



BUILDING PROJECT PROGRAMME REVIEW

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EMPOWERED TO THRIVE

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CONTENTS

i Executive Summary

- i Purpose of the Building Project Programme
- i Insights for the BPP from the literature
- ii The value or added benefit of the Building Project Programme to the grantee
- iv Insights and recommendations

1 Introduction

- 2 Purpose of research and method

4 What the literature says about building programmes

- 4 Literature about place making and the role of infrastructure
- 6 Literature about the distances people travel to community buildings
- 7 Literature about equity and the role of infrastructure

9 The experiences of building grant recipients'

- 9 About the building grants
- 11 The people and structures surrounding the grant recipients
- 13 How the grantees ensure financial sustainability of the building project
- 14 Composition of the project funds and leveraging others

16 Effecting positive social change by strengthening community organisations - outcomes

- 20 Grant recipient's resilience and long-term orientation
-

23	Strengthening organisations by being strong grant makers
28	Building Project Programme data analysis
29	Findings
36	Conclusions and Recommendations
36	The value or added benefit of the programme to the grantees
37	How Rātā funding benefited communities of need and what outcomes have the grants contributed towards
38	What works well about Rātā processes
38	The outcomes of the building project grant
39	Who are the communities that have been served, what can we learn about who uses the facilities and how often.
40	Challenges for Rātā and BPP grantees
40	Recommendations
41	References

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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Building Project Programme

The Rātā Foundation Building Projects Programme (BPP) sits within Rātā's Proactive Grants programme. The programme was last reviewed in 2019. In 2022, the BPP was re-focused towards supporting tangata whenua and community organisations to be as effective as possible. Rātā Foundation (Rātā) wanted to:

- Enable equitable access to community buildings in areas of high need
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Recognise the special role that Marae play in supporting community cohesion.

This report explores the effectiveness of this new focus for the BPP. Rātā want to understand how the building grant has helped grant recipients to reach vulnerable communities, and the real-world challenges faced by grant recipients with their building projects.

The BPP funds across Rātā's Funding Areas: Connect, Learn, Participate, Support and Sustain. Funding building projects aligns with the purpose of these funding areas to increase cultural and community connection by funding community centres, marae, health services, education centres and other community buildings. The focus is on reaching those people and places who experience barriers to access and most need support.

The research includes a literature scan, semi-structured interviews and analysis of grant applications over two time periods (2019-2022; and 2023- May 2024).

Insights for the BPP from the literature

Literature related to place making, equity and the role community buildings was scanned to provide an evidence base for this research, reaching these conclusions:

- Community buildings contribute to a sense of place, with an important goal being to create a place that has both a strong sense of community and a comfortable image, as well as a setting, activities and uses that collectively add up to something more than the sum of its often-simple parts. This is easy to say, but difficult to accomplish. Places thrive when users have a range of reasons to be there...cultivating a dense and diverse mix of uses, perhaps 10+ uses (PPP, downloaded 2024).
- Community building projects can strengthen communities through contributing to a sense of place. Clustering uses or services together into community hubs can facilitate the co-location and co-delivery of services, with community organisation taking a holistic and whānau-centred approach. There are strong links between socioeconomic disparities, physical inactivity, and



poor health. Individuals experiencing poverty, value and engage in a variety of free and affordable leisure activities. But they are not afforded the necessary leisure opportunities, accommodations and supports as the general population (Cantor, et al, 2022, p.1).

- Marae and other community buildings contribute to a sense of place. Marae provide a context for revitalisation of te reo Māori tikanga and a range of cultural practices. They are important centres for recreation and leisure, as well as social services (Ihi, 2017). For rangatahi wellbeing is embedded in culture (Fox, 2018; Houkamau, 2011).

The value or added benefit of the Building Project Programme to the grantee

Rātā lends credibility to projects and attracts co-funding

The Rātā BPP contributes to communities who need the grant when they most need it. The programme is often an early contributor to a building project, increasing the credibility of the project and attracting other funding into the project. For example, a sports club was able to apply to another community fund to complete the fundraising they needed to upgrade their facilities.

Rātā is proactive and seeks projects that fit the new criteria

The Rātā team proactively engages with communities to identify building projects that fit their new criteria. They create packages of support for eligible projects before, during and after the build. For example, for a Māori medium preschool, Rātā supported the collective members to hire a project manager and helped link the project manager with the local rūnanga. This ensures that the buildings are well-supported in their local areas, and carefully tailored to meet the needs of the community the building is serving.

Rātā is timely with its support for community building projects

Rātā BPP grants were timely for the recipients. For example, a BPP grant was made when a community organisation had the opportunity to purchase their building. Another community organisation was able to acquire neighbouring land when it came on the market. For a marae project, the grant contributed towards an upgrade of accommodation facilities, prior to hosting Te Matatini.



Grants to community projects in higher deprivation areas have increased

In 2023-May 2024, more BPP grants were made to communities who need the grant the most. For example, more grants are being made to areas of higher deprivation, as measured by the New Zealand Deprivation Index (NZDep) ¹.

Rātā supported grant recipients with advice and supplementary funding, increasing success

Rātā helped grant recipients to prepare for their building project with community consultation, feasibility studies, detailed designs and business plans.

The outcomes of the BPP

Overall, the BPP contributes positively to the recipients of the programme, including towards these outcomes:

- Communities of need have access to better quality facilities and services.
- Higher deprivation communities have facilities and services better tailored to their needs.
- Communities have opportunities to learn about and experience Māori culture.
- Mana whenua are connected to their local area or marae.

These outcomes in turn lead to better health and wellbeing and more community cohesion and resilience. And within these outcomes there have been many subtle and specific benefits for grant recipients and their communities. These outcomes include more skillful leaders, more confident learners, innovative programmes, higher quality health services, improved mental health and improved participation. Overall, this means that the Rātā BPP has been able to increase its impact in the community.

The quality of the programme and the changes since 2022

The programme has been evolving since the establishment of a new Building Projects policy from 2022. More BPP grants have been made to areas of higher deprivation, as measured by the NZDep. This means that the Rātā building project grant has been able to increase its impact by focusing on communities in need with many barriers to getting these needs met. For example, a grant for facility upgrades to a family-centred sports club with an apprenticeship scheme and family-friendly policies, such as a smoke and alcohol-free space.

¹ The New Zealand deprivation index is an index of socioeconomic deprivation based on census information. Meshblocks (the smallest geographic area defined by Statistics New Zealand) are assigned to deciles, with 1 representing least-deprived areas, and 10 representing most deprived areas. The population-weighted deprivation is calculated by a weighted-average of the meshblock-level deprivation index.



Grants have been made to grant recipients with a track record of achievements in their community of interest and the capacity to carry out the building work. The Rātā team have identified a mix of sectors and organisations who are able to source supplementary funding, oversee the successful completion of the project and sustain the building over the long term.

They have worked to support applicants to complete a comprehensive building grant application. And the Rātā team have connected potential building project recipients with others in their community to thoroughly prepare for their project. Consequently, Rātā building project grants seed other funding, bringing confidence to the project and supporting its success.

Challenges for Rātā and building project grantees

In some cases, building project grant recipients had to re-scope their projects to fit with escalating building costs. Building regulations, such as fire and earthquake proofing were seen as necessary and important, while expensive. Where the organisation did not have a funded project manager or coordinator to dedicate to the building project, progress was slower. Building upgrades are quite different challenges to new building projects, with more unknown costs, though often lower total costs than a new build.

One strategy Rātā used to help overcome some of the costs involved was to put together grant and loan packages to support one organisation get the funds they needed. Sometimes they acted proactively to source funding for a volunteer to focus on the build.

Insights and recommendations

Insights from the interviews, literature and data indicate:

- Overall, the BPP grants show evidence of a shift towards grant making in areas of higher deprivation, and access to those facing barriers.
- Community building projects should contribute towards a sense of community and a sense of place, cultivating a dense and diverse range of uses. Marae play a special role in reconnecting rangatahi with their culture and supporting community cohesion and community resilience in times of crisis.
- Building projects are being developed to achieve an organisation's vision and strategy and to better meet the needs of their communities of interest. Costs of building projects range widely, particularly with building upgrades. Rātā acts flexibly to put packages together for grant recipients at all stages of the build, give community organisations a better chance of success. This flexibility allowed grant recipients to maintain motivation, momentum and energy during these projects.
- The Rātā BPP application process added rigour to the applications and helped them think through all aspects of the project. And early or timely grants gave confidence to other grant makers that the project was worthy of funding. So, the BPP grants seeded wider funding.



- Often the timing of the grant was important for the grant recipient. For example, to buy a building that had come up for sale, or to get a facility up to standard prior to a large event.
- In conclusion, this successful building grant programme has led to more effective outcomes for communities in need in Rātā regions and in areas of higher deprivation.

Recommendations

Finally, these recommendations are made:

- Retain the BPP and continue to direct the programme towards building projects in the highest areas of need.
- Continue to tailor the criteria for the fund towards those building projects that are able to meet multiple layers of need and/or provide core services to those who need them most.
- Continue to take a relational approach, identifying opportunities and supporting grant recipients throughout the building process to strengthen their community connections and carefully planning the building project to be sustainable after the build is complete.
- Continue to connect with communities of need so that as opportunities arise Rātā can respond.
- Continue to be agile about the timing of Rātā's funding during the life of a project.
- Continue to be flexible with funding support through grants and community loans.



Introduction

Rātā Foundation, one of 12 Community Trusts across the country, funds not-for-profit (NFP) organisations working in its takiwā, covering Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough, Kaikōura, Hurunui, Waimakariri, Christchurch, Selwyn districts and the (Rēkohu / Wharekauri (Chatham Islands)). Rātā strives for an equitable and sustainable society under the korowai of Te Tiriti o Waitangi to support positive intergenerational change.

Through its grant funding Rātā supports community organisations to reduce barriers to access and provide support to those in need. They also support those acting to benefit the environment and address climate change. The way Rātā works with organisations is guided by its Grant Making Philosophy, outlined here:

- We believe in the rūpu/organisations we support and operate in a pono/high-trust model
- Whanaungatanga/relationships are key, and we are present in hāpori/communities - kanohi ki te kanohi
- We are respectful, clear, and whakamana/empower organisations
- We strive to use an evidence base and be a learning organisation – me ako tonu
- We take a lead from the rūpu/organisations we serve about their knowledge of their hāpori/community
- We whānau/elevate and tell the stories of the rūpu/organisations we support
- We strengthen and manaaki/support rūpu/organisations to deliver better outcomes for the hāpori/community. We don't achieve outcomes on our own – we enable and work in partnership – Kotahitanga.

The Rātā Foundation's community investment approach has three funding programmes: Responsive, Proactive and Strategic. The Proactive Programme which aims:

- To engage with communities on shared priorities to guide investment
- To effect positive social change by strengthening community organisations.

