STRENGTHS & OPPORTUNITIES

REVIEW of TSI 2020

Established by the Auckland Council, TSI is a place-based innovation hub focused on local and system-level transformation to improve social, economic, cultural and environmental wellbeing for current and future generations of south and west Aucklanders.

This review follows the first TSI review undertaken by Ingrid Burkett in 2017.

This review has been completed by Professor Ingrid Burkett and Cathy Boorman from The Yunus Centre at Griffith University. Further information about the process of the review is included at the back of this report.

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2017 Review	What's happened since
The 'cradle-to-career' spectrum outlines the key intervention points that have been identified in research as critical to addressing and reversing place-based disadvantage.	The 'cradle to career' spectrum has continued and been complemented with a strong 'future-ready' approach, focussed on development of skills for the future across generations. This combination is exemplary, and has a huge potential for long-term impacts.
TSI is systemic in its reach. This approach goes beyond a purely 'social' or welfare approach, to incorporate and join together community development and economic development.	The systemic reach has developed into systems innovation. The development of many of the models TSI has tested over the past 3 years is highlighting the need for an ecology of supports that could form the foundation of more community-centred and whānau-led responses.
TSI is an excellent example of how economic and social policy can be integrated and local growth can be inclusive.	The integrative and inclusive approach adopted by TSI has continued to be developed and strengthened since the last review, demonstrating potential impacts of stronger connections between social and economic policy.
TSI has work on both supply and demand sides of systems such as the labour market, undertaking projects focussed on training jobseekers (eg. Māori and Pasifika Trades Training) and in building strong local businesses (eg. through the procurement work TSI is undertaking) beyond a purely 'social' or welfare approach, to incorporate and join together community and economic development.	The learning that has occured in TSIs social procurement work should inform the international conversations in this field. The fact that this work is now integrated with the development of Māori and Pasifika owned businesses through Amotai highlights the need for economic strategies that focus on growing businesses from within not seeking to connect people to mainstream businesses. Amotai is gaining local and international attention as a significant way to truly grow shared prosperity.
The combination and linkage of TSI and The Auckland Co-design Lab creates the foundations for a partnership that combines an institutional structure focussed on implementation with an innovation engine that can design and test approaches to achieve transformative outcomes.	The work of TSI and the Co-design Lab has been deepened and integrated. The Co-design Lab enables TSI to embed learning in their approach - but also to actively share this learning with others. Through the Co-design Lab innovation and learning support is available to all TSI projects and programs, and this extends beyond TSI as the Lab is mandated with the mission to develop, execute and provide innovation support to cross sector public innovation projects. The Co-Design Lab strengthens both the depth and breadth of TSI's work.
TSI is able to effectively understand where to focus efforts AND how to engage people in creating the changes needed to generate real and lasting outcomes. This effectively links evidence-based practice with practice-based evidence.	TSI has published a number of ground-breaking reports detailing how 'evidence-based practice' and 'practice-based evidence' has been linked through their innovative initiatives. This has been recognised internationally as demonstrating the importance of incorporating both forms of evidencing and learning, which is increasingly seen as critical for addressing complex challenges in ways that are creating lasting change and transformational impact with and for people.
The work TSI has undertaken to develop approaches that not only put Culture at the centre of practice, but which actually grow practice out of Culture, is exemplary.	TSI has further developed, strengthened and consolidated the cultural connectedness of their social innovation framework. The team itself reflects the cultural diversity of the community and they are champions and enablers of culturally connected social innovation. In a global context where social innovation is still rooted in Western cultural constructs and has only very recently engaged with decolonising methodologies, the work of TSI continues to lead the way.
Developing a stronger Theory of Change would assist TSI to reflect strategically on their future work, and evaluate the outcomes generated along the way.	The development of Niho Taniwha, TSIs evaluative and practice framework, has laid the foundations for tracking the progress of the initiatives in a way that embeds learning and emphasises the need for culturally and contextually grounded evaluative frameworks. This work is a world-leading example of evaluative frameworks that not only acknowledge complexity, but embed and embrace it as part of the work that is needed if we truly want to focus on transformational outcomes. Niho Taniwha incorporates a Theory of Change, but extends and deepens this tool into a framework that is much more holistic and grounded in the Culture and vision of TSI.
Ensuring that scaling the work retains the transformative agenda that is so evident in the work of TSI. TSI focusses on ensuring that 'solutions' have transformational potential.	TSI has extended its reach by scaling nationally significant innovations such as Amotai and UpTempo, in addition to deepening its work in south and west Auckland through innovative initiatives such as the work with Papakura Marae and the Food Hub in south Auckland and Digital Animation Training in west Auckland. These initiatives point to a strong commitment to transformation as central to scaling of the work.

TSI
at a Glance

Supporting a prosperous, resilient south + west Auckland where tamariki + whānau thrive.

Sharing on the ground learnings to influence better systems outcomes that enable people to fulfill the aspirations they have for themselves, their Whānau + their communities

Champion and enable social innovation by working with our communities to learn + prototype solutions, + then influence the levers that will drive social and economic transformation for south + west Auckland

Good Food Roadmap

Auckland Council Internal Food Strategy Group

Active Transport

Green New Deal for south + west Auckland

Amotai
Connecting buyers to Māori and Pasifika-owned businesses + promoting supplier diversity + development

Resilient Food Systems

Food Hub

HEALTHY INFRASTRUCTURE + ENVIRONMENTS

Lab Insights (shared learning)

Live Labs (innovation support)

Live Learning (learning programs)

CODESIGN LAB *

Uptempo
Supporting Pacific families to direct + determine their own economic futures

Youth Economy

NEW ECONOMY

Kitchen Project

Community Place

Auckland Council Leisure

Māori and Pasifika Trades Training

Healthy Environments

Community Facilities (Leases)

Increasing public space in communities available to whānau

Developing whānau-led alternatives to traditional service delivery models

Digital Equity

Peer-to-peer support + capability building

Economic strengthening of whānau around birth of baby + beyond

Whānau Led Solutions

Getting the best start in the first thousand days

Creating opportunities to learn from Western science and mātauranga Māori

Youth Well-being

Reinvestment in environment, home + community infrastructure that helps grow + restore mauri, safety, security, health + wellbeing

Reducing Stress

Engaging strengths + aspirations

Learning Pathways

Demonstrate inclusive, just, circular + regenerative economic development where prosperity is shared for south + west Aucklanders, particularly Māori and Pasifika

WHĀNAU + TAMARIKI WELL-BEING

* Codesign Lab: Whānau-led + rangatahi led innovation informing policy + practice through evidence, ethical + treaty-based design + evaluation

Catalyse the policy, practice, investment + mindset changes needed to achieve significantly better outcomes for tamariki in the early years + enable lifelong wellbeing

Since the previous review in 2017 TSI has expanded and deepened its work. The resultant breadth and depth, and the interconnections between the range of work that makes up TSI can be difficult to visualise. For this reason we have attempted to map the key parts of the initiative in this visual. We are mindful that TSI is much more than a set of connected activities - as we heard during the review, TSI is evolving as a culturally-led initiative, with Tikanga as a means and an outcome. So, the interpretation of the above map needs to privilege "how TSI are" in the work as opposed to what TSI is doing.

Introduction

The start of this review coincided with the first of the lockdowns due to COVID 19. Apart from the disruptions this posed for the process of the review, what the pandemic has made even clearer is the extraordinary importance of the work of TSI. The insights and innovations developed by TSI are a demonstration of how social innovation can help us all, whether in NZ or elsewhere around the world, address some of the fundamental inequalities that have remained unchanged in place for far too long.

COVID has made these inequalities starkly visible, exposed the true effects of precarious employment and made real the depth of structural fragility that exists in our health and welfare systems around the world. It has also highlighted the critical need for new pathways forward that not only broadly acknowledge social determinants of health, but take seriously that the social, economic, environmental and cultural dimensions of wellbeing are intimately and intrinsically connected.

It is clearer too that the co-created experimental and learning approach taken by TSI in their work points to a much broader and deeper way we could address the current and pending crises ahead of us not by thinking we can merely 'build back better' but exploring how we 'learn back better'.

There are different ways to view TSIs work. If we zoom in to the individual initiatives, the work, the outputs, the relationships, we can start to see significant ways in which these initiatives are working to create positive outcomes for people and in places across south and west Auckland.

If we zoom out, the picture that emerges is even more significant. The ways of working, the reach, the depth and the systems outcomes point to a demonstration of a new future for public value creation, systemic change and the embryonic demonstration of a new kind of social contract.

The TSI evaluative framework (Niho Taniwha) can account for the outcomes that are being realised through each initiative. This review, therefore, will focus particularly on the latter, zoomed out picture that TSI is creating through its work, and will explore the strengths, challenges and opportunities that are starting to emerge as TSI models new ways of working, different ways of distributing risk and capital, and innovative opportunities for delivering public services in place.

While on the previous page (figure 1) we examine some of the key developments we have seen since the last review, on the next page (figure 2) we provide an overview of the four key dimensions of TSIs work that we focus on in this review. These dimensions were chosen because they are indicative not only of the process of the work that TSI does, but of the emerging outcomes of this work (as articulated in the annual reports and in internal learning documentation). The three red layers organise the levels of the work of TSI - working in place, with people and with the goal of transforming systems. The grey layer underneath this refers to the learning frameworks that underpin the work. And the circular foundation layer, culture, both grounds the work, and flows through it.

The review starts with the three red layers, and then cycles back to the underpinning layers - the learning and the culture that creates the foundations for but also the regenerative nature of the work of TSI. The review begins with the following sections:

- Place-Based Innovation: exploring the role of place - south and now west Auckland - in anchoring the work;

- People-Centred Practice: examining the generative, regenerative and intergenerational nature of the work;

- Transforming Systems: reflecting how the work is highlighting 'ecologies of wellbeing' and the importance of structural and system changes needed to support the place-level work.

The final two sections of the report then examine the two levels of learning that underpin the work, and how culture is increasingly not only embedded in the work, but actually shaping and leading the work.

