

AOTEAROA + YOUTH DECLARATION

WHAKAPUTANGA RANGATAHI

2018



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ROLE OF THE DECLARATION

As a culmination of the opinions, ideas and passions of young New Zealanders, this Declaration is sent to Members of Parliament, local government bodies, NGOs, businesses, sponsors and other decision makers. There are Action Points for decision makers to follow after reading this document. The role of the Youth Declaration is to provide a youth voice for decision makers to use in their decision-making processes so that young peoples' views are incorporated in a meaningful way.

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FOREWORD

E ngā mātāwaka o te motu, tēnā koutou katoa,

This is the ninth Aotearoa Youth Declaration, and what started from humble beginnings has grown to a massive national event, this year is the biggest yet. This conference provides a platform for young people to express their views on issues of importance throughout New Zealand communities. The kaupapa of Aotearoa Youth Declaration 2018 is to empower rangatahi with the tools, knowledge and ability to be change makers and active citizens.

The Youth Declaration sets out a vision for Aotearoa, created by youth as a future society they want to live in. This document is the result of hours of hard work, discussions and debate from participants. It holds a collective youth vision for Aotearoa, covering all areas, from economic development to environment. It provides policy statements for decision makers, Members of Parliament, Councillors, Chief Executives, community leaders and groups, schools and whanau to refer to as a collaboratively made youth voice.

Often decision making processes do not meaningfully engage with young people, and often when young people are involved it is tokenistic or unvalued. Young people have a tremendous impact for change. They hold insights, ideas and opinions that should be valued, respected and incorporated in a meaningful way. Young people are valuable assets to communities, development, business and government, but are not utilised and valued in the way they should be.

The Youth Declaration is not only a tool for decision-makers to refer to and use, but it is also a framework for participants and their community to work from. At the conference, participants and volunteers came together in their regions to identify the biggest challenges in their communities and how to address them. Participants have begun planning and organising not only these community initiatives but how they are going to achieve the statements of the document as goals.

The kaupapa of Aotearoa Youth Declaration did not stay at the conference but will continue in the work that participants do after the conference. They are committed to sharing the Youth Declaration with as many people as possible. These rangatahi are not only the leaders of tomorrow but the leaders of today.

We hope that the work that began at Aotearoa Youth Declaration 2018 continues through you into communities so that we might all give our youth voice the weight it truly deserves.

Nāku i runga i aku mihi ki a koe,

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Aotearoa Youth Declaration 2018 Coordinator

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2018 Organising Committee

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WHAT IS AOTEAROA YOUTH DECLARATION 2018

Aotearoa Youth Declaration is UN Youth's flagship civics education conference. The conference aims to equip participating youth from all across Aotearoa with a deeper understanding of their place within their community and the ways they can actively contribute to it. Participants are guided by facilitators in small groups (focus groups), each centered around a different policy area.

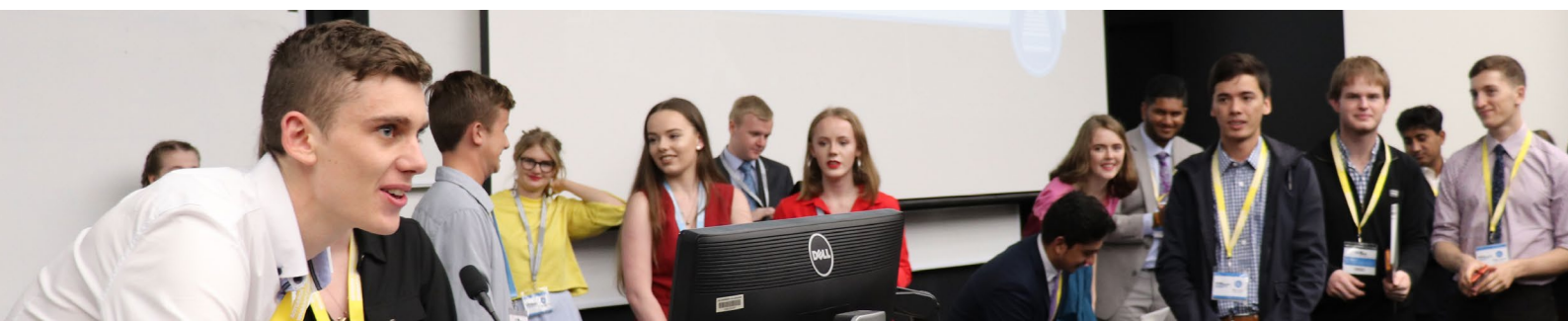
Over four days, they participated in workshops, visited various businesses and organisations, and heard from industry experts to further engage with their chosen topic. Participants then develop policy recommendations on the issues and areas most important to them. These are brought together in the Youth Declaration – this document that represents a youth voice.

More broadly, Aotearoa Youth Declaration is also about introducing young people to new experiences, new people and new opportunities. The event is not just for enthusiastic debaters or youth council members, but rather is for all young people from every corner of society. The conference helps participants find the issues they are passionate about, and shows them how they can express that passion through advocacy, volunteering or general community involvement. It is important to empower young New Zealanders to become conscientious citizens, aware of the influence their voice has upon the country. By challenging participants to tackle Aotearoa's biggest social, economic, and cultural issues, the conference provides young New Zealanders with the motivation to create positive change.

To increase rangatahi representation we introduced the Regional Hui programme. These are small scale Youth Dec events in different regions. We ran our first one in Kaitia in early February thanks to the support of Youth Innovations. Students discussed the biggest challenges and issues they see in our society and their community and created solutions to them. This information was brought to the conference for participants to engage with.

