

# CLIMATHON WAIKATO IMPACT REPORT



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The impacts of climate change are occurring harder and faster than models have predicted. When global climate politics are stifling, it's our turn to move! Based on a global concept, Climathon Waikato is a region-based programme that offers a clear pathway to action.

This year, Climathon Waikato represented an opportunity for citizens from across the Waikato to co-create locally relevant ideas and solutions to our region's shared climate challenges. Ultimately, our goal was to raise climate awareness, disrupt the status quo, rethink the way we live, and reimagine the future we want as citizens. Following a regular series of online events, held between September 2021 and February 2022, Climathon culminated in an Ideathon - a one-week incubator-style programme in which participants ideated, validated and pitched transformative climate solutions addressing our five greatest climate challenges.

Climathon's warm-up events were attended by approximately 200 people. In total, 63 participants entered the Ideathon, and 26 went on to complete the full week of events, culminating in a pitch. Ten teams pitched their solutions to our five challenges to an audience of 50+ people.

All solutions focused on addressing one of the Waikato's five greatest challenges, as determined by Waikato Rangatahi Voices and key stakeholders:

1. transport
2. energy
3. food
4. biodiversity
5. empowerment

Although we faced some challenges, and had to make several adjustments along the way (such as shifting to online delivery, and changing the date of the Ideathon), we achieved what we set out to, and would deem Climathon Waikato a relative success. All participants and mentors rated the programme highly, noting the expert support and connections to be of particular value. Overall, there was a positive shift in empowerment and perceived capabilities towards tackling climate change, as a result of the programme - presented anecdotally as well as in the impact measurement - all of which will be explored in-depth throughout this report.

For future iterations of the programme, we intend to deliver the programme in a hybrid model, to allow for the full benefit of the content while still being accessible through specialist use of technology. We also recognise the need to better engage a wider audience, particularly young people and region-wide.



**Paul Kerssens**  
Strategic Advisor



**Emma Sinclair**  
Project Lead



**Esther Gathambo**  
Events Manager & Tech Lead



**Chantelle Cobby**  
Marketing Manager

# A HEARTFELT THANK-YOU

Climathon Waikato would not have been possible without the support of all those who kindly contributed to our kaupapa. There is no better way to begin this report than by expressing our heartfelt appreciation to those who played a vital role in our success.

## Main sponsors:

- Waikato Wellbeing Project
- Trust Waikato

## Supporting sponsors:

- Hamilton City Council
- Waikato Plan

## In-kind supporters:

- Waikato University

Who kindly offered a **venue**, plus support with **sponsored materials** and **outreach**

- Enviroschools

Who supported **student outreach**, and provided **mentorship/operational support**.

## Special individuals and groups:

- Rangatahi voices

For being our **North Star** and guiding light **setting challenges and themes**

- Hannah Huggan, Jennifer Nickel, Sarah Thompson and Riki Manarangi

For giving their time and expertise as **judges**

- Rachael Goddard  
For providing **expert advice and connections**

- Sarah Roberts

Who facilitated **stakeholder engagement**

- Rhys Cooper and Shivali Harman

Our brilliant **Chief Enthusiasm Officers)**

- Our mentors, experts, coaches and speakers

Who lent their **expertise** to our participants

- Anmol

Who ensured smooth **technical operations**

The following key stakeholders were also pivotal in activating the community at large:

- Waikato Tainui
- Te Waka
- Momentum Waikato
- Design Factory New Zealand
- Para Kore
- Go Eco
- Maungatautai Sanctuary Mountain
- Waipa District Council

A stakeholder map can be found in Appendix A.

Of course, we are also immensely grateful to all of the Climathon Waikato participants, who chose to spend their weekend advancing climate solutions, and making local history with us.



Climathon Waikato Ideathon

# INTRODUCTION

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Since 2015, Climathon has been uniting people across countries and cultures to co-create solutions to local climate challenges. This year, for the first time ever, this global hackathon was brought to the Waikato region by Impact Hub Waikato and our key collaborators.






Climathon Waikato set out to **raise climate awareness**, disrupt the status quo, rethink the way we live, and reimagine the future we want as citizens. At the heart of it all is the Ideathon which builds the foundation for **long-lasting climate projects**, impact-driven start-ups, and genuine conversations with decision-makers, over city plans and policies. The event series is designed to **engage and empower a broad and diverse community**, to allow for sharing of ideas and the creation of long-lasting impact.