Rātā's BPP supports the Proactive Programme of work. It has been running since 2019 and Rātā want to understand the value of the programme and its added benefit to grant recipients.

Rātā's BPP policy wording and grant priorities changed between 2019-2022 (Period 1) and 2022-2024 (Period 2), marking a greater focus on meeting community needs.

In Period 1 Rātā provided for grants for building projects which fostered community connections, increased community participation, or were of regional significance, with this policy wording:

Priorities were building projects which either:



- promoted collaboration and multi-use spaces and had ongoing wide community use
- acknowledged and celebrated our diverse communities, such as the arts, sports or youth sectors
- protected and enhanced the environment in which we live
- recognised the special role that Marae play in supporting community cohesion.

In Period 2, Rātā aimed to promote sustainable communities and enable equitable access to facilities and services for people who might otherwise not have the opportunity. A building project is considered to be a new build or rebuild of a structure or facility, with this policy wording emphasising equitable access:

Rātā's building project priorities are:

- Enable equitable access to facilities and services in areas of need
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Recognise the special role that Marae play in supporting community cohesion

Building projects are also categorised by how they align to Rātā's Funding Areas of Connect, Learn, Participate, Support and Sustain which each have priorities for funding.

Purpose of research and method

The purpose of this research is to inform the review of Rātā's BPP, guided by these questions:

- What is the value or added benefit of the programme to the grantee?
- What difference has the programme made to the grantee and what are the reasons for this difference (value criteria)?
- How important is the BPP to community organisations (dollars, years, timing, innovation/edgy, size and stage/context)?
- What have been the outcomes of the BPP?
- To what extent can they be attributed to the building project (direct and indirect, specific and general)?
- Has there been a change in the programme since 2023?

The methods used in this research include a literature scan, semi-structured interviews (video and phone) with grant recipients, analysis of grant applications with Rātā staff and sense making. A purposive sampling method was used to select five to seven grant recipients whose projects closely matched the new BPP criteria. The criteria used to select these interviewees also covered different Rātā regions and a range of types of projects.

Rātā staff introduced the research to the grant recipients through emails and/or phone calls. The researcher sent an informed consent sheet to the grant recipients to be interviewed and confirmed consent at the time of the interview. The information contained an interview schedule and



questions focused on the BPP grant outcomes, benefits and challenges and included these questions:

- Tell me about the mahi you did with support from this grant?
- What difference did the grant make? Any examples? Benefits and outcomes?
- What other support were you able to gather?
- What challenges did you encounter in the mahi funded by the grant?
- How did you factor in environmental and climate issues to your application?
- What could Rātā Foundation do to help overcome these challenges?
- Where too next with this type of mahi for you/your organisation? How are you sustaining it?
- Any other suggestions for Rātā about how they can best support building projects?

The interviews were either video or phone based. They were recorded and transcribed. An offer was made at the conclusion of the interview for the interviewee to follow up with any additional comments, if they wished.

A qualitative analysis was then undertaken, theming the transcripts according to the issues raised by the interviews and research questions. These themes reflect the principles of the BPP. This analysis was shared with Rātā staff for sense making and collaborative recommendation development. This information was triangulated against BPP literature and grant data.



What the literature says about building programmes

This section summarises key trends in building project literature relevant to the Rātā BPP. It looks at literature from place making, commuting distances to recreation facilities and equity and leisure.

Literature about place making and the role of infrastructure

This section contains information from a place making practitioner and literature on place making. It covers definitions and principles of place making and links between place making and community buildings.

Definitions of place making

Community buildings contribute to a sense of place:

- Place making is changing a place or space into something where more people want to visit, work and live. It should be inclusive. (McGrath, pers.comm, 2024).
- Place making in a structural sense (i.e. a Council or agency) is the combination of strategic planning (spatial, corporate), social engagement and economic development. A key to place making is increasing dwell time, the longer people stay, and the more they interact and integrate (McGrath, pers.comm, 2024).
- Place making creates a place that prompts strangers to talk to other strangers as if they knew each other (Whyte, in PPP, 2024).
- Place making creates a place that is something more than the sum of its often-simple parts (PPP, 2024).

Principles of place making

The Project for Public Spaces (2024) suggests these principles for place making. Many are transferable to public building projects:

- The goal is to create a place that has both a strong sense of community and a comfortable image, as well as a setting, activities and uses that collectively add up to something more than the sum of its often-simple parts. This is easy to say, but difficult to accomplish.”
- A successful place will be sociable, have many different uses and activities, and be comfortable, appealing and accessible.
- “Places thrive when users have a range of reasons to be there. These might include a place to sit, playgrounds to enjoy, art to touch, music to hear, food to eat, history to experience, and people to meet. Ideally, some of these activities will be unique to that place, reflecting the



culture and history of the surrounding community. Cultivate a dense and diverse mix of uses, perhaps 10+ uses.

- “Seeding a space with active uses, in which visitors directly engage with organised activities, requires some elbow grease. While it does not always require a formal calendar of events, it does help to have people dedicated to making activities in a place happen.”
- To make an under-performing space into a vital place, physical elements must be introduced that would make people feel welcome and comfortable, such as seating and new landscaping. Done poorly a project can drain value from the public realm and overemphasise design over community needs.
- Elements such as seating, outdoor eating areas, public art, striping of crosswalks and pedestrian havens, community gardens and murals are examples of improvements that can be accomplished in a short time.

The links between places and buildings

- Marae and other community buildings contribute to a sense of place.
- The principles of designing successful places also apply to designing successful buildings.
- Rātā gives grants for building projects. They advise grantees about their building projects and how to make them successful. Rātā often support grant recipients as they go about conceptualising, consulting and evaluating the feasibility of a building project.
- Rātā strives for equitable and sustainable building projects. Rātā is impact oriented and proactive. They want to make a difference to more vulnerable communities and apply an equity lens to places.
- Rātā liaises with other funding partners, particularly local councils, iwi organisations and government.
- Christchurch City has a lot of knowledge and practical experience in place making. There will be many resource people in this community. Most Rātā regions, have experienced extreme events in their communities, for example, weather events, earthquakes and other community safety crises.
- In terms of building projects, Recreation Aotearoa (February 2020, p1) says that buildings are retrofitted to update or extend their lives. This may be in response to a shift from single to multi-use or to create a hub. Retrofitting existing buildings can be cost-effective, reduce the impact of waste through demolition, and reduce CO2 emissions, by avoiding new builds. Improved building efficiency is another potential benefit of a retrofit.

Summary points: place making and community buildings

Community building projects can strengthen communities through place making. Rātā’s focus on equity and sustainability, under the Korowai of Te Tiriti, can strengthen place making projects, through supporting community building projects.



Rātā people and their networks have extensive knowledge and experience of place making in their communities. This know-how can strengthen grant making on community building projects.

Community hubs facilitate the co-location and co-delivery of services, and they also often take holistic and whānau-centred approaches. Events such as the Auckland floods and Cyclone Gabrielle have demonstrated the contribution of these hubs in supporting community resilience during extreme events (SWA, 2024).

Literature about the distances people travel to community buildings

Literature about the distances people travel to use community buildings is mostly focused around accessing recreation facilities or taking part in leisure experiences. Here's some of the key points:

- People travel on average for 10-30 minutes, for 4-20kms to recreate. There is variation in the distances and durations depending on the purpose of the trip and the population subgroup.
- Neighbourhoods have been defined as 0.4 to 1 km, or 400-1000m from a resident's home. This is the distance individuals are likely or willing to walk from home (McCormack et al, 2006, p8).
- Residents of socially disadvantaged areas travelled further than those in advantaged areas (7.3kms, compared to 6kms) (McCormack, 2006).
- Younger people travel further than older people, e.g., up to 7kms. Men travel further than women. Club members travel further than non-club members.
- The type of physical activity undertaken at a destination and the number of neighbourhood opportunities were also associated with distance travelled (McCormack et al, 2006).
- A natural space footprint could be considered a 1 km radius of home (RANZ, 2019).



Factors influencing travel distances and accessing community buildings

Access to community buildings, including recreation facilities is influenced by:

- Demographics, including where a person lives.
- Destination type, for example, people will go further for special facilities (sports clubs, marae), or special places (e.g. a beach); or for utilitarian activities (shops, health services).
- Proximity / access; and
- The number of opportunities available at a building or facility.

Literature about equity and the role of infrastructure

Key points

According to the literature on equity and leisure, poverty and geography affect people's ability to access recreation experiences and facilities. Accessing recreation and leisure experiences is linked to better health and wellbeing:

- Researchers have identified strong links among socioeconomic disparities, physical inactivity, and poor health (McKenzie, et al, 2013, p1).
- Socioeconomic disparities are geographical and may be intensifying. Those living in rural areas can also be isolated from recreation facilities and services (Marmot et al, 2020, McKenzie et al, 2013, p29; Sports Canterbury, 2022; Recreation Aotearoa, 2024).
- Identity is a source of strength (Recreation Aotearoa, 2021). For Māori, marae provide a context for revitalisation of te reo Māori tikanga and a range of cultural practices. They are important centres for recreation and leisure, as well as social services (Ihi, 2017). For rangatahi, especially, wellbeing is embedded in culture (Fox, 2018; Houkamau, 2011).
- Recreation can be culturally different. For example, participation in 'outdoor recreation' is more common amongst Pākehā, than other ethnic groups (RA, Insight paper 4).
- "The planning and provision of space can be a highly political process and may prioritise the needs of some groups over others" (Recreation Aotearoa, February 2024, p1).
- "The condition of the community centre facilities and amenities, but not their number, was positively related to neighbourhood income ($p < .05$). As well, the number of cost-free, but not total number of, youth physical activity programs were inversely associated with neighbourhood income" (McKenzie et al, 2013, p1).
- Individuals experiencing poverty, value and engage in a variety of free and affordable leisure activities. But they are not afforded the necessary leisure opportunities, accommodations and supports as the general population (Cantor, et al, 2022, p.1).
- "Social inequity in health is apparent in mental, social and physical aspects of health among people living in low-socio-economic neighbourhoods. Lowering the risk of many non-communicable diseases and improving mental health is best achieved through setting-based



programmes. These are programmes that facilitate long-term physical activity behaviour changes in children and adolescents living in marginalised neighbourhoods” (Elsborg et al, 2019, p1).

As a consequence, those living in lower socio-economic communities participate less in recreation and leisure, negatively impacting on their health and wellbeing:

- People in lower wealth areas have lower levels of participation in all types of leisure activities. The lower the socio-economic status of a group, the lower the levels of participation (McKenzie et al, 2013; Recreation Aotearoa, December 2019).
- In low-income communities, park and recreation facilities may be the only place for children to be physically active, outside of school.

