



Community Kōrero on Youth Leadership: Key Themes

May 2024



What is this document?

This document highlights **key themes around youth leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand** which have emerged from a virtual community kōrero (conversation) in May 2024.

We invite this resource to be shared with everyone seeking to understand what is top-of-mind in the youth leadership space.

Background

On the 22nd May, as part of Youth Week 2024, Multiethnic Young Leaders NZ – the team behind the Rangatahi Leadership Opportunities Database (RLOD) – hosted the RLOD's first public virtual event, **Community Kōrero: Celebrating Youth Leadership 2024**.

This event celebrated and discussed the past, present, and future of youth leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The event was attended by young leaders (over two thirds of attendees), as well as youth mentors/coaches, opportunity providers, Ministry and government agency representatives, and other members of the public. Together, various themes emerged from this hui (meeting) .

Key Themes

- **Identity** is strongly intertwined with leadership – seeing people in leadership who share your identity is important, especially for marginalised communities
- Young leaders recognise the **privilege of being “at the table”** and feel a sense of duty to **recognise and represent who is not in the room**, including communities and future generations
- Young people may enter leadership positions due to their **passion for a cause**, not necessarily because they were seeking to become a “leader”
- Young people **challenging the status quo** can be seen as an advocate for change (positively) or annoying / disruptive (negatively)
- Young people want **intergenerational solidarity** – everyone has a part to play
- The importance of **self-care and wellbeing** in youth leadership – young leaders are often emotionally invested in their efforts and often rely on support networks (e.g. whānau, clubs)
- **Young people want to feel safe entering leadership** – spaces should be safe enough for young people to participate, such as by seeing people like you in positions of power, and having adults / leaders support you in reaching your potential
- Young leaders are often volunteers and should be **remunerated for their work**
- **Barriers to youth leadership can be removed** by improving safety and pastoral care, especially for marginalised youth, and enabling young people to create spaces to lead
- **Social media** can be a tool for leadership that amplifies spaces and voices – but it needs to be used positively and we should be mindful of the digital divide in Aotearoa
- Young people are finding **greater hope in the future of youth leadership** thanks to greater visibility of youth leaders such as youth in Parliament, and visible platforms for youth-led decision-making
- **Listen, trust, and invest in young people!**

More Info:

Website: rangatahiopportunities.co.nz

Email: RLOD@multiethnicyoungleaders.org.nz

Instagram: [@youthleadershipnz](https://www.instagram.com/youthleadershipnz)