



# A snapshot of some of our work

2024/2025

# Introduction

This review provides some examples of the work of the Centre for Social Impact in the 2024/2025 year. In 2024, we marked the tenth anniversary since the centre was founded by Foundation North. The kaupapa for the centre was to strengthen the capacity and capability of Foundation North grantees and the wider community sector, to amplify social impact.

Today, our team and our network of associates support funders, grantmakers, changemakers and their organisations with research and analysis, evaluation and learning, community engagement and participatory design, strategic advice and planning, collaboration and collective impact, capability development, governance development and communicating for influence.

Since 2014, in addition to our work with the Foundation, the Centre has worked with over 80 organisations and delivered nearly 200 significant projects.

What we learn in our work with funders and changemakers supports our knowledge and practice hub, Te Pūaha o te Ako. The hub is Foundation North's koha to support those driving change. This is where what we learn from our mahi, is made available to the wider social impact community.

In 2023, for example, CSI supported Foundation North's three-yearly review of their strategy. Community engagement with the strategy review provided insights into which funding practices are most enabling and mana-enhancing for Foundation North's priority communities. These insights were captured and shared with the sector in 2024 in a CSI Insights brief, Community Perspectives on Effective Funding Practice.

Below are examples of some of the work we completed over the last year with funders, changemakers and organisations working to create sustainable social change in our communities, and the webinars, tools, research and reports, training, interviews and insights we produced for the wider social impact community.



CSI tenth birthday celebration from left - Kaumatua Kevin Prime, Mel Hewitson (past Foundation North board member), Karinia Lee CSI Head of Centre.

# Leadership



## Women's Refuge - Wāhine Kī Toa Programme

Women's Refuge is the country's largest nationwide organisation that through a national network of 41 refuges supports and helps women and children experiencing family violence.

The Wāhine Kī Toa leadership programme, developed by CSI in partnership with the National Office for Women's Refuge for refuge staff, welcomed its second cohort of participants in 2024. Participants from the first year of the programme in 2023 reported increased personal confidence, self-care, and capacity to contribute to their teams.

CSI associates involved in designing and delivering the year-long programme drew on their combined experience with Haumanu, CSI's approach to restorative systems change, to shape a highly participative process. This offered participants the benefits of both designed learning and learning from the diverse experiences of their co-workers. A third cohort began the programme in 2025.

*“It's been one of the highlights of my year, and I think it's made me a better person, personally and professionally.”*

Wāhine Kī Toa participant



# Strategy Activation



MOUNTAINS TO SEA  
CONSERVATION TRUST

# Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust

The Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust is a national leader in conservation, environmental education, and community-driven restoration. CSI was commissioned to support the Trust in activating its 2024–2027 strategy.

Over four sessions we worked alongside the Trust’s Board, senior leadership and staff in a collaborative process to refine their strategic direction and strengthen alignment across the organisation. The work helped clarify the Trust’s role as a systems change organisation and gave confidence in its strategic direction.

Outputs included a visual strategy poster articulating the Trust’s vision, values and strategic pou; emerging aspirations for becoming a Tangata Tiriti organisation; and initial guidance for a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning plan. The strategy activation also confirmed the relevance of the three strategic pou and highlighted practical ways to better deliver on the Trust’s vision and deepen its commitment to equity and impact.



Mountains to Sea strategy illustration by artist Jacqui Chan, *Drawing for Change*

# Evaluation

## MIXIT Charitable Trust

Since 2006, Mixit has brought young people with refugee backgrounds together to get involved in creative projects with local and migrant youth. Mixit gives young people positive skills and experiences to enrich their lives and establish new networks and opportunities.

It is estimated that over the years Mixit has had more than 10,000 engagements with young people and their families. CSI was commissioned to produce a report which reviewed Mixit's context, activity and impact between 1 April 2022 to 31 July 2025. The report covered Mixit's Core Programme in Auckland, and the Mixit Aotearoa Outreach Programme (MAO), launched in 2022 to connect to former refugee youth in settlement areas across New Zealand.

The report concluded that 'in the thin landscape of support for former refugee youth in New Zealand and their families, the work that Mixit is doing is critical and high impact.' As Mixit looks to diversify and grow its funding sources, the report provides compelling insights into the value of their programmes.

## Te Ngākau Kahukura

Te Ngākau Kahukura works to make communities, environments and systems safer and more inclusive for rainbow people.

In a sector largely focused on service delivery to the rainbow community, the focus for Te Ngākau Kahukura is on effecting systems change across a range of sectors, including health, housing, education and justice. Six years on from its establishment, Te Ngākau Kahukura sought an evaluation from CSI of what it has achieved, its role in the rainbow support eco-system, its strengths and anything it can do to improve.

Interviews with key stakeholders identified that Te Ngākau Kahukura is highly regarded, both as an organisation and for the skills and experience of individual kaimahi. Its systems-focused, relational, intersectional, Te Tiriti-centred and lived experience-led approach is considered to be producing demonstrable impact in line with its critical strategies and outcomes.



## Belong Aotearoa

Belong Aotearoa strengthens belonging, inclusion, and wellbeing for refugee-background and migrant communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, working primarily in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) while focusing its systems change efforts nationally.

In 2025, Belong Aotearoa celebrated its 20th anniversary, marking two decades of commitment to supporting diverse communities to belong and thrive.

Belong Aotearoa commissioned a report from the Centre for Social Impact (CSI) to demonstrate its impact between 2022 and 2024, along with key insights and implications. The findings provided a strong foundation for the next phase of the organisation's work.

CSI has co-developed a five-year strategy with Belong Aotearoa, which focuses on addressing the barriers to belonging faced by former refugees and migrants, including social exclusion and isolation, limited access to income and opportunities, and poor mental health and wellbeing outcomes. The strategy emphasises collective impact and collaboration, centring lived expertise to inform decision-making, ensuring ongoing community connection, and developing and testing new pathways, practices, and solutions to enable more equitable access to opportunities in key areas such as employment and income. Through this approach, Belong Aotearoa aims to disrupt the systems and conditions that create inequity and exclusion, supporting communities to thrive and belong.



## Foundation North

CSI acts as a learning partner to Foundation North, to continually sharpen its line of sight between its funding and non-funding support and real-world impact.

CSI does this through developing and iterating Foundation North's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework, which contains increasingly more refined feedback loops to respond to these four questions:

1. How are we funding to our strategy?
2. How are we contributing to our strategy?
3. How are we enabling impact?
4. What are we learning about how to enable impact?

Quarterly insights reporting on these questions builds into a six month and annual Impact and Insights Report for Trustees. A six monthly 'So What' session with Foundation North staff ensures that practice improvements are embedded from MEL findings. The flow of MEL through the organisation and to trustees supports across organisation engagement, informs the annual business planning cycle and the three yearly review of the Foundation's strategy. Through CSI, Foundation North also supports practice improvement across philanthropy in terms of understanding impact, through Te Puaha resources and guidance. This includes reports on good practice foundations for understanding impact, Te Tiriti considerations and leading practice.

## JR McKenzie Trust

Since at least 2017, CSI has developed a strong relationship with family foundation JR McKenzie Trust (the Trust).

In 2019, CSI supported JR McKenzie to create its 10-year strategy Te Anga Rautaki. From 2021, CSI has acted as a learning partner with JR McKenzie Trust, co-developing an Impact Framework for the Trust and since 2023 preparing annual Impact and Insights Reports. These reports share the annual funding picture, contribution to intended outcomes and key insights.

In 2024, CSI explored the Trust's journey as an upstream and systems change focused funder, which has intensified since the creation of its 2019 strategy. This included exploring the whakapapa of the Trust's giving and the characteristics of the Trust that have led it to become more focused on supporting systemic change.

In 2025, the findings of this work were shared at an August hui for funders interested in supporting system change (i.e. in shifting the conditions holding problems in place). Over 80 people attended, including corporate, local and central government and philanthropic funders. JR McKenzie Trust continues to play a leadership role in the development of strategic philanthropy in Aotearoa New Zealand.

# Workshops and Webinars

# Te Pūaha Talks

Te Pūaha Talks, our free online capability workshops and webinars, provide opportunities to learn from people who are leaders, innovators, and influencers in their areas of expertise.

These are a resource for organisations and individuals in the social impact community to build their knowledge and confidence to apply what they learn to their own community organisation or area of practice. A wide range of topics was covered during the year, from evaluation, to hauora, to effective collaboration and communication.

## Participation 2024/25



**1,703**

registrations from  
724 organisations



**792**

attendees



**4,212**

Te Pūaha homepage  
webviews

## Community focus: Exploring the Core Skills Toolkit – webinar series

A series of webinars were held to explore a practical, easy-to-use toolkit of resources and insights that CSI produced to help new and small community groups and not-for-profit organisations thrive. The toolkit provided an introduction to: Te Tiriti; community engagement; strategic planning; evaluation and measuring impact; communications; working in a culturally responsive way, and; wellbeing / hauora. Each webinar saw a CSI subject expert provide an overview of their topic and discuss with participants.

These webinars provided us with additional insights into the information interests of community organisations on each topic. Subsequent to each webinar, we offered a limited number of half hour one-on-one sessions to participants to discuss issues specific to their organisation.



*“[The one-on-one session was] very helpful, gave me some good advice and approaches I can take moving forward. Was great to bounce ideas and get affirmation for me in my role.”*

## Funder focus: Shifting Culture and Power through Mana-Enhancing Partnerships

The webinar explored the Shifting Culture and Power through Mana-Enhancing Partnerships report produced by CSI in partnership with the J R McKenzie Trust. The report explored what matters most in ‘partnerships for purpose’ between funders and ngā kaikōkiri (communities, funded groups, grantees).

It was based on interviews with funders across Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia on how their organisations are building mana-enhancing funding partnerships. Webinar guest speakers included Dr Katie Bruce from HuiEI, Jenn Chowanec from Wayne Francis Charitable Trust, Niall Fay from Fay Fuller Foundation, Maria Ramsay from Toi Foundation and Gael Surgenor from the Peter McKenzie Project.

This webinar helped promote the original report, encourage engagement, and allowed other funders to hear directly from the organisations who were interviewed for the report.

# Guides and Toolkits

# Funder focus: Te Tiriti o Waitangi – a guide for funders

Philanthropic organisations are increasingly looking to how they can honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi through partnership and genuine power-sharing.

The Centre's [Tiriti resource](#) provides an overview of te Tiriti and considerations for funders. The resource includes video interviews in which CSI Associate Kate Cherrington explores the Tiriti journeys of Toi Foundation with Maria Ramsay, Community Trust South with Jackie Flutey and Mata Cherrington, Trust Waikato with Dennis Turton and Rongo Kirkwood and JR McKenzie Trust with Chelsea Grootvelt.

The Tiriti guide complements our other guides for funders: [Better funding practice](#) - Seven ways funders can make life better for community partners; [Advocacy](#) - A funder's guide to supporting advocacy; [Participatory grantmaking](#); Understanding impact

Toitu te  
TIRITI  
honour  
the  
Treaty.

# Community focus: The Capability Support Wheel

For community organisations, finding the best information and resources critical topics, such as how to build organisational governance and leadership, find funding, or develop capabilities for social impact, is a challenge.

An online search on any topic will offer a myriad of publications, websites, courses and organisations. To help organisations find good information quickly, CSI developed the [Capability Support Wheel](#). This tool provides links to a curated selection of resources; generic resources available online, targeted support such as professional development training, and tailored support, such as coaching, mentoring or consultancy services designed to meet the specific needs of individuals or organisations.

The Capability Wheel complements our other guides for community organisations; the [Funding Guide](#); the [Core Skills Toolkit](#).



# Systems Change Focused Projects

# Haumanu - healing collective trauma to create equitable futures

Haumanu, an approach to restorative systems change, offers a practical framework and process method for working with and starting to heal collective trauma.

Developed by CSI Associates Louise Marra, Tuihana Ohia, Kate Cherrington, Rachael Trotman and Chloe Harwood, Haumanu draws on both mātauranga Māori and western knowledge.

International interest in this innovative work saw Louise and Tuihana invited to introduce the Haumanu framework and process at the 2024 Collective Impact Action Summit. The summit, a virtual event with an international audience, is hosted by the Collective Impact Forum, an initiative of the Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions and global nonprofit consulting firm FSG (Foundation Strategy Group.)

Facilitators and change makers from a variety of New Zealand organisations were introduced to Haumanu through CSI wānanga in 2022 and 2023. In response to their interest, CSI this year trained a group of 15 experienced facilitators to facilitate Haumanu in their cultural context.

*“Haumanu means to restore and rejuvenate, and the approach provides a conceptual framework, a process method and practices to address collective trauma as it arises, and to redesign our systems from a place of mauri ora (wellness and wholeness). Bringing restoration into the work of systems change means changing the way we work, relate, design and learn together.”*



# Insights and Interviews

# Insight brief: Social investment and social return on investment

Social investment is a key concept in current Government thinking about the funding and delivery of social services.

Social investment, alongside an approach to determining value called social return on investment, is now a significant topic of conversation between funders and the community sector. To support sector engagement with these concepts, in this Insight brief, CSI associate Rachael Trotman explored what is? social investment and social return on investment, the history of these concepts in social policy thinking in New Zealand, the benefits and limitations of these, and what they mean for philanthropy.

*“There are some worthy intentions behind social investment and cautions. Philanthropy can play a useful partnering role at this time with the community sector and with government, to meet shared aims.”*

Rachael Trotman

## Social investment and social return on investment

What does this mean for philanthropy?

December 2024

Questions are rife regarding the Coalition Government's social investment approach and its potential implications for philanthropy. The concurrent elevation of a particular method for helping to determine value - social return on investment - is also a focus of conversation amongst funders and the community sector alike.



Rachael Trotman – CSI associate

### Social investment A mixed bag

Social investment is about using data and evidence to target government social spend to those most in need with effective interventions early, to break cycles of poverty and disadvantage. The use of the term 'investment' is deliberate and signals an expectation of a measurable return. The door is opened to harnessing private sector funding through social bonds<sup>1</sup> (see endnotes).

Social investment emerged from the 2011 [Welfare Working Group](#) and gathered steam from 2017 under the last National-led Government, spearheaded by then Finance Minister Bill English. The Coalition Government has resurrected social investment through its newly formed [Social Investment Agency](#) with a new champion in the form of Finance Minister and Minister of Social Investment Nicola Willis. See [here](#) for a November 2024 webinar hosted by Hui El, of Minister Nicola Willis discussing social investment. A Social Investment Fund will 'commission services for vulnerable New Zealanders' from 2025.

Success under social investment includes reduced costs to the state – costs saved by moving people out of deprivation, including associated health costs, welfare and justice costs, and future savings if people's lives stay on track. Having better data means that more effective services and programmes can be grown, and less effective initiatives let go.

At the Aotearoa New Zealand Evaluation (ANZEA) Conference in November 2024, a representative from the Social Investment Agency described the purpose of social investment as being to drive better outcomes from government spending by using data and evidence to target funding to where it is most needed. It is also about setting and tracking measurable goals, being able to compare the effectiveness of services and better understand the value created by addressing issues earlier and better. Building the breadth and depth of our data infrastructure through the IDI ([Integrated Data Infrastructure](#))<sup>2</sup> is a further goal.

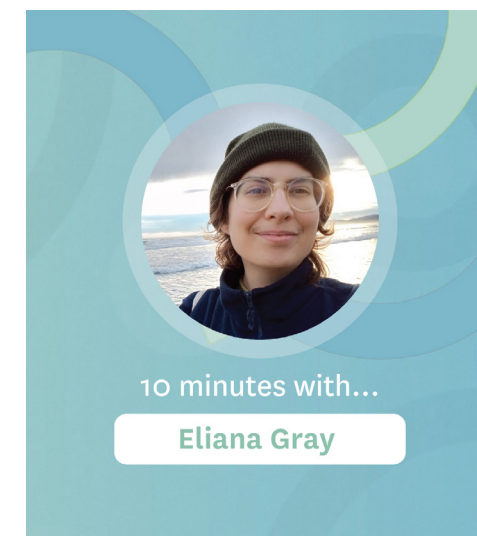
A stated driver behind social investment is seeking to embed evaluative thinking and better use of data in public policy, government and community approaches. The need to lift evaluative capability and capacity in government and the community sector to do this is acknowledged. There is reported to be an openness in the Social Investment Agency to pluralism – applying multiple worldviews and knowledge systems.

Value and measurement guidelines are being developed by the Social Investment Agency, which set out what is expected from government agencies and contracted providers – principally a theory of change (clear goals and

# Ten for Ten podcast series

We have some remarkable changemakers in the community sector in Aotearoa. Each of them has a story to tell about how their interest in making a difference in our society developed, and the careers that they have followed. Our [TenForTen podcast](#) series discussed their individual journeys, their current mahi, and their hopes for the future.



- > Te Aorangi Murphy-Fell
- > Dr Claire Achmad
- > Dan Gerrard
- > Qiane Matata-Sipu
- > Red Nicholson
- > Eteroa Lafaele & Julia Arnott-Neenee
- > Shruthi Vijayakumar
- > Ezekiel Raui
- > Amita Kala
- > Shaneel Lal



## Ten Minutes With... our leadership hub interviews

Our Ten Minutes With series were developed for our [Leadership Hub](#), a space created in Te Pūaha o te Ako specifically for community sector leaders. Our Ten Minutes interviews provided a series of insights into personal leadership experiences, what made each leader feel connected to community, and what inspires them.

- > Dan Te Whenua Walker
- > Eliana Gray
- > Irirangi Te Kani
- > Kate Cherrington
- > Manawa Udy



Centre for Social Impact  
PO Box 68 048  
Victoria St West  
Auckland 1142

+64 9 360 0291  
[contact@csinz.org](mailto:contact@csinz.org)  
[centreforsocialimpact.org.nz](http://centreforsocialimpact.org.nz)