

NEXT FOUNDATION

# Review



Reflecting on ten years  
of strategic philanthropy

**NEXT**  
**FOUNDATION**  
Investing in our land, our people



## FOREWORD

by Chris Liddell

Kia ora koutou,

Forty years ago in 1984 I was fortunate to first meet Annette and Neal Plowman - a proud Kiwi couple, astute, grounded and with a real love for each other and for New Zealand. For the greater part of my life, it's been a privilege to have walked alongside them in business, friendship and to see their desire to give back to our country.

As the NEXT Foundation journey draws to completion, Annette and Neal are delighted with what has been achieved. NEXT has catalysed tremendous progress for the land and people of New Zealand: including rebuilding biodiversity through massive ecological projects, helping spark a nationwide movement towards "predator free" and strengthening leadership within the education system.

NEXT has carved a unique path, role modelling philanthropy that draws from the best of the world and the best of New Zealand. Kiwis have always been generous people, and NEXT has built on that generosity with what we describe as strategic philanthropy, a long term approach to major projects and causes.

NEXT also grew, with Bill Kermode's leadership, into an influential community of change-makers, with a heart for our land and our people. We are proud to have been associated with, and to have supported some of the finest leaders in the country.

I see NEXT as part of a growing movement in New Zealand. There are many people here who have created significant financial wealth over the last generation and are increasingly thinking about what their legacy could be. In the future, I hope that strategic philanthropy can be a significant force to build those legacies. There remains important work to be done not just in environment and education but all aspects of the country and society. I hope that we have a vast group contributing to making a substantive positive difference. Individuals and families, through sharing their wealth in a purposeful way, can help solve some of our nation's biggest issues.

As for Annette and Neal, together we are looking at how we can build on the foundation NEXT has created. We have faith in a strategic model of philanthropy. Our hope is to do something even more substantial for future generations of New Zealanders. For the land and people we love.

*Manaaki whenua, manaaki tangata, haere whakamua*  
Care for the land, care for the people, go forward

*Chris Liddell*



NEXT Founding Chair Chris Liddell (back) with Neal and Annette Plowman following the Kea World Class New Zealand Awards. Neal and Annette were named Supreme Winners in 2018. Photo credit: Renee Harbers.

### About NEXT

- Established in 2014
- \$100m, ten-year spend down strategic philanthropy fund
- Vision to create a legacy of environmental and educational excellence for future generations of New Zealanders
- Investing in a small number of multi-year initiatives, giving financial and non-financial support
- Targeting initiatives that are transformational, inspirational and run in a business-like way

Jacqualene Maindonald, Principal of Mangere Central School, has participated in Springboard Trust's Strategic Leadership for Principal's Programme.



## CONTENTS

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| The back story                    | 4  |
| NEXT Foundation vision            | 6  |
| A strategic imperative            | 7  |
| It's about people                 | 8  |
| NEXT investments                  | 10 |
| Milestones Environment            | 12 |
| Milestones Education              | 18 |
| Milestones NEXT Fellowship        | 22 |
| Milestones Strategic Philanthropy | 26 |
| Lessons learned                   | 28 |
| Sustaining the gains              | 30 |
| An enduring legacy                | 34 |

## THE NEXT REVIEW

by Bill Kermode

Kia ora koutou, and welcome to the NEXT Review.

This Review covers the journey of NEXT over ten years and includes the back story, way of operating, key milestones and various lessons learned along the way.

At sunset, while NEXT has helped to catalyse significant change for the land and people of New Zealand, I'm very conscious that any achievements are collective in nature. Change has only been possible by working with community, iwi, government, philanthropy, investors, business, friends of NEXT, and many more.

This work has been a privilege and a joy. Thank you to everyone who has walked alongside NEXT over the last ten years. I am proud to say that together we have made a lasting difference for Aotearoa New Zealand.

Ngā mihi nui,

*Bill Kermode*

# The back story

The NEXT Foundation story began with a humble Kiwi couple – Annette and Neal Plowman – a teacher and a businessman, with a love for New Zealand.

Annette and Neal Plowman have always been generous. Their philanthropy pre-dates NEXT and is a hallmark of their lives together. They have a heart for transformational projects in the areas of environment and education. They believe that everyone with enough disposable income should give to the causes that matter most.

The seeds of Annette and Neal's philanthropy were in the 1980s. In the early part of the decade the couple led the buy-out of Endeavour Services. Neal was the managing director and his family had a large stake in the business. It was at this time that Neal met Chris Liddell, who was the junior analyst on the initiative to privatise the company. Over the following years, Chris became a friend, confidante and worked closely alongside the family – supporting the growth and eventual sale of the business, investment of funds and the Plowman's aspiration to give back.

Annette and Neal wanted to make a difference for New Zealand – without any personal credit or publicity. For many years their generosity was kept under wraps, managed discreetly in a charitable trust. Across a range of significant projects, trustees Chris, Barrie Brown, and Geoff Harley were instructed to not disclose the origin of the gifting.

Their early giving ranged from endowments, to donations to groups such as Lifeline (where Annette had been a counsellor) and Teach First NZ – a valued relationship that was to continue with NEXT.

The couple also had a passion for conservation, and Rotoroa Island was the first significant project in this arena. Involving more than money, the project encapsulated the long-term leasing of Rotoroa Island from the Salvation Army, establishing a Trust, developing a conservation plan and implementing it. This was a step up from their previous philanthropy: where the team were now hands-on in governance and management. In Rotoroa, a blueprint was formed – catalytic projects requiring large amounts of capital, combined with strong strategic and operational support.

With the escalating public interest in the Island, it became necessary for Annette and Neal to finally break their silence. Barrie Brown recalls, 'There were all sorts of stories circulating. Neal wouldn't allow an interview, he just came out and said, 'It's us,' and that is all. They are a private couple.'

The ambition was to increase again with Project Janszoon in Abel Tasman: 22,500 hectares, multiple partners and operating at landscape scale. This was also the first partnership with the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the largest it had embarked on with a philanthropist in a national park.