Aotearoa Youth Declaration was on the 12 to 15th of April 2018 at The University of Auckland. We would like to thank the Minister of Youth Development Hon Peeni Henare, the Minister for Children Hon Tracey Martin, the Hon Nikki Kaye and David Seymour for attending.

Thank you to the 70 tertiary volunteers that gave up their time, leadership and knowledge to make this event a reality.



FOCUS GROUPS

Focus Groups at Aotearoa Youth Declaration discuss content in their area and create policy statements that are then brought to a plenary of all participants to debate. In this declaration the statements are separated by Focus Group.

Each focus group spent four days exploring the issues and challenges within those topic areas before creating policy solutions to them with guidance from their Facilitators. We would like to thank the 16 Industry Speakers that came in to give insightful information about their experiences within particular industries relating to the Focus Group Topics. Participants also had the opportunity to go out into Auckland City to visit an organisation or business relating to their Focus Group. Thank you to the 16 organisations that held informative educational sessions at their offices, providing an inside look into these industries.

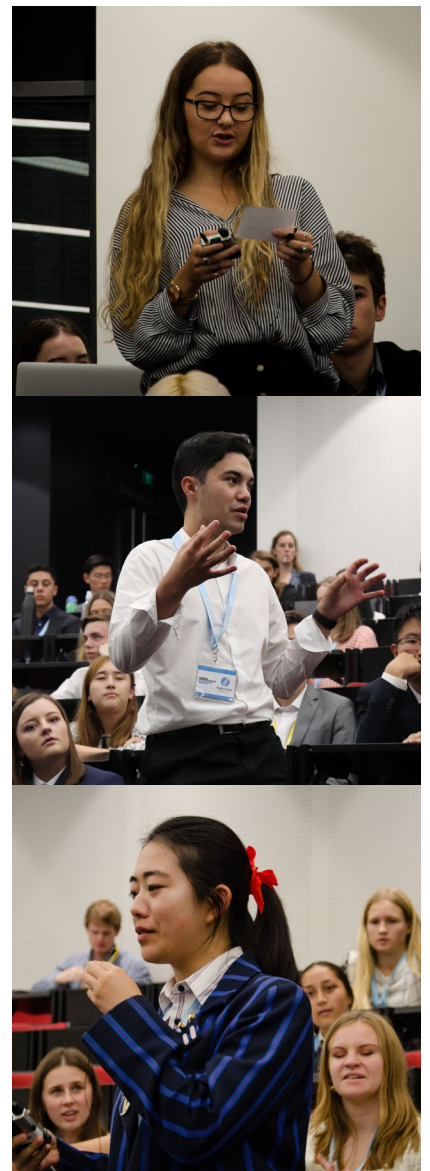
Our 16 Focus Groups in 2018 were;

Culture and Heritage	Economic Development
Education	Environment
Equity	Foreign Affairs
Governance	Hauora
Healthcare	Housing and Infrastructure
Justice	Media and Communications
Science and Technology	Innovation and Enterprise
Social Development	Youth Development



ACTION POINTS FOR DECISION MAKERS

- Read the Youth Declaration in detail, consider the vision for Aotearoa it holds.
- Consider how you can incorporate those ideas into your decision-making processes.
- Invite rangatahi to engage in your decision-making processes in a meaningful way.
- Share the Youth Declaration internally and with your staff - please CC our email address in when you pass it on: **ayd@unyouth.org.nz**
- Invite the Aotearoa Youth Declaration team to run presentations or workshops on the importance of youth involvement in decision-making processes. Contact them at **ayd@unyouth.org.nz**
- Share the Youth Declaration and video across your social media platforms - remember to use the hashtag **#youthdec18**



PARTICIPANTS

Organise a meeting with your local MP to discuss the Youth Declaration.

- You can find who your local MP is on the Parliament website.
- You can send an electronic copy along with the videos prior to the meeting or take a printed copy to personally present.
- You can discuss your experience at the conference, things you discussed in your focus group, what was discussed in plenary, and how these statements were created.
- Ask the MP how they are going to promote, share and uphold the Youth Declaration.
- Make sure you grab a photo! Send it to the Aotearoa Youth Declaration page and if you are posting it, use the hashtag **#youthdec18**

Organise a meeting with a Councillor or the entire Council.

- Contact information should be available on your Council's website.
- Send the Youth Declaration prior to the meeting so you can have a detailed conversation about specific points in the document.
- Ask how they can promote, share and uphold the Youth Declaration.
- Ask how they engage with youth in their decision-making processes and discuss how it can be improved.

Share the Youth Declaration with your school!

- You can do a presentation at an assembly or an article in the newsletter - share it with as many people as possible!

Share the Youth Declaration with your community groups, religious groups, whanau, or any other networks you are part of!

Beyond sharing the Declaration

- How are you going to achieve the statements in the Youth Declaration in your own lives or by working with other people?
- You have contact information about other participants in your region and information about how to start initiatives/address issues in your Conference Booklet. If you have any ideas or would like some support do not hesitate to contact us!
- Make sure you update us on what you have been working on.
- You can make submissions to your Councils or to Parliament on aspects in the Youth Declaration.



CULTURE & HERITAGE

1. Te Reo Māori, as an official and our indigenous language, is central to our identity and heritage. We endorse the compulsory learning of Te Reo Māori language and culture in primary school. We would like to see local iwi and local schools partnering to develop the teaching of Te Reo and tikanga in primary schools. Loss of language is parallel to loss of culture and we think action must be taken to revitalise the national taonga of Māori language and culture.
2. We would like a broader implementation of Whānau Ora in the sphere of social welfare. Welfare options are difficult to access for Kiwis. WINZ currently does not assess the personal hardships of individuals in the context of their cultural backgrounds, familial responsibilities and roles in their communities. A broader approach can allow support received from the state to sit alongside family support, empowering individuals and encouraging upward social mobility.