## KEY THEMES, PRINCIPLES & CHALLENGES

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Manaaki whenua, Manaaki tangata,  
Haere whakamua.  
Care for the land, care for the people  
and move forward.

Climathon Waikato was driven by five key principles:

-  Just transition
-  Science led response
-  Nature-based solutions
-  Tiriti-led approach
-  A clear, ambitious and affordable path

Globally, it's tradition to call on a prominent politician or elder to set the challenges of Climathon. For us, it was a natural choice to turn to the younger generation. We held a co-design session with Rangatahi voices - who represent the future, to understand the greatest challenges facing our region.



**Transport:** How to bring our mobility and transport to zero emissions, whilst being accessible / affordable to all?



**Energy and healthy homes:** What can enable our energy usage to become more efficient and sustainable?



**Food systems and agriculture:** How can we transform our food systems to be healthier, fairer and more sustainable?



**Biodiversity:** In what ways can the biodiversity in the Waikato be increased?



**Empowerment:** How can all people be empowered to take action on climate change in the Waikato?

In all solutions and ideas, we looked for work on the root causes and transformative change toward one or more of these challenges - and each of the winning ideas effectively achieved this. We believe that all science and technology is available to reverse global warming. We thus aimed for solutions that implemented and enabled positive change as of tomorrow.



# KEY ACTIVITIES & PROGRAMME OUTLINE

## Warm-Up Events

Throughout the Climathon, our focus was on enabling climate action in the Waikato via a series of events, workshops, expert views, sector and individual participation and collaboration. In the lead-up to the Ideathon, we delivered a series of interactive online workshops and events, designed to equip local changemakers with the tools they needed for change.

Event	Date	Summary	Speakers
Documentary & Fireside Chat	Sep 2021	Free online screening of 2040, followed by a panel	Tesh Randall (Raglan Food Co), Jennifer Nickel (Waikato Regional Council), Simon Thomson (Regenerative Farmer), Aaron Barnsdall (Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust), and Hannah Huggan (Climate Justice Advocate), plus Paul Murray as MC
Waikato's Climate Challenges	Sep 2021	Deep-dive into the root causes of the Climathon Waikato challenges	Ngakau Harris-Peke (Para Kore), Dr Janelle Ward (Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari), Ian Mayes (Hamilton City Council), and Jose Gonzalez (Waikato Regional Council), plus Paul Murray as MC
Introduction to Global Warming	Oct 2021	Workshop exploring how to reverse global warming	Delivered in partnership with Pachamama Alliance Aotearoa
Climate Collage (x2 sessions)	Oct 2021	Workshop exploring the causes and effects of climate change	Facilitated by Pete Bernhardt (La Fresque du Climat/Climate Fresk)
Climate Drinks	Nov 2021 and Feb 2022	A virtual climate action-themed networking event	Nicola Turner (Mainstream Green), Manaaki Nepia (Waikato Tainui), Lorraine Dixon (Waikato Tainui), and James Hutchinson (Kiwinet), Georgina Miller (Project Do Less), Rachael Goddard (Waikato District Council), Hannah Huggan, plus Dujon Cullingford as MC



Climathon Waikato Warm-Up Events

## Climathon Waikato Ideathon

The climax of Climathon Waikato was an Ideathon, where changemakers from across the region came together to work in teams to explore and develop solutions to shared climate challenges. Between March 28th - 31st, we ran a virtual power-hour session, designed to help participants develop inspiring and well-informed ideas that effectively addressed one of the five challenges. The full working weekend, where participants developed and pitched their ideas, took place between April 2nd - 3rd.

Event	Date	Summary	Speakers
Kick-Off	March 28th	An exploration of the week	James Shaw
Ideation	March 29th	An exploration of Design Thinking	Elna Fourie (Design Factory)
Challenge Deep-Dive	March 30th	Break-out sessions looking into the root causes, and potential solutions, for Climathon Waikato challenges	Alex Daniel (Enviroschools), Gareth Cartwright (Community Energy Network), Jose Gonzalez (Waikato Regional Council), Claire St Pierre (Waipa District Council), Evan Vaughters (Hamilton City Council), Ngakau Harris-Peke (Para Kore), Poppy Barran (Hamilton City Council)
Validation	March 31st	A deep-dive into how to identify and validate solutions	Paul Kerssens (Impact Hub Waikato)
Ideathon - Day One	April 2nd	Idea development, validation, and testing	Ngahuia Muru, Mitchell Jordan and Rosalie Norton (Waikato Rangatahi Voices), Sarah Boher (Reusabowl), Pamela Storey (Waikato Regional Council), Jennifer Nickel (Waikato Regional Council), Sarah Thompson (Hamilton City Council), and Ben Gleisner (Cogo)
Ideathon - Day Two	April 3rd	Idea refinement and pitching	-