As the philanthropy grew in size and complexity, Neal and Annette saw the opportunity to record what was being learned and also wanted to take a step back, from being quite so hands on. Dedicated resource and increased structure was required.

To manage the transition, Chris Liddell did what he always does when entering a new situation. He immersed himself in learning, 'I read everything I could on the topic of philanthropy, gleaned the best practices and built it into the thinking of what a foundation might look like.'

The strategic plan that emerged, contained many of the elements that were to be fulfilled under NEXT, including an intent to:

- Deliver a 10-year \$100 million spend down programme
- Focus in the areas of education and environment
- Invest in high impact meaningful projects focused on underlying causes
- Act as a model for strategic philanthropy in New Zealand and inspire others to give
- Invest in the millions, while remaining flexible

This blueprint aligned with Annette and Neal's thinking. The couple wanted a fixed term, spend down Foundation, where they could see the fruits of their investments during their lifetime. They believed that with focus and tenure you can achieve significant impact on important issues. 'Neal really wanted that,' says Chris, 'He felt you achieve the best results by having a fixed term. You get in, make a difference (including a plan to sustain the gains) and move on.'

Rotoroa Island in the Hauraki Gulf was the first significant conservation project for the Plowmans.



Annette and Neal believed that trusting relationships were the basis of good business and this translated to their philanthropy. They wanted a board that was small, flexible, philosophically aligned and with people they knew and trusted. Chris Liddell was appointed as the Founding NEXT Chair, alongside Barrie Brown, Carol Campbell and Geoff Harley.

While the trustees knew about running trusts and business, they had knowledge gaps in the focus areas of environment and education. They made the decision to appoint a specialist advisory board. This included Sir Rob Fenwick and Devon McLean in environment, and Margaret Bendall and John Taylor in education. Three commercial advisers were also appointed including Roger France, Geoff Ricketts and Pip Dunphy.

The next step was to appoint a CEO: someone smart, with heart, but with relevant business and investment experience

and who could work with people from grassroots to the PM. Bill Kermode fitted the bill, and having known Chris for decades, the appointment was an easy one. Chris reflects, 'Bill was a stand-out.'

The NEXT journey was beginning.



# NEXT Foundation vision

## VISION

Our land and our people  
– creating a legacy  
of excellence for future  
generations of New Zealanders

## OBJECTIVES

To INVEST \$100m with impact  
To PARTNER with others to increase that impact 10x  
To INSPIRE and energise individuals and communities

## VALUES

We care, about our land and our people  
We are ambitious for New Zealand, but grounded in what we do  
We are good partners, and we do what we say we are going to do

# A strategic imperative



Annette Plowman with Taranaki Mounga Chair Jamie Tuuta at the NEXT five-year celebration. Iwi were valued partners on the NEXT journey.

The NEXT Theory of Change was that strategic philanthropic investment in transformative, inspirational projects would catalyse and accelerate positive system change.

The Foundation invested in a small number of multi-year initiatives (with a view for transitioning to sustainability), providing multi-year financial and non-financial support. High performance organisations were targeted that were transformational, inspirational and business-like.

### NEXT'S APPROACH TO PHILANTHROPY

- NEXT supported organisations that aimed to transform the system they operated in
- NEXT would partner, convene and advocate for increased impact
- NEXT, and the organisations it supported, were business-like and learning focused

NEXT utilised a range of impact tools. These included having targeted focus, backing and building strong governance and project management capability within

the supported initiatives, systems thinking, goal setting, measurement, capacity building and importantly – collaborative approaches.

Over time, NEXT also became more thoughtful and intentional in their engagement of iwi as partners. Bill Kermode reflects, 'Iwi are a critical relationship, and the Te Ao Māori worldview is very powerful and a strong way to approach environmental challenges.'

### NEXT KAIHAUTŪ

In addition to the financial investment, grantees were backed by a NEXT-placed kaihautū or navigator, often agreed as an observer on the Board of trustees. The kaihautū offered governance and management support and connections, and were the primary vehicle for delivering NEXT non-financial support.

'Through Bill and the NEXT community we have worked with projects and their teams, providing financial, management and governance support. Our kaihautū (or navigators) like Margaret Bendall, Devon McLean, Jan Hania, Bridget Best, Frank Janssen, Mike Ferrand, Andrew Poole and others have directly inputted into the projects and made an incredible contribution,' recalls Founding Chair Chris Liddell.

# It's about people

Surrounding themselves with a trusted group of friends and advisors was part and parcel of the Plowmans' business philosophy and they carried this into their philanthropic approach. In addition to the NEXT Board, team and kaihautū, NEXT surrounded itself with an influential community and circle of friends.

## THE NEXT COMMUNITY AND FRIENDS

Over time the NEXT community grew through a series of conversations, convening and events, and via its own giving processes and actions. The natural network of NEXT is the business sector, which was the starting point for convening. These business relationships were leveraged, and increasingly over time the community diversified to also include change-makers, philanthropy, government, iwi, social entrepreneurs and others. The opportunity to unite behind common goals brought out the best in people. Barrie Brown says, 'People are basically good and want to do something to help.'

**NEXT events were central to building the community and provided a platform for learning, connecting and inspiring.**

- NEXT Outlook Breakfasts were quarterly thought leadership events that brought powerful speakers to share on a specific topic

- The NEXT Short Drinks were an opportunity for people to meet with others with shared interests but often came from a different community
- The NEXT Hui were held every two years and brought together grant partners and wider community in areas of shared interest

## STRENGTHS OF THE NEXT COMMUNITY INCLUDED

- People came together from a range of backgrounds, for a common purpose – for the land and people of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Those involved genuinely care, have a track record of 'getting things done', are networked and influential. Taranaki Mounga Chair Jamie Tuuta sums it up, 'The beautiful thing with the NEXT community is you have a huge amount of passionate, purpose driven inspiring individuals who go above and beyond. They care and once people care, they will go out of their way to do what needs to be done'
- Being able to leverage a wide range of connections. Members of the community facilitated access to institutions within government, philanthropy and more, 'Where it leads can be diverse. It can be access to a conversation we need to have, for example to change a regulation'
- There is a democracy of ideas, 'Graduates out of university can contribute in just as meaningful a way as others'

## NEXT FRIENDS

The work of NEXT was further enhanced with a whole lot of help from their friends. Valued relationships exist with PwC New Zealand, Chapman Tripp, Play it Strange and others.