> Throughout this review we refer to **TSI**. We use TSI as the overall acronym for the work that is happening in both south and west Auckland; integrated with the Co-design Lab; and extended by the growing family of initiatives sparked by TSI, such as Amotai, which have come out of South Auckland but which now have a national focus.
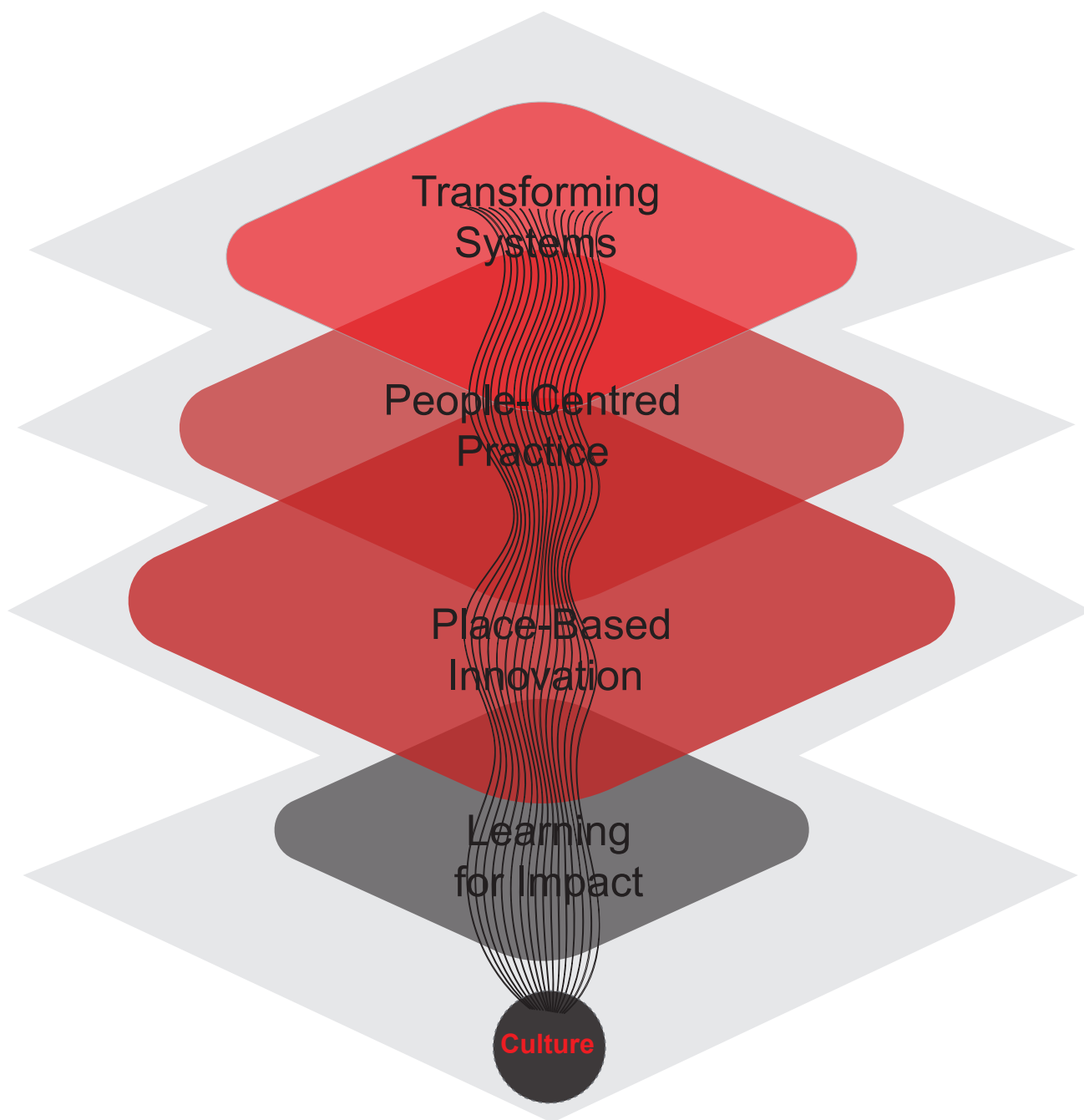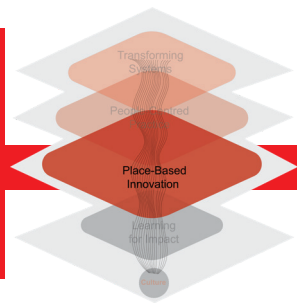
Figure 1: Dimensions of the TSI Work that are the focus of this review

TSI is an initiative that is 'place-based', focused on innovation in south and west Auckland, and demonstrating how this work can inform broader policies and programs focused on wellbeing. TSI's work as part of Auckland Council demonstrates how 'place-based work' can create an anchor for wellbeing.

A Place-based Approach to Wellbeing

New Zealand, like Australia, and many other countries, recognises that place-based approaches can play a critical role in addressing a range of inequalities, including persistent disadvantage. This has led to an increased focus on place-based initiatives around the world for the delivery of welfare programs and community service interventions.

What makes TSI different to these approaches is that place is seen through a lens of social innovation and aspiration rather than through a deficit lens. This means that place becomes a space where people can co-create and experience positive futures for themselves and their whānau. TSI demonstrates how place-based approaches can generate real changes for people, while also providing evidence for how systems can more effectively work across diversity.

Continuing to develop a place-based approach to social innovation is a critical element of the success of TSI's work. The expansion to west Auckland in addition to the strengthening of the initiative in south Auckland has highlighted both the possibilities of place-based work, but also the need for careful attention to the differences between places and the implications of that for creating outcomes with people.

Connecting People, Place, Social Innovation + Systems Change

TSI has demonstrated the power of place-based work in the context of addressing systems change. This may seem like a paradox, but it is actually an essential learning for how we can innovate within systems while not losing a focus on people. Working in place, but with a systems focus:

• **Makes 'systems' real**. Place offers a real context in which we can not only see the impacts of systems in all their complexity, but also be able to experiment with people around how these impacts could be mitigated, or indeed how we could innovate to shift the detrimental impacts of systems;

• **Enables an opportunity to see how actions intersect**, how working in one part of a system interacts and ripples out to or effects other parts of the system;

• **Offers an opportunity to engage with people and communities holistically** rather than in service silos, making a relational approach possible;

• **Enables a better appreciation of what is 'scaleable' and 'replicable'**, or what kind of scale is appropriate for particular impacts. This puts a halt to unfounded assumptions that all innovations or initiatives are or should be scalable in the same way or that scaled up initiatives will automatically lead to scaled up impacts.

Further, people are more likely to *want* to participate in creating systems level change in place because they have a stake in the future of co-producing their futures in place - whereas systems beyond place can seem abstract, removed and nebulous.

Auckland Council as a Critical Anchor Institution

Auckland Council, as the originator, host and core funder of TSI and as a critical stakeholder in the growth of south, west and greater Auckland, has played an essential role as an 'anchor institution' in the work undertaken by TSI.

Anchor Institutions are large organisations that are strongly grounded in 'place' – whether that be a suburb, town, city, or region. These 'strongly grounded' institutions are characterised by a mission or purpose that is tightly connected to the current and future wellbeing of a particular place. Further, their infrastructure, asset portfolios and their strategic priorities require them to be committed to that place for the long term (Smallbone et al. 2015).

Though governments are not often included as 'anchor institutions' there is no doubt that local governments in NZ often do and indeed should play this role, particularly when there are stark inequities between parts of a region's economy.

As part of Auckland Council, TSI has been able to support the adoption of anchor-like practices across Council which address priorities for south and west Auckland such as via:

• urban redevelopment initiatives that focus on generating local outcomes (eg. Te Haa o Manukau co-working and maker space)

• the provision and marketing of healthy food, beverages and lifestyles via Council-operated child-care and community facilities;
• changes to the ways in which services such as libraries are provided to make them more welcoming and accessible to families experiencing cumulative and toxic levels of stress; and
• strengthening opportunities and targets for procurement from enterprises that are either Māori and Pasifika owned and operated, or which have a strong commitment to employing south and west Aucklanders.

These functions reflect and stretch strategic priorities and enable a leveraging of Council's core assets, procurement activities, resources, and services to respond effectively to local needs and aspirations (see figure 2).

While it could be considered somewhat unusual for local government to play this role, it is increasingly recognised around the world that both Central Governments and other funders (such as philanthropic foundations) are often somewhat removed from the realities of people's lives (particularly beyond service delivery), whereas for local government, these realities are much closer to home (see for example, Ryan et al, 2015).
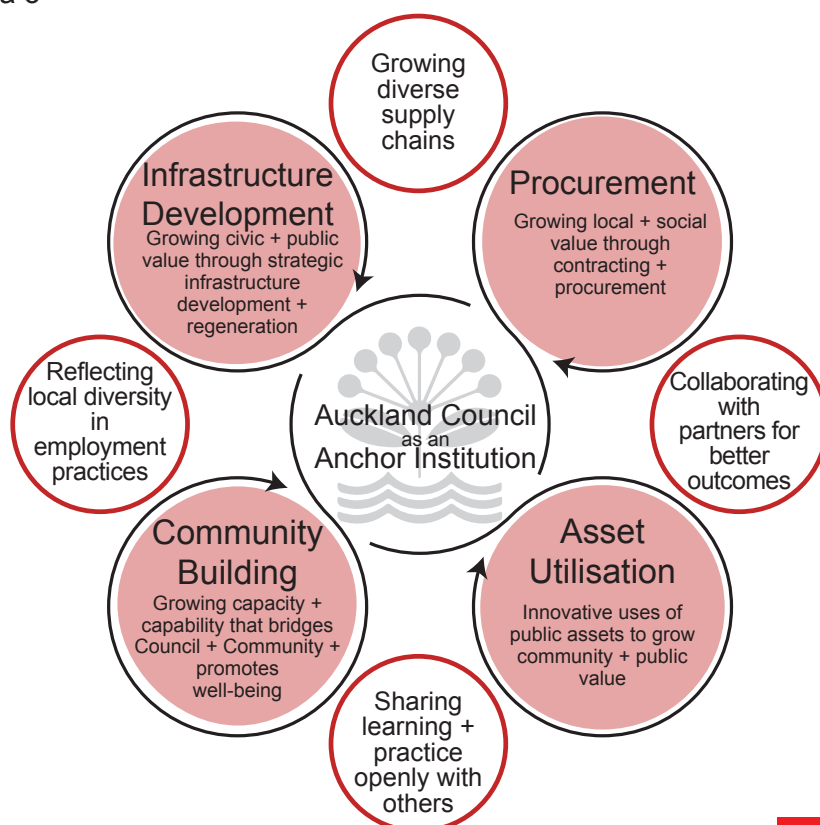

Figure 2: Auckland Council as an Anchor Institution with some of the key anchor roles it demonstrates with and through TSI

From Anchor to System Networker

TSI is demonstrating the power of new kinds of partnerships through which Central Government and external funders could engage more closely with place-based partners to co-create new futures for support and wellbeing.

Local Governments do not typically have the authority or the responsibility to control many structural and systemic levers but TSI and Auckland Council are actively exploring opportunities to act as an effective partner in systems transformation through activities such as:

• Collaborations with data scientists and policy innovators within Central Government to test new approaches to combine and leverage data, lived experience, indigenous knowledge systems, practice and research-based evidence in ways that support the co-designing and testing of more impactful policies and programs (see for example Tamariki Wellbeing initiatives; and UpTempo);

• Connections with change makers in industry, universities, social enterprises, philanthropists and service delivery organisations to design and build new platforms and collectives to strengthen support ecosystems (see for example the many connections that have developed around the Food Hub, and community infrastructure work; and the growth of Amotai).

These activities have been designed with the explicit intent to benefit south and west Auckland.

Their systemic nature however, means that impacts are likely to extend well beyond those communities.

In this way, TSI, and through it, the broader Auckland Council, provide a valuable demonstration of the role that Local Government can play both as a local anchor institution and as a partner in systems-transformation designed to improve wellbeing. Further, they are effectively demonstrating the behaviours and values that are needed to play this role in ways that have the potential to be truly transformational.

Place-level wellbeing provides a powerful and unifying framework for integrating social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing in ways that respect and work with people, whānau, workers and communities. The focus of the work is maximising people's aspirations for agency and growth, based on their full set of strengths, assets and resources.

TSI demonstrates a place-based approach to transformation and future making in a number of ways including by:

• facilitating a diverse portfolio of strengths-based, community-led initiatives, informed by lived experience and local data; co-designed with residents, service providers and funders; to address both local priorities and systems change imperatives.

• seeking to build purposeful and goal-aligned innovation into all initiatives to foster new solutions with potential to deliver better results for local people

• leading strong, evidence and insights-informed advocacy with and on behalf of south and west Auckland

• employing local residents and empowering whānau to create their own local fit for purpose, strengths based solutions for the most complex challenges.

• nurturing the development of local ecosystems to expand and sustain the networks of stakeholders involved in delivering transformation agendas

• leveraging spending and procurement capacities to advantage local enterprises

• conducting research to identify industries which are most likely to provide well-paid employment, mentoring and transparent career paths over the long-term and designing strategies to improve local participation in those industries

• modelling a spirit of optimism about the potential to design better futures and creating opportunities for whānau, rangatahi and local communities and enterprises to increase their sense of agency in building better futures.
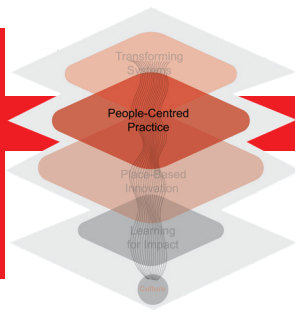
People-Centred practice:
Relational + Connected Wellbeing

TSIs practice is people-centred - it is relational, in that it is centred on building strong relationships between people (Whānau and community) as the basis of wellbeing. It is also connected and collaborative. TSI works *with* community and whānau in ways that are deeper and more connected than traditional service-led approaches.

