

OVERALL SUMMARY



Prepared by TK White

This quarter, we continued to deliver diverse, creative, and culturally grounded programs across Tāmaki Makaurau. From design-to-product projects using Procreate and heat-pressing, to songwriting, performance, and live showcases, our spaces remained as platforms for young people's expression and connection. Cultural activities like lolly lei-making and Pacific language week celebrations deepened identity and pride, while our music-based programs encouraged collaboration, technical skill, and storytelling. Alongside these, Dojo, Creative Labs, and Bridge the Gap offered opportunities for young people to explore music production, test new ideas, and build industry-ready skills. This period also marked an organisational milestone with the election of new Trustees, strengthening governance and guiding our next chapter of community-driven growth.

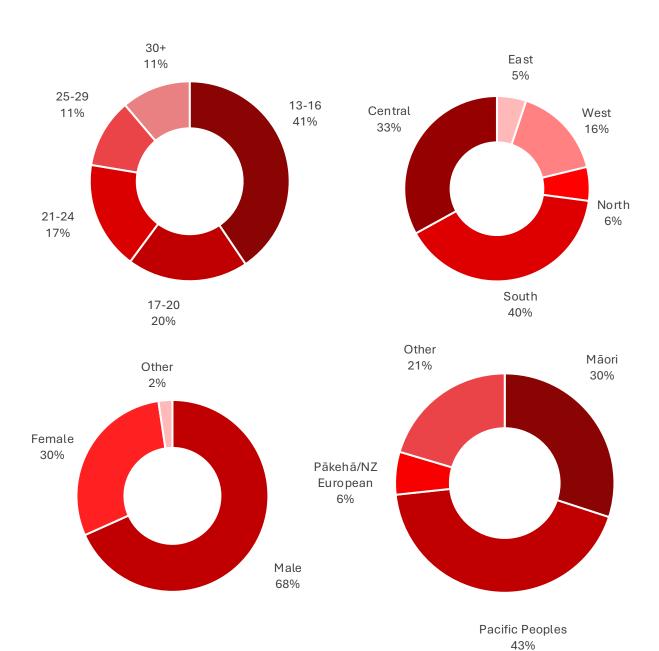
Across all programs, creativity became a catalyst for personal transformation. Participants built confidence, pride, and new friendships through hands-on projects and open talanoa. We saw young people take ownership of their creative journeys — from producing songs and leading jam sessions to creating their own brands and performing for the first time. Guest speakers and mentors from the NZ music industry shared insights that inspired participants to see their work as valuable and their stories as worth sharing. The sense of community was strong, with participants supporting one another through challenges and celebrating each other's wins.

As participation grew, managing focus, space, and momentum became key themes. Attendance and engagement fluctuated due to outside pressures, and facilitators often balanced structure with flexibility to meet participants where they were. Limited studio access, resource demand, and scheduling shifts also required constant adaptation. Despite these challenges, each program continued to provide consistency, safety, and creative purpose — showing that even when circumstances shift, the power of connection and creativity keeps young people returning.

This quarter reaffirmed that creativity is one of our strongest engagement tools — especially for young people who may not connect with traditional pathways. Cultural activities proved essential for trust-building and belonging, while peer-to-peer learning lifted group energy and confidence. We learned that flexibility in facilitation is key — allowing young people to flow between social and creative modes while still providing enough structure for growth. Having multiple facilitators, hands-on technical support, and spaces for live performance have all proven vital to engagement. Ultimately, our work this quarter reminded us that when young people are trusted, supported, and creatively empowered, they not only grow as artists but as people — confident, connected, and ready to take on new opportunities.

DATA TOTALS







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CREATIVE PATHWAYS

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

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CREATIVE LABS

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

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Throughout the year we deliver events for our rangatahi to showcase their skills as artists in their chose creative industry.

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

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PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Preparing aspiring creatives for future work environments. Supporting rangatahi with business ideas and focusing on artist professional, personal, and business development.

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TUAKANA TEINA

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





OVERVIEW

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

PERSONAL OUTCOMES



Increased confidence and selfexpression through creative and cultural activities



Strengthened sense of identity and personal pride



Improved social skills and peer relationships within inclusive learning spaces



Greater self-awareness and openness through transformative moments of growth

CREATIVE OUTCOMES



Development of transferable creative and technical skills across multiple artforms



Exposure to industry professionals and creative career pathways



Experience designing, producing, and showcasing original work



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





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

This quarter, our focus was for participants to create their own brand and logo designs using Procreate and iPads, before transferring their finalised concepts onto AS Colour t-shirts using a heat press. The project gave them the full design-to-product experience, from early sketching and digital refining to the pride of seeing their ideas printed and wearable. Alongside the design focus, we celebrated Pacific language weeks with hands-on activities: making lolly lei necklaces for Cook Islands Language Week and preparing Otai for Tongan Language Week. These moments added cultural depth, creativity, and a sense of celebration to the program, while encouraging participants to take leadership in sharing their identities and heritage.

HIGHLIGHTS

The most rewarding part of the term was seeing participants unlock their creativity and build confidence through the design process. Many who had struggled with engagement in the past became invested once they saw their logos come to life on t-shirts. The hands-on nature of the heat press gave them a real sense of achievement seeing that their ideas were valuable and tangible. Cultural activities like lolly lei making and Otai preparation created a strong sense of connection and pride, allowing participants to take ownership of their heritage while sharing it with others. Socially, we saw teamwork grow — with participants supporting and encouraging each other. A standout was one usually withdrawn participant who opened up during the t-shirt project, helping peers troubleshoot their designs and showing leadership for the first time this year. Across the board, the program built skills in creativity, collaboration, and cultural pride.