### PwC NEXT Young Leaders

The genesis of the relationship with PwC goes back to the 1980s, to when NEXT founders Neal and Annette Plowman had their business. PwC acted in various capacities for the founders, including with the charitable trust that NEXT sits under. Since NEXT's earliest days, there has been a PwC NEXT Young Leader involved. The Young Leader was seconded to the Foundation for circa six months and made available to NEXT for up to half their time, while still working at and paid by PwC.

There was mutual benefit and the relationship was highly valued. Bill Kermode says, 'It gave NEXT a fantastic skilled resource and also gave 12 young people insight into various for-purpose sectors, including philanthropy.'

### Chapman Tripp

Chapman Tripp provided high quality legal services to the NEXT team on a pro bono basis, again from early in NEXT's life, and made its networks and capabilities always available to the Foundation.

### Play It Strange

Play It Strange exists to bring into the light the great songs written by New Zealand Secondary School students. Through an annual competition a cohort of songs are selected and the musicians have the opportunity to record

their song. Through the Play It Strange partnership with NEXT, a number of those young people's songs were chosen to back the Foundation's videos and some of the musicians performed at NEXT events.

## WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

The NEXT Foundation wishes to remember and honour all dear friends who have passed, including the late Sir Rob Fenwick KNZM KStJ and Geoff Ricketts CNZM.

Rob was a friend to the Foundation, a speaker at NEXT events, a member of the Foundation's Advisory Panel, and a regular connector of NEXT with people who could help. An outspoken environmentalist, he was one of the architects of Predator Free New Zealand and influenced the Government to take the mission up as national policy.

Geoff was a friend to the Plowmans, involved with NEXT as an advisor and an active supporter and connector for its strategic philanthropic mission. He previously shared that his experience with NEXT, 'sowed the seeds for Fran and I to establish the Ipipiri Trust. The overall Elliot Bay property consists of 700 hectares: 500 hectares of native forest, 200 hectares of farmland, and the iconic Northland surf beach, Elliot Bay. The property will now be a taonga, a treasure for all the people of Aotearoa New Zealand to enjoy.'

***'If you can put your hand up for a cause you believe in, and put your hands in your pocket at the same time to support it – others in the community will follow.'***

Geoff Ricketts CNZM





# NEXT investments

From 2014 to 2024, NEXT invested in a breadth of inspirational organisations. NEXT is grateful for the vision, passion and perseverance of all of the for-purpose groups engaged. The Foundation wishes to acknowledge the staff, volunteers, partners, governance and collaborators that enabled this important work to happen. Following are a list of some of the larger investment groups supported.

## NEXT SUPPORTED PREDATOR FREE INITIATIVES

Zero Invasive Predators  
[zip.org.nz](http://zip.org.nz)

Taranaki Mouna  
[taranakimouna.nz](http://taranakimouna.nz)

Te Manahuna Aoraki  
[temanahunaoraki.org](http://temanahunaoraki.org)

Predator Free South Westland  
[predatorfreesouthwestland.nz](http://predatorfreesouthwestland.nz)

Predator Free Wellington  
[pfw.org.nz](http://pfw.org.nz)

NEXT predator free community champion  
[pfw.org.nz](http://pfw.org.nz)

Cacophony  
[cacophony.org.nz](http://cacophony.org.nz)

Support of Project Janszoon in Abel Tasman National Park ([janszoon.org](http://janszoon.org)) and Rotoroa Island ([rotoroa.org.nz](http://rotoroa.org.nz)) continued through NEXT

For further information and videos see [www.nextfoundation.org.nz/investments/education/](http://www.nextfoundation.org.nz/investments/education/)

## NEXT SUPPORTED EDUCATION INITIATIVES

Ako Mātātupu: Teach First NZ  
[teachfirstnz.org](http://teachfirstnz.org)

The Education Hub  
[theeducationhub.org.nz](http://theeducationhub.org.nz)

Manaiakalani Education Trust  
[manaiakalani.org](http://manaiakalani.org)

The Mind Lab  
[themindlab.ac.nz](http://themindlab.ac.nz)

Springboard Trust  
[springboardtrust.org.nz](http://springboardtrust.org.nz)

Talking Matters  
[talkingmatters.org.nz](http://talkingmatters.org.nz)

SPACE for you and your baby  
[parentingplace.nz/courses/space](http://parentingplace.nz/courses/space)

Tamariki Wellbeing  
[tsi.nz/tamariki-wellbeing](http://tsi.nz/tamariki-wellbeing)

For further information and videos see [www.nextfoundation.org.nz/investments/environment/](http://www.nextfoundation.org.nz/investments/environment/)





## A living treasure

Conservation is an area close to the hearts of Annette and Neal Plowman and, wishing to focus to have real impact, with the counsel and advice of Sir Rob Fenwick, the decision was made early to focus on a predator free nation. Becoming predator free is a matter of national importance and relevance for Aotearoa New Zealand. Having developed as an isolated archipelago for 80 million years, absent of mammalian predators, Aotearoa evolved uniquely, with one of the most remarkable eco systems in the world: a living taonga.

New Zealand is home to a plethora of unique ecological assets, including thousands of endemic species. The taiao or natural world is sacred to tangata whenua, intrinsic to national identity and New Zealand's 'pure advantage' on the world stage. Introduced mammalian predators are a primary cause of damage to endemic plant and animal life. Hence, eradicating the three main introduced predators – rats, stoats, and possums – became NEXT's north star in environment.

