



WHANAKE O TE KŌPARA



# Evaluation, Learning & Reflections

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Curated and facilitated by  
Women in Sport Aotearoa  
& The Shift Foundation



Mā te huruhuru,  
ka rere te manu

Adorn the bird with feathers so it can fly

*Orongomai Marae,  
Upper Hutt*



## Whanake

to grow, to develop, to move  
onwards, move upwards.



## Kōpara

the bellbird (especially the female  
bellbird), known for its strong, clear,  
liquid songs.

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E te whānau

Whāia te mātauranga kia mārama

Kia whai take ngā mahi katoa

Tū maia, tū kaha

Aroha atu, aroha mai

Tātou i a tātou katoa

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For this family

Seek knowledge for understanding

Have purpose in all that you do

Stand tall, be strong

Let us show respect

For each other

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# INTRODUCTION



Whanake o te Kōpara is a leadership development programme established for young women aged 19 to 25. Built upon the foundations of co-design and social learning spaces, it aims to amplify the strengths of the individual, enabling them to uplift themselves, their community and the sector that surrounds them.

INTRODUCTION

Whanake o te Kōpara is co-designed with the young women participating to ensure it meets their unique needs. The first programme was delivered between March 2021 and January 2022.

If you want to watch a summary of Whanake o te Kōpara [click here](#) to preview a short video.

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## Purpose

Using human-centred leadership frameworks and practices, the programme intentionally focuses on the learning gained through the journey, rather than its outcome. It amplifies the strengths of each individual, enabling them to create change within themselves, throughout

their wider community and the sectors they contribute to.

Facilitated and enabled by The Shift Foundation and Women in Sport Aotearoa (WISPA) this mahi was informed by an identified gap in leadership opportunities for young women, particularly in the sport, active recreation and wellbeing sectors.

The programme was designed to address this gap, offering a safe and empowering environment for the participants to begin and build their leadership journey while strengthening their confidence, values and self-belief.

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## Bridging the Gap - Why this programme matters

It is a known and evidenced fact that women face a range of barriers when it comes to participation and leadership in the sport and recreation sector, and this is even harder for young women. Whanake o te Kōpara aims to change this systemic imbalance by providing an early pathway for the next generation of women in leadership. The programme veers away from the 'how-to' model of learning leadership by providing space for young women of all backgrounds to find their 'why'. It encourages young women to identify their strengths and how they can leverage these in order to shape their own definition of leading; enabling personal and



professional development through frameworks, tools and ideas that challenge the status quo.

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## Participants

Applications were invited from young women from around Aotearoa. These young women were not in leadership positions, in fact, many of them had been told that they were not 'leadership material'. The programme has enabled them to identify their values, passions, strengths, and they have demonstrated the ability to make a difference to the people in their communities and have developed their confidence to exercise leadership.

Seventeen participants were selected from across the motu, from Pukekohe in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland)

to Owaka in Murihiku (Southland). Each young woman differed in the way they had grown up, what opportunities they have had access to, their education, their ethnicities, and their age. However, they all shared a common passion for physical activity and wellbeing, and a desire to create systems change, to challenge the frameworks and structures they had traditionally learnt from and build their confidence.

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## Programme

Participants were invited to take part in the programme which consisted of six digital hui and three kanohi ki te kanohi (face-to-face) weekend wānanga based around Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington region). During the programme, each

participant was asked to hone in on a concept or idea that would impact the wellbeing of a particular group of humans within their community. They were encouraged to think about the role of physical activity or health promotion as a vehicle for wellbeing. Through action planning, prototyping, interaction and peer feedback the young women curated a community initiative or programme of work that was embedded within their own personal values. It's important to note that the intent of the Action Plan was not to expect a tangible outcome but to progress, develop and learn from the journey.

The programme supports young women who have left secondary school, perhaps have graduated from university or are now in their first roles



or early careers. It champions them as an individual at this particular stage of their life, providing them with tools and frameworks to operate within their communities. Longer-term, will create positive change which helps redress inequities in the sport and recreation system, within Aotearoa.

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## Redefining Leadership

Leadership programmes are typically aimed at those already within positions of leadership, and follow a linear path, consisting of steps that focus on a predefined outcome. Whanake o te Kōpara aims to challenge the notion of leadership providing an opportunity for those who have leadership aspirations, but do not fit the traditional mould of 'leader'.

