changing paradigms

for charity and business

essays from Aotearoa New Zealand by

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Eleanor Cater • Chris Clarke
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Lani Evans • Craig Fisher • Jenny Gill
Bea Gladding • John Godfrey • Aaron Hape
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Parry Field Lawyers

Edited by Steven Moe

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About Parry Field Lawyers
I am a Partner in New Zealand's leading law firm supporting purpose-led organisations that range from charities to companies and hybrid structures, across property, disputes, and commercial issues.
Our Impact Team works across the country for clients on legal structures, solving legal problems, providing free training, resources, articles, and videos to empower the 'for purpose' sector and we have 100 staff across five offices. Maybe our team can help you. More at parryfield.com

A labour of love, **Seeds Podcast** now has more than 475 hour-long interviews I've done with inspiring people – you can join the community by subscribing in podcast apps. You can find lots more information and check out *The Apple Tree*, a book for children (and adults), as well as *The Circle: Careers with Impact*, and other books, articles, videos and more at theseeds.nz

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Changing Paradigms

For Charity and Business

Goodbye 'Oliver Twist' Mindset!

Featuring original essays by
Rachel Afeaki, Paul Brown, Rachel Brown, Eleanor Cater, Chris Clarke, Shamubeel Eaqub, Judene Edgar, Lani Evans, Craig Fisher, Jenny Gill, Bea Gladding, John Godfrey, Aaron Hape, Eve Jolly, Emma Lewis, Dan Mazengarb, Rachael McDonald, Steven Moe, Angela Norton, Caren Rangi, Ben Reid, Ros Rice, Josiah Tualamali'i, Mele Wendt, Safe Wongsunopparat

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About the Cover
The image on the cover is from Bri Leone-Rhea Lawrence (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa), an artist based in Ōtautahi. She holds a Bachelor of Art & Design specialising in Photography from Ara Institute of Canterbury, and was recognised with the Eke Panuku awards. Bri is a recent recipient of the Toi Ōtautahi Incubator Programme and resident photographer for Queer Horizons Ōtautahi. Her work was included in Whakawhanaungatanga (2023) at CoCA Centre of Contemporary Art Toi Moroki and 09 07 25 (2025) at The Physics Room, Ōtautahi. She works from Te Wā | The Space, which is mentioned in the first essay.

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Introduction

Ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi.
As the old net withers, the new net goes fishing.

This Māori whakataukī (proverb) conveys why this book exists, to challenge your paradigms of thinking. It is the result of contributions from around 25 people who have helpful insights not just on how we operate today but also how we could change things for the future.

The title 'changing paradigms' was chosen to show that we ourselves could be the ones implementing the changes. That involves a proactive mindset and maybe even considering new ways of thinking like those set out here.

Perhaps one example of this to show you what I mean. You probably grew up with an Oliver Twist mindset about charities. I did too.

The young boy in the famous 1838 book says, "Please sir, I want some more" which exemplifies someone who is reliant on the generosity of those who have resources. When Charles Dickens was 12, he spent two years in an English workhouse much like the setting of the story and this is an early example of a 'social novel' which exposed the poverty and injustice during his time.

So, what does this novel reveal to us 188 years later? Charities today often perpetuate the same mindset and continue to operate in ways that have worked in the past. Saying goodbye to the Oliver Twist mindset involves reimagining different aspects of how charities operate such as where they get their funding and thinking about ways to improve them so that the charity can better advance their purposes.

This book compiles a series of wero (challenges) from an inspiring and focused group of people who operate in the charities space and many of these challenges extend into business as well. These challenges are for those prevailing paradigms of thought and offers a "blank piece of paper" perspective. By considering the topics you are about to read about my hope is that you are encouraged to rethink what you do in your own context or organisation, wherever you are in the world.

Thank you to the collaborators for input from their specialist areas. It was amazing to have so many perspectives shared, and I am humbled to have such quality people involved.

I am also grateful for the cover image which speaks to disruption from Bri Leone-Rhea Lawrence (Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa) who like me is based in Ōtautahi and works from Te Wā which is an artists workplace founded by a contributor of the opening essay on youth in philanthropy by Bea Gladding.

As a lawyer with 25+ years experience and a focus on purpose driven organisations, I've seen first hand examples of the topics described in this book. If it might help, then I would be happy to have a discussion on your situation as my weeks are filled with "commute time" chats with people at no cost.

With around 100 people and five offices Parry Field Lawyers is the leading law firm in this area of purpose driven business and charity. We release an abundance of resources on these topics, so make sure you check out our guides, videos and articles on our website. A particular thanks to Bridget Holland and Tasha Fraser for their work on this book. Also, Seeds podcast now has more than 475 hour long conversations with inspiring people so why not add it to your playlist.

One request: If this book offers you value then please consider sharing it with your networks with a short comment or in a post, so they can also benefit (the landing page for it to use is here or forward the book on). It might provide a chance to challenge the thinking of Boards or organisations that you are part of as well.

This is volume 1 on purpose. Please contact me if you have an idea for a topic to contribute to a volume 2 … let's together create more resources like this to change paradigms of thought.

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March 2026

Seeds Impact Conference 2026

Parry Field Lawyers is pleased to present the Seeds Impact Conference 2026, taking place on Friday 22 May. This free online event will feature panel discussion on a variety of topics. Register to join us online at seedsconference.nz

Charities and Young People

By Bea Gladding, Te Wā | The Space

Too often, young people are positioned as recipients of support rather than drivers of change. I'm drawn to charities that are not only for young people (rangatahi), but by them, with them and for them - where rangatahi hold real voice, agency, and leadership.

Through a Te Ao Māori lens, young people aren't seen as "incomplete adults" or just "the future." They are taonga - treasures - in their own right, and living links in an intergenerational chain. Young people are both taught and teachers. Knowledge is passed down, but it's also reshaped and reimagined by each generation.

As a young person myself, I founded Te Wā The Space with our small team at the end of 2024. Starting something that meaningful and that business-focused, where my responsibilities suddenly extended far beyond just myself and my own interests, became a huge part of exploring my identity and making something meaningful to the communities I'm a part of. It was me stepping into who I am and what I want to leave behind.

I know the venture was quite audacious - and maybe that just says something about me. But I wonder if more young people should be stepping into their own ventures sooner. It can feel like starting a business or organisation is gatekept, like it's something young people shouldn't or couldn't do. I want to encourage more young people to build the things they want to see and just go for it. Young people understand other young people in a way older generations simply won't fully grasp. They can create services and spaces for their peers in ways that feel real and relevant.

In my early 20s, I worked for a charity - first as an actor, then directing a show about sex and sexuality that toured high schools around Aotearoa. These three big things stayed with me:

First, young people relate to other young people. We want to see ourselves reflected in the spaces we're part of. If something feels too far removed from our lived experience, it's harder to engage. Charities need to think carefully about employing people - including board members - who genuinely represent the communities they're reaching.

Second, the communication between boards, staff, and the eventual delivery of a programme or service is everything. It needs to be honest and aligned. Like any relationship, it requires clarity, follow-through, kindness, curiosity, and love. When that alignment slips, the impact slips too.

Third, young people know what they're doing, they just need real opportunities to put their ideas into practice. They need meaningful roles, real responsibility, and genuine influence over decisions that affect them. Speaking directly to those impacted by board decisions is powerful. Even better is employing young people to lead that work - not when we think they're ready, but when they truly are. I'd love to see more young people in positions of power.

What I brought to Te Wā from those earlier roles was a deep trust in my own vision and instincts. We were going to build a community, artist-led space, and we were going to do it on our own terms.

Te Wā is living proof that young people can create work that is relevant and meaningful, by, with, and for their own peers. I'm really proud to say that Josiah Morgan, who runs the space with me, is only 24. He's already published multiple books, sits on funding panels, mentors others, is an incredible actor and director, a total funding wizard, and helps run Te Wā to an extremely high standard alongside me. That, in itself, says something.

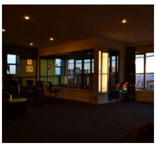
I sometimes think an intergenerational way of thinking might be a missing link, not just in the charity space, but more broadly. If we truly valued young people as contributors in the present, not just leaders-in-waiting, I believe we'd see more coherent decision-making and stronger, more relevant infrastructures for change.

Bea Gladding

Originally from Taranaki, Bea Gladding (Ngāti Porou / Ngā Puhi) is an artist working across Aotearoa. Her connection to te ao Māori and its values have driven her work in both theatre and music. In Tāmaki Makaurau, Bea was the director of The Jingle Bellethon Telethon (Basement Theatre 2023) and was a performer, co-director and sound designer for Josiah Morgan's The Texas Chainsaw Massacre for Auckland Pride in 2024. She has also acted and directed in The Duffy Books in Schools programme and Sexwise. Bea received a Creative New Zealand Toi Rangatahi Leadership Grant towards workshops with young Māori and Tagata Moana. She was also the recipient of the Creatives in Schools grant to teach underprivileged youth through electronic music and theatre.

Bea performs and produces electronic dance music under the name MR MEATY BOY, creating music that resists simple categorisation and centres marginalised identities across techno, bass and post-club. In 2021, she co-founded Routine Magic, a Māori-led DJ course for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ participants.

In 2024, she co-established Te Wā, an artist-led space supporting Māori, Tangata Moana and queer artists outside the mainstream. Her work centres experimentation, collaboration, and creative exchange across the motu.



Te Wā | The Space

instagram.com/te_waa_the_space

Te Wā | The Space is an artist-led, low-cost creative hub based in the heart of Ōtautahi Christchurch - where bold ideas flourish outside mainstream appeal, replenishing the creative well we all draw from.

Grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi and guided by te ao Māori values, Te Wā nurtures underground and outlying voices, specifically tangata whenua, tangata moana and queer artists.

Located at 74 Hawdon Street in Sydenham, the two-storey, multi-functional space houses a music studio, performance venue, theatre and rehearsal rooms, and co-working areas. It is an open environment where people can conceptualise, create, collaborate, and experiment across disciplines - by, with, and for artists.

From Charity to Civic Investment: Reimagining Giving as a Tool for Nation-building

By Aaron Hape, Chair of the Te Papa Foundation

We often talk about generosity like it's something soft, like a nice extra when times are good. But generosity, used well, is one of the most powerful tools we have. The challenge isn't getting people to give more; it's helping them see giving as part of how we build the country we want to live in.

That's what I mean by civic investment. It's generosity that builds belonging, connection, and pride. Charity, in the old sense, was about helping people in need. Civic investment is about building a society where those needs shrink because the foundations are stronger.

Doing Things Differently

A few years ago, I worked on the Provincial Growth Fund. It was ambitious, messy, and sometimes controversial — but it tried something new. Rightly, ministers wanted to invest with communities instead of for them. That meant co-funding projects with councils, iwi, and local businesses, and trusting people who lived there to decide what mattered.

It wasn't perfect, but it proved something important: how you invest matters as much as what you invest in. When people share the risk, they share the ownership. When you give them agency, they stay committed.

That same idea applies to giving. If we want generosity to mean something, it has to be collaborative. Boards and foundations need to see themselves as co-investors in a shared future and not distant benefactors writing cheques from the sidelines.

The Problem with Old Words

I've never liked the word philanthropy. It sounds stiff and exclusive, like it belongs to another era. Words such as donor or benefactor quietly tell people who belongs in the conversation — and who doesn't.

Language matters. If it feels outdated, it shuts people out, especially younger generations. In Te Ao Māori (the māori worldview), generosity is about connection and guardianship. Those are values that resonate strongly with how many of us want to give today. The words we choose should reflect that sense of shared responsibility and belonging.

New models of growth like The Gift Trust and Community Foundations of Aotearoa NZ is so encouraging. They use plain language and modern tools that invite people in. The Gift Trust, for instance, offers "gift accounts" which is a kind of donor-advised fund that lets people pool their giving and decide how to use it over time. Community Foundations of Aotearoa NZ are booming because they let people invest locally without having to set up a trust. Perpetual Guardian's 'Growing Our Giving' report shows New Zealanders are finding flexible, long-term ways to participate.

These are cultural innovations, not just financial ones and they're making generosity accessible again.

Building for the Long Term

If the last few years have taught us anything, it's that relying on one big donor or one campaign isn't sustainable. The strongest organisations diversify their support. They seek to combine endowments, community funds, partnerships, matched investments, and even civic crowdfunding, where locals co-fund public projects alongside councils or foundations.

That future must be flexible, blended, and participatory. People want to be involved, not just as supporters but as partners. They want to feel part of something and, rightly, see where their investment goes, to share the story, and to know it endures.

Measuring the Real Return

We talk about return on investment as dollars and cents but we don't often think of it as civic yield. These are things that we can measure in belonging, knowledge, pride, and resilience.

Ask different questions: How many relationships did this project build? How many new voices are involved? How much knowledge or culture was preserved? Did the community grow stronger?

If boards reported on that as clearly as they report on finances, they'd build trust and attract more people who want to be part of something bigger than themselves.

Governance as Guardianship

Changing how we give means changing how we govern. Trustees aren't there just to protect capital. They have a duty to activate it and to turn money into momentum. That takes transparency, collaboration, and a willingness to see opportunity in measured risks. Governance should be about stewardship and care.

When giving is seen as an act of guardianship, rather than charity, the whole tone shifts. It becomes about investing in something you belong to, not just something you support.

A Call to Rebuild Culture, not Just Fund Projects

I've often argued that generosity should be seen as a form of civic power. It's how we express what matters, and how we decide who we are.

We don't lack generosity in this country. What we lack is imagination and infrastructure. So, here's the invitation: stop treating generosity like a soft skill. See it as a nation-building force.

If we can reframe giving not by what we give away, but by what we build together, we'll create something far more powerful than charity — a culture of investment in each other, and the kind of strength this country needs now.

Aaron Hape

Aaron Hape is a public policy strategist working at the intersection of government, business, and philanthropy. His career includes advising senior leaders across New Zealand's justice, health, and economic sectors, and leading strategic initiatives in global businesses and international NGOs. He now operates at the nexus of health, science, and policy, shaping modern health systems, while chairing and advising major cultural and philanthropic organisations, including the Te Papa Foundation, the Shakespeare Globe Centre, the Ngāti Kahungunu ki Tāmaki-nui-a-Rua Iwi Development Trust, and the Advertising Standards Authority.

TE PAPA FOUNDATION

Te Papa Foundation

tepapa.govt.nz/foundation

The Te Papa Foundation grows philanthropic support for New Zealand's national museum, enabling meaningful acquisitions, vibrant exhibitions, scholarly research, and programmes that connect culture, history, and community. It champions a stronger culture of giving in New Zealand and fosters strategic partnerships so that Te Papa's impact endures and expands.

The Economy, Social Cohesion and Charities: What Matters and Why

By Shamubeel Eaqub, Chief Economist of Simplicity

Charities matter — not only for what they do, but for how they do it. They fill the gaps in private and public provision, tackling everything from poverty to climate change. They bring communities closer together by pooling goodwill into money, volunteer time and collective action.

Through their programmes and investments, charities bridge gaps in our economy and society. They make long-term, meaningful change by building understanding and empathy, and by shifting societal attitudes over time.

They are unique because they are motivated by collective rather than individual good. At their heart, the purpose of charities is to create the conditions for belonging — for everyone.

The Economy and its Gaps

The economy matters for charities because economic activity should make people better off while doing the least harm to the environment and society. Yet while there are many positives, gaps remain — and charities step into them.

Too often, growth does not translate into shared prosperity. Externalities such as exploitation of people and nature persist. New Zealand is no exception. Income inequality has stayed stubbornly high for four decades. Economic gains have not been evenly shared. Poverty has deepened, with a quarter of Kiwis now going hungry sometimes or often.

Climate change continues to worsen despite progress in many sectors. Nature is still viewed as something to extract from, not something to steward for future generations.

These challenges — poverty, inequality, environmental decline — are not the result of ignorance or a lack of tools. They stem from **fraying social cohesion** and an **unwillingness to bear costs** for the voiceless: nature, marginalised communities and future generations.

Harder Times Ahead

The future may test us even more. Fiscal pressures from an ageing population and increasingly polarised politics could lead to abrupt changes in public services, creating more frequent and unpredictable need.

Demand for charities will rise. Yet, at the same time, two key inputs — money and volunteer time — may decline. We risk facing greater need with fewer resources.

But we still have time to act differently — by rethinking **what we do, how we work, and why we exist.**

1. What We Do

Charities' visible work lies in the programmes delivered by almost 150,000 organisations across New Zealand.

This raises two essential questions:

1. **Do our programmes have a clear logic and proven impact?** If evidence shows they don't, we must have the courage to stop.
2. **Are we duplicating effort?** With so many organisations seeking to make a difference, our focus may need to shift from running standalone programmes to scaling up what works elsewhere.

Purpose — the outcomes we seek — must take precedence over personal attachment to programmes, structures or egos.

2. How We Work

What's less visible, but just as vital, is how charities operate as the social glue that holds communities together.

Successful organisations are durable yet adaptable. They evolve with the world as it is, not as it once was or as we wish it to be.

This adaptability also applies to how we invest. Should we preserve capital and do good through returns, spend down our assets, or invest directly for impact? The right answer depends on purpose and context.