Building on the early generosity of Annette and Neal, NEXT supported a targeted group of high performing organisations each playing their part in making Aotearoa New Zealand predator free.

When working out where to focus, an early scan of activity by NEXT provided valuable insights. Project management skills, investable propositions and R&D were needed. The opportunity existed to shift mindsets and move beyond predator free islands – to a belief that eradication is possible on the mainland. A social campaign and movement was required. Lou Sanson the Director-General of DOC at that time looked to the future, 'A NEXT legacy in predator free would be the Noah's Ark of the world.'

Over time the work and ambition grew – from island to mainland, and from sole funded to public-private partnerships. And the scope expanded to filling gaps in research and development (R&D) and embracing the urban

challenge. At each step, NEXT brought a learner mindset to improve contribution.

From 2014 to 2024, NEXT invested \$100 million in the areas of environment, education and strategic philanthropy. In environment, predator free was the primary focus and the approach was one of strategic philanthropy, grounded in the unique context of New Zealand. NEXT focused on organisations taking a business-like approach, with inspirational leaders, and which were collaborators with iwi, community, government, business and private landowners. The following milestones are a sample of what was achieved in environment over more than ten years.



### 1. RISE OF THE NATIONAL PREDATOR FREE MOVEMENT

NEXT helped to catalyse the national predator free movement. This was achieved through joined up activity, a unifying vision and system change investments. Mike Slater (formerly of DOC) observes, 'NEXT has provided the building blocks, that now with the will of everybody including the Crown, we can go on to deliver an entire predator free Aotearoa.'

### 2. ROTOROA ISLAND

This pre-NEXT project involved the long term leasing of the island from the Salvation Army, forming a trust, building a conservation plan and enacting it. The Trust has created an 82ha predator free public conservation park and wildlife sanctuary in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf. The ecosystem has been transformed with more than 400,000 native plants, the return of native species, and is a creche for young kiwi and takahē restoration.





### 3. ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK

Through Project Janszoon 20,000 hectares of stoat control was established, wilding pines eliminated and native species reintroduced (including kākāriki, robin, whio, kākā and pāteke). This was the first time the NZ Government had partnered with philanthropy in a national park restoration of this magnitude.



### 4. THE TOMORROW ACCORD

Establishment of the ground breaking Tomorrow Accord between the NZ Government and NEXT. The Accord is structured flexibly and available for use by any philanthropic organisation. It will ensure that once predators are down to agreed levels (or other milestones achieved), the Crown will maintain those gains. At sunset, handover to DOC had begun in Taranaki, Abel Tasman and South Westland.



### 5. BACKING R&D

NEXT co-founded and supported R&D breakthrough organisation ZIP (Zero Invasive Predators) through feasibility, stand-up and on to Government adoption of the technology. This has enabled a transformational step change for biodiversity here. The ability now exists to completely eradicate rats, stoats and possums from the mainland.



### 6. LEVERAGED INVESTMENT

NEXT leveraged additional funding from others multiplying NEXT's investment in the environment six times over. Bringing in supportive co-funding was an integral part of the NEXT way of doing things.



### 7. A WORLD FIRST

NEXT provided the model and influenced the Government to start up Predator Free 2050. Lou Sanson of DOC commented at the time, 'When the Prime Minister announced Predator Free 2050 that story exploded around the world. I believe it will be viewed as being up there with giving women the vote.'



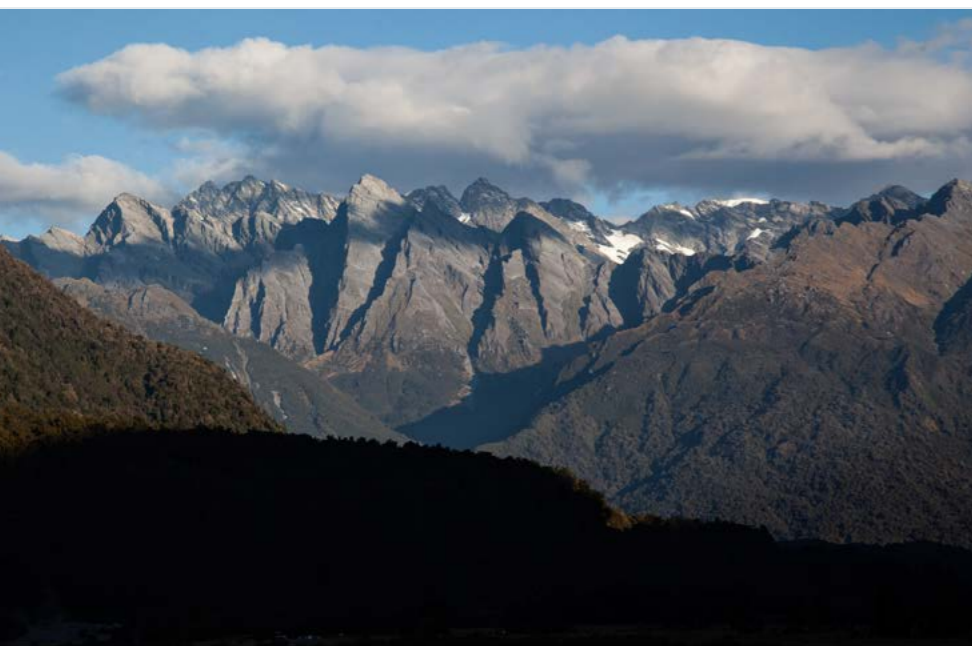
### 8. TARANAKI MOUNGA

He Kawa Ora! Back to life! NEXT convened diverse stakeholders around Taranaki Mounga and with Taranaki based iwi leadership and then DOC built Taranaki Mounga governance 'from ground zero.' This resulted in a number of significant biodiversity outcomes, and a pathway for many more. The consortium includes eight local iwi, philanthropy, government, business, and community. The restoration covers more than 34,000 hectares and has influenced an array of regional outcomes.



