

# Leadership Lab

IMPACT REPORT 2025

# KIA ORA

**Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini**

*Our strength is not as individuals, but as a collective*

We are a Tiriti o Waitangi-led, impact focussed leadership consultancy. We grow leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand who develop equitable and flourishing communities and organisations.

**Committed to giving effect to**  
the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi

**Inspired by our vision to see**  
Equitable and thriving communities and organisations

**Through growing leaders who are**  
Fostering collective approaches to complex issues

**Guided by our values**  
Mana Ōrite, Kotahitanga and Manaakitanga

**This is who we are.**

# Acknowledging Rochelle Faimalo

*Anei te mihi pouri e pa ana tō mātou nākau. Ka mihi ka tika kua mihia ki te whānau pani o Rochelle me ōna whānau whanui.*

It was with enormous sadness that our friend and Leadership Lab NZ team member Rochelle Faimalo passed away in August 2025. Rochelle had been part of our team for over seven years and a key member of the facilitation team of our rangatahi programme Puāwai. She was also one of our senior CliftonStrengths coaches and had coached many of our team members over the years. She has also worked alongside Jade Beaman and Chris Jansen coaching leaders in international schools in China during COVID.

Over the months that followed, our team gathered regularly to grieve and share many memories, describing Rochelle as beautiful, inspirational, kind, a special friend, dynamic, fun, full of love, with a pizzazz that lit up the room, depth of character, vibrant, positive, get shit done, driving force, legendary and caring. Our Puāwai team dedicated this years project to her memory and not surprisingly it was the most impactful and meaningful of the six years we have run it.



## [READ MORE: OUR LEADERSHIP LAB TRIBUTE](#)

“For me, it’s all about people and service”

Rochelle built movements, empowered communities, and left an indelible mark on everyone fortunate enough to journey alongside her.



# Waitangi Day 2025

Waitangi Day this year was a powerful and inspirational experience for 15 of our Leadership Lab NZ team members who spent 5 days in Northland in Feb 2025. It was fantastic to be hosted and spend two days at Waitangi supporting the acknowledgements, the pōwhiri, the dawn service, a flotilla of waka, an enormous haka, several makete (markets) with every kind of kai, kapahaka, the forum tent on the lower Treaty grounds etc... a complete celebration of Te Ao Māori. We also spent two days exploring the whenua hosted by 2 of our Ngā Puhi team members. Toitu te Tiriti!

*I whakapapa to the whenua of Ngāti Rāhiri, Ngāti Hine, and Ngāti Kawa. I grew up in the South Island and now live in Ōtautahi with my boy. Because of this, having opportunities to connect with all the elements that make up the uniqueness of our whenua—and our collective tūākiritanga—is, on one hand, a privilege. On the other hand, it should be our right as tāngata whenua.*

*Being part of the Leadership Lab whānau, which affords these collective experiences, is truly life-giving. My boy and I were able to show our Leadership Lab whānau our marae at Oromahoe and introduce them to my Nan and Koro, as well as other whānau members who rest at our urupā. Two significant moments for me during our time at Waitangi were standing in front of our wharenuī, Ngāti Kawa, and later looking up at our maunga, Pouerua, as we explored the area. This is whakapapa, whenua, and whānau, framed through Te Tiriti o Waitangi. - Te Ao Marama Apiata (Leadership Lab Director)*



# Creating Real Impact

We aspire to grow equitable and flourishing communities and organisations across Aotearoa, through growing leaders who focus on the below [impact areas](#):



## **enacting Te Tiriti o Waitangi**

We understand our shared histories in Aotearoa NZ and promote inclusive practices for all people



## **transformative learning**

We are committed to education that meets the needs of all learners and exists in the realities of the modern world



## **radical inclusion**

We actively surface voices, experiences, and perspectives that are otherwise marginalised or passed over



## **hauora & wellbeing**

We take a broad and inclusive view of wellbeing, which holds quality of life as a high priority



## **thriving relationships**

We recognise and harness the power of workplaces as environments to influence the quality of life of all workers

# 2025 IMPACT SNAPSHOT

35+  
EVENTS



160+  
COACHING  
SESSIONS



35+  
FACILITATORS

450+  
PARTICIPANTS



12  
PROJECTS



40+  
RESOURCES

*“Is it possible to use our influence and power to create islands of sanity in the midst of a raging destructive sea”*

*-Margaret Wheatley*

# Impact Area #1: Enacting Te Tiriti o Waitangi

## Te Tiriti Incubator 2025/56

We launched [Te Tiriti Incubator](#) in June this year with 25 experienced leaders from a wide range of sectors. Our key impact question for this initiative is;

*As Tangata whenua and Tangata Tiriti, how do we intentionally grow our relationship as intended in Te Tiriti o Waitangi?*

The Te Tiriti Incubator facilitates a learning journey in which Tangata Whenua (Māori) and Tangata Tiriti (non-Māori of any background) come together to develop a deeper understanding of building and sustaining mutually respectful and beneficial Tiriti-based relationships. By engaging both groups, the programme is creating an opportunity for exploring our own identities and deeply held beliefs, engaging in brave and meaningful dialogue, and activating system change that respects and honours the articles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.



## Hāpaitia te Manukura

*How do we lead schools that grow tomorrow's leaders?*

[Hāpaitia te Manukura](#) is a dynamic 10-month leadership development journey for pairs of senior leaders in Aotearoa primary, intermediate, secondary and area schools. This programme launches in May 2026.

[READ MORE](#)

*Te Tiriti o Waitangi centred leadership development*

[READ MORE](#)

*Growing culturally sustaining leadership*

[LISTEN TO](#)

***Rourou Conversations:***  
*Becoming Tangata Tiriti*  
podcast

# Impact Area #2: Transformative learning

## Leaders for Equity Network

*How do we activate and supercharge a vibrant network of 'leaders for equity' by convening spaces to connect, learn, and be inspired?*

Equity doesn't live in isolation – it lives in practice, in people, and in connection. The Leaders for Equity Network was created to be more than a series of events, it's a movement of leaders working towards creating equitable systems, grounded in Leadership Lab's approach to collective leadership and systems change.

Throughout the year, we hosted two hui and gathered 60 participants in November using the unconference format. There will be two more hui in 2026 as well as an extended Leader for Equity Unconference in September 2026.



## Mairangatia te Angitu Symposium

Following on from the success of this conference in 2024, this year's [Mairangatia](#) was a symposium for 250 rangatahi from schools across Ōtautahi.

Hosted in partnership with Mana Whenua, Grow Waitaha and the Ministry of Education, this symposium was fully lead and facilitated by rangatahi included [inspiring speakers sharing their stories](#) about life & their pathways post high school.

[READ MORE](#)

*Leaders for Equity  
Unconference:  
Participant Reflection*

[READ MORE](#)

**Grow Waitaha:** *A Decade  
of Educational  
Transformation*

[RESOURCE](#)

*Gender Diverse Rangatahi*

# Impact Area #3: Radical Inclusion

## Intersectionality COP (Community of Practice)

Towards the end of 2024, a diverse group of leaders, practitioners, and change-makers came together through a co-design process to explore what it might mean to create a Community of Practice (COP) rooted in Intersectionality and Systems Change. Emerging from our Te Whāriki programme, this group asked bold, heart-centred question: *How do we sustain intersectional leaders creating system change in this region?*

We launched the COP series in 2025 based on the mantra “Who we are is how we lead”. Hosted at Te Ora Hou Ōtautahi, each hui created space for continued whānaungatanga, sharing practice and exploring tools and frameworks relevant to this field of work.



### Te Whāriki Impact Story: Mau te Rangimarie Clark

*From the moment I stepped onto the marae at Rāpaki for our first wānanga, Te Whāriki felt like a homecoming, a space where kaupapa, people, and shared purpose intertwined in a way that left me energised and deeply seen. There's a unique mauri in this mahi, a resonance of intellectual and cultural connection that's often missing in my everyday life. It's more than a programme; it's a sanctuary where like-minded voices gather, and isolation dissolves into collective energy.*

[READ MORE](#)

*Sustaining intersectional leaders creating system change*

[READ MORE](#)

*Te Whāriki Impact Report 2025*

[LISTEN TO](#)

*Rourou Conversations: Conscious Catalyst*

# Impact Area #3: Radical Inclusion

## Puāwai Rangatahi programme

[Puāwai](#) is a five-month experience for rangatahi aged 15-18. It is designed to connect and develop a diverse network of potential leaders, innovators, disruptors, and drivers while equipping them with fundamental skills and knowledge. In 2025 Puāwai evolved from a 9 month programme to two five-month programmes per year, with approximately 30 rangatahi and 5-6 Tuākana in each cohort.

The programme consists of strengths coaching, whanaungatanga hui, a two-day wānanga and Activator events. This shorter-form programme has proven successful, with higher engagement in each component and stronger rates of retention across the span of the programme.



## Project Fiftyone

In November and December we co-hosted two screenings of the beautiful and inspiring film [‘Project FiftyOne’](#).

It’s the story of Saba Afrasaybi and Bariz Shah ([Asturlab](#)) and their commitment to love instead of hate, by supporting 51 micro businesses in Afghanistan.

[READ MORE](#)

*Puāwai Impact Report  
2024/25*

[LISTEN TO](#)

**People of Puāwai:**  
*Kōrero about topics close  
to their hearts.*

# Impact Area #4: Hauora and wellbeing

## Involve Conference (Kotahitanga at our core)

Involve 2025 was hosted in Ōtautahi - the biggest national conference for youth health and development in Aotearoa. Chris Jansen, our co-director, had the opportunity to deliver a short keynote on the second day.

*“Leadership Lab is a collective of passionate humans and experienced consultants. Over the last 11 years we have been committed to ongoing wānanga around who we are and what we believe. We represent these in the metaphor of Te Pou Herenga – the post that our individual and collective waka are lashed to. Kōtahitanga, to us, doesn’t mean we are all one – or are all the same. It does mean that we stand together and are not isolated as we work in complexity – we find courage through standing together back to back. In collaboration with communities and agencies we grow collective impact around shared aspirations.”*



## Scaling Deep Wānanga

In May, international and local perspectives came together across the motu to wānanga on systems change and the powerful intersections between global research and local action. In addition, 40 systems change leaders and practitioners gathered in Ōtautahi - seeking community, inspiration and practical insight. Leadership Lab was also invited to be part of Scaling Deep - Stories from the Field Case Study, published by The Systems Sanctuary.

[READ MORE](#)

*Kotahitanga at the core of Leadership Lab*

[READ MORE](#)

*Mental Health, Addictions and Intellectual Disability Services*

[READ MORE](#)

*Scaling Deep: Stories from the Field Case Studies*

# Impact Area #4: Hauora and wellbeing

## Leadership Incubator

LinC Leadership Incubator is an engaging personal development journey that supports leaders who want to grow equitable and thriving communities. It helps leaders to step away from their day-to-day demands, reflect deeply on their lives and work, and build the personal foundations of leadership to achieve work and community outcomes.

Leadership Incubator runs for 9 months with a team of 36 participants that starts at the time of Matariki (June), a time of new beginnings. Leadership Lab has offered the Leadership Incubator for 10 years and the 2024/25 cohort of 35 leaders completed the programme in June 2025.



## Participant Reflections

“I realised I’ve been leading on autopilot—I need time to reflect.”

“Whakapapa is the thread that weaves through everything.”

“My story matters—and so does that of my tūpuna.

“Leadership isn’t about hierarchy—it’s about impact”

“The facilitators modelled courage, and it gave me permission.”

“The quiet spaces became where I did the most thinking.”

“It’s the first time I’ve felt like I could bring my whole self—heart, head, and whakapapa.”

## WATCH & REFLECT

### **Leaders’ Buffet:**

*A self-directed learning programme*

## READ MORE

*Our expertise and core services*

## READ MORE

*Leadership Incubator Impact Report*

# Impact Area #5: Thriving relationships

## Our Strengths Coaching Rōpū

CliftonStrengths is a tool that is used across a range of our programmes and offerings. At Leadership Lab, we continue to invest in our large group of coaches - we now have 20 individual coaches across our team. In 2025, eight of our Leadership Lab team also became CliftonStrengths Partnership and Team coaches.

We utilise Clifton Strengths coaching across four of our programmes; Te Tiriti Incubator, Te Whāriki, Puāwai and Leadership Incubator. Our coaches often meet up to share experiences and learn from each other, a Community of Practice, our very own Leadership Lab rōpū. Facilitated by Danette Abraham and Sooze Harris, these sessions provide space to share and kōrero about coaching practices and scenarios.



## Relationship with Strengths Network

I could never have dreamt how significant that meeting with Chris and the team from Leadership Lab back in 2015 would be. Putting this tool into their hands has been inspirational. The impact their work is having continues to change lives, teams and communities. It is one thing for us to know our “Strengths” but it is quite another to know how to integrate these with those around us.

*Tessa Dodge, CEO of Strengths Network*

[READ MORE](#)

*CliftonStrengths x  
Leadership Lab*

[LEARN MORE](#)

*Leadership Lab  
Foundation Report to  
Funders November 2025*

# Impact Area #5: Thriving relationships

## Te Korekoreka Rōpū - Year 2 Update

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A huge highlight of the year was co-facilitating Year 2 of our Te Korekoreka Rōpū in partnership with [Tokona te Raki](#) - the Ngāi Tahu Māori Futures Lab. This is the second year that 25 of our consulting team have participated in a rōpū (community of practice) with the team from Tokona te Raki.

Over eight one-day wānanga in 2024 and 2025, we have developed a strong sense of kotahitanga, and every team member has reported a significant increase in confidence and extensive knowledge in facilitation based on the [Te Korekoreka](#) framework.

In Year 2 we have focussed less on the four realms of Te Korekoreka and focussed more on the intentional and natural transitions between the realms. Karakia are a part of this process and as facilitators we design prompts to assist team members to intentionally let go of one realm as they transition into the next realm at the appropriate time.



### Community of Practice

*"I have loved hearing the practical ways in which people are using Te Korekoreka, in explicit and non-explicit ways; hear about the barriers and challenges that are being experienced and how to learn from these"*

**WATCH**

**Te Korekoreka:** A kawa for māori future making

# What's Next

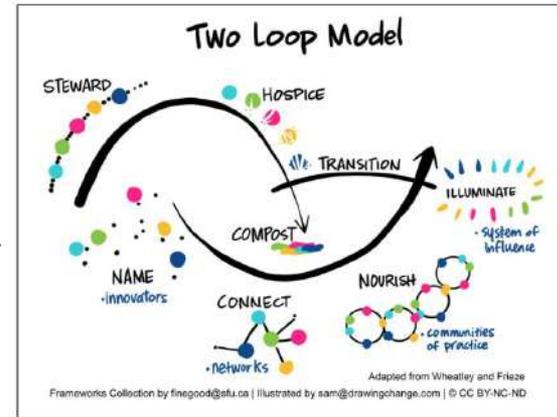
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At Leadership Lab, the curating of this Leadership Lab Impact Report 2025 has been an opportunity to savour the diverse, creative and impactful projects and people we have worked alongside in 2025. As we look ahead into 2026 and beyond we observe an Aotearoa and global landscape which looks more complex and ambiguous than ever before, and we are quietly curious and utterly determined about what this year will hold in terms of opportunities to advocate for equity together.

We are inspired by the [Berkana Two-Loop Model](#), as described by Margaret Wheatley and Deborah Frieze - a map for creating change in living and social systems. It illustrates how new systems can emerge from old ones - and the intentional actions that individuals and organisations can focus on to facilitate the emergence of this new system. We find ourselves attracting innovators and trailblazers who turn their backs on the existing system so they can create something new. By identifying and connected these brave people they can form networks and build trust to allow for a stronger base and a sharing of knowledge. When networks are nourished, they can become Communities of Practice (COP's)- the convening of multiple COP's within our Mara Impact Framework is our greatest strength in Leadership Lab and we actively amplify these stories of change in order to grow the momentum towards these new more equitable systems becoming normal.

Thanks for being on this journey with us!

Ngā mihi,  
Danette Abraham, Te Ao Marama Apiata, Dr Chris Jansen and Dr Pete Cammock,  
Leadership Lab Directors



*Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, he toa takitini*

*Our strength is not as individuals,  
but as a collective*

[leadershiplab.co.nz](https://leadershiplab.co.nz)