Participating in recreation and leisure activities helps mental health and resilience to stressors, including weather/climate events:

- Rangatahi experiencing poor mental wellbeing benefit from recreation opportunities tailored to their needs (Fox 2018).
- Recreation helps build “community resilience, social capital and community capacity to support a response to major stressors such as climate change, terror attacks and the effects of COVID-19”(CCC, 2024, p5).

How might we do things differently?

Actions recommended by Christchurch City Council (CCC) proposes regarding recreation facilities include:

- Develop recreation opportunities as a vehicle for social connectedness and belonging, targeted to (vulnerable) population groups.
- Locate facilities in lower wealth places.
- Promote opportunities close to home.
- Promote affordable opportunities that require little or no equipment.
- Design facilities to accommodate multi-generational groups.
- Design facilities that provide activity choices that reflect cultural differences.
- Use inclusive language and imagery about events or programmes (Recreation Aotearoa, unknown date, p1)
- Facilities should promote a strong sense of community, be modern and robust (Christchurch City Council, 2024, p4); and
- Planning should be integrated (Recreation Aotearoa, 2024, p2).



The experiences of building grant recipients'

This section includes the reflections of those interviewed about the Rātā BPP. Their perspectives have been grouped into comments about the grants and how this fitted into the way the grant recipients worked. The reason for the grants is discussed and the composition of the funds for their building project is explored. The grant recipients then focus on how the building projects came about and the effects and outcomes the Building Project had on their organisation and communities.

About the building grants

This section describes the reasons for the building project, and the people and structures supporting the grant recipients.

Vision of grant recipients

All grant recipients said their building project was a way to achieve a wider vision for their work:

“Our building project was completed as part of our long-term vision for the iwi and all its marae”

“(Our vision includes) the relief of poverty and provision of social services and care of our elderly, indigent and/or impoverished members”

“Our purpose is to promote education, vocational training and health (to vulnerable people)”

“Our 'why' is rooted in our commitment to the community and the cultural significance of the marae”

Catalysts for building projects

Land comes up for sale

For some grant recipients, their building project was initiated in response to an opportunity arising in their community. For example, one grantee seized the opportunity to buy land adjacent to their marae when it came on the market. For another, an opportunity arose to buy the building they had been leasing for many years:

“Recent changes in stop bank alignment have freed up land, presenting a unique opportunity to fast-track our (building) development of stage two”



A family arrives in an area with a small population

For another grant recipient, the catalyst for the building project was moving to a new town and finding a gap in the provision of Māori medium, preschool education services. This contrasted with the support networks and facilities available in the large city they had moved from:

“In 2019 we moved to (a small rural town) for a change in pace. I was a stay-at-home mum at the time. And we realised we didn’t have as much of a support network around our te reo journey here”

“I was able to network and whakawhanaungatanga with other whanau at home with their babies too. Other whanau Māori who were interested in te reo and bilingualism and what that would look like. And then, since 2019, step-by-step we started some little projects. Started a little community trust and it led to us today opening the (building)”

A large event is being hosted in the local area

For another grant recipient their building project got off the ground in order to take advantage of a big event occurring in their rohe / area:

“This (building project) is timely, as we aim to accommodate the increased demand for marae usage, particularly considering the upcoming Te Matatini Festival (and) increased interest in [our area, land, history and culture]”

Members of the Board identified a need

In contrast, this grant recipient said the building project got off the ground through a Board initiative. Board members identified a need for an accessible building to meet a specific need in their community. They began looking around for a site:

“It was Board foresight that saw a need for a purpose-built site, with plenty of space and lots of car parks. Our Board had foresight. (Now), we have a wonderful location surrounded by... bush. The building is architecturally designed, with a Northwest aspect, and is near (another associated health centre). (We have) seventy-two car parks... People are coming and going all day long here”

Other reasons for the grant

There were a variety of reasons for the building projects, from maintenance and upgrades of existing buildings, to purchasing an existing building, through to new builds.

Maintenance and upgrades

Maintenance and upgrades to an existing building included a wide range of internal and external activities. For example, upgrading kitchens, offices, accommodation blocks, toilets and showers. In



some cases it included improvements to car parks, driveways and entrances. Sometimes the aim was to bring a building up to speed with new building standards, including earthquake proofing and installing fire safety systems.

In another case, it was to protect carvings and other special features of a wharenuī with a sprinkler system. Another grant went towards a major upgrade of a clubroom built in the 50s and 60s by club members. It had been upgraded in the 80s and “not much had been done since then”.

Opportunity to buy

One of the grants was for the purchase of a building being leased by a community health service. The community group had occupied the building for over ten years and were happy with the location because it was local to the communities they served, but wanted the security of owning the property.

New and purpose built

Other grant recipients sought to build new, specialised, and fit for purpose buildings for their communities of interest. For example, new facilities were built for early childhood education in one case, and for those with neurological conditions, in another case.

The people and structures surrounding the grant recipients

Governance structures

Many grant recipients talked about the need to have the capacity and capability to execute building projects. Building projects need people to carry out the work of a build at each stage – design, build and operation. The larger grant recipients had a structured approach to building projects, with the Rātā grant fitting into this approach:

“We have a structured approach to Marae development, as outlined in our [Marae Plan]. This includes a clear vision, current state assessment, and proposed actions. So, is indicative of our capability to manage development projects effectively”

Smaller grant recipients managed the work through volunteers or a key staff member. All grant recipients described the important role of their governance members in guiding their building project. There were a variety of styles and structures in place including Boards, a collective and Trusts:

“The way our governance is set up is very modern and is a combination of te ao Māori and western governance. We think it is truly the best of both worlds and it has been successful for us the last three years”



“Our Trust is set up with only four Trustees because the community wanted the building project to move quickly and efficiently. Any major decision that is made, any extra set of hands that is needed, any items of business we do not know how to manage or handle, we have a whānau collective... as well as a rūnanga and marae, who are all able to assist us”

Access to specialised expertise

Building projects happening under a mantle of a tangata whenua or Kaupapa Māori organisation bring cultural expertise to the building project. Often this expertise is part of the governance structure:

“Cultural management plans and cultural assessments. This expertise is crucial in ensuring that building development projects align with cultural values and requirement”

“The iwi may apply on behalf of the marae to ensure that the cultural and historical significance of the marae is appropriately recognised and preserved. This is particularly important when dealing with matters related to land, heritage, and traditional practice”

Having a key person to execute the building project

Having a key person to execute the building project was common to all grant recipients. This may have been a board member, or other key person, volunteering their time. Sometimes these roles evolved into paid positions. Often, they were voluntary. All building projects required concentrated time and resource:

“Since moving to (a small town) and getting this project up and running, (I) have been working on this project full time, voluntarily. This was done to ensure we had someone who had energy, resources and the capacity to work on this project full time. This was a hard decision to make, being out of paid work for three years. But the project has been too great and the sacrifice necessary and worthwhile”

“(Our Trust) has better access to resources, expertise, and networks to support the application process and can leverage these resources to benefit multiple marae within its jurisdiction”

Getting the work done and completing the build

There are many aspects to a building project, including developing the design, coordinating consents and implementing the building work. Many of the grant recipients secured funding from several different grant makers. As well as applications for the capital costs, grant recipients sometimes applied for grants for project managers:



“We have applied for funding from other sources, as well as from Rātā Foundation to go towards paying a contribution to (our key person) to keep focusing on the project full time. (Our Trustees) have other full-time jobs away from this project”

“If there was a paid staff member in the organisation, they would often lead the building work. All those interviewed talked about the amount of time taken to do the project. Smaller grantees coordinated the work through volunteers”

How the grantees ensure financial sustainability of the building project

All Rātā grant recipients have a range of financial strategies in place to support their building projects. For larger recipients with-established funding, these strategies were formal and embedded within the wider structure of the community organisation:

“(The building project grant went towards) our principal marae, which operates on a mixture of funding sources, including koha, direct manaaki grants, and whānau, hapū contributions. These contributions will continue as (they) always have”

“We are a highly trusted recipient of funding from government, community and philanthropic funders”

In contrast, projects where the building project was to a smaller recipient, were sometimes on a learning curve, with respect to financial sustainability. They acquired their know-how along the way, and from within their networks:

“It’s a big learning (curve). My husband is an accountant, which helps. It’s still a learning journey”

All grant recipients were committed to transparency about their funding sources. They were comfortable discussing their processes for maintaining this transparency. They evolved their funding strategies over time and as circumstances changed. They showed an appreciation for the needs of their funders:

“Our (Trust) sits under the umbrella of our Rūnanga, which has a variety of financial strategies and plans, which are evidenced annually through our audited annual reports”

“What we want is many sources of funding and support. Private trusts, individuals who are generous givers. These are people who we need to respect, understand and stay connected with. Rātā is one of most significant supporters in that group”



Composition of the project funds and leveraging others

The Rātā building project grant was one contributor

All Rātā grants contributed towards part (but not all) of the capital cost of the building project. They ranged from a quarter to a half (25-50%) of the capital costs of the build. Sometimes smaller grants were also made by Rātā. For example, towards a coordinator role, to bring together a concept plan, feasibility study, prices or the detailed design:

“We got funding for the total cost. Yes 100%. Rātā came with 50% and then the Ministry of Education came with 50%. We received a few little (grants) to tie up loose ends. If not for Rātā, we would not have been able to build as quickly as we did”

“We received about 25% of the total cost of the build from Rātā”

Generating income from the build

One strategy for financial sustainability used by a grant recipient was to create spaces for several associated community services. These were services who could pay rent, while also strengthening the services offered in the building:

“To be sustainable, we will look for support to enable future viability for all our tenants. We work together to promote the building, for example, with a speaker programme, aligned with the areas of shared interest for all our tenants”

Combination of types of grants

All those interviewed managed the uncertainty of building projects with realism and stamina. Capital costs shortfalls would lead to reducing what they did and continuing to search for funds:

“(We may) re-scope the project and look for efficiencies to reduce costs”

“We have other funding... on top of this building project”

“There’s a huge wish list (of jobs to do to upgrade our building). If we want to seal the carpark, that’s [\$]100k, right there. We have to go get pricing for everything. We’ve just downscaled our list, to what we can afford. In the meantime, we received funding from Department of Internal Affairs. So, we can do a commercial kitchen. In saying that, there’s a lot of unforeseen costs. I’ve got to do a vinyl test for asbestos. If that’s a problem - there’s another [\$]5k there”

Funding grants acquired by grant recipients evolved over the course of the build, as their needs evolved. The building project was a big focus, often for many years. However, all these grant recipients retained a focus on their wider vision and meeting the needs of their communities of interest.