Charities that strengthen social cohesion tend to share a pattern: they distribute power, foster participation and respond to cultural change. This is the essence of **devolution** — building community self-sufficiency and creating virtuous cycles of progress.

3. Why We Exist

Finally, our purpose — the "why" — may need to be reimagined or at least clarified. The core purpose of charities is to create belonging and strengthen social cohesion.

In a world of fragmentation, uncertainty and volatility, our purpose must be capable of holding complexity, nurturing belonging and helping people navigate change together. It must be dynamic and responsive — not static or imposed.

Charities step into the spaces where no one else will. The need for them will grow. Unless we rebuild social cohesion, our collective capacity to respond will erode.

The economy matters — it drives material prosperity and determines how widely it is shared. But charities are uniquely placed to focus on the deeper foundations of prosperity: **social capital and culture.**

Social cohesion should not be seen as a separate pillar of charity work but as the **thread that runs through everything.** When woven into an organisation's DNA, it clarifies why we act, what we choose to do, and how we do it.

Shamubeel Eaqub

Shamubeel Eaqub makes economics easy and fun. Shamubeel is the Chief Economist at Simplicity. He is also an author, media commentator and a thought leading public speaker. He graduated with Honours in Economics from Lincoln University and is also a CFA Charter holder. He has 25 years of experience as an economist in Wellington, Melbourne and Auckland in leading financial institutions and consultancy (ANZ Bank, Goldman Sachs JBWere, NZIER, Sense Partners and Simplicity). He balances a portfolio of economics, consulting, public speaking, governance and family duties. He lives in Auckland with his wife and two sons.

Books published:
Urban Aotearoa (2024), contributing author with Selena Eaqub
Generation Rent (2015), co-authored with Selena Eaqub
Growing Apart: Regional Prosperity in NZ (2014)
The NZ Economy: An Introduction (2011), co-authored with Dr Ralph Lattimore

simplicity.kiwi

We need nature to thrive. Nature needs us to act.

By Rachel Brown, ONZM – Founder & CEO, Sustainable Business Network

We give to disaster relief. We give to hunger. We give to hospitals. All worthy causes. But we're barely giving to the natural systems that make every one of those causes possible.

We rely on nature for everything. From the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat to the raw materials our businesses depend on. Yet we take it for granted and we're not doing enough to connect with, care for and restore it.

Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, 75% of indigenous reptile, bird, bat and freshwater fish species are at risk, according to Stats NZ. Our air and waterways are polluted and extreme weather is wreaking havoc on our communities. The crisis isn't coming – it's already here. Nature needs us to act!

We know the will is there. 82% of Kiwi businesses surveyed by the Sustainable Business Network in 2023 said they want to "do the right thing for nature". However they often don't know where to start.

Regeneration doesn't happen from a distance. It happens when communities plant alongside waterways, when funders back the long game rather than the quick win and when mātauranga Māori guides the way. It happens when businesses stop extracting and start replenishing.

Every organisation has a role. By acting for nature, you're also strengthening your own resilience. These aren't competing priorities!

Here's where to start:

- Support communities restoring nature's health. Fund them. Volunteer for them. The Tāmaki Taiao Alliance is a great example. It's a landscape-scale, place-based regeneration programme that weaves together business investment, community action and kaitiakitanga leadership.

- Back businesses building a better future. Invest in them. Buy from them. Champion them to help them grow! Look out for a new sustainable business fund that will make it easier to support these businesses.
- Change your operations. Where is your money going? Does it reflect what you stand for? Align your procurement, donations and investments with your values.

The natural world isn't separate from us. Nature's survival and our own are the same story. Let's work together to ensure it has a good ending.

Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi. With your food basket and mine, the people will thrive.

Rachel Brown, ONZM

The founder and CEO of the Sustainable Business Network (SBN), Rachel has played a critical role in advancing sustainability for more than 20 years. She is a regular presenter, collaborator and driver of action within NZ business. She provides strategic sustainability advice to countless businesses, ranging from large corporates to small enterprises, as well as government agencies. She sits on the Board of Mindful Money. In 2018 she was awarded the New Zealand Order of Merit for years of service to sustainable business.

Sustainable Business Network

Sustainable Business Network

sustainable.org.nz

The Sustainable Business Network (SBN) is Aotearoa New Zealand's largest sustainable business organisation, representing a diverse cross-section of the business and sustainability communities. It's at the forefront of change, driven by a vision of a world where people and nature prosper. It provides the tools, knowledge, connections and investment needed to accelerate the shift to a sustainable future.

The Charity Model Was Not Designed For Us: Rethinking Governance and Accountability in Community Contexts

By Mele Wendt

In conversations about the charity sector, I often hear Pacific community organisations described as "capacity constrained", "informal" or still developing their governance capability. After many years working in and with these groups — and also within formal governance and public sector environments — I have come to a different conclusion. The issue is often not a lack of governance. It is a mismatch of models.

The modern charity framework in New Zealand is largely built on Western institutional assumptions. It expects clearly defined organisations, identifiable individual beneficiaries, measurable services, and a separation between governors, management and community. Accountability is primarily directed toward the regulator and the funder, and success is demonstrated through outputs and reporting.

These assumptions make sense in a system designed around organisations. But many Pacific communities are not organised primarily around organisations. They are organised around relationships.

In Pacific thinking there is the concept of vā — the relational space between people that must be nurtured and cared for. Community organisations sit within this space. Churches, women's groups, youth groups, ethnic and cultural collectives do not simply deliver programmes. They maintain belonging, identity, culture, safety, conflict resolution and prevention of harm. Much of the work that keeps communities well is relational, and therefore largely invisible to a funding contract.

Within these contexts, accountability can also operate differently. There are constitutions and bank accounts, but the deeper accountability is relational. Leaders are accountable to elders, families, and the wider community. Reputation matters. Trust matters.

Intergenerational relationships matter. For many community leaders, the most serious audit is not a regulator's review — it is facing our own people.

Because the normal systems measure governance through policies, independence and reporting, they sometimes interpret these organisations as weakly operated and governed. In reality, they are operating a different governance paradigm — one based on stewardship rather than corporate oversight. Leadership is not held over the community but within it.

This does not mean our current charity framework is wrong. It has provided important structure, transparency and protection. But it is incomplete. If we want to support communities equitably, our understanding of governance must expand to recognise relational accountability alongside institutional accountability.

As conversations around equity and Te Tiriti o Waitangi continue to shape our sector, we have an opportunity to reconsider what good governance looks like in different community and cultural contexts. Strong governance is not measured only by compliance with frameworks, but by the trust a community places in those who lead it.

Mele Wendt MNZM, MInstD

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Mele Wendt is of Samoan and palagi heritage, with 28 years of governance experience and 17 years in senior leadership roles across education and the not-for-profit sectors. Her roles have included being a high school teacher, the founding pacific islands liaison officer and manager of the student recruitment office at Victoria University of Wellington, and then the executive director of Fulbright New Zealand for ten years.

In governance Mele currently chairs Wellington Community Fund, and is a board member of Tu Ora Compass Health, Tokelau International Trust Fund, ANZ Bank (Samoa) Ltd, Tāwhiri: Festivals and Experiences, Helen Clark Foundation, and PACIFICA Inc. She is also on the Institute of Directors' Pacific Advisory Group.

Mele provides consultancies in governance training, Pacific peoples' development, organisational capacity building, and scholarships management. She and Caren Rangi, ONZM run the Good Governance with a Pacific Lens course ggwapl.nz.

In 2019, Mele was awarded a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for her services to governance, the Pacific community and women. In 2022, she won the Not-For-Profit Governance Leader Award at the Women in Governance Awards. Mele is a White Ribbon Ambassador and a member of various professional and community groups. She is a proud Wellingtonian and is married to Eteuati Ete and together they have 4 children and five grandchildren.

Building Sandcastles at Low Tide

By Chris Clarke, CEO of The Wilberforce Foundation

On my first day as CEO World Vision NZ, I was left in no doubt my success would be measured by my ability to turn around declining child sponsorship numbers. The 'hero' product which had been such a force for good had lost its lustre. Various solutions were proposed - better, more passionate staff, digital technologies, more relevant celebrity endorsements. No one asked the bigger question – was the charity model of 'donors' and 'beneficiaries' and measuring success by total revenue and low operating costs, rapidly reaching its use by date?

So, I set too, writing letters describing urgent needs and praising the kindness of "our donors". We 'refreshed' our celebrities, we embraced digital technologies, we upped the marketing budget. I drove cost efficiencies and I joined our team door-stopping harried shoppers offering them the opportunity to sponsor a child (and wondering afterwards was I doing more harm than good.)

One year into the job, head in hands, I was beaten. We'd tried all the proffered solutions and yet sponsorship numbers continued to decline. I was providing answers to the wrong questions. I had elevated the means - reviving a product, over the ends – transforming children's lives. I was not alone. Other charity leaders in different sectors described similar moments of despair. A few bravely admitted the joy had gone out of their work.

Today, from my current vantage point as CEO Wilberforce Foundation, while I see some shining lights including World Vision, I am not sure that much has changed overall. Wilberforce supports around 150 faith-based charities, all of whom are chasing a declining pool of discretionary spending. Most have upped the urgency of their appeals. Few are looking at their operating model or questioning whether they should remain in business. Joint ventures are rare. Mergers and acquisitions, commonplace in other sectors, are almost non-existent. Some have quietly shelved their faith basis for fear of alienating future supporters. A few are experimenting with measuring impact, but for many revenue and operating costs remain the overarching performance measures.

And yet despite the inertia, the charity sector is remarkably resilient, and the quality of our work remains high. The sector has weathered all sorts of storms and New Zealanders remain among the world's most generous givers. And here in lies our problem. As a sector we have yet to reach crisis. We continue to comfort ourselves with stories of the good we do, so busy we don't have time to think. So, we soldier on, switching out leaders, chasing increasingly disillusioned major donors, bequesters and government funding in the hope that somehow, we will get through another year and somehow next year will be better.

Are we, in effect, building sandcastles at low tide, frantically reinforcing the walls in the hope we can avert the incoming tide? Having watched the tide come in and take out a few of my sandcastles, here is my advice to those wishing to avoid a similar fate:

1. **Start by auditing your language** – how do you describe what you do and your role in it. Go so far as to ban any words that hint of paternalism, self-interest and hubris. Count the number of times your organisation's name appears in your publications compared to the communities you serve. Stop singing your own praises, allow others to do that.

2. **Stop talking about your donors/supporters** – you are not a football club. They are not your supporters. They support the work you do, not your organisation. The difference matters. Understand their motivations. Get out of the way as much as you can – you are at best a broker.

3. **Treat your supporters as investors** - who are after a social return. Educate them on risk, offer them multiple opportunities, recognise they hold a portfolio of social investments and are open to different levels of risk. Focus on impact and make sure you are measuring social return and not just operating costs.

4. **Own your whakapapa** - don't hide it or excuse it, especially if you are a faith inspired organisation. It is your greatest strength. Don't allow your charisma to become bigger than your mission. Honour those who have gone before. It nurtures a posture of humility and the courage to carry on.

5. **Disrupt yourselves** – ask yourself: if I was a startup looking to take on my current organisation – what would I build and who would I partner with?

6. **Don't dumb it down** – societal change is complex, full of risk, it can take generations to effect lasting change. What you do is rocket science and you have some great scientists. Invite people on the journey and offer them opportunities to connect with the communities through means other than just their wallet.

7. **Do not confuse means and ends** – Your services, or the products you offer, are only a means to an end. Avoid the temptation to elevate the means to the ends. Does your board and leadership team even know the difference?

8. **Understand the power imbalances** – hard baked into the donor/beneficiary model is a significant power imbalance. "Overcoming poverty" said Nelson Mandela "is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life." Get your board and

management team to read A Just Mission by Mekdes Haddis a powerful treatise on laying down power and embracing mutuality.

9. **Abandon your moral high ground** – the for purpose sector is not intrinsically better than the for profit or government sectors. Search out entrepreneurship, energy and enterprise wherever it can be found regardless of ownership structures. Stay curious. What can I learn from colleagues in business, public sector? What can I bring to them and they to me?

10. **Harness the power of digital technologies to connect investors with the communities they care for** – yes there are all sorts of safety and privacy issues to negotiate but don't allow this to stop you from thinking of ways to break down the power imbalance between 'funders' and 'beneficiaries'. Success is when both realise, they have much to learn from the other.

It's a courageous board and management team willing to expose its sacred cows. It also requires lashings of grace and a willingness to last the distance. What we do is hard, relentless work. Our best work is only ever a contribution. It is always imperfect and partial. And that is the way it will always be.

Chris Clarke

Chris Clarke is the CEO of Wilberforce Foundation. Previously he was CEO World Vision New Zealand and CEO Hawke's Bay District Health Board. He has also worked for World Health Organisation (Europe), NHS (Wales) and in a number of health sector roles in New Zealand.

Chris holds law and commerce degrees and since 2009 has been the inaugural Praxis Visiting Scholar at Green Templeton College, Oxford University.

Chris is Chairperson of Arrow Leadership Global which works with faith based leaders in majority world and fragile state contexts. He also chairs the Emergency Alliance in New Zealand - a grouping of 9 major humanitarian NGOs.

Chris is married to Karen and they have two adult sons.

wilberforce.org.nz

How has the Room Changed – Philanthropy in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2026

By Jenny Gill, ONZM

The word philanthropy originates from the Ancient Greek word philanthrōpía, which translates to "the love of humanity". It combines philos (loving, fond of) and anthropos (humankind).

Recently at a Philanthropy New Zealand (PNZ) workshop we were gifted a wonderful gem by our Australian colleague Genevieve Timmons when she said that in the 300,000-year history of humankind: money is only 4,000 years old.

Genevieve went on to say that money is a tool that was designed so that we didn't have to carry around a pig or a bag of wheat in order to exchange goods with each other - but then she reminded us that the philanthropic dollar is the only money that that is linked to the word love.

Aroha was a word used frequently in our 2026 PNZ conference with talk of philanthropy being part of the aroha economy. There was talk about philanthropy being so much more than money with numerous challenges to have ambition, to work with others, to look at systems and to be bold by being part of the solution not the problem.

It could not be more different than the first meeting of philanthropists held at the James Cook Hotel in Wellington in 1990.

In March 2026, 400 people met in the new Sky City Convention Centre for the biennial PNZ conference. In 1990, 50 people met in response to an invitation from philanthropists Roy McKenzie, John Todd and Graeme Sutherland to establish an organisation to support philanthropy in New Zealand. Present in that room were family trust and trustee company representatives.

Sir Roy could see that the country needed an organisation that drew a range of funders from across the country to share ideas, to learn from each other, to collaborate on funding and to do it better!

I was the youngest person at that 1990 conference, by at least 25 years, and as far as I can recall one of only two women. The only Māori delegate in the room was the, then, Māori Trustee, Neville Baker and shockingly at the time the Trustee companies that attended could not tell us how many trusts they administered.

What a difference today: nearly 40 Years later to reflect on how the sector, and PNZ has developed. Looking around the room I saw so much professionalism and diversity in our speakers and in our conference attendees.

Back in 1990 getting to know each other was paramount, now we are seriously engaged in discussions about working together and with communities on the issues that they face.

In preparing the closing keynote address I reflected on the significant changes that have happened in the philanthropic sector over the past 36 years.

An image that came to mind was of the braided river of giving and generosity in Aotearoa New Zealand…….we all want to reach the sea. Some of us have our origins in the headwaters of the maunga and rush headlong to the sea, others tumble in from the cliffs and over a waterfall, while others glide down a side stream that meanders before joining the main stream and some come down in the rain. But we all have the same goal. We are heading to the ocean.

When I first started in philanthropy the administration of trusts and foundations sat largely with part-time retired accounts and company secretaries. The decision makers were almost exclusively businessmen. Many decisions were made in the dining rooms of the Auckland, Canterbury and Wellington Clubs and the male-only Rotary clubs throughout NZ.

At the 2006 conference we had Iwi, from throughout the motu, Pacifica and members of the Asian diaspora. There were more women than men in the room and a significant number of rangatahi.

We had representatives of two new family foundations engaging with trusts and bequests that are over 100 years old. We had the emergent and growing community foundations and the wide range of diverse donors that they represent. Sitting alongside them were the private wealth advisors who are increasingly prominent in our sector.

We had staff and trustees from the community trusts, established from the sale of the Trustee Savings Banks in 1988 and the subsequent energy trusts established in the early 1990's. These entities have given philanthropy in New Zealand a unique profile. No other country in the world has this number of locally focused funders who have been endowed with significant asset bases.

Philanthropic boards are now employing professional staff, utilising technology, focusing on long term change and recognising that our strength is in working with each other and listening to the communities we seek to serve - as we were challenged by one conference speaker if you want to address homelessness, ask the homeless.

We have moved from what seemed in 1990 to be brave, even radical: we started having conversations about how we might move away from being driven by grant applications to funding in line with a well-researched, evidence informed, strategy with a focus on long term impact. We have moved from measuring outputs to outcomes. Increasingly we work in partnership and have come to understand that philanthropy is more than money.