*“Everybody should have the opportunity to exercise leadership. If you give people the right environment to thrive, then they will do so”* – Sarah Leberman, WISPA Co-Founder

*“Prior to Whanake o te Kōpara I didn't identify myself as a leader in the traditional sense (outgoing, confident, holding authority or power) and would hesitate to put my hand up for something like WotK.*

*Learning about Wayfinding Leadership transformed my perspective of leadership and how I would like to develop as a leader within my community. I like the notion of bringing people together to become something bigger than ourselves, leading*

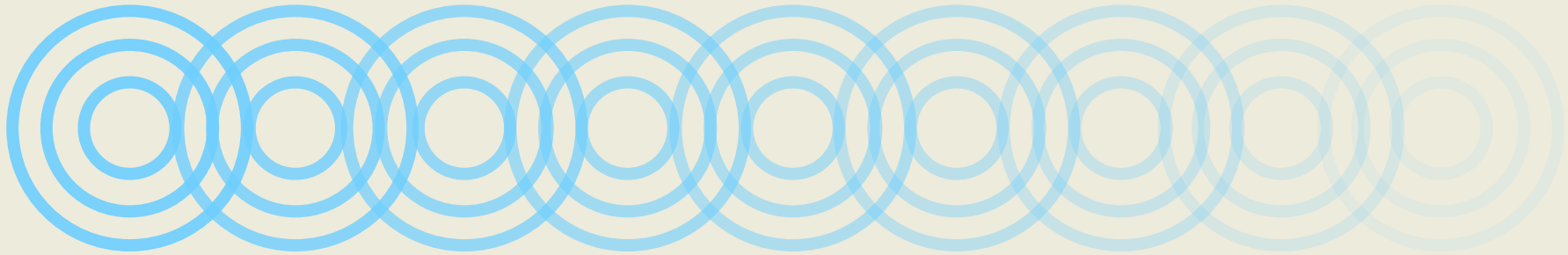
*from within your people, place, and environment, and how we rise by raising others”* – Kelly

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## Removing barriers

With most major leadership programmes run in the main centres such as Auckland and Wellington, Whanake o te Kōpara seeks to provide access to opportunities for those that live in our regional towns and areas, addressing issues around equity and opportunity.

Financial barriers are also a common obstacle to accessing opportunities such as leadership programmes. We used a 'social ticketing model' to remove these barriers. Those who could make a koha (contribution) do, and those who couldn't contribute a koha receive free access to this programme and its activities including travel to



each wānanga. This model of revenue generation and financial subsidy contributes to sustainability and ensures that, regardless of financial background, every young woman has the chance to take part.

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## Programme impact

Throughout this programme, we have seen the participants benefiting as individuals, in their relationships and through leadership in action in the following ways.

### Individual benefits:

- Identify and strengthen their own value sets, belief systems and sense of self
- Improve their leadership confidence and competence
- Strengthen their connection to and understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, tikanga Māori and te ao Māori
- Challenge themselves physically and mentally when participating in group activities and challenges

- Surprise themselves in their own ability to accomplish the things that they didn't think they had the skills or confidence to do.

### Relationship benefits:

- Form a deeper appreciation of the different personality traits and communication styles of others by developing approaches to engage their peers in more diverse ways
- Fill their kete with tools, frameworks and resources that enable them to make changes in their personal and professional lives
- Forge lifelong connections with other participants and facilitators of the programme.



### Leadership in action:

- Feel empowered as individuals to contribute to the wellbeing of their communities
- Understand and appreciate the issue of equity in professional spaces and harness the tools to make change in these areas
- Forge a unique capability set and better understand the concept of leadership that doesn't fit the traditional mould.

While the impact on the individual participant is a critical outcome, the ripple effect of the programme on their learning and experience is equally important. This may be through changing roles, implementing new ways to manage and lead in their mahi, or creating a new form

of cohesion in their communities. By participating in this programme, young women have the power to create change, address issues of inequity and be part of a new generation of young women exercising leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Reflection Report

This report summarises the Whanake o te Kōpara programme evaluation. It is based on surveys after each wānanga and digital hui plus interviews during the programme with all participants. A critical analysis of the programme's benefit is based on the value creation framework by Duarte, Culver and Paquette (2021)<sup>1</sup>, delivered between March 2021 and January 2022. It covers the journey of these young women, insights captured, and the learning

that will enable the sustainability and development of this programme in the future.

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Source | 1. Duarte, T., Culver, D. M., & Paquette, K. (2021). Assessing the Value Created in a Social Learning Space Intervention: Four Vignettes of Paraspport Coaches. *International Sport Coaching Journal*, 8(3), 348-361.





# GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH

**Whanake o te Kōpara is based on five guiding principles:**

- ▶ Honouring Te Ao Māori
- ▶ Leadership as practice
- ▶ Human-centred design and co-design
- ▶ Values identification and development
- ▶ Social learning spaces

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## Honouring Te Ao Māori

We were committed to authentically incorporating tikanga Māori and te ao Māori into the programme as a sign of our commitment to inclusivity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Our Māori and non-Māori co-facilitators did this by:

- ▶ Practising tikanga and kawa - mihi whakatau, pōwhiri and whakawhanaungatanga
- ▶ Educating our programme participants about Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its modern-day implications
- ▶ Holding our first wānanga as a noho marae at Ōrongomai to acknowledge our presence in Aotearoa
- ▶ Incorporating hauora - Māori philosophy of wellbeing - into our tools and frameworks
- ▶ Writing, practising and performing pēpeha
- ▶ Encouraging participants to incorporate tikanga within their own action plans and practice
- ▶ Practising karakia, waiata and poroporoaki.