Climathon Waikato participants dressed up for the final pitch

# OUTREACH & MARKETING



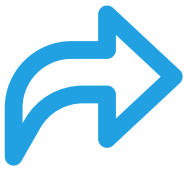
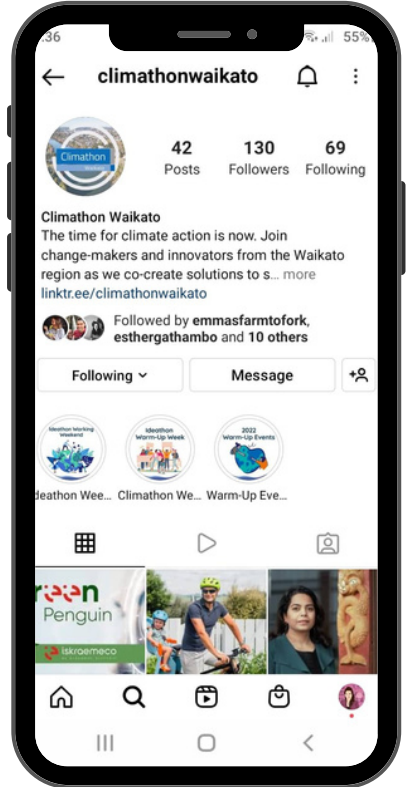
77 followers  
16.2K reach



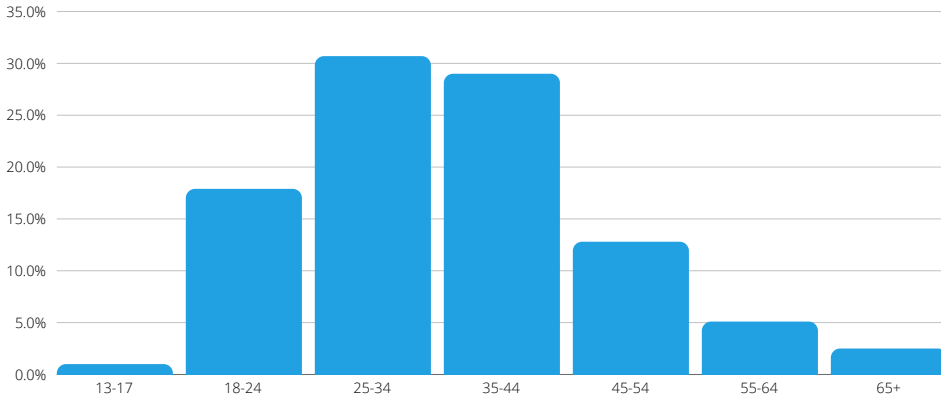
130 followers  
3K reach



74 followers  
4.9K reach



Climate Action Aotearoa, Trust Waikato, Taupō EEC, Momentum, Wintec, Go Eco, Hamilton City Council, Waikato Regional Council, Climate Fresh Aotearoa NZ, and Waikato Plan