**9. FIRST PREDATOR FREE CAPITAL CITY**

NEXT backed the formation of Predator Free Wellington, with ownership across community, iwi, local government and philanthropy. In 2023 Miramar Peninsula achieved the project's first zero predation goal and now sights are set on expanding through the rest of Wellington city. With 97% ratepayer support, Pōneke Wellington is on track to become the first predator free capital city in the world.



**10. BACKING PREDATOR FREE SOUTH WESTLAND**

This ambitious project will see the elimination of possums, rats and stoats from 107,000 hectares of forest, townships and rural land bounded by rivers, alps and sea. The partnership is on track to achieve its predator elimination goal by mid-2025. Nature is thriving through the project area.

**11. TRANSFORMING TE MANAHUNA AORAKI**

NEXT went on to convene and build the coalition to transform and enhance biodiversity across 310,000 hectares in the upper MacKenzie Basin and Aoraki/ Mount Cook National Park. This was the Foundation's third joint venture with DOC and the most ambitious. The area is home to many endangered species, including kea, pīwauwau (rock wren) and the kakī.



**TRACKING NEXT ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTMENTS**

**TE MANAHUNA AORAKI 310,000<sub>HA</sub>**

PARTNERS: DOC, Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, Te Rūnanga o Waihao, Te Rūnanga o Moeraki, private land owners, Aotearoa Foundation, Jasmine Social Investments, PF 2050 Ltd, other government agencies, ZIP, re:wild, community and NEXT

**PREDATOR FREE SOUTH WESTLAND 107,000<sub>HA</sub>**

PARTNERS: Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio, DOC, Predator Free 2050 Limited, OSPRI, ZIP and NEXT

**PREDATOR FREE WELLINGTON**

PARTNERS: Wellington City Council, Greater Wellington Regional Council, Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika, PF 2050 Ltd, community and NEXT

**THE CACOPHONY PROJECT**

**TARANAKI MOUNGA 34,000<sub>HA</sub>**

PARTNERS: The Taranaki Iwi Chairs Forum, DOC, Toi Foundation, Shell NZ, Jasmine Social Investments, other philanthropic investors, sponsors, community and NEXT

**PREDATOR FREE COMMUNITY CHAMPION**

**PROJECT JANSZOOON 22,350<sub>HA</sub>**

PARTNERS: DOC, iwi, Abel Tasman Birdsong Trust, community and NEXT  
*Pre-NEXT Project*

**ZERO INVASIVE PREDATORS**  
PARTNERS: DOC, Jasmine Social Investments, Morgan Investments, PF 2050 Ltd, dairy industry and NEXT

**ROTOROA ISLAND 82<sub>HA</sub>**

*Pre-NEXT Project*

KEY Land Based Projects Research & Development Urban Projects



## Influencing life course



It is well understood that success in education is a determinant of life outcomes. Education can pave a path to prosperity, enhance health outcomes and build a fairer nation. As a teacher, Annette Plowman is passionate about education, which alongside environment, was a key focus for the couple's generosity.

Following a review of sector needs in education, NEXT identified the opportunity to focus on professional development and growing great educators. The counsel of education advisor Margaret Bendall also influenced NEXT to include the first thousand days of life as a focus. NEXT formed three Whetū Ara Mārama or guiding north stars in education: education leadership, teacher excellence, and the first thousand days. Building on the environmental milestones, following is a sample of what was achieved in the education arena over NEXT's ten year lifespan.

### 12. SHIFTS IN THE NEW ZEALAND EDUCATION SYSTEM

An external independent review of NEXT investments in education found benefits to the education system from the organisations NEXT supported and to the wider system. Shifts included strengthened principal leadership and teacher digital skills; greater access to digital devices and learning; more skilled teachers in areas of shortage; and improved learning outcomes for Māori and Pasifika learners. System benefits included improvements in innovation, teaching, leadership, collaboration and R&D.



### 13. BRIDGING THE RESEARCH GAP

NEXT backed start-up The Education Hub alongside other givers. Their reach has now extended to more than 900,000 interactions and they are leading in bridging the gap between education research and the classroom.



### 14. SCALING MANAIKALANI TO 120 SCHOOLS

The kaupapa of Manaiakalani is proven to accelerate learning gains in writing and reading and focuses on low decile schools. And the benefits persist into secondary school and across some of our poorest communities. With NEXT support, Manaiakalani scaled to 120 schools nationally.





## 15.

### GROWING STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Nationwide expansion of Springboard Trust's Strategic Leadership Programme for Principals, with a priority focus on low decile schools. Over the years of NEXT support, Springboard has reached 750 principals with a year long programme delivering stronger strategic leadership.

## 16. TACKLING EDUCATION INEQUITY

Ako Mātātupu: Teach First NZ is focused on addressing education inequity through accelerated teacher training for graduates and people changing career. During the period of NEXT's support, over 400 teachers have trained (or are training) in this kaupapa, including 108 Māori and 78 Pasifika participants.



## 17.

### BUILDING THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

During the years of NEXT support 3,500 teachers completed their Postgraduate Certificate in Digital and Collaborative Learning with The Mind Lab. And since 2019, over 30% of learners on this programme have been Māori and Pasifika. An external review confirmed significant improvements in teaching practice.



## 18. RECOGNITION OF THE CRITICALITY OF THE FIRST THOUSAND DAYS

Greater recognition of the importance of the early years in a child's development has been achieved through seeding and supporting initiatives such as Talking Matters, SPACE and Tamariki Wellbeing. 85% of brain development occurs in the first three years of life, creating the educational foundation blocks.



## 19. BACKING START-UP TALKING MATTERS

Talking Matters builds language-rich environments for babies in the first thousand days through evidence-based practice change. NEXT supported startup, strategy, implementation, and advocated with other funders so the work could endure.

## 20. EARLY YEARS INNOVATION

The Foundation backed early years innovation, including Tamariki Wellbeing, who supported key government agencies towards a more collective approach to investing in the first 1,000 days. Manager Aimee Hadrup described the NEXT investment as catalytic, 'There was flexibility and trust. We drew on neuroscience, whānau lived experience and matauranga Māori.'