A Relational Approach to Wellbeing

In her work and research, UK designer Hilary Cottam (2018; 2019; 2020) argues that we need a new approach to welfare that is fit-for-purpose in the 21st Century.

At the heart of her proposal lies the argument that our current welfare systems "cannot cope with modern troubles or support good lives" and that one of the fundamental reasons is that most modern welfare systems design "people and their relationships out of the welfare state" (2018).

The welfare systems we need for the 21st Century, according to Cottam, require "a relational approach", a recognition that 'relationships are everything' (2019), that:

> "People need human connection to make change, and most of all to sustain change" (Cottam, 2019).

In developing its 'relational approach' to working in south and west Auckland, TSI embodies much of what Cottam argues should lie at the heart of new, modern support systems (see figure 3). In particular, the participatory nature of TSI's work (with the support of the Co-design Lab) has demonstrated how working in collaboration with community and whānau results in deeper shifts across people's lives, towards the aspirations they have for their own and their whānau's futures.
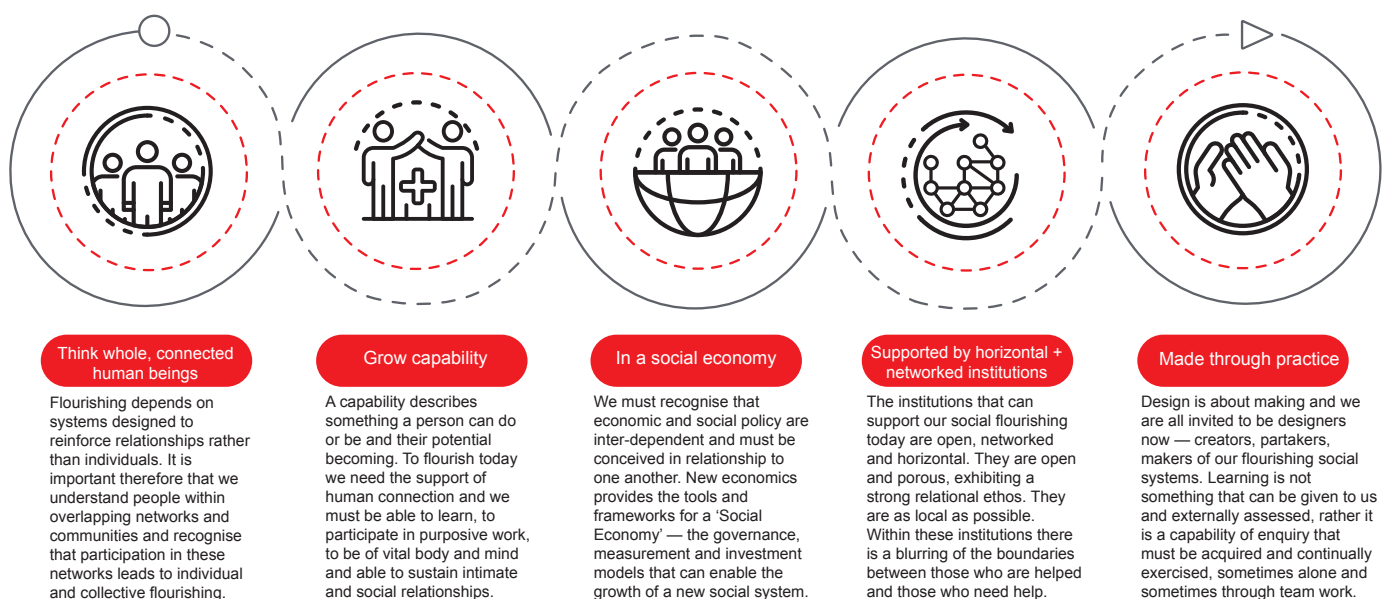

Think whole, connected human beings

Flourishing depends on systems designed to reinforce relationships rather than individuals. It is important therefore that we understand people within overlapping networks and communities and recognise that participation in these networks leads to individual and collective flourishing.

Grow capability

A capability describes something a person can do or be and their potential becoming. To flourish today we need the support of human connection and we must be able to learn, to participate in purposive work, to be of vital body and mind and able to sustain intimate and social relationships.

In a social economy

We must recognise that economic and social policy are inter-dependent and must be conceived in relationship to one another. New economics provides the tools and frameworks for a 'Social Economy' — the governance, measurement and investment models that can enable the growth of a new social system.

Supported by horizontal + networked institutions

The institutions that can support our social flourishing today are open, networked and horizontal. They are open and porous, exhibiting a strong relational ethos. They are as local as possible. Within these institutions there is a blurring of the boundaries between those who are helped and those who need help.

Made through practice

Design is about making and we are all invited to be designers now — creators, partakers, makers of our flourishing social systems. Learning is not something that can be given to us and externally assessed, rather it is a capability of enquiry that must be acquired and continually exercised, sometimes alone and sometimes through team work.

Figure 3: Elements central to a new 'fit-for-purpose' welfare approach for the 21st Century (based on Cottam, 2020)

This is expressed poignantly in the following quote from TSI's 'Relational Approach' research:

"These community leaders treat TSI as whānau because the staff behave as they would with whānau (family)… A family-like relationship includes being inclusive, valuing who you are and what you each offer, showing interest in one another's lives, demonstrating genuine care and concern, being yourself, being open to things as they unfold, and being willing to operate at both a human and a professional level" (Hancock, 2018;p. 25).

Hilary Cottam refers to these approaches as 'generative' in that people participate in creating their own futures - *"(people) are given a chance to contribute and to create good health, good care and good lives"* (2018).

We can no longer invest in social systems that are designed to fix us, allocating support according to the extent we have broken down (a difficult and expensive task). Humans are designed to grow, heal when necessary and to continually develop. Social systems need to be designed to mimic and support this naturally occurring generative and regenerative capacity.

Hilary Cottam 2020;p.25.

Generative work is focused on growing capacities and capabilities that enable people to realise their aspirations rather than continuing to cycle through welfare systems and fit into programmatic results criteria. This is best articulated in the Kootuitui Papakura work with TSI:

"Social service models of intervention struggle to impact complex social problems and expert-driven approaches often discount whānau and community knowledge.New approaches are needed to respond to the aspirations of individuals, families and communities experiencing the greatest inequities. We needed a relational orientation that was culturally appropriate for our community and would position whānau as the experts on their realities" (Kootuitui Papakura, Changing Lives, One Home at a Time, 2019).
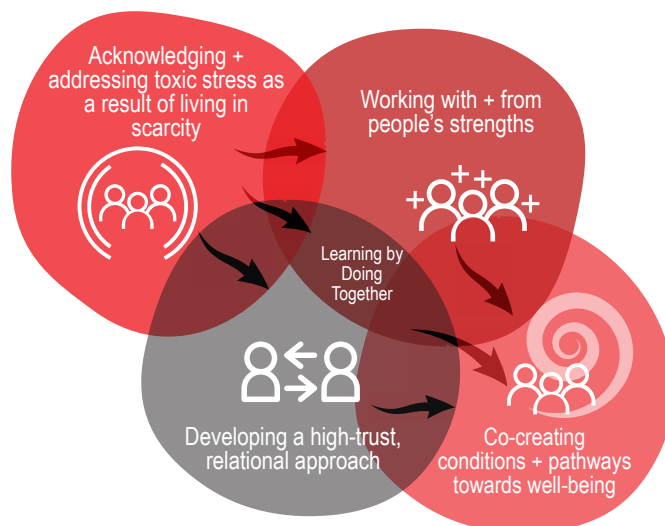

Figure 4: Foundational mindsets of TSI's relational approach

The foundational work that TSI undertook particularly through the Early Years projects, recognised that these generative approaches cannot just be mandated by service managers or funders. They need to be built on some fundamental shifts in mindsets, and they require a different kind of approach than what is generally considered typical of service provision. The two core mindset shifts are illustrated in figure 4.

First for generative work to flourish there needs to be be a profound acknowledgement that people living with the ongoing and cumulative stress of scarcity do not necessarily have the bandwidth for engaging in change unless this scarcity and the toxic stress it results in are addressed.

Such an acknowledgement and with it approaches to reduce stress are evident in all of TSI's work, from within the team itself, to the co-design work undertaken in community, to the wider work undertaken with systems and partnerships.

Second, generative work can only flourish through the development of a high-trust relational approach. The expertise and strengths that people and whānau bring to the process needs to be valued in all work towards better futures.

These are the fundamental foundations for TSI's generative work. These foundations enable a focus on the co-creation of both pathways and conditions towards wellbeing.

As the concepts underpinning strengths-based, human-centred work spread across service

systems, many programs identify that they subscribe to such frameworks. Yet, without a relational approach and generative mindsets that underpin it, this can often be hard to actually evidence in the work. In TSI there is clear evidence that the relational approach, and a generative mindset are central to the work.

Generative Approaches + More

The generative approach that TSI has developed over the past six years is impressive. However, TSI takes these approaches even further than Hilary Cottam articulates. We have identified in their work not just a commitment to generative work, but also approaches that could be termed 're-generative' and further still, an 'intergenerational vision'.

Generative work is focused on working alongside people in order to co-create new relationships, new practices, new outcomes (Harquail, 2014). The focus on social innovation in TSI, and its commitment to learning with people and creating opportunities in south and west Auckland, demonstrate such a 'generative' approach.

The emphasis on 'future-making' that TSI embodies in much of its work (eg. Rangatahi economic futures; technology and innovation, Uptempo) could also be termed '***regenerative***', in that these projects involve actively exploring the question, 'how do we develop futures that not only seek to alleviate disadvantage or mitigate harm, but that intentionally aim to create positive impact'?

In other words, the work aims to build not just outputs, but sustainable outcomes over time. This, epitomises the nature of the increasingly well recognised 'regenerative' paradigm, which, though mostly referred to in ecological disciplines, is actually equally relevant in relation to social and economic change. Regenerative work can be understood in this way:

> *"instead of focusing on social and environmental health using traditional reductionist logic to "solve problems," it aims directly at building healthy human networks as the objective, drawing on universal principles and patterns, with "sustainability" becoming an outcome, a natural byproduct of systemic health". (Fullerton, 2015;p.10).*

In social and economic contexts, regenerative approaches seek to generate wellbeing by design rather than only ameliorating symptoms of disadvantage or inequity.

Grown out of Māori principles, TSI's work recognises that deep transformation requires learning from previous generations in order to improve holistic wellbeing outcomes for current residents and future generations. TSI thus applies an *intergenerational* approach which is both developmental and relational.
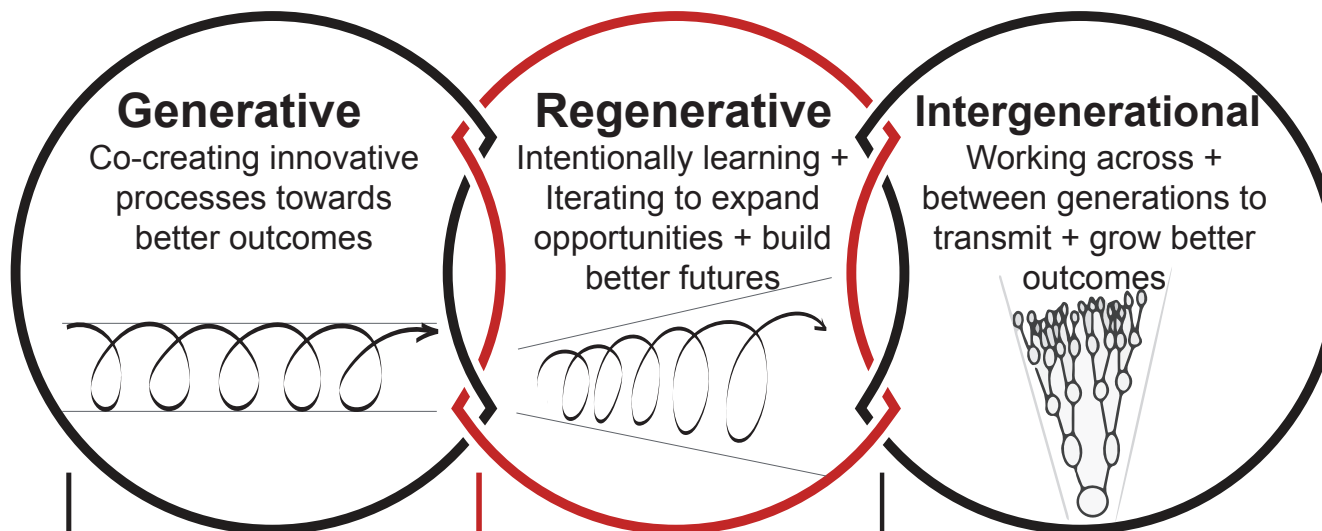
As identified in the previous review, TSI looks across the 'cradle to career' spectrum of people's lives, with work being undertaken across this spectrum to open opportunities through which people can realise their aspirations.