70% female  
30% male



60%  
Hamilton



Featured in:  
- Waikato Times  
- Waikato News  
- Waikato Business News

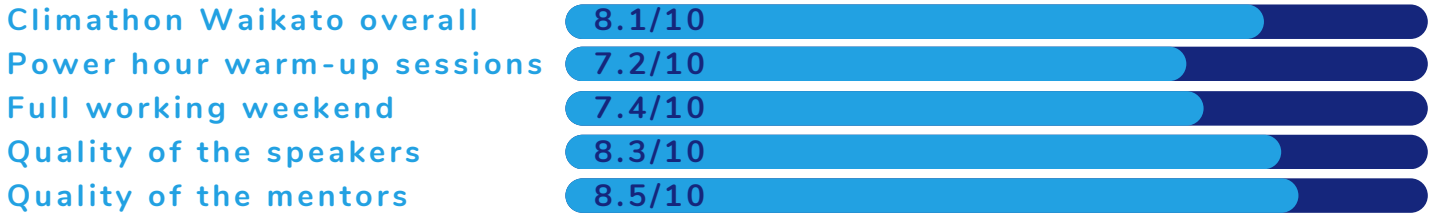
# OUTCOMES & POSITIVE IMPACT

Throughout the process, despite the challenges we faced, we kept our eye on the prize - ensuring all of our activities were aligned with the long-term intended impact (engagement and empowerment in climate action), as well as the intended outcomes (mid-to short term tangible and measurable parameters and success indicators such as number of participants, attendees, people reached, projects undertaken, and more).

The evaluation and impact measurement is crucial for Climathon Waikato to justify our activities, ensure that we are reaching our goals, and form a baseline for future improvements.

We have done this based upon the findings from three online surveys, as well as anecdotal evidence and testimonials. A baseline survey (prior to the Ideathon) and an exit survey (after the Ideathon) have enabled us to measure the shift in the target outcomes.

This has given us insight on how well we fulfilled our objectives of raising climate awareness, and sparking innovation, collaboration, and action.



91.7%

"Climathon Waikato has increased my sense of empowerment relating to climate action"



92.4%

"Climathon Waikato has given me new ideas for my own personal climate actions"



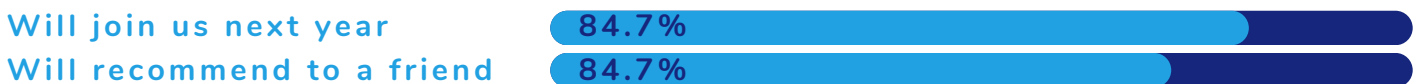
83.3%

"I made valuable connections with others during Climathon Waikato"



77%

"I am likely to continue working on my Climathon Waikato project"



Positive qualitative feedback can be found in Appendix C.

## WARM-UP EVENTS



**7** VIRTUAL WARM-UP EVENTS

## POWER-HOURS

**4** VIRTUAL POWER-HOUR EVENTS



**20**

SPEAKERS



**~200**



ATTENDEES FROM ACROSS THE WAIKATO REGION



**8**

INSPIRING SPEAKERS

**80**

ATTENDEES

**2400**

REACHED ON SOCIAL MEDIA



**14**

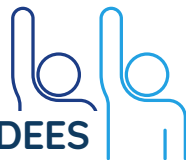
TEAMS FORMED



## IDEATHON WEEKEND

**63**

TOTAL ATTENDEES



**26**

COMPLETED THE FULL PROGRAMME



**10**

TEAMS PITCHED

**26**

MENTORS AND SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

**84.7%**

OF PARTICIPANTS WOULD JOIN US AGAIN, AND WOULD RECOMMEND CLIMATHON WAIKATO TO A FRIEND

**91.7%**

OF PARTICIPANTS INCREASED THEIR SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT RELATED TO CLIMATE ACTION

**92.4%**

OF PARTICIPANTS HAVE NEW IDEAS FOR THEIR OWN PERSONAL CLIMATE ACTIONS

**8.1/10**

AVERAGE RATING FOR CLIMATHON WAIKATO OVERALL



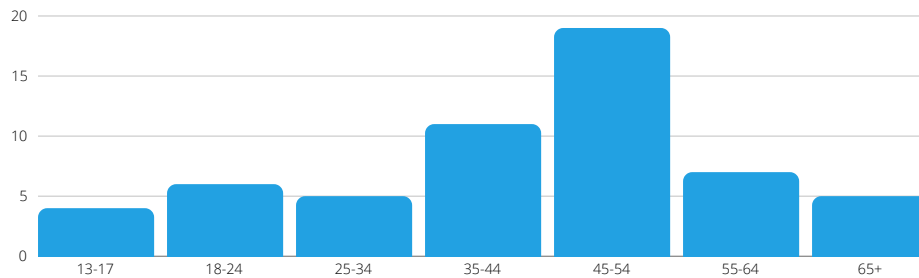
**2000**

COLLECTIVE HOURS OF CLIMATE ACTION



# PARTICIPANTS, IDEAS AND WINNERS

70% of participants identified as female.



Participants ranged in age from 13 to 79 years. The median age was 44 years.