Jenny Gill, ONZM

Jenny was the first person employed in Aotearoa New Zealand to work in a full time professional role in philanthropy when Sir Roy McKenzie employed her in 1984 to manage his personal philanthropic foundation, the Roy McKenzie Foundation. Working with Sir Roy over two decades, together they established Philanthropy New Zealand, The Funding Information Service and New Zealand's first community foundation - the Niaku Foundation. Jenny was appointed as a Trustee and then Chair of the J R Mckenzie Trust and Chair of Philanthropy New Zealand. Jenny has had a range of governance roles in community, corporate and family foundations. In 2004 Jenny was appointed as the first, and to date the only, female CEO of Foundation North, Aotearoa's largest philanthropic trust. Jenny retired from Foundation North in 2019 and is currently the Chair of the MAS Foundation, a trustee of the Selwyn Foundation and Te Rourou, One Aotearoa Foundation.

With nearly 50 years' experience in the philanthropic sector, throughout her career Jenny been an innovator in philanthropic practice. She has written extensively and spoken nationally and internationally about the development of philanthropy in Aotearoa. In 2017 Jenny was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to philanthropy and she was the inaugural winner of the Perpetual Guardian Lifetime Achievement in Philanthropy Award.

Myths and Truths About Governance of Charities

By Caren Rangi, Co-Founder of Good Governance with a Pacific Lens

MYTH #1: "Being a trustee on a charity is easy! After all it's not real governance, not like on serious boards – charities are just grateful that you turn up to the meetings…."

THE TRUTH: Charities are subject to exactly the same governance standards as other entities, and diligent trustees will carry out their role and responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

MYTH#2: "Yes I am a trustee of this charity but I also have a fulltime job, so I put the time into my trustee role when I can – after all I am just a volunteer (and I told them they don't have to pay me).

THE TRUTH: Governance is a 24-7 occupation where you and your board colleagues have the ultimate responsibility for the stewardship of the organisation, regardless of whether you are paid or a volunteer.

MYTH#3: "Sure, we would love to have a greater range of different skills around our board but in the charity sector you just take whoever you can get and hope that they will be in the seat for as long as possible – we don't have time to continuously look for new trustees"

THE TRUTH: Setting board terms, regular board evaluations, board development and good succession planning are all important governance practices for ensuring that the boards of charities remain fit for (Charitable) purpose.

MYTH#4: "Charities are all about "doing good" - so as long as we are doing good things, we are complying with the charity requirements"

THE TRUTH: Know your legislative requirements people! The law decides what is and isn't charitable purpose, and it is a fundamental requirement of charity boards to be confident that the organisation is delivering on its charitable purpose at all times.

Caren Rangi ONZM, FCA, CFInstD

Caren Rangi is an experienced governance professional with a passion for community focused leadership. Caren is a proud New Zealand-born Cook Islands Māori, a qualified chartered accountant and has built her governance career across public and not-for-profit sectors. She is currently the Pro-Chancellor of Massey University, Chair of Pacific Homecare, Deputy Chair of Pacific Co-operation Broadcasting Ltd and a director of NZ Rugby. She also support other boards by providing facilitation services, and runs Good Governance with a Pacific Lens Ltd with colleague Mele Wendt, delivering governance training.

Good Governance with a Pacific Lens (GGWAPL): ggwapl.nz

Community Foundations are Disrupting Charity Norms as Leaders of Purpose and Builders of Communities

By Eleanor Cater, CEO, Community Foundations of Aotearoa NZ

When I am asked where the idea of Community Foundations come from, I often describe how the first community foundation in the world, the Cleveland Foundation, was launched in 1914. At that time, commercial magnates such as Rockefeller and Carnegie were defining philanthropy through top-down approaches, seeing through their own personal visions for society and deciding what they wanted to do 'to' communities. Frederick Harris Goff was a Cleveland lawyer who thought that communities should decide what they need, and he had a vision of a permanent structure which would harness local people's aspirations, with the long-term view of community-led change. The Cleveland Foundation was born.

Today, there are 18 community foundations in New Zealand, and they are at varying levels of maturity and size. Nīkau Foundation was the first one to establish in Wellington in 1991, and the movement really took off with the support of The Tindall Foundation in 2003, which provided seed funding for others to establish across the country. Early ones to be launched included Acorn Foundation in Tauranga and Advance Ashburton Community Foundation in Mid-Canterbury. Others followed over the next 20 years, and the most recent one to establish is Southland Foundation in 2024.

Despite 90% country coverage, community foundations are not a well understood concept in New Zealand, and this is partly to do with our very unique and rather 'muddy' funding landscape: New Zealand has a uniquely wide range of legislative trusts, including local community trusts and energy trusts, which were seeded from sale of public assets in the 1980s. Theses trusts manage a fixed pool of investments, giving out the income as grants.

In contrast, community foundations are independent from political governance, and they are being built, brick by purposeful brick, by local people who set up funds or contribute to existing funds. And, while they are building permanent invested endowments and sustainable income streams for communities, their potential stretches far beyond financial. As they mature, community foundations in New Zealand are evolving to be leaders of purpose and builders of communities and field catalysts for community-led change.

Community foundations are shifting charity norms in different ways:

- **Long-term relationships vs. transactional**
  We often use the byline "together, we are building communities" and this is because community foundations partner with local people who really want to 'shift the dial'. Community foundations are uniquely poised to shift giving from transactional to something more transformative and help local people step into more intentional giving pathways. As they mature, community foundations have great potential to lead funding for systems change and more 'upstream thinking,' rather than temporary relief.

- **Place-based approach**
  While many charities focus on single issues (education, environment, health, etc.), community foundations take a holistic and geographical approach to an entire region. They see how issues interconnect within a specific place and can respond flexibly to evolving community needs, which will shift over time.

- **Leadership and field catalysts**
  Community foundations provide a central connecting and convening role that connects the resources of a region with local needs and aspirations. They hold a unique place in communities that brings 'unlikely fellows' together: those with the resources and those with the energy, catalysing community-led change.

- **Local knowledge and trust**
  Community foundations are embedded in their communities, challenging the idea that distant experts, national organisations or Government are best positioned to solve local problems. They leverage local knowledge and relationships, aligning with the philosophies of Nobel prizewinning economist Elinor Ostrom, who concluded that local people "have the strongest incentive to get solutions right".

- **Power and decision making**
  Traditional philanthropy often is expressed via a top-down model where donors decide what communities need. Increasingly skilled philanthropy advising and the use of data and insight by community foundations has the potential to draw donors closer to communities and shift perspectives, flattening traditional top-down approaches.

- **Pooling resources**
  Community foundations convene diverse stakeholders - nonprofits, businesses, government, local people - and challenge the siloed approach, where individual trusts or charities a) compete for resources and b) work in isolation. This has seen community

foundations in New Zealand resettling over $60m in existing trust funds under one structure, enabling greater collective impact. By pooling resources from many donors of varying capacities, community foundations challenge the idea that philanthropy – or 'private giving for public good' – is only for the wealthy.

- **Leading giving campaigns and shifting philanthropy norms**
  Because New Zealand's fundraising sector is so under resourced the community foundations network are leading 'giving' campaigns across the country, including 'September Wills Month', which encourages charity bequests, and 'Give and Get Back' which promotes our nation's 33% 'tax back' incentive. These campaigns have been picked up by the wider charity sector, creating movements for awareness and momentum for change.

Community foundations in New Zealand are essentially reframing charity from "helping those in need" to "building community capacity and agency." This is systems change in action, challenging prevailing charity norms of people with wealth deciding what communities need, enabling communities to decide for themselves.

The potential of community foundations is vast, and it's exciting to see them gaining momentum across New Zealand, as more and more Kiwis understand how they differ from our legislative community trusts, and realise their potential in unleashing the generosity of local people and the resources of the regions.

Eleanor Cater

Since 2017, Eleanor has been leading the evolution and growth of the Community Foundations network in New Zealand, taking on the CEO role in 2025. These days, she describes herself as a bit of a 'philanthropy nerd', having recently completed an MA in Philanthropic Studies through the University of Kent's Centre for Philanthropy. She is a Winston Churchill Fellow, her research project exploring international initiatives which have led to the growth of community philanthropy. Describing Community Foundations as 'leaders of purpose and builders of community', Eleanor believes that personal giving has the potential to be transformative and says that local people are the changemakers that their communities need, "sometimes they just need a bit of help to step onto that pathway of discovery themselves". She is a grant maker on two local boards in her home city of Porirua, and is motivated by the potential of more informed, participatory philanthropy in local communities.

communityfoundations.org.nz

Time for New Levers

By Paul Brown, Managing Director of Boardworks

"Give me a lever long enough and a fulcrum on which to place it, and I shall move the world." So said Archimedes, most likely thinking mathematically, not likely about the role of charities. But having worked in, volunteered in, governed and advised charities for over 30 years, I believe Archimedes and his long lever offer a refreshing starting point to move and change our world for better.

The challenge is many in the charitable sector are wedded to existing levers.

'Charity' – that jaded moniker that covers a range of organisations tackling problems the state has offloaded, or that commercial entities cannot profit from – is dogged by a starvation cycle that continues to prevent 'what if' thinking. Instead, leaders and those charged with governance of for-impact organisations are captured by the proximate, the what-we-are-doing-now, just to survive and eke out another year of mission. Outcomes become opaque, outputs are at best iterated, and for conservative established yet fatigued agencies, this translates into misguided energetic incrementalism.

There are alternatives. But to arrive at these alternatives requires boards based around courage and curiosity. These attributes rub up against the traditional stewardship trustees and directors believe they were called for. If you are a for-impact organisation trustee, what legacy do you want to leave for the next generation of trustees?

A good starting point for boards of for-impact organisations is to reflect and ask themselves whether their modes of thinking have become stale. Have:

- strategic frames and assumptions become blinders?
- baked in processes dissolved into routines?
- we allowed relationships to drift into being inflexible and shackles?
- our values deteriorated into dogmas?
- we as a board, grown fearful of learning?

Exploring new levers starts with governance - a board that has clarity of the organisation's purpose, matched with an obsession on impact. The board should regularly question whether the objects (and purpose) articulated in the organisation's Trust Deed (or

Constitution) remains relevant. There are good questions for boards to discuss and think deeply about in Parry Field's Charting the Future,[i] which can help boards define the 'ends' for the organisation. In other words, what the organisation exists to achieve (does our mission still have the right to exist?).

In Boardworks' experience, based on working with 650+ boards during the past 30 years, too often we see boards misdirect their effort to the 'means' of the organisation. In other words, how the organisation achieves its ends, which management is to be held accountable for.

"Ends language is never about what the organisation will be doing; it is always about what will be different for others (what good, for whom at what cost)." [ii]

If boards, as custodians of purpose and values, focus on the organisation's ends, possibilities are opened. Conversely, directing inquiry on the means (for example, 'we need to improve our fundraising') can create a bias towards constraints. As one of my lecturers in IMD Business School challenged our One Planet Leaders cohort:

"If you end up perfecting the wrong things, then you will end up perfectly wrong."

Further, Ann Mei Chang in her provocative book Lean Impact,[iii] implores leaders of for-impact organisations to stay in love with the problem (the purpose that the organisation was established to solve) – after all, that's why we exist. Too often leadership becomes seduced by their solutions and impact is demoted.

Paul Ronalds riffs off Clayton Christiansen's seminal book The Innovator's Dilemma[iv], and how this can paralyse for-impact organisations. Ronalds encourages the sector to employ privateers, who

"…operate within a system of legitimacy—commissioned to disrupt, but protected and supported, allowing innovation to sustain and scale."

Image credit "Innovation Catch-22" by Tom Fishburne at Marketoonist

Such innovation demands a mindset change where risk is viewed as opportunity, not something to be avoided and having available resources available. To unlock resources for-impact organisations may need to revisit their reserves policies. Rainy day balance sheets serve no one.

It may mean looking laterally: what other for-impact organisations are tackling a similar (or worse, the same) mission that would benefit form working together? What assets can be jointly converted into risk capital to support your privateers? Here's what Rosabeth Moss Kanter has to say on the issue:

"Working on big societal problems calls on leadership skills beyond what most people exercise in their careers and companies. I call this "advanced" leadership — the ability to find fresh ideas, persuade people you don't control, and work across sectors and organisations to build coalitions. This kind of leadership requires moving beyond what you already know, looking more broadly, listening to more voices, and examining problems from many points of view. In short, get over the success traps by thinking outside the building.

Translating this to strategy sounds impossible. Management is most likely in survival mode, and unable to juggle experimentation. Consider how your organisation can change the rules, not just innovate within the rules. *Dual Transformation*[v] (summarised in this 2-minute video) provides a practical playbook:

Adding AI to how leaders challenge their business models will bring further fresh perspectives, along with new questions to consider – on the proviso your organisation is AI ready.

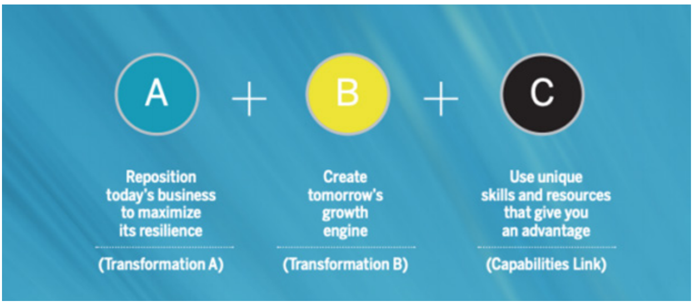

Image sourced from "Dual Transformation: How to Reposition Today's Business While Creating the Future" by Clark Gilbert, Mark W. Johnson, and Scott D. Anthony

If you are privileged to serve on a for-impact board it is time to rally your colleagues for deep thinking as to new levers for your organisation. As C K Prahalad described:

"Leadership is about change, hope and the future. Leaders have to venture into uncharted territory, so they must be able to handle intellectual solitude and ambiguity."

Sure, you will meet lots of naysayers, including your inner voices. But keep going. Courage comes from the French word Coeur, meaning heart. Follow your heart. It is far more fun!

"It's impossible," said pride.
"It's risky," said experience.
"It's pointless," said reason.
"Give it a go." whispered the heart.

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This article was written without AI.

Paul Brown

With a strong foundation in leadership across both private and for-purpose sectors, Paul now leads Boardworks as its Managing Director.

Known for his deep curiosity and problem-solving skills, he excels at helping boards align their purpose, outcomes, and strategy.

Paul's expertise includes guiding boards to uncover root causes of governance challenges, ensuring organisations stay on track for long-term success. He holds a Bachelor of Civil Engineering and an MBA, along with executive education from Harvard, Duke, and IMD business schools.

Paul chairs a for-purpose trust board and is independent Chair for a commercial entity and Executive Director for a pioneering collaboration in the for-purpose sector. In Kenya, Paul was made an honorary Maasai chief for his work in bringing Maasai and Kamba tribes together.

Paul also serves on several advisory boards. Paul is a Member of the Institute of Directors and Member and Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

boardworks.nz

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[i] Fisher, C and Moe, S. Charting the Future, 2020. www.parryfield.com

[ii] Carver, J. Boards that Make a Difference, 2006.

[iii] Chang, A. Lean Impact, 2018.

[iv] Christensen, C. The Innovators Dilemma, 2024.

[v] Anthony, S, Gilbert, C et al. Dual Transformation, 2017.

Why is Impact Investing Transformative Now?

By Steven Moe, Partner at Parry Field Lawyers, Host of Seeds Podcast

So, what really is Impact Investing? How does it relate to Charities, if at all? A short explanation…

Having now interviewed almost 500 guests on Seeds Podcast a recurring theme which has emerged is how they are often using impact investing to effect positive change in our society. A question I get all the time though – both from companies, charities, directors and Trustees is – what exactly are you meaning when you keep talking about the rise of Impact Investing?

So, let's break it down and explain what it is and why that matters today.

First the traditional approach. Someone has a spare $10 million dollars - this is a hypothetical scenario rather than being my situation! For the purposes of this overview lets say it is a charity which has built up those funds from donations and bequests.

The Board have a choice about where they put that money. One option is a traditional approach which means they put it into a long-term deposit which makes interest. They get some financial return, even if it is relatively low, and the offshore owned banks recycle that money to make themselves a nice profit. The Board is mainly concerned with how they use any returns generated by the $10 million (rather than thinking too much about where the $10 million itself is invested).

Impact investing steps in at this point and offers another approach. What if that charity has a particular cause that they care about and in fact were set up to try and solve. Unfortunately, the list is long – social housing, food deprivation and poverty, using sport to increase confidence in children, education on mental health and suicide prevention, climate change and green tech – there are many needs.

Let's choose social housing as an example of the area the charity is wanting to make a difference in. I know it really well as I'm the Chair of Community Housing Funding Agency where we get money to community housing providers (more than $500 million raised).

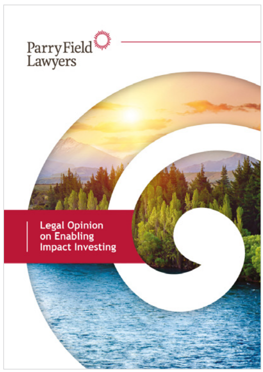
So, what if our friend took a portion (not all) of that $10 million and invested it into a startup company that wanted to provide social housing – this could be as equity and result in owning shares, or it could be as debt and they would have a loan they make. The crux of the difference with traditional investing is that they would be able to make a financial return because it is not a donation, it is an investment. But at the same time they would be able to have impact which is far greater and more satisfying than the interest they make from that long term deposit.