However what has become evident in this latest review, is that this has deepened so that TSI is now also working in ways that could be termed '***intergenerational***', working:

- To acknowledge and respond to intergenerational trauma that have resulted from structural inequalities, racism and colonisation;

- To change these inequalities by working from pre-birth to support parents to birth, nurture and raise a healthy next generation;

- To grow new opportunities with adults seeking to exit from sunset industries into employment in emerging industries, thereby opening up long-term careers and stable incomes which can scaffold financial wellbeing for current and future generations.

Figure 5 outlines the ways TSI is working in three expressions of work seeking to create new opportunities: Generative, Regenerative and Intergenerational.

This effectively lifts the focus of work from simply presenting issues, towards a long-term futures orientation, reinforcing the focus on strengths, potentials and opportunities. Further, it provides an approach for exploring impact multipliers. That is, an approach to accounting for how changing opportunities now can create multiplier effects for whānau and communities in the present, but also exponentially more positive effects for the wellbeing of generations to come. This is the long-term perspective that has been missing from narrow social investment approaches of the past and which could be embedded in deeper, more long-term, regenerative wellbeing approaches.

Generative
Co-creating innovative processes towards better outcomes

Regenerative
Intentionally learning + Iterating to expand opportunities + build better futures

Intergenerational
Working across + between generations to transmit + grow better outcomes

TSI co-creates better outcomes with whanau and community through its exploratory + experimental work (eg. through various initiatives in Tamariki Well-being; Rangatahi economic futures)

TSI's work is generative in that:
It is **exploratory** and **experimental** – seeking to enable whānau and system stakeholders to develop grounded, authentic, accessible and impactful responses to local priorities in the midst of complexity and uncertainty – deliberately working differently to achieve different results

It **starts from a position of whaka-mana** – seeking to produce new insights, skills, capabilities and connections which help to grow the size, diversity and capacity of the ecosystem of local change agents and those in adjacent systems with the ability to support change in south and west Auckland. The complexity of approaches and the deep valuing of diversity support whaka-mana while the platforms and processes of learning support ecosystem development and growth.

It reflects a **deep and broad commitment to capability development** stretching approaches, mindsets, principles and cultural philosophies. Learning about community needs and aspirations, innovation methods, processes and impacts are recognised as a shared priority for participating whānau, partners and team members and critical for refining current activities, guiding future work and shaping systems and futures.

TSI is growing opportunities in New Economy work across south and west Auckland, not only in technology related fields, but in areas such as building food security + resilience; quality work + enterprise development; + transitions for people in sunset industries.

TSI's work is Regenerative in that:

It reflects both a **focus on making the future and on the interconnected nature of determinants of wellbeing**. The work is deliberately laying the foundations for future development - for example, by: increasingly focusing on positive rangatahi school engagement as a critical foundation for quality work and whānau prosperity post-school; growing skills in technology futures, making and animation, which opens opportunities in future jobs for rangatahi; strengthening futures of Māori and Pasifika owned enterprises by growing them into local supply chains; opening pathways for Pacific people working in sunset industries to grow their capabilities for new economy work and futures.

This work **prototypes approaches within a sophisticated social R&D framework which will support ongoing refinement of co-designed responses** in Auckland and will also contribute to the development of the field of place-based innovation internationally.

TSIs work spans generations - from pre-natal work (Having a Baby in South Auckland), to early childhood, Whanau well-being, rangatahi economic futures; + whānau working or looking for work. The focus on Whānau also exemplifies a commitment to multi-generational outcomes

TSI's work is Inter-generational in that:

The work spans **life courses** - from pregnancy to adults, and works in ways that are **whānau-centred**, which is, by its nature, intergenerational.

By working with young mothers, tamariki, rangatahi, whānau and community, TSI is working across generations concurrently, and ensuring that impacts open opportunities not just for current generations, but for upcoming and future generations.

TSI's work is framed around post-colonial responses to better outcomes for communities and whānau - and this is centred in **recognising and responding to intergenerational trauma** through a whānau-centred, strengths and equity lens. Intergenerational work requires: a grounded approach (so TSI is **grounded in place**), a healing approach to address intergenerational trauma in place, and a **systems approach** that can address the power imbalances and structural inequities that can either perpetuate these inequities or promote equitable futures.

Figure 5: TSI's Generative, Regenerative and Intergenerational Approach
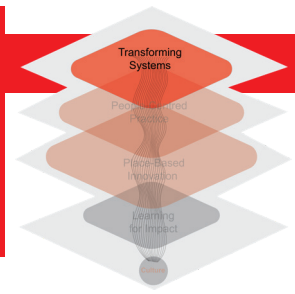
In the previous review one of the identified strengths of TSI was its systemic perspective. Over the past three years TSI has continued to foster a systems approach to social innovation work, which is critical given that generative work with people and in places often highlights issues and barriers that are structural and systemic in nature.

Effective social innovation work cannot just focus on the symptomatic impacts of systems - it must directly engage with the systems themselves, otherwise such work will ultimately only perpetuate structural inequalities.

Beyond systems thinking: complexity-informed systems approaches

Yet, having a systemic perspective is not enough when TSI is also working at the intersections between systems, people and place. What is also required is an orientation to and appreciation of complexity.

The interrelationships between issues in peoples lives and in the places where disadvantage is concentrated are not always clear. Presenting issues may not only be symptoms of much deeper structural inequities, but interventions themselves may actually perpetuate rather than relieve these inequities. Further, issues often intersect in surprising ways, and are not always responsive to singular or programmatic interventions.

Over the past three years TSI has been strengthening their appreciation not only of systems work, but of complexity informed systems approaches.   There are three core ways in which this has been evident in the work reviewed:

1. The recognition of threads between work that, at first glance, may seem only distantly related but which can actually strengthen and multiply outcomes over time.

2. The development of a sophisticated range of experiments that point to the importance of wellbeing ecologies in place rather than just growing 'service systems'.

3. The organising of the TSI team as it grows in size, and in reach, and how this is pointing to the development of a structure that is networked with distributed leadership - one that is fit for purpose in enabling and supporting teams to respond to and innovate within complex systems.

Working in complexity-informed systemic ways is critical for sustained and transformative change but is also extraordinarily difficult in an environment that is still predominantly built on siloed, programmatic intervention methodologies.

This section will examine each of the three ways in which we have seen a strengthening of complexity-informed systems work, and then explore the challenges and opportunities involved in continuing to undertake this work.

Threads across lives: when outcomes intersect

In interviewing both staff from across TSI and external stakeholders, one of the consistent comments made was that it was increasingly difficult to see the 'whole' of TSI, while simultaneously there was an appreciation that the work itself was reflective of people's lives in a holistic sense.

A closer examination of the range of work undertaken by TSI reveals strong interconnections between work, and the relationships between what could, at first glance, be seen as quite disparate arenas of work. For example, the work undertaken in Tamariki Wellbeing not only starts to address some of the fundamental challenges whānau and community face in helping their children thrive, it also reflects and creates conditions for

approaches further upstream. Through its New Economy work, TSI seeks to progress better livelihoods, growing whānau and community wealth and thereby redistributing economic power, which in turn enables whānau and Tamariki to thrive.

In discussing the work undertaken in more structural programs such as Amotai, it was evident that connections and threads from the work in Tamariki Wellbeing has not only been foundational for shaping approaches, but remains influential.

In looking at the insights generated through the Tamariki Wellbeing work, a picture emerges of ways in which TSI is actually working along the threads of each of the insight areas. Joining up the insights and the outputs across these threads starts to reveal the potential for significant multiplier effects that can be generated by taking a systemic approach to shifting outcomes.

Beyond Service Responses: Experimenting in the development of support ecologies

Responding to complex issues requires an 'experimental' and 'learning' approach, and very often, the outcomes can only be seen in retrospect rather than being 'planned for' in the first instance. What is clear as we review the work undertaken

When working with complexity, we can understand why things happen only in retrospect. Instructive patterns, however, can emerge if leaders conduct experiments that are safe to fail. That is why, instead of attempting to impose a course of action, leaders must patiently allow the path forward to reveal itself. They need to probe first, then sense, and then respond

Snowden and Boone, 2007

by TSI over the past three to five years is that this retrospective view highlights a groundswell of opportunity and local capability that is being created through the work. The social innovation and co-design framing that has become core to TSI's work enables a generative response that takes as its starting point the realities of life that people in place face.

The regenerative framing enables responses that can grow capacities, capabilities, and open opportunities that include both people (community, whānau) and supports around responses that match people's aspirations (see figure 6).
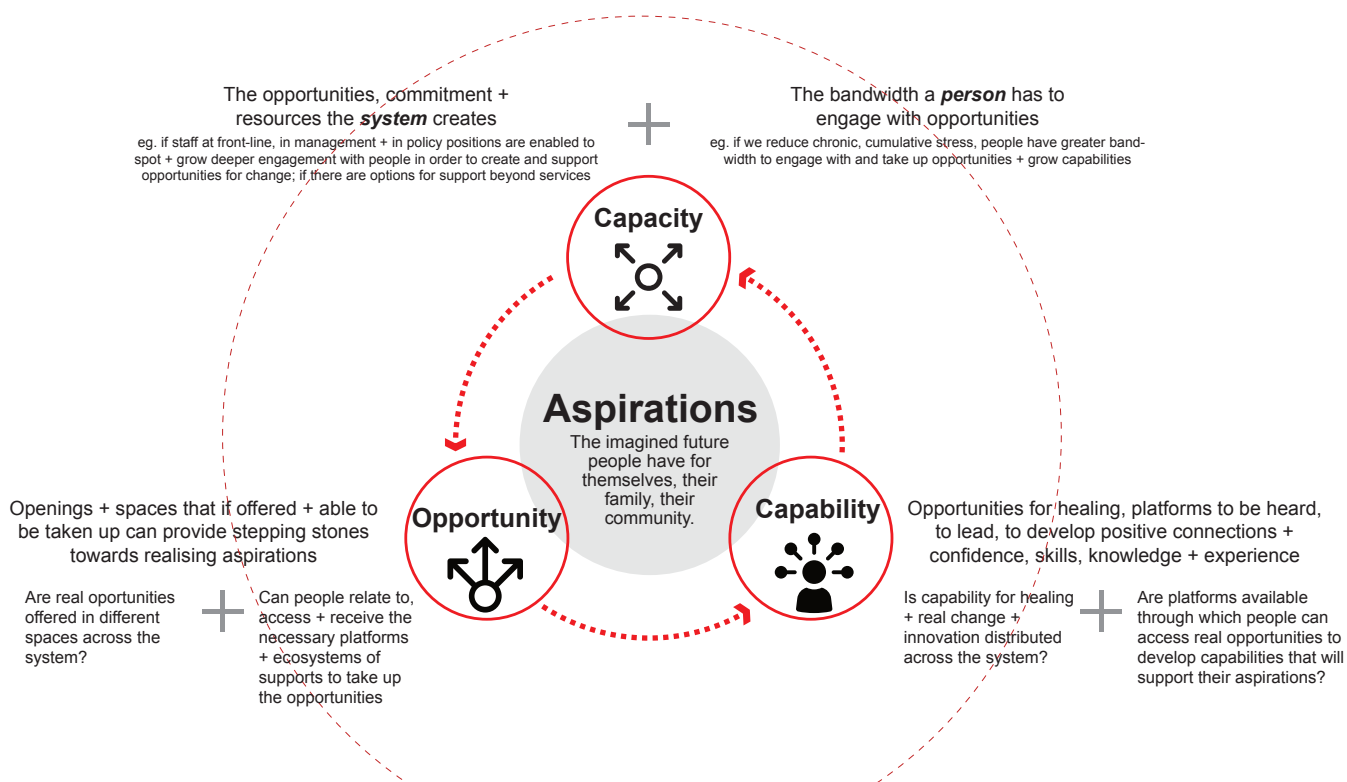

Figure 6: Three interconnected domains that enable a focus on how support responses can create pathways towards matching people's (community, whānau) aspirations - and that need to be matched with equivalent structural / systemic domain changes.