3. We see a need for the heritage and culture of all cultures in New Zealand to be fostered by a central organisation. We suggest the creation of a national culture and heritage organisation that brings together regional corporations that highlight the diversity of Aotearoa. New Zealanders should be able to remain connected to their roots while also appreciating the heritage of other cultures. This organisation should partner with local iwi to showcase the history and culture of Aotearoa.
4. We believe immigration is important to New Zealand's culture, heritage, and demographic make-up. We endorse:
 - a. Incentivising immigration to regions outside Auckland by changing current immigration regulations to offer non-financial incentives, such as increasing regional visa allowances;
 - b. The creation of a whānau buddy system, where families of different cultures can connect and exchange cultures with one another. Connecting people in this way will foster kotahitanga (the principle of unity and solidarity). We want to see total understanding and inclusion of all cultures, particularly immigrant, indigenous, and refugee cultures.
5. We promote the balanced portrayal of positive characters in New Zealand film, television shows and advertisements to dismantle racist stigmas within our society.





ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. We recommend the Government take action to address the root causes of the present levels of inequality, and to ensure that future growth is both inclusive and sustainable.
2. In order to alleviate poverty we support the Government in:
 - a. Investigating the use of a negative income tax to either replace or supplement the current transfer payments system as a simplification measure;
 - b. Increasing the minimum wage, but only in proportion to the rate of inflation so as to avoid unnecessary unemployment as a result of placing an excessive burden on employers.

3. The income tax rates should be amended by zero-rating the first \$10,000 earned, decreasing tax rates on those earning \$70,000-100,000 and increasing the rates on those earning greater than \$100,000. This should be done by introducing new tax brackets and the changes should be revenue neutral.
4. We support the Government's goal to reduce net debt to 20% of GDP, but we believe that the superannuation scheme should be changed to ensure the long-term sustainability of New Zealand's public finances.
5. We recommend the Government introduce a land value tax, whereby taxpayers can choose whether they are taxed on accrual or on a realisation basis (plus interest) with an exception for Māori customary land.
6. We support the Government agreeing to new Free Trade Agreements, and we believe that current intellectual property laws should be retained unless the benefits of the deal exceed the costs to New Zealanders.
7. We understand the benefits of closed-door negotiations and investor state dispute settlements with adequate exceptions provided for the interests of public health and security, but we encourage government to provide more time and resources so there can be more meaningful public debate.





EDUCATION

1. We encourage schools to consider education from a variety of perspectives, including Progressive Education. We want schools to operate beyond traditional formats, which includes:
 - a. Open access to devices, particularly in lower decile schools via increased government funding;
 - b. Further focus on subjects that endorse hands on learning and connectivity between related subjects;
 - c. Time set aside for students to independently select and pursue educationally productive projects.

2. We acknowledge the Government's intended review of the National Curriculum, and recommend:
 - a. The credits awarded by subjects be more proportional to workload, to avoid incentivising 'easy credit' subjects;
 - b. Increased subject standardization in both internal assessments and numeracy or literacy credits offered;
 - c. Increase subject diversity within the curriculum, including but not limited to and civics education, philosophy, cultural studies, Asian and multicultural studies.
3. We view quality professional development as fundamental to providing Aotearoa with empowering teachers and strongly encourage:
 - a. Schools implement professional development programmes, such as but not limited to Ka Hikitia;
 - b. Professional development in regards to multiculturalism to empathise with identities;
 - c. Teachers to embrace the digital age and undergo digital-specific training.
4. We recognise the obvious disparity and issues with educational accessibility. We strongly encourage a government review, seeking alternatives to:
 - a. Zoning, in order to better balance comfortable school size, freedom of school choice, and equity in the classroom;
 - b. The decile system, highly endorsing the anonymization of a schools decile rating.

5. We acknowledge the institutionalised issues facing indigenous students, and we deeply aspire to see these issues mitigated by means of:
 - a. A comprehensive implementation of Māori history and culture in the curriculum;
 - b. Increased government funding towards inter-school cultural events that celebrate indigenous cultures in particular.
6. We acknowledge the importance of streaming for excelling, proficient students, and particularly endorse:
 - a. Subject based streaming as opposed to streaming by overall performance and;
 - b. Increased tests and increased focus on past internal grades in determining said stream placement.
7. We request teacher wages are increased within the public school education system to encourage positive learning, and decrease New Zealand's current teacher shortage.





ENVIRONMENT

1. We want Aotearoa to be a world leader in mobilising action against climate change. We strongly endorse the implementation of the Zero Carbon Act and call upon the New Zealand Government to adopt more ambitious short-term targets under the Paris Agreement. New Zealand's Emission Trading Scheme must also be reformed to balance environmental and economic concerns and enhance accountability. We recommend the inclusion of agriculture in the scheme and the restriction of offshore carbon credits.
2. We acknowledge the significance of agriculture to Aotearoa's economy but its detrimental consequences require urgent action. We advocate for the cessation of agricultural expansion and dairy intensification. We recommend a shift in focus to enhancing agricultural efficiency and adopting more sustainable farming practices in line with circular economy. To enable this transition, we encourage greater government support and funding in collaboration with industry and iwi stakeholders.

3. We recognise our responsibility as kaitiaki of Aotearoa's biodiversity and the need to simultaneously protect our economy and national identity. We urge the preservation of native species and vulnerable ecosystems through increased funding towards the success of collaborative programmes such as Predator Free 2050. We strongly support the inclusive creation of new national parks and networks of marine reserves. This includes the increased protection of Great Barrier and creation of the Rangitahua Ocean Sanctuary.
4. We encourage New Zealand's transition to a circular economy and believe New Zealanders and businesses must be better enabled to adopt a zero waste paradigm. In order to achieve this, we urge the Government to:
 - a. Eliminate single use plastics following a similar process to the banning of microbeads in New Zealand;
 - b. Increase waste minimisation funding and subsidies;
 - c. Mandate the composting or donation of surplus food from businesses.
5. We demand a clean energy future for Aotearoa where diverse, culturally appropriate resource development is embraced at both the regional and national level. The transition towards 100% renewable electricity production is urgent, particularly a focus on increasing solar and wind infrastructure. We promote the use and subsidisation of local energy technologies such as micro wind turbines and solar systems positioned in public spaces as educational mechanisms for enhancing public engagement with sustainability issues.

6. We endorse the Environmental Education for Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan 2017-2021 and urge that strong governance is provided to enable progress and measure impact. We particularly support programmes such as Enviroschools which provide opportunities for experiential learning. We encourage a holistic approach which emphasises engagement with a diversity of perspectives, including mātauranga Māori.
7. We call on the Government to increase investment in infrastructure that supports and enables low carbon transport options. We want to see reliable public and shared transport alternatives, promotion of the cycle-share programme and implementation of safer bike lanes.
8. We urge the Government to increase research and development of low carbon fuel alternatives and the implementation of electric vehicles and other sustainable alternatives.





EQUITY

1. We believe it is difficult for those in the LGBTQIA+ community to express their identity and feel self-worth in employment or training. We expect workplaces to actively work with the Rainbow Tick organisation to better promote health and welfare to sustain healthy and emotional well being.
2. We request that the Health curriculum is updated to reflect the wide spectrum of sexual and gender identities in order to create an inclusive, safe, and positive environment for all students. We think this will help normalise attitudes towards individual and sexual diversity and lead to healthy relationships between young people.
3. We believe societal expectations of disability can negatively impact the mental wellbeing of those affected. We suggest the creation of educational media and resources to raise awareness about recognition and treatment of learning and physical disabilities.

4. We are concerned that a high proportion of youth go through the school system suffering from an undiagnosed learning disability (including but not limited to dyslexia, ADHD, and dyspraxia). We call for the Government to subsidise the diagnosis of learning disabilities along with the screening of primary aged children to promote early diagnosis and access to assistance for people from all socioeconomic backgrounds.
5. We think there is a lack of meaningful discussion and understanding in New Zealand about rape culture. We recommend a greater emphasis on removing damaging societal stigmas and promote discussion around issues such as sexual consent, rape and its impact, and sexual and domestic violence. It is instrumental that victims feel safe and respected in detailing and sharing their experiences.
6. We think there are issues regarding accessibility and distribution of benefits in the social welfare system. We urge that the criteria are changed to allow greater access to vulnerable people in need of additional resources to attain a healthy living standard.
7. We believe there is insufficient education on New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) to create an inclusive environment for those with hearing impairments. We call for a greater accessibility to resources for learning NZSL to prevent social exclusion of the hearing impaired.





FOREIGN AFFAIRS

1. We think New Zealand's independent foreign policy is increasingly relevant as the interests of our strategic partners continue to diverge. We see New Zealand having a constructive role in intergovernmental organisations. Simultaneously, we support policy in the pursuit of development of New Zealand's relationships with member states of the Commonwealth in multiple fora, including but not limited to;
 - a. Economic, in the form of Free Trade Agreements;
 - b. Security, in the form of emboldened collaborative defence arrangements; and
 - c. Immigration, in the form of exploration into the potential for freer movement between their citizens.

2. New Zealand has a pivotal responsibility to maintain and develop relationships with fellow Pacific Island nations. We have common cultures and should utilise measures within the Commonwealth, connections with organisations, aid and diplomatic presence to further our common interests.
3. In the past, New Zealand has been a leader in world issues. We want to see this role continue through:
 - a. Greater commitment to addressing climate change and implementing sustainable development within New Zealand;
 - b. Encouragement for the international community to move toward sustainable models of development;
 - c. Maintained public interaction with our programmes in the Antarctic.
4. Further developing our precedent for a defined stance on world issues, we encourage New Zealand to continue to hold states to account in circumstances of proven violations of international law, especially proliferation of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, and encouraging other states with common interests to do likewise.
5. We endorse the continued funding and support of ethical and accountable non-governmental organisations that provide aid to the refugee crisis. We also see a need to address root issues of displacement such as climate change and conflict. Finally, we would like an increase to New Zealand's refugee quota.

6. We recognise the importance of the New Zealand Navy in relation to our extensive exclusive economic zone. We strongly suggest increasing the funding and functionality of the New Zealand Navy, in order to better equip them to carry out their role in the areas of: interaction with the Antarctic; humanitarian aid peacekeeping; search and rescue; defence agreements; and Pacific development.
7. We want to see more public awareness of the New Zealand Government's actions, particularly in the area of foreign policy. To that end, we encourage;
 - a. Greater publicity and media awareness of New Zealand's international interactions, including its contributions to intergovernmental organisations, particularly through social media;
 - b. More active promotion of engagements and events facilitated by foreign diplomatic missions and immigrant communities;
 - c. Investigation into the potential introduction of a New Zealand Youth Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly, to encourage youth political engagement and participation.





GOVERNANCE

1. We recognise that the current voting age is at 18 years old. However, we strongly encourage that civics education should be actively endorsed within schools, after which lowering the voting age to 16 should be explored.
2. We recommend retaining the current system of Māori electoral seats while investigating more effective and democratic methods of ensuring Māori representation.

3. We advocate for greater awareness and prominence of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti, including:
 - a. Partnership;
 - b. Duty of active protection of Māori people by the Crown;
 - c. Right to redress in the event of a Treaty breach;
 - d. Right of the Crown to govern;
 - e. Recognition of Māori rangatiratanga over Māori land and culture.
4. We recommend giving prisoners the right to vote, with the exception of prisoners who have committed serious crimes including but not limited to:
 - a. Murder;
 - b. Aircraft hijacking;
 - c. Manslaughter;
 - d. Terrorism.
5. We recommend lowering the MMP voting threshold to 3.4% (4 seats), to gain wider representation of minority opinions. We think the purpose of democracy is to uphold minority viewpoints as much as to allow the rule of the majority.
6. Participants were divided on whether New Zealand should adopt a codified constitution. Some participants opposed a written constitution as they thought it would prevent future evolution of New Zealand's governing arrangements, particularly the role of the Treaty, while others were for it as they believed a written constitution could provide greater accountability on decision-makers.



HAUORA

1. We encourage the Government to the Te Whare Tapa Whā model at the forefront of policy considerations. A holistic approach is required to hauora and well-being to ensure equitable outcomes and reduce potential stigma around service utilisation.
2. Mental illness touches many across New Zealand society, particularly youth, the elderly, LGBTQIA+, and other vulnerable groups. The Government has a key role in funding and providing mental health services. We want to see equity in care and recognition that mental health is of equal importance to physical health.

3. We strongly urge the Government to address youth mental health through all means available. In particular we would like to see the implementation of:
 - a. In-school, targeted mental health education to equip students with tools and skills to recognise mental illness, cope, and remove stigma around mental health;
 - b. Yearly mental health check-ups by external mental health professionals in schools.
4. We believe drug use and addiction is a hauora issue as opposed to a justice issue. We recommend that drug use is decriminalised, while its production and distribution remains a criminal offence. In addition, we urge increased funding and support in rehabilitation for victims of drug abuse.
5. Obesity is widespread in New Zealand, and we see diet as key to the problem and solution. We recommend that the Government:
 - a. Encourage and support community vegetable gardens;
 - b. Remove GST from fresh fruits & vegetables;
 - c. Implement a limited tax on certain products high in sugar;
 - d. Regulate food options available in school canteens; and
 - e. Include compulsory healthy food and lifestyle education in school curricula.

6. We believe advertising contributes to unhealthy behaviours and cultures in society. To reduce these effects, we call on the Government to:
 - a. Ban advertisements for alcoholic beverages in public spaces and media; and
 - b. Increase advertising regulations for unhealthy and harmful foods, substances, and practices.
7. We believe the right to bodily autonomy should be respected for all individuals and supported by our institutions. We urge the Government to remove abortion from the Crimes Act 1961, and provide easier access to abortion and post-abortion support, for people of all socio-economic backgrounds, through:
 - a. Greater information regarding options;
 - b. Better physical access to facilities; and
 - c. Expanding eligibility criteria.
8. We think the current Health Star Rating system doesn't go far enough and would like the government to take steps to ensure that:
 - a. Foods high in saturated fat, sugar or sodium cannot receive a high health star rating;
 - b. Foods that are specifically marketed to children receive and present health star ratings on all packaging;
 - c. Companies can't claim high ratings based on mixing their products with something more nutritious.



HEALTHCARE

1. We believe that the tikanga principle whanaungatanga should be embodied by the New Zealand Healthcare system. This can be achieved by:
 - a. Fostering meaningful relationships between Primary Health Organisations (PHO) and the communities with shifting demographics;
 - b. District Health Board conducting their financial procedures with transparency.
2. We recognise the tikanga principle utu to acknowledge the contribution registered Nurses have made towards New Zealand society. We advocate for a complete review of the working conditions of Nurses. We want to see a more equitable and safe working environment for nurses with reducing working hours and increased pay that is proportional to workload.

3. We call for an increase in funding for grassroot medical non-governmental organisations within New Zealand, as acknowledgement of their effective initiatives. We would like to see incentives for more non-governmental organisations to be established that can give aid to the most disenfranchised communities.
4. We recognise that, under the current financial framework, District Health Boards cannot address the current range of issues faced by our generation. We urge more financial provisions are made, including:
 - a. Fully funded charitable emergency ambulance organisations;
 - b. Subsidised Mental Health Services for over 18.
5. We reaffirm the responsibility of the Crown in protecting the interests and health of tangata whenua, under Article 3 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. To prevent disparities within the healthcare system, we call for increased attention to minority groups who are vulnerable to preventable diseases and increased subsidies for non-communicable disease screening and treatment.
6. We think our current legal, political and medical frameworks cannot tackle the exponential growth of illegal drug use within New Zealand. We suggest illegal drug use is decriminalised and Supervised Consumption Facilities are introduced in affected areas in New Zealand.
7. We emphasise the importance of accessible medication, especially for those who are heavily reliant on a specific treatment. Therefore we call for the New Zealand Government to create policies that both:
 - a. Prevent the monopolisation of the pharmaceutical market from private financial interests;
 - b. Allow for more research for new alternative treatments such as medical cannabis.
8. We stress the need for more accessibility to gender reassignment surgeries and hormone therapy for the transgender community of Aotearoa. We would like to avoid harm to individuals seeking cheaper alternatives, in countries such as Thailand, who may receive services from surgeons without professional qualifications.

BRAINSTORMING

During breaks in the conference schedule participants were encouraged to brainstorm on whiteboards that proposed questions - here is a selection of what was said.

**If you were in a position of power,
what would you change?**

"I wouldn't write off the voices of those who can't or won't vote."

"I would implement a sugar tax and remove GST from fruit, veg, milk etc., so that low income families can provide their children with nutritious food instead of sugar, fat, and other junk."

"Give women the right to a choice that isn't illegal."

"Standardised testing in schools."

"The introduction of civics education, not only in schools but also in the workplace."

"Less focus on STEM, more on arts and the humanities. Encourage freedom of thought, and teach via socratic method."





What is something I wish decision-makers knew about me?

"Your decisions affect us more than they affect you."

"That the stereotypes of apathetic teenagers are not true."

"I am often more informed than you think."

"That the best thing a teacher can do is care for me personally and let me know I am worth their time."

"The reason most of us aren't involved with politics is because we don't know how to be, not because we don't want to be."

"Youth have mature and valid opinions."

"I am a minority and I care!"

"We are humans like you."

"It is our future you are making decisions about, not yours."

"We are allowed to not feel ok, and are allowed to have strong opinions and controversial thoughts."

"That we have a voice and want to use it."

"That I am not addicted to social media."

"I am different - we don't all fit into the same box."

"I don't want you to be selfish."

"Don't look down on us because of our age."

"We are not tools - stop trying to convert us to your beliefs."

"Being young does not mean we are incapable of knowing what is best for us."

"My mental illness can't be defined by statistics on their own."



INFRASTRUCTURE & HOUSING

1. We recommend housing developments build up into high-density areas, such as apartments, to future-proof our cities and create more affordable housing. We think Kiwibuild's emphasis on building sprawling suburban houses rather than on central city apartments is not a sustainable long-term solution. We understand the 'Quarter Acre Dream' is important to many Kiwis, but think we need to be looking to high-density residential housing that is energy efficient, environmentally sustainable, community-focused and facilitates less car-focused cities.
2. We want accessible and affordable housing. We recommend first home buyers are prioritised for entry-level properties, and that foreign investment can only be directed into high rise apartments. We would like it to be easier for first-home buyers to break into the market and prevent low and middle income earners moving out of main centres.

3. We encourage more foresight to ensure lasting quality and versatility of transport, particularly in regard to future technologies like autonomous systems. We recommend infrastructure investment consider:
- a. The potential of rail freight becoming obsolete, due to future technologies which would require high quality roading
 - b. which can be shared by all vehicles;
- Urban infrastructure, specifically future planning for population growth.
4. We acknowledge that the poor housing standards and decreasing livability in some parts of the country is driving us to impulsively and unsustainably build large numbers of free standing homes with no future planning. We propose;
- a. Improving the minimum housing and building standards to promote high rise buildings, and increase lasting livability, appeal, worth, and sustainability in the introduction of government housing schemes.
 - b. Implementation of a nationwide housing warrant of fitness on both private and social rental housing sectors.
5. We are excited that the Christchurch rebuild is a chance to reimagine how we build and live in cities. We hope to see the Government and Christchurch City Council learn from urban planning mistakes of the past, improve existing infrastructure and use innovative human centred design for urban spaces. We also wish to see construction follow international earthquake proofing best-practice to make Christchurch the most functional, liveable city possible.
6. We would like to see infrastructure investment attuned to future developments like projected population growth or a future aging population. We don't want to see repeats of the current situation in Queenstown which needs urgent infrastructure support to accommodate its growing population.

7. We lament the neglect of infrastructure investment outside urban areas. We advocate the Government introduces incentives for businesses and residents to move to rural areas, by:
 - a. Investing in neglected service infrastructure in rural areas such as water, power and internet where these areas are lacking;
 - b. Increasing public transport links in city fringes that are currently being cut off from city centres.
8. We think the traffic woes in major New Zealand cities would be alleviated if more investment went into public transport. We would like New Zealand to build on the success of recent public transport projects such as the Northern Busway and Train Electrification in Auckland and:
 - a. Invest in public transport capacity, such as in the form of the Third and Fourth mains or Light Rail in Auckland,
 - b. Prevent significant underestimates in passenger traffic that have occurred in the past modelling of public transport projects, namely the Northern Busway and Train Electrification projects, in future and current investment into public transport infrastructure, such as the City Rail Link project in Auckland
 - c. Increase public consultation on future transport projects to attract public opinion that benefits the quality of outcomes





INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE

1. We suggest a legal business definition for 'social enterprise' to mitigate the current limits to growth. To allow for social enterprises to have a more widespread impact, we suggest a legal definition that includes:
 - a. Business objectives being outlined and approved through application;
 - b. A requirement that profit is not a primary objective;
 - c. Tax exemptions and broader investment conditions all monitored by a reporting system on financial and social goals.

2. We believe the lack of innovation within New Zealand industries, such as dairy, could lead to future market stagnation and economic difficulty. We advise the tax credit initiative implemented by the Government in 2008/2009 is extended to provide tax credits to companies that are using research and development (R&D) to improve their efficiency and sustainability. We see this as a cost-effective measure for government to encourage innovation.
3. New innovations such as blockchain, automation and AI have the potential to both transform the efficiency of New Zealand enterprise, and disrupt the future of jobs. We call on the Government to make upskilling and retraining accessible for youth and the existing workforce so our population can adapt. We suggest:
 - a. Adapting existing Polytechnic programmes
 - b. Changing student loans and support requirements to increase accessibility for mature students
4. We want to see government-funded incubators to support growth of SMEs (Small to Medium Enterprises) beyond the initial start-up phase (defined as registering the business). In particular, support should be provided to SMEs affected by disruption from large national and international companies. Providing SMEs with similar innovation, community spaces and resources as start-up incubators will help New Zealand businesses stay competitive against international pressure.
5. We suggest increasing promotion of innovation based development schemes and the creation of country specific conversion processes for qualifications. This will help resolve the skill shortages identified by the 2018 revision of the New Zealand immigration skill shortage list. If we invest in the necessary workers, they will invest in New Zealand.

6. New Zealand has potential to be a great testing environment for new products and services. We recommend corporate tax rates for entry “tester” businesses are assigned revenue-based tax brackets. For example, one model could be for businesses with an annual income under \$100k to have a corporate tax rate of 12.5%, and all those earning over \$100k taxed at the normal rate of 28%. We also propose “tester” businesses are given access to a pool of highly-skilled New Zealanders in various fields and assistance to establish an HQ in New Zealand, to enable long-term international links for New Zealand businesses.
7. We suggest the government supports innovation in sustainable and regenerative technologies to further the impact of the Zero Carbon Act and other environmental initiatives. We want to see more open syndicated government contracts aimed at stimulating environmental research and innovation, and the establishment of government involved joint ventures for increasing innovation in the environmental sector.





JUSTICE

1. We recommend an opt-out system for vaccinations. Educational material should be provided if individuals wish to opt out, then the onus of proof of having informed reason to opt-out is on the individual.
2. We value individual autonomy for those able to express their consent only when the physical risk is isolated to them. Where the impact will go beyond the individual, we value the place of paternalism of the state.
3. We recognise the need for incarceration as a means of protection for members of the public, and we reaffirm the importance of the preservation of judges' discretion. However, we would like the Three Strikes Law to be adapted to incrementally decrease opportunities for rehabilitation with each strike instead of increasing punitive measures.

4. We see disparities in the accessibility of equitable legal aid. To combat this, we suggest that:
 - a. Law firms be assigned minimum pro bono time proportionate to the size of their firm;
 - b. All lawyers be encouraged to complete limited retainer (“unbundled”) legal services.
5. We value the principles of tikanga and its humanising impact on the adversarial nature of the court system. We suggest that tikanga principles be integrated in courts beyond Rangatahi Youth Courts, in ways that are harmonious with the values tikanga shares with other cultures of Aotearoa’s multicultural society.
6. We think that prison populations are at a crisis point and solutions are required. In the short-term, we think correctional facilities need to expand to address immediate overpopulation and reduce the number of people in remand by considering alternatives to incarceration. In the long-term, we value a focus on prevention and rehabilitation (e.g. community service) for victimless crimes, rather than a reactionary policy in regards to vulnerable people within the justice system.
7. We encourage a greater focus on increasing resources to support mental health in prisons, as it creates barriers to rehabilitation. We recognise the path to rehabilitation begins within the prison.





MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

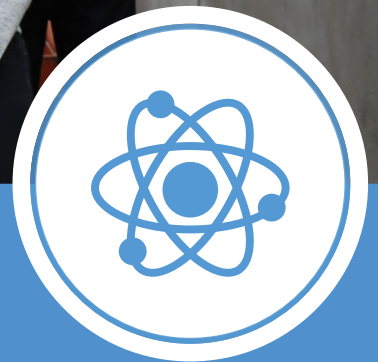
1. We are concerned that New Zealanders do not know how much of their personal data, including private messages, call logs, etc., is being gathered. Enterprises and organisations do not make clear which information is handed over. We would like to see online enterprises being transparent with users about specific details of what data they are collecting and how it is being used, as well as who will have access to it.
2. We acknowledge the increasing power that media platforms such as YouTube have over the incomes of young and diverse content creators, and small local businesses. These creators are at risk of (further) having their primary incomes impacted as a result of policy changes on these platforms. We therefore urge these platforms to comply with the spirit of Aotearoa employment law, specifically regarding protections from discrimination and termination without notice.

3. We encourage the continued cooperation between the Government and private entities to enable affordable and secure private internet connections to low socio-economic communities. We want to see equal opportunities for all to engage with information and online services.
4. We are concerned about the fall of journalistic integrity, and its consequences on the spread of false information. We encourage the Government to educate the public about the integrity of information sources through educational campaigns to combat misinformation.
5. We acknowledge that the media have a strong influence on the perspective of today's youth, contributing to misinformed or misguided biases. As such, we believe that the media has a responsibility to make clearly publicly accessible:
 - a. The content author's affiliations and associations;
 - b. The overall nature of the content e.g., opinion, sponsored content;
 - c. Their sources of revenue and sponsors if applicable.
6. We believe generalisations and stereotypes in the media affects the quality of life minorities who are misrepresented. Therefore, we urge media producers to include genuine diversity and positive representations of minorities in their content. Positive representations will show young people who are part of minority groups that they are celebrated by society.





SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY



1. We are concerned by the underrepresentation of women, Māori, Pacific Islanders, LGBTQIA+ and other minorities in STEM fields, and we suggest that proportional representation be achieved by methods such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Exposing children at a younger age to STEM subjects, to challenge the current social perceptions of STEM as options for a future career;
 - b. Increased media representation for minorities in STEM.
2. We believe every student should have the opportunity to pursue quality STEM education regardless of socio-economic or regional differences. A substantial portion of STEM education in New Zealand takes the form of private initiatives or extracurriculars, which are not universally accessible. We advocate for nationwide publicly funded STEM initiatives focused on accessibility.

3. We think children should be exposed to scientific ideas with an emphasis on inquiry, discussion, collaborative learning and critical thinking. We encourage the Ministry of Education to develop the curriculum to ensure that STEM subjects teach these skills, and have a more holistic approach.
4. We recognise that sustainable technologies will underpin industries of the future. We urge the promotion and development of sustainable technologies so that we may uphold the tikanga principle of kaitiakitanga and protect the taonga of Aotearoa, through:
 - a. Encouraging industries such as nanotech, software, and specialised industry through investments and preferential policy;
 - b. Working to ultimately make sustainable industries the backbone of the economy and preserve taonga by aiming for a significant but gradual reduction of polluters in the dairy and meat industry;
 - c. The development of new farming methods and technology to reduce the environmental impact of unsustainable industries.
5. We think that some jobs require human interaction. Automation is growing exponentially, bringing both benefits and challenges, including the loss of jobs in some sectors. We suggest:
 - a. Educating people on harder to automate skills in areas such as creativity, collaboration and critical thinking, at a younger age. We encourage the educating of these skills, especially at secondary school level;
 - b. Proactively exploring and supporting the creation of jobs based upon newly available technology.

6. We believe that the privacy and data of New Zealanders should be a greater concern of the Government, and we are uncomfortable with our data being collected and sold. We should be able to trust that our decision to opt-out of data collection is respected. Furthermore, we believe that terms and conditions should be more transparent, and this can be achieved by:
 - a. Limitations on the length of terms and conditions agreements;
 - b. A requirement that each agreement is understandable for the average reader.
7. We recognise science is a complex topic that may be hard to communicate with audiences. The media often misrepresents scientific topics for commercial or entertainment purposes. We would like to see a publicly funded independent organisation that holds the media and individuals accountable for inaccurate or misleading scientific claims.





SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1. We think equitable and easy access to social services is important. We recommend the Government collect thorough statistics to recognise where these values are not being met. We want situations of inequality and inconvenience to be addressed.
2. We are concerned that domestic violence cases in New Zealand will continue to go untold and unsolved, as currently 76% of cases are unreported. We believe it is the right of the children of Aotearoa to have consistent and compulsory wānangatanga to help them prevent, recognise, report and eliminate abuse in our communities. We want to prevent normalisation of a culture of abuse.
3. We recommend that the current reporting periods for victims of sexual harassment of 90 days in the Employment Relations Act 2000 and 12 months in the Human Rights Act 1993 are significantly extended. Many victims need more time to report their grievances.

4. We are concerned with the lack of awareness about the current state of the foster care system in Aotearoa. We strongly endorse measures which will ensure our rangatahi have a safe and secure upbringing including, such as, but not limited to:
 - a. Undertaking measures to expand understanding of the severity of issues in foster care, especially within the Government;
 - b. Improving the adequacy of foster care services;
 - c. Establishing a support system for parents whenever possible to ensure the isolation of children from their families and communities is a last resort.
5. We stress the value of high quality integration services for refugees being implemented in Aotearoa. Integration services should aim to maintain personal culture and beliefs while adapting to a lifestyle in the New Zealand system to help cope with newfound freedom. With whānaungatanga in mind, we aim to achieve positive resettlement outcomes through accessibility to these services.
6. Aotearoa is a nation where many social issues exist under the radar, disadvantaging many of these people we cherish as a nation. We believe that the best way to address this is through relevant education of our youth as a preventative measure.
7. Aging populations impact future generations. We recommend the government increase the age of entitlement to superannuation to 67, within a reasonable timeframe.





YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

1. We stress that the Government encourage civic engagement in Aotearoa's rangatahi by:
 - a. Contracting the Electoral Commission to facilitate compulsory politically neutral civics education in secondary schools, with a focus on how electoral and parliamentary systems work, and;
 - b. Incorporating civics education into cultural and religious activities and/or organisations targeted at Māori and Pasifika youth. We want to boost engagement in this under-represented demographic, but also ensure rangatahi can make informed, educated decisions.

2. We stress the need for the Government to provide greater access to emotional and mental health guidance for rangatahi, especially within at-risk Māori and Pasifika communities. We endorse volunteer organisations that connect young people in the same community experiencing similar difficulties. We support existing community programmes such as Do Good Feel Good in Mangere who develop youth-led responses to improve the hauora of rangatahi in the area through mentoring support.
3. We are appalled by our high mental illness and suicide rate and thereby support the Ministry of Health's Mental Health Enquiry, especially regarding its focus on equity of access to quality mental health services. We hope the Enquiry will call upon the Government to reduce negative stigma around mental health and further increase awareness and understanding of existing services, such as YouthLine, LowDown, and Kapiti Youth Support.
4. We call upon the Government to fully subsidise public transport for primary and secondary school students in order to make attending school more feasible for all rangatahi. We believe that by increasing accessibility to education, rangatahi will be more enabled to reach their full potential.
5. We strongly urge the Government to implement a nationwide nutrition programme which provides both education on nutrition and provides primary school and early childhood education students with healthy lunches. We support the work of existing campaigns such as Fonterra Milk for Schools, KidsCan: Food for Schools, and Eat Right Be Bright. We believe children are entitled to receive adequate nutritious food and clean drinking-water, and to have knowledge of nutrition as emphasised by Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

6. We strongly urge the compulsory establishment and implementation of youth panels for each district council, with a focus on smaller towns and cities and where there are youth of minority backgrounds. We recognise current efforts of youth councils and other organisations that non-tokenistically engage rangatahi in order to mitigate the issue of youth disengagement in local and national decision making which affects them.
7. We stress the need for youth spaces in all communities in Aotearoa that facilitate programs which mitigate youth unemployment and encourage educational participation, while maintaining a relationship with a local youth mental health service providers. We believe these spaces are a hub where young people feel safe, welcomed and valued as a member of the community and where they can also connect with fellow rangatahi.



AOTEAROA YOUTH DECLARATION 2018 WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL OUR OUTREACH HOSTS AND INDUSTRY SPEAKERS FOR THE VALUABLE INSIGHT THEY PROVIDED TO THE FOCUS GROUPS.

Auckland Art Gallery
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Ministry of Youth Development



**MINISTRY OF
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

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