I am not saying they invest the full $10 million they have, but they do invest a portion of it – doing so may involve some risk but often ethically motivated companies that provide real solutions to our most wicked problems perform better, not worse, than traditional investments. A tsunami of consumer support for such initiatives is on its way as people consider the supply chain and where their products come from.

Even easier than a direct investment might be joining a fund which has those ethical lenses and thinks about where they put their money – and this is a choice that each of us can easily make with our Kiwisaver providers such as Pathfinder, Simplicity and Generate.

A real life example of this approach to impact investing I hinted at is the Community Housing Funding Agency where I get the joy of serving as Chair of the Board. We identified social housing as a massive need and we support Community Housing Providers by providing them with finance at a lower rate than mainstream banks, which we get from philanthropic investors and Kiwisaver funds like those I just mentioned.

So that is what impact investing is – simple, right? We may be on the cusp of going even further though.

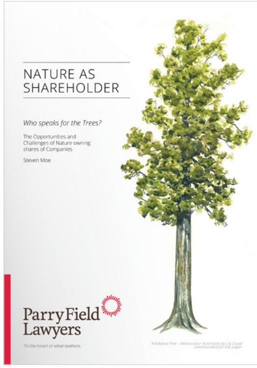


Recently I released a legal opinion on how I think Trustees of large Trusts or Foundations that sit on large untapped pools of wealth now have a duty to consider Impact Investing and where their funds are invested. Shamubeel Eaqub interviewed me about that and why I think the law itself has changed for Seeds podcast it is at the Parry Field Lawyers Impact Investing Hub.

The point is that those funds that have billions of dollars in aggregate often were set up by a founder or donors (such as to religious groups) who wanted to tackle one of those problems in society, but the Trustees only think today about how they can use income from their traditional investments. Instead they should have a blue skies moment to think about how they invest the capital itself because where they invest it might be a means to advance their purposes.

If all this is intriguing but you are wondering about the detail of how to set up the right structures and ensure your Trust Deeds and SIPOs are appropriate then I'm happy to tell you more and also visit Boards who are on the fence at no cost to give them an outline of how they should be rethinking this topic.

The cynical might say none of this applies to charities as it intersects with business but I disagree. If more charities had a mindset of fulfilling their purpose first then they would see this as a massive opportunity to do even more good rather than sitting on vast reserves.



Steven Moe

Steven Moe is a Partner at Parry Field Lawyers based in Christchurch, New Zealand with a focus on "for purpose" organisations. He is the Chair of the Community Housing Funding Agency, which has raised more than $500 million for social housing.

Steven has worked as a lawyer for 25 years including four years in Sydney, four years in Tokyo, three years in London, three years in Wellington, and has been in Christchurch for the last 10 years. Steven hosts the Seeds podcast which has a focus on people doing inspiring things and currently has more than 475 episodes. He also hosts another podcast on governance called Board Matters for the Institute of Directors in New Zealand and is a facilitator on governance for them.

Seeds Podcast has more than 475 episodes with inspiring people and you can find it on all podcast apps.

Challenging Charity Paradigms

By Ros Rice, Community Networks Aotearoa

There are certain ways of thinking about a charity that are definitely stuck in the 1900s. When many citizens think of the word charity, they think of an organisation that pays vulnerable people money. But today in 2026 the meaning of charity is totally different.

It relates to how an organisation sets itself up to operate according to legal and government requirements. But this archaic word 'Charity' needs to be replaced with one that better describes the changing and dynamic roles of non-profit entities.

Here at Community Networks Aotearoa (CNA), we have started to focus on several different things, to change up our organisation and create better support and impact.

We are essentially a "national umbrella organisation" that represents the members viewpoint, and we support the work of other networking organisations. By working better with them, we hope connection and information reaches in turn, their memberships. But it is a rapidly changing world out there!

Technology Technology Technology

CNA now has an office in a virtual world. Here our avatars regularly visit our virtual office and meet representatives of non-government organisations (NGOs) from other countries. Our office is funded through Connecting Up which is part of Microsoft's generosity programme.

CNA now regularly uses AI (being aware that everything must be checked by a human). One example is how we feed a change to legislation into the AI, and prompt it to tell us the main points that non-profits need to know in plain English. It really works and helps how we notify people of changes to Acts of Parliament in an understandable way.

CNA is currently working with an IT company to provide our members and their members with a compliance app. This app will enable small non-profits to be notified as different compliance dates are looming. This app means if you are about to hold a food stall for fundraising, you can check what obligations under compliance legislation you need to be aware of. It will tell you when you need to notify members of your AGM or what health and safety requirements you should be reporting on and when you need to do that.

These are some of technological things we are working on sharing with our membership to enable them to work in different ways, and not to be overcome by the old way of doing things.

Friends, Supporters and Allies

The old adage regarding "strange bedfellows" is often discussed when we talk about Government and non-profits, or business and non-profits or even different non-profits having nothing in common. Talk about holding us back! None of this is true, as irrespective of who we are or where we work - we are all community.

CNA actively works with several business including large banks, legal firms and others to find how we can support each other in spaces of similarity, and how we can work together.

CNA has actively worked and made friends with organisations in the Sports World. Similar to those in the arts, all of us have similar issues we need to work with, but those paths don't naturally cross with us in the Community and Social Services Sector. There have turned out to be many places where we can act together, and support each other. We continue as an organisation to reach hands across these arbitrary lines and find positions of togetherness.

There are so many good people working in Government. We are always happy to meet and talk to our friends. I am not talking about issues of difficulty that we grapple with, but where what we do and what our public servants want to do align in a way that encourages joint work to achieve better results for communities.

I can go on and on about how to change your mindset and open your thinking to new and better ways we can work as non-profits. Start with the easy ones, and as time goes on, more and more will open to you.

Ros Rice

Invercargill born, Ros has worked for Community Networks Aotearoa now for 18 years. Her historical knowledge and political interests alongside her passion for working in the For-Purpose sector ensure she loves her job as the Executive Director of this national organisation.

COMMUNITY NETWORKS AOTEAROA
Te Hapori Tūhononga o Aotearoa

Community Networks Aotearoa (CNA)

communitynetworksaotearoa.org.nz

Community Networks Aotearoa (CNA) is the national umbrella organisation for community networks across Aotearoa New Zealand. We support and connect local, regional, and national community organisations, and act as a trusted conduit between communities and decision-makers. CNA gathers and shares on-the-ground insights, emerging trends, and collective perspectives from the community sector, helping government and other partners make well-informed, practical decisions that reflect real community experience. Our work strengthens collaboration, builds sector capability, and supports policies and systems that contribute to community wellbeing, guided by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The Passion Conundrum in Charities

By Craig Fisher

Passion is an essential requirement for success. But can there be too much passion? Is passion sometimes actually a handbrake on success?

Passion is a key element of any successful venture. It's often that secret ingredient needed to overcome seemingly insurmountable hurdles. Look behind any successful venture and you'll find passionate people who have been a key part in making the organisation successful. Their individual passion has been integral to creating something much bigger than themselves.

Apple exists due to Steve Jobs' passion. The Fred Hollows Foundation exists and does great work eliminating avoidable blindness thanks to Fred's passion. While both those people have sadly passed on, their passion created something special, and they managed to share their passion and positively infect others who now carry on the cause.

Passion is an essential ingredient in living a fulfilling life. It allows us to keep pushing to create something more than just the mundane and the known. It drives us forward and allows us to grow as individuals, and sometimes with what we create; to progress as societies.

So what exactly is passion? Wikipedia tells us it is "an intense emotion, strong enthusiasm, a feeling of unusual excitement, a compelling feeling or desire for something." The word comes from an ancient Greek verb paskho meaning "to suffer". Ancient Greek philosophers also recognised that passion is an especially strong emotion, and which often makes it impossible for us to listen to reason.

And Therein Lies the Passion Conundrum…Passion is a Double-Edged Sword.

The passion that got them to where they are is often the same reason they stop developing and moving forward. The passionate emotion of the leader/driver is so strong that it can stop them seeing what may be common sense to others. They become blinded, or at the very least blinkered, by their passion. They then miss seeing what they need in order to move their organisation on to the next stage of progression – and to be able to truly deliver the impact they desire.

So How Does all of This Relate to Organisations?

Organisations need passionate people within them if the organisation is to reach its true potential. Ideally these passions need to be harnessed to help the organisation move forward. The passions don't all need to be the same. But they do need to be aligned to the same strategic direction. This can be a challenging management exercise in understanding and acknowledging the different passions and then ensuring they are directed and aligned enough to help meet the strategic objective.

The danger of passions within organisations is when they work against the strategy and hence are counter-productive.

The Passion Handbrake in the NFP Sector

Interestingly, the biggest organisational passion challenges seem to be in for-purpose organisations. This is perhaps understandable if one considers some of the common features of many for-purpose organisations in New Zealand:

- They are often started by one or two individuals passionate about their cause.
- The nature of the cause, whether it be a sport or pastime, or a charity providing a social good, engenders strong passionate input and reactions.
- There is a heavy predominance of volunteer effort involved – without payment the sense of fulfilment from the passion outlet becomes the reward.
- The organisation and cause is often the main outlet for people with time on their hands.
- The founder or founders is/are often heavily involved for a long time – The amount they have given "for the cause" engenders an incredibly strong sense of ownership for the organisation and also embeds the way they have done things.

If a business is not making money or delivering its products or services efficiently it will generally go out of business. Brutal perhaps, but this is just the law of the economic jungle. Survival of the fittest. Accordingly, management of a successful business focuses closely on its financial health. It also takes prompt action to address any issues within it.

Interestingly however for-purpose organisations often survive where a business wouldn't. They often operate on a model that involves receiving considerable volunteer resources in time and other stakeholder support via donations of money, goods and/or services. This translates to them often being able to survive when a comparable for-profit business would fail financially.

However just because an entity survives doesn't mean it is necessarily effective. Surviving is very different to thriving! Many for-purpose organisations don't reach their potential because passion impedes objective assessment. Good governance in any organisation dictates that its governing body should regularly assess how effectively and efficiently they are delivering on the organisation's purpose. But if the governing body is blinkered by their passion and as the Greek philosophers said; unable to even listen to reason, then they will, at best, perpetuate the status quo.

Common blinkered issues in the for-purpose sector are:

- Being like the 'frog in the hot water' and not recognising significant changes, or soon enough.
- Not facing up to the need for new models or new ways of working.
- Not recognising the need to take the hard decisions – to be cruel to be kind. This especially concerns addressing sub-standard performance.
- Not being open to collaboration, consolidation or joining with others in the sector to achieve a better outcome.
- Not letting go of the reins and giving others within the organisation opportunities to develop and use their initiative and ideas.
- Lack of talent development and succession planning.

So What To Do? - Tips for Thriving Through Passion

- Appreciate that passion is essential to successful organisations and motivates individuals – ensure that individuals understand their passions and that there is a good fit to their roles.
- Understand the importance of passion to positively infect others in our organisations to greater heights.
- Recognise that our passions can leave us blinkered – remember to step back and be objective.
- Build in systematic objectivity to organisational systems and processes
- Appointment of independent members of the governing body and regular refreshing of board personnel.
- Seek the wise counsel of others to help achieve objectivity.

To truly see; first we must open our eyes.

Craig Fisher

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Craig Fisher is a board director, governance consultant and advisor with specialist expertise in governance, strategy, audit, assurance and financial consulting.

He is a Fellow Chartered Accountant formerly with 30 years public practice experience, 23 of those being an audit partner for a wide variety of entities in the public, private, and not-for-profit / charitable sectors. He is an experienced Chairman and chaired the accounting firms he was a part of for his last 20 years in public practice accounting.

Craig has a recognised specialisation in not-for-profit and charitable issues and also has a long history in audit, assurance and ethical standard setting both in New Zealand and representing New Zealand internationally. He has a strong interest in good governance and transparency of reporting, especially service performance reporting and other forms of impact reporting.

Current governance roles include being board chair of The Fred Hollows Foundation NZ, Advisory Panel Chair for New Zealand's External Reporting Board, a trustee of the Wise Group (a significant mental health services provider), Independent Chairman of the Risk, Audit, and Assurance Committee of Ngati Whatua Orakei, director and co-chair of Xtreme Zero Waste Limited, a member of PWC NZ's Audit Advisory Board, and Massey University School of Accountancy Advisory Board member. He is also an Associate of Boardworks and provides advisory services to a range of other entities.

In his spare time he is a late onset surfer and farms macadamia nuts – proving to some that accountancy can send you nuts!

From Transactions to Trust: Why the Future of Fundraising Depends on Self-Regulation

By Angela Norton, Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA)

For much of the past two decades, fundraising has been discussed in narrow, functional terms: channels, conversion rates, acquisition costs, and income targets. Face-to-face, telephone, digital, direct mail - each treated as a separate activity, optimised in isolation and governed by its own rules, risks, and reputational assumptions.

This channel-based mindset has shaped how many charities organise teams, report performance, and even think about their supporters. Donors become data points. Fundraising becomes transactional. And trust, the very thing that makes public generosity possible - is treated as an outcome rather than the foundation.

That way of thinking is no longer fit for purpose.

Across Aotearoa New Zealand, and increasingly around the world, public expectations of charities are shifting. People are more informed, more values-driven, and more sceptical. The 2025 Edelman Trust Barometer Global Report highlights that trust in institutions cannot always be assumed, even where organisations are acting with good intent. People care not just about what charities do, but how they do it: how they ask, how they listen, how they support people - particularly those in vulnerable circumstances - how they use data, and how they respond when things go wrong.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the scale of this relationship matters. According to the Charities Services Sector Overview 2024/25, there are more than 29,000 registered charities, and in the past year alone $5.16 billion was received through donations, koha, and fundraising.

This level of public generosity reflects a strong foundation of trust - and reinforces the responsibility the sector carries to protect it.

In this environment, trust is not a "nice to have". It is what makes public generosity possible in the first place.

Fundraising is a Relationship, not a Channel

At its core, public fundraising is not defined by where it happens, but by who it involves. Whenever a charity asks a member of the public for financial support - whether on the street, over the phone, or online - it enters into a relationship. That relationship may be brief or long-term, but it carries responsibilities of care, fairness, transparency, and respect - grounded in manaakitanga.

When organisations take this relational view of fundraising, several important shifts occur.

First, silos begin to break down. A supporter acquired face-to-face is no longer seen as "belonging" to a channel, but as a person whose experience of the charity must be coherent, ethical, and values-led across every interaction.

Second, success is no longer measured solely by short-term income. Retention, confidence, complaint trends, donor understanding, and public perception become equally important indicators of impact and sustainability. This reflects a broader global shift identified in the Edelman Trust Barometer, which shows that trust is built through consistency, fairness, and care - not authority or transactional efficiency.

And third, governance strengthens. Boards move beyond minimum legal thresholds to actively consider ethical practice, accountability, and whether decisions strengthen public trust, uphold mana, and advance the organisation's mission.

Why Self-Regulation Matters

In times of complexity and rapid change, prescriptive rules struggle to keep pace. No rulebook can anticipate every fundraising scenario, new technology, or emerging risk. What endures instead is culture - the shared principles that guide decision-making when there is no obvious answer.

This is where sector-led self-regulation plays a critical role.

Done well, self-regulation is not about shielding organisations from scrutiny. It is about holding ourselves to account before others need to do it for us. It reflects collective responsibility: charities agreeing on the standards they expect of one another, and investing in systems that consistently uphold those standards.

Self-regulation works because it is designed by the sector, for the sector. It is grounded in real-world fundraising practice, not abstract theory. It can adapt faster than legislation and creates shared ownership of ethical behaviour, rather than outsourcing responsibility to regulators or crisis response. In a global environment of fragile trust, the Edelman Trust Barometer emphasises the importance of visible accountability and self-correction as signals of credibility and leadership.

For self-regulation to be credible, it must be matched by clear expectations, practical guidance, transparency, and meaningful consequences when standards are not met, and open channels and for public feedback.

Importantly, strong self-regulation also helps reduce the risk of blunt, reactive government intervention that fails to reflect the nuance of charitable work.

Trust is a Cycle - Not a Moment

Trust is not built in a single interaction. It accumulates over time.

Ethical behaviour builds public confidence. Confidence encourages deeper engagement. Engagement strengthens impact. And visible impact reinforces trust. When any part of that cycle breaks through poor practice, weak oversight, or misaligned incentives, the damage is felt far beyond one organisation or one campaign.

This is why fundraising cannot be treated as a standalone revenue function. It is a public-facing expression of an organisation's values. When it is done well, it invites people into a cause with dignity and respect. When it is done poorly, it erodes confidence not just in one charity, but across the sector.

Challenging the Old Mindset

The challenge for today's charity leaders is to move beyond outdated binaries: compliance versus innovation, regulation versus growth, fundraising versus mission.

The future belongs to organisations that understand trust as a taonga - a treasure - something that must be actively protected, governed, and renewed through kaitiakitanga. That takes courage. It means investing in standards, training, oversight, and accountability, even when budgets are tight.

