



# YOUTH DIVERSITY

**FUTURE NEW ZEALAND RACE RELATIONS**

What NZ youth want



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

New Zealand National  
Commission for UNESCO

*Te Kōmihana Matua o Aotearoa mō UNESCO*

# FUTURE NEW ZEALAND RACE RELATIONS

## What NZ youth want

### YOUTH DIVERSITY FORUM CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

---

**A three-day forum was held from 4-6 October in Ōtautahi Christchurch in response to the March 15 mosque terror attacks.**

It was important for New Zealanders to reflect on what societal changes were needed after the attacks. Working with the Human Rights Commission, Ngāi Tahu and mana whenua Ngāi Tūāhuriri, the NZ National Commission for UNESCO organised the Youth Diversity Forum as a safe space for young people to share ideas, connect and learn from each other.

The forum was underpinned by the following te ao Māori values:

**Whanaungatanga** – kinship, connection, shared experiences

**Manawanui** – patience, perseverance, dedication

**Manaakitanga** – hospitality, generosity, care

**Aroha** – love, compassion, empathy

This document was drafted by the nearly one hundred rangatahi (young people) whose ideas made the forum an engaged, honest and lively conversation.

# A CALL TO ACTION

**New Zealand has a proud history of international involvement; it was the second country to sign the UNESCO constitution in 1946, and ratified the UN Declaration of Human Rights.**

Yet our leaders have lost sight of the values and the vision that these commitments represent. And we are here to remind you of them.

We, tangata whenua and tangata tiriti rangatahi call for a diverse and inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand. All New Zealanders have a responsibility to join us on this journey.

**We identified three key levels for change:** individual, community, and government and non-government institutions.

## TO INDIVIDUALS

**Our vision for Aotearoa is that everyone will accept, respect and celebrate each other's differences. This is essential for a society bound together through aroha and manaakitanga.**

We call on everyone in Aotearoa to participate in courageous intercultural and interfaith conversations. Courageous conversations can be learning through dialogue with our peers, whanau and institutions and are aimed at shifting racist rhetoric and behaviour.

Being vulnerable is a challenge, but it is important that we are honest with each other in order to weave communities where kotahitanga (unity) resides, and where we will honour our global whakapapa (lineage).

The responsibility is on each of us to journey through our individual and shared whakapapa in order to understand ourselves in relation to each other.

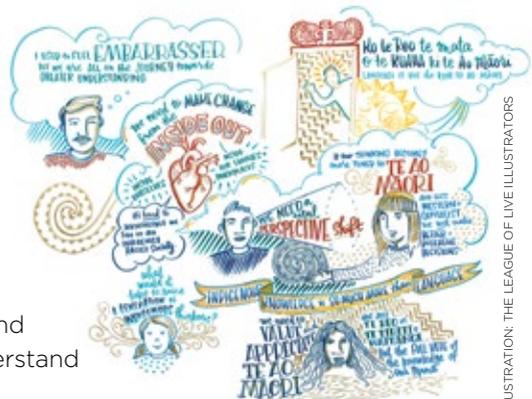


ILLUSTRATION: THE LEAGUE OF LIVE ILLUSTRATORS



## TO COMMUNITIES

---

**We want to see thriving communities, where all people can find a sense of belonging and contribute to shaping the future of Aotearoa. Young people are integral to nurturing strong and inclusive local communities; intergenerational mentorships and exchange allow for the passing down of taonga (treasure) to form the foundations of the future.**



ILLUSTRATION: THE LEAGUE OF LIVE ILLUSTRATORS



**In order to achieve this we need to:**

- » celebrate and welcome diversity (including faith/cultural/rainbow/disabilities)
- » foster intergenerational relationships through reciprocal learning
- » have inclusive spaces that nurture collective belonging
- » grow with and learn from other communities
- » learn from and overcome conflict and struggles peacefully and compassionately
- » ensure that communities provide young people with a space where they are encouraged to bring their passion, energy, experience, mana, creativity and imagination.

When this shift happens we will see communities as a place where everyone is heard and their mana (power/influence/authority) is recognised, where young people flourish, where they can reach their full potential and drive innovative, lasting solutions and positive change.

# TO GOVERNMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS

---

**As Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti, Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi) underpins and guides our relationship to this whenua (land) and is integral to our sense of belonging. We call on leaders to honour and uphold Te Tiriti o Waitangi through all legislation in Aotearoa.**

Decision-makers tell us our voices are essential for their work – while this is said out loud often, it does not always translate into policy or funding of young people’s development.

All institutions and decision-makers must be held accountable for their portrayal of diverse communities and people of Aotearoa. They have an active responsibility to use their influence to represent the diverse peoples of Aotearoa in a way that fosters inclusivity and acceptance. This includes:

- » taking initiative to engage with and learn from different faith, non-faith and spiritual communities
- » ensuring all communities have the ability to talk meaningfully to their decision makers about what is important to them
- » representation of LGBTQIA+, Rainbow communities at all levels
- » participating in cultural awareness education with a focus on minority groups
- » providing opportunities for people with disabilities to be meaningfully heard, valued and elevated as decision-makers
- » investing in capability building for rangatahi, especially for those who lack opportunities to explore their full potential with an emphasis on those in low socio-economic areas and rural regions of the country
- » investing in co-designed spaces that facilitate cross-community learning and knowledge sharing (particularly social infrastructure, such as public libraries, community centres, maara kai/community gardens etc).



Social media and education play a key role in informing people's understanding and appreciation of diversity.

Our leaders have a responsibility to ensure social media and technology is free from speech with intent to harm, and does not propagate discrimination and hate. All platforms must ensure that their spaces are free from any form of speech with malicious intent, in accordance with the Christchurch Call.

We ask our leaders to rejuvenate and decolonise our education system to empower all Aotearoa youth. We want an education system that is values-based, encourages curiosity and instills acceptance of all. An education system that is values-based will create belongingness and a sense of pride that Aotearoa is our home.

To enable this, education must be tailored to all learning needs, both inside and outside the classroom. Te reo Māori should be compulsory in schools, but is just the first step towards recognising the value of the matauranga (knowledge) embedded in te ao Māori. We must be taught an unbiased account of our history (pre and post colonisation) developed with iwi, hapu and whanau.



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

**New Zealand National  
Commission for UNESCO**

*Te Kōmihana Matua o Aotearoa mō UNESCO*



**Te Rūnanga o NGĀI TAHU**



**NZ  
Human  
Rights.**

Human Rights Commission  
Te Kaitiaki Take Kōwhiri

**CONTACT US**

**New Zealand National Commission  
for UNESCO**

c/- New Zealand Ministry of Education  
PO Box 1666  
Wellington, New Zealand

**Tel:** +64 4 463 8600

**Email:** UNESCO.NZ@education.govt.nz

**[www.unesco.org.nz](http://www.unesco.org.nz)**

**[www.facebook.com/UNESCONZ](https://www.facebook.com/UNESCONZ)**