All these grantees talked about sharing their building with others and extending the benefits of their building to a wider section of the community, such as small community groups and associated sports clubs. Others also saw the new build as an opportunity to generate revenue:

“We are looking forward to moving from building mode into operational mode. We want our facility to be used by local groups...who support us. We want to do that for them”

“Our Trust is looking forward to offering the new rooms to small third-party groups”

“We may have events for (commercial) companies or partner organisations and for their charity events. For example, next week one of our commercial sponsors is holding a fund-raising event in our new building”

Safety, standards, compliance and best practice

Some of the building project grant recipients said it was important to have a building that met modern building standards. Where the building project was co-funded by a government agency, these requirements were mandatory. For example, for those delivering early childhood education services:

“We have all the appropriate and necessary documentations in place, including Privacy policy, Child Safety policy, COVID19 policy, Vetting policy and Health and Safety policy”

“We will follow all regulations of child to adult ratios (in our centre). We are working alongside a very experienced architect and builder who is being overseen by the property team at the Ministry of Education”

Building project grant recipients providing child and youth services, such as sport, also mentioned the need to care for the children in their club, being mindful of building design for different age groups.



Effecting positive social change by strengthening community organisations - outcomes

This section explores the outcomes the building project recipients were striving to achieve in their communities and how the building project supports these outcomes. It describes the types of legacies they seek to leave, what outcomes they want to contribute towards, and how this helps bring communities together.

Location matters

The location of the building projects was often significant in their formula for success:

We are well known, where we are. We are on a bus route close to [a] mall. We're in the community hub. We've been operating from there for a long time. We had to put up big signs. We didn't want to do that. It's expensive. We didn't want to do that if we didn't have security of tenure. Good signage and good way finding. We have [another associated business] on site. So, they have security as well. ...It's across the porch. We needed separation from health centre (to comply with health regulations). We are in the same building, but across the hall. Whānau can access different services.

Early childhood community centre

Some of the grant recipients were focused on education initiatives tailored towards a specific age group and need in the community. For example, building an early childhood Māori medium childcare and language education centre. The centre was focused on 0-6 year's children and their families with the goal of normalising Te Reo Māori.

"The centre has a strong connection with te ao Māori and local iwi. It seeks to increase community awareness, empathy and inclusiveness, through bilingualism and involving their whānau naturally"

"Upskilling whānau within (this area). Our tamariki and our whānau are teaching and learning as well. Two Kaiako are enrolled to do their teaching degree. Huge for us to be able to learn what they are learning"

Older adult education centre

Another grant recipient used a Rātā building grant for a purpose-built, adult health and education centre. The building was tailored towards adults with neurological health challenges, needing specialised space and services. Like the early childhood centre, this facility has a strong community education orientation:



“(We have some) wonderful key notes coming in. Talks about well-known high-profile speakers with a lot to share of their own lived experiences. Beneficial wider community we service. Really helping people deal with facing the adversity and everyday challenges if diagnosed or (if they have a) major accident that has changed their life. There are major challenges week to week. (We support them to) thrive in adversity. Each has got their own experience. Huge challenges – we give people hope”

Community connections

All these grant recipients were contributing towards a wide range of outcomes. Consequently, their connections with their communities were wide-ranging, complex and courageous.

The outcomes described in this section focus on the way in which grant recipients connect with their communities. For example, this grant recipient embodies a collaborative approach throughout their organisation and wider network. This enables them to tap into expertise and resources across a wide area:

“(Our) collaborative approach can help in leveraging expertise and use of broader networks across (our area) for Marae development projects”

“The iwi represents a larger collective, including multiple hapū (sub-tribes) and marae. This collaborative application ensures a unified approach is taken representing the interests of the wider Te Tau Ihu whānau”

“A lot of our whānau are really well connected in the community. Businesses and governmental. The networking that they have done is a testament to the people they are. That they are honouring their outlook, their view. The Business Plan and Strategic Plan of the club. They (should be) identified and acknowledged for that”

“We are confident in our individual abilities, our collective skillset and huge supportive network”

The grant recipients often described the voluntary contributions made to the success of their projects, summed up by this quote:

“My time is voluntary. I get the joy of helping out”

New and innovative projects take time to build community support for

For this grant recipient, they recognise that new projects and programmes take time and attention to community networks to build:

“I would love to see whānau Māori flocking in from day one... I recognise we are in a small place. It's a brand new kaupapa. And it's a kaupapa that has a lot of intergenerational trauma associated with it... I've got to keep building that relationship of trust and being here



and proving to the community... There's a lot of people we can't count that are watching and I'll know we'll get there"

Many roles – facilitator, partner and building provider

This grant recipient sees their role as facilitator and partner in their community, as well as building-provider:

"Our role is not just as a facilitator but as a dedicated partner in preserving and promoting our cultural heritage"

"We have a few different projects lined up for community. We have found that subtle marketing is the way to go. We are busy on social media we get a lot of views on videos what tamariki are doing during the day"

Community training towards employment

This grant recipient also has youth education orientation through support for apprenticeship schemes:

"He Toki is still around. We've had a few young lads go through their training scheme to have electrician plumbers, builders. Learn on the job. So, if we need some (work done). We can ask these lads: 'sand this down'. And, because it's a (community service), as such. We can koha them"

All grant recipients tap into a wider collective of community people contributing in kind support towards the building project:

"We have a pool of 14 known (in a) whānau collective who are just as involved in the project... The members of the whānau collective each have individual skillsets and experience examples include businesswomen, teaching background, active part of the marae community, a well networked and respected Kaumātua, a sales background, an electrician"

"Re-deployment of Māori workers displaced by the COVID-19 pandemic, and procurement through diverse suppliers including two Māori owned businesses"

"Collectively they all provide the reason for being together within our Trust. No other centre can do that yet. We were a first in Australasia. A one stop shop approach. Everyone under one roof contributing synergies and information sharing amongst a wider range of organisations and services. Cohesively getting results. ...It's the collaboration between tenants. In the past separated and isolated. For example, it's very advantageous to anyone with dementia to do music and movement a stimulus for each other. Weekly music therapy



onsite. If those two (community organisation weren't together onsite, that wouldn't easily happen"

Access to health services for lower wealth communities

For another building project recipient, being able to purchase their building and retain the building at their current site, means they can continue to work with lower wealth communities and the associated services who serve them in a very practical way:

"(Being in this building means that (the people were serve), they're more likely to pick up their medications, while they're here. And we can work with the [other organisations] around costs of those medications"

"It's really a big issue for poor people. Getting themselves or their children to a doctor. But then they don't pick up the meds (medications), or they have a debt at the pharmacy and won't want to go back because they are whakamā about that. The building project supported our security and the security of the pharmacy as well"

Lower wealth communities

Some of the building project grant recipients saw their service as being for the public. While for others they strove to serve a more targeted part of the community:

"I can't overstate the community we service. We are well known in Christchurch. And to Rātā. (We look to) the refugee and migrant community. Sometimes people can't get into General Practice anywhere else. There are all sorts of reasons. Some of it is outright racism. Some of it is debt. Families have got debt at the practice and can't go back"

"It happens a lot in Ashburton and Kaikōura. When doctors say their books are full. Their books are not full with poor people. They're full of average New Zealanders. Those on the margins miss out"

"Flu jabs are a big deal. We search (people) out. Our staff will ring them up and search them out. Get them in for their free flu jab. Though that has changed now, it's not free anymore"

Access and reach - working at scale to achieve results

Grant recipients work at different scales to achieve results for their communities. Some work in a local area, others are aiming for a wider reach:

"We rarely go for smaller grants. We're in medium to large grants area because we are a large entity, so (we have) plenty of capacity to support our different work streams. (We) do sometimes do small one-off projects, like Matariki, kapa haka, usually with other iwi – a collective approach"



“The Christchurch City Council have been good with that as well. We had a Hau Ora programme. They fund wages for a Coordinator”

Other grant recipients start small and look to build up the number of people who come to their building over time:

“Our organisation is becoming known. It is taking a while. We are a charity, and we don’t have a large funding spend for marketing and promotion. We have a very skinny resource base cost wise. We rely on word of mouth. We have a handful of part time people”

“(We are) open to people generally, as well as those with disabilities”

“We are touching many people in the community. Working more to tell our story and activate other corners of the community for people who still don’t know about us”

“The increased usage of the marae underscores its importance as a hub for cultural preservation and community engagement”

“I would love to see whānau Māori flocking in from day one. Enrolments are growing. It’s crazy to see it up and running after the last five years. Right now, it’s all locals”

Grant recipient’s resilience and long-term orientation

Values based

The values of the grant recipients are evident in the role their buildings play in their long-term strategies.

“The marae is a cornerstone of our community, embodying the principles of our... strategy by fostering unity, cultural preservation, and intergenerational learning”

“Immense historical and cultural significance for (our people), serving as a testament to our hekenga (migration) and resilience”

“We will persevere in providing support to marae operations to promote sustainability and prosperity within our iwi”

“Our aim is to revive our mātauranga and cultural knowledge”

However, values can lead to grant recipients trading off funding in the short term, for bigger outcomes over the long term. Two grant recipients shared some of the challenges they faced in acquiring funding for their building upgrades. These grant recipients chose not to seek funds from certain sources:



“One of our key tenants doesn’t believe that gambling-generated revenue should be the way we should go. Others have a different opinion. That’s where our treaty settlements (guide us). (What is) our tupunas’ intention?”