As the programme evolves so will the ways in which we honour and respect Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

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***“My te reo journey has been hard...for most of my life, I didn’t have a sense of belonging. I knew where I was from, where I grew up, but never ever felt Māori...but to feel safe, to express who I am confidently in this space has helped me so much. To come here, and have people look to me for advice in the te ao Māori space - it is a boost of confidence.” – Ora***

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND APPROACH



## Leadership as Practice

Leadership requires an approach that is holistic, inclusive, dynamic, relational, and process focused. It means moving away from a singular focus on outcomes to a broader orientation to process and the actual ‘doing’ of leadership. Part of this is being able to ask and identify the right questions and the ability to mobilise groups of people in a common direction.

As we have seen across the world — particularly in crisis situations such as COVID-19, hurricanes and earthquakes — people who may never consider themselves as leaders in their day-to-day lives, pull together to help one another to deal with the situation at hand. Leadership as Practice (L-A-P) (Raelin, 2016)<sup>2</sup> embodies a shift from leadership being about individuals with titles and positions, to a focus on ‘exercising’ leadership that is based on actions and behaviours. L-A-P moves away from leadership being exclusive to the privileged few and gives voice to people often underrepresented.

Using L-A-P as our programme framework, Whanake o te Kōpara has been able to encourage our young women to focus on the processes of leadership, rather than the characteristics of leaders.

**“Fundamentally, leadership is ‘messy’. Because of this , we need to think about how leadership is exercised in differing contexts to achieve sustainable change for the future”** — Sarah Leberman, WISPA Co-Founder

## Human-Centred Design and Co-Design Principles

Using a co-design approach challenges the curriculum development of traditional leadership programmes which are designed before participants and their needs are known. By including the participants in the design of the programme, through surveys and feedback loops, they were able to communicate their wants and needs as individuals, their content preferences and determine the direction the programme took.

Because this co-design approach caters to the needs of each group, the programme will continue to evolve and will not necessarily always look the same. Whanake o te Kōpara embraces a strengths-based approach that meets individuals’ needs and wants in order to achieve outcomes that are inclusive and relevant to all involved. One size does not fit all.

**“The whole thing felt very authentically co-designed with the wāhine at the heart of it. I had never been a part of something like that before. I loved being involved in the evolution of the programme, it was such a positive aspect.”** — Naomi

Source | 2. Raelin, J. (2016). Leadership-as-practice: Theory and application. Routledge: New York, NY.]

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## Developing self-awareness

Identifying core values allows individuals to understand what motivates them. Values guide behaviour in all aspects of social and professional lives. By recognising their key values, identifying what matters to them the most and what drives them, the participants could then discover their 'why'.

This 'why' became the driver behind their Action Plans during the programme and informed the way they approach leadership. This knowledge enabled them to develop their leadership authentically by recognising their personal values.

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***"Identifying my values has helped me draw out more about myself, who and what I stand for. My moral compass becomes even more important."*** – Georgia

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## Social Learning Spaces

Being part of a social learning space is the practice of learning and developing through the process of interacting with others (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020)<sup>3</sup>. It is built upon the principle that it is not about the outcome, but the process that is undertaken to achieve it. It is a learning practice that acknowledges that what we learn through interaction with other humans helps us develop our own identity.

Incorporating social learning into Whanake o te Kōpara meant our participants exchanged ideas, asked questions, provided answers and explored issues with one another, no matter when or where they are. This kind of learning through interaction, rather than through knowledge acquisition, meant the young women could see value in their own ideas and the difference they could make within the group.