## 21. BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

The evidence base within the New Zealand education system has been enhanced and strengthened. Examples of this include via The Education Hub, Manaiakalani, and Springboard.



**MILESTONES**  
*Fellowship*

**Backing leaders  
in system change**



In 2019 NEXT turned its attention to growing leaders in system change via the NEXT Fellowship. Three cohorts were curated through to 2023, with a total of eighteen Fellows. The vision was to build, connect, and grow a community of inspiring individuals who are (or have the potential to be) catalysts for system change, in areas related to NEXT's focus. This included environment, education and strategic philanthropy.

The Fellowship approach was flexible, supportive, human centred, and offered a suite of supports: financial, mentoring, professional development, and access to networks and connections. The experience was infused with Te Ao Māori values, tikanga and rituals throughout. This was elevated through the knowledge and leadership of Jan Hania, 'We provided a container for trust to be built, so deep learning and courage could appear. We were gifted access to marae and hosted elements of the wānanga in special natural places. People grow in these spaces, there is resonance.'

In the years since genesis, the Fellowship reflected and evolved: increasingly exploring thematic coherence within the cohort, building connections between cohorts, and a Te Ao Māori frame. Being on the frontier of system change can be a lonely place and burnout is common, so there is benefit in connecting with other leaders also tackling the big issues.

NEXT acknowledges the mana of all of the Fellows. Following are a selection of some of the milestones achieved, to give a sense of the difference these inspiring leaders have made and continue to make. As Jan Hania says, 'This is not a one or two year thing, it is a movement, that will have ongoing outcomes for years to come.'

**22.**  
**LEADERS PUSHING INTO NEW FRONTIERS**

Many of the Fellows made profound life changes and pushed into new frontiers personally and professionally. Strong trust was built between participants, collaborations formed and the Fellows grew in confidence, courage and resilience. For example Fellow Leslyne Jackson who led Manaaki Tairāwhiti, grew the community and government engagement beyond anything first envisaged, developing data translation and community voice methods now being implemented elsewhere.



**23.** **WATER CATCHMENT RESTORATION**

NEXT Fellows advanced a number of water catchment restoration projects. Sean Zieltjes progressed water catchment restoration at sites in Taranaki; Alison Dewes worked with leading farmers, industry and government to restore ecosystem health in the Waihi Estuary (raising over \$8m in the process); Naomi Aporo set a platform for restoration of waterway health within Motueka and became the Māori Director of the Our Land and Water Science Challenge, influencing millions of dollars of investment in adapting farm systems and inclusion of matauranga in waterway improvement systems; and Andrew Schollum developed and implemented a framework for waterway restoration enabling real time monitoring and reporting.





## 24. TRANSFORMING THE FUTURE

NEXT Fellows are working to transform the future. Dr Eruera Tarena of Tokona Te Raki, is aiming to achieve equity in education, employment and income for all Māori within the Ngāi Tahu takiwā, and beyond, developing and implementing a Māori systems change framework and wānanga (school of learning). Another Fellow, Izzy Fenwick, founded Futureful: a game-changing online job site where people and organisations are matched through a purpose led commitment to a better world. Jimmy McLauchlan developed a system of enabling criteria for scaling social impact initiatives.



## 25. PROGRESSING INDIGENOUS DATA SOVEREIGNTY AND DIGITAL INCLUSION

A number of NEXT Fellows are strengthening digital inclusion and empowerment. For example, Kirikowhai Mikaere (Tūhourangi, Ngāti Whakaeu – Te Arawa) developed a globally recognised indigenous data strategy and micro-credential system which will contribute to indigenous peoples having greater agency over their data and their perspectives being included in AI development and algorithms.



## 26. SOLUTIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE

NEXT Fellows generated solutions in the area of environment. Abbie Reynolds in Roopu Tuatoru delivered a unique piece of work on the intersection between biodiversity and climate, including the barriers and enablers to joint action. Rachel Devine influenced changes in proposed government legislation to make environmental information more comprehensive and accessible.



## 27. CHAMPIONS FOR THE EARLY YEARS

NEXT Fellows including Thalia Wright, Leanne Dawson and Andrew Sharp championed the criticality of the first thousand days in a child's life. These Fellows are ensuring evidence based approaches are scaled, exploring systems leadership and putting relationships at the very centre.





# Strategic philanthropy

The NEXT modus operandi was to be strategic, grounded and business-like in approach and in the organisations it supported. Following are some of the milestones achieved, in the area of strategic philanthropy.

*'Annette, Neal and trustees wanted NEXT to be not just a 'doer' of strategic philanthropy, they wanted it to be an inspiration and catalyst for strategic philanthropy in New Zealand.'*

Bill Kermode, NEXT FOUNDATION

## 28.

### ENLIVENING STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY WITHIN NEW ZEALAND

The Foundation role modeled a hybrid strategic and uniquely Aotearoa model of philanthropy and seeded this approach, for other givers to consider. This drew on the best of the world and the best of Aotearoa New Zealand. NEXT shared its actions and its learnings with any others interested in the strategic philanthropic kaupapa, through events, videos, publications and sharing contacts.



## 29.

### ELEVATING GRANTEE VOICES

As a learning and business-like organisation, committed to improvement, NEXT provided grantees with a confidential forum to share feedback on how it was doing as a funder. Two independent evaluations of NEXT from a grant partner perspective were undertaken over the life of the Foundation. This increased equity in the relationship and provided valuable learning insights for NEXT.



Centre for Strategic Philanthropy

## 30.

### THE CENTRE FOR STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY

Near the end of NEXT's ten-year life, and with the support of four other founding funders, NEXT launched the Centre for Strategic Philanthropy (CSP): a place for givers with a strategic, business-like approach to meet, to share, to learn and to find opportunities to act. The CSP is a vehicle for growing strategic philanthropy learnings among givers interested in increasing their impact.



