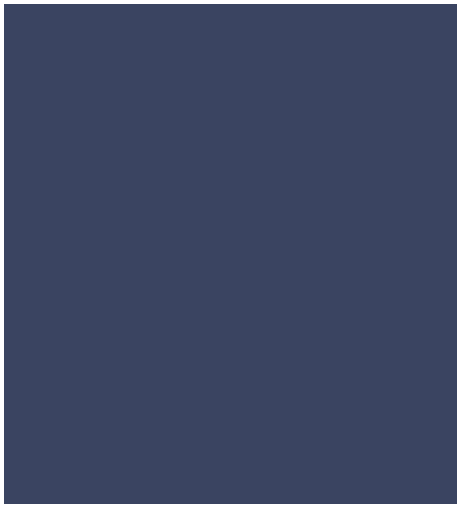


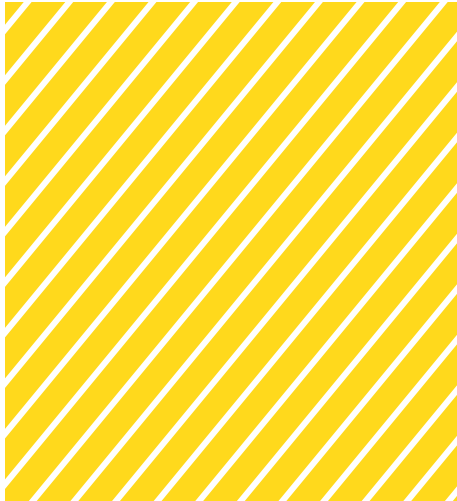
LIFEHACK

Investigating youth civic engagement
in Aotearoa New Zealand
- voices of young people

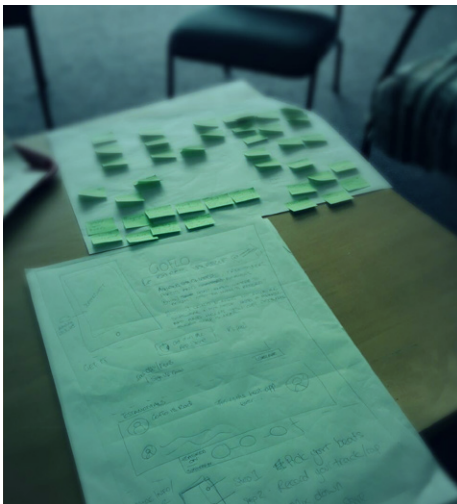




telling more
authentic
stories



positive
connection
between having
a voice and
using it



moving
away from
institutions

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Executive Summary

Lifhack brings together people from across New Zealand to collaboratively develop ideas which will improve wellbeing for young kiwis. Lifhack was invited to support the Ministry of Youth Development (MYD) with a consultation project investigating the reasons why young New Zealanders are involved in avenues of civic engagement or not. Lifhack's team lead conversations around the country with over 55 young people from Kaitia to Wellington in person and online across 4 weeks.

Young people around New Zealand are seeking more diverse ways of being recognised for their contribution to society. Young people have shared their perspectives on the concepts of Volunteering, Voice and Voting as well as issues around civic engagement, which are broader than those topics. Here are some examples of youth perspectives expanded on throughout this report:

"I'm hungry to be part of a community. I don't feel part of a country in the same way that I feel part of a community."

"I'm 20 and haven't voted. Decided not to as my voice didn't matter, all the campaigning was aimed at the other generation. It was about student loan being cut, it didn't get to me. Now I'm 20 thinking maybe I should have voted. Superannuation and Kiwisaver, do I really care about it? Not enrolled."

"The increase in more formal stuff might reflect the steady introduction of service/volunteering clubs (and sometimes requirements) by Schools and Universities and the informal has, I suspect, always been there although the specifics of the contribution evolve with generations." Jason Pemberton, co-founder Student Volunteer Army

"Voting feels like a unsatisfying channel. One tick amongst many. No discussion. If I thought about all the ways I could impact the country, I would put voting very low."

One of our main questions going in to the research was how to foster a positive connection between having a voice and using it. If early negative experiences, for example in school settings, lower the likelihood of civic engagement later in life, how do we shape positive experiences? If young people are unable to make their voices heard in schools, how does that predict their desire to make their opinions heard at a national level? Is it possible to embed democratic decision-making systems within schools and other settings, so that young people are listened to and can see what happens when school officials genuinely respond to the collective youth voice?

Looking ahead, what might it look like to convene young people without a prescriptive agenda for a dialogue around civic engagement – in words and a setting that suits them?

Who is Lifehack?

Lifehack enables and empowers young New Zealanders to co-design and develop ideas which will improve youth wellbeing in the digital age. We collaborate with young people and organisations, kick starting new projects and social ventures and facilitate community energy going into existing effective projects. We build community, upskill individuals and enable youth led projects to get off to a good start. Lifehack is part of the Prime Minister's Youth Mental Health Project and funded out of the Social Media Innovation Fund. We work on **complex social problems** with the people affected by them.

We are a experienced team of open-hearted professionals from the Enspiral network (enspiral.com). We upskill young people with a set of tools and skills needed to take on complex issues in community: **design thinking, social innovation, entrepreneurship, wellbeing as well as human & interpersonal skills**. Over the past 18 months, we've worked with 450 people between Kaitia and Invercargill to boost or bring to life youth wellbeing projects for the benefit of young kiwis.

We are known for our ability to create safe and inclusive spaces for young people to explore who they are, explore their purpose, and the challenges in the world with open minds (see Appendix 1).

Lifehack's interest in the topic of young people's civic engagement stems from research that 'there is evidence that civic engagement is important not only for healthy democracies but also for individual wellbeing' (Hayhurst, 2014). Taking a holistic approach to wellbeing, we are keen to explore all areas that allow us to systemically work on improving youth wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand.

'there is evidence that civic
engagement is important not
only for healthy democracies but
also for individual wellbeing'

(Hayhurst, 2014)

About this civic youth engagement project

Over the course of June 2015, the Lifehack team undertook a participatory approach to investigating the status of youth civic engagement in Aotearoa New Zealand from young people's perspectives.

Our approach to gathering this information was to dig deep, to seek and discover the underlying reasons why young people are engaged or disengaged. We explored many forms of civic engagement, and sought to gain a greater appreciation of how young people understand civic engagement in their lives and communities in the current political, economic, technological & social climate of New Zealand.

We held conversations with young people aged between 13 and 24 about the 3Vs (voice, voting & volunteering) directly, as well as related questions to get a sense of their understanding of the words. We ran workshops with sports teams, school classes, residential alternative education initiatives, and youth groups as well as one-on-one interviews.

MYD was interested to learn from Lifehack's methodology of co-designing and co-interrogating the topic of civic engagement with the people affected & disengaged. In this instance, the team at MYD has access to a vast amount of data in regards to the lack of civic engagement by young people. However, the statistics don't necessarily go to the root of the problem, and rather explore the current state on a symptom level. By speaking to young people more broadly we were able to listen to their thoughts and concerns, and work out their relationship to the topics MYD is interested in investigating around civic engagement: voice, voting and volunteering.





WHO DID WE SPEAK TO?

Over the course of four weeks we ran sessions with different youth groups, individuals, organisations, and schools in the Far North, Lower Hutt, Auckland and in central Wellington. The groups were of mixed ethnicity, from schools with low decile ratings, and from minority groups.

The main conversations we held were with

WHERE	NO.	AGE (YEARS)	OTHER DETAILS
Orientation Aotearoa <i>(Wellington based, but participants from across NZ)</i>	10	19 - 24	On an eight-month residential social entrepreneurship programme
Vibe Youth One Stop Shop <i>(Lower Hutt)</i>	12	13 - 22	Culturally diverse residents of Wainuiomata and wider Hutt City
Victoria Eagles Volleyball <i>(Wellington)</i>	8	14 - 30	Largely Maori and Pasifika background
Northland College <i>(Kaikohe)</i>	20	16 plus	Senior students from Northland college who more mostly Nga Puhi and lived rurally

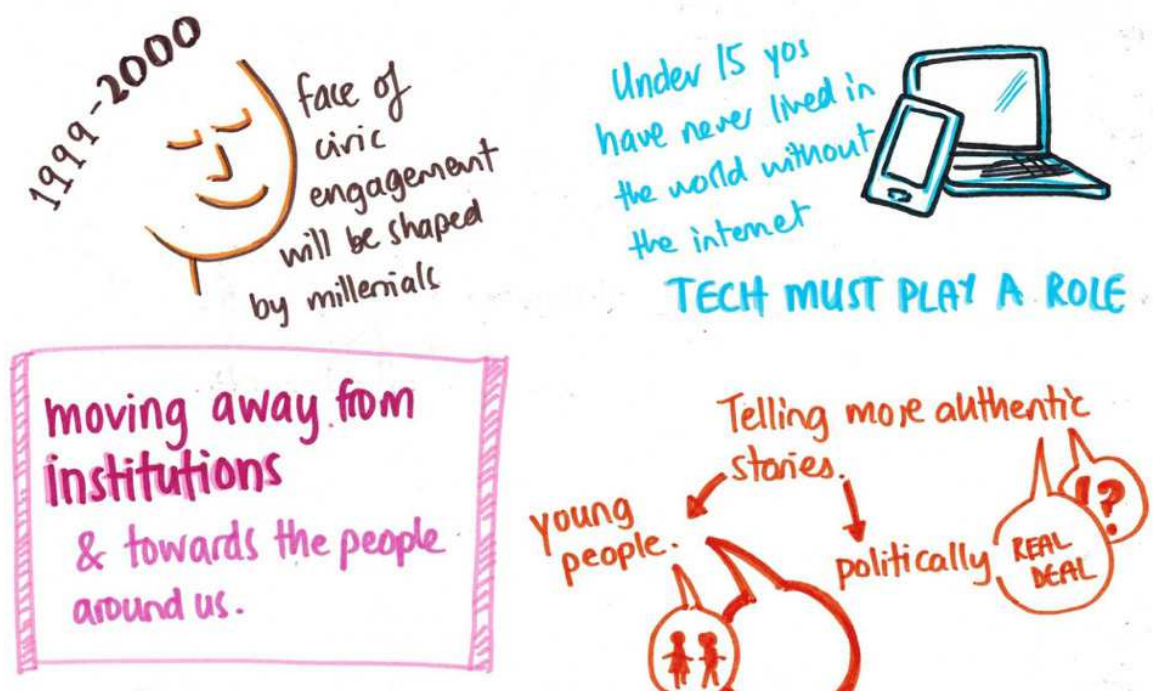
We also talked with Laura O'Connell-Rapira, founder of **RockEnrol** (a youth enrolment campaign in 2014. See Appendix 2) and campaign director at **ActionStation** (an online platform aimed at creating a digital community focused on citizen led social action). Note that all the groups were mixed gender except for the Victoria Eagles Volleyball team who were all males.

Our intention was to ask questions about voice, voting and volunteering, and leave it up to the participants to interpret each phrase in a way that had meaning for them. What we found was there was a large difference between what MYD and Lifehack understood key words like 'civics' and 'volunteering', and what young people did.

Overarching trends

In the last general election results, 40% of enrolled voters aged between 18-24 years old chose not to vote in the 2014 general election. Moreover, near half (47%) of those within the same age bracket were eligible to vote but not enrolled (Electoral Commission, 2014). The same happened in the 25-29 age bracket, but after that there was a steady increase in amount of voters, eventually reaching the 70+ age range where less than 15% are non-voters. Youth civic engagement in Aotearoa is in a frail state. Previous expectation that young people who do not vote would vote when older are proving not to be the case (see Appendix 3).

Throughout our conversations it soon emerged for us that young people are feeling disengaged because it appears to them that their voices do not count. To them, submitting a vote did not seem to affect the outcome of the decision – so why bother in the first place? This was also noticeable in the volunteering conversation, where it seems increasingly important to acknowledge a wider-reaching definition of volunteering which goes beyond the official thinking of collecting money for the Red Cross, or helping at the SPCA on a Saturday. **How does assistance to the kaumātua on the marae get acknowledged, or helping milk the cows on a dairy farm?**



Voting, voice and volunteering – the perspectives of our young people

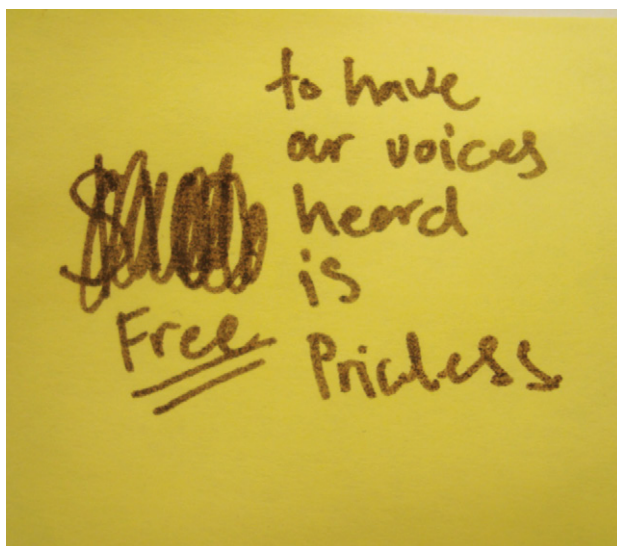
VOICE

We initially interpreted 'voice' as the ability of young people to make their voices heard by decision-makers in situations that affected them – in the home, at school or at work, at their sports club, and in government.

Asking about voice is lost in the definition of what 'voice' means. For the majority of the young people we spoke to, **recognition from figures of authority was given to only a minority.**

**ie only if you use your voice
to say the 'right' things**
GENEVIEVE, 25

It also became evident that 'having a voice' had a broad meaning for the young people we spoke to – it could be expressed in all kinds of ways, through petitions, speeches, demonstrations, via social media, through protests or even physical fights to defend issues they feel passionate about.



(Volleyball team member's response to the question what an appropriate koha to the club would be for them having given up their training time to participate in the project. See Appendix 4 for raw data).

Spectra - how much influence do you have in decisions made...



...at home? (Left=little, right=lot)



...at volleyball? (Left=little, right=lot)



...at school or work? (Left=little, right=lot)



...in government? (Left=little, right= a lot)



What type of decisions do you have a say in?

a. at home

"What to eat" Junior, 15

"Food, TV, holidays, most things" Thomas, 16

"Bills, food, jobs" Kurt, 21

"Television shows, food" John, 16

b. with your friends

"Where to go, what to do" Junior, 15

"Things we do, places we go" Thomas, 16

"Things we do, where we go, when we do things" Kurt, 21

"Where we go, including someone" John, 16

c. at volleyball

"Get to call the plays" Junior, 15

"Plays we run, my own actions" Thomas, 16

"Drills we do, who I set" Kurt, 21

"Plays we run, teams" John, 16

d. in school/ at work

"Voting for school reps, subjects I take, other votes, can attend meetings" Thomas, 16

"The order in which I do my jobs" Kurt, 21

"Options I take, to study or not" John, 16

Of the four examples listed above, only one participant listed voting in school as a place where they can contribute their voice to decisions. It is important to highlight in this instance, little was said about positive experiences of having a say in school's issues across the conversation by participants.

Decisions made by peers in the volleyball session were made within a nucleus of social interaction. Decisions about where a group of friends eat, how they spend their free-time, or the decisions made within their volleyball team are all dependent on what their relationship is to each other, and to their group. These decisions differ to the decisions made within their family, school or wider community. While peer groups are non-hierarchical, families, schools, and local or national government structures have hierarchical power structures to differing degrees.

Youth prefer to make their voices heard by actively participating in co-created, mutual and democratic decisions that have a frame of reference for them.

Hmmm I can't unpack this sentence to know whether I agree with it or not
GENEVIEVE, 25

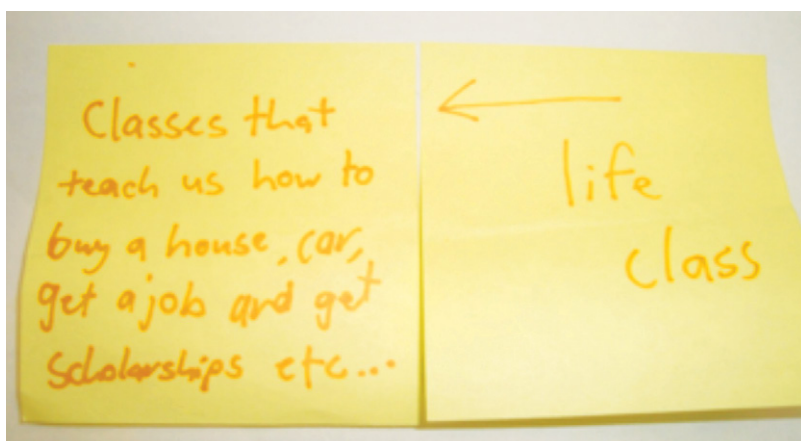
VOICE IN SCHOOLS AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

It is evident from our conversations with all participants that engagement with civic engagement and bureaucracy begins at school. Currently, it is down to schools to decide what is important to teach. At times, student councils can be part of this decision, but nobody can force the schools to prioritise civics. It is not a set part of curriculum. Having mentioned this to students in particular, many of them voiced the desire to learn more about civics, the responsibilities of citizenship, and how to influence decisions that affect them. On top of that, students suggested a 'life class' during which they'd learn how to open a bank account, or buy a house, or learn tangible tips on how to get a job or a scholarship.

this is such an interesting topic for me, thinking of the times I have encountered bureaucracy and been prevented from doing something or accessing something I've needed without being given a satisfactory reason why - it's demoralizing and incredible hurtful. - GENEVIEVE, 25

The youth from Northland College highlighted their anxieties surrounding bureaucratic engagement. Part of this anxiety is around their confidence and ability to engage with a system that they need to learn. Questions of "can I do this?" and "do I feel appreciated?" suggest that young people currently do not feel confident to express their opinion and then to act on it. It begins with personal engagement, social engagement, and then leads to higher bureaucratic engagement. An example of engagement could start with family, then peer-to-peer and decisions made within school, and then with formal institutions.

It was reflected in the ability for young people to vote for their prefects – but ultimately students know that the final decision sits with teachers and principals. So the perceived ability to affect a decision is then counteracted by the teacher's choice, which overrules the democratic decision of the students.





Case study: School socks and jackets

In a conversation about school socks, of all things, it became apparent that students seek to influence decisions they believe are unjust. In this instance, the young people at Vibe spoke of Wainuiomata High School's decision to let girls wear any type of black socks or stockings they chose, but boys had to wear special school uniform socks that cost about \$15 a pair. The young people highlighted that students could be sent home for not wearing the uniform including socks and ties. Students got the student representative to raise uniform issues at the Board of Trustees meeting, yet felt that the imbalance – one student among many adults – meant that the decision was always being decided by the adults. The young people felt their views were not taken into account, for example they wondered what messages were sent when exact uniform compliance was put ahead of access to education.

Around the same time the issue of student input on school decisions was highlighted when a Motueka school confiscated puffer jackets from students because they were not part of the school uniform. The school argued the uniform required had been set in consultation with parents two years earlier and puffer jackets had not been suggested by many parents. Student Jennifer Guthrie started an online petition on the issue that gathered more than 1000 students signed. As a result of the petition the school board agreed to conduct a new uniform survey. Jennifer's father said there was a gap in communication between the younger students at the school and the Board.

These examples highlight how often when young people attempt to have a say about issues important to them they felt their views are not valued.

Positive engagement starts with democratic systems in schools where youth are listened to and can see what happens when school officials value the collective youth voice. The young people we spoke to felt a strong divide between 'youth' and 'adult' (ie. student and teacher) and this links to the capacity for an individual to engage and have positive experiences.

VOTING

Through the conversation held at Vibe in Lower Hutt, it became evident that voting in its official form had little appeal to the young people present, who were aged between 13 and 20.

This attitude was strengthened by one of the Orientation Aotearoa participants:

Vibe participants said they would be interested in expressing their voice through alternative forms of voting, or by being able to give more context and reasoning for their decision:

I don't know about parties, we need more exposure in high schools about those things- Vibe

Boring - I'm 20 and haven't voted. Decided not to as my voice didn't matter, all the campaigning was aimed at the other generation. It was about student loan being cut, it didn't get to me. Now I'm 20 thinking maybe I should have voted. Superannuation and Kiwisaver, do I really care about it? Not enrolled - Vibe

Voting as a way of being heard by your nation's governments? Voting feels like a unsatisfying channel. One tick amongst many. No discussion. If I thought about all the ways I could impact the country, I would put voting very low - Stanley, Orientation Aotearoa

Having an area to write your reason why you ticked the box you did, instead of picking random boxes to pick. So they know you have a reason or something like that - Shannon, 16, Vibe



Additionally, they mentioned alternative forms of voting. Vibe participants highlighted that they would like their presence counted at rallies or demonstrations, for example about climate change or cycle lanes. **Similarly, participants at Orientation Aotearoa spoke of the concept of taking into consideration where young people choose to spend their money – is their hard-earned or saved pocket money going towards fast food, or going to the zoo? Is it going towards ethical businesses, or fast food chains?**

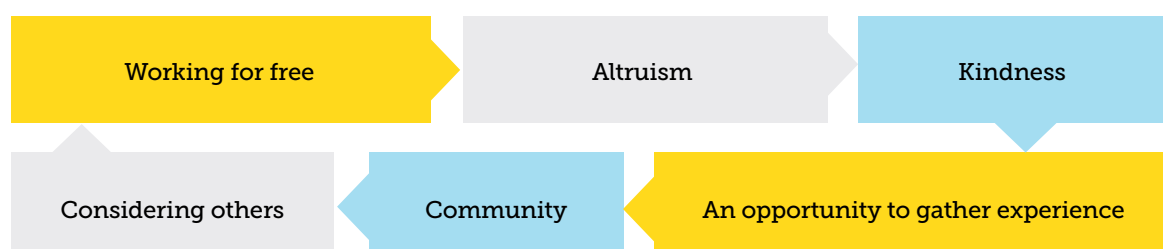
Orientation Aotearoa participants spoke about the idea of what being an 'adult' means to them. They viewed politicians as adults, who should behave like an 'adult'. There was an element of 'looking up' to the politician. This served to highlight the great gap between expectations of what an adult is. In this instance, the adult has the identity of the person who is in a position of influence over decisions or government policies. However, whether politicians behaved like adults was questioned...

I just felt disengaged. Now it's time to grow up & be engaged
- Emma, Orientation Aotearoa

I feel a lot of what we [think] as being politics, is children being really rude to each other, rather than than people talking about making laws that improve the lives of New Zealanders. It doesn't make me want to be a part of it - Emma & Rachel, Orientation Aotearoa

VOLUNTEERING

We asked students from Northland College what volunteering means to them:

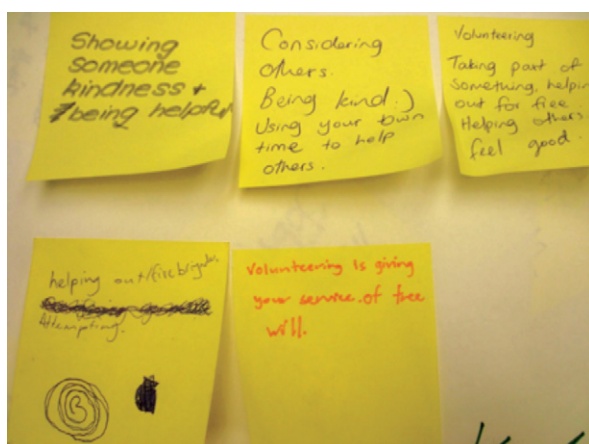


Volunteering is an active participatory way of making voices heard and contributing to society. 'Contributing to society' is interpreted as voluntary action to help people across a whole spectrum of activities; but voting is considered a different thing. This paradigm can teach youth that 'contributing to society' can begin with volunteering and grow into voting.

Volunteering is a positive path for youth to understand their contribution to society as an individual, whether through an organisation or by helping others out of goodwill.

People are volunteering to gain necessary skills, but these are not taught in school as an essential part of the conversation around citizenship. Connecting volunteering to voting as expressions of active citizenship can begin by volunteering and be expressed through voting.

articulating what else there is between cv-building and 'making a difference/ saving the world' feels super important
GENEVIEVE, 25



VOLUNTEERING IN RELATION TO SHAPING CAREER PATHS

Tell the minister that there needs to be more alternative education, a broader range that's not labouring... Opening it up to office admin, management. Maybe you were kicked out of school for having poor experiences rather than not having the skills needed - Vibe

I like this whole paragraph
GENEVIEVE, 25

Participants from both Vibe and Northland College recognised that the trade-based education that is being included in the NCEA curriculum and the Youth Guarantee initiative means they are needing to volunteer to gain administration and management skills. **This raises the question of how does incentivising leaving school earlier to enter a trade-based pathway inform an experience of active civic engagement? Does staying in school, in the democratic system where their engagement can be built upon, foster a positive experience of engagement? Youth look to volunteering as a way to gain these skills that are not accessible at school. If further development of the Youth Guarantee initiative takes place in the NCEA Qualification system, there will need to be an inclusion of administration and management skills to compliment trade-based skills, so young people do not feel like volunteering is the only way to gain these skills that are not accessible to them through the current education system.**

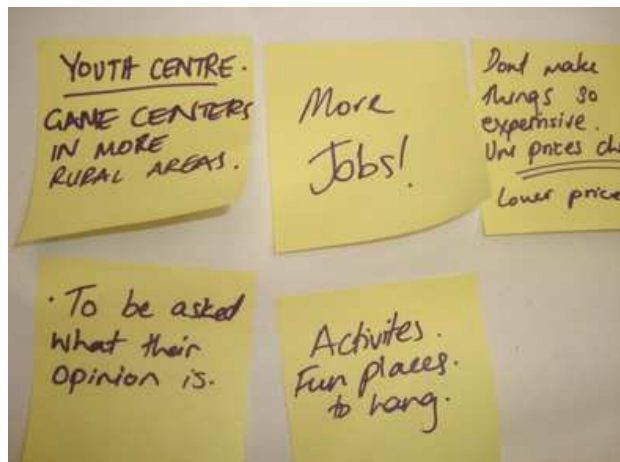
Young people may have a voice, but it is conditioned to be irrelevant to the decision makers, and so they channel their civic engagement into helping others, and gaining credentials to help them once they are older and entering the job market.

For a generation whose voice is not felt heard, there is a strong motivation for action-based movement.



▶ OVERARCHING QUESTIONS

We asked students from Northland College, what young people needed more of in life:



The Northland College participants had a strong understanding what young people need more of. Their responses demonstrated a high level of empathy towards needs *not* specific to their own situation.

Northland College students wrote down needs that matter to them, and it is evident their voice is reflective of the situation they are in, attending a decile-one school (Te Kete Ipurangi, 2015).



CITIZENSHIP VERSUS CIVICS

We investigated the difference in understanding between the word “civics” and “citizenship” through active listening exercises. The Orientation Aotearoa participants understood “citizenship” to mean their identity as a New Zealand citizen and told stories about moving to New Zealand and gaining citizenship legally. Whereas “civics” prompted stories of whether or not they or their friends voted or not, and how difficult it is to have your voice heard on issues you care about.

I’m really disengaged and apathetic. I have a really low sense of trust towards a system that serves individuals. My wellbeing is linked to my belonging to a community. I have a distaste to a community that large (the country). I experience these thoughts in a really strong way. I don’t know if that’ll change. I’m hungry to be part of a community. I don’t feel part of a country in the same way that I feel part of a community - Kane & Stanley, Orientation Aotearoa

Feels like the theory or concept, but doesn’t feel active. It doesn’t light my fire - Kate, Orientation Aotearoa



Cross-cutting themes

Voice:

- What are different ways of telling the world what you have to say?
- What does the Government need to know?
- Why does what you have to say matter?
- How do you feel when you express your opinion to teachers/student reps/bodies of authority/the Government?
- How is a connection fostered between having a voice and using it? Does this start with democratic systems in schools where youth are listened to and can see what happens with the school officials act on the collective youth voice?
- How do you instil in youth a feeling of confidence in their own voice, that their voice/opinion matters, even if it's only one in 4 million?

Um. Maybe they are right to think their voice doesn't matter? It's not just "instilling in them a feeling", their voice actually should matter KATE, 24

Vote:

- If how to vote, and how your single vote matters, was taught at high school, do you think if you had the knowledge you would feel more confident about voting in the elections?
- Would you vote if you were able to vote online?
- If there is an election next week, and given what you now know, would you vote?
- Do you feel prepared to vote?
- Is voting active participation any way - it is just a one off action. What does active participation mean?

Volunteering:

- What does 'contributing to society' mean to you?
- Do you feel like you are respected by people older than you when you volunteer and do good things for other people? How does that make you feel?
- Volunteering is the soil, voting is the tree that grows, voice is the branches that extend out to make changes to the system? Is this a useful metaphor?
- People are volunteering to gain necessary skills, are these not taught in school? Is an essential part of this conversation around citizenship about how volunteering and doing your bit is as important as voting – are you volunteering your voice?

This seems weird to me personally. I volunteer because of belief in the cause and a desire to help; gaining skills is just a bonus, not the core objective KATE, 24

- What if early negative experiences, for example in school settings, lower the likelihood of civic engagement later in life? If students are unable to make their voices heard in schools, then what does that indicate for their desire to make their opinions heard if they think it's not influential early on?
- How do youth reach a level of comfort to feel engaged and involved?
- What form of support and reassurance do youth need to feel safe enough to write down their feelings? It is evident from our sessions that a fostered sense of comfort and safety for young people to express their feelings and vulnerabilities was important.

Does being part of an organisation foster a high sense of wellbeing?

From our conversations with the youth participants, it is evident that many are having positive experiences of engagement. Early experiences of civic engagement play a major role in shaping the trajectory of civic engagement. Outside of family schools are the environment young people under 18 years spend most of their time. So experiences at school are very important in developing civic engagement. It is not just about the civics curriculum, but about how schools engage young people in the operation of the school. Government has a role to play in the expectations it sets for student engagement by Boards of Trustees and Principals. When schools and other government services connect well with young people, young people are more likely to feel connected to government. Civic engagement is a two way process.

Establishing connections is a crucial part of shaping this trajectory toward an active and robust democratic system; it's about creating relevance to the self to foster a relevance to society. It is about recognising a shift must take place, from passive engagement to active engagement by all New Zealand youth. Establishing positive values and attitudes towards civic engagement requires the government to recognise the **intrinsic** value of the voice of young people. An example of this is the relatability of policies advertised by parties during the election lead up to young people.

Word
GENEVIEVE, 25

The nationwide network ReGeneration was an active programme from the years 2009-2013, and provided young people the opportunity to engage with issues important to them and equip them with useful skill sets. Jill G. Hayhurst notes a "key aim of **ReGeneration**¹ is to connect people to people and people to place." (Hayhurst 2014). The model of how young people can become involved with civics by connecting young people with their immediate place used by ReGeneration is important to consider. This connection fostered by people and place provides a context and framework for how to go forward with civic engagement in New Zealand.

1. The project ReGeneration was created to support a new generation of 'young changemakers' in their transition from secondary education into work, further study and volunteering opportunities.



Next Steps

Bringing together these youth voices on the topic of civic engagement is just the first step of a longer process. It appears that the New Zealand Government has some promising early data on how engaged young people are in the traditional forms of civic engagement; for example, the Electoral Commission's data on voting patterns, (however this data set is not a complete picture). This consultation uncovered a number of key strategic questions about deeper cause and effect relationships between different experiences of civic engagement and citizenship across a young person's life. These ideas and possible links would need to be more significantly investigated before it would be possible to pilot and develop ground breaking or game changing initiatives to tackle the issues (see Appendix 5 for initiatives from around the world).

The bigger opportunity is to establish a cross-sector, diverse task force of New Zealanders to investigate the deeper issues impacting youth civic engagement and begin to prototype small possible solutions to the deeper issues. From our experience in Lifehack, we have the power of a “social labs” approach. This consultation is an effective starting point for an integrated approach to collaboratively creating solutions for all young New Zealanders. Beyond collaboration, it would also be advantageous to be experimental; another aspect of the “social labs” approach. As we move forward, we should look at assembling a task force of leading thinkers and actors in youth civic engagement to run small experiments and prototypes to test what works and what does not quickly.

In reality, what this could look like is a program of work over the course of a few months to begin to knit together the necessary stakeholders and establish a clear vision and goals for the work together. This work to prepare the “preconditions” of an experiment-driven, diverse task force could include bringing together resources from other organisations in a collective impact framework.

In order to take the voices of these young people off the shelf and off the pages of reports, we need to find ways of investing the time and resources in prototyping solutions to the deeper issues holding our young people back from showing civic leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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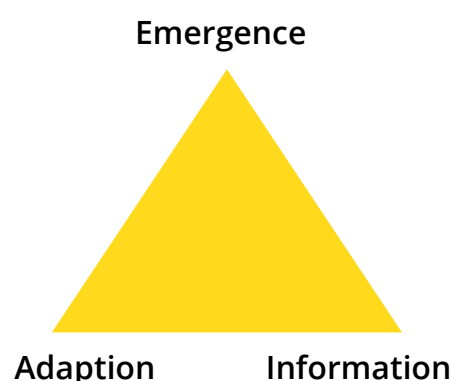
Appendices

Appendix 1. Social Labs Preconditions

Social Labs is an approach which is globally recognised as a way to address complex problems. Labs are designed to increase the likelihood of successfully addressing complex social issues, and as an alternative approach to centrally-driven and designed templates that are not informed by the complex lives people lead.

The Social Labs approach builds understanding and predictability in dynamic environments through real-world testing of concepts, instead of future forecasting best guesses. The approach does not pretend to have the answers typically laid out in strategic plans, instead it uses rigorous real-world testing and evaluation. We outline a number of capitals as a comprehensive way of measuring primary and secondary outcomes from a Social Lab approach. Government agencies have traditionally been held back from taking innovative, user-centred approaches to problems as funding structures required surety over outcomes and impact, despite the complexity of the environment programs operate in. This approach seeks to develop increased probability of outcomes, and a method to add rigour to the development of new interventions.

Social Labs are an approach particularly suited to navigating complex problems, as they work around three key characteristics: emergence, information, and adaption. This reflects the complexity of social issues, where there is constant, unpredicted change, a mass of confusing information including local and international research, conventional and social media, local stories, expert theories, data and web-based information. People are constantly adapting to what they're told, the changes around them, their own circumstance, their experiences and the needs of their families and communities.

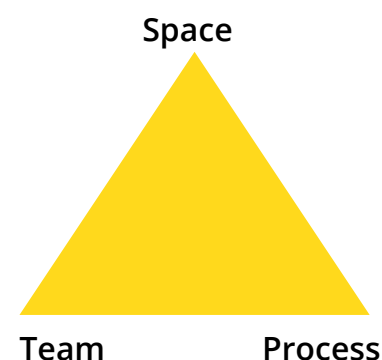


The [Rockefeller Foundation](#) and its research partner The Bridgespan Group, and organisations such as [UNICEF](#) and multinationals like [Unilever](#) are using a social labs methodology to work on wicked² problems like poverty, child malnutrition and conflict.

The author of the book “Social Labs Revolution”, Zaid Hassan, recommends the following three elements in building a plan for running a social lab.

2. “A wicked problem is a social or cultural problem that is difficult or impossible to solve for as many as four reasons: incomplete or contradictory knowledge, the number of people and opinions involved, the large economic burden, and the interconnected nature of these problems with other problems.” – Jon Kolko, Author of Wicked Problems

- **TEAM:** This must include a diverse group of individuals who each bring a different perspective to the table. The people the lab is working to change or support must be at the centre of the process, surrounded by stakeholders.
- **PROCESSES:** Teams need support with the *how*, including leadership, decision making, leadership, conflict resolution and steering through the process of creating and trialling new ways of working.
- **SPACE:** systemic action requires a space to support it - a social space for the team to work and an intellectual and social space which contributes to the thinking and growing of the lab approach.



Measuring outputs within a social labs approach

Assessing the impact of innovation programmes requires new frameworks of evaluation. We suggest the following as key indicators of success of a social innovation program, which leverage 15 years of experience of Reos Partners (a Social Lab consultancy). This framework captures both predicted and unpredicted outcomes which will inevitably be generated in any social innovation initiative.

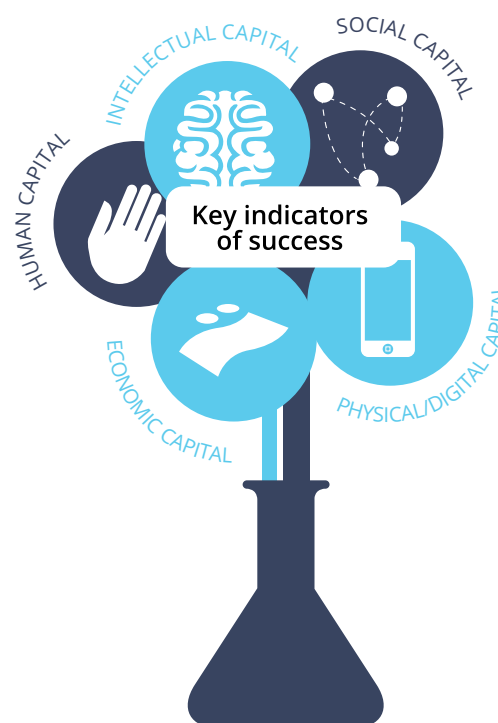
PHYSICAL CAPITAL – new services, products, prototypes or infrastructure.

HUMAN CAPITAL – new capacities and skills that people acquire throughout a process

SOCIAL CAPITAL – increased trust and collaboration that manifests itself amongst a group of people

INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL – any new knowledge, research, and insights generated during the programme by any participant.

ECONOMIC CAPITAL – new time, resources and capital leveraged, including pro-bono mentoring of teams, skilled volunteering hours, brokering funding relationships, attracting social impact investment, or enabling in-kind sponsorship



Appendix 2. Equipping Young People to Vote - An Interview Laura O'Connell-Rapira / RockEnrol, Action Station

We interviewed Laura as part of this project. Throughout her working life she's been working on increasing civic engagement through her activities with **RockEnrol** (a youth enrolment campaign started for the 2014 general election) and, more recently, **ActionStation** (an online platform for citizen-lead social change). What emerged from the interview was her experience and sense that 'people are feeling inadequately equipped to have a vote'. She refers to her own time at school, where she learnt about the set-up of Parliament, mentioning that she and her peers learnt about the logistics of voting, but not where to sit on the political spectrum. This made it harder to know how to apply their vote.



Appendix 3. The status of youth civic engagement

CIVIC ASPECTS	DATA
Voice	48% of New Zealand young people in a 2008 survey said they took part in decision making about how school was run
Volunteering	about a quarter of young people are engaged in formal volunteering with community organisations according to international research about half of young people help non family members
Voting	47 percent of young people aged 18-24 years who were eligible to vote voted in 2014.

Appendix 4. Raw data

All of the data from the workshops can be found [here](#).

Appendix 5. Inspiration from around the world

Good Spend Counter

Initiatives from around the world are demonstrating the ability to make their voices heard in different ways. New Zealand's on [Good Spend Counter](#), organised by Conscious Consumers, allows people to 'vote' for issues through the money they choose to spend.



Get The Mayor

'German city Heidelberg is giving citizens the chance to influence political decisions using the internet. Mayor Dr. Eckart Würzner is launching an online platform, [#GetTheMayor](#) ([#HolDenOberbuergermeister](#)), allowing residents to submit geo-located issues in order to help build a map of civic problems calling for attention across the city.

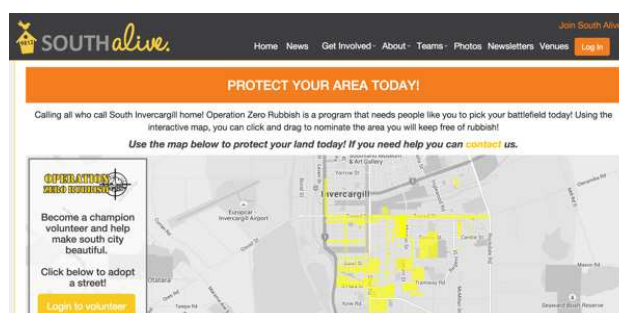
Users can suggest places for the mayor to visit or vote on other people's suggestions (which range from saving local parks to offering public transport to isolated communities). The most popular problems will be visited by the man himself, giving ordinary Germans the ability to influence the mayor's weekly schedule.'

<https://www.contagious.io/articles/get-the-mayor>

South Alive, Invercargill

'Calling all who call South Invercargill home! Operation Zero Rubbish is a program that needs people like you to pick your battlefield today! Using the interactive map, you can click and drag to nominate the area you will keep free of rubbish!'

<http://www.southalive.org.nz/OperationZeroRubbish>







LIFEHACK