The occupations of participants included students, strategy advisors, teachers, sustainability officers, project managers, scientists, researchers, event managers, nutritionists, herbalists, architects, business owners, directors, account managers, and consultants.



## Transport

- E-Easy - an e-bike subscription services (Innovation Prize Winner)
- Mode Choice May - a month-long challenge for sampling alternative transport options (People's Choice Prize Winner)



## Food and agriculture

- Grown in Waikato - bringing producers and consumers to showcase sustainable food production
- Team 5 - an app that acts as a hub for seasonal, plant-based eating



## Biodiversity

- Team 7 - an information hub with links to resources and ways to empower community groups to connect, host kete tuatea/aranui, plant, and maintain their preferred biodiversity



## Empowerment

- Climate Commons - a forum for enabling collaboration amongst climate action initiatives (Community Prize Winner)
- Enviro Story - a website featuring inspirational stories and videos to empower and enable action (Grand Winner)
- Small Wins, Big Planet - a platform for celebrating climate victories (Youth Prize Winner)



## Energy and healthy homes

- No ideas developed

# FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT

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The wrap-around support that the participants, teams and winner will receive is imperative to the impact that a Climathon will have. Impact Hub Waikato and the collaborators and stakeholders of Climathon Waikato are well positioned to connect great ideas with relevant people and organisations to ensure that the work that is done over the Ideathon week is merely the start of something big, and that the efforts of the participants is not wasted.

Soon after the event, we hosted the first of many participants Happy Hour - an informal gathering to allow the participants to re-connect, debrief and investigate future directions.

Additionally, all participants have been contacted and engaged by the Impact Hub Waikato team, in order to determine the type of support that is

needed, and these conversations are ongoing. At least two teams have already utilised the connections of Impact Hub to connect with potential funders and collaborators, and these conversations are currently underway. For example, EnviroStory have connected with one of the main sponsors of the Climathon to access funding for themselves and the sustainability of their project. They have also been connected with other teams, as well as existing ventures, with ideas that complement the concept and ensure a collaborative approach.

E-Easy and Climate Commons are also part of the 2022 cohort of Impact Hub's Accelerate Regional Membership - which will allow them to connect with entrepreneurs both locally and across the Asia-Pacific region.



# CONCLUSION

Overall, we consider Climathon Waikato a success. Given that this was our first year delivering the event, we have also learnt a lot - and we look forward to applying these lessons, as we build upon our strengths and successes in coming years. We hope a global pandemic is a challenge we will not need to contend with in future iterations of Climathon Waikato. We also acknowledge that parts of the project management and stakeholder outreach can be improved with our learnings from the first iteration.

Throughout the warm-up events and Ideathon weekend, the participants blew us away with their rich discussions, insightful ideas, and confident pitches. It was inspiring to see such a diverse group of people rally so united by their drive to create change. Perhaps best of all, Climathon Waikato made ripples - with the Ideathon sparking conversation, curiosity, and action, throughout the region well after the final Pitch and Showcase event drew to a close.

Above all, we want to acknowledge the incredible collaborative effort that went in to making this project come alive; this multi stakeholder, public-private partnership is a testament to the importance and urgency of the global climate crisis, and we have demonstrated that organisations in Waikato are willing and able to come together to make a difference, using a proven global model such as Climathon.





# APPENDIX A

## Media Coverage

This was the media coverage of Climathon Waikato:

WAIKATO NEWS

### Waikato on a mission to find local solutions to climate change at Climathon event

25 Mar, 2022 02:35 PM

3 minutes to read



Due to climate change, flooding caused by increased rainfall and a rising sea level is expected to increase. Photo / Dave Murdoch



By Danielle Zolickhofer  
Multimedia journalist, Waikato Herald

[VIEW PROFILE](#)



## WAIKATO BUSINESS NEWS

NEWS REGULAR COLUMNS OUR ISSUES AGRIBUSINESS NEWS SHOWCASE HA



Winning South Waikato Climathon team - from left Cherie Pascoe, Meena Sharma and Colleen Litchfield.

### South Waikato team wins the Waikato regions first-ever Climathon event

BY WAIKATO BUSINESS NEWS ON 26/04/2022

NEWS

A platform designed to inspire and connect a new wave of climate action volunteers, has proven to be a winning formula at the Waikato's first-ever Climathon Ideathon.