## A catalytic investor

Alongside the successes and milestones, there has been plenty of learning. Lessons in predator free include:

Alongside the successes and milestones, there has been learning in education too. Those include:

## Focus for impact

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>NEXT is most impactful as a catalytic investor</b></p> <p>The Foundation shifted from being a sole funder, to being a partner, honest broker, and collaborator. Having multiple parties with skin in the game increases resilience and sustainability</p> | <p><b>Engaging subject matter experts</b></p> <p>was instrumental in defining focus and in implementation</p> | <p><b>Seek balance and equity between Western and Te Ao Māori</b> ways of doing things: there is a time and place for Western programmatic approaches and also for matauranga Māori values and ways of being. A Te Ao Māori worldview is a powerful and much needed way to approach environmental issues</p> |
| <p><b>Spend time on relationships and building trust</b> especially at the beginning of a new project.</p> <p>This includes engaging iwi early and well, and engaging government while there is leverage</p>  | <p>Good storytelling and advocacy matter and <b>increase your ability to influence</b></p>                    | <p>Consider the mechanism/s that could help <b>make the result sustainable long term.</b></p> <p>The Tomorrow Accord with the Crown was a game changer</p>   |
| <p>Initiatives always take longer and cost more than you expect.</p> <p><b>Persevere!</b></p>   | <p><b>Having the right team</b> with the ability to engage diverse stakeholders <b>matters</b></p>            | <p><b>Have fun!</b></p> <p>Be a collective that people want to be with</p>   |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Having <b>education experts full time</b> in the work, as happened in predator free, <b>would have led to even better outcomes</b></p> | <p>The <b>size of the goal</b> needs to <b>align</b> with the <b>available resource</b></p>   | <p><b>Co-designing</b> the work with expertise from the communities most impacted, including Māori and Pasifika <b>would have added value</b></p> |
| <p><b>Securing government funding is hard work</b>, involves luck, timing and you <b>can't assume participation</b></p>                   | <p><b>Change takes time</b> and that makes measuring the difference made in education even more complex.</p> <p><b>Systemic drivers</b> such as <b>inequity</b> are <b>considerations</b></p> | <p><b>Teachers are nation builders</b> and <b>need to be valued</b> professionally and financially</p>  |
| <p><b>Long-term unrestricted funding</b> enables the organisation to <b>focus on the cause</b> and <b>attract top talent</b></p>          | <p><b>Back and connect leaders</b></p>  | <p>Begin the transition <b>conversation with grantees early</b> and be a <b>partner in co-design</b></p>  |





Photo credit Emma Rowell.

## Sustaining the gains

Ensuring the good work can endure is important for all philanthropic groups and especially those with a limited life.

NEXT 'began with the end in mind' and has been disciplined and focused on transitioning well, to ensure the organisational and system gains are sustained beyond NEXT's sunset. NEXT understood that its success was connected to the individual and collective success of those it supported.

To this end, NEXT focused on ensuring the gains could be sustained after sundown. At sunset in 2024, initiatives have been handed over sustainably – if not always perfectly – in the end across six spheres: iwi, central and local government, public, new revenue models and other philanthropy.



Planning for transition was a conversation that began at investment. NEXT wanted their partners to progress to a stronger position as a result of, and beyond, their relationship with NEXT. To this end, the Foundation provided financial and non-financial support, supporting sustainability for many of the grantees worked with.

### ENVIRONMENT

In environment, the NEXT approach to sustainability encompassed systems thinking, iwi engagement and the Crown. The founders and team wished to protect the investment and ensure project life beyond NEXT sunset.

**NEXT took a systems approach to catalysing a predator free movement which included:**

- Engaging iwi early, valuing a Te Ao Māori view and partnering at place
- Beginning with the end in mind and developing a mechanism, via the Tomorrow Accord, to sustain the gains at landscape scale. At ten years, hand over to the Crown has begun in specific sites
- A collective impact approach where ownership is shared across community, iwi, government, landowners, investors and others. For instance, Taranaki Mounga is a collaboration between DOC, the Taranaki Iwi Chairs Forum, philanthropic investors, businesses, sponsors and community
- Offering a range of non-financial, bespoke support to grant partners, based on their needs. This varied from governance and management, to advocacy, storytelling and advice. 'NEXT helped us get out of the starting blocks, get set up, establish relationships with other funders, tell our stories and grow,' comments James Willcocks from Predator Free Wellington
- Openly sharing successes, insights and learning over NEXT's ten-year life, in the hope that others may benefit

Left: Predator Free Wellington is part of the national predator free movement. Photo credit Eleanor Dewar.



# Sustaining the gains

## EDUCATION

With multiple goals, more complex metrics and no NEXT-placed education experts working full time in the initiatives – sustaining the gains in education was a ‘tougher nut’ for NEXT to crack.

That said, much progress towards transition was achieved. Alongside supporting new revenue models and advocating with the Crown, NEXT championed their grantees and provided connections to donors, investors and others, to help position these inspirational organisations for ongoing success.

### To ensure long-term gains, the NEXT approach in education included:

- Having transition conversations early and including grantees in both investment design and planning
- Management and governance support of NEXT supported initiatives through NEXT kaihautū. ‘Mike was

our NEXT kaihautū and is now on our board,’ shares Madeleine Sheahan from Talking Matters. ‘He is a real champion for us. We now have multiyear funding from new funders’

- Convening education leaders to build trust, social capital and explore sustainability models
- Bespoke capacity building, as needed, to ensure organisations are strongly positioned for the future. ‘Bill invited me to be involved with a couple of organisations. One was the Education Hub, we framed up a subscription funding model, to help enable them to become more self sustaining,’ recalls Amy Ellis from PwC
- Three of NEXT’s education grantees developed new revenue models during their time with the Foundation
- Being a champion for the organisations and their cause with other philanthropists, funders and the Ministry of Education

Talking Matters is helping to build language-rich environments for babies in the first 1,000 days. NEXT supported Talking Matters through startup, strategy development and with ongoing sustainability.



## STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY

From the start NEXT role modelled strategic philanthropy within New Zealand. This included focus on specific issues, backing and building strong governance and project management capability within initiatives, systems thinking, goal setting, measurement, capacity building and importantly – collaborative approaches.

Alongside this imperative to give in a business-like way, NEXT grounded itself in the Aotearoa New Zealand context and drew on the unique strengths of this country. This contributed to the emergence of a hybrid strategic and uniquely Aotearoa approach to giving.

Bill Kermode shares, ‘Given our backgrounds in business, being strategic was always going to be how NEXT approached things. That said, strategic philanthropy is just one way of giving. It’s not a ‘better than’ and it’s not the only way.’

In addition to role modelling strategic philanthropy, the Foundation openly shared their experiences (and lessons) through storytelling and events. Building on this, near the end of NEXT’s ten-year life, and with the support of four founding funders, NEXT launched the Centre for Strategic Philanthropy. The CSP is a place for givers with a strategic, business-like approach to meet, share, learn and find opportunities to act.

*‘There is important work to be done in environment, education and all aspects of country and society. Individuals and families, through sharing their wealth in a thoughtful way, can help solve some of our nation’s biggest issues.’*

Chris Liddell, FOUNDING NEXT CHAIR



## Introducing the Centre for Strategic Philanthropy

Aotearoa New Zealand





## An enduring legacy

A strategic and unique model of philanthropy has made a substantive difference for the nation and one that shall endure. NEXT is hugely grateful to the community, friends, partners and collaborators who joined hands with them over ten years. A collective approach has enabled powerful outcomes to be achieved and seeds to be sown, for the land and people of Aotearoa New Zealand.

*'Neal and I are delighted with what happened with NEXT and encourage everyone who is in a privileged position to give away at least half of their wealth during their lifetime.'*

– Annette Plowman, NEXT

View of the sacred Taranaki Mouna from Mt Stoke. Photo credit Chad Cottle @nzcoastie.





# ‘Whakaraupo i a koutou i te iwi,’

– TE WHITI O RONGOMAI

*One raupo will break in the wind, but bound together/working together we flex, but do not break*

Cover photo: The kākā is a large parrot endemic to Aotearoa New Zealand. When Europeans first arrived here, kākā could be found in abundance throughout the forests, however browsing by introduced pests such as possums, impacted their food supply and introduced mammalian predators found them easy prey. By 1930 kākā were localised to just a few areas. Several projects exist to promote kākā recovery, such as Project Janszoon in Abel Tasman National Park and Zealandia in Wellington.

*Photo credit Manaaki Barrett, Manaaki's Pictures of Things.*

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Further captions and photo credits: *Page 8 group photo top row:* the NEXT team in the Perth Valley in South Westland at an environmental hui. *Page 9 top right:* Play it Strange singer songwriter Carlo Marinovich, performing at a NEXT event. *Page 9 group shot bottom centre:* NEXT Board, Scott St John, Bill Kermode, Carol Campbell and Barrie Brown. *Pages 12-13 header images left to right:* Perth Valley South Westland credit Peter Young; Predator Free Wellington officer credit Ian Robertson; South Island tomtit/ngirungiru credit Chad Cottle @nzcoastie. *Page 12 milestone one:* flock of pateke in Abel Tasman credit Bradley Shields @bradley\_birdsnz. *Page 13 milestone two:* tree planting on Rotoroa Island, credit Striped Trees Productions. *Pages 14-15 milestone three:* Awaroa in Abel Tasman National Park, credit Ruth Bollongino. *Milestone five:* members of the ZIP team check an AI camera, credit Chad Cottle. *Milestone seven:* Women's suffrage stamp, URL: <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/photo/womens-suffrage-stamp>, (Ministry for Culture and Heritage), updated 13-Mar-2018. *Milestone eight:* Taranaki Mouna, credit Rodney Allen. *Page 16 milestone nine:* Predator Free Wellington team, credit Jim Huylebroek. *Milestone ten:* the Main Divide South Westland, credit Peter Young. *Milestone 11:* piwauwau or rock wren, credit Chad Cottle. *Pages 18-19 header images left to right:* Waitara East School is part of the Manaiakalani programme; School children at Point England School in Auckland, where Manaiakalani was developed. *Milestone 12:* photo features Tamara Bell, former Principal of Southbridge School, with thanks to Springboard Trust. *Milestone 13:* Dr Nina Hood is the Founder of the Education Hub. *Milestone 14:* school children at St Pius School in Auckland, which is part of the Manaiakalani kaupapa. *Pages 20-21 milestone 15:* Springboard volunteer Fiona Morgan (ASB Bank) and Mark Ashcroft (Parua Bay School), credit Sarah Marshall Photography. *Milestone 16:* Ako Mātātupu: Teach First NZ graduates. *Milestone 17:* MindLab graduates. *Milestone 18:* photo credit Jarrod Brown. *Milestone 19:* credit Daniel Lee. *Milestone 20:* a Tamariki Wellbeing prototyping workshop, credit Soul Feather Collective. *Pages 22-23 milestone 22:* NEXT Fellows at Arahura Marae in Hokitika. *Milestone 23:* Kaiteriteri Waka, credit Naomi Aporo. *Pages 24-25 milestone 24:* Fellowship Roopu Tuarua, Hokitika Gorge, credit Jan Hania. *Milestone 25:* Kirikowhai Mikaere. *Milestone 26:* ancient tuatara, credit Peter Young. *Milestone 27:* credit nazar\_ab on istock. Kea image across footer, credit Peter Young. *Pages 26-27 milestone 29:* photo credit Maayan Nemanov on Unsplash. *Page 31:* Predator Free Wellington is part of the national predator free movement. Credit Eleanor Dewar. Special thanks to everyone who has supported the creation of this final NEXT Review. Your contribution is greatly appreciated.



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