15

Towards an Ecology of Support for Wellbeing
Means strengthening supports beyond and instead of services

From Services as First Response → Towards a Broader Ecology of Supports

Strengthening Relational Supports for Wellbeing

within whānau

Sharing capabilities

Unlocking + Growing Capabilities

Culturally responsive services that offer specialised support + connection back into ecology of wellbeing

Enabling capacities (reducing stress)

towards new networks

Thickening relationships with whānau + community

across communities

Services can be an important **part** of a support ecology, but are not replacements for a broader ecology of support + wellbeing

Diverse Spaces Supporting Wellbeing

Civic spaces that support whānau

Access to 'home' spaces

Marae-based support for whānau

Community-centred food + infrastructure

Opening Opportunities for Wellbeing

Growing opportunities for education + training in new economy jobs

Growing opportunities through stronger Māori and Pasifika enterprises

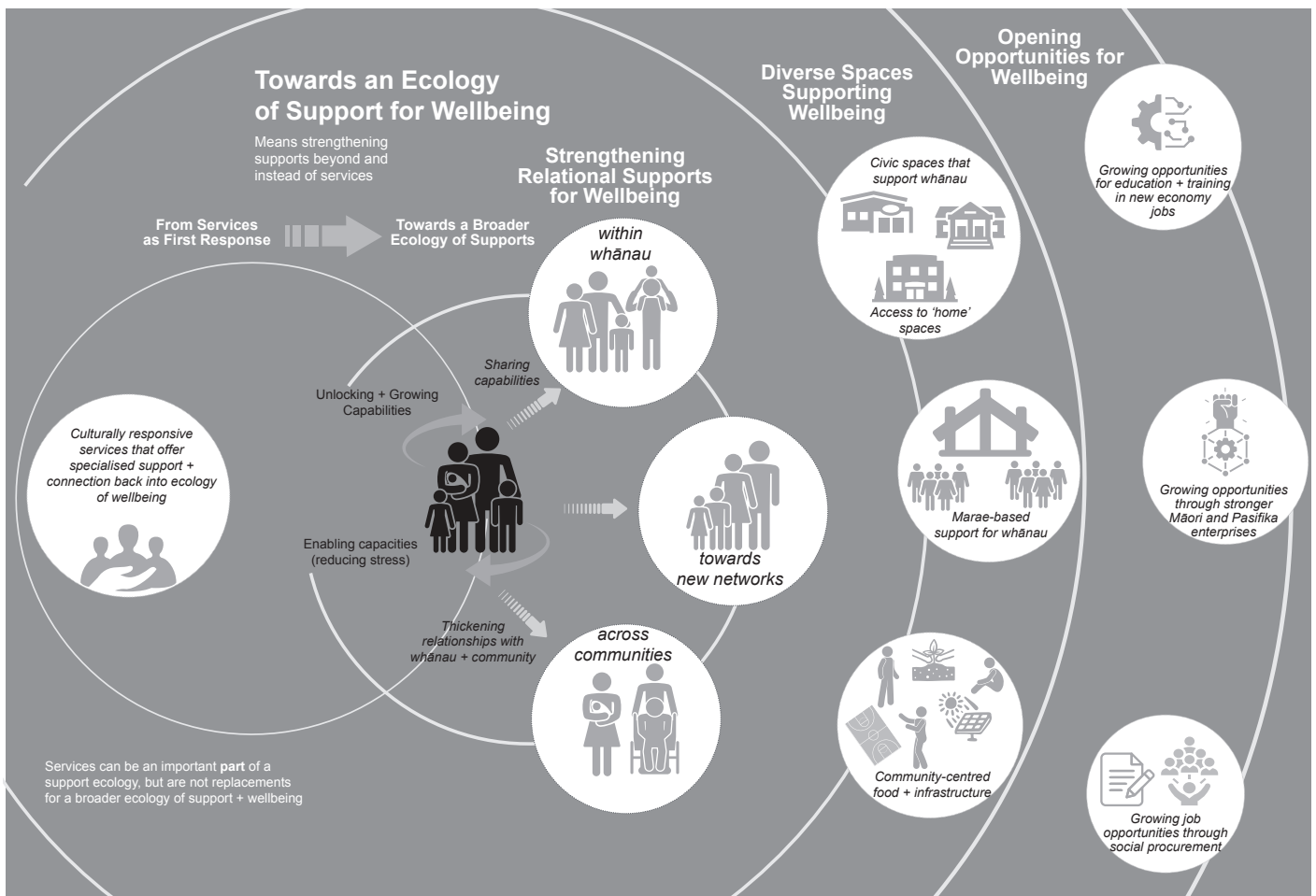Growing job opportunities through social procurement

Figure 7: Ecologies of support emerging from the work TSI is engaged in with community and whānau (which can be complemented with work to grow specialist services that are responsive and play valuable roles in the ecology of support)

What has emerged out of many of the experiments that TSI has undertaken are support ecologies: a weaving together of supportive acts, spaces, relationships, capabilities and opportunities. Such support ecologies are likely to be much more present and responsive to peoples needs and aspirations than singular responses from services or external professionals who are often disconnected from the contexts of people's lives. In general terms, (and acknowledging that there are a growing number of services challenging the norm), most welfare services are still prescriptive, focused on particular issues, programmed and accounted for on relatively narrow, predetermined outputs.

They are set up to ameliorate the worst of what people experience due to poverty and disadvantage. However, they do not, in the main, create real opportunities for transformative change.

Zooming out to examine what TSI has learnt and is working on reveals an emerging picture of what such 'support ecologies' include (across different work within TSI).

While this picture does not exclude the role of services in the ecology, it does shift both the positioning of such services (so that they are no longer dominant) and their nature (for example, how they can be more whānau-led, and how they can work to provide connections back into broader support ecologies rather than having people stuck in cycles within service systems).

Figure 7 provides an example of the emerging ecologies of support models that this review identified in TSI's work.

Rather than being based on amelioration of symptoms or on compliance, support ecologies are built around people, focused on supporting them to achieve their aspirations through strengthening capacities, capabilities, and growing opportunities.

The work TSI is undertaking with partners is creating strong foundations for transforming traditional service-based welfare into diverse ecologies of support that could enable people and places to thrive, starting in south and west Auckland. It is effectively a practical

demonstration of what Hilary Cottam articulates in her overview of new support systems and could inform the development of a new place and people centred social contract.

One of the challenges of this 'integrated, experimental approach' is, however, that most funding structures (either government or philanthropic) are not yet at the point where they are able to support generative and regenerative approaches beyond experimentation or pilot projects.

In partnering with TSI on this work there are emerging opportunities to radically rethink how funders can commission and evaluate work over time and ensure that capital underpins rather than dominates the shaping of effective and sustainable ecologies of wellbeing that have a transformative potential.

Beyond Silos: Developing a networked organisation to undertake complex systemic work

Over the past three years TSI has grown significantly - from a relatively small team of a dozen or so people, to over 40 staff, now focused not only on south Auckland but also west Auckland (which has its own unique characteristics, and is initiating work that is distinct from that in south Auckland). This itself is testament to the confidence that the work is inspiring.

With scaling there are always questions and pressures, both in relation to holding onto the fidelity of the work, and ensuring levels of coherence across growing teams. The team at TSI is aware of these pressures and is actively exploring how they might scale with integrity. What stood out during the review were significant expressions of the value and necessity of growing a team structure that:

• supports emergent and innovative approaches; and
• enables a coherent set of practices and principles to underpin the work.

From the reviewers perspective (having seen many initiatives scale too quickly or be forced to adopt incompatible management structures to cope with scale), the opportunity that exists for TSI is to reflect the systemic nature of its work with a structure that matches this nature.
One of the models that could inform this structure

is that of the 'networked organisation' (see Laloux, 2014).

In these models small teams operate using distributed leadership models. An equally small central platform exists to ensure that there is a coherence (different to coordination) across the teams, and to manage common administrative and managerial tasks.

In effect, the structure echos the ecosystem or ecological approach TSI has established in its external work. What this enables is an operational approach which is much more akin to an impact 'movement' (see for example, Johar, 2018) than a traditional hierarchical organisation.

TSI already has many of the characteristics and competencies needed to enact such a networked structure, and it also has the learning and evaluation infrastructure this would require in both its entrepreneurial learning practices and through Niho Taniwha (explored in the following section).

The benefits of such a structuring would include:

• enabling teams to maintain maximum focus on the work - and the innovation and impact of the work rather than its administration;

• developing a distributed leadership capability across the work, something which is often identified as critical but lacking in relation to working in complex environments;

• enabling teams to include and legitimise community, whānau, partners and allies in the work as team members (recognising of course that they may not be considered employees of the wider organisation).

Teams would be able to organise themselves around the work, and identify who might play critical roles in relation to the work - for example, who would play a brokerage and communications role between other teams, and who would engage in holding the connection to Niho Taniwha and the platform agendas.

The challenges would also, however, need to be navigated (particularly given TSI exists within a bigger, much more traditional organisation).

There could be significant benefits to the Council, through the fostering of a team that grows an impact movement and engages partners, collaborators, community and whānau in realising positive futures for south and west Auckland.

Effectively TSI, as a unit inside Auckland Council engage in what Kotter refers to as a 'dual operating system' (2012), where the networked structure can effectively focus on rapid and transformational change agendas, and the traditional hierarchy it sits within and alongside can manage the day-to-day structured activities with efficiency, predictability and effectiveness (see figure 8).

Since the previous review TSI has scaled significantly. Not only has the team itself grown, the increasing depth of the work is significant (scaling deep), there is also now The Western Initiative (scaling out), and the systemic and policy work has increased markedly (scaling up). Because the work is place-based and whānau-centred, the challenges over time will be to:

• Continue to ensure the enactment of the principles of the work, its integrity and fidelity that comes from the grounded nature of the work; while

• Enabling innovation in place that comes from a valuing of the differences between places; and

• Harnessing the opportunities that are emerging that need to move beyond place to address key systemic issues (as is the case with the work of Amotai).