“We turned away from (earning revenue from alcohol) quite a while ago. We want to promote a smoke free zone and an alcohol-free zone as well”

Climate and Earthquakes

A grant recipient referred specifically to the future impacts of weather changes on their area and facility:

“The Rūnanga has recently adopted a climate strategy, which has been linked in the (grant) application documents”

Other grant recipients spoke about future proofing their building. For example, for earthquakes saying they had a:

“Future Plan and wanted to earthquake proof”

Designing accessibility

Making buildings accessible was also a feature of future planning:

“We do look for a lot of funding streams. Rātā have been absolutely incredible in coming forward with the amount they have. It means we can now put in accessible toilets. People with wheelchairs come. We’re looking at providing for everybody”

Overheads

Some grant recipients were thinking ahead to the other challenges of maintaining their building and sustaining the work they do. This sports club shares their thinking:

“(We are also thinking about) the rates, the insurance has gone up. The overheads of the building are phenomenal. The income must be sustainable and provide for us as well. That’s where we are open to the community. We run different hui and wānanga. We do (collaborations) with mental health. We do collaborations with District Nurses, Active Communities, and Christchurch City Council”

“So, the programmes are run they so they can we reach out to the community, and whānau. To our members. (Our clubrooms are) a great place to come together”



Revenue streams, fundraising opportunities and other funding sources

Grant recipients value the Rātā grant, but don't take it for granted. They scan the funding landscape for other opportunities. The future orientation shows up in this grant recipients thinking about revenue streams:

"Well, we hope the space will bring in more executive business during the week. We are creating three separate spaces. So, if there was a need for a small business in the community to have a kitchen during the week (then we could lease it to them). We will also have a hall which will have its own tea and coffee nook – so that's another income stream. And then if we can get the office board room upgraded and all data-connected... that's another income stream that operate like a Co-op Workshop. So that's the whole purpose of what we are doing (with the building upgrade). Future proofing, because we don't want to lose that beautiful rugged handmade charm. It's an exception. A one-off in Christchurch. You won't find that (type of building) anywhere else"

"We (would have been) disappointed if this (grant) application was not successful. However, we had spoken of this scenario and were aware of potential fundraising opportunities. We are always on the lookout for other funding sources. Currently, we are waiting for an updated quote from our builders (about costs of the upgrade and therefore how far we can go with the upgrade)"

"Our contract with the Ministry of Education is that they will fund half of the total cost of the build. Our vision is to provide and promote safe spaces to learn, use and normalise Te Reo Māori"

"DIA have helped with outlay of kitchen appliances and stuff like that. Over [\$]90k to buy a dishwasher steriliser. Stainless steel sinks, an island bench that's lockable"

"The Council have discretionary funds and we will probably have to apply for that as well. If we need to get the carpark tar sealed. That can normally come under the discretionary fund they can approve"

"The money disappears pretty fast"

"Security of tenure was the big thing. Because it's a very low-cost general access practice. It's made a huge difference. In the long term it will mean there is a lot more money in the system. We won't have the leases or mortgage. So, it means there's more money in the system. To develop services for people in our communities to access"



Strengthening organisations by being strong grant makers

This section explores the relationship between Rātā as the grant maker and the building project grant recipients. grant recipients also shared their thoughts about how Rātā works and what the hallmarks are of their organisation and people. They talked about a Rātā mojo, an orientation towards the long term, strength and flexibility:

Rātā mojo

“Look they’ve found their mojo. They are doing it right. Continue on the way they’re going. Fast early fails or support all the way through to project completion. This is the hallmark of Rātā. Congratulations to them and I wish them all the best”

The grant lays an awesome foundation for longevity

“For Rātā to say here’s ‘[\$]220k towards your project. Use it wisely. It’s just great. It means we can remain for the next 40 years and hopefully the next generation can see what was done. We’re laying an awesome foundation”

Strength and flexibility

“It can be a Catch 22. Can’t have a plan without a consent and vice versa and Rātā have been good like that. Their strength and flexibility around communicating with senior advisors giving good advice”

“And they discussed the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of the building project grant processes. This approach made sure that grants were well thought through. The building project grants contributed towards the cost of a build but did not fund the total cost. Rātā supported grant applicants before, during and, sometimes after, the building project grant. So that grant recipients could conduct feasibility studies and think through sustainability of the building and services”

Grant size/proportion

“It’s often a contribution and not a full amount for a grant. Which is good. Because people applying need to be well networked with well thought-out projects. Not stressing one funder by going to them for the full amount”

“I haven’t explored the loans scheme. That could be something in the future...The community loans scheme could be developed. Not sure what the details are”



“We’ve spread the net quite wide and are being quite strategic about what we are doing going forwards. Still evolving as an organisation. (We’ve) learnt a lot in the first two years. We’ve had incredible support from individuals. Needs more support from the community”

It gives other funders a sense of security.

Rātā building project grants give grant recipients confidence, and the grants seed other funding:

It’s the old story - get a little bit of money and it attracts more money. Seeding, is the real value of Rātā grants”

“The real value of Rātā grants is they can generate more money. Rightly or wrongly, other agencies get alongside. All funders talk to each other”

“You have a good rapport with one group, and they can see your vision and help you fulfil those dreams. Then, that’s just a carry on for anyone else to say: ‘Ok you are well established”

“You have a great (name)...You are thinking about sustainability, you are thinking about future generations. You’ve got your strategic succession plan in place. Yep, awesome we can help you in future”

Builds confidence and energy

For one grantee, the receipt of another early grant from a tangata whenua organisation was a confidence boost. Their smaller, and early grant, together with the early and larger Rātā grant was an energising catalyst for action:

“(The organisation is) another incredible organisation who got in early and were very passionate about our work. They got on board early”

“Rātā... invested in me and trusted me with this project”

Timing matters

Timing of the grants was important for grant recipients. Sometimes Rātā made a building project grant early in the project. At other times Rātā made a grant later on:

“Rātā were the first. They were involved before the build. They had funded me with a small project fund... (After that work), I could ask them for the building project grant”

“The thing Rātā did for us was, be a catalyst. We have a loan. We’ve had that in place from the get-go. That was an absolute milestone or watershed event which was a turning point. It enabled us to move from concept to become a real situation. Without that (we) wouldn’t have gone ahead”



“If there’s one negative, it would be the time it takes to make a decision. I had to coordinate. We have a Board, but it really came down to me. We had to coordinate the sale of a building. Because we have another building that we sold. And we didn’t know for such a long time how much we were going to get. Or, if we would get anything. It makes it difficult if you are going down to the wire. Gotta confirm on this property by such and such a day and time and you are waiting for a Rātā decision”

Communication and connecting with advisors.

The way in which Rātā communicates with grant recipients was commented on several times:

“Great communication with recipients”

“(We appreciate) meeting [a Rātā staff member] on-the-ground. Or we can ring-up and say ‘we want to swap out an internal door to make it electric for people in wheel chairs and walking frames.’ That’s the kind of support we need in an ongoing way. Those are small one-off kinds of grants, as we grow and expand”

“It’s been an easy conversation. Rātā are a little more applicant-supportive than some of the agencies”

“Advisers have established relationships. So, you’ve got confidence. As an applicant you can have confidence that you are getting a fair equitable slice. If it’s a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’... So, you don’t have a worrisome (feeling of) ‘well, that’s not fair’. (They are) good at making it clear – what you do and don’t do. Priorities are communicated to applicants on the web and other media”

“Rātā keeps you up to date with any new things. For example, don’t forget, you need to do that. Not just if you get it wrong - you are out. And have done a year’s worth of work and might be an admin error on the part of the app, us, or Rātā. To be thrown out lower in process would not be the best”

“Key people in Rātā are well-connected with key people here...created a platform to build on”

“I’ve never felt with Rātā (that) there’s a power game... We’re all on the same side”

“Rātā has established relationships and a visible presence in the community”

“The Rātā application and reporting process is easy, and communication is clear”

“The grants online transmission... paper to online. I’ve been involved with Rātā for a long time and have seen (them) change. Simplification of admin processes. Have declarations all upfront and all signed off. When (we have) done (our) due diligence beforehand, there is no tiresome reporting. Don’t have to go back and do tiresome reporting on projects”



“We are very grateful for the seed funding to get our project off the ground. After Rātā lent us money, it had a groundswell effect with other organisations. After that, it was a cascading effect with other organisations all wanting (to help) us get going”

“Rātā were right up there, in terms of size and scale. (They) had the faith to back us in the first place”

“Rātā have been incredible supporters. We hope to continue to receive operational support, forging-forward”

“If I’m looking at a project and I can’t get Rātā funding it makes me think, maybe this isn’t a good idea. Because their processes are there for a reason. Rātā have very thorough and robust processes”

“It’s the support. I’ve spent hours with [a Rātā staff member]. Talking about how we could go about doing things. Bright ideas. Being on the same page. They understand that failure is bad for us, as well as them”

Rātā Grant seeded other grants

Building project grants catalyse other funders to support an initiative. They contribute enough to get projects ‘across the line’:

“It’s the grant from Rātā that got us across the line. If we hadn’t had that, we would have struggled to get the CCC loan. We would have struggled with other funders. Also, when Rātā is behind us they are generous... (You) never get what you want from anybody. You’ve got to have a lot of irons in the fire”

“Rātā have such good credibility in the community. I wear a few hats”

“We do want to have a funding model that is sustainable. We don’t want to be reliant on one group of people or one organisation. Though we do hope they will help us fund our operating budget”

“Rātā have also given [\$]20k for operations. They are so well known and respected. It gives us credibility. Sends a message. If Rātā trust us, then others can trust us”

The advisors made a difference

Advisors are seen as key to applicants preparing well thought-out proposals for building grants:

“(The Rātā advisor) has obviously covered this region long before I came about. He knew a lot of the networks: rūnanga, marae, schools, and different people in the hāpori. They said, ‘Hey have you talked with this person?’ ‘Hey, I know this person has something lined up’. That was the kind of korero they were giving me”



“I have these big ideas that are a little bit outside the box. I always ring [a Rātā staff member] They would say: ‘I love it’. Let’s look at what that means practically. Those are the kind of thought-provoking questions”



Building Project Programme data analysis

The focus of this analysis was to explore the impact of the changes to Rātā's Building Projects Policy by comparing one policy period to the next.

Building Project information was analysed over two time periods: 2019-2022 (Period 1) and 2023-May 2024 (Period 2). The information for the 2024/2025 financial year is partial, covering decisions to May.

Data exported from Rātā's grant management system was analysed in MS Excel by the Rātā Research Analyst and then mapped using MS Power BI against the NZDep.

The data was sourced from the Building Projects applications for the two policy periods. In some cases, building costs recorded at the time of application may have been lower, as building costs had increased by the time the project came about, or the scope of the building project may have changed. This means that the figures reported here may be different to those reported by some of the grant recipients interviewed in this report.



Findings

The amount granted has remained steady

Rātā granted \$5.8m in Period 1 compared with \$4.5m in Period 2 (as at May 2024). Over the two grant periods, over \$10m in building project grants have been made, with the total cost of the projects being \$226m. The table below shows the value of funding under the period 1 and period 2 building priorities.

Priorities	Period 1	Period 2	Total
Acknowledge and celebrate our diverse communities, such as the arts, sports or youth sectors	\$790,160		\$790,160
Protected and enhanced the environment in which we live	\$110,000		\$110,000
Promote collaboration and multi-use spaces and have ongoing wide community use	\$4,630,000		\$4,630,000
Recognise the special role that Marae play in supporting community cohesion	\$240,000	\$500,000	\$740,000
Enable equitable access to facilities and services in areas of need		\$4,037,992	\$4,037,922
Total	\$5,770,160	\$4,537,922	\$10,308,082

The table below shows the application numbers, state and decline rate. While it looks like more applications were received in Period 1 (46) compared with Period 2 (34), when full financial year averages are compared there is little difference (15 compared with 16, respectively).



Of note in Table 2 is the increase in decline rate between the two periods (20 to 29%).

