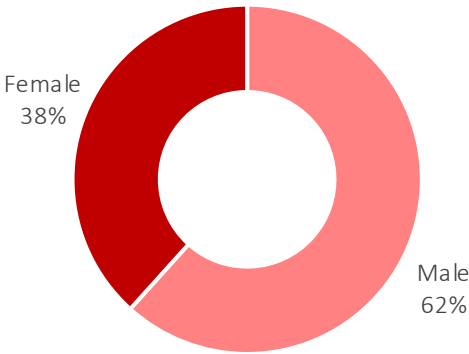
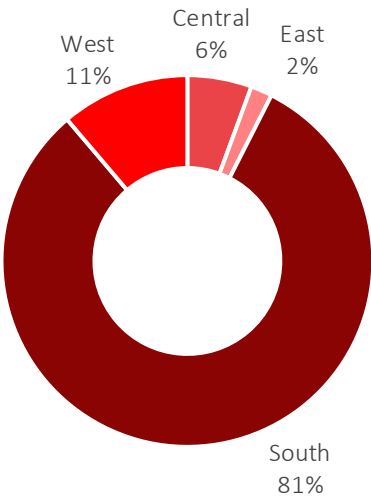
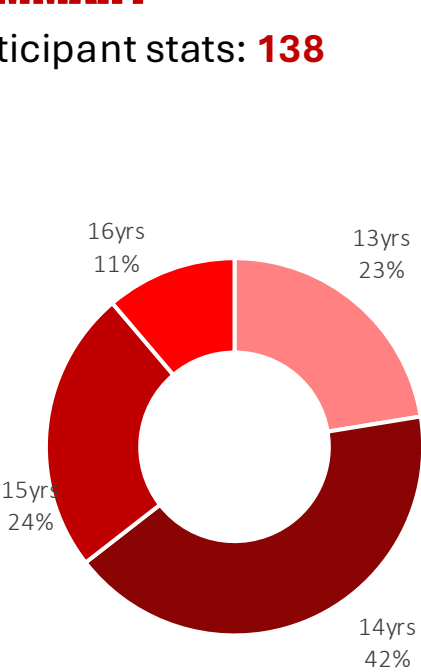
Introducing music showed us how valuable it can be to offer participants different creative outlets rather than expecting everyone to engage in the same way. Some participants naturally gravitated towards design, while others were excited by beat-making, writing or DJing. Giving them those options allowed participants to explore their own interests while still learning new skills and stepping outside of what they were already comfortable with. We also learnt the importance of being flexible with our planning. Absences made it difficult to complete some projects, so moving forward we can create activities that allow participants to work at their own pace and still feel like they have achieved something within the time available. Most importantly, we want to continue creating a supportive environment where participants feel comfortable experimenting, expressing themselves and becoming more confident and independent in their creativity.

CREATIVE PATHWAYS



SUMMARY

Participant stats: **138**



CREATIVE PATHWAYS

IMAGES





NAVIGATORS

OVERVIEW

Navigators is a free weekly social program that responds to the growing need for communal spaces where young people can connect, reflect, and express themselves authentically. Through open check-ins, talanoa (group discussions) and creative practice, participants build trust, foster connection, and achieve personal growth, whilst sharing experiences, building self-awareness, and supporting one another in a non-judgemental environment. Creative sessions offer a healthy outlet for expression, helping young people process life experiences while developing confidence, identity, and a sense of belonging.

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Strengthened sense of belonging and connection



Increased confidence and self-awareness



Improved emotional literacy and communication skills



Safe space for reflection and mental wellbeing

CREATIVE OUTCOMES



Development of creative skills and artistic confidence



Increased confidence and self-awareness



Access to professional networks & industry opportunities



Increased ability to work independently as artists



NAVIGATORS / SOUTH



Facilitated by Ben Tuimaseve, Lincoln Keepa Noah Tauti & Oliva Luki

Report by Ben Tuimaseve

Monday's, OMAC, Ōtara

This quarter we wanted to get more access to the studio so participants could apply the skills we've built over the many weeks of writing, sharing amongst peers and doing exercises that sharpen their creativity. We wanted participants to move from practising and developing ideas into experiencing what it actually feels like to record and shape a song. The purpose of getting more studio access was also to help participants work towards more cohesive songs and understand the recording process for when they continue their creative journey outside of Navigators. Alongside this, we continued writing, sharing ideas and working more collaboratively, giving participants opportunities to learn from each other and become more confident in their own creative process.

HIGHLIGHTS

A big highlight was having a handful of new people become regulars, especially on the back end of the year. This is a testament to the people within the space who make it welcoming enough for people to want to come back. Using the recording studio was another highlight, allowing participants to get a taste of the recording process, hear and shape their own voices and work together to create cohesive songs rather than just individual efforts. We also did a lot more group work this quarter, which has sparked growth in confidence, communication and creativity. In a world where art can feel quite vulnerable, these collaboration sessions have allowed people to feel less alone and more comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas amongst each other. One participant in particular, who is only 17, credits South Navs as one of the reasons for his growth in creativity and creative confidence. He has entered competitions to test his skills, appeared on Fresh TV, created content around his craft and has even put his hand up to run some of the studio recording sessions we've been having. Seeing him go from developing his creativity to being willing to lead and support others has been a huge achievement. He is no longer afraid to experiment, put himself out there or trust his own creative ability.

CHALLENGES

The main challenge is still regular studio access due to limited access on some weeks at OMAC. This can make it difficult for participants to consistently apply what they have been learning and get enough hands-on experience with recording. After spending weeks developing songs, writing and building confidence, having access to the studio gives participants somewhere to take those skills to the next level. It can also make it harder to keep people in the door, especially when other Navigators programmes have access to several recording studios. In saying that, I think we do a good job of making it work with what we have. The challenge moving forward is continuing to give participants meaningful creative opportunities while finding ways to improve access to the resources that can further their development. We are working on securing more access and other pop-up recording methods.

LEARNINGS

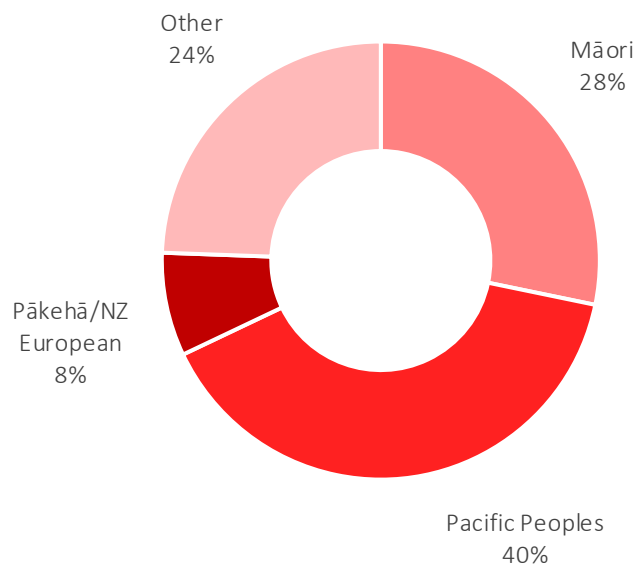
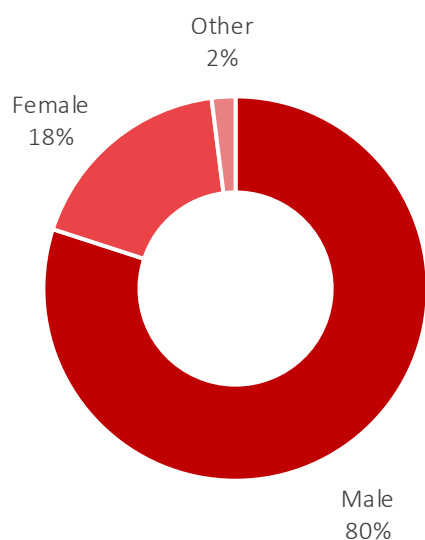
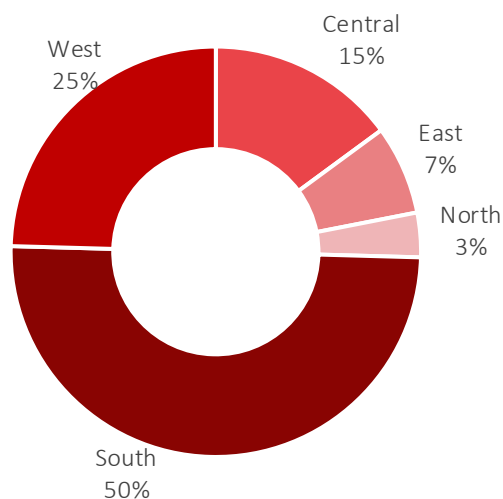
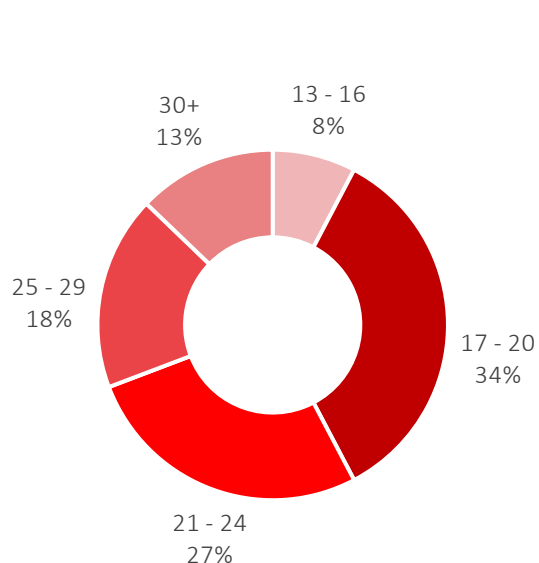
One of our biggest learnings is that the facilitation team does a good job of connecting with people, and the people themselves have become the drive and appeal of South Navigators. We are constantly talking, offering ideas and finding different ways to improve creativity and make things work with what we have. South Navs is very much a fundamentals space because of the lack of resources, but we have learnt that this can still be made valuable and appealing to participants. Those fundamentals are also not just limited to creativity, but extend to a human level through confidence, communication, relationships and learning how to work alongside others. The growth of participants is evident through the consistent repetition of showing up, making the right changes and putting in creative effort each week. We are seeing that development happen over time, with participants becoming more confident in their abilities, more willing to experiment and, in some cases, stepping up to lead and share what they have learnt with others.



NAVIGATORS / SOUTH

SUMMARY

Participant stats: **100**



NAVIGATORS / SOUTH

IMAGES



NAVIGATORS / WAHINE



Facilitated by Hariata Makiha, TK White & Tamzin Naicker

Report by Hariata Makiha

Tuesday's, Wesley Community Centre, Mt Roskill

This quarter we had a new and diverse cohort come through who were curious about music and connecting with a community. Some had a high interest in songwriting and music production but were not familiar with collaborating or connecting with other artists. We noticed early on that we had a lot more introverted and shy participants this quarter, so our first point of call was building common ground and using talanoa as the main focal point to bring the group closer together. From there, we would utilise our creative sections as a fun way to move away from some of the deeper, heart-felt conversations and finish the night with something playful. Through songwriting, recording and collaborative activities, participants were able to explore their creativity while slowly developing their confidence around sharing ideas and creating with others. This balance between talanoa and creative helped us build relationships first, while still giving the Wāhine opportunities to learn, experiment and have fun together.

HIGHLIGHTS

There were so many new faces that joined after seeing our promos on social media. This changed the way we facilitated, moving from building sessions around familiar participants to developing a new group into an aligned cohort. One of our biggest achievements was seeing two participants direct themselves in the booth for the first time during a creative session, with minimal assistance from facilitators. They managed to create a track that blended both of their styles, producing something fresh without the use of backing tracks. Seeing them communicate, make creative decisions and trust their own abilities showed how much confidence and independence they had developed. Another participant has shown major improvement not only personally, but also in her songwriting, recording and ability to adapt to each creative session. She has now become a regular and is fully confident in showing up as herself in all aspects of Wāhine Navs. These moments have been really rewarding because the growth is not only in what participants can create, but in their willingness to share ideas, try something unfamiliar and become comfortable taking up space creatively.

CHALLENGES

It took a lot of time for new participants to feel confident with each other. There was a lot of shyness, hesitation around sharing ideas and fear that what they created wouldn't be good enough. Having returning participants who already understand how our sessions run has really helped with this. They have played an important part in making the space feel safe and showing newer participants that they can contribute without needing everything they create to be perfect.

LEARNINGS

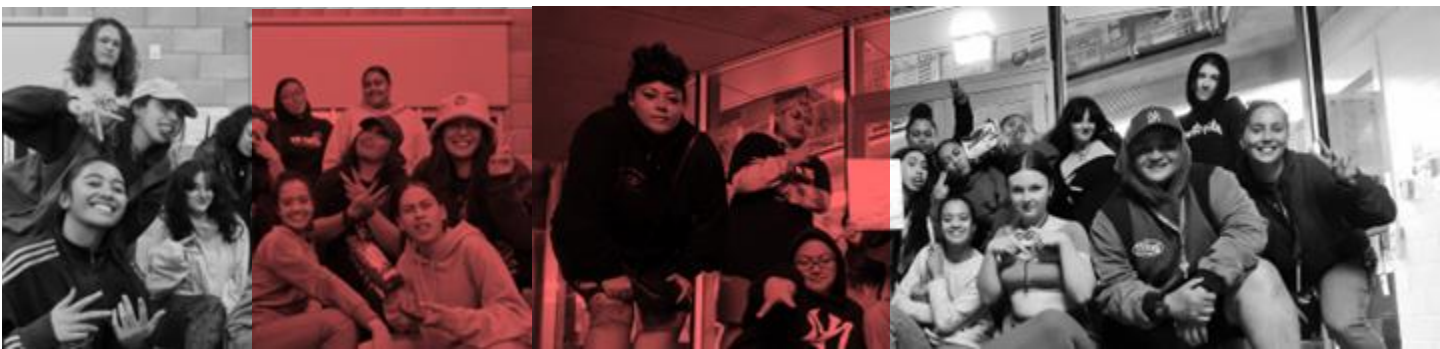
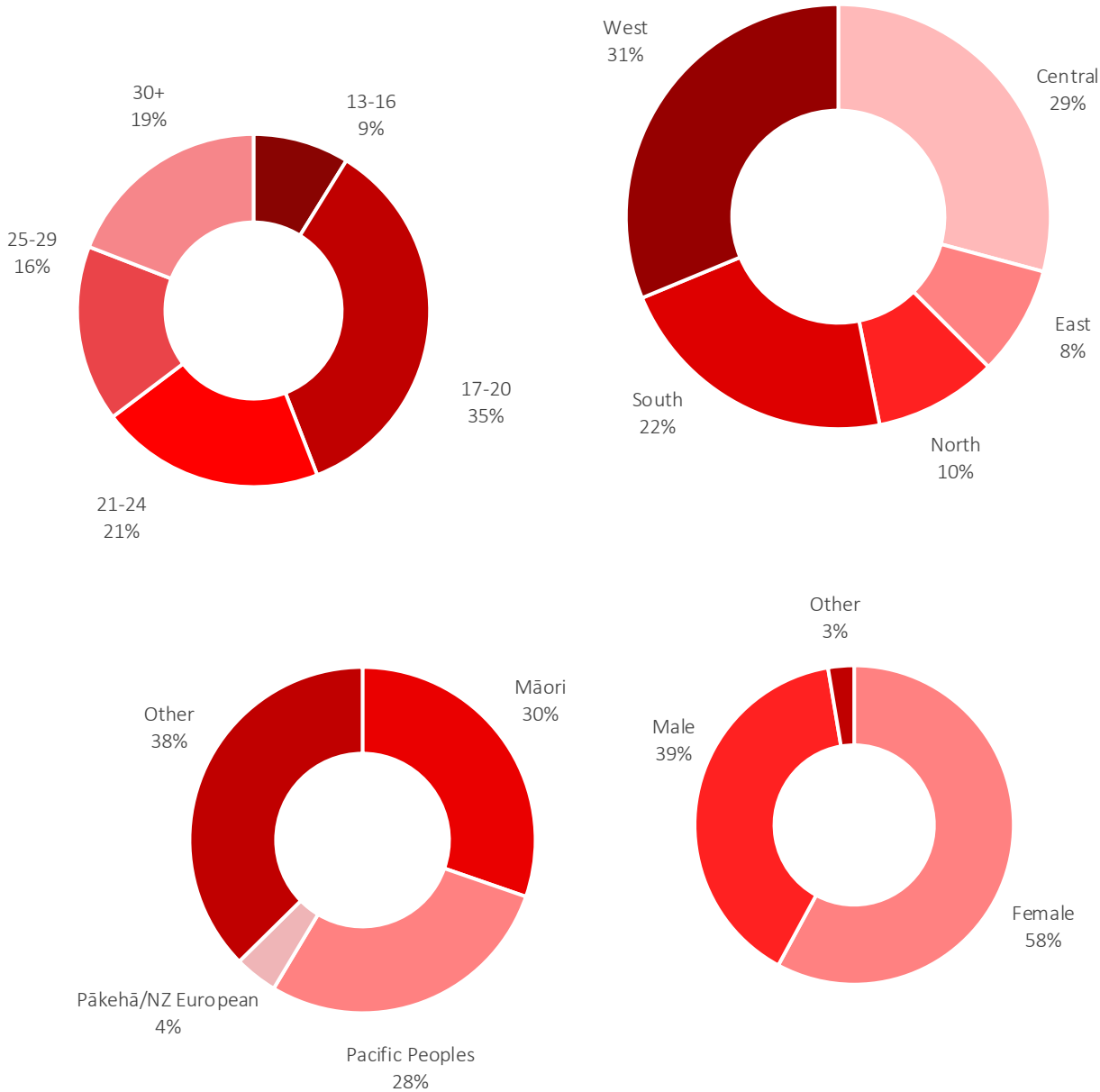
One of our biggest learnings is that building connection requires the Wāhine to first feel safe and accepted, and this quarter showed us that this requires time and patience. Participants need to feel comfortable before they can become vulnerable, not only during talanoa but also creatively. For some participants, simply sharing an idea, singing in front of someone or stepping into the booth can be a big achievement. Building these relationships over time has the potential to develop strong, motivated and driven Wāhine who can then inspire the next cohort that comes through. We have already seen returning participants help newer ones feel more comfortable, showing us how that confidence can ripple through the programme. The more participants feel that they belong, the more willing they become to collaborate, experiment, learn new skills and show up as themselves.

NAVIGATORS / WAHINE

SUMMARY



Participant stats: **76**



NAVIGATORS / WAHINE

IMAGES





NAVIGATORS / WEST

Facilitated by Bronson Price, Elijah Manū, Harry Huavi & Oliva Luki

Report by Elijah Manū

Tuesday's, Zeal West, Henderson

This quarter focused heavily on Talanoa and building connections between all participants and facilitators. We wanted to create safe spaces for dialogue about not only music, but personal life as well. Giving time for these conversations has helped participants get to know each other beyond their creative abilities and build stronger relationships within the West Navs community. We also utilised multiple spaces within ZEAL to give participants different ways to make music. This included a live room for instrumentalists, a room for beat-makers to work on laptops, and our usual studio to work collaboratively on songs every week. Having these different spaces allowed participants to move between different areas of music, learn from each other and find where they felt most comfortable creatively.

HIGHLIGHTS

A great highlight was seeing how many different ways people were able to be creative throughout our sessions. Some people would play guitar or piano, others would sing or rap, some would even beatbox or use machines to make live beats. Participants were able to bring their own strengths into the space while also being exposed to new styles, instruments and ways of creating. The great thing about this is the collaboration that naturally comes from it. We have seen participants share knowledge, jump into sessions with people they may not usually create with and become more confident contributing their own ideas. Everyone has something different to bring, and watching those different skills come together to create music is a beautiful thing to see.

CHALLENGES

At times, a challenge is making sure everyone has a space to belong. West Navs can get hectic when we have lots of people in the programme at once, especially when participants have different interests and ways they want to create. It is important that nobody gets lost within the numbers or feels like there isn't a place for them to contribute. Because of this, it is important for all facilitators to be present and aware of everyone in our space. As the community continues to grow, we need to make sure we are connecting with participants, helping them find where they fit and creating opportunities for everyone to be involved, whether they are confident jumping straight in or need a bit more support to participate. To ensure this during planning debrief we have discussed cues and/or propts to give each other to make sure we are actively managing the space as a team

LEARNINGS

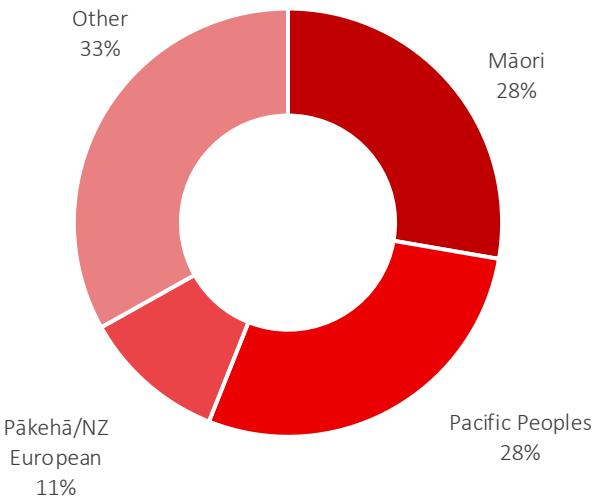
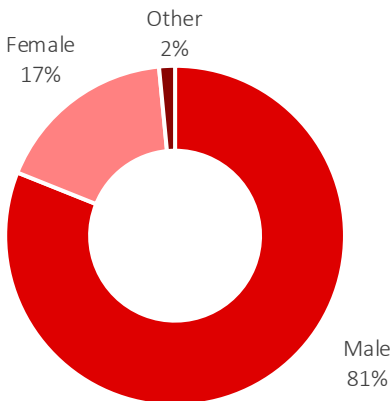
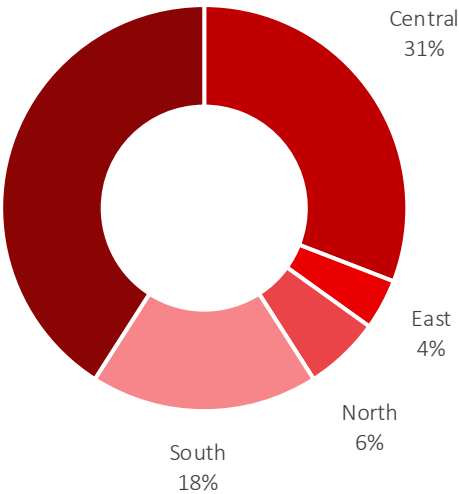
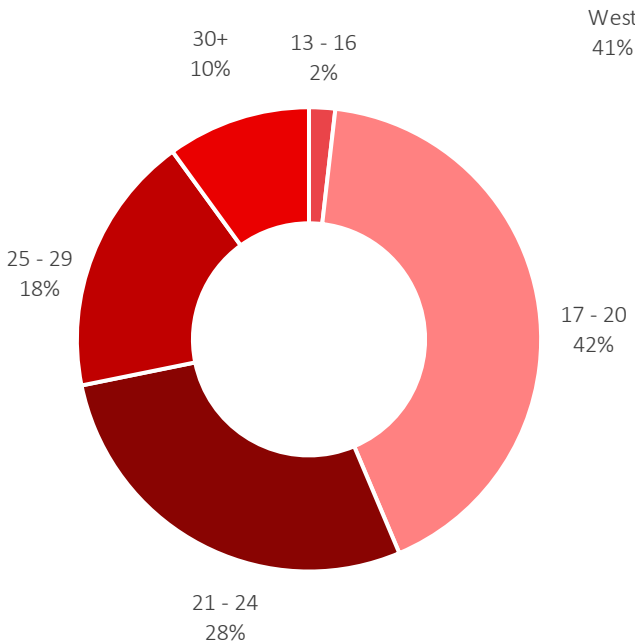
People come from all over the city to use this space, and it's a testament to the programme we provide and the environment we have created. A big learning for us is that people can communicate regardless of their backgrounds through music and our shared interest in being creative. Participants don't necessarily need to know each other beforehand to find something they can connect over. We have also learnt that giving participants different ways to contribute helps create a stronger sense of belonging. Whether someone plays an instrument, produces, sings, raps, beatboxes or simply wants to learn, there is room for them to bring something to the space. Music becomes the common ground, and through creating together participants are learning how to collaborate, communicate and build relationships with people they may not otherwise have met.

NAVIGATORS / WEST

SUMMARY



Participant stats: **132**



NAVIGATORS / WEST

IMAGES



NAVIGATORS / HOMESTEAD



Facilitated by Jesse Gibson, Luani Nansen & Noah Tauti

Report by Luani Nansen

Every second Tuesday, Nathan Homestead, Manurewa

Homestead Navigators emerged from a previous programme, Spoken Word Navigators. We were faced with concern of finding the right venue, the right engagement, and the right resources. How do we exist as a space for creatives if there are no artists or tools here? Through weeks of planning and connecting, we as facilitators, wishing to create a space for creatives like ourselves, agreed that an early pop-in studio would be the go. Nathan Homestead in Manurewa offered the space and resources we needed. Over time, our ideas developed into Homestead CLabs and Homestead Navigators - offering free one studio sessions run by Luani, alongside access to laptops with Fruity Loops for beat-making with Jesse and followed by a Navigators session. While we are still in the early stages, we have already had many faces enter our space. Behind these faces are creatives hungry to express themselves through art, whether that be rap, poetry or beat-making.

HIGHLIGHTS

Feeding the hunger: It has been cool to connect over kai... but on top of that, it has been even cooler to witness the eagerness and hunger for expression from our artists. A highlight as facilitators has been seeing this hunger expressed through various tastes of music and watching participants become comfortable bringing their own style, ideas and creative strengths to the table. While this hunger comes in many flavours, each creative holds the idea that “we all eat at the table.” Every artist brings their flavour, whether through raps, poetry or beats, and we are seeing participants learn how their individual creativity can blend with others. Rather than needing everyone to create in the same way, the space allows participants to share what they know, experience different styles and contribute towards creatives and projects together.

CHALLENGES

Hungry for more (time): A lowlight for the team has been maintaining the flow of our sessions between whakawhanaungatanga, Talanoa and creative. In the short span of time we have, it can feel like a long time until you are in it! We have found that those hours go quickly, and the cram for each creative does not always allow artists to fully immerse themselves in the process. Some creatives miss out on spitting their bars, while others don't have enough time to cook their beats. A challenge for facilitators has been navigating this time crunch. Being fortnightly also means we haven't had as many opportunities to fine-tune our schedule. Fortunately, we have narrowed it down to two things: if the Talanoa is rich, we have less time for creative. If we want more time to create, we need to know when to hard cut our Talanoa. Moving forward, finding that balance will be important so participants still have space to connect while also having enough time to develop and finish their creative ideas.

LEARNINGS

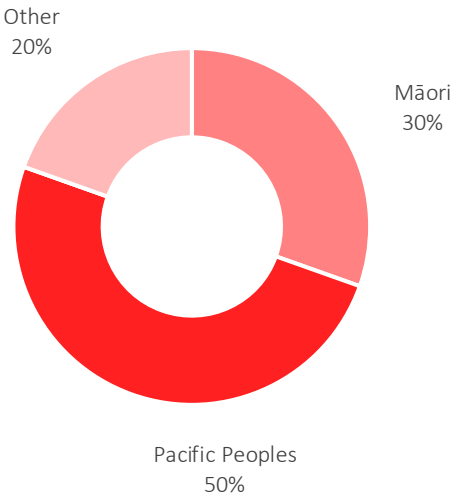
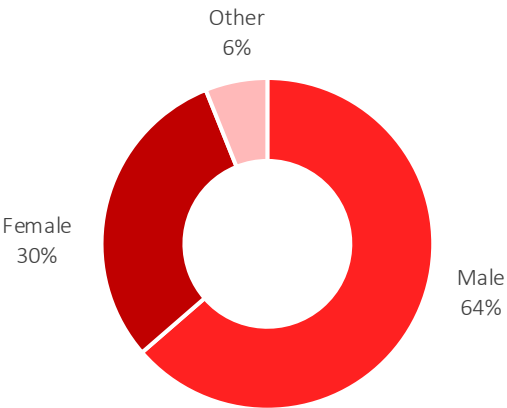
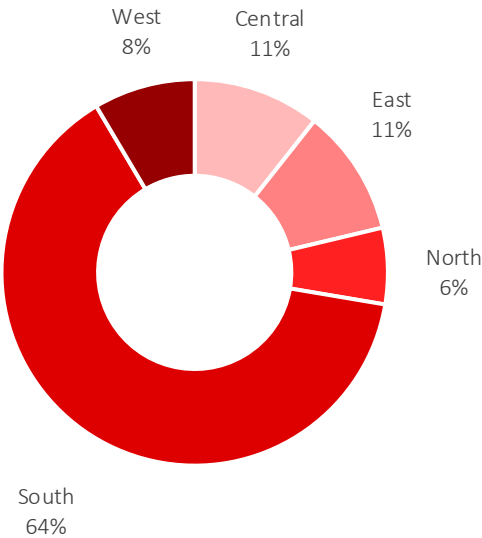
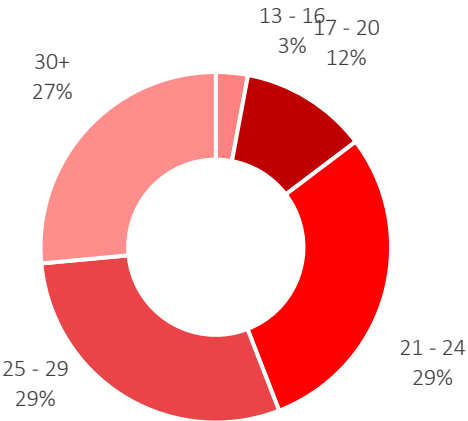
One of our biggest learnings has been that pivoting plans to engage with the community is important. Homestead Navigators itself came from recognising that something wasn't working and being willing to try something different. Preexisting relationships and networking have also been hugely helpful for community growth, giving us access to a space and resources where new creatives can come through and explore what they are capable of. We are also learning how important it is to find the balance between allowing our artists to flow and still honouring the schedule. Participants need time to build relationships and Talanoa, but they also need enough time to actually create, experiment and practise their craft. As the programme continues to grow, fine-tuning this balance will help us give each artist more opportunity to contribute, develop their skills and leave feeling like they got to eat at the table. Time is money, don't waste it.

NAVIGATORS / HOMESTEAD



SUMMARY

Participant stats: **39**



NAVIGATORS / HOMESTEAD

IMAGES



NAVIGATORS / CENTRAL



Facilitated by Branson Price, Elijah Manū & Oliva Luki

Report by Elijah Manū

Wednesday's, Wesley Community Centre, Mt Roskill

This quarter saw some of the highest participant numbers we have had at Central, so a big focus for us was building interpersonal relationships through Talanoa. We created space for participants to share their perspectives with each other on topics such as fashion, A.I. and the future of the music industry. These conversations gave people a chance to get to know each other, hear different points of view and become more comfortable contributing to the space. We also gave a lot of space for participants to create music and work in groups to collaborate. With so many different people coming through, this gave participants opportunities to share their skills, learn from each other and create with people they may not usually work with.

HIGHLIGHTS

The highlight was definitely seeing so many new faces at our programme. We had people from all different backgrounds, including participants who make music in multiple languages, all able to work together and create strong ideas. It was cool seeing people who had only just met become comfortable enough to share what they do, contribute their own ideas and find ways to collaborate with each other. I think it showed the potential of Central Navs and what can happen when we are able to bring more people into the space. We also learnt that our Instagram ads really worked, as a lot of our new participants said that was how they heard about the programme. Bringing in new people created more opportunities for participants to connect, build relationships and be exposed to different styles and approaches to making music.

CHALLENGES

The numbers have slightly dipped since we stopped running fresh ads, so one of our biggest challenges has been retaining the new people that come through our programme. While we have shown that we can attract new participants, the next step is figuring out how we turn those first visits into stronger and more consistent engagement. I think we should look at keeping in touch throughout the week so we can remind the community that we are here. Building that connection outside of programme nights could help participants feel more connected to the space and encourage them to keep coming back, especially those who are still new and developing relationships within the Central Navs community.

LEARNINGS

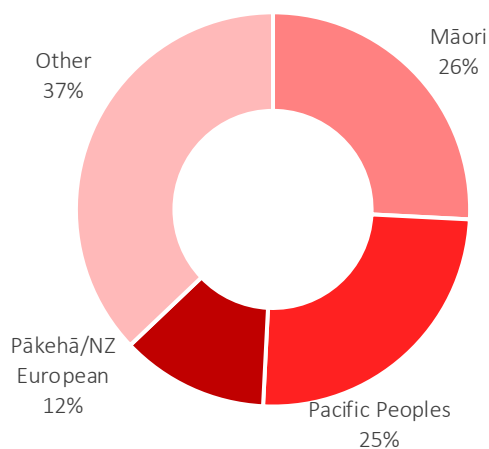
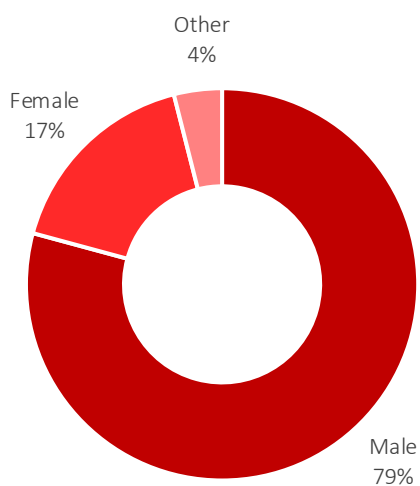
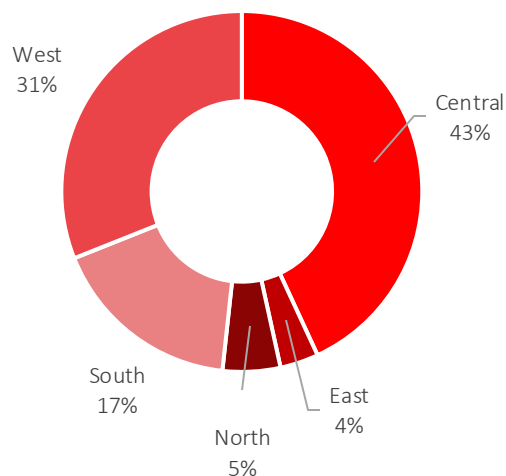
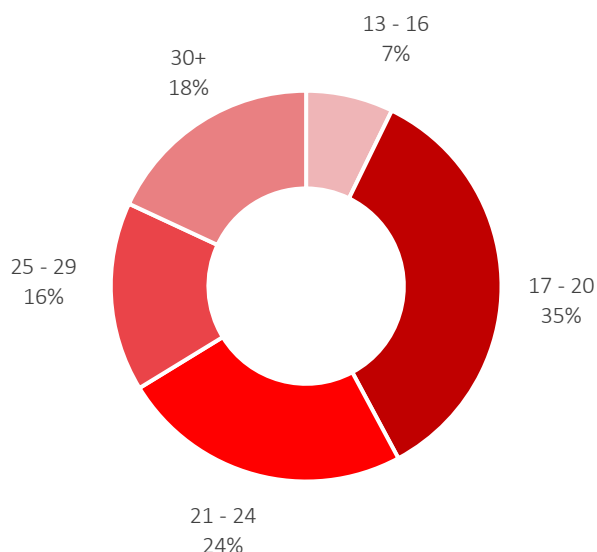
A key learning for me is that people come to these programmes in search of community, and we hold a space for relationships to develop and grow. The music is important, but we have seen that participants are also learning how to connect with new people, share their ideas and collaborate with people from different backgrounds and experiences. Over this quarter I have seen many people meet for the first time and then go on to collaborate on music outside of the programme. We're able to be that link between people meeting, which can often be the hardest part of making music. Seeing those relationships continue beyond Central Navs has shown us that one of the biggest things participants can walk away with is not only stronger creative skills, but a wider community of people they can create and grow alongside.



NAVIGATORS / CENTRAL

SUMMARY

Participant stats: **101**



NAVIGATORS / CENTRAL

IMAGES





NAVIGATORS / TALALOTO

OVERVIEW

Talaloto is a communal dialogue initiative that provides a culturally grounded space for honest conversation, reflection, and collective growth. Rooted in the Pasifika practice of Talanoa, it offers a rare environment where people can explore personal experiences and worldviews that are often difficult to express in other settings. By creating a safe and dignified forum for open dialogue, Talaloto strengthens emotional wellbeing, mental health, builds social connection, and fosters a sense of belonging across diverse communities and generations.

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Increased emotional self-awareness through guided communal dialogue



Strengthened sense of connection and belonging across diverse communities



Greater capacity to reflect on life challenges and navigate them with dignity



Access to a consistent, culturally grounded space that fosters trust and connection

WELLBEING OUTCOMES



Improved ability to process personal experiences in a safe and supportive environment



Increased sense of safety and dignity when exploring personal or sensitive issues



Strengthened emotional resilience through shared reflection and collective care



Enhanced overall mental and emotional wellbeing through regular, meaningful dialogue



NAVIGATORS / TALALOTO



Facilitated by Gemma Orourke, Jesse Gibson, Luani Nansen & Rizván Tu'itahi

Report by Luani Nansen

Every second Thursday, Taro Patch Creative, Papatoetoe

In this quarter, Talaloto Navs served as a safe space, something our participants echoed throughout our fortnightly meets. Each member would meet on noa (even grounds) and tala (speak/talk/share), with everyone excited to share what had happened between our meetings. It was beautiful to experience everyone's talaloto (speak from their hearts), creating a space where participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences, perspectives and worlds with each other. We dove into many topics, including third spaces like Navigators, youth groups and co-curricular activities, and how they exist as pillars within our villages. Our topics would often revolve around the many villages we exist in and the different experiences we carry from them. Through this, participants were learning how to speak openly, listen to different perspectives and find noa with each other, even when our experiences or opinions did not always align. Alongside our group Talaloto gatherings, facilitators provided individual check-ins and follow-up mentoring for participants needing additional support. These conversations offered space to talk through personal challenges, explore ways of coping and stay connected with trusted facilitators between sessions.

HIGHLIGHTS

Worlds colliding: We discussed injustices within our villages, including experiences and perspectives around our legal system and the people in positions of power. This opened up further talanoa about the election, where participants would talaloto about their different stances. Despite these differences, we understood the mana each person held within the space and that we could eventually find even grounds (noa). Participants were able to disagree, question and listen to each other without losing the respect and relationships already established within the space. This understanding is something we continued to uphold as we navigated many different topics of conversation. Worlds existing, worlds entered and returning: Each Talaloto Navs brought a different vibe. Sometimes our talaloto would stay within the big circle, while other nights it would naturally break into smaller circles or pairs. The energy would still exist and flow, the tala would still happen on-noa and from-loto. This quarter saw fresh faces enter and mould into Talaloto effortlessly, speaking from hearts open to conversation and even 'dropping lore' exclusively between the walls of Taro Patch Collective. Seeing both new and existing participants continue to return each fortnight, hungry for more talanoa and talaloto, has been a testament to the safety and noa created within the space.

CHALLENGES

The world is tough: As facilitators, and by human nature, we cannot hold the world on our shoulders. A challenge for us has been recognising when we are trying to hold space for participants while also needing to hold ourselves. Whether it is a stressful day at Uni or a week's worth of work, how can you fan the flame if you're burnt out? Fortunately, our Talaloto Navs team has enough members to balance the load. If someone is not at 100%, we can lean on each other to continue the kaupapa while consciously taking care of one another, allowing that facilitator to eventually return recharged and ready to talaloto. Another challenge comes when a large talanoa connects deeply with one participant, meaning they may become more vocal and the focus naturally falls towards them. As facilitators, we are learning how to bring that talanoa back into the wider group while still maintaining and lifting the mana of that individual. We may not always relate directly to their experience, but we can acknowledge it, offer words of encouragement and make sure everyone leaves the space with awhina. If the waka is our circle, we wade in each water together. Follow up sessions have faced much-expected challenges including supporting participants experiencing mental distress, interpersonal problems and relationship breakdowns. Supervision and management support has ensured staff don't cross professional boundaries or risk burnout.

LEARNINGS

One of our biggest learnings has been that in order to hold space, we must hold ourselves. Self-compassion matters, and our team works like a clock, relying on each other to keep things moving. We have learnt that good facilitation does not mean one person carrying everything. Sometimes it means knowing when to lean on your team, when to listen and when somebody else is better placed to hold a particular conversation.

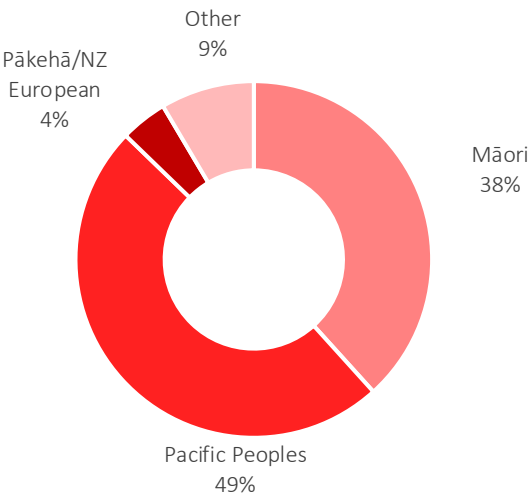
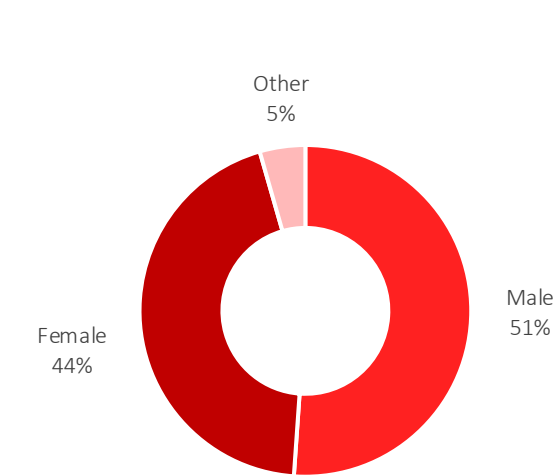
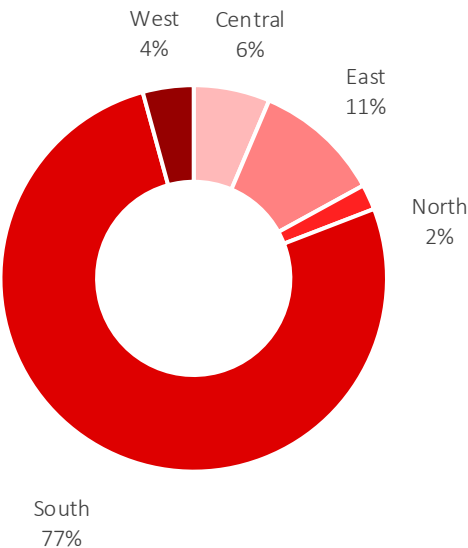
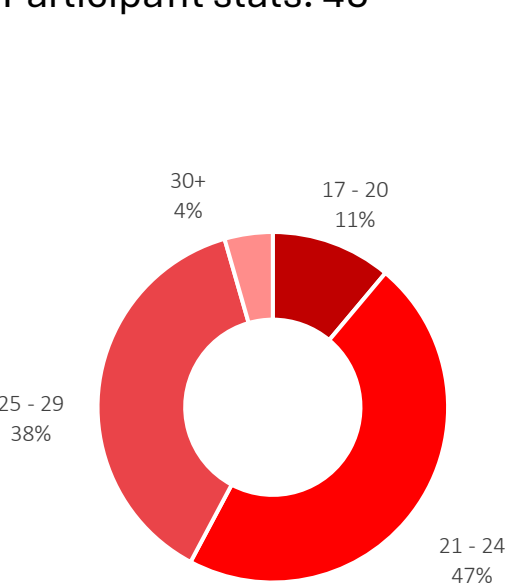
We have also learnt that no matter how deep the talanoa becomes, we must always leave the space with love. Participants are learning that difficult conversations can exist alongside respect, empathy and connection, and that differences do not have to take away from anyone's mana. Talaloto continues to show us that when noa is established, people can speak from the heart, listen to each other and still leave the space together. Never give up.



NAVIGATORS / TALALOTO

SUMMARY

Participant stats: 45



NAVIGATORS / TALALOTO

IMAGES





CREATIVE LABS

OVERVIEW

Creative Labs provides free access to high-quality music spaces, creative resources, and mentoring for young people—particularly those facing adversity—so they can develop their skills in a safe, supportive environment. Participants receive hands-on guidance from experienced producers and musicians, as well as opportunities to learn the technical skills needed to work independently. The program has become a pivotal launchpad for many emerging artists, helping them create and release original music, build confidence, and take meaningful steps toward future opportunities in the creative industries.

PERSONAL OUTCOMES



Strengthened sense of identity and personal agency through music creation



Increased confidence and self-expression through supported creative practice

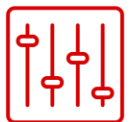


Development of resilience and perseverance through independent studio use



Access to a safe, inclusive space that fosters belonging and personal growth

PROFESSIONAL OUTCOMES



Growth in technical music production, recording, and creative industry skills



Creation and release of original works that build artistic portfolios



Experience using high-quality equipment and software independently



Increased readiness to pursue performance, recording, and industry opportunities



CREATIVE LABS / SOUTH



Facilitated by Oliva Luki

Report by Oliva Luki

Mon & Weds, OMAC, Ōtara

South CLabs continued to be a space for participants to come and create music, whether that was recording, making beats, engineering or learning more about the overall studio process. Participants have been able to learn studio etiquette, get advice, develop their production and engineering skills and experience what it is like working within a real studio environment. It is also a place where participants can come to just get away from the world and talk music. Not every session has to be purely about getting a song finished. Sometimes it is about having somewhere safe to be, talking through where they are at and then using music as a way to release energy positively and express themselves.

HIGHLIGHTS

A big highlight has been seeing a lot of participants utilise both the space and mentorship offered at CLabs. We have seen participants release much more music and become more confident with letting their work go out into the world rather than holding onto it. It has been cool seeing them stay active and consistent with releasing, showing growth not only in their music but also in the confidence they have in what they create. Another highlight has been having new participants come through excited to learn and experience a real studio environment. It's always a nice feeling seeing them arrive prepared and ready to work! Participants are learning how to carry themselves in the studio, work through the recording process and become more independent in what they do, whether that is recording, producing or engineering.

CHALLENGES

Sometimes the studio is down and it sucks having to cancel, especially when participants have prepared for their session and are ready to work. Having consistent access to a working studio is important because it allows participants to keep their momentum going and continue developing their skills from one session to the next. No-shows and last-minute cancellations can also be frustrating, especially when that time could have been offered to another participant wanting to use the studio. A challenge moving forward is finding ways to keep communication strong and encourage participants to take ownership of the sessions and opportunities available to them. We have a few we are working on.

LEARNINGS

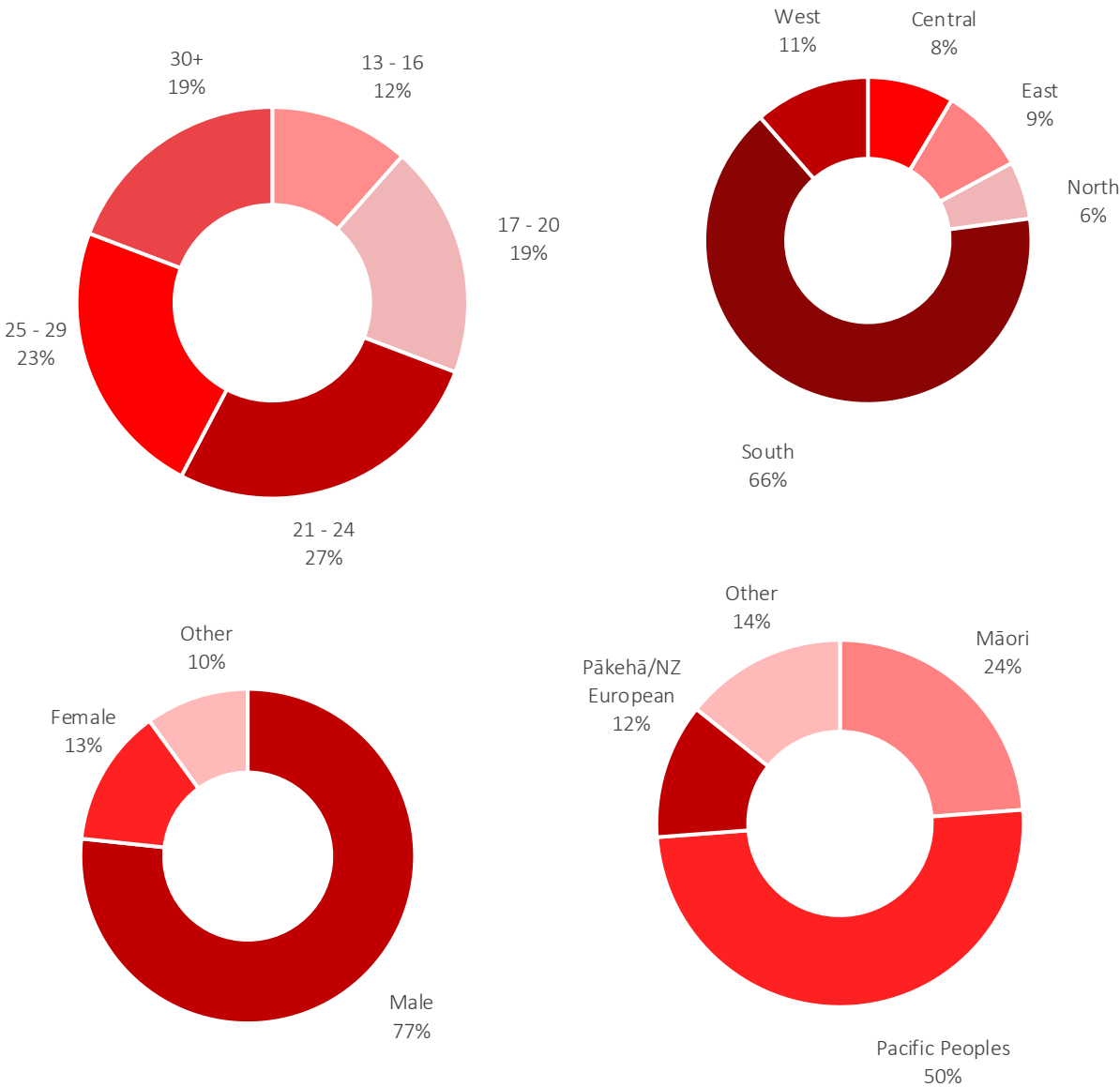
One of the biggest learnings is staying consistent, both in the creative work and in how we support participants. Making sure we check in with them before we start is important because a lot of the time CLabs is a place of escape, where they can release energy positively through the expression of art and music. I find the sessions run much smoother when participants feel heard and safe before any music is done. That relationship and check-in can be just as important as the technical skills we are teaching. Once participants feel comfortable, they are more open to learning, trying things, taking advice and expressing themselves creatively.

CREATIVE LABS / SOUTH



SUMMARY

Participant stats: **30**



CREATIVE LABS / SOUTH

IMAGES



CREATIVE LABS / WEST



Facilitated by Oliva Luki

Report by Oliva Luki

Mon & Weds, Zeal West, Henderson

West CLabs continued to be a space for participants to come and record their music, make beats and just escape for a bit and get into their zone! Participants have access to the studio where they can work on their own projects, develop their craft and learn more about almost anything to do with the creative process of making art and music. A big part of the programme is also learning studio etiquette and how to actually operate within a studio environment. Participants are developing skills in recording, beat-making and engineering, while learning how to use the equipment and run their own sessions. It is not always about finishing a song either. Sometimes participants come in to experiment, talk music or simply have a space where they can be creative.

HIGHLIGHTS

West CLabs has become quite self-sufficient, which has been a big highlight. The majority of participants are now able to run their own sessions, with me mainly there to supervise, troubleshoot equipment problems or jump in if they need an engineer. We have a lot of active participants who come almost every week to work on projects or simply keep developing their craft. Seeing them become more independent in the studio shows how much they have learnt through consistently using the space. Another highlight has been seeing participants feel safe enough to use the space for more than just music. We have had participants come through and feel comfortable enough to vent, talk about life and just have someone listen. Having that relationship alongside the creative work is important, and it means participants know they can come into CLabs whether they are ready to record, want to talk music or just need somewhere to be for a while.

CHALLENGES

A big challenge is that a lot of the time equipment can be faulty or things are missing. When participants are coming in ready to work, these issues can put everything at a standstill and take time away from the session while we try to troubleshoot or find another way to make things work. At its worst, equipment issues can mean having to cancel sessions completely. This can interrupt the consistency participants have built, especially for those who come almost every week to work on ongoing projects. Having reliable equipment and making sure everything stays where it needs to be would allow participants to keep that momentum going and get the most out of their studio time. We have put time in to creating a back-up gear bag to avoid these issues.

LEARNINGS

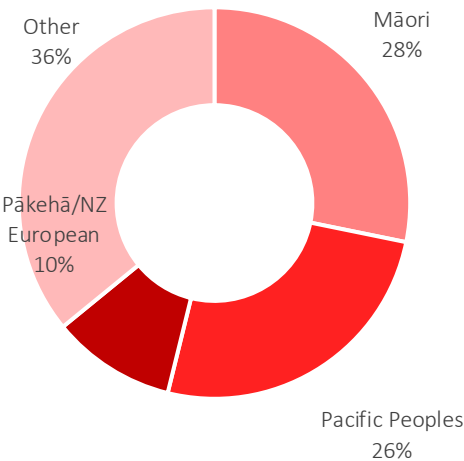
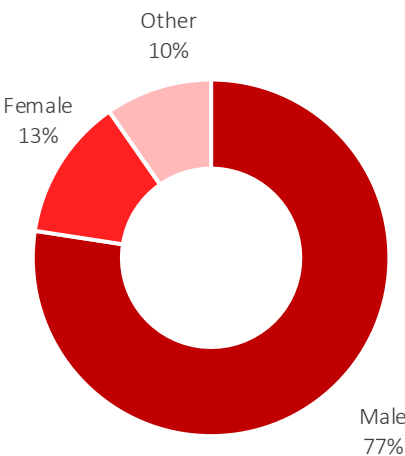
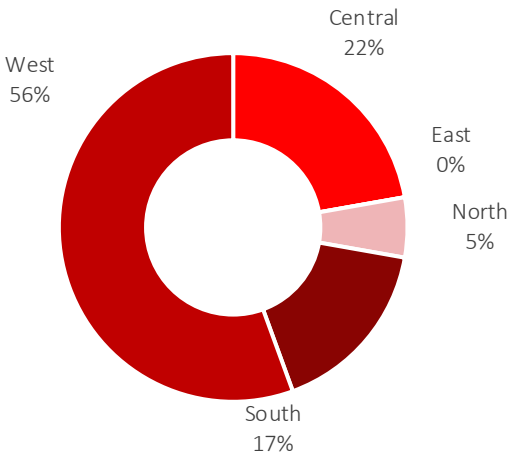
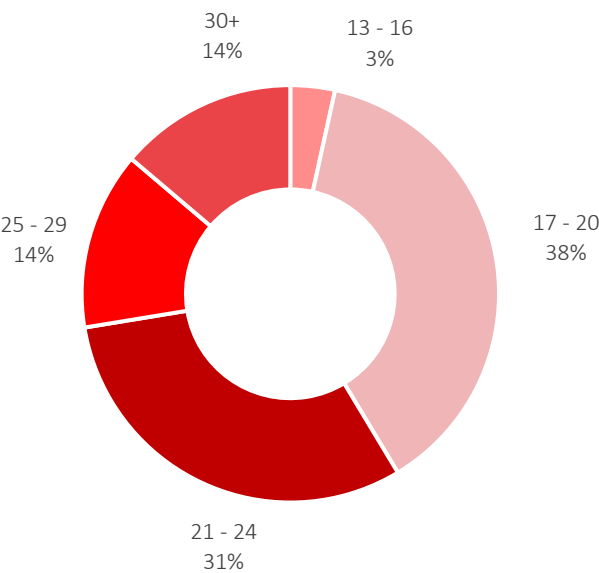
One of my learnings has been making sure participants know that CLabs is not only a place to make music. If they need someone to talk to, they can. Sometimes being able to vent, talk about life and feel heard is what they need before they are ready to create. Building that trust has helped make the studio a space where participants feel comfortable being themselves as well as developing creatively. I have also learnt the importance of jumping in and giving my advice on recording and engineering when it is needed. I feel like participants really value what I have to say, and I have to remind myself that giving honest critique can help with the betterment of their craft. As participants become more self-sufficient, my role becomes less about doing things for them and more about guiding, challenging and supporting them to keep improving.

CREATIVE LABS / WEST



SUMMARY

Participant stats: **31**



CREATIVE LABS / WEST

IMAGES



CREATIVE LABS / CENTRAL



Facilitated by Aidan Fine, Mataio Hanrahan & Sean Andersen

Report by Mataio Hanrahan

Weds & Thurs, Wesley Community Centre, Sandringham

This quarter we continued providing a creative space for young musicians in Central Auckland. As the studios are always in high in-demand, we re-vamped and tidied the space while also replacing computers with new ones. While the main purpose of CLabs is music creation, the space has also become somewhere participants can come to feel comfortable, connect with others and spend time around people with similar creative interests. Having regular access to the studios allows participants to practise their craft, work towards their own projects and become more confident and independent in the way they create music.

HIGHLIGHTS

So far, the best part for me has been the number of people that have come through the doors. We have had some familiar faces and a lot of new ones too. As much as it is a place intended for music creation, some nights it feels a lot like a safe space for the young people who participate in our programmes. Seeing people consistently return and make use of the studios shows how important having access to these spaces can be. Creatively speaking, we have a lot of talented people who use our studios consistently. In particular, one of our familiar faces recently recorded and published an entire album, all from our studios. Seeing a participant take their ideas through the recording process and eventually release a full body of work is a huge achievement. Seeing people succeed and achieve their own creative goals using our programmes is very inspiring.

CHALLENGES

For me, the biggest challenge is not having enough time in the booths to cater to the sheer number of people trying to book. It can feel quite competitive to get a spot, with most time slots completely booked out within minutes of the booking sheets being refreshed. This has led to some frustration throughout our group chats, especially for participants who see our programme as one of the only places where they have access to the equipment and space needed to make their music. We have also had a lot of participants coming in larger groups. This can sometimes become challenging as it becomes harder to keep the space peaceful and productive for everyone due to noise and rowdiness. Moving forward, having clearer expectations around the number of people allowed in each booth could help us maintain a safe and practical environment while still allowing participants to collaborate.

LEARNINGS

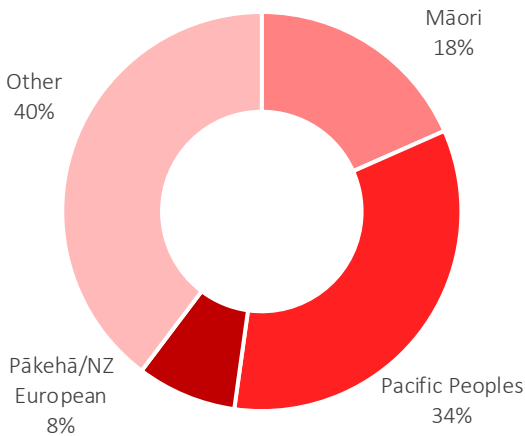
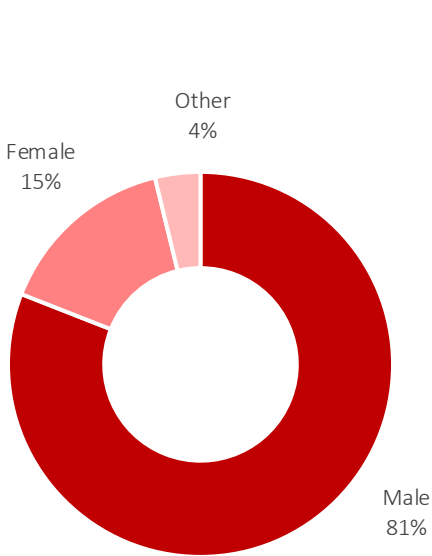
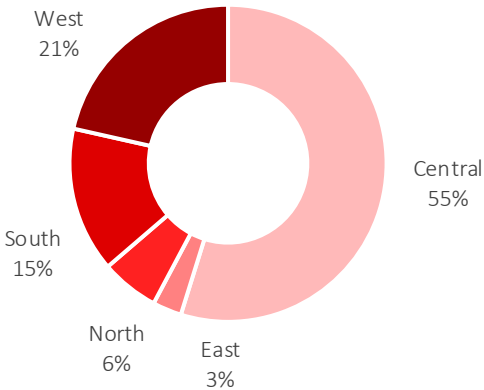
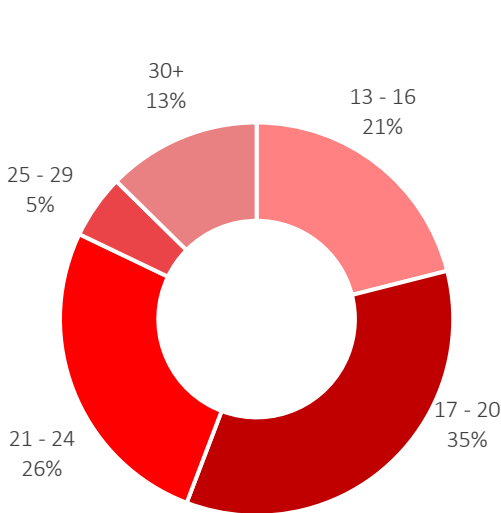
Although these challenges are still ongoing, they have helped me learn how to better manage people's feelings and solve problems through communication. With such high demand for the studios, there will naturally be times when we cannot give everyone exactly what they want, so being able to communicate clearly and fairly with participants has become an important part of running the space. We have also learnt just how valuable consistent access to creative resources can be. Participants are not only learning how to record and develop their music, but are working towards real creative outcomes and becoming more independent in their craft. Seeing someone go from regularly using the space to releasing an entire album shows what can happen when participants have the tools, time and environment to keep working towards their goals.

CREATIVE LABS / CENTRAL



SUMMARY

Participant stats: **122**



CREATIVE LABS / CENTRAL

IMAGES





BRIDGE THE GAP

OVERVIEW

Bridge The Gap is an intensive creative development program that guides young emerging creative entrepreneurs through a transformative, hands-on learning journey. Participants produce, and publicly release an original body of work, while learning every stage of the business process – from production and digital distribution to content creation, identifying potential revenue streams, promotion, and merchandise development. The program empowers young people with creative passions to gain practical, transferable skills, project management and real-world experience, supporting their growth as independent and confident creative leaders, capable of shaping their own pathways.

CREATIVE OUTCOMES



Full end-to-end experience in music production, release, and promotion



Growth in entrepreneurial and creative industry skills



Development of branding, content creation, and merchandise capabilities



Increased ability to lead and manage creative projects independently

PROFESSIONAL OUTCOMES



Access to professional networks and industry opportunities



Paid performance, work & experience within the industry



Development of skills for future creative or business ventures



Increased readiness to sustain creative careers beyond the program



BRIDGE THE GAP



Facilitated by Bev Adair, Oliva Luki, Elijah Manū, & Rizván Tu'itahi

Report by William Mark-Brown, Elijah Manū & Oliva Luki

This quarter, Bridge the Gap continued supporting young people to develop their creative and entrepreneurial capability through focused mentoring and practical projects. The emphasis was on helping participants move from having ideas to understanding the work needed to develop, manage and prepare a project for release. We currently have four staff working one on one with participants and small groups at varying stages in their entrepreneurial development. The projects described below illustrate two examples of this approach this term, with young people supported to make creative decisions, build technical skills and monetise their creative outputs.

One rōpū involved three participants developing their first ever solo music projects. Working alongside their mentor, and at other TKT programs they explored their individual sound, developed beats and recorded original material. BTG activity progressed through learning about (and setting up) revenue splitting on publishing and masters, strategic planning for online and physical release, a live show and merchandise run. In another rōpū, four participants from Navigators were developing a collaborative album from scratch as a collective of producers, inviting artists from their communities to contribute. They were tasked with producing, organising and completing the work themselves, with strategic and executive-production guidance from their mentor. Both approaches supported learning through a real projects rather than isolated creative exercises.

HIGHLIGHTS

A highlight was the commitment shown by participants working towards their first solo releases. They invested substantial time in refining their work and arrived at sessions prepared. Relationships already established through Navigators helped create a strong foundation for this more focused mentoring. Within the collaborative album project, participants' ideas were taking shape while they learned what is involved in developing and professionally promoting and releasing a full body of work. The emphasis was on building the capability to carry their own projects forward, rather than relying on a facilitator to do the work for them.

CHALLENGES

Maintaining momentum required flexibility as participants often balanced school, work, whānau commitments and travel. Some sessions were rescheduled or moved to different locations, and periods of absence extended production timelines. Completing a full album is a crash course in project management and involves many interconnected tasks with deadlines that require sustained attention and guidance. Mentors remained mindful of participants' mental and emotional wellbeing, adjusting the pace rather than rushing creative decisions or treating delays as a lack of commitment.

LEARNINGS

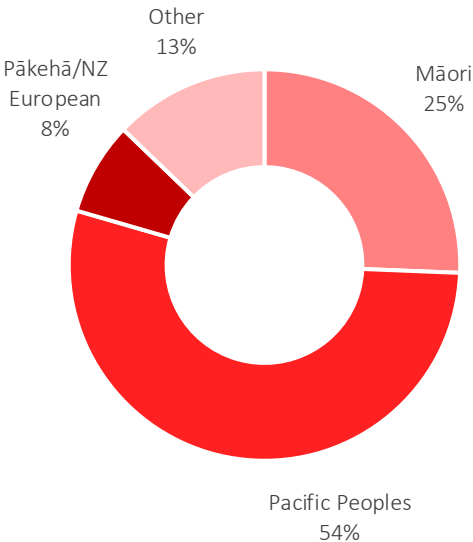
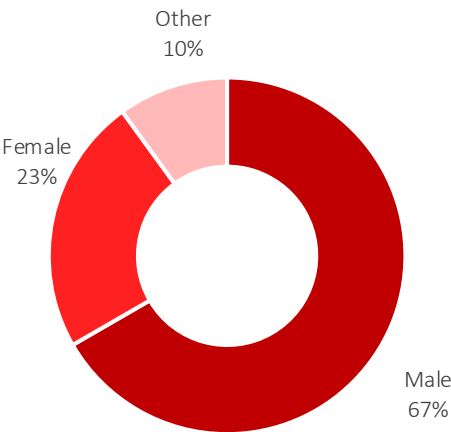
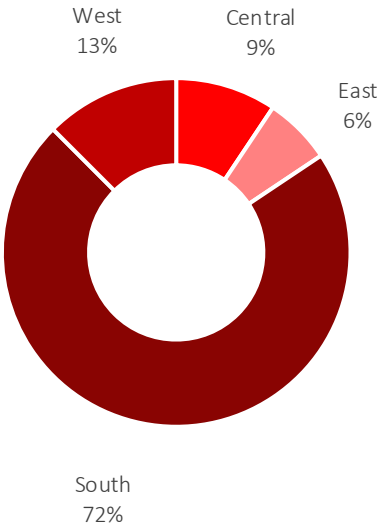
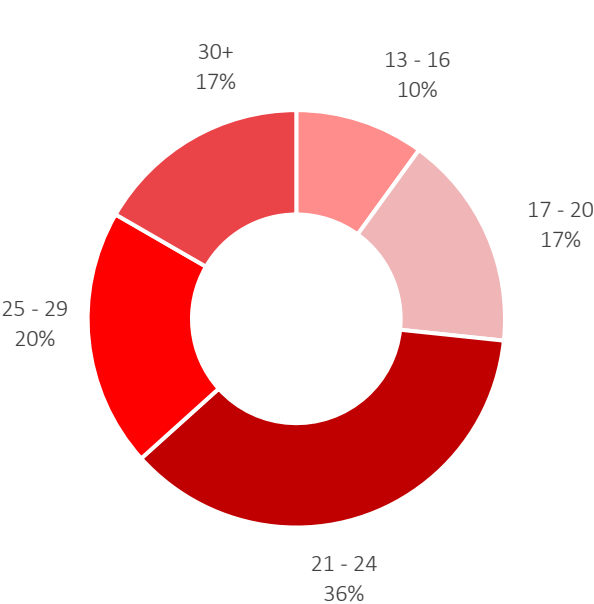
This quarter reinforced the value of relationships built before intensive project work begins. Knowing participants and understanding their creative direction made it easier to provide relevant support. It also highlighted that supporting independence does not mean removing guidance: young people need opportunities to take responsibility while learning how to navigate the demands of a larger project. This connects directly to Bridge the Gap's wider enterprise purpose, using creative interests to develop self-management, practical problem-solving and the confidence to pursue future opportunities. At the time of reporting, these projects remained in development, with completion and the associated show and merchandise plans still to be progressed.

BRIDGE THE GAP



SUMMARY

Participant stats: **30**



TUAKANA



OVERVIEW

Tuakana is our mentoring program designed to nurture personal growth, confidence, and wellbeing through genuine connection. Built on trust and meaningful kōrero, Tuakana provides a safe space for young people to express themselves freely, reflect on their challenges, and explore solutions with the support of experienced mentors. Each mentoring journey is guided by the pace and capacity of the participant — empowering them to find direction, take action, and build belief in their own potential. Whether it's through one-on-one sessions, group chats, or spontaneous moments in daily life, Tuakana creates pathways for personal, creative, and social development that strengthen the whole person.

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Strengthened confidence and self-belief



Increased personal responsibility and leadership



Stronger sense of connection and belonging



Positive identity and self-awareness

WELLBEING OUTCOMES



Improved emotional regulation and awareness



Greater resilience and coping skills



Empowered decision-making and independence



Stability through healthy routines and relationships

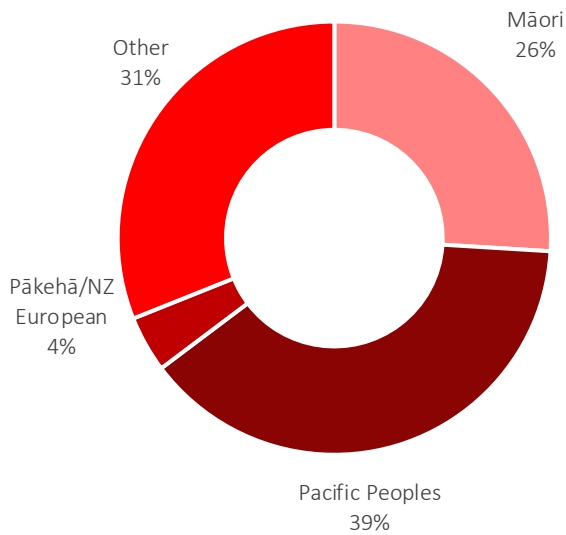
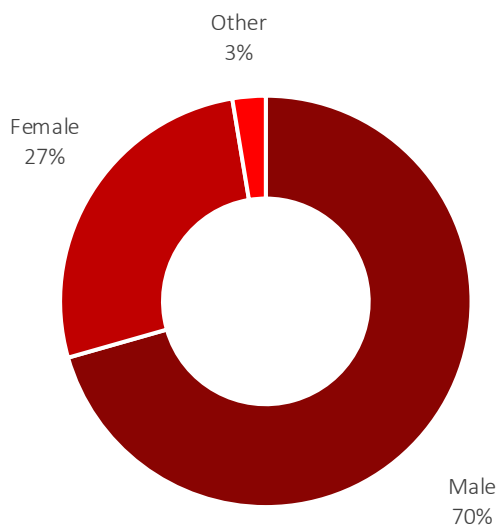
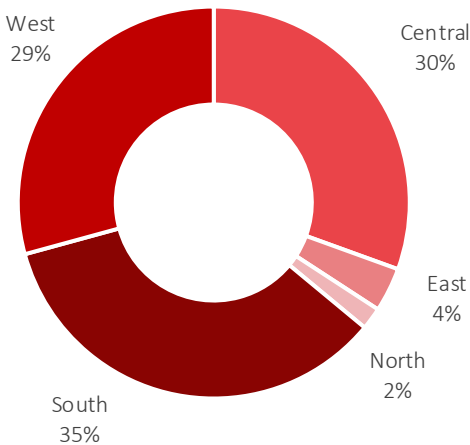
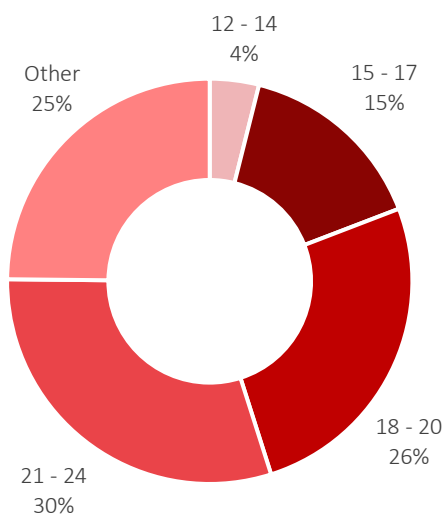


TUAKANA

SUMMARY



Estimated Participants: **459**



RANGATAHI HIGHLIGHTS



“Being in connection and community with other people, sharing and listening to other people’s kōrero has been a beautiful way to navigate being back with our people”

“The community is actually dedicated to supporting each other and actively cares about you”

“Being able to meet new Wāhine that have created a safe space to be yourself and support each other.”

“South Navs is an amazing programme that has incredible value - tapping into heritage ways of gathering to talanoa while offering a powerful and important space for spoken word skills to be shared and strengthened and enjoyed!”

“Challenging myself to create music in short time frame and working with people I've never met to create something beautiful”

“The whole experience of getting set up as an Artist and learning all the ins and outs of the industry; I don’t think I could quite learn as in depth if I didn’t do this”

“Hearing all the wisdom and advice from people who know a lot in that field and also in the way you can discuss and talk about personal things”

“The friendly and lovely staff always there to help and show love, support”



“The community, new connections, having a third space away from home and work with an environment of people working towards similar dreams”



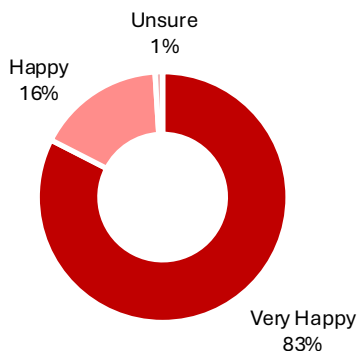


FEEDBACK ANALYSIS

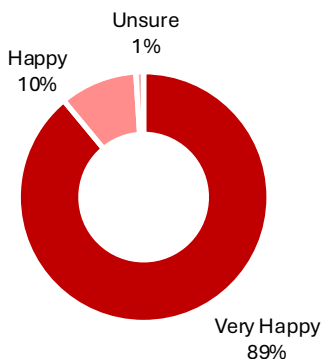
HOW OUR RANGATAHI FEEL

(Data collected 30 June 2026)

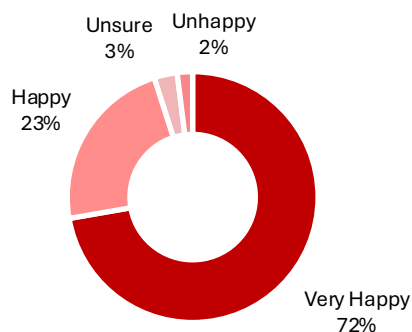
HAPPY WITH THE PROGRAM



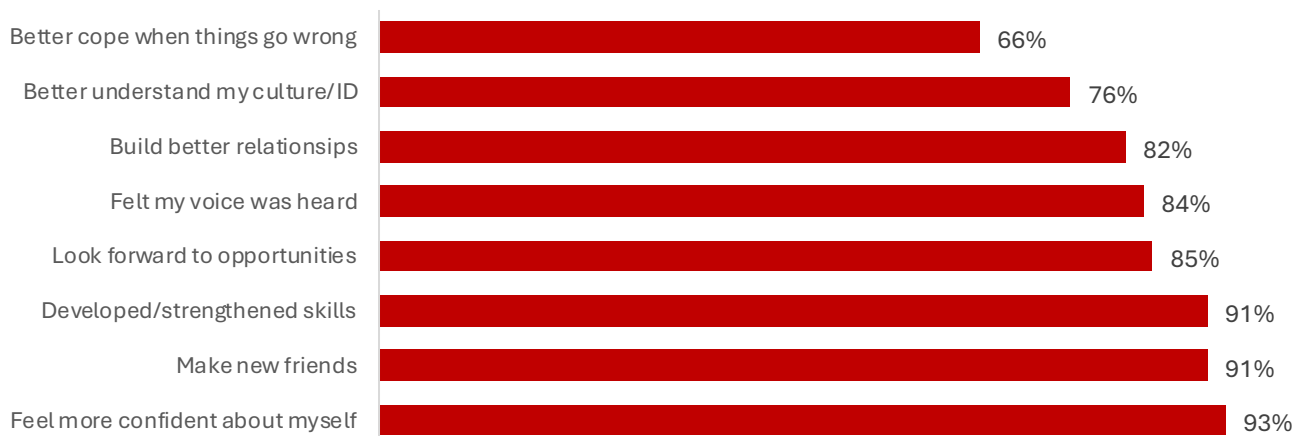
HAPPY WITH THE FACILITATORS



HAPPY WITH THE FACILITIES/VENUE



THE PROGRAMS HELPED ME TO...



WHAT COULD BE BETTER

25% Indicated that no improvements were needed.

18% Requested increased access (more time, days, or sessions)

10% Requested improved equipment and creative resources.

10% Requested more events, workshops and learning opportunities.

4% Requested greater facilitator interaction / engagement

2% Provided other individual suggestions specific to their programme.

MORE IMAGES



MORE IMAGES



MORE IMAGES



MORE IMAGES



MORE IMAGES



MORE IMAGES