Balancing these aspects of the work will ensure it remains focused on innovation that is transformational rather than transactional and programmatic.
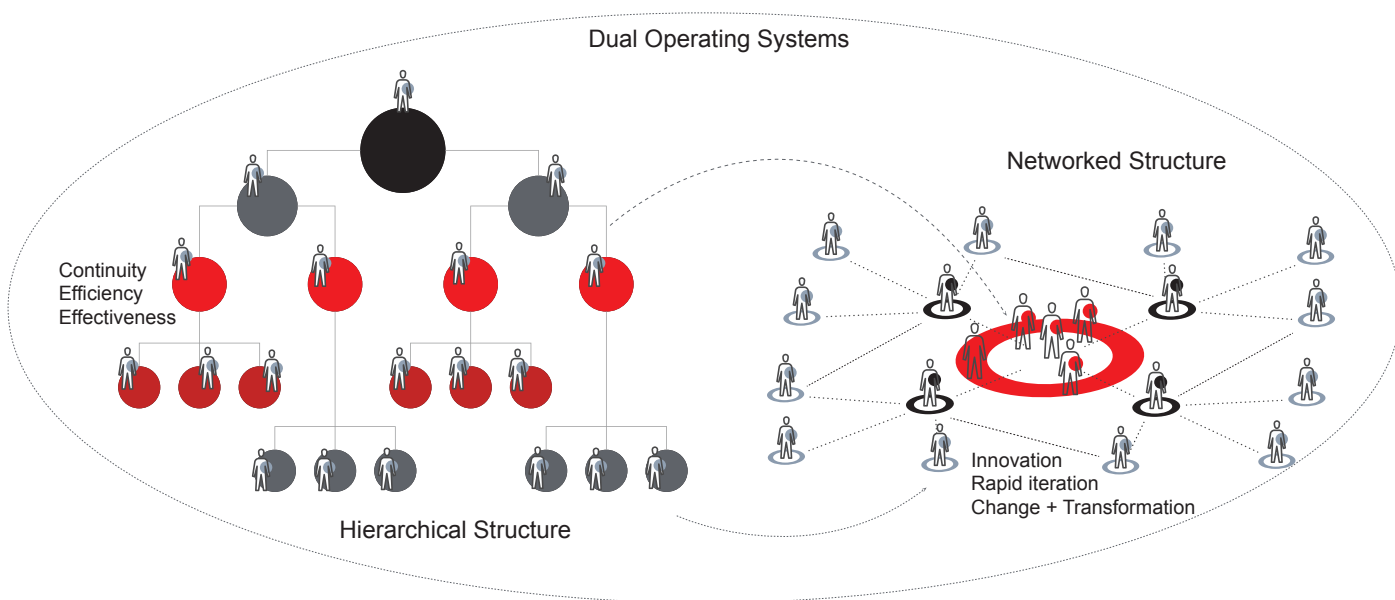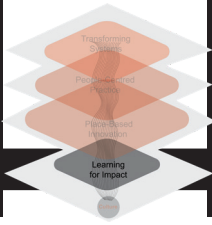

Figure 8: The networked structure of TSI is well-suited to innovation-oriented work. This can sit alongside the more hierarchical structure of Council as a key delivery body for local government services.

In TSI learning occurs across two layers or levels (see figure 9). The first layer matches the nature of the work - entrepreneurial learning - through which teams learn rapidly in and through the work, and adapt, iterate and learn through action.
The second layer, which is deeper, and therefore slower - evaluative learning - creates the foundations for monitoring and evaluating the practice and the outcomes of the work over time. The layers are integrated in the work of TSI, with each playing an important role in the development not only of the work, but of the outcomes that are possible within and through that work. The entrepreneurial learning layer is depicted as 'smaller' in the diagram only because it operates at a much faster pace, almost as 'fly-wheel' for the larger evaluative learning. These layers are explored further below.

Entrepreneurial Learning

The focus in TSI on experimenting, reflecting, learning and iterating has resulted in some remarkable developments over the past three years. An example that particularly stands out is that of Amotai. The work started from an outcomes focus on 'growing shared prosperity', initially through opening opportunities from strategic and social procurement initiatives.

This continues to deliver important opportunities for training, pathways to employment and jobs. However, what became apparent was that without some structural commitment through policy that enabled contractors to scale and mandate social value creation within public procurement, the potential opportunities were constrained to a contract-by-contract approach. Therefore the TSI Shared Prosperity team continued to explore potentials for more structural commitments (demonstrated through a commitment from Auckland Council to a target of 5% of their direct spend and 15% of their indirect spend with Māori and Pasifika suppliers).

Yet, again from reflections and learning through action, it also became evident that focussing on the suppliers rather than the contractors could potentially open up a much greater opportunity for impact. The team then started to explore a focus on supplier diversity, engaging with existing examples of minority supplier councils internationally, and testing the possibilities with Māori and Pasifika businesses. This work evolved into He Waka Eke Noa, and has now been relaunched as Amotai.

Entrepreneurial Learning

Rapid iteration
Learning in + by doing
Reflection in action
Iterating practice
Increasing effectiveness

Evaluative Learning

Engaged development
Learning from + by doing over time
Reflection on action
Evolving practice
Deepening outcomes

Figure 9: Two levels of learning in TSI

Social Procurement as a way to create training + jobs

Policy + commitment to strengthen equity, market accountability + strategic public value

Supplier Diversity as a way to grow opportunities through diverse businesses

Growing Diverse Markets

Strengthening Market Accountability

Demonstrating Outcomes

Employment Focus

?

Learning forward towards greater impact

Wealth Creation + Redistribution Focus

◦ Singular multipliers

◦ More transactional in nature

◦ Job by job, contract by contract

◦ Limited by low market accountability

Organisational + policy commitment can strengthen potential, reduce transactional nature of social procurement + increase potential for impact. However, the market still needs to be educated + monitored.

◦ Mainstream employers are still less willing to pay a living wage.
◦ Markets are still driven by a 'race-to-the-bottom' mental model
◦ Racism + deficit thinking still drive a 'charity' or 'welfare' mentality towards creation of pathways into employment

◦ Exponential multipliers

◦ More transformational in nature
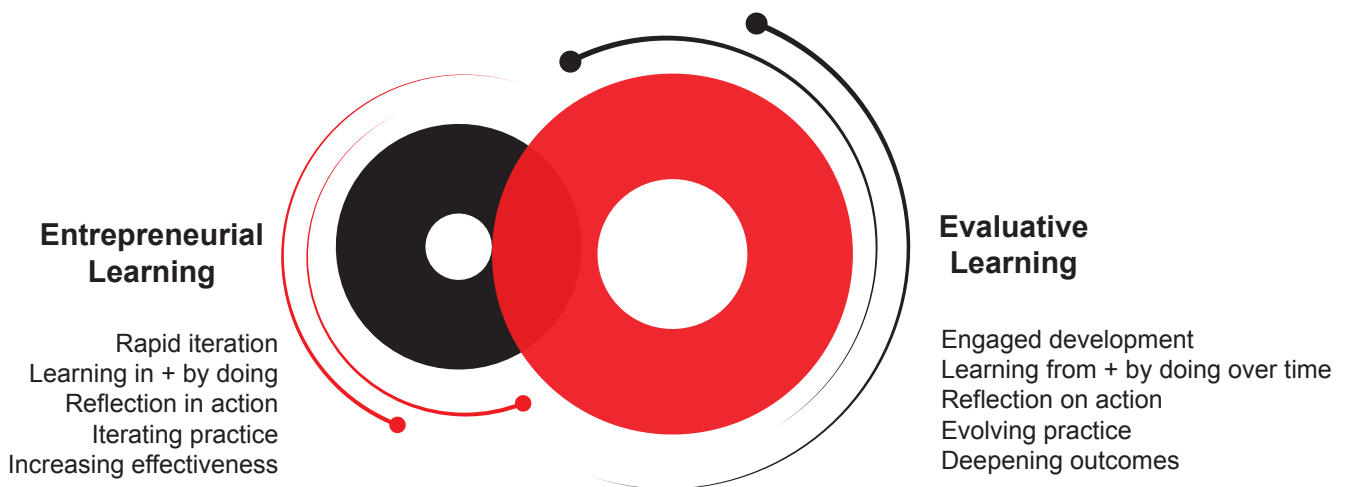
◦ Unlimited opportunity

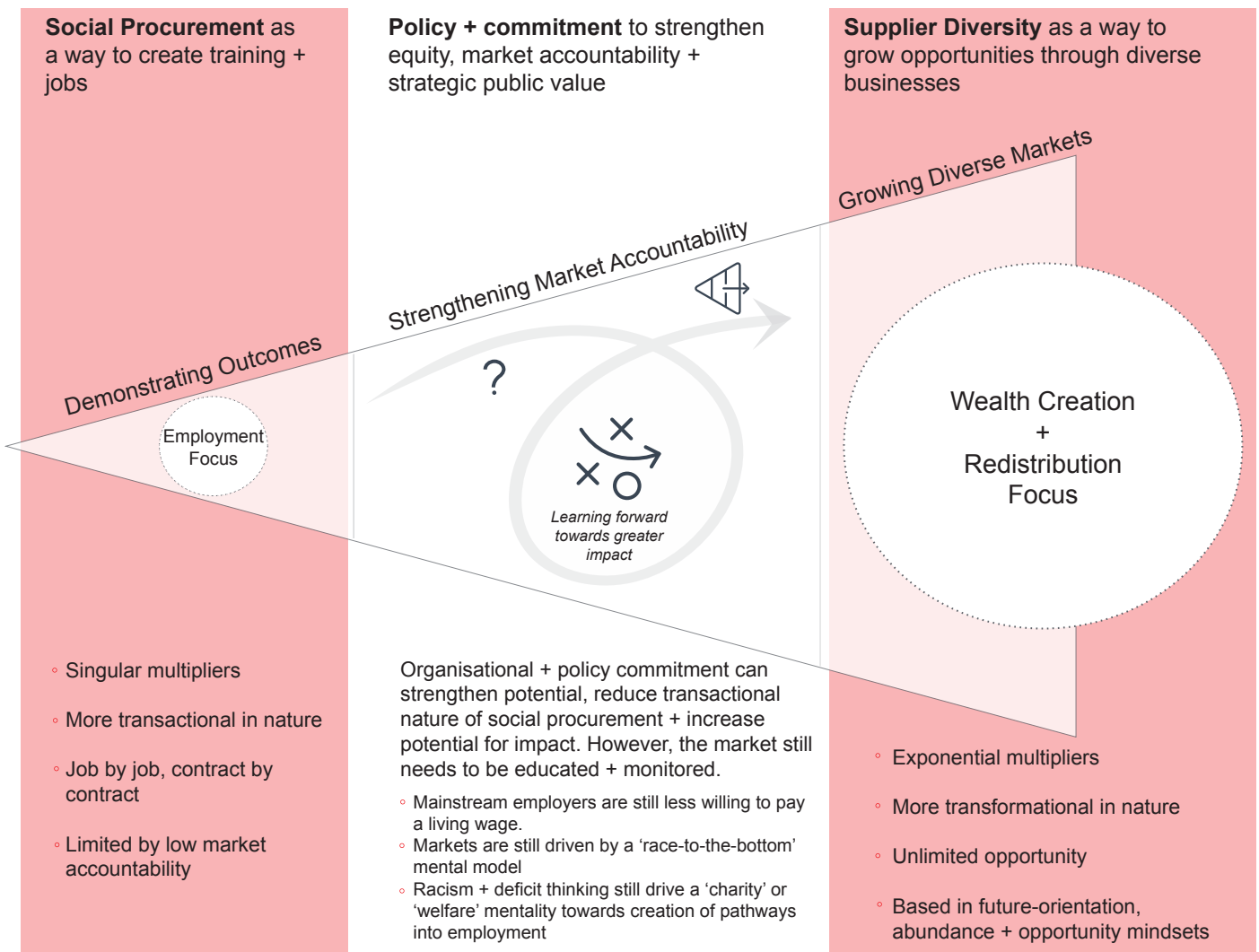◦ Based in future-orientation, abundance + opportunity mindsets

Figure 10: Expanding opportunities from social procurement to supplier diversity

The potential opportunities and multiplier effects of focussing on supplier diversity are exponentially greater than only focussing on social procurement (though it is not a question of either/ or). However, the focus on supplier diversity requires a much greater scale of perspective, so it must, necessarily, move beyond a place-based approach. This has and does present a challenge for TSI, but one which could potentially lead to a connection to much greater impact possibilities. The movement and expansion of opportunity is depicted in figure 10. TSI reports that, the value of contracts won through He Waka Eke Noa between July and December 2019 was $4m with a further $120M in tenders still in train (TSI Year in Review, 2019). During the period that COVID-19 exerted its first impacts on NZ, the number of businesses registered with Amotai has quadrupled to 400.

Evaluative Learning: Niho Taniwha

Despite a growing emphasis on the use of evidence and evaluation in social programs, and even social innovation, it is still the case that this is often an add-on to the practice rather than integral to it. As befits its cultural grounding and values, TSI has approached the development of an evaluative framework as integral to the practice and learning.