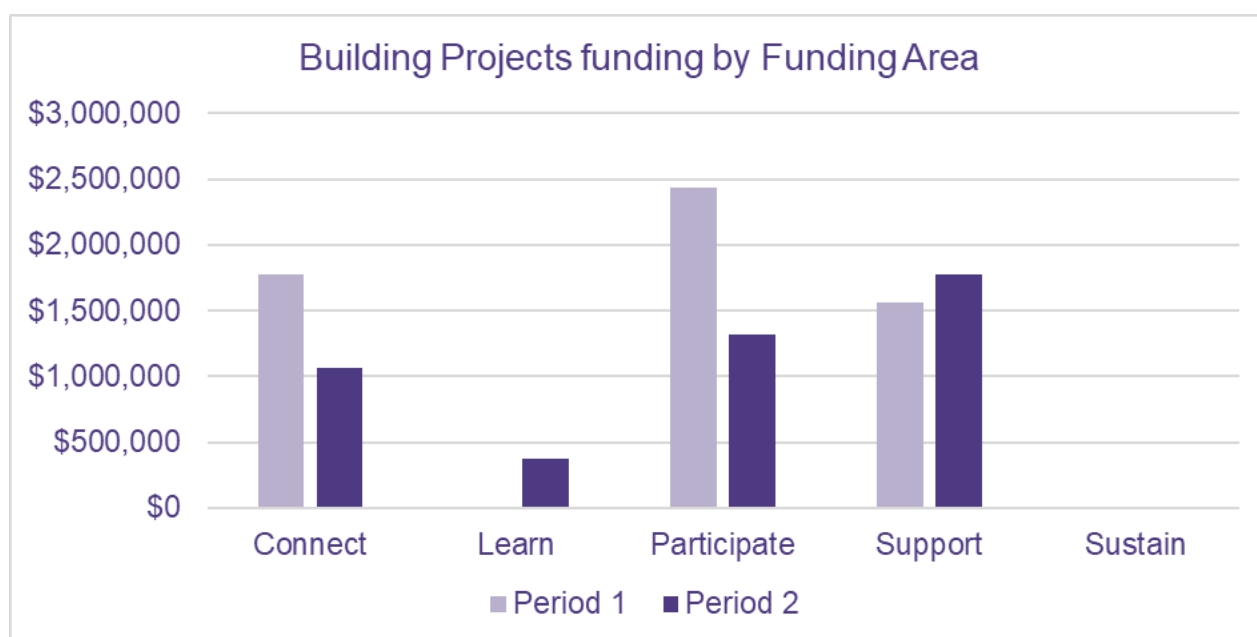
	Period 1	Period 1	Total
Application Numbers	45	34	79
Approved	36	24	60
Declined	9	10	19
Decline rate	20	29	24

Grants have become more evenly spread across funding areas and sectors

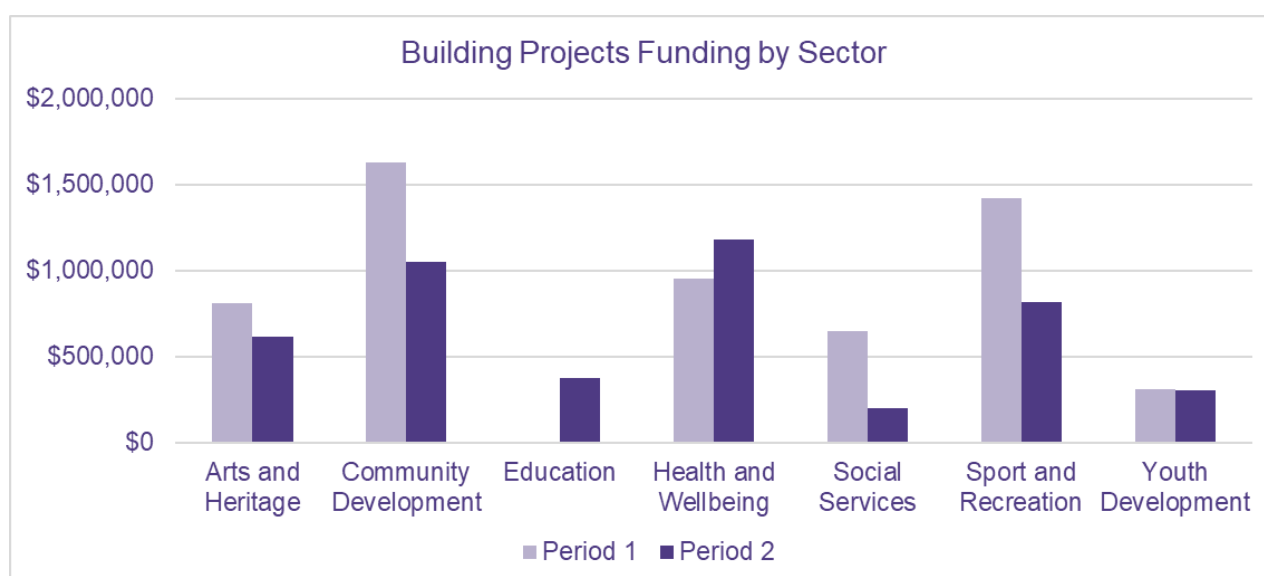
The change in Building Projects funding policy and priorities has resulted in a change in distribution by the Funding Area of the grant and by sectors as shown in the graphs below. The data indicates that Building Projects funding has become more evenly spread across all Rātā funding areas and sectors in Period 2.

In Period 1 the Connect and Participate Funding Areas received the most funding. In Period 2, the proportion of funding to the Support Funding Area increased while funding to the Participate Funding Area decreased.

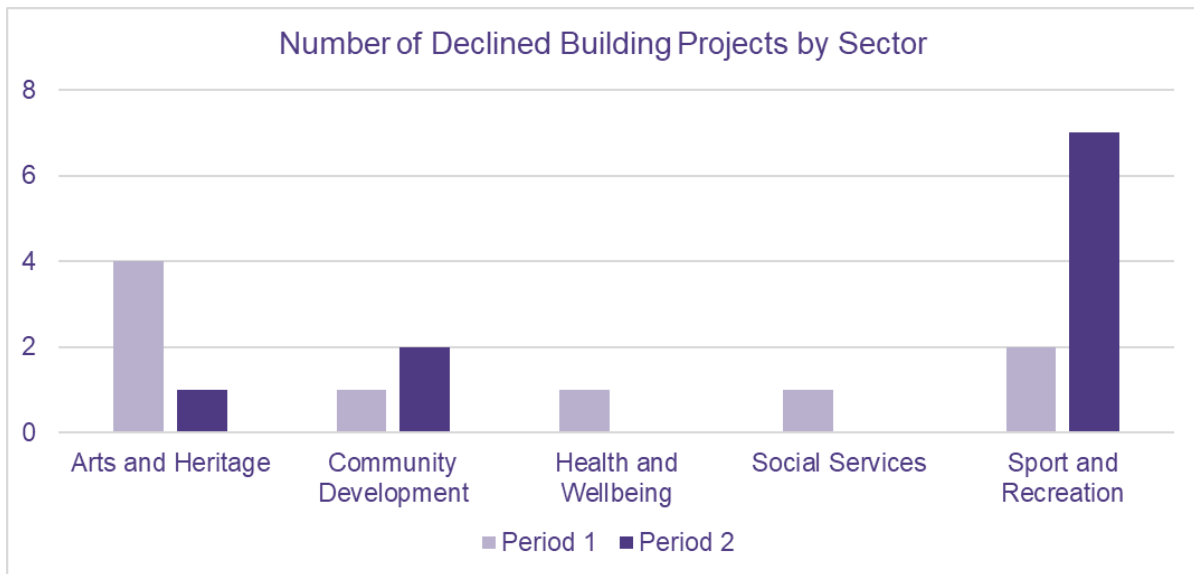
In both periods there has been no Building Projects funding under Rātā's Sustain Funding Area. The funding in Period 1 under the priority 'protected and enhanced the environment in which we live' was for the Link Pathway which is a cycle trail.



This decrease in funding in the Participate Funding Area is reflected in the distribution of funding sectors, with a significant drop in funding to the Sport and Recreation sector.

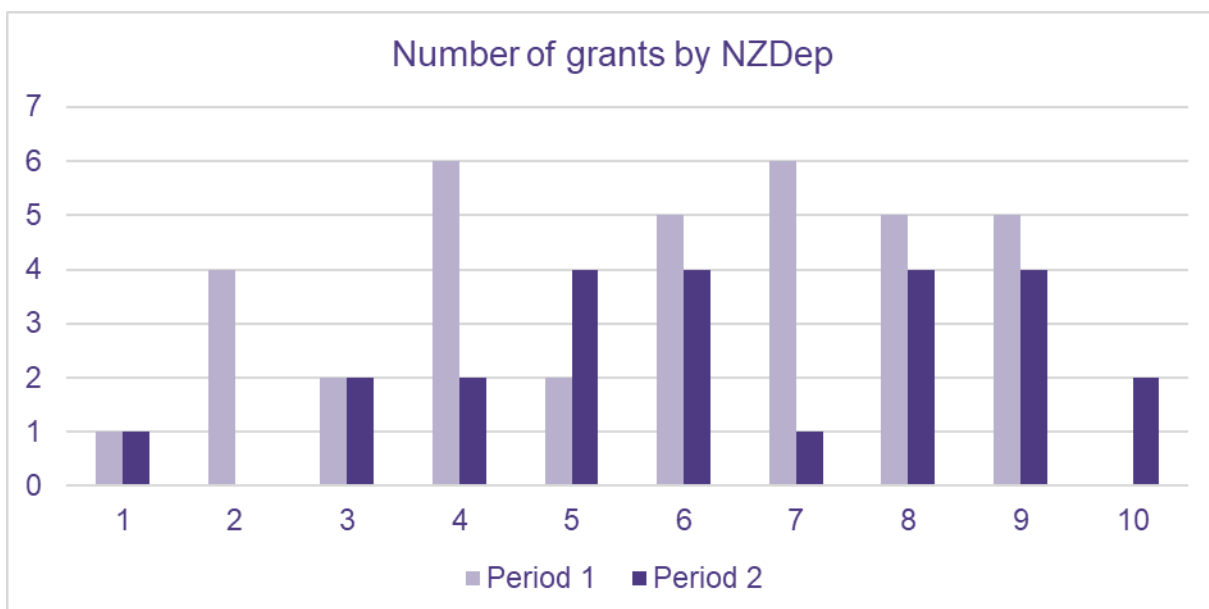


In addition, the number of declined applications by sector (graph below) shows the shift away from granting in the Participate Funding Area priority for increasing participation in active sport and recreation for the general public.

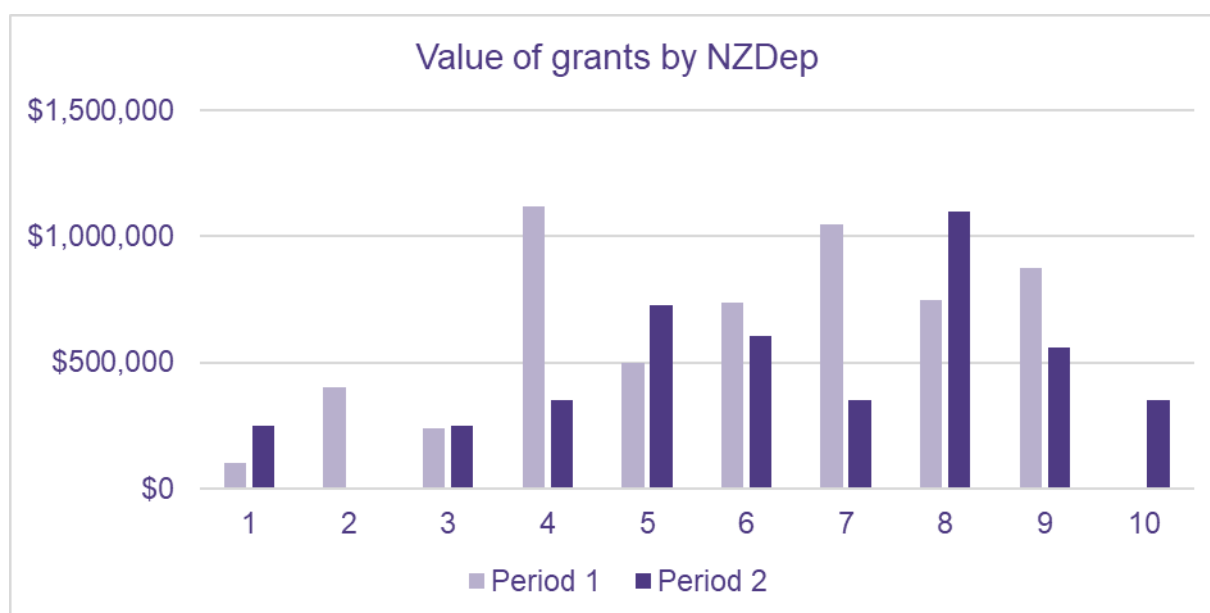


More grants have been made towards areas of higher deprivation

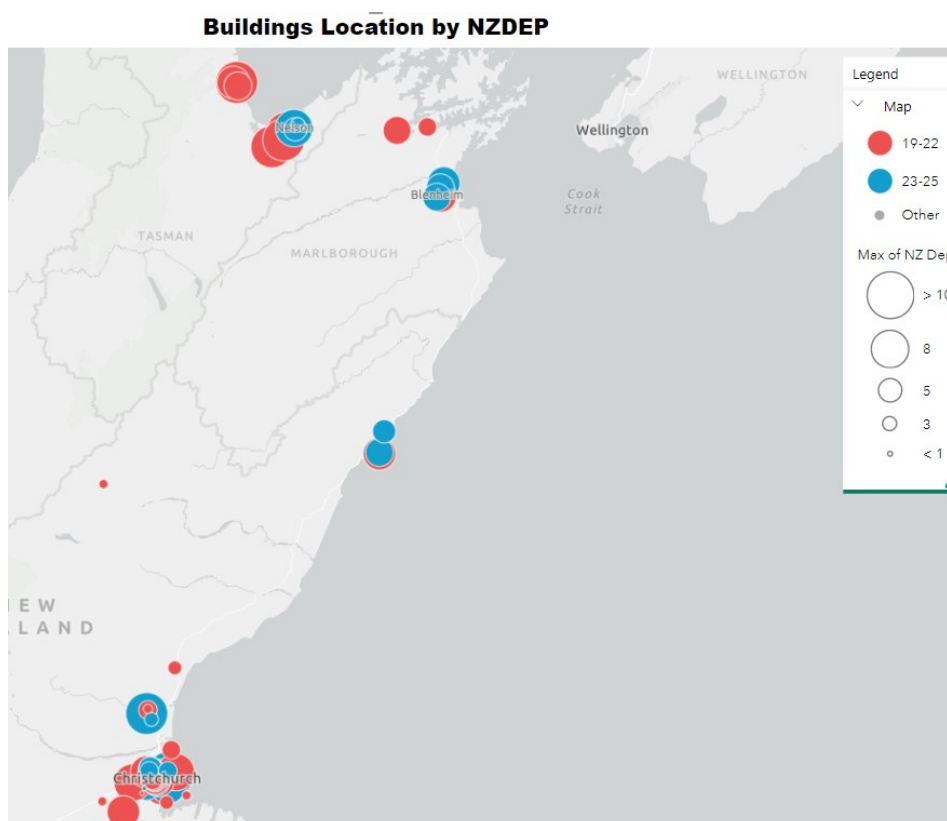
In 2023-2025, more building project grants have been made towards those living in areas of higher deprivation, as shown by the number of applications across NZDep areas in the graph below. New NZDep 10 being an area where people experience the highest levels of deprivation. The graph below indicates that there were no applications in areas two. Applications in areas five and ten have increased.



This graph below shows an increase in spending in the higher deprivation areas - with there being three full financial years in 2019-2022 against two and a quarter financial years in 2023-2025.



The map below shows the change in granting between Period 1 and Period 2 by mapping location to the NZ Dep. Period 1 grants are the red circles, Period 2 are the blue circles. The size of the circle indicates the increase in the NZ Dep ranking. Period 2 shows granting into higher deprivation areas.

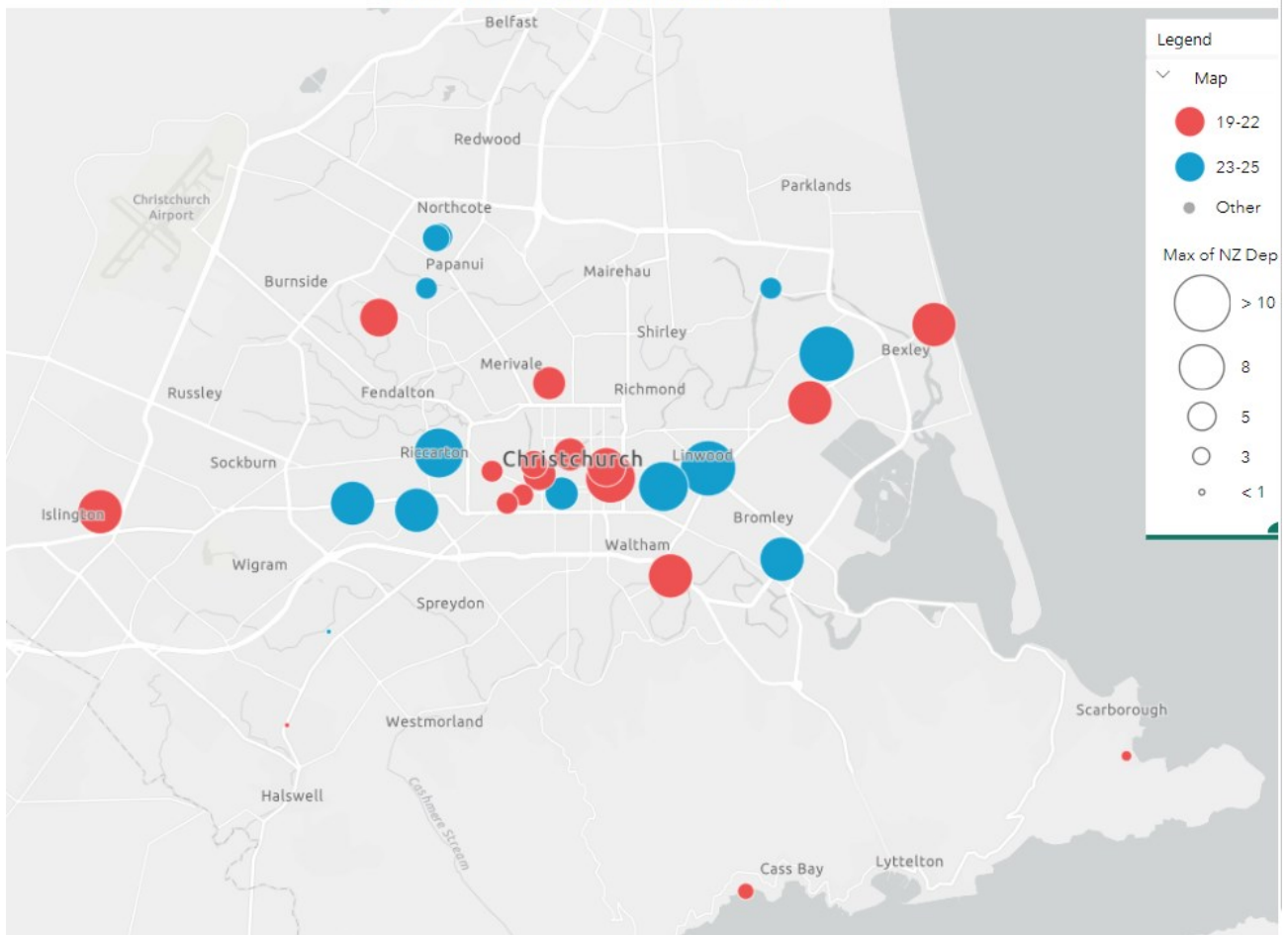


In some cases, building projects in lower socio-economic areas are funded, for example the CBD or because Rātā is seeking to remove a range of barriers to access for different groups. For

example, Christchurch Netball Centre’s building project (funded in Period 2) is in a low deprivation area. The project Rātā funded was for the installation of a lift and glass balustrade to enable wheelchair users to view all sports, and North Canterbury Mini Bus Trust (NCMBT), also situated in a relatively low socio-economic area, provides affordable trips for elderly, disabled people and students to get to doctors’ appointments, supermarkets, programmes and social activities.

The map below captures the Christchurch area. Period 2 building locations are clearly reaching into higher deprivation areas.

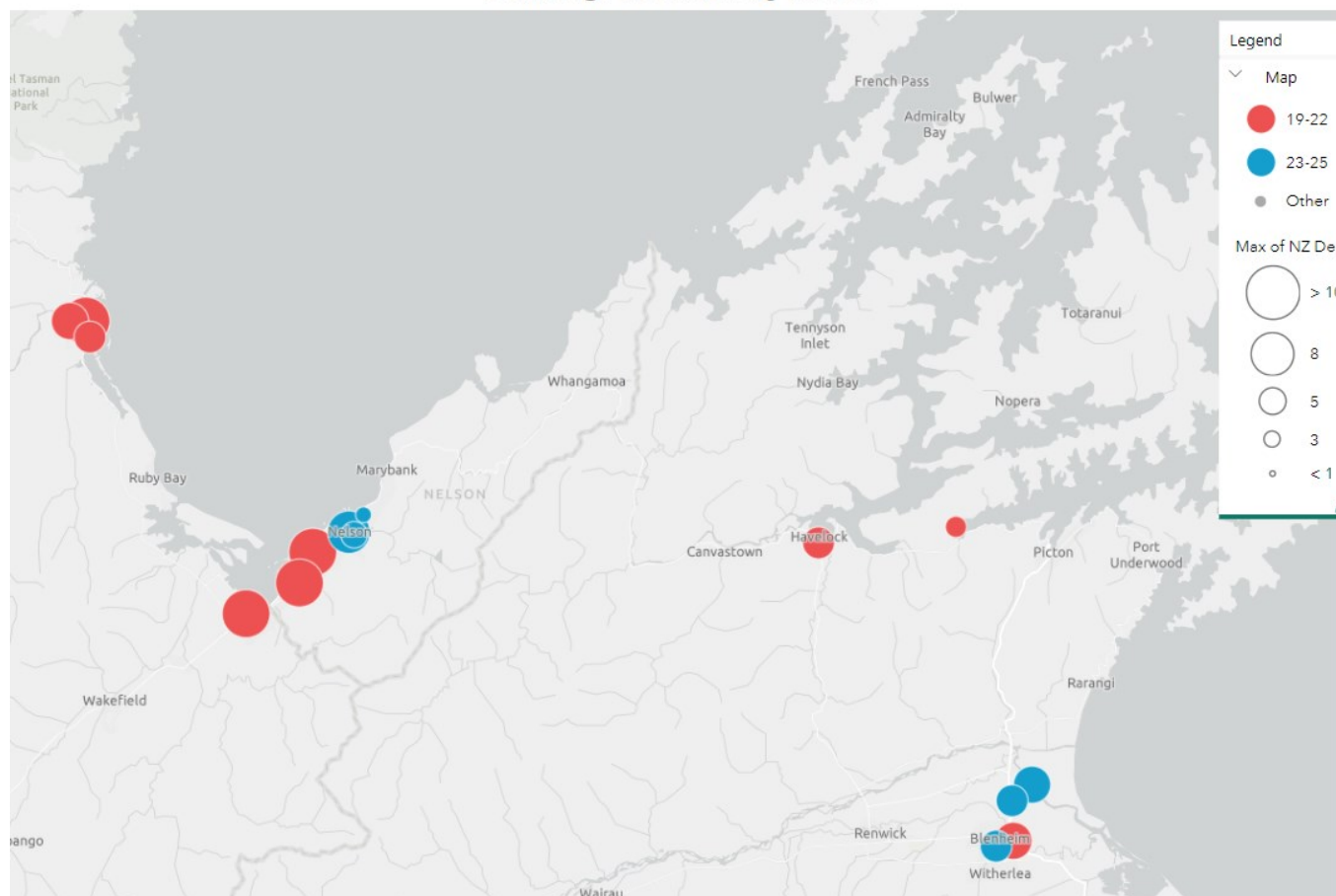
Buildings Location by NZDEP





In Te Tau Ihu the change is not as pronounced. However, funding is continuing to reach into areas of need.

Buildings Location by NZDEP



Summary

Together these figures indicate that Rātā has successfully shifted its funding to the new priorities of the Rātā Foundation. This means that Rātā will be reaching people across their Funding Areas and sectors and reaching those communities who need the building projects the most.

In summary the data indicates that:

- The amount granted has remained steady.
- The number of grants declined has increased between the two periods.
- Grants are becoming more evenly spread across all Rātā funding categories and sectors.
- More grants have been made towards areas of higher deprivation.

There has been no Building Projects Funding under Rātā's Sustain Funding Area.



Conclusions and Recommendations

This section contains the key conclusions of this research and recommendations to address the research questions outlined in the first part of this report.

The value or added benefit of the programme to the grantees

The building programme makes an important contribution to the community organisations who have received grants and advice about their building projects.

Those interviewed said that their building project fitted within a wider vision for their communities. It was part of the infrastructure needed to achieve their goals and provide the kind of services best tailored to their people and place. These building project grant recipients emphasised the importance of having the capacity and capability to take on a building project. There was often a key person focused on the build, with support from a wider circle of governors, collective members and whānau. Rātā staff members were often seen as part of the extended team of resource people the organisation could call on for support.

The BPP grants were particularly valued because of their timeliness. These grant recipients said that the grant came at an important time in their programme. For example, when an opportunity came up for a health centre to purchase the building they were in, or when land adjacent to a marae came up for sale.

Rātā's relational style and close connection with their communities has been a strength. For example, connecting up a community innovator and volunteer with wider networks, so that her education project could be well-supported in the community. Rātā then sustained this support by connecting this person with a grant to enable them to coordinate detailed building plans and complete a feasibility study and business plan.

The building projects completed under the BPP were labour-intensive, expensive and at times, risky programmes of work to undertake. So, the joining-up of capability building grants and community connections by Rātā, helped reduce risks and enabling a grant recipient to conduct a thorough process prior to applying for a BPP grant.



How Rātā funding benefited communities of need and what outcomes have the grants contributed towards

Rātā were also interested to understand whether their BPP grants were reaching communities of need and what outcomes the grant might be contributing towards.

Grants made before and after the new grant policy was put in place, were mapped against the Deprivation in New Zealand index. The map indicates that grants made in the past 2 ¼ years have moved into areas of higher deprivation and therefore higher community needs.

This analysis indicates that the BPP programme is also tailoring grants towards building projects with a strong orientation to connecting families into their programmes and projects. For example, with a preschool project, and a family-centred sports club. This approach strengthens community connections and builds community cohesion. Another recipient was able to upgrade traditional accommodation and meeting buildings in time to host a major cultural event. The grant recipient was able to showcase local culture and traditions, increasing pride and prosperity for local people.

Another grant recipient used the grant to buy the community health centre they were leasing, allowing them to concentrate on their core services, and diverting rent money into a wider range of health services offered to their clients. They provided affordable health services to people who could not access these services elsewhere. The security of tenure achieved with the BPP grant extended to other co-located health services in the building, increase the impact of their mahi and that of the other tenants.

A sports and recreation club with a large and growing range of teams used the building project grant as a catalyst for raising other funds for a major building refurbishment. The aim was to bring the facility up to modern standards and open the facilities up to the wider community at affordable rates. Their family-centric approach and linked programmes, such as an apprenticeships scheme, generated income for the club, while creating a safe and healthy place for recreation, community and skill building.

Another grant recipient with a strongly collaborative orientation led the construction of a specialised and accessible new building which combined a number of smaller health services with a mix of spaces and client services. Bringing these groups together in one place increased the quality of the services they could provide, reducing the isolation of the workers. With an adult education-orientation, this organisation was able to attract high profile speakers and increase participation in their programmes.

All of these building project grant recipients were growing and sometimes outgrowing their facilities.



What works well about Rātā processes

In all cases, those interviewed said that the grant unlocked other funding partners for their building project. The grant contributed towards the building project, but did not cover all the capital costs, or address ongoing operational costs. Grant recipients said that often Rātā's grant came at a critical time in the building project, helping them formulate their plans and increasing their confidence to seek funding elsewhere. All those interviewed said that Rātā's approach of making a contribution towards the build was realistic and that their rigorous application processes were appropriate for such a grant. The Rātā grant gave other funders confidence that the grant recipients were worthy of backing and made it easier for other parties to come to the table. The mix of grant plus loan, got the Health Centre purchase 'over the line' and so was an impactful strategy for a highly-tailored core community health service. One said that Rātā had found 'its mojo' with regard to building projects, and that Rātā should 'continue to build on this mojo'.

The outcomes of the building project grant

In summary, building project Programme contributes towards these broad outcomes:

- increasing community cohesion and resilience
- supporting communities of high need
- fostering an indigenous informed Aotearoa
- supporting community innovation
- increasing community prosperity
- increasing cultural understanding and biculturalism.

And within these broad outcomes the BPP contributes towards many subtle and specific outcomes for grant recipients. These include leadership, confidence, courage, growth and success.

Rātā is seen by community organisations as known, timely, focused and Treaty-aware. They connect grant recipients to community networks and to other parts of their grant program. They are prepared to back innovation and leadership while also ensuring that careful planning and preparation has been done by the grant recipient so that they are better able to take on the challenges of a community building project.



Who are the communities that have been served, what can we learn about who uses the facilities and how often.

There are a diverse range of grant recipients in the Building Project Programme. Not surprisingly many are well-established NFPs with the capacity and experience to manage building projects. For example, iwi agencies, community health and education trusts.

In at least one case, however, a community leader was supported to create the structures around them to conceptualise, design and implement a new build. This is particularly noteworthy because it indicates that Rātā also strives to open up the grants to new comers and to meet a need to a community in a new way.

Communities supported by these grant recipients included tangata whenua, lower wealth communities, family/whanau centred facilities and preschool children. They include marae, community health centres, and sports and recreation clubs. All have a community vision that is aspirational and needs focused. Tangata whenua organisations connected with an extensive network of family and subtribes and offered a wide range of services and programmes centred on marae.

All grant recipients said their members and clients were growing. Some had reached capacity. Grant recipients with children and young people involved in their work, also looked towards the wider family and community.

Rātā has successfully shifted its funding to the new priorities.

The analysis of grant applications indicates that Rātā has successfully shifted its funding to the new priorities, reaching people across most Funding Areas and sectors and in particular granting towards those communities who need the grants the most:

- The amount granted has remained steady.
- The number of grants declined has increased between the two periods.
- Grants are becoming more evenly spread across all Rātā funding categories and sectors.
- More grants have been made towards areas of higher deprivation.
- There has been no Building Projects Funding under Rātā's Sustain Funding Area.



Challenges for Rātā and BPP grantees

In some cases, building project grant recipients had to re-scope their projects to fit with escalating building costs. This may have reduced the overall impact of their services to their communities. For example, they may not be able upgrade the accessibility or energy efficiency of their building.

Where reductions were needed, this sometimes reduced the long-term financial sustainability of the building. For example, not being able to complete an office refurbishment would reduce future income from hireage. Building regulations, such as fire and earthquake proofing were seen as necessary and important, while expensive. Where the organisation did not have a paid person to dedicate to the building project, progress was slower. Organisations who chose not to accept lottery funding could not raise funds for their building project through this route. Organisations that were celebrating the purchase of a building, were yet to face some of the challenges of upgrading it. Although one said that the combination of a grant and loan had been helpful.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

- Retain the BPP and continue to direct the programme towards building projects in the highest areas of need.
- Continue to tailor the criteria for the fund towards those building projects that are able to meet multiple layers of need and/or provide core services to those who need them most.
- Continue to take a relational approach, identifying opportunities and supporting grant recipients throughout the building process to strengthen their community connections and carefully planning the building project to be sustainable after the build is complete.
- Continue to connect with communities of need so that as opportunities arise Rātā can respond.
- Continue to be agile about the timing of Rātā's funding during the life of a project.
- Continue to be flexible with funding support through grants and community loans.



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