It means making deliberate, values-led decisions about fundraising practices. And it means embracing self-regulation as a mark of leadership - a clear signal to the public that this is a sector willing to hold itself to high standards.

If charities want long-term sustainability, public confidence cannot be an afterthought. It must sit at the centre of how fundraising is governed and delivered.

Angela Norton

Angela Norton is the National Manager of the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA). With more than a decade of experience in charity fundraising and regulation, she works alongside charities and agencies to strengthen sector-led self-regulation, with a focus on ethical practice, supporter experience, transparency, and public trust.

Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA)

pfra.org.nz

The Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) is a charity-led, member-based organisation that self-regulates public fundraising in Aotearoa New Zealand. Established to promote consistent, ethical standards, the PFRA works with charities, agencies, and stakeholders to build public trust, support professional fundraising practice, and uphold accountability across the sector.

The Pacific Diaspora Worldview: Re-thinking Partnership in the South Pacific Region

By Rachel Afeaki, FaceNorth Promotions Ltd

As a superpower Nation recalibrates elements of its international engagement across the South Pacific, a familiar narrative has resurfaced: that Pacific nations will be left vulnerable, destabilised, or dependent on whichever global power steps in next.

That narrative misunderstands the region.

As a first-generation Pacific New Zealand–born woman of faith, I have spent my life navigating two worlds. I operate within Western systems of policy, funding, and enterprise, yet I remain accountable to my Pacific identity and communities. From that vantage point — not outside the system, but within it — the current moment demands clarity.

The Pacific diaspora is one of the most underestimated forces shaping resilience in 2026. For decades, our families have sustained one another through remittances, church networks, collective obligations, and informal economies operating across borders. Long before formal development frameworks existed, Pacific communities practised structured generosity — consistently, sacrificially, and relationally.

This reality disrupts the assumption that Pacific nations are primarily sustained by Western benevolence. Diaspora communities have long carried the financial, emotional, and spiritual weight of supporting both their homelands and their communities abroad. We have been contributors to stability — not merely recipients of assistance.

When major powers recalibrate foreign policy priorities, Pacific communities do not disappear. We adapt. We reorganise. We invest inward.

Yet withdrawal from international cooperation does carry consequences. Development partnerships are not only about funding; they shape influence, standards, and long-term strategic alignment. When the superpower nations reduce aspects of its regional presence, it creates both risk and opportunity.

The risk is that the Pacific becomes a theatre for transactional geopolitics rather than principled partnership. Funding gaps can pressure governments into short-term arrangements that compromise long-term sovereignty.

But there is also opportunity — to redefine partnership altogether.

The Pacific diaspora is not asking to be rescued. We are asking a different question: what model of partnership is fit for this era?

Any future engagement — whether from the United States, China, Australia, New Zealand, or multilateral institutions — must meet higher standards. It must build capability within Pacific institutions rather than bypass them. It must respect Pacific leadership in climate resilience, ocean stewardship, and community governance. It must strengthen intergenerational sustainability rather than create cycles of dependency.

Charity models rooted in maintenance are no longer sufficient. The Pacific sits on the frontlines of climate change, economic vulnerability, and strategic competition. What is required is investment in sovereignty — in governance capacity, data ownership, enterprise development, and regional cooperation designed by Pacific leaders themselves.

Deficit-based narratives must also be left behind. Portraying Pacific nations primarily through crisis to unlock funding may generate short-term sympathy, but it weakens long-term negotiating power and dignity. Our stories are not geopolitical leverage. Our data is not extractive. Context, consent, and sovereignty matter.

Across Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, the United States, and beyond, Pacific leaders are already co-designing institutions that integrate enterprise with social purpose and embed cultural values within governance structures. Faith communities continue to function as welfare systems, redistribution networks, leadership incubators, and crisis-response hubs — enduring regardless of superpower engagement.

If any major power nation chooses to recalibrate its role, that is its sovereign decision. But the Pacific is not defined by it.

Global powers may reposition. Pacific leadership will not.

The question now is whether international partners are prepared to engage on terms that recognise Pacific agency, capability, and sovereignty.

That shift is already underway.

Rachel Afeaki

Rachel Afeaki is a business owner and a Chartered Fellow of the Institute of Directors, with more than 20 years' experience in governance and executive leadership across community, business, housing, energy, economic development, and government.

Rachel's authentic leadership is grounded in the values of integrity, goodwill, and excellence. She is recognised for strategically influencing and strengthening diversity of thought, and for building bridges that support social and economic prosperity within and across nations.

Rachel has international governance experience across the South Pacific region and the global church. Outside of her professional roles, she enjoys golf, long walks, and being actively involved alongside her husband, Aleki, in raising their four energetic young sons.

The AI tide is Rising: Will Charities Sink or Swim?

By Lani Evans, Fundsorter

The charities sector in Aotearoa faces mounting pressure. Government spending cuts have shifted more responsibility onto community organisations, while the polycrisis—overlapping economic, environmental, social, and geopolitical crises—stretches resources thinner. The social contract is fraying, and charities are expected to fill the gaps. In this context, conversations about artificial intelligence can feel like a luxury, but the impact will be undeniable. Will AI multiply limited resources or deepen the crisis?

The risks are real

The digital divide is growing, both between organisations and within communities. The social sector, like most others, is largely unprepared for the economic and social disruptions ahead, as labour markets are reshaped, demographics shift, and social cohesion erodes. AI's environmental impacts are uncertain; its economic impacts are not. If the AI bubble bursts, it could take philanthropic investment funds down with it.

Then there's the proliferation of tools: well-meaning actors releasing half-baked products, and bad actors looking to extract value from community organisations. The noise makes it harder to identify what actually works.

But focusing solely on risks misses something important

AI can hold and analyse datasets at a scale impossible for human cognition, examining patterns across thousands of variables, tracking changes over decades, and connecting dots we simply cannot see. This opens the door to anticipatory action: using data to respond to climate disruption, conflict, food insecurity, and displacement before crises fully unfold. Good data allows us to take the long view while better understanding what's happening now. AI lets us move faster with fewer resources—small teams can achieve what previously required much larger ones.

AI can be a lever for equity. It can help preserve taonga (treasured) languages, increase accessibility for disabled and marginalised communities, and democratise access to tools and expertise once available only to large, well-resourced organisations. AI can automate time consuming, repetitive tasks, freeing up time for humans to do more of their uniquely human work. But AI is not a neutral force. It will only increase equity if we actively make it do so, and how it is governed, owned, and managed makes all the difference. The for-purpose sector's input into the discourse is important. We must be active participants in shaping the AI-enabled future.

AI won't sit on the sidelines of the community sector. It will shape funding flows, service delivery, public expectations and organisational capability. Whether it increases equity and capacity or compounds existing strains is yet to be seen. The difference will lie in governance, values and participation, not in the technology itself.

What next

The charity sector has always operated in the uncomfortable space of urgent need and insufficient resources. AI doesn't resolve that tension, but it does shift what's possible within those constraints. Organisations that engage seriously with these tools, neither dismissing them nor embracing them uncritically, will be better positioned to serve their communities through whatever comes next.

Questions worth considering

- How do we ensure AI adoption doesn't deepen existing inequities?
- How do we maintain human connection while adopting efficiency tools?
- How do we prepare for disruption while continuing to deliver services?

These conversations are worth having now, before the decisions are made for us.

Lani Evans

Lani Evans (she/her/ia) has spent the last ten years leading philanthropic foundations. She is co-founder of Share Collective and Generous Ventures, and was the founding CEO of Thankyou Payroll. Lani is a 2024 Equitable Futures Fellow at the East-West Centre, a past recipient of the Winston Churchill Fellowship, an honorary member of Philanthropy New Zealand and was awarded a New Year's Honour for services to social enterprise.

Fundsorter

fundsorter.com

Fundsorter makes funding easy for New Zealand organisations by helping them find and apply for contestable grants. In minutes, community organisations can discover relevant funding, prepare applications, and confidently submit them, making the grant seeking process simpler, faster, and more effective.

Making Charity Work for Everyone

By Rachael McDonald, CEO of Trust Investments Management

If you're part of a charity, you know things are always changing. To keep making a real difference, we need to rethink some old habits, especially around how we handle money, use our property, buildings, and make decisions.

Too often, we treat finances and our purpose as separate things, but the best results come when we bring them together.

Let's look at two big areas where we can do things differently: how we invest our money, and how we use our property.

1) Investing Well – What Should We Think About?

When people talk about investing, they often mean making as much money as possible. But for charities, it's not just about the dollars. It's about doing good too. Good investments can help us grow our funds and make a positive impact at the same time.

Mixing purpose with performance

Imagine if every dollar we invested helped us do more good in the world. That's what happens when we choose investments that match our values, like caring for the environment or supporting fair workplaces. Investment partners such as fund managers and advisors can be instructed to focus on this blend of purpose and performance, helping charities do more good with money.

Local charity investment – long term mindset

Many smaller charities in Aotearoa often keep most of their money in cash, worried about the risks of investing or not understanding what options are available that might suit their needs. Most charities exist in a perpetual state – they aim to operate for so long as there is need. To support that, ideally, they want some certainty of income to pay for their activities.

If they are privileged enough to have some spare money, moving a portion of these funds into lower volatile, longer-term income generating investments e.g. over a ten-year period, could be a sensible option. This could provide a stable return with some degree of comfort that there will be at least some regular cash for community projects, without taking on too much risk.

"'The stock market is a device to transfer money from the impatient to the patient,' Warren Buffett once said. Investing is a long game. Rather than looking for hot stocks or buying and selling according to what's red or green, taking a long term lens is the time-proven way to investing success."

Measuring impact

Some organisations want to know exactly how much good their investments are doing. That's where impact measurement tools come in. This approach helps charities increasingly see the social return of every dollar invested, showing how their money is helping people in the community. For instance, a charity might use such a tool to show donors that their investment in a social housing project is not just earning a return, but also helping families find safe, affordable homes.

Pooling Investments

Even smaller charities can make a difference by joining together in pooled funds. For example, specialist providers such as CCLA and Epworth Investment Management in the UK serve churches and charities with investment funds that match their shared values. This makes it easier for even small organisations to invest ethically and get expert advice. There is a growing cohort of ethical and other specialist investment professionals in Aotearoa able to advise on aligning an organisation's values with their investments.

2) How Should We Invest?

Here are some simple rules for investing well as a perpetual charity:

- **Diversify:** Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Invest in different things so if one goes down, others might go up e.g. property, bond, equities, cash etc.
- **Long term view:** Align your investment requirements carefully with your values and purpose. Seek professional guidance where necessary. Be prepared to monitor, understand and be patient, sometimes over many years.
- **Manage risks:** Every investment has risks, such as changes in the market, currency, or world events. We can manage these by diversification and monitoring what's happening. Balance with the long-term view.
- **Speak up:** As investors, we can ask questions and encourage companies to do better. For example, we can ask our fund managers to support companies that are open and honest and/or actively engage to advocate for change (e.g. using shares to vote on resolutions of the company, advocacy with other investors).

- **Excluding harmful activities:** We can choose not to invest in things we don't agree with, like tobacco, gambling, pornography or fossil fuels.

By investing with both our hearts and our heads, and embracing an ethical investment approach that blends performance with purpose, charity leaders can help their organisations deliver investment solutions with good returns with integrity intent, all while continuing to deliver on their own purpose.

Rachael McDonald

Rachael has over 25 years of corporate and finance legal and professional services executive experience across New Zealand, the Caribbean, and the UK, her current role that of CEO of Trust Investments Management Ltd. She has worked with a wide range of organisations across a multitude of industries (commercial and for purpose), giving her a wide perspective with a practical, solutions-focused approach. Rachael is passionate about supporting for-purpose organisations and empowering people to create lasting impact. She is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors and a trustee of both Life Education Trust (North Shore) and the Auckland Hospital Foundation.

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Trust Management

trustmanagement.co.nz

Trust Investments Management supports for-purpose organisations across Aotearoa with specialist asset management capability, offering investment funds, property management, and accounting services. We partner with charities, churches, and community groups to strengthen their commercial foundations and support then to achieve their goals for meaningful, long-term impact.

Considering the Role of Funders

By Eve Jolly, Director of Hoku Foundation

As funders, we have an opportunity and a responsibility to examine our own behaviour that shapes prevailing charity paradigms and influences the growth of impact.

Funders are among the most stable actors in the sector. We have a mission for impact, a balance sheet, the ability to scale our work (our giving) up and down, and a long time horizon. We have the flexibility to change our strategy and the privilege of choosing who gets funded to become our partners. Doors to government and influential people open pretty easily for us.

So why are charities asked to carry the uncertainty of annual funding rounds and abrupt exits? The burden of compliance-based reporting? The expectation of achieving impact largely on their own?

What would it take to do things differently? What if we as funders used our stability and all our assets to help charities strengthen their organisations and grow their impact?

We're asking ourselves these questions at Hoku Foundation. Our answers are informing our behaviour and below I share three practices that are emerging so far. Our efforts to do better are a work-in-progress, sometimes imperfect, and my views are shared in the spirit of reflection and improvement.

Absorb uncertainty and take more responsibility for impact

The challenges that charities and funders work on take years to shift. At Hoku we work alongside our partners to clarify the longer-term outcomes that matter to their communities and the environment. We provide multi-year commitments and flexible funding to help strengthen their organisations and allow them to focus on aspirational strategies that could make a step-change in progress.

Reporting then becomes less about compliance and more about learning together. Learning disarms everyone from a fear of failure and creates opportunities to resolve blind spots and improve. Our conversations canvas things like: what are you noticing about what's working and what's not? Which outcomes matter more than others? What should you do more or less of to grow impact? How is our funding approach helping or hindering?

We are also partnering with government and other funders to bring more resources and consensus into the areas that our partners believe matter.

Be a problem-solver and sense-maker

Funding culture emphasises selection and monitoring. Choose well. Touch base once or twice a year. Track what's spent and done.

I've come to appreciate the value of a funder as more than an assessor and monitor. Alongside our trustees, we are forming hypotheses about what creates enduring change by listening to our partners, paying attention to research and interpreting patterns across the portfolio. There are lots of benefits to this approach. So far we see it can lead to a smarter allocation of capital and more effective partnerships.

For example, rangatahi face challenges securing employment whilst also couch surfing or sleeping in cars. So we now focus on youth housing in addition to youth employment; and we're in the early stages of exploring how our partners can progress both. This sounds self-evident but how many funders take a portfolio view and deliberately fund at the intersection of their priorities?

We are also able to bring intel back to our all partners for joint problem-solving, such as the importance of youth employment charities to have connections with employers and how to cultivate these relationships so that rangatahi can have lasting vocational pathways.

Design good exits

Inevitably, funding ends. Yet we rarely design exits with the same care as entries. Poor exits destabilise organisations and erode trust and impact.

Good exits mean being clear about the rationale, signalling early, tapering intentionally and leaving partners stronger than when the relationship started. Sometimes this means helping our partners secure other capital, connecting them to peers doing the same mahi, or providing ongoing support to track and demonstrate impact.

Just because the funding ends it doesn't mean the relationship has to.

These are just a few practices that funders can consider. Undoubtedly there are others. So, let's keep finding ways to positively shape charity paradigms to help them grow their impact.

Eve Jolly

I'm dedicated to finding creative ways of using finance to support organisations to grow their impact. Prior to Hoku Foundation, I led the innovation team at Foundation North including its impact investment and participatory grant-making portfolios. I've been a commercial lawyer and social enterprise consultant in Aotearoa New Zealand, and an advocacy strategist for children's rights in Eastern Europe. Over the years I've enjoyed working alongside many inspirational and hard-working people and it's a privilege to continue this with Hoku.

Hoku Foundation

hoku.nz/foundation

Hoku Foundation is a philanthropic funder. Hoku supports organisations in Aotearoa New Zealand to improve and grow their impact in youth employment, community housing and waste reduction. Each year we partner with a small number of organisations and provide flexible, multi-year funding commitments to help them achieve longer-term change.

From Good Intentions to Governance Capability

By Judene Edgar MNZM, Principal Advisor – Governance Leadership, Institute of Directors

Good intentions are abundant in philanthropy. Governance capability is not.

For many not-for-profit organisations, the quality of governance is felt most acutely in its absence. When boards lack the capability or confidence to govern well, management time is spent managing governance rather than advancing mission.

That tension is becoming more visible as philanthropy evolves. Organisations are expected to move faster, collaborate more deeply and demonstrate measurable impact. Funders are more sophisticated. Communities and members are more vocal. Regulatory expectations are rising. In this environment, governance cannot simply be present; it must add value.

The future of philanthropy will not be shaped by the generosity of donors or the ingenuity of staff alone, but by the quality of board stewardship. If boards cannot define strategy, set risk appetite or make disciplined capital allocation decisions, they will struggle to guide organisations through complexity. Intent does not compensate for capability gaps.

Capability, in this context, is not about credentials. It is about contribution. Boards add value when they are clear about their role, disciplined in their oversight and deliberate about their own development. They understand the difference between governing and managing. They create space for challenge without destabilising trust.

Governance capability shows up in practice. It is evident in the quality of questions asked, in the clarity of strategic direction, and in disciplined attention to long-term sustainability. It is also evident in the willingness of boards to examine their own performance.