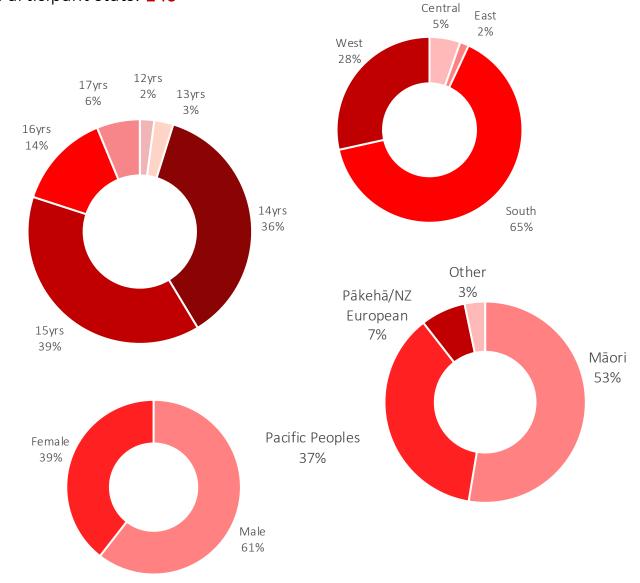
CHALLENGES

Not all participants engaged at the same pace. While many quickly adapted to using Procreate, others struggled with staying focused through the full design stages, especially refining their work before printing. Technical challenges also came up — from learning how to properly use iPads to operating the heat press safely. These moments often slowed the group down and required flexibility from facilitators to adjust session flow. Consistency in attendance was another barrier, with outside pressures — family, social, or legal — meaning some participants missed key steps and didn't always get to finish their projects. Overall, the main challenge was balancing structure and flexibility while ensuring each participant experienced the full journey from concept to product.

LEARNINGS

This quarter highlighted how creativity can be a powerful engagement tool, especially for participants who don't always connect with traditional learning. Seeing their designs printed on t-shirts gave participants pride, ownership, and confidence in their abilities. We also learned that cultural activities are more than side projects — they are key opportunities for connection, celebration, and trust-building within the group. Structuring the creative process into smaller, achievable steps proved essential, as did offering consistent technical support for those less confident with the tools. Another important insight was the strength of peer-to-peer learning — when one participant mastered a step and helped others, the energy of the whole group lifted. These learnings will shape future delivery, reminding us to prioritise cultural connection, step-by-step structure, and shared teaching to create an inclusive, supportive, and impactful creative space.

SUMMARY









NAVIGATORS



OVERVIEW

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

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Strengthened sense of belonging and connection



Increased confidence and self-awareness



Improved emotional literacy and communication skills



Safe space for reflection and mental wellbeing

CREATIVE OUTCOMES



Development of creative skills and artistic confidence



Increased confidence and self-awareness



Access to professional networks & industry opportunities



Increased ability to work independently as artists



NAVIGATORS / NORTH



Facilitated by Rizvan Tu'itahi, Siose Solo & Tamzin Naicker
Report by Tamzin Naicker
Monday's, Shore Junction, Takapuna

This term, North Navigators blended talanoa with creative activities to give young people a space for reflection and expression. Discussions focused on topics like mental wellbeing, respect, bullying, and patience, drawn from the participants' own experiences. These korero encouraged empathy and supported young people to connect with each other. Creative sessions included writing prompts, music-making, and live performance. Together, talanoa and creative practice created a safe, balanced space for sharing, experimenting, and growing confidence.

HIGHLIGHTS

We had our highest attendance in two years, with several new young men joining us and bringing fresh energy to the space. This lifted the atmosphere and pushed everyone creatively. Talanoa sessions were especially powerful, with young people opening up about how they handle tough days emotionally, leading to honest and supportive exchanges. The creative tasks that followed showed real growth — from stronger writing skills to increased willingness to take risks in expression. A standout moment was a dancer sharing his first-ever rap, inspiring others to try new forms of expression. Across the term, participants showed noticeable progress in self-expression, emotional literacy, and willingness to collaborate. The quarter felt full of growth, connection, and creativity.

CHALLENGES

With the growth in numbers, we've also had to manage focus and group dynamics. Some of the younger participants are neurodivergent and still adjusting to the Navigators culture - which means energy levels can sometimes spill over into distraction. One participant on the spectrum needed additional support with turn-taking during discussions, and the wider group was reminded about respecting each other's voices during sharing and performance times. These were not instances of deliberate disrespect but rather challenges in learning how to balance enthusiasm with patience. Facilitators addressed these moments gently, reinforcing the values of respect, openness, and inclusiveness. It has been a valuable reminder that group culture needs to be revisited often as new members join. Therse challenges ultimately became opportunities to practice patience, understanding, and accountability. The group continues to show progress in developing respect and building positive, supportive dynamics together.

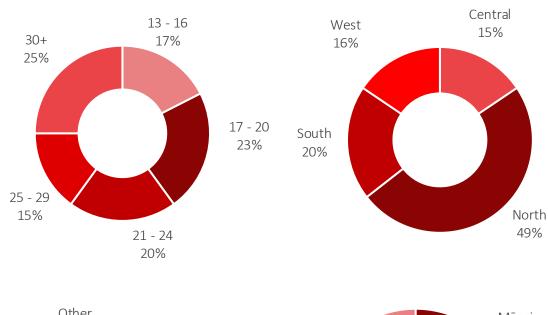
LEARNINGS

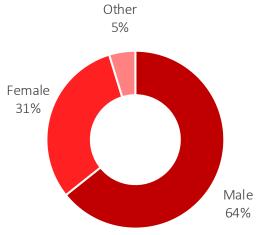
The quarter highlighted the importance of structure when numbers grow — clear routines brought steady energy while still allowing creativity to flow. We saw how small facilitation shifts, like pacing activities or encouraging quieter voices make a big difference to group dynamics. Finally, we recognised that new members bring challenges but also fresh perspectives that can strengthen culture when guided well. These insights will shape how we continue to build North Navigators as a safe, creative, and supportive space.

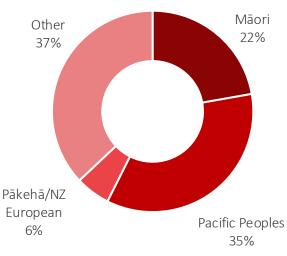
NAVIGATORS / NORTH



SUMMARY









NAVIGATORS / NORTH





NAVIGATORS / WEST



Facilitated by Elijah Manū, Aidan Fine & Bronson Price Report by Elijah Manū

Tuesday's, Zeal West, Henderson

There was a huge focus on collaborative songwriting and producing tracks as collectively this quarter. With such a diverse mix of people and skills, the aim was to create space for everyone's strengths to shine. The sessions were designed to make music and practice collaboration — learning how to balance creative input, share responsibilities, and develop trust as a group. The creative flow ranged from structured songwriting to freeform jamming, giving both experienced and newer participants a chance to add value. Overall, the program became a platform for creativity, teamwork, and growth in both musical and personal confidence.

HIGHLIGHTS

One of the biggest highlights was seeing participants step up to lead their own sessions. Many learned to record themselves and others with little assistance, building independence and technical skill. A few even began exploring engineering, experimenting with mixing and sound design — a strong sign of growth from both a craft and confidence perspective. This shift allowed facilitators to step back and focus on supporting new ideas and encouraging innovation, rather than guiding every step. The group also developed strong collaboration habits, learning how to combine diverse styles and influences into cohesive tracks. Their growing independence, technical ability, and creative ownership showed the real promise of this group, not only as musicians but as future leaders in creative spaces.

CHALLENGES

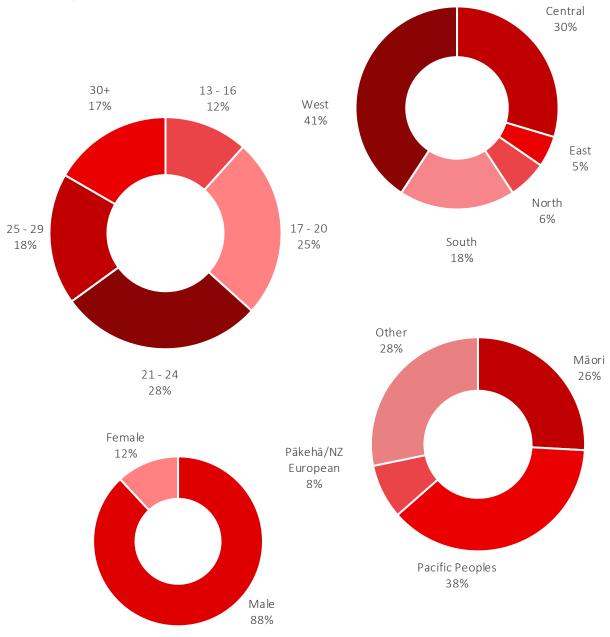
The large number of participants created some logistical challenges. Making sure everyone was fed, supported, and given a chance to share their ideas sometimes stretched the facilitators and resources. At times, the space could feel overwhelming, particularly for quieter members who found it harder to speak up in big groups. To address this, facilitators worked to spread their attention across the evening, encouraging different people to step forward while also creating smaller moments for individual voices. The challenge highlighted the importance of balance — ensuring energy and excitement are embraced while still fostering respect and inclusion. Despite the size of the group, participants generally showed willingness to support each other, and with careful facilitation, everyone had opportunities to be heard.

LEARNINGS

A key learning this term was recognising the variety of reasons participants come to Navigators. Some attend with a clear passion for making music and developing their craft, while others are drawn to the social space, using the program to connect and chat. Both are equally valid, and facilitators learned to cater to these different needs by allowing space for music-making alongside conversation and relationship-building. We also saw how important it is to adapt facilitation to the energy of the group — some nights required more structure, while others thrived on free collaboration. By acknowledging the different wavelengths within the room, we could create a culture where everyone felt included, no matter their focus. This reinforced the idea that Navigators is not just about music but about providing a safe, flexible space where young people can connect, create, and grow.

NAVIGATORS / WEST

SUMMARY





NAVIGATORS / WEST





NAVIGATORS / WAHINE



Facilitated by TK White, Hariata Makiha & Tamzin Naicker **Report by** Hariata Makiha

Tuesday's, Wesley Community Centre, Mt Roskill

This winter, Wāhine Navigators welcomed many new faces, creating evenings that felt both vibrant and intimate. Participants engaged in both heavy and light-hearted moments — candlelit sessions, dance breaks, and track-making under pressure. Some used the space to flex their creativity, while others found peace in reflection. Together, we laughed, cried, and held conversations that wouldn't leave the room, building a sense of trust that strengthened week by week. Through shared experiences and creative expression, the group became more than a program — it became a space of belonging.

HIGHLIGHTS

The most powerful highlight was how quickly new relationships formed. Within weeks, participants felt safe enough to share sensitive korero about women's health and wellbeing, relationships, sex, and even heavy trauma. These stories were met with compassion and support, teaching us all how to hold space for one another. The bonds formed inside the program extended beyond the room — participants collaborated on gigs, created music together, and built lasting friendships. One participant, newly moved from Australia, found strength and belonging after opening up in talanoa. Over time, she brought her daughter and her daughter's friends, who, despite being under 18, shared openly and added fresh energy to the space. Another participant overcame anxiety about attending alone and is now a regular, showing how welcoming the group has become. One participant even leveraged our networks to host a fashion week event, showcasing the powerful opportunities that emerge from this collective.

CHALLENGES

While talanoa is vital for bonding and building trust, it sometimes expands beyond the intended space, cutting into music-making. This has made it difficult to balance deep conversation with creative productivity. Going forward, we plan to set clearer time boundaries which will help preserve the depth of talanoa while ensuring there is enough room for creativity.

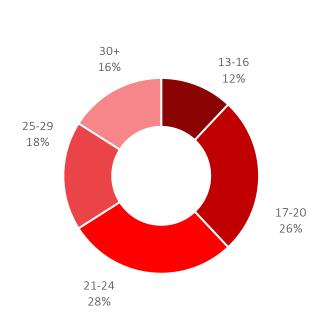
LEARNINGS

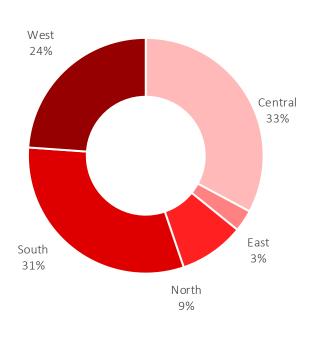
Even with only 30 minutes in the booth, participants produce high-quality tracks full of energy and originality. Their ability to collaborate quickly and creatively is inspiring, showing strong potential for growth. One key learning is the importance of shifting focus toward production and self-sufficiency. Teaching participants how to record and produce their own music could build confidence and efficiency, helping them take creative ownership both inside and outside of Navigators. Going forward, we aim to dedicate more time to hands-on production, refining tracks, and deepening skills in collaboration. These learnings affirm that Wāhine Navigators is not only a safe space for connection but also a launching pad for developing artistry and self-direction.

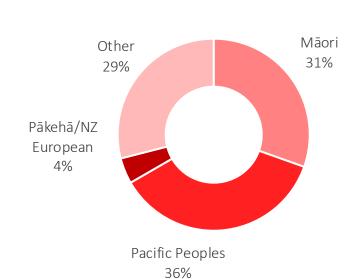
NAVIGATORS / WAHINE

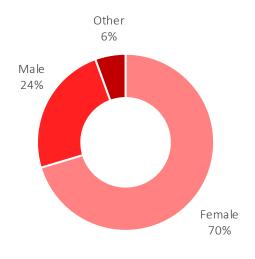


SUMMARY











NAVIGATORS / WAHINE





NAVIGATORS / CENTRAL



Facilitated by Elijah Manū, Aidan Fine, Bronson Price & Dera Meelan **Report by** Dera Meelan

Wednesday's, Wesley Community Centre, Mt Roskill

This quarter, Central Navigators welcomed a new cohort of participants and focused on helping them settle in. The aim was to support friendship-building and creative exploration. Participants gradually started connecting, sharing ideas, and using the space in ways that felt both social and productive. Over the weeks, the group began forming a foundation for collaboration and engagement, showing promising growth in both creativity and community connection.

HIGHLIGHTS

Initially, the group was shy and cautious, but over time friendships grew and confidence increased. Multiple participant-led musical projects began taking shape, and small creative teams emerged. Even when some participants weren't creating, they still attended for connection and support, showing how Central Navigators is becoming a safe and welcoming space. The balance between creativity and community energy has been one of the strongest outcomes this quarter.

CHALLENGES

Finding the right balance of structure has been ongoing. Sessions can feel chaotic when too open and overly rigid activities risk disengagement. With weekly sessions and limited time, maintaining focus while allowing freedom has been challenging. Facilitators continue learning how to provide guidance without limiting participant ownership of their creative and social experience.

LEARNINGS

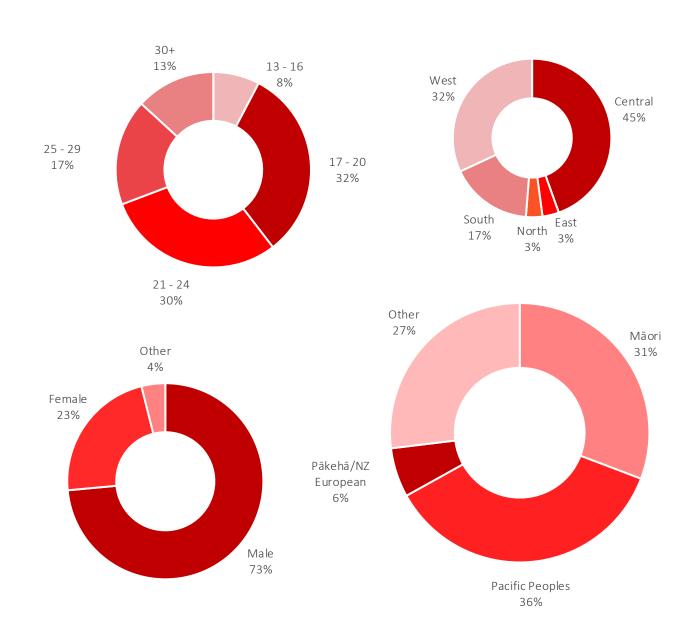
The program's social dynamics are just as important as the creative ones. This quarter highlighted the need for facilitators to carefully guide interactions, manage energy, and support collaboration. How we hold space and navigate group dynamics significantly affects both engagement and the success of creative projects. The group continues to grow confidently not only individually but collectively, and as self-direction takes place in the booths, so does collective output.



NAVIGATORS / CENTRAL



SUMMARY





NAVIGATORS / CENTRAL





NAVIGATORS / SOUTH



Facilitated by Oliva Luki, Ben Tuimaseve, Lincoln Keepa & Noah Tauti Report by Noah Tauti Monday's, OMAC, Ōtara

The energy had a steady increase this quarter as collaboration peaked keen interest with this cohort. South Navigators focused heavily on studio sessions, combining live jams and recording studio opportunities. We maximised the space by splitting into smaller groups or creating as one large group, allowing participants to curate pieces collaboratively and record them. Instrumental setups and beat-making stations enabled a variety of creative approaches, giving participants flexibility to explore different aspects of music-making. This approach encouraged teamwork, creativity, and skill development across the group.

HIGHLIGHTS

We welcomed both returning and new participants, creating a strong dynamic for collaboration and networking. The young people become more and more confident about sharing in talanoa as they speak of school, expectations and identity. Participants shared openly about life and mental health, particularly young men under 30, showing how safe and supportive the space has become. Sessions included live jam circles, beat-making, and studio recording, allowing participants to explore multiple creative avenues. The energy was high, and participants embraced experimentation, supporting one another and forming deeper connections. One participant who is usually shy finally shared a piece during creative that showed confidence and trust slowly building amongst each other. Participants are eager to create and share that eagerness with each other when jamming together.

CHALLENGES

Studio availability was inconsistent this quarter, requiring flexibility in choosing between the studio and another space. When the studio wasn't accessible, we improvised with makeshift recording setups, table and speaker arrangements for beat-makers, and live jam spaces to accommodate all participants. This required constant adaptation to ensure everyone could create comfortably.

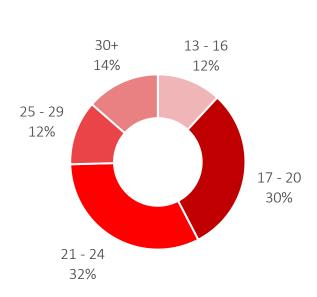
LEARNINGS

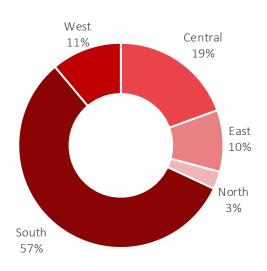
Having multiple creative spaces—booths for recording and areas for live instrument jams—offers participants choice and encourages exploration. Collaboration grew rapidly as participants jumped from one medium to another. The live band set up brings such a huge impact to artists as they move from their standard performance set up to something bigger. Regular attendees have built deep trust in the space, sharing more about wellbeing during talanoa. The new cohort has fostered a welcoming, family-like environment, strengthening bonds through both music and friendship.

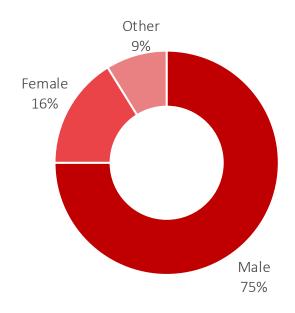
NAVIGATORS / SOUTH

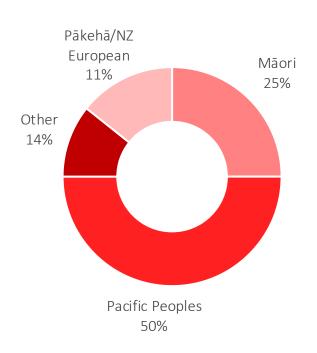


SUMMARY











NAVIGATORS / SOUTH





NAVIGATORS / SPOKEN WORD



Facilitated by Noah Tauti & Luani Nansen **Report by** Noah Tauti **Wednesday's, OMAC, Ōtara**

This quarter, Spoken Word Navigators included a mix of off-site experiences and creative workshops. We attended several open mic showcases, giving participants the chance to experience poetry in different community spaces. These outings provided fresh inspiration, which we carried back into our weekly sessions through discussion and reflection. In addition, participants engaged with a wide range of creative prompts, helping spark new ideas and strengthen their writing practice. A highlight for the team was welcoming a new facilitator, Jesse, a respected emerging artist in the South Auckland community, who started as a participant a year ago. His involvement has brought fresh energy and perspective to the program.

HIGHLIGHTS

We've continued to see participants' confidence grow over time. Most are now regulars, and their progress is clear in the way they engage—volunteering to open highs and lows, taking lead in sharing spaces, and even steering talanoa discussions. This willingness to contribute shows the space feels safe and supportive, encouraging participants to bring their authentic selves without whakamā (shyness). It's been powerful to watch participants step into leadership roles within the group, building trust and ownership of the sessions.

CHALLENGES

The primary challenge has been navigating room availability during OMAC renovations. Sessions shifted between the studio and the green room depending on access, which at times disrupted flow and required flexibility from both participants and facilitators.

LEARNINGS

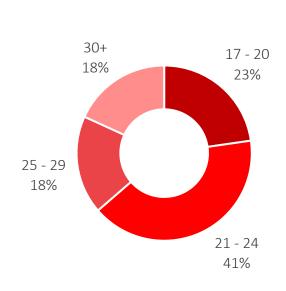
Introducing a new facilitator has strengthened the program, giving us the ability to alternate roles and share leadership of sessions. Having three facilitators present has proven valuable, especially during talanoa, where the dynamic benefits from multiple voices. It has also provided continuity when one facilitator is unavailable due to illness or other commitments. This has reinforced the importance of strong facilitation support to keep the program consistent, welcoming, and effective.

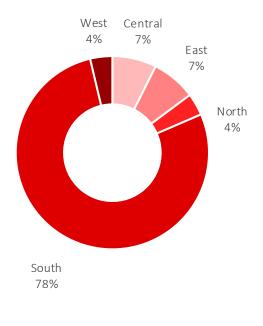


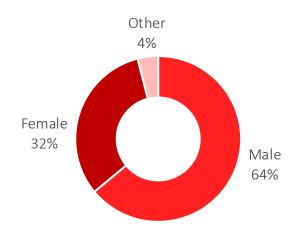
NAVIGATORS / SPOKEN WORD

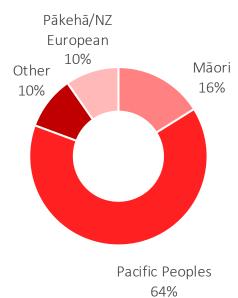


SUMMARY











NAVIGATORS / SPOKEN WORD





TALANOA TUESDAYS



OVERVIEW

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

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Increased emotional selfawareness through guided communal dialogue



Strengthened sense of connection and belonging across diverse communities



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



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

WELLBEING OUTCOMES



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



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



Strengthened emotional resilience through shared reflection and collective care



Enhanced overall mental and emotional wellbeing through regular, meaningful dialogue



CREATIVE LABS



OVERVIEW

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

PERSONAL OUTCOMES



Strengthened sense of identity and personal agency through music creation



Increased confidence and selfexpression through supported creative practice



Development of resilience and perseverance through independent studio use



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

PROFESSIONAL OUTCOMES



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



Creation and release of original works that build artistic portfolios



Experience using high-quality equipment and software independently



Increased readiness to pursue performance, recording, and industry opportunities



CREATIVE LABS / CENTRAL



Facilitated by Dera Meelan & Aidan Fine
Report by Dera Meelan
Weds, Thurs, Wesley Community Centre, Sandringham

This quarter ran smoothly for Central Creative Labs. The program has developed a strong rhythm with a core group of regulars who consistently book sessions, focus on their work, and maintain the flow of the space. It now operates much as originally intended—participants take ownership of their sessions, use the time productively, and leave feeling accomplished. This efficiency has made the program sustainable and self-driven, while still allowing space for new participants to engage and create.

HIGHLIGHTS

Creative Labs has continued to be both a music-making hub and a social space. Participants often come to create, but sometimes simply to connect, and both have proven equally valuable. A standout moment this quarter was a young participant with down syndrome who began singing and joining in, supported by his mother. They have quickly become regulars, embodying the welcoming spirit of the space. Sessions have been consistently booked out, with participants showing noticeable growth in creativity, confidence, and output.

CHALLENGES

The primary challenge remains capacity. Demand for the program outweighs the available time, with booking sheets filling immediately when released. This leaves some participants missing out, while others try to swap or share time to ensure they can be involved. The need for an additional day is becoming clearer, as the current schedule cannot fully accommodate the interest and enthusiasm within the community.

LEARNINGS

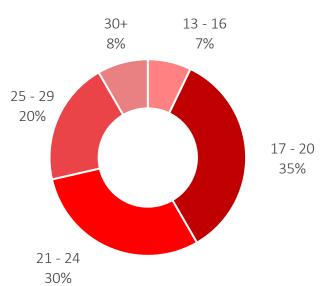
This quarter reinforced how much participants value a space dedicated to creativity and growth. Having two facilitators available has been especially impactful, providing encouragement, structure, and reassurance. Many participants noted that without this support they might lose momentum or second-guess their work. By offering both technical guidance and emotional encouragement, the program helps participants stay consistent and confident in their creative journeys.

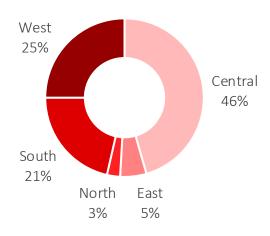


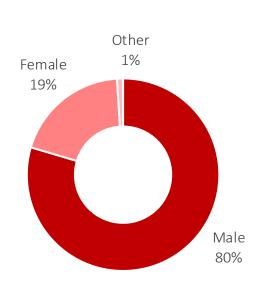
CREATIVE LABS / CENTRAL

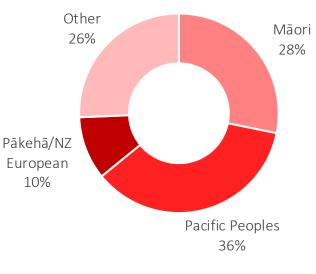


SUMMARY











CREATIVE LABS / CENTRAL





CREATIVE LABS / SOUTH



Facilitated by Oliva Luki
Report by Oliva Luki
Mon, Tues & Weds, OMAC, Ōtara

Creative Labs South has continued to provide free studio sessions for up-and-coming artists at OMAC. Over this quarter, participants have used the space to explore beat-making, recording, and music production. One South Navigators participant, who has been producing beats for nearly a year, came through to deepen his knowledge of FL Studio (a beat making software) and refine his craft. We also supported participants in recording five demos across back-to-back sessions, while other bookings were used to teach beat-making and software skills. The program has remained a hub where emerging artists can level up their skills and grow in confidence.

HIGHLIGHTS

The past three months brought a wave of new participants making the most of the free studio time. Despite renovations and scheduling around OMAC's drum lessons, we adapted—running beat tutorials or recording in a smaller booth when needed. Several participants have been steadily working on songs, with some releasing tracks and now planning bigger projects. It's been inspiring to see school students come through, commit to their dreams, and begin building their musical journeys. The mix of new faces and regulars has kept the space creative and productive.

CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge this quarter has been the studio's limited availability due to renovations. This has sometimes led to cancellations and made it difficult to meet the high demand for bookings. With many participants eager to record, we've had to be resourceful in creating makeshift setups to keep momentum going.

LEARNINGS

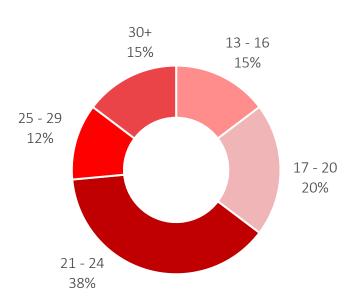
Consistency has proven key in building rapport and trust with participants. As relationships deepen, artists feel freer in the studio and more confident in their creative process. Many have shown strong interest in one-on-one sessions, which highlights the value of personalised support. With the renovations nearly complete, we're excited to welcome more participants back into a fully functional studio.

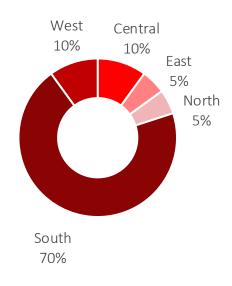


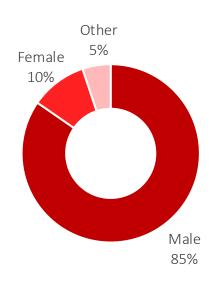
CREATIVE LABS / SOUTH

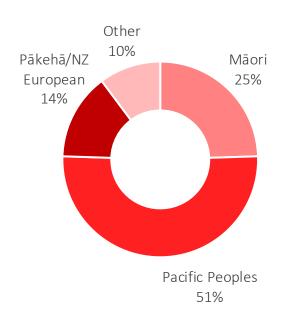


SUMMARY











CREATIVE LABS / SOUTH





BRIDGE THE GAP



OVERVIEW

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

CREATIVE OUTCOMES



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



Growth in entrepreneurial and creative industry skills



Development of branding, content creation, and merchandise capabilities



Increased ability to lead and manage creative projects independently

PROFESSIONAL OUTCOMES



Access to professional networks and industry opportunities



Paid performance, work & experience within the industry



Development of skills for future creative or business ventures



Increased readiness to sustain creative careers beyond the program





BRIDGE THE GAP



Facilitated by Oliva Luki Report by Oliva Luki

This quarter, Bridge The Gap has been all about setting a strong foundation for the next project cycle, leading up to our big release event in November. We've brought together participants from North, West, and South Navigators to work on individual music projects to release from scratch. Over 4–5 months, each artist is developing their own body of work while learning the full process behind it — from writing and recording with a producer/engineer, to releasing their music online, planning content for social media, and designing their own merchandise with seed funding support. By the end of the program, they'll perform at their very own live event, showcasing everything they've created. The goal is to teach them the skills to run their own creative journeys — not just to make great music, but to be able to manage and grow their careers independently.

HIGHLIGHTS

A real highlight has been seeing how seriously the participants are taking this opportunity. They're coming to sessions prepared, working on their writing outside of program hours, and treating the whole experience like it's their job — which, in many ways, it is. The mix of ages has also brought a good dynamic, with younger participants showing heaps of energy and the older ones bringing a sense of focus and drive. You can really see the hunger in this group, and it's exciting to watch their projects take shape.

CHALLENGES

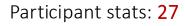
Like any creative project, there've been a few bumps along the way. Participant cancellations have been tricky, especially with tight timelines — losing a session here and there can mean fewer songs make it to the final cut. We've also noticed that younger participants sometimes struggle to keep up with the pace and intensity of the program. While we support them to move at their own speed, sometimes their personal timelines don't quite match the structure of the program, which can make things challenging.

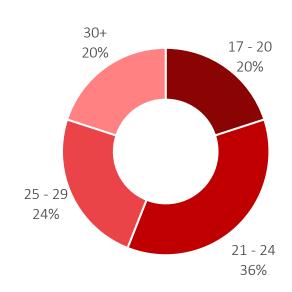
LEARNINGS

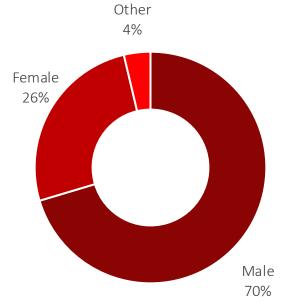
This round has reminded us that patience and flexibility are key, especially when working with younger artists who are still figuring themselves out alongside their creative work. Clear expectations from the start really help them rise to the challenge. Even though we're still in the build-up phase, the groundwork we're laying now is setting the stage for a strong finish later in the year.

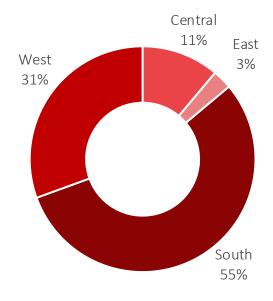
BRIDGE THE GAP

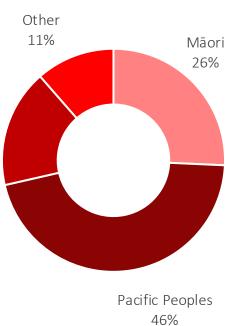
SUMMARY













Pākehā/NZ European 17%

BRIDGE THE GAP



IMAGES



EVENTS



OVERVIEW

Events provide powerful opportunities for young people to build confidence, showcase their talents, and gain real-world experience across all aspects of live performance and event delivery. Through performances, collaborations, and behind-the-scenes roles such as DJing, MCing, stage management, and content capture, participants are supported to step into new spaces, grow their skills, and discover their potential. These events are designed not just as creative platforms, but as spaces that uplift participants' mana, strengthen their sense of belonging, and open pathways toward future opportunities in the creative industries and beyond.

PERSONAL OUTCOMES



Increased confidence and stage presence through live performance



Strengthened sense of belonging and pride through public creative expression



Growth in leadership and teamwork through active involvement in event delivery



Opportunities to discover personal strengths and interests in a real-world setting

PROFESSIONAL OUTCOMES



Exposure to live industry environments and potential paid opportunities



Hands-on experience across performance, hosting, DJing, stage management, and event production



Increased readiness to plan, lead, or contribute to future creative events



Development of transferable skills in communication, organisation, and professionalism



DOJO



Facilitated by Oliva Luki & Luani Nansen Report by TK White

Thursday's fortnightly, The Button Factory, Auckland Central

Following the successful pilot last quarter, Dojo has continued to evolve as a creative hub for young people, with a new fortnightly delivery model now running on Thursdays. The refreshed format has brought new energy and new team members, each contributing to a stronger and more dynamic delivery. This quarter, we've hosted guest speakers from the NZ music industry who broke down the lyrics and creative process behind their latest releases, giving participants an inside look at songwriting and storytelling. We also delivered a Producer Navigators pop-up, a Krump workshop, and a showcase for North Navigators, offering a wide range of creative and cultural experiences under one roof.

HIGHLIGHTS

A major highlight this quarter has been the lyrical breakdown sessions. Both guest artists and participants found the experience refreshing and deeply engaging, as artists shared personal stories, creative tips, and insights into their craft. These sessions gave young people tangible tools to apply to their own creative journeys. Another standout moment was the North Navigators showcase, which featured some of our youngest performers to date — including an 11-year-old who jumped on stage to perform a full track for the first time. The pride from his family, peers, and the audience was huge, and the energy in the room captured exactly what Dojo is about: confidence, community, and celebration. We've also begun expanding Dojo to include young people-led events, empowering participants to design and host their own shows. Three participant-run events have already been booked for later this year which is a massive step toward building ownership and leadership within the space.

CHALLENGES

The shift from weekly Fridays to fortnightly Thursdays has taken some time to find its rhythm. While the change has helped with sustainability and planning, it's also meant we've had to rebuild consistency and familiarity with our audience. Attendance has gone up and down as people adjust, and we're learning that momentum looks different when the delivery model changes. Thursdays have worked well for some, but it's also shown us how much young people value routine and connection — they come back when the energy feels right, and that takes time to rebuild.

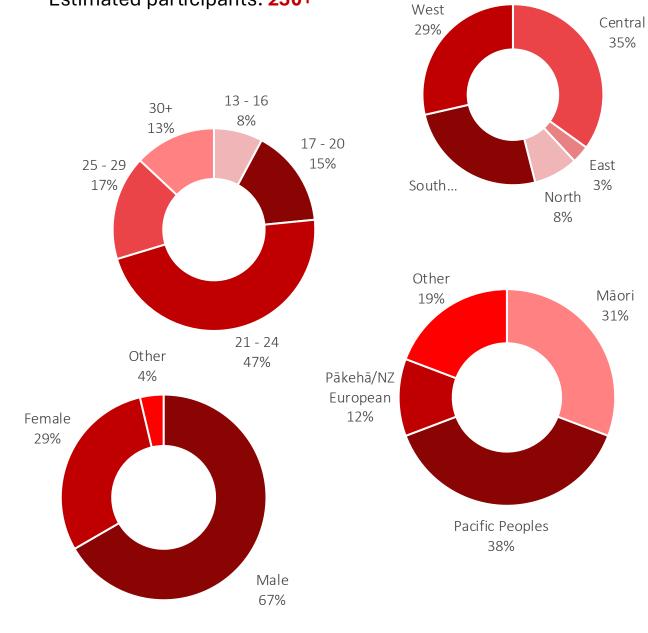
LEARNINGS

Dojo continues to prove that young people thrive in live, interactive environments. They come alive through performance, connection, and collaboration more than structured workshops or formal learning spaces. This has reminded us of the power of keeping things organic and young people-led, meeting young people where they're at and letting the creative energy guide the experience.

DOJO SUMMARY









DOJO IMAGES





TUAKANA



OVERVIEW

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

SOCIAL OUTCOMES



Strengthened confidence and self-belief



Increased personal responsibility and leadership



Stronger sense of connection and belonging



Positive identity and selfawareness

WELLBEING OUTCOMES



Improved emotional regulation and awareness



Greater resilience and coping skills



Empowered decision-making and independence



Stability through healthy routines and relationships



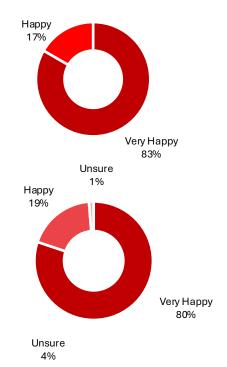




FEEDBACK ANALYSIS



HOW OUR RANGATAHI FEEL



HAPPY WITH THE PROGRAM

"Being able to network with new people as well as maintain a strong connection with those already met is something special."

HAPPY WITH THE FACILITATORS

"Being able to work alongside and get tutored by established artists and take on creative challenges every week."

Happy 26% Very Happy 70%

HAPPY WITH THE FACILITIES/VENUE

"The best thing about this program is the skill development and the accessibility to professional equipment."

PARTICIPATING ON THE PROGRAM HELPED ME TO ...