### South Waikato team clean up at inaugural Climathon

Matthew Martin · 13:11, Apr 12 2022



SUPPLIED/WAIKATO TIMES

Half of the South Waikato's winning Climathon team, from left, Cherie Pascoe, Meena Sharma and Colleen Litchfield.

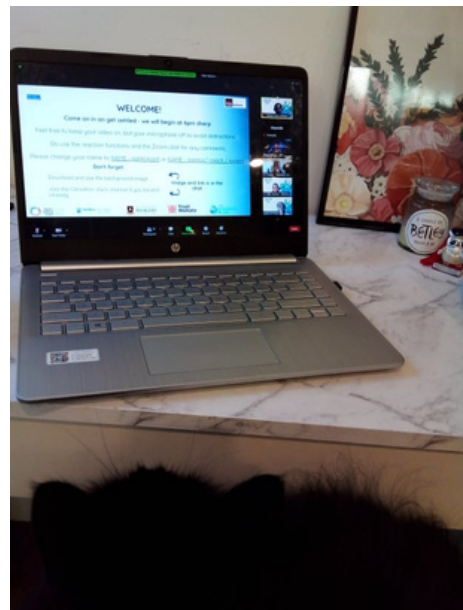
A combined team of Tokoroa and Putāruru women have taken out the Waikato's first climate action Climathon.

# APPENDIX B

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## Positive Feedback from Participants

- “The idea of translating climate solutions into tangible projects was the inspiration for me to sign up. Climathon Waikato offered a great opportunity to learn from awesome mentors and changemakers and co-create solutions that would make a positive difference to our planet” - Climathon Waikato participant
- “I felt like I took away a better understanding of how to approach community lead solutions and better empower people in the community. I also learnt a lot about the marketing approaches taken from the mentors involved in the hackathon” - Climathon Waikato participant
- “Honestly, at first I thought I would sign up because it sounded fun. I only truly realised how cool it was after the Climathon week started” - Climathon Waikato participant
- “It was the largest online event I have been to and it was amazing to see how the technology worked! It was also fantastic to hear the other pitches, and immediately we say different opportunities for collaboration in the future” - Climathon Waikato participant
- “Climathon struck me as an event that created a community of climate actors who are capable of turning innovative ideas into practical solutions. The biggest barrier to climate action is working in silos. We need to come together, collaborate and co-create solutions. I think this is what Climathon communicated through this event” - Climathon Waikato participant
- “I really enjoyed the diversity of the participants and the ideas that came from them. Everyone approached the challenge from completely different angles and it helped widen my view of approaches to large problems such as climate change” - Climathon Waikato mentor
- “There are so many people motivated and dedicated to climate action, and it is great that there are exciting and innovative ideas. It made me feel hopeful about the future” - Climathon Waikato mentor
- “I was inspired to sign up because this platform offers huge opportunities for youth to step up to lead change for a better future. With support of diverse experts great things can happen through their leadership. Climathon is a strong enabler. It's inspiring to see youth boldly and actively leading their peers and other generations” - Climathon Waikato mentor





# APPENDIX C

## Case Study: Enviro Story (Grand Prize Winner)

An online volunteer platform, featuring inspirational stories and videos, designed to counteract the barriers that prevent people from becoming engaged as climate action volunteers, and enable action.

**Vision:** To have people engaged in environmental projects throughout the region, in a meaningful way that has measurable benefits for their wellbeing and the environment.

**Mission:** The experience of volunteering can be life-changing and can have a deep impact on the wellbeing of the volunteer, the community, the project & the planet. By creating a platform that inspires potential volunteers toward action, Enviro Stories moves individuals from consideration to commitment, through a series of well-crafted inspirational stories & video

Since Climathon, this team has gone on to further their idea and connect with funders to secure the future of the project, thanks to Waikato Wellbeing Project and Impact Hub Waikato.



## Case Study: Mode Choice May (People's Choice Winner)

A month-long challenge for sampling a range of alternative transport options.

**Vision:** To enable emission reduction by highlighting alternative modes of transport, fostering behaviour change and ultimately, reducing one's dependency on, and use of, private vehicles.

**Mission:** Mode Choice May aims to encourage people to explore and sample a range of alternative transport options, so that they can make appropriate choices, for appropriate journeys with the outcome of future behaviour change and reduced emissions from private motor vehicles.