Through such a framework TSI can remain accountable to the communities and whānau with whom they work. The evaluative framework that has been developed and is still being developed by TSI - Niho Taniwha - is one of the most comprehensive and culturally grounded the reviewers have seen. It is certainly not 'off-the-shelf' - and it has been and continues to be subjected to the rigourous and intentional testing that any initiative of TSI undergoes.

Niho Taniwha is a developing evaluative learning framework supported by an evolving set of tools. Niho Taniwha reflects a deep commitment to cultivating a culture of 'learning in complexity' within and across TSI by embedding evaluative mindsets and activities within (rather than separate to) all levels of TSI's innovation activities to scaffold and amplify transformation.

It seeks to capture and where possible to aggregate quantitative and qualitative impacts, insights and lessons at the initiative, focus area and whole-of-TSI level thereby fostering multi-evidenced sites of understanding. Lived experience, data and mātauranga are equally valued within Niho Taniwha as sources of evidence about emergent outcomes for whānau, system change impacts and strategic learnings.

Developed in partnership with highly experienced and respected evaluators and grounded in cultural practice Niho Taniwha seeks to contribute to the re-indigenisation of knowledge systems and processes, cultural renewal and bi-cultural practice.

It is also intended to provide a structuring environment to support regular and routine reflection and data capture along with alignment and sense making across TSI's growing and diverse teams and activities.

Niho Taniwha is, in effect, a working example of transformative evaluation models (see for example, Patton, 2019). What guides TSI is more like a Theory of Transformation than a theory of change, with the former then being knitted out of the Theories of Change for each program area (eg. Tamariki Wellbeing; Innovation and Technology etc).

The cultural groundedness of Niho Taniwha is critical as evaluating transformational initiatives requires a much more acute sensibility towards both context and cultural principles than has traditionally been the case for evaluation methods (even those that are developmental in nature). In addition, the need for any transformational work to be 'complexity-infomed' (informed by an understanding of and engagement with complexity theory/research), means that the orientation is much more towards 'learning' than 'causation'.

Transformative evaluation frameworks have three key features (also summarised in figure 11):

• **Contextual in nature** - the framework is culturally grounded, works to support co-creation of the 'what' and 'how' of evaluation, and has an accountability base that is skewed towards an internal locus of control (ie. what the people value) rather than an external locus of control (what the funders and the influencers value).
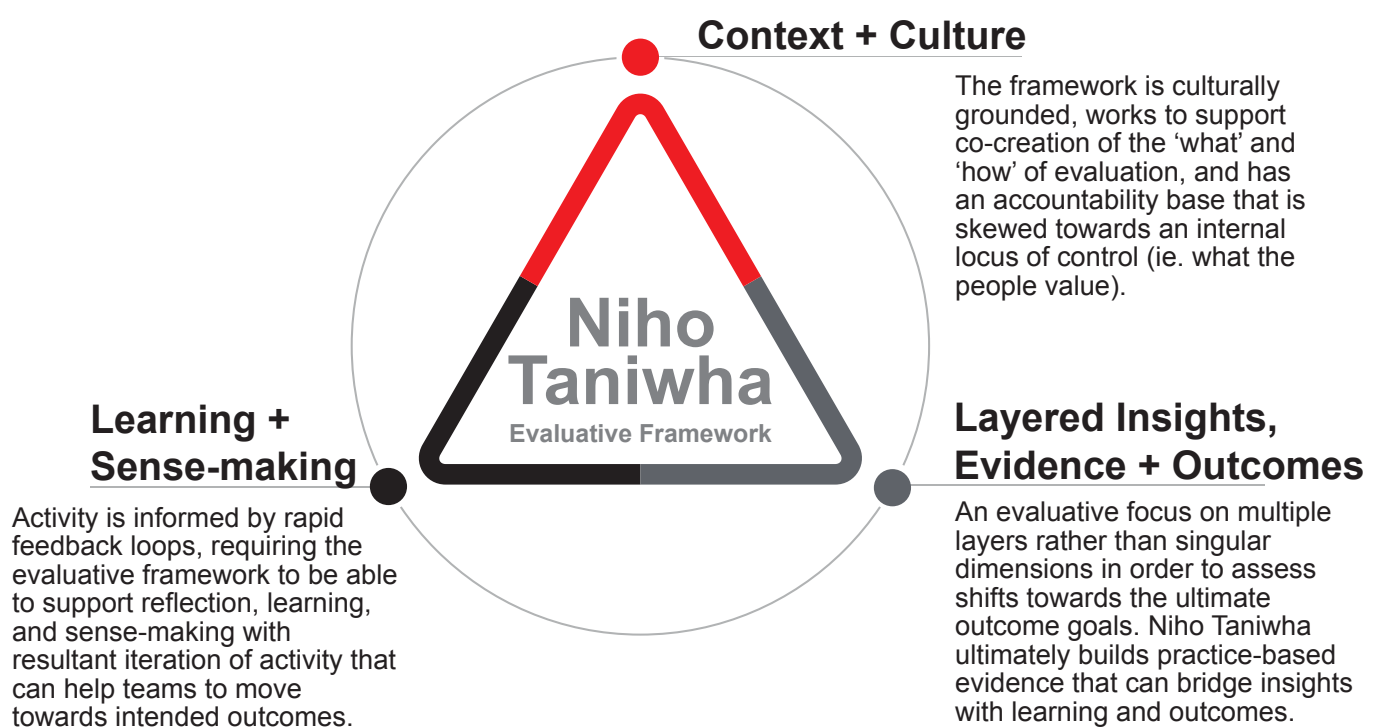

Context + Culture

The framework is culturally grounded, works to support co-creation of the 'what' and 'how' of evaluation, and has an accountability base that is skewed towards an internal locus of control (ie. what the people value).

Niho Taniwha
Evaluative Framework

Learning + Sense-making

Activity is informed by rapid feedback loops, requiring the evaluative framework to be able to support reflection, learning, and sense-making with resultant iteration of activity that can help teams to move towards intended outcomes.

Layered Insights, Evidence + Outcomes

An evaluative focus on multiple layers rather than singular dimensions in order to assess shifts towards the ultimate outcome goals. Niho Taniwha ultimately builds practice-based evidence that can bridge insights with learning and outcomes.

Figure 11: Features of Transformational Evaluative Frameworks that Niho Taniwha embodies

• **Learning + Sense-making orientation** - because TSI is working in a complex domain (looking at multiple intersecting challenges and focused on systems change rather than siloed individual shifts), causal relationships between factors will only be evident in retrospect, if at all. This does not, however, mean that activity is random. What it does mean is that activity needs to be informed by rapid feedback loops, requiring the evaluative framework to be able to support reflection, learning, and sense-making with resultant iteration of activity that can help teams to move towards intended outcomes. So while there are figures that can be (and in TSI's case, are being) collated at an output level, and a clear directionality towards outcomes, it is the learning along the way (and the reflection on and reporting of that learning) that is critical to the evaluative framework.

• **Layered insights + evidence** - Tracking transformational change requires an evaluative focus on multiple layers rather than singular dimensions in order to assess shifts towards the ultimate outcome goals. So, Niho Taniwha traces changes that happen for people and whānau, along with changes in interaction, organisation, institutions, structures and systems. It is the patterns of insights across the layers that together start to provide a picture of the transformation taking place, and that ultimately builds practice-based evidence.

Because Niho Taniwha is itself being developed and co-created, it is not yet possible to assess in detail its potential contribution to the work of TSI. However, early signs are very promising, both in terms of how rigorous the evaluative principles are, and the integrative learning potential of the platform.

Two of the three features of Niho Taniwha as a transformational evaluative framework deserve a little further analysis as part of the review. Below we highlight how they are being and could further be used to deepen the potential outcomes from the work itself.

Layered insights + outcomes
The layered nature of the insights that are captured by the evaluative framework support what is known about influencing transformational systems change. According to some of the most respected evaluators and researchers regionally and internationally (see for example, Patton, 2020), transformational evaluation requires a view of change that is not only centred on one level or perspective, but which is able to provide a multilayered understanding of what is changing, how it is changing and who is contributing to the change.

The potential for Niho Taniwha is that it enables such a layered approach to understanding both the goals of the changes towards which TSI is aiming to contribute, but also the levels and collaborations that are required to actually achieve the change (see figure 12).
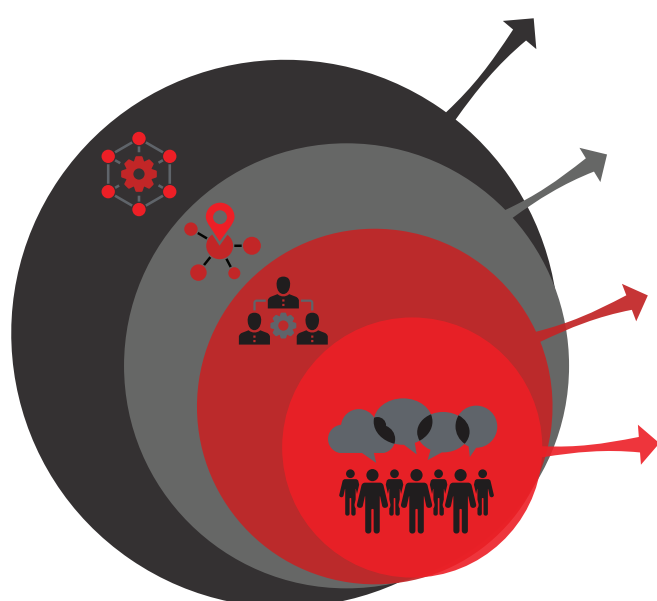
Institutions
Changes at institutional level - structures, policies, laws, resource flows.

Networks / Movements
Changes across levels, growth of collaboration + alliances between people + organisations - networked changes.

Organisations
Changes at organisational level, in culture, process, procedure + policy.

People + Interactions
Changes for people - whanau, community, workers, service providers. Changes in behaviour, mindset + relationship.

Figure 12: Layers of action, insight and outcomes are thought to be critical in any work that aims to create systems change - and yet, so many evaluative frameworks are still mono-dimensional.

As an example, in the education work that has been undertaken by TSI, the layers of work are clear. Within a broad vision of improving rangatahi engagement with school so that they transition to quality jobs in sunrise industries and experience personal and whānau prosperity, TSI is working with partners at the following levels:

• Micro level for individuals (eg. Improving access to ancestral knowledge via participation in the Māori-led Science in Schools – Rangatahi innovation program)
• Group level for whānau, Marae and schools (eg. Marae-based mātauranga Māori workshops exploring connections between ancestral knowledge and contemporary life)
• Ecosystem level (eg. growing and spreading ancestral knowledge across school systems through the Rangatahi innovation program)
• Community level for south and west Auckland (eg. Increasing the number of Māori and Pasifika rangatahi enrolling in science courses with potential to lead to quality work)
• Beyond Auckland (eg. Developing content for inclusion in the National curriculum).

In order to help external stakeholders to understand and engage with TSI, the development of a 'Theory of Transformation' at the level of TSI might help to articulate the intersection between the levels in which TSI is engaging, the various programs and projects and the transformational agenda held by TSI and their partners as a whole.

Towards Social R&D

In so much supposedly social impact work one of the key things that is missing is rigorous 'R&D' (research and development). So much of the work that is supposed to be generating impact is based on unchallenged assumptions and developed on the fly without reference to either people's realities or what is already known to work in particular contexts. TSI's work is a rare exception, and reviewing the work over time offers some important perspectives on what social R+D actually involves, and how this could, if applied more broadly, actually help us to build credible, verifiable evidence that is based in practice, in order to improve outcomes with and for whānau.

One of the consequences of a growth in using 'design methodologies' in the context of social innovation has been a focus on generating insights about (and in more effective cases, with) people, whānau and communities. While, if done well, this can provide a great foundation, it is not in and of itself, enough if we really want to improve outcomes. Too often the result of design process is an array of insights which are, at best, helpful 'in the moment' for providing immediate feedback that can identify where to start experiments. However, insights and experiments cannot, in themselves, generate sufficient evidence to underpin deeper and broader (ie. scaled, deep, up and out) shifts in practice. This is the challenge that has been taken up in TSI through the development of Niho Taniwha.