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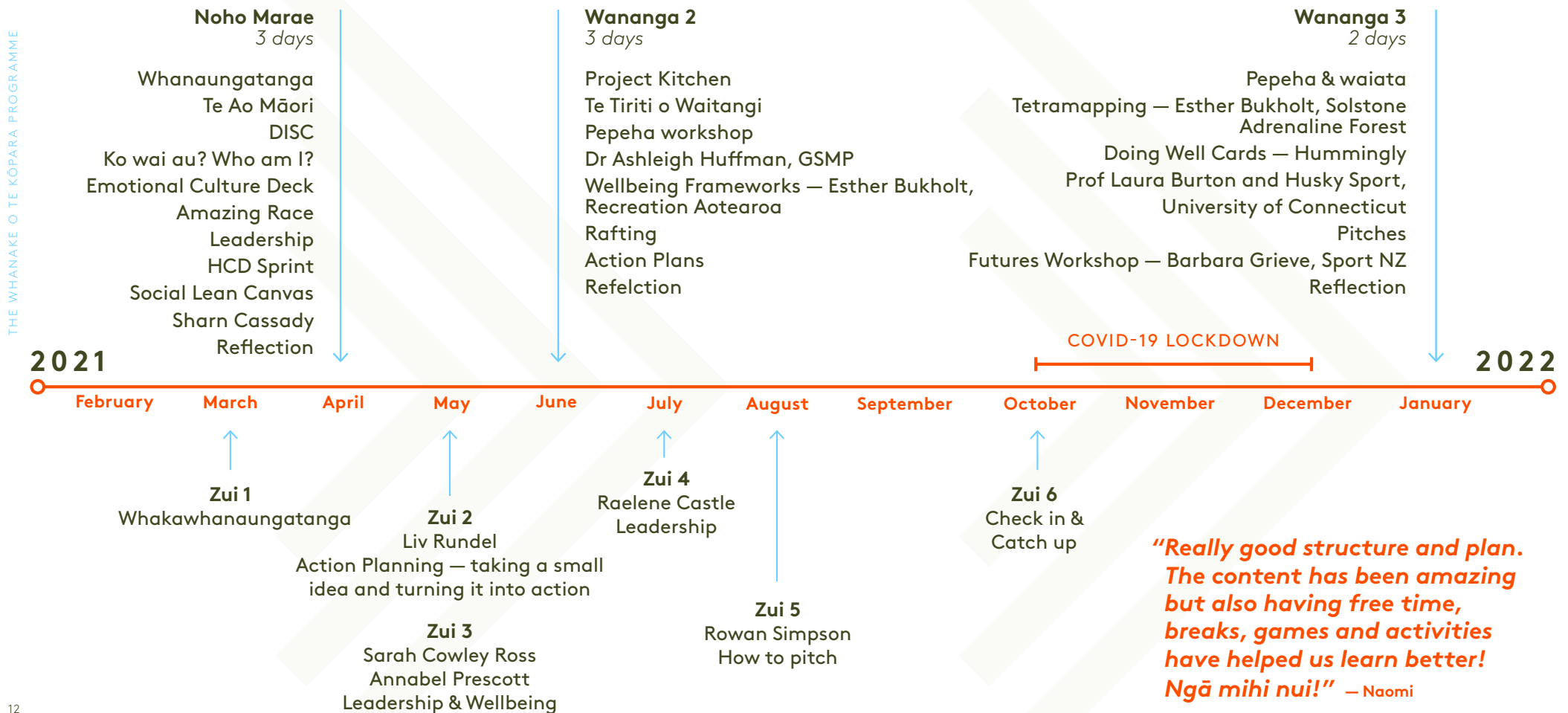
***"The journey and pathway is the important part and it's ok if it is not linear"*** – Nicole

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**Source | 3.** Wenger-Trayner, E., & Wenger-Trayner, B. (2020). Learning to make a difference Volume 1: Value creation in social learning spaces. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

# THE WHANAKE O TE KŌPARA PROGRAMME

The Whanake o te Kōpara programme was co-designed and developed to authentically bring our guiding principles to life. Its development included the following high-level considerations and intentions. As the programme progressed, the agenda continued to be set and developed by the young women.



# TOOLS AND FRAMEWORKS

## DISC

The DISC model is about preferred behaviours not personality, and measures four traits dominance, influence, steadiness, and compliance. Understanding our own and others preferred behaviours assists us to develop self awareness, and also improves team performance.

## Emotional Culture Deck

The Emotional Culture Deck is a simple yet powerful and flexible tool for creating face-to-face conversations about feelings, culture and leadership within any organisation or team.

## Social Lean Canvas

The Social Lean Canvas is a tool to help social entrepreneurs work out the key attributes of their very early stage ventures, and identify their key hypotheses so that they can be validated.

## 5 Wais

Based on Atawhai Tibble's own experiences, this is a framework for engaging with Māori in a way that works for Māori.

## Te Whare Tapa Whā

A model developed by Tā Mason Durie for understanding Māori health with the symbol of the wharenui illustrating the four dimensions of Māori wellbeing.

## Fonofale

A system of wellbeing that acknowledges and embraces Pacific perspectives. It is a model built around a simple idea: the Samoan fale, or house. However, it includes elements from many nations, including the Cook Islands, Niue, Fiji, Tokelau and Tonga.

## Husky Sport

Husky Sport is a community-campus partnership that utilizes the power of sport to connect and empower partners from the city of Hartford and University of Connecticut in the USA.

## TetraMap

TetraMap is a globally proven learning model designed to grow everyone's potential through the use of nature-based metaphors.

## Hummingly

Hummingly create easy to use deck cards and video packs that people, communities and workplaces across the world can access during tough times.

## Preferred Future

A framework developed by Sport NZ to determine how things will be done differently by 2040 according to five pou or themes.

**"These tools have given me a way to identify the way different people can work. Tetra mapping, especially, has helped me understand why people behave the way they do and has allowed me to realise that their reactions are not about me. It's been super helpful in my work." – Leah**

# NAOMI

Born and raised in Mount Maunganui, Naomi Stewart grew up in a bi-cultural and bi-lingual household. With a Scottish father and Japanese mother, Naomi didn't always know which space she belonged to. However, as she grew older she came to recognise this as a strength rather than a weakness and harnessed this diversity of her background as she navigated her way through life.

WĀHINE STORIES

*“Growing up I didn't always understand who I was as a person but I now see it as a privilege to have been raised that way”*

As someone involved in sports from a young age, Naomi decided to study Exercise and Sport Science at Massey in Wellington. She discovered a fascination with the way the body moves and functions and was also able to foster a passion for physical health and its links to mental wellness.

*“I discovered how important physical activity is for your holistic hauora”*

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## Hitting the glass ceiling

Shortly after graduating, she began working in the sector that she loved. Two years in a managerial position provided an abundance of learning opportunities but Naomi soon found herself hitting that glass ceiling.

Despite these challenges, it was during her time working in the sports sector that she was encouraged by her boss to apply for Whanake o te Kōpara. Familiar with both WISPA and The Shift Foundation, Naomi applied on a whim and was thrilled when she was accepted.

*“As a young woman you don't often jump at these opportunities, you might feel like they're not right for you or that you're taking up the space of someone else who deserves to be there more. Looking back now, I'm so happy that I applied”*

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## Finding her 'why'

Prior to attending Whanake o te Kōpara, Naomi had a pretty good idea about who she was and what her core values were. However, the programme itself has helped to solidify these for her and enhance her passion for equity within the sports, recreation and wellness sector.

***“Having a core purpose that you know and recognise has helped me immensely”***

It was this passion for equity that helped inform her Action Plan during the programme. Initially, she wanted to help as many people as she could. However, the process and journey taught her how to scale her ideas down to better suit her ‘user’, the person who was central to her plan. For Naomi, this was a young woman who needed access to reliable health resources in a centralised location.

From here the idea of an informative website or blog took shape. She wanted it to act as a ‘one-stop shop’ for young wāhine who need help with their mental, physical, or sexual health — a place where young women have equal access to the correct resources in order to assist their wellbeing.

While the website itself has not yet manifested, Naomi appreciated how she was encouraged to focus on the journey and learning through crafting her action plan and not worry about producing a tangible outcome.

***“For me, it felt real, as we know in real life, not all plans have a defined outcome, being able to iterate and change gave certain freedom to my ideas”***

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### **Forging a new path**

Naomi has now branched off from the sport and recreation sector and is one of the several wāhine who have changed their jobs since beginning the programme. Now working within the health sector, Naomi has a role with a strong focus on equitable health outcomes for New Zealanders and feels like she is in a space where she can make change.

***“I do still feel like I have my foot in the sports sector and still want that in my life, it’s a big part of my identity, something that I am sure I will circle back to”***

With the programme complete, Naomi has her own wellbeing at the forefront of her mind and her vision and drive to change the system has been fueled even further. She wants to continue to do work that allows her to break

down structures that are limiting to vulnerable people, especially when it relates to their wellbeing and feels that Whanake o te Kōpara has given her the tools and mindset to do so.

***“There are people actively trying to change things for the better - it was reassuring to be around a group of women who felt the same way - made me feel like I wasn’t the only one thinking this way or feeling these things. I don’t feel so isolated in these hopes for our future”***



## GEORGIA

**You could say rugby runs in the veins of the locals in Owaka. And for Georgia Mason, who comes from this small town on the Otago/Southland border, this couldn't be more true.**

Gifted her first rugby jersey by her great aunt on her fourth birthday, Georgia spent most evenings at the rugby club across the road from her house, kicking a ball around with her neighbours. The game took her to boarding school and then on to Otago University on a scholarship where she completed a degree in Sport Development and Management.

*“Rugby really is the bread and butter of the [Owaka] community”*

### Embracing opportunity

Now 24, Georgia works at Rugby Southland in Invercargill where she was encouraged to apply for Whanake o te Kōpara. Not one to turn down an opportunity, she decided to throw her name into the hat and hope for the best.

Having attended leadership programmes in the past, Georgia felt apprehensive about how the group would interact but on meeting everyone, she immediately felt a strong connection to the other young wāhine.

*“Even though everyone in our group was at different stages of life, we all felt quite connected. We want to head in the same direction, we're just taking a different path to get there”*

When deciding her Action Plan for Whanake o te Kōpara, Georgia drew on her community's connection to rugby. Concerned about what happened in the off-season she wondered what could bring people together. How could everyone remain connected to one another? How could mental health and wellbeing be supported in such a rural town?

### A community taking care of one another

Equipped with the tools and frameworks to connect with her community, Georgia could put her Action Plan into place. Engaging with six local women with differing backgrounds helped to bring about Friday Night Sports, an evening where the community could gather, keep fit, have fun and play together. Despite worrying that people would not attend, Georgia saw a huge uptake in numbers each week with locals bringing their own micro-communities of family, friends and neighbours along.

### Making an impact

The effect of these sports evenings was immediate. Georgia witnessed her community making new connections and bolstering existing ones. There was a



culture of care, with locals checking in on one another if they had not turned up for an evening.

With the first series of sports evenings finished for the summer, generating continued buy-in from her community for a new round is the next challenge. However, Georgia recognises this as just another step in the journey, one that is likely to help evolve her project for the better.

***“The programme reassured me that I do know what I’m doing, made me realise that I do have the capabilities to do what I want to do. To trust myself and my abilities and to just get out there and do it”***

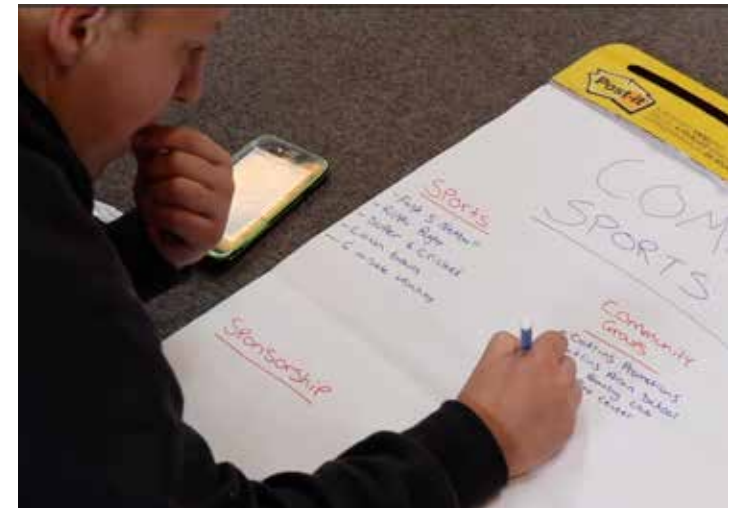
## Putting frameworks into practice

***“There were so many gold nuggets to take away from this programme. The long term benefits of the programme are huge, I think I will be using these frameworks for a long time”***

Drawing from the success of her Action Plan and learnings from Whanake o te Kōpara, Georgia now uses the human-centred design framework in her role at Rugby Southland, ensuring that the teams she coaches or people she mentors have a say in how they want things to be done.

With her family deeply embedded in the Owaka community, Georgia says it was ‘only a matter of time’ before she too would step up into some form of leadership position. But her views on how this will manifest have evolved since attending the programme. She now sees leadership as not trying to solve the world’s problems but to ‘make small changes in ourselves, our communities and our work for the better.’

***“I’d rather see all of us do something little for the good of our communities rather than nothing at all”***



# LEAH

Connectivity has always been important to Leah Farrell. Identifying as Ngāi Tūhoe and coming from the small town of Pukekohe in South Auckland her mum and dad raised her to be open-minded and accepting of others, with the ability to talk to anyone from any background.

WĀHINE STORIES

*“They instilled a growth mindset in me. They are a major part of who I am and where I am today”*

It was this growth mindset that propelled her to apply for Whanake o te Kōpara when the opportunity was presented to her by her boss at Counties Manukau Rugby.

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## Taking a chance

With a degree in Sports and Recreation Management from AUT behind her, Leah felt like the programme could offer her more scope to develop her skills and knowledge within this sector. Her previous leadership learnings were more theory-based so when she was accepted she was pleased to see how Whanake o te Kōpara was rooted in actionable frameworks, emotional intelligence and community change.

*“I had completed a leadership paper at university but still felt like I had a lot to learn in this space”*

Joining the programme, Leah was immediately inspired by the group of women she would be sharing the journey with and felt encouraged and supported within the space created to pursue her Action Plan with confidence.

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## Connectivity in action

Initially inspired by her friends and the issues they were having in their own lives, Leah wanted to produce a community-based programme where women her age could be physically active, maintain social connections and benefit from mindfulness, meditation and good nutrition.

Drawing on her ability to connect and with a small team of passionate people behind her, Leah introduced an accessible, low-cost programme of physical activity combined with wellbeing workshops for women on Saturday mornings at the local Navigation Homes Stadium in Pukekohe.

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## Embracing the Challenge

Although initially aimed at women in their early to mid-20s, Leah was surprised to see that the attendees were made up of an older generation. Leah embraced this divergence in her initial plan, knowing that it was a clear example of how the journey can change direction when you least expect it.

***“This was something I had not anticipated - but for me, it was another challenge to confront - to connect and inspire a group that I hadn’t expected to be involved”***

With her learnings and values from Whanake o te Kōpara consistently at the front of her mind, Leah ensured it was a safe space for these women to connect and could identify the expectations, wants and needs of each person within a co-designed framework.

***“I tried to create an open environment for these women and brought some of those elements from Whanake o te Kōpara into my programme as I saw so much value in them. From the get-go, it helped me and the women to relax and to give themselves over to the process”***

***“Sometimes I look back at the project and how it panned out and think, I can’t believe I actually did that. I have always wanted to make someone’s day a bit better and brighter and I feel like, through this project, that is exactly what I did”***

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## **Walking off Cloud 9**

Connecting and working with the group of young women and the facilitators has been a huge aspect of Leah’s year and to not see them again is a hard thought to reconcile with. However, she knows that the bonds she has formed are for life and she now feels well-equipped to move forward both professionally and personally with her kete full of learnings.

***“To be honest it feels like walking off Cloud 9. The impact that some of us have made, knowing the impact some of us will make, connections formed, experience gained has been incredible. It’s powerful stuff”***

Whanake o te Kōpara has given her the confidence to believe in herself and her capabilities in an ever-changing world. She sees herself as a potential leader, now knowing how to identify the spaces in which she can help others.

***“I want to make some impactful changes in my future for both me and other people - I don’t necessarily know what these might be but I know I have the tools now to do it”***



# VALUE CREATION

Whanake o te Kōpara has had a positive impact on the young women participants and programme facilitators.

VALUE CREATION

To understand the wider impact, the Value Creation Framework (on the following page) has been used. This approach uses eight value cycles to show:

- ▶ how Whanake o te Kōpara has generated value
- ▶ how that value has been translated by doing something with it
- ▶ how we set our hopes and expectations for Social Learning Spaces (SLS)
- ▶ how we evaluated whether the value is making a difference.

We asked our young women to share how they were feeling throughout the programme with one word:

**EXCITED**  
**FULFILLED** **FAB**  
**EMPOWERED** **CONNECTED**  
**LOVED** **MOTIVATED**  
**ENERGISED** **OPTIMISTIC**

## Orienting

### *Interactions with the broader landscape*

“Breaking up the programme with outdoor activities helped so much. I feel like I could connect with the group in a different way and refresh my mind for the rest of the day.” — Jasmine

“I’m excited to grow new relationships with people.” — Renee

## Immediate

### *Participant experience of the Social Learning Spaces*

“I’ve learnt more about myself how to manage feelings, emotions and ideas and it has helped me understand people around me. Developing a support community with these girls has been amazing.” — Leanne

“I’ve learnt so much about other people so I’m definitely feeling more connected.” — Tara

## Potential

### *What do you get out of the Social Learning Spaces*

“From here I would like to find my way through another door - I initially felt like there was only one path to take but now I know there are actually a lot of different ways to go about it. 2022 is the year of possibility.” — Leah

“Gaining that planning framework, and how to communicate ideas and pitch to people. Human-centered design is massive. I hadn’t heard of it before but it made so much sense.” — Georgia

## Transformative

### *Deeper or broader effects*

“I now have a better understanding of my key values.” — Larissa

“I learnt about my personal values and what helps me to be successful. I learnt that I need to understand these in order to make change in my wider community as it will be what drives me forward.” — Sophie

## Realised

### *The outcome of applied value*

“Each experience I am having on this programme is helping me feel more confident, connected and true to myself, and everything I am learning can be applied throughout my life — personal, professional and socially. Truly grateful.” — Leanne

“I like the notion of bringing people together to become something bigger than ourselves, leading from within your people, place, and environment, and how we rise by raising others.” — Tabi

## Strategic

### *Conversations with stakeholders*

“Learning how to sell my own ideas and pitch has been huge for me. I’ve learnt to elaborate properly and connect with stakeholders. Identifying people who have a base understanding of what you’re trying to achieve has been essential.” — Georgia

## Enabling

### *What should be in place to make it possible*

“Having the same facilitators throughout the whole programme is important. Felt like we connected with them really well, I don’t think it would have been the same experience if we had different people every time. We were excited to go back and see them again. It was an honour to get to know them well.” — Naomi

## Applied

### *What you do with what you gained*

“Upon reflection, I feel like I am quite a different person now from when I started on this journey. I have had big changes in my professional and personal life, and this programme has definitely contributed to the positive changes I have had. I have gained a lot more confidence and skills from this programme and these are things I will remember for a long time!” — Leanne

# OBSERVATIONS AND LEARNING



Whanake o te Kōpara has been instrumental in helping each of the young women build their confidence, redefine leadership and discover their own individual strengths and values.

Through feedback and evaluation, we have discovered how this programme has helped them:

- ▶ understand that the process is just as important as the end goal
- ▶ that networks and connections enable us to create more impact collectively
- ▶ that one person can bring about change, and
- ▶ that here in Aotearoa an authentic connection to te ao Māori practices should be embedded within our everyday lives and organisations.

While the participants' learning and their impact on their communities and sectors has been the primary focus of the programme, as facilitators and stewards we have gained our own insights based on the feedback of the young women, experiences, observations and challenges. These insights will help inform the way we create and implement future programmes for young women.

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***"This programme has helped me learn that you can lead in so many different capacities and that you don't have to be in those 'leadership' roles in order to influence people. I understand now that it's about how you get there and not the end outcome."*** — Leanne

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## Strengthening our commitment to Te Tiriti

***"I learnt about the Treaty of Waitangi and how to introduce myself with a pepeha"*** — Nicole

Honouring Te Tiriti is something that we have mindfully and authentically woven into our programme. However, work remains to be done. We have ensured the presence of a Māori co-facilitator during the programme but this role has been covered by several people. Being Te Tiriti driven means recognising a need for a main Māori co-facilitator who is a part of every session and a key member of our programme's journey. Our continued commitment to Te Tiriti includes engaging this person for future programmes and including them and their mātauranga Māori (knowledge) in the co-design and delivery.

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## Whanake o te Kōpara's power lies in both immediate and long term results

*"I came into it wanting to progress my career but it's definitely changed from furthering my career to instead trying to find a new direction in my life" – Kelly*

Throughout the duration of the programme, we witnessed an immediate shift in the participants' confidence levels, most noticeably in those who were initially very introverted and quiet. They were able to step out of their shell with a sense of confidence that was fostered within the safe space provided. We have seen evidence of the 'ripple effect' of these changes in the young women, with many of them changing work roles or confidently taking up new opportunities, engaging with their communities or challenging the status quo. We believe the programme was a catalyst for these changes and expect more value creation to follow.

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## Leadership is a forever learning journey

*"That it [leadership] is an aspect that is forever growing and changing, you have to be open-minded and explore all possibilities and take in thoughts of all of those people around you. Listening to others will help you succeed as they will feel valued within the group. Learning is also an aspect that connects in with this, a good leader should be willing to learn" – Gemma*

As essential as it was for our participants to understand that the most important learning is found on the journey to leadership, it was just as important for us to recognise that our learning process as facilitators did not end when the final wānanga came to a close. Through our own frameworks and tools, we have come to understand that there exists space to continue to support these women and connect again in a different format. With events like the [Women and Girls Summit](#) and alternative media such as resource websites, there are

multiple ways that we can continue to connect, support and encourage these young women to continue to learn post-programme. Our next challenge is to find ways to viably include these opportunities in the future and widen the impact of the value creation framework.



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## A team with complementary skill sets is key

*“If you bring together a team that has complementary skill sets, then you’re going to create something great” – Sarah Leberman, WISPA Co-Founder*

Our team of facilitators - while all grounded in the sports, recreation, health and wellbeing sectors - were a range of ages, came from varied backgrounds, and contributed different skill sets, knowledge and views. This bolstered the programme and strengthened our kawa. We learnt that taking guidance from the younger generation of facilitators was absolutely essential as they are living the day to day lives of the participants’ generation. It was important for us to recognise when to step back and support the younger generation facilitators to lead.

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## Recognising and providing the space for specific content

*“I loved literally everything! I thought two days was pretty perfect as we were all still captivated by all the content that was delivered by the end of the second day” – Tabi*

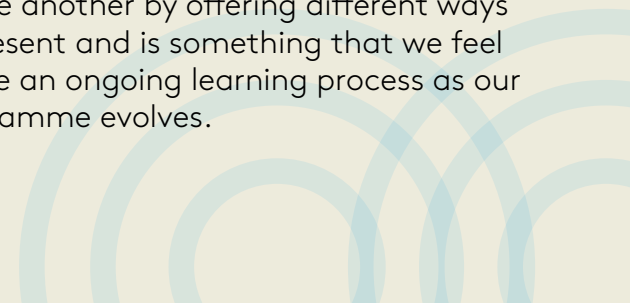
Overall the participant feedback on the programme was positive. However, in an attempt to ensure that we covered all areas, at times we did not allow enough time for each topic. For future programmes we will refine the programme content to ensure that there is a balance between content delivery and time for participants to process it.

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## Acknowledge the diversity of individual communication preferences

*“Understanding the different ways that people act, feel and communicate is so important for making progress” – Leah*

Traditional forms of presentation, such as speaking in front of a group of people, are often the quickest and most effective way of communicating ideas. However, our experience through Whanake o te Kōpara has shown us that this method does not always suit everyone and has highlighted the importance of being mindful of an individual’s preferences. By engaging in reflective inquiry, we will review our processes and frameworks to ensure that each participant feels comfortable, confident and supported when communicating with their group. It is vital that we create a safe space for our participants to communicate their ideas to one another by offering different ways to present and is something that we feel will be an ongoing learning process as our programme evolves.





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## Diversity of location

*“I really enjoyed having an activity (like rafting) that took us out of the ‘classroom learning space’. The physical movement to a different location, as well as being outside, was refreshing so the brain/mind wasn’t so drained” – Nicole*

We recognised that it was important for the young women to experience and immerse themselves in different parts of the Wellington region in order to strengthen certain aspects of the programme. The noho Marae at Ōrongomai gave Whanake o te Kōpara its true uniqueness, grounding the programme in Aotearoa and underpinning our commitment to te ao Māori. Unlike traditional courses or programmes that are held within one location, the feedback provided by the participants has indicated that this was a positive aspect of the programme for them.

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## Anticipating and navigating challenges

*“Challenges are multi-faceted - keep your solutions flexible” – Leah*

Whanake o te Kōpara was delivered against a backdrop of COVID-19. The pandemic had an undeniable impact on the way we could implement the programme and resulted in several changes to our delivery. Responding to these unprecedented challenges enabled both the facilitators and the participants to be more flexible and adaptable to change while at the same time allowing us to focus on the things that really matter. With a collective focus on delivering a quality leadership development programme, whatever form it took, it highlighted the importance of maintaining our ‘why’ when presented with obstacles.



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### Expert contributors

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SARAH LEBERMAN  
MNZM

**“Young women  
are not just the  
future, they are  
the now.”**

**FRAN MCEWEN**

FOUNDER — THE SHIFT FOUNDATION

Whakataka te hau ki te uru  
Whakataka te hau ki te tonga  
Kia mākinakina ki uta  
Kia mātaratara ki tai  
E hī ake ana te atakura  
He tio, he huka, he hau hū  
Tthei mauri ora!

Cease the winds from the west  
Cease the winds from the south  
Let the breeze blow over the land  
Let the breeze blow over the ocean  
Let the red-tipped dawn come with  
a sharpened air.  
A touch of frost, a promise of  
a glorious day.



## WHANAKE O TE KŌPARA

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