Yet discipline is uneven. The Institute of Directors' 2025 Director Sentiment Survey shows that only 42.8% of not-for-profit boards undertake regular performance evaluations, indicating that governance capability is often assumed rather than actively tested.

When boards do not regularly assess their own effectiveness, governance becomes inward-looking rather than future focused. Risk is treated defensively. Innovation slows. Decision-making prioritises process over judgement, reducing the board's capacity to enable impact.

If philanthropy is to be more than transactional then boards must see capability as part of their stewardship duty. That means being explicit about the skills and experience required around the table. It means evaluating board performance as rigorously as financial results. It means planning for succession, both at board and executive level. It means investing in governance learning as renewal, not remediation.

It also means being honest about how governance is resourced. Director fees in the not-for-profit sector remain modest, and many trustee roles remain unpaid. While volunteer stewardship is central to philanthropy, capability requires time, expertise and accountability. Boards must consider whether their remuneration structures – or lack of them – support the attraction, retention and development of the governance capability they expect.

Above all, it means recognising that in a future of heightened scrutiny, authority without capability will not sustain public trust.

The question for the future is not whether boards care. It is whether they are prepared. In a sector built on purpose, governance must be more than well-meaning. It must be competent, curious and committed to adding value.

Because if governance does not strengthen the organisation's ability to fulfil its mission, then good intentions, however abundant, will not be enough.

Judene Edgar

Judene Edgar MNZM is a Principal Governance Advisor with the Institute of Directors' Governance Leadership Centre and New Zealand Lead for Chapter Zero. She leads research and develops thought leadership and practical guidance to support directors navigating complex oversight and strategic challenges. Appointed a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2026 New Year Honours for services to governance, local government and the community, Judene brings more than 20 years' experience across public, private and community sectors. She is a Chartered Member of the IoD, Deputy Chair of the Rātā Foundation, a trustee of Network Tasman Trust, and Chair of the Nelson Historic Theatre Trust, with significant experience in the not-for-profit sector.

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The Institute of Directors is the professional body for directors and governors in Aotearoa New Zealand and is at the heart of our governance community. We believe good governance strengthens organisations, protects purpose and builds public trust. We support directors and trustees to add value to their organisations and communities by connecting them through our network of more than 10,500 members, strengthening board capability through professional development, training and evaluation services, and advancing governance standards through research, advocacy and thought leadership.

There is No Such Thing as a Donor Pyramid

By John Godfrey

Newer donor-engagement models talk about loops and networks rather than pyramids, emphasising continuous interaction and peer-to-peer connection.

The traditional donor pyramid starts with one-off donors and ends with the 'ultimate gift' meaning a bequest. It is abstract and hybrid: combining the first gift, expected rise in value and interest in giving more, then finally, the donor's demise. Its pyramid shape reflects that retention rates are notoriously low. Only a few make it to the top.

Low retention rates reflect lack of engagement – or your lack of a relationship with the donor. Fundraising is about relationships not transactions. Veteran fundraiser Ken Burnet got it right when he coined the phrase for his book - Relationship Fundraising. Knowing, understanding and relating to the giver allows the fundraiser, and the organisation they represent, to be responsive and aligned with the values and interests of the supporter. Non-traditional donor-engagement models talk about loops or networks rather than pyramids, emphasising continuous interaction and peer-to-peer connection.

"Dollars up, donors down" has been a trend increasingly noted by analysts of giving. One solution to this is to focus on major gifts but that is not the only or best solution. Instead, you could consider a whole-of- donor-lifetime approach. Many organisations are encouraging supporters to shift from single gifts to monthly giving. They do this through ongoing stewardship: supporter updates, behind the scenes content, and setting up regular giving as an option on their giving platforms. Good stewardship allows you to stay close to your supporters. The more interactive it is, the more you will learn about them.

Another phenomenon often reported is a seeming lack of generosity among the young. Closer scrutiny shows this not to be true. What is true is that young people's generosity is sparked and fulfilled through social media channels. This is important, because if you engage with young people and involve them (and keep them involved) there is a chance you will keep the relationship for the long term. Investment in social media engagement and crowdfunding would be wise.

Internationally, organisations are using gamification as an online engagement device. Examples include trivial pursuit challenges or a virtual treasure hunt, with questions and objects linked to your purpose. Participants unlock prizes such as branded merchandise by donating.

Peer-to-peer fundraising can move well beyond traditional walk- or run-a-thons to include scavenger hunts, where participants walk, cycle, or drive to designated locations and complete challenges or answer questions at each stop. A related and increasingly popular approach is the fitness-challenge model, in which supporters commit to meeting daily, weekly, or monthly activity goals linked to the funds they raise from their own networks, combining personal achievement with visibility for the cause. In New Zealand, the Mental Health Foundation offers opportunities for supporters to livestream events and raise money for their work.

For some organisations, volunteering will be an option. Volunteers will gain firsthand experience of your work through helping at events or assisting with projects and programme delivery. If your purpose focuses on the outdoors, scrub cutting or tree planting, beach cleanups, and wildlife monitoring initiatives are opportunities. The Kindness Collective encourages supporters to run food drives for the people it supports. Volunteers are engaged and valuable supporters as much as are donors; and not everyone, including children and young people can be a donor.

How do you keep supporters – volunteers as well as donors – truly engaged? It starts with how you say thank you. How can you make it feel genuine and personal? Options range from an automated digital acknowledgement through to a personal phone call, with many possibilities in between, such as a short video message or a handwritten note.

However, maintaining a relationship requires ongoing interactions, or stewardship. How do you make each supporter feel they are valued and respected as an individual. Effective and targeted stewardship needs effective and targeted storytelling. The stories will be about a particularly impactful project or a testimonial from those whose lives have benefited from supporters' contributions.

As much as fundraising can use a spectrum of media, so too can stewardship. You should consider printed to digital; words, sounds, and images; and events, which can be live or screened. It is not important that the storytellers are polished presenters, or that the media is of professional quality. What is important is the story's authenticity and the genuineness of the appreciation of the support.

Good stewardship communication frames supporters as partners in a long-term relationship. Doing this requires ongoing interactions, making each supporter feel they are valued and respected as an individual. Supporter surveys can be a part of this. Ask supporters what they value, then report back on the results and what you will do in response. This frames the supporter relationship as a two-way conversation.

Lifetime supporter engagement needs you to understand their preferences, histories and behaviours then effectively plan how you engage and communicate with them. That means analysing donation recency, preferred communication methods, and responses to different campaigns. This will help you personalise your communications and get better responses.

At some point, you will want to drill deeper to discover whether a supporter is a prospect for a specific campaign, including a major gift or a bequest campaign. AI provides new ways to do prospect research - with caveats around carefully checking that the sources and identity of the supporter are accurate.

However, the best way, by far, of understanding the values and circumstances of the supporter is by getting to know them face-to-face. There is an adage among major gift fundraisers that "fundraising is a contact sport." Nothing beats a personal visit or a coffee with a supporter to build a relationship and understand their commitment to your cause.

Reaching that point is neither hierarchical nor linear, nor is fundraising. The map, or model, is not the territory. The territory is full of genuine, real-life relationships between supporters and the organisation.

John Godfrey

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John Godfrey, PhD, MRSNZ, MInstD, has been an international major gifts consultant for 20 years advising education, health and arts nonprofits on their fundraising in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, the Middle-East and India. He has been a board member and chair the Fundraising Institute of New Zealand (FINZ). Current for purpose board memberships include ADHD New Zealand Inc., and Australia New Zealand Third Sector Research Ltd., His research degrees and numerous published articles cover fundraising and philanthropy in Aotearoa and other parts of the world.

Have Charitable Trusts Had Their Day?

Reimagining charitable giving structures mean futureproofed community support.

By Emma Lewis, Nīkau Foundation

Over the last few years, I have had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of charitable trustees doing good mahi to support the people and places of Te Upoko-o-te-Ika-a-Māui, the Greater Wellington region, and Aotearoa New Zealand.

Although these charitable trustees come from different backgrounds, have different passions and work to effect positive change for different causes throughout our communities, they usually have one thing in common. They're all a bit over it.

Why?

Because, where they once found joy in volunteering for a charitable trust, they're now drowning in compliance and reporting obligations, and a time-consuming administrative to-do list.

Where they once could deliver more significant grants to the cause(s) the trust was designed to support; this is now being sucked up by significant running costs.

Where they once felt connected to the community, they're often feeling increasingly out of touch.

Where having enough energy and passion to put your hand up was once enough, the expertise required to operate a charitable trust now surpasses the skill sets of many willing to volunteer.

And where once recruiting new trustees was as easy as putting the call in, it is getting increasingly difficult to get people around the table as new generations get busier, and the time-intensive commitment of being a trustee becomes less appealing.

It's a huge shame, especially when you consider the role that charitable trusts play in our community sector and the legacies these trusts are so often keeping alive.

As this generation of charitable trustees ages out (to be delicate), we've got to ask the question of 'what's next?'

Do these charitable entities wind down? Will these charitable legacies be lost completely? Have charitable trusts indeed had their day?

Or do we also ask the question of 'what else?'

Adopted from the U.S., the community foundations movement was founded in the early 1900s when many charitable gifts were trapped in tight will stipulations, which had quickly lost relevance as time went on. The first community foundation, the Cleveland Foundation, was launched by Frederick Harris Goff with the intention of challenging these philanthropic norms and future proofing charitable giving.

Although we are now a century along from Goff's lightbulb moment, with so many charitable trustees now looking for another way, perhaps we find ourselves at a similar crossroads.

Across Aotearoa New Zealand, many charitable trustees are looking to our very own community foundations to secure a powerful, practical succession plan. With 18 community foundations now operating nationally, these foundations offer a compelling opportunity to preserve the charitable intent of the trust while all investment, compliance, administration, reporting, governance and grant-making is taken care of.

A powerful example is the Joe Aspell Fund. Formerly held by Wellington City Council, the Joe Aspell Trust supported organisations helping youth to upskill, build capabilities and gain confidence. Facing high costs and hiking administrative requirements, the trustees decided to transfer the trust to streamline, maximise impact, and ensure Joe's generosity continued to be felt.

Another example was the Kāpiti Welcome Trust, which had supported local disabled communities since the 1980s. Facing similar challenges, the trust was transferred to Nīkau, becoming the Kāpiti Disability Support Fund in 2020. This new chapter has seen the Trust give out over $300,000 to a wide range of organisations, honouring the trust's objectives in a way that taps into community knowledge and is poised to grow and give back, forever.

Have charitable trusts had their day? When considered even just from a practical perspective, it may just be the case.

Emma Lewis

Born in Eastbourne, UK, Emma has an extensive background in fundraising, marketing and strategic growth, holding senior development and philanthropy management positions at Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington, the UK's National Autistic Society and Tate Museums, and advisory positions at local community organisations, including Women of Worth and the Rotary Club of Wellington.

"I've worked across many sectors throughout my career, helping them to raise funds to grow their reach, support their aspirations and be impactful," says Emma, "But something in me changed when I became a mum. I felt an innate responsibility to be part of an organisation that focused on the long-term, not just the here and now."

Emma took the position of Engagement Director at Nīkau Foundation in 2019 before stepping into the role of Chief Executive Officer in April 2022. "Nīkau Foundation offered me the opportunity to play a part in making a difference to the people and places I love, and doing that in a way which is meaningful, sustainable and lasting."

Emma also currently sits on the board of Community Foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Emma lives in Featherston with her husband, children and two golden retrievers. She loves nothing more than enjoying what our amazing region has to offer at the weekend.

nikaufoundation.nz

From Situational Awareness to Agency: Practical AI Strategy

By Ben Reid, Memia

Introduction

I'm writing this in March 2026.

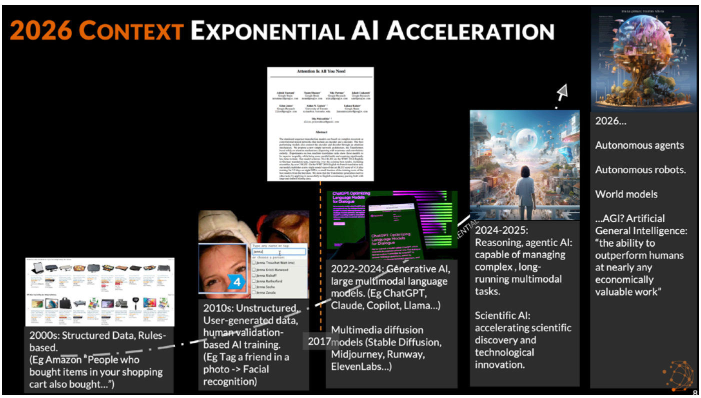
Or, more precisely, I'm loosely coordinating a collection of AI agents, chat interfaces, and image generators in a rapid back-and-forth dialogue: ideating, editing, critiquing, honing, refining… Taken together, these tools augment my thinking, improve the quality of the outputs and speed up my delivery by hours. And the technology is so early still.

In this short essay, I attempt to capture and distil this moment in time - describing the advancing capabilities of artificial intelligence that are relevant for New Zealand businesses and not-for-profit organisations, together with proposing some ideas about how organisations can respond to what feels like a rising tsunami of change.

I've also included a few illustrations from my recent presentation to Philanthropy New Zealand's annual conference in Auckland on 5th March - sometimes a picture speaks a thousand words.

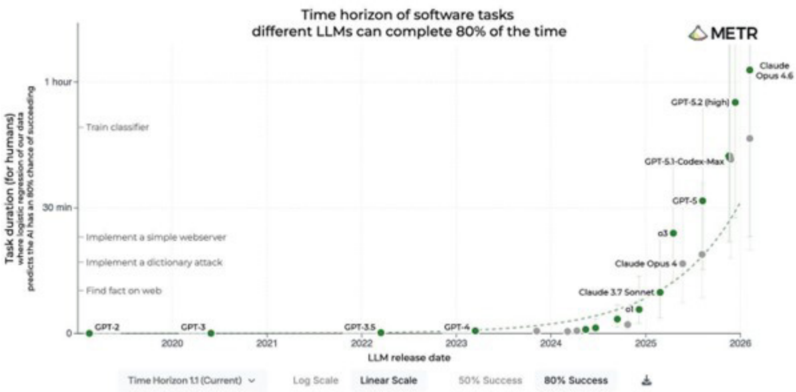
Thank you to Steven Moe and Parry Field Lawyers for the opportunity to contribute. I hope some of this is useful!

2026 Context: Exponential AI Acceleration



Three years since ChatGPT's release, the world is experiencing exponential acceleration in frontier AI. Key technologies to be aware of include LLMs and multimodal AI models, autonomous AI agents, world models, scientific AI systems, and advanced robotics.

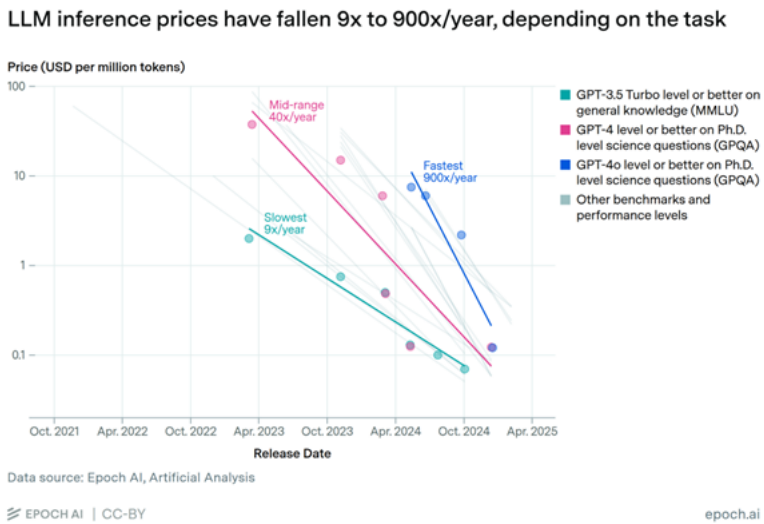
METR's "Time Horizons" metric[1] tracks how long a task frontier AI agents can reliably complete. The latest models now hit 8–10 hour time horizons at 50% success rates, and Claude Opus 4.6 can autonomously complete over one hour of skilled cognitive software work at 80% success.



CC BY METR

***Implications:** Agentic tools can now synthesise data, navigate file systems, and execute analysis without human intervention. Organisations need workers building "metacognitive skills"[2] — the ability to envision, plan, and verify AI workflows rather than produce the raw output.*

The economic realities of advancing AI

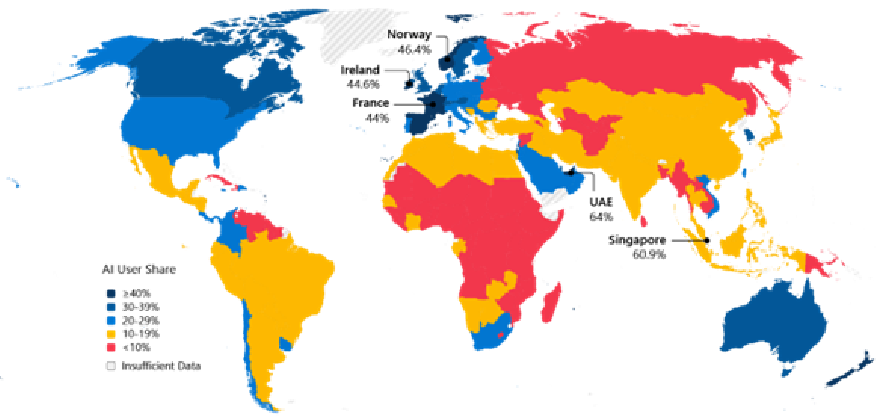


The price of intelligence is falling exponentially, leading to Jevons' Paradox: as AI reasoning costs fall, demand will explode. "Intelligence", previously scarce throughout human history, is being rapidly repriced from "per-skilled-human-hour" to "per million tokens".

Image: Ben Reid, Memia / Gemini "Nano Banana 2" CC BY
***Implications:** AI budgeting should factor in continued price declines. Organisations should explore use cases previously uneconomic, while noting that reasoning models mean the most capable AI tasks may not always be cheapest.*

AI diffusion and the disruption of legacy business models

AI diffusion throughout the economy is arguably a more important lens than raw performance. New Zealand's diffusion is relatively high internationally, placed 7th with 40.5% measured diffusion in H2 2025[3]:

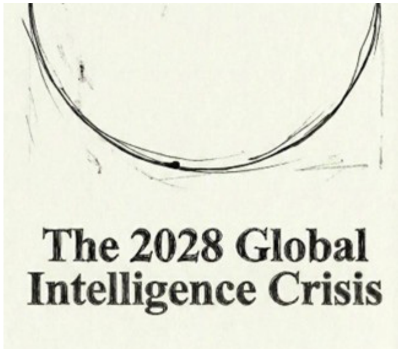


Microsoft (2025)

AI Forum NZ longitudinal research[4] reveals adoption jumping from 67% to 82% across six months, with 91% reporting efficiency gains. The "SaaSPocalypse"[5] captures growing anxiety that AI will cannibalise the SaaS businesses dominating the last decade. Legacy industries from legal to accounting are realising AI doesn't just automate tasks within existing models — it can restructure the models themselves.

Figure: AI Forum Research Findings, 2025

Goldman Sachs predicts AI companies may invest over US$500 billion in 2026. OpenAI's projected cumulative cash burn before breakeven: US$218 billion[6]. Citrini Research's speculative "Global Intelligence Crisis"[7] scenario argues that the entire architecture of Western finance is quietly a leveraged bet on human intelligence remaining scarce.



Citrini Research

Implications: *NZ's high diffusion rates could mean AI-driven economic changes arrive here earlier. Macroeconomic impacts of a potential AI bubble should feature in strategic scenario planning.*

AI's impact on the workforce

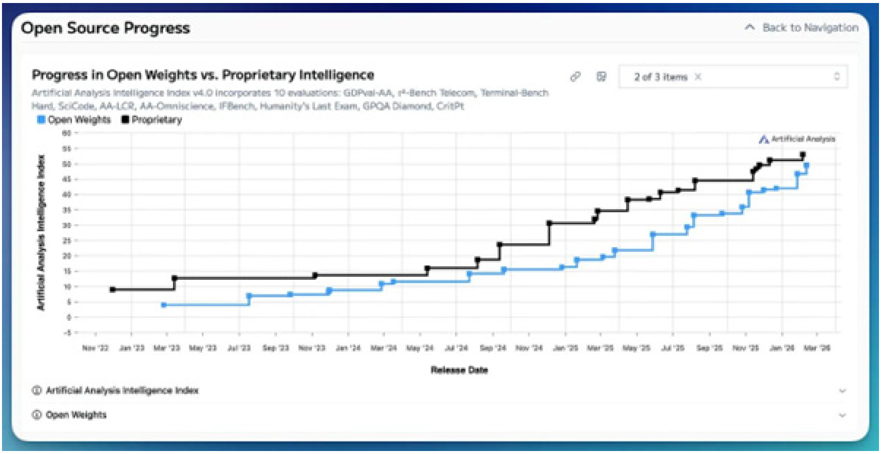
Key signals: PwC's 2025 AI Jobs Barometer[8] shows AI-exposed industries experiencing triple the productivity growth. An MIT study[9] reveals AI can already replace 11.7% of the US workforce. Microsoft AI CEO Mustafa Suleyman[10] predicts most white-collar professional tasks will be fully automated within 12–18 months. Whether AI primarily displaces work toward higher-level tasks or automates everything remains vigorous debate.

Implications: *Disruptive labour market changes are being discussed openly in mainstream media but remain early-stage in NZ discourse. Organisations must establish their own hedged position on timing and scale of disruption.*

AI sovereignty and geopolitics

Chinese labs' success despite US export controls has demonstrated hardware restrictions alone cannot maintain Western technological dominance. Open-source Chinese models — DeepSeek, Qwen (Alibaba), and others — now routinely top benchmarks[11], while the lag between US commercial labs and Chinese releases continues shrinking.

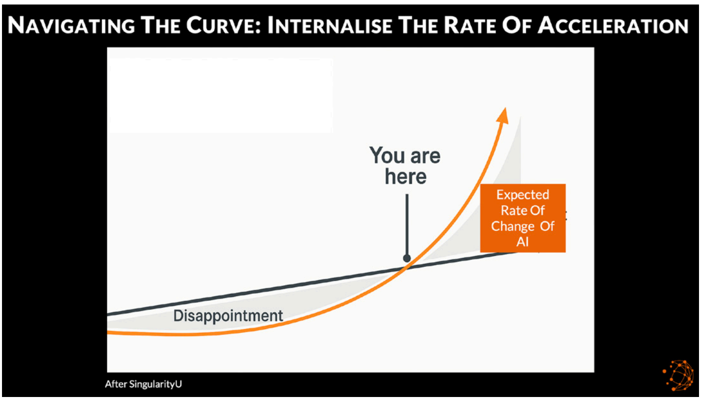
Sovereign AI has moved from theoretical posture to enterprise trend, with Deloitte reporting it's rapidly challenging centralised US vendors[12]. Only 1 in 5 organisations have mature governance for autonomous AI agents.



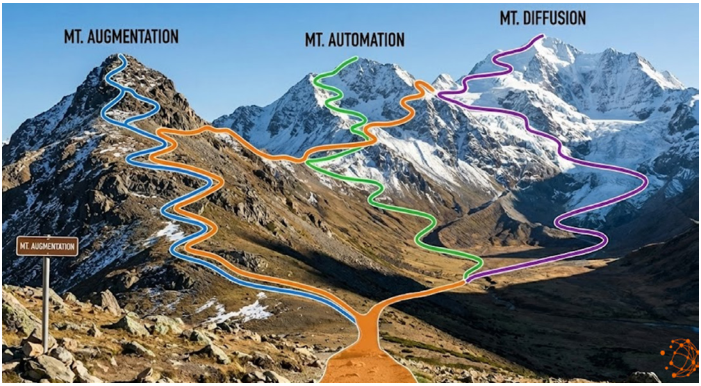
Implications: *The strategic case for open-weights AI has strengthened. NZ organisations should develop proficiency with open-weight models alongside commercial offerings. Organisations committed to Tikanga Raraunga and Māori Data Sovereignty place Aotearoa on a differentiated global path.*

Practical AI strategy

The clear transition from Generative to Agentic AI reinforces the imperative to move from situational awareness to action. There is no advantage in ignoring how quickly these changes are happening — organisations need to internalise the rate of acceleration and build this into their strategic planning.



Multiple routes exist to ascend "Mt. Diffusion" — organisations must prepare for all scenarios and adaptively respond to the rate of change.



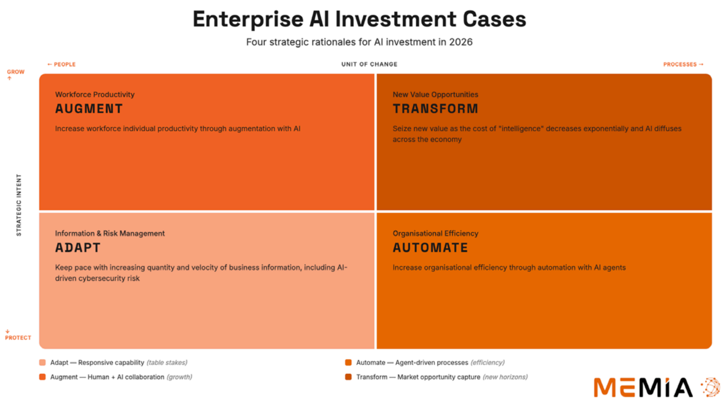
Four Modes of AI Investment

All strategic AI investments distil into four categories:

- **Adapt** (information and risk management)
- **Augment** (workforce productivity)
- **Automate** (organisational efficiency), and
- **Transform** (new value opportunities)

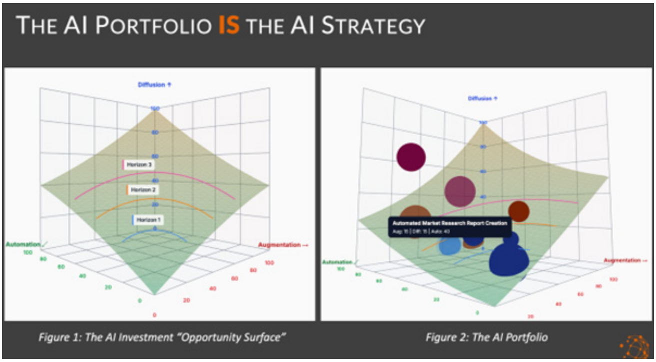
An AI strategy takes the form of a portfolio of investments across these categories, distributed across time horizons.

For adaptation use cases in particular, every services organisation now needs to ask: *"What if our customers have access to the same AI agents as we do? What value will we still add?"*



Enterprise AI Portfolio Management

A simple portfolio management toolset can enable planning and managing the Enterprise AI Portfolio to balance investments across the opportunity surface.



Conclusion

Situational awareness on AI-related change is no longer enough on its own. Three years into the ChatGPT era, the evidence is clear: AI capabilities are advancing on exponential curves, the price of intelligence is collapsing, and autonomous agents are beginning to reshape workflows that entire industries were built around. The question facing New Zealand organisations is no longer whether this will affect them, but how quickly — and whether they'll be ready.

The honest answer is that nobody knows exactly how this plays out. The labour market impacts could be gradual augmentation or rapid displacement. The macroeconomic effects could be a productivity boom or a deflationary crisis. The geopolitical landscape could consolidate around a handful of US and Chinese hyperscalers, or fragment into sovereign ecosystems. Responsible strategy must hold space for all of these possibilities simultaneously.

What is certain is that standing still is not a neutral choice. Every month of inaction widens the gap between organisations building institutional muscle in AI — learning to architect, govern, and adapt agentic workflows — and those still treating this as someone else's problem. The existential question remains: what value do we still add when our customers, competitors, and partners all have access to the same AI agents we do?

For Aotearoa, the opportunity is real but time-bound. Our relatively high AI diffusion rates, compact economy, and emerging frameworks around Māori data sovereignty give us distinctive advantages — but only if we convert awareness into agency. That means investing across the full portfolio: adapting business models, augmenting workforces, automating where it makes sense, and preparing to transform when the moment demands it.

The tsunami metaphor is imperfect, but the instinct behind it is sound. You don't outrun a wave. You prepare, you move to higher ground, and you build structures that can withstand what's coming.

Ben Reid

Ben Reid is an experienced technology strategist, commentator and keynote speaker who focuses on new AI trends and their impacts on the future of business and society.

Ben is the author of the weekly Memia newsletter which explores the cutting edge of AI and emerging technologies, as well as implications for businesses and society, read by thousands around the world.

Ben presents regularly on AI at conferences and also works as a strategic advisor with leadership teams across Asia-Pacific and Europe, helping to navigate AI and exponential technology change.

With over 30 years of career experience across software development, enterprise architecture, business strategy and AI transformation, Ben combines technical expertise with strategic foresight to guide businesses through complex transformations to thrive in a rapidly changing technological landscape.

memia.com

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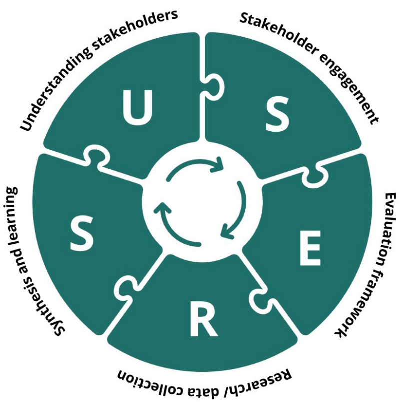
Putting People Back at the Heart of Impact

By Safe Wongsunopparat, Oceania Director - The Social Investment Consultancy

For many for-purpose organisations, impact measurement feels like a "tick-box" exercise, something done for funders rather than for growth. Traditional evaluation is often extractive, taking information from the community without sharing the benefits back.

The USERS methodology, developed by **The Social Investment Consultancy (TSIC)**, flips this script. It ensures the people you serve - the "users" - are the ones defining and driving success.



Graph 1: Overview of USERS methodology

The Case for Inclusion

Centring user voices is more than an ethical choice; it ensures learning is grounded in reality.

- **Lived Experience:** Users experience the change first-hand; their perspectives should inform every stage of impact management.
- **Innovation:** Listening to users provides unique insights and surfaces unintended impacts that decision-makers might otherwise miss.

- **Data Validity:** When users are involved, they are more likely to describe real changes rather than simply telling a funder what they want to hear, improving the reliability of the findings.

The 5-Step Learning Cycle

Instead of a rigid process, think of impact as a continuous loop of listening and adapting:

1. **Acknowledge Power Dynamics:** Recognise that funders and users have different levels of influence. Work to level the playing field, prioritising the voices that are often the quietest.

2. **Plan Together:** Decide early how users will be involved and allocate the necessary budget and time to make their participation possible.

3. **Define Success:** Don't guess. Ask your users which outcomes matter most to their actual lives.

4. **Gather Stories:** Use creative, simple methods - like user-led conversations or photo stories - to reflect the community's true reality.

5. **Share and Improve:** Discuss findings with your users before reporting to funders. Use those insights to refine your approach and strengthen your impact.

Where Do I Start?

To shift your approach, keep these practical principles in mind:

- **Engage and Listen:** Understand the stories and the real changes being experienced, including any unintended impacts of your programme.

- **Co-design with Awareness:** Involve users from day one. Be mindful of power dynamics to create an equal relationship.

- **Shift to Impact Learning:** Move beyond "proving" your worth to "improving" your work. Build in feedback loops to adapt strategies in real-time.

- **Share Transparently:** Share your impact story with everyone. Transparency builds the trust that inspires others to join your mission.

- **"Enough Precision for Decision":** Data doesn't have to be "perfect" to be valuable. Collect what you need to improve your decision-making.

A Continuous Journey

Everyone is on a journey; no one is at the beginning or ever truly at the end. Whether you are just starting or looking to deepen your practice, the mission remains the same: ground your work in the lived realities of your community. Listen to your users, amplify their voices, and let their stories drive the change.

Safe Wongsunopparat

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Safe is the Oceania Director at The Social Investment Consultancy (TSIC), a global firm assisting impact investors, charities, and foundations with impact strategy, evaluation, and DEI. He acts as a strategic learning partner, supporting purpose-driven organisations to understand and scale their impact while challenging traditional power dynamics.

Safe brings extensive experience in impact investment, IMM, and the iNGO sector across the UK and Aotearoa New Zealand. Driven by a passion to scale impact through finance, he offers a unique blend of financial acumen and social impact to amplify marginalised voices, drive systemic change, and build a more equitable and inclusive society.

The Social Investment Consultancy (TSIC)

The Social Investment Consultancy (TSIC) is a global social impact consultancy network with 25 consultants across Asia-Pacific, Africa, the Middle East and the Americas. As a women-of-colour-led firm, we bring a unique intersection of lived experience, strategic insight, and academic rigour to help our partners achieve inclusive and just growth. Since 2008, we have supported over 500 organisations across 50 countries, including impact investors, international development agencies, foundations, and governments.

tsiconsultancy.com/about

Reimagining the Future Together – People. Place. Progress.

By Josiah Tualamali'i

Summary from Philanthropy New Zealand Conference

Across my early years, Nana and Grandad taught me to be a holder of our family stories. Nana, a mental health nurse aide, and Grandad both put it on themselves to almost 'adopt' some people as part of our family, as deinstitutionalisation was taking place – where the mental health institutions were closing and people who had lived there for their whole lives needed new support. As children, my brother Benjamin and I were really influenced by this creation of community, and it's a core part of why I do what I do.

During that time my parents did the best they could do financially, and yet it was always tight. Over the years, many people helped fill gaps and were the difference, through quiet generosity. Someone went to my old school office and said they would pay for all of the costs for me to go to high school, as long as I would never know who it was. This incredible blessing made such a difference in our family of five boys and was such a significant personal encouragement for me.

I was at Youthline's Youth Mental Health Summit hosted by Minister Hon. Matt Doocey in February. Professor Patrick McGorry AO who established Orygen (Origin) – Australia's Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health – said that "young people are the mental wealth of the nation," that we must prevent problems occurring and focus on the social structures around families and young people. My own upbringing is an example of this; I would not be where I am without the tautoko of people who stepped in when my parents and our family needed it most.

As challenges for our communities broaden and deepen, we can protect and continue to encourage generosity at all scales, especially "micro-generosity." There is a specific magic in quiet giving. It tests our intentions: do we give for recognition, or for the purpose itself? By continuing to nurture this and also allow ourselves to receive, we are protecting the community base we need at the centre. Core to this will be that our generosity and focus is on preventing problems, supporting young mothers, children, and those facing adverse childhood experiences, and enabling young people's dreams.

At Youthline's Youth Mental Health Summit, Lola, Anna, Abdulla, and Epeli shared seven thoughts on co-design of mentally well futures with young people, which I have summarised:

1. Begin together with us
2. Continually commit to listen and meaningfully engage - "ever present, ever active"
3. Include all of who we are:
    a. Honour Te Tiriti
    b. Support rangatahi Māori to thrive
    c. Bring in and enable lived experience to lead
    d. Enable wider equity and welcoming
4. Don't predetermine what our capabilities are. There is a role for awhi/pastoral care/tautoko – work that out together
5. Be accountable
6. Resource the valuable input you receive from young people's voice and participation
7. Close the loop

Finally, as we think of the future, we have more we can do as a country to understand how Antarctic and Pacific Aotearoa New Zealand is. This is on the foundation of the special relationship between tangata whenua and tangata Moana, all as peoples of Te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa.[1] We are also part of a legal construct called the Realm of New Zealand. This binds us with the Ross Dependency (Antarctica), Niue, the Cook Islands, and Tokelau. We share currency, citizenship, education curriculum, defence, and our health systems, and more are very integrated. This year is the 125th Anniversary of the Cook Islands and Niue becoming part of the New Zealand Realm. It is the 100th of the New Zealand administration of Tokelau.[2] We have also given Government apologies to Samoa (2002), and for the Dawn Raids (2021), and have a Treaty of Friendship with Samoa, the only one we have. We all have to find ways to understand these relationships and the collective responsibilities. We will need to revisit the past more to go forward, and this anniversary year is a great time to grow our understanding for a stronger future for current and future generations.

[1]The Pacific Ocean, literally the great ocean of Kiwa. "The Great Connector" of all the Pacific to Aotearoa.

[2]https://www.mch.govt.nz/publications/commemorations-programme-2023-2027

Josiah Tualamali'i

Josiah Tualamali'i is a historian, short film producer and wellbeing governor with deep experience in youth and community leadership, advocacy and health.

He began his journey through the Pacific Youth Leadership and Transformation programme (PYLAT), later helping establish it as a charity. Josiah served on the 2018 Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction. He co-led youth support for the Polynesian Panther Party Legacy Trust's Dawn Raids apology advocacy. From 2023–2025 he was one New Zealand's five Children's Commissioners.

He is Chairperson of the Rātā Foundation and of Le Va, and has a Master of Arts with Distinction in History from the University of Canterbury. Josiah is of Samoan (Salelesi, Satuiatua, Lepa, Aufaga and Fagaloa), Scottish, Polish and Irish whakapapa.

I Do Not Have

By Dan Mazengarb, CEO of Christian Savings

"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." — Acts 3:6

It's striking that the Church has often grown most rapidly when it was poorest and most persecuted. In Acts, the early believers had little in the way of assets, yet the Gospel spread like wildfire. Today, some denominations echo this reality—thriving despite limited resources. Others, flush with wealth, watch people walk out the door. Clearly, there's no simple correlation between financial strength and mission success.

If history teaches us that the Church can flourish among the needy and persecuted, then perhaps we should never feel poor. But what do we make of rising insurance costs, compliance burdens, and shifting cultural paradigms? The answer might surprise you: start with governance.

Strong governance is the keystone of thriving organisations. From my experience across New Zealand, here are three governance questions that can help us navigate this moment:

1. Does Our Model Suit Our Mission and Context?

I've seen small churches struggle to survive while imitating large-church models—renting buildings, maintaining worship rosters, running websites. These costs often crush small communities and undermine their mission of building deep, faith-filled relationships.

Contrast that with a pastor who once led a large city church but now oversees a network of home churches. No budgets for building maintenance. No stress over insurance. Instead, maximum participation and authentic community. The model fits the mission—and the fruit speaks for itself.

2. What Wealth Do We Have That We Cannot See?

Resources aren't just money, land, or buildings. Creativity, experience, and passion walk through our doors every week. When paired with mission and community needs, amazing things happen.

Consider churches that launch social enterprises—op shops, funeral homes, social housing. These initiatives advance mission, grow community, and sometimes generate income. Meanwhile, many denominations sit on billions in idle assets: car parks, lawns, empty buildings. One NZ diocese has a property for every 40 people—a millstone of wasted potential. What if we leveraged these for Kingdom purposes?

3. What Does Success Look Like?

We're all tempted by unhealthy measures—balance sheets, attendance numbers, busyness. Yet Jesus taught that Kingdom success looks radically different.

One church I know lives by an unofficial motto: "We give our best away." They train leaders and send them to plant churches—not under their own banner, but to bless others. You won't find this on a balance sheet or a flashy website. It's quiet, humble, and deeply Kingdom-minded.

The Paradigm Shift

If Acts reminds us of anything, it's this: silver and gold aren't prerequisites for mission. Governance that aligns with context, eyes to see hidden wealth, and a redefined vision of success—these are the levers for transformation. When we embrace them, we rise up and walk—not in worldly strength, but in Kingdom power.

Dan Mazengarb

Dan started at Christian Savings in March 2017 as our in-house lawyer before taking over as Lending Manager in 2018. After working across a wide range of projects and building a new lending team, Dan transitioned into the Chief Executive role in August 2021. Before joining the Christian Savings' team, Dan worked as a commercial lawyer in Tauranga and at Z Energy head office in Wellington. He is passionate about our vision and partnering with churches and charities doing good in Aotearoa. Dan attends Bethlehem Baptist Church with his wife and two children.

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From our very first loan financing pews for a church, we now lend over $270m to Christian churches and charities. Our calling has grown larger as well. While serving as the go-to lender for the sector remains a core part of why we're here, we are now an essential part of the infrastructure for Christian churches and charities seeking to embody Christ's love and do amazing things. When they thrive we all thrive, so through capital and deep partnership, we're here to help build foundations for the future.

Property to Further Purpose

By Rachael McDonald, CEO of Trust Investments Management

A lot of charities see their property asset as a cost to manage and/or something to worry about, particularly from a health and safety perspective. But what if we saw property as a tool to help us drive more impact for good?

Around the world, community organisations are finding creative ways to use their property to support their mission and help their communities.

Using Property for Community Impact

Some charities in Aotearoa have turned underused property and buildings into community hubs, social enterprises, or affordable housing. For example, a charity might convert an old office into a co-working space for local groups or develop vacant land into housing for families in need. These projects not only provide a steady income for the charity but also directly support the community.

Donating Property

Donors can sometimes give real estate like homes, farmland, or commercial buildings, to charities. The charity can then use the property for its core purpose or sell it to fund new projects. For instance, some charities have received donated homes and turned them into transitional housing for people in crisis, sold properties to fund scholarships, or used commercial properties to generate a regular cash income return to fund activities.

Managing a Property Portfolio

In some instances, it is efficient to have a property or multiple properties managed professionally. By taking a professional approach, these charities can generate income, manage risk and compliance, protect against inflation, and make sure their property is always working in furtherance of their own requirements.

How do we decide what to do with Property?

Making good decisions about property takes planning. For-purpose organisations have unique challenges and drivers distinct from purely commercial entities, so a specialised and tailored approach is warranted:

- **Find out what we have:** Make a list of all properties, what they're used for, and what shape they're in.
- **Check the fit:** Ask if each property helps you further your purpose. Does it match your values? Is it helping the community?
- **Think ahead:** What will you need in the future? Are there new ways you could use your property as your community changes?
- **Weigh the risks:** Look at costs, maintenance, and any risks e.g. earthquakes or climate change.
- **Get help if needed:** It can be useful to get advice from property experts, especially for bigger decisions.

By thinking creatively and planning well, property can be a valuable resource for the charity and community.

Let's challenge "how we do things"

Charities do amazing work, and to keep making a difference and continuing to evolve with constant change, we need to challenge our ways of thinking and "how we do things". By investing wisely and using our property thoughtfully and sometimes, it feels, courageously, we can make sure charities use their balance sheets to best effect to stay strong and keep helping people and communities for years to come.

Rachael McDonald

Rachael has over 25 years of corporate and finance legal and professional services executive experience across New Zealand, the Caribbean, and the UK, her current role that of CEO of Trust Investments Management Ltd. She has worked with a wide range of organisations across a multitude of industries (commercial and for purpose), giving her a wide perspective with a practical, solutions-focused approach. Rachael is passionate about supporting for-purpose organisations and empowering people to create lasting impact. She is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors and a trustee of both Life Education Trust (North Shore) and the Auckland Hospital Foundation.

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Trust Investments Management supports for-purpose organisations across Aotearoa with specialist asset management capability, offering investment funds, property management, and accounting services. We partner with charities, churches, and community groups to strengthen their commercial foundations and support then to achieve their goals for meaningful, long-term impact.

Moving, seconding … but why?

By Mele Wendt, Caren Rangi, and Steven Moe

This article was first published by the Institute of Directors and it relates directly to Charities as it questions one of the practices we have all seen – moving and seconding. Take a chance to consider the paradigm of governance you come from and whether other ways of thinking about the Board and our role as individuals on them might be important to consider.

How often have you been in a board meeting where the chairperson asks for someone to move a motion, or asks for someone to second it. We all have – but what is the legal basis for it? Is this needless bureaucracy that takes time and effort to record, for decisions which are nearly always by consensus anyway? And what does the practise say about our conception of governance and the approach to board decision making itself?

The short answer is simple: there is no legal requirement for this. The obvious place to look is the Companies Act: that doesn't require it, and neither does other legislation. Despite this, it has become ingrained in governance culture and is now very common, and even the default, for chairs to respond: "But, this is how we do things". The Institute of Directors in its Board Meetings Practice Guide has minute templates that include details for all resolutions including who "moved" and "seconded" a motion. Should this be accepted as best practise though?

We want to question it to ensure that old paradigms of thinking about governance do not continue when they are no longer relevant or represent the wrong approach – for example, if they are based on a different mindset and conception that placed individualism over collective decision making.

A quick history lesson

Individuals can have oversized influence on a particular practise and that is the case here. When it was published in America in 1876 the "Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies", written by former US Army Officer Henry Robert set the standards for meetings of all types (both business and community organisations).

While that origin of many governance standards is somewhat lost in time, the book was very influential and became known as "Robert's Rules of Order". The practise of moving/seconding was outlined in that book and seeped into governance approaches throughout English-speaking countries, including New Zealand.

However, it is important to note that book had a bias towards decisions being made by majority rather than by consensus. So the philosophy that underpins the approach in Robert's Rules contrasts to that which we would advocate for as a better way of conceiving the role of governance and how decisions are made.

Because one of us is a lawyer, we also scoured legislation but found nothing mandating the practise of moving/seconding. We looked for some cases, and found one in the 1879 English decision of Re Horbury Bridge Coal, Iron & Waggon Company, which concluded that at common law there is no requirement that a motion be seconded at a company meeting unless that is normally what is done in that company. We acknowledge that for some councils and other statutory bodies this may be required and stipulated in standing orders, but mostly it is tradition – and that can be refreshed.

Why is this an important issue to consider and what does it say about our board cultures?

We think boards are over complicating things and requiring process is followed that is not even needed. A fundamental principle of decision making by boards is that they are collectively responsible. So singling out people to move or second a decision goes against that principle.

The moving/seconding approach has an individualistic emphasis which aligns with a Western conception of the world more than an indigenous perspective. In our view, dropping this approach would align more with collective decision making practices of Māori and Pacific cultures. It's never about the individual who proposed things or did the initial work or who pushed the decision. Instead, it's about the whole group and its decision, made together.

If we are practicing consensus decision making in our boardrooms - which we are in all of those the authors are part of, then we shouldn't fall back to rigid processes and rules. We say that because in collective korero/talanoa/discussion, a good board chair will implement various strategies to manage issues. We should also have board charters and codes of conduct, and rely on both individual and collective responsibility to hold ourselves and others to account, and maintain the highest standards of behaviour.

Are there situations where this tradition might still be appropriate?

If you vote against a resolution then that can be recorded – it might even affect how a judge views your contribution at a later date. But that is not the same thing as going through the motions of asking for someone to move and second motions where the whole board agrees.

So what about another perspective: perhaps it is useful to have a motion moved by one person who did the most work on the proposal or wants to be recorded as proposing it. However, you could argue that as a board member like this wanting their individual actions recorded is not being a team player – instead they want to be Player of the Day!

What about keeping a record for controversial decisions? Perhaps there is a role where it is unclear if the issue should even be debated – having one person propose it and another second it might show it is worthwhile. There may also be value in a checking process like this in a different context, for example where there are 150 people at an AGM and someone proposes a totally inappropriate or unnecessary topic to discuss. In that context perhaps there may be a reason for someone to second such a suggestion. But taking that unique situation and then also requiring moving/seconding in a boardroom setting, it doesn't seem necessary. However, that seems to be what has occurred.

In the IoD guide mentioned above, it is noted: "A motion or resolution may need to be moved and seconded before it is debated, and voted upon. It is standard practice for a chair to put a motion or resolution to the meeting with no mover or seconder, if they feel the topic has been sufficiently debated and a decision is imminent."

All this implies that more controversial decisions would need to have a mover and seconder, to meet the criteria to then have a discussion – a little election is held, before the topic can be raised. However, if it is a topic that a board member thinks is worthy of debate then such a criteria seems quite arbitrary. It seems to also have seeped out from that original purpose of larger meetings, to now infect nearly all decisions that do not truly need a mover and a seconder.

The way forward?

We are here to argue for a move to simplicity and clarity. In our boardrooms, let's ask why we continue with this practise of having movers and seconders. It is not actually a legal requirement. Let's start a movement where we simply pass the resolution and get rid of unnecessary complexity and the time-wasting tradition in our meetings. This would help our meetings to be easier to understand, be more culturally aligned with who we are in Aotearoa, and remove a practise which is not adding value and which goes against the fundamental governance principle (and responsibility) of collective decision-making.

So the next time you are asked if you want to second a motion perhaps ask back: "… but why?".

Not for Profit, or For Purpose?

By Steven Moe, Partner at Parry Field Lawyers, Host of Seeds Podcast

Sometimes we need to reinvent. I think one thing that might need some reinvention are the ways we describe the sectors we care about – how we frame them. This is because words matter.

Words convey underlying assumptions. For too long we have used the term "not for profit" sector, which negatively frames it. Let's face it – sometimes it is easy to get settled with what we know.

Why do we:

- start the description with the negative word "not"? We don't describe other important things in our life by saying what they are not ("Are you enjoying that 'Not coffee'"?);
- frame it by reference to "for profit"? By doing so we adopt the paradigm of thinking that we centre what we do around whether or not we make profit – as if that is the more important thing;
- we miss out the heart of the sector which is that we often act for reasons that are far higher, more noble and worthy than "profit".

We could be content and think our terminology cannot change or be improved – but it can. We can change and improve too. What if we started consciously talking about the "For Purpose" sector and labelling reports we are involved on with the term "For Purpose Sector Report" instead?

It's a simple step but I think this would focus us in on the fact that we are defined by what we are – rather than what we are not. Would you be willing to join this movement?

This would also allow us to get beyond the binary thinking of either you are a charity which is "Not for profit" (doing good) or you are a business "For profit" (focused on shareholder returns). You can do both. And I don't mean profit is bad – it is a measure of sustainability, and we need to have a new conception that it is possible to be both "for profit" and "for purpose".

One example I've seen on this is through Impact investing. This is a way that a charity might fund a project from investors, rather than donors. It's a new way that combines both purpose and profit.

This phrasing of "For purpose" can even encompass a wider group than just charitable entities. So that is my challenge if you have read this far. Embrace new ways. Let's really think deeply about the terms we use, and what they are really saying. Let's start describing what we do as being part of the 'for purpose' sector.

Steven Moe

Steven Moe's bio is earlier in this publication.

His proudest role is as father for his children Shanna, Ayala, Isabel, and Isaac, and as husband to Ellie.

Be watching out for his next children's book, *The Horse & The Queen*.

Inspired by the Māori whakataukī "*Ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi*" – as the old net withers, the new net goes fishing – this book invites readers to rethink how charities and purpose driven organisations operate in a changing world. Drawing on insights from around 25 contributors working across the charity and business sectors, Changing Paradigms challenges long held assumptions about funding, impact, and leadership. Moving beyond the traditional "Oliver Twist" mindset of dependence, it encourages fresh thinking and practical innovation. Each chapter offers a wero, a challenge to prevailing ideas, inviting readers to approach their work with curiosity and courage. Wherever you are in the world, this book aims to spark new perspectives and inspire meaningful change.

Steven Moe is a Partner at Parry Field Lawyers and the host of Seeds podcast. His other books include *The Circle: Careers with Impact*, *Laying Foundations for Reimagining Business*, and *The Apple Tree*. For more visit **theseeds.nz**

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