In examining the work focused on Tamariki Wellbeing over the past 3 years, the value of connecting a design approach, with an evaluative approach becomes evident. It represents the kind of rigorous, verifiable process that could be considered 'social R&D' (see figure 13).
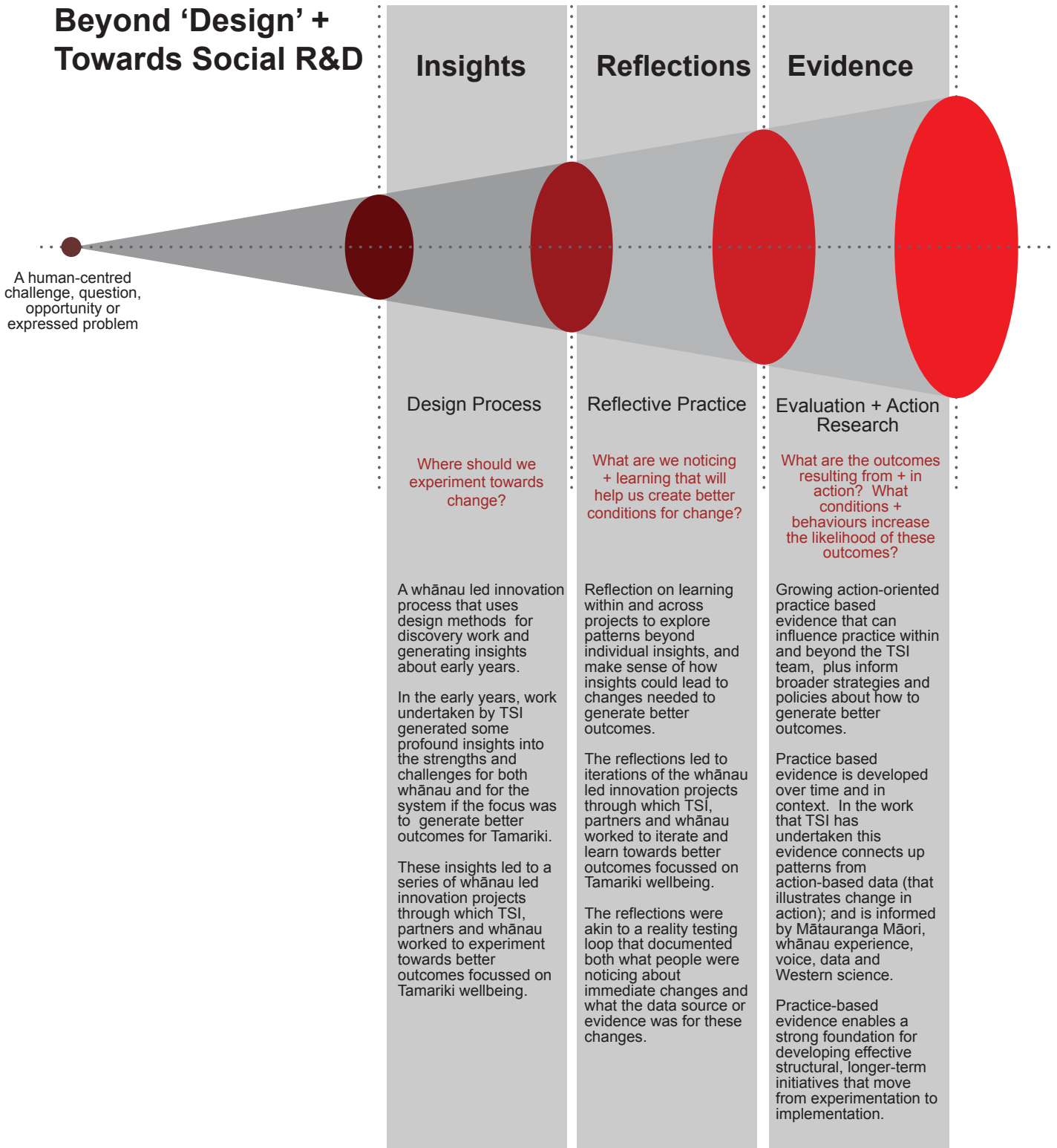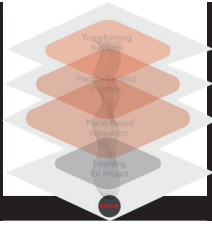
Beyond 'Design' + Towards Social R&D

Insights **Reflections** **Evidence**

A human-centred challenge, question, opportunity or expressed problem

Design Process

Where should we experiment towards change?

A whānau led innovation process that uses design methods for discovery work and generating insights about early years.

In the early years, work undertaken by TSI generated some profound insights into the strengths and challenges for both whānau and for the system if the focus was to generate better outcomes for Tamariki.

These insights led to a series of whānau led innovation projects through which TSI, partners and whānau worked to experiment towards better outcomes focussed on Tamariki wellbeing.

Reflective Practice

What are we noticing + learning that will help us create better conditions for change?

Reflection on learning within and across projects to explore patterns beyond individual insights, and make sense of how insights could lead to changes needed to generate better outcomes.

The reflections led to iterations of the whānau led innovation projects through which TSI, partners and whānau worked to iterate and learn towards better outcomes focussed on Tamariki wellbeing.

The reflections were akin to a reality testing loop that documented both what people were noticing about immediate changes and what the data source or evidence was for these changes.

Evaluation + Action Research

What are the outcomes resulting from + in action? What conditions + behaviours increase the likelihood of these outcomes?

Growing action-oriented practice based evidence that can influence practice within and beyond the TSI team, plus inform broader strategies and policies about how to generate better outcomes.

Practice based evidence is developed over time and in context. In the work that TSI has undertaken this evidence connects up patterns from action-based data (that illustrates change in action); and is informed by Mātauranga Māori, whānau experience, voice, data and Western science.

Practice-based evidence enables a strong foundation for developing effective structural, longer-term initiatives that move from experimentation to implementation.

Figure 13: Towards Social R&D - bridging insights from design, reflections and evidence to grow foundations for better outcomes

Flowing through all the dimensions of TSI's work, and underpinning each program, and the framing of the vision is a grounding in Culture. Since the last review this has been further strengthened, the diversity of TSI has been deepened across both south and west Auckland, and Culture in practice is evident in both team interactions and published resources. While sometimes this is not evident from the outside, the reviewers have been deeply impressed and inspired by the extent and the depth of cultural leadership and embeddedness across TSI.

Below we set out some of the key ways in which this has been expressed as a way of articulating what to us should inspire other initiatives that similarly seek to transform systems which have been built out of colonising histories (acknowledging that this is an outsider perspective, and respecting that decolonisation requires not only visible action, but deep reflection of this in mindset and mental model transformation):

• privileging tikanga/mātauranga that dictates the importance of "how we are" in the work as opposed to what TSI is doing, and that tikanga is both the means and the outcome, so cultural principles lead process and are key outcomes;

• the routine use of and respect for Te Reo Māori in publications and daily communications within and beyond the team;

• privileging an evolving framework that weaves together Manaakitanga (caring and nurturing for others) whānaungatanga (acknowledging the importance of connectedness) mana (acknowledging the inherent power and influence of whānau);

• using recruitment and selection processes to establish teams that reflect the communities in which they work;

• consistently maintaining the priority of whānau voices and whānau-centric transformation;

• weaving and equally valuing mātauranga (Māori knowledge systems), western science and design methods together in innovative ways to support sustainable socio-economic transformation;

• researching and documenting insights about how systems and workplaces could better respond to cultural contexts to improve outcomes (particularly for Māori and Pasifika Aucklanders);

• valuing te ao Māori concepts of the world to make the work and its complexity more understandable and able to better explain TSI's work, both internally and externally (for example, the naming process of Amotai gave a much stronger purpose to the work, as did naming their membership model; using te ao Māori concepts to understand international frameworks for Collaborative Innovation);

• daily practice of aroha (unconditional love and concern) when working with rangatahi in the Makerspace;

• respecting that adopting a relational approach means that once relationships are initiated they are genuine and enduring;

• structuring the Annual Report (2019) as a Whakatauki (way of giving insight into Māori thought) with four sections of content reflecting four Māori principles:

•"Tuia ki te rangi, tuia ki te whenua, tuia ki te moana" (Bound by the sky, land, sea and each other)

• "Tuia te here tangata" (and each other are the innate obligations of humankind)

• "Ka rongo te ao, ka rongo te po" (Our world waxes and wanes, contracts and expands)

• "Tihei Mauri Ora" (Be the change our world needs).

Beyond these ways of working, TSI is deliberately seeking to decolonize spaces, practices and structures, and simultaneously working towards indigenising knowledge systems and practices for systems innovation by valuing mātauranga alongside insights from lived experience and evidence gathered from scientific research.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The work TSI has done since the last review in 2017 is demonstrating their commitment to transformational innovation with whānau, in place and for systemic change.

The breadth, depth and integrity of the work is impressive, inspiring and visionary - and for anyone working to truly transform outcomes the work led by TSI should be held up as exemplary. There is, however, always a tension involved in highlighting work as 'exemplary' - particularly in contexts like New Zealand and Australia, where we experience a degree of reluctance to acknowledge the great (often expressed as 'tall poppy syndrome'). Further, often when an initiative is recognised the common response is that we should replicate and scale - without considering the fidelity and the integrity which actually makes the work great. So in concluding this review we wish to highlight three key opportunities for TSI in the next phase of their work.

Theory of Transformation

In the last review, one of the recommendations was to develop a Theory of Change for TSI. This was adopted - but in a way that actually developed a bespoke, culturally grounded methodology for tracking change and learning within and across the initiatives led by TSI.

Niho Taniwha, one of the two key learning frameworks within TSI is starting to demonstrate a way of tracking changes for whānau, in systems and for strategic learning. This has been recognised as a potentially significant example of how complex systems change can be evaluated.

The opportunity identified in this review is to develop a 'theory of transformation' for TSI as a whole that focusses on the broad principles that integrate and draw together the work as a whole. A 'Theory of Transformation':

> *"incorporates and integrates multiple theories of change operating at many levels that, knitted together, explain how major systems transformation occurs" (Quinn-Patton, 2019).*

Because of the complexity of TSI, a Theory of Transformation may provide a frame or scaffold to connect the diverse parts of the initiative together coherently, and may also articulate the two different types of learning needed to undertake this work.

Developing and fostering distributed leadership

The leadership that has guided TSI as a whole, and each of the parts of the initiative is both one of its greatest strengths, and also one of the biggest risks for TSI as so much depends on leadership that can balance innovation, complexity and diversity. The networked structure and the shared leadership approaches that have been innate to TSI could be further developed and highlighted as one of the key factors in creating conditions for the development of the work.

Making a distributed leadership model both more visible and more structural could mitigate risks over time as the team grows and deepens the work. The diversity of the team and the extraordinary skills of team members will, no doubt, mean that the work will continue to flourish - but highlighting the formal and informal leadership needed to ensure this, and developing some clear frameworks that highlight the skill involved in leading transformative innovation are likely to benefit both TSI itself and others keen to explore initiatives such as this.

Developing ways to innovate and incubate - while partnering with implementors

TSI's key strength is to grow better approaches, practices, structures and processes that can enable communities and whānau to realise their aspirations. As TSI's success grows, one of the challenges will be to ensure that there are ready partners who can take the next steps of implementing these better ways of working, rather than TSI becoming both innovator and implementor for the long-term. This is harder than it may seem - and is something that many innovation-focused agencies are grappling with.

What could assist is the development of the social R&D framework - and partnering with funders who are willing to use TSI's pioneering work in this space to test, stretch and innovate this framework with some of the initiatives TSI has worked on.

Inspirations from South and West Auckland to the World

The global pandemic has perhaps heightened the impressions that the reviewers have about the importance of TSI's work. Given the scale of the challenges ahead of us all as we face the economic consequences of COVID, but then as we confront the even more stark challenges ahead with climate change and loss of biodiversity, and all that means for prosperity and wellbeing, TSI can, we think, shine a light on some of the ways we could prepare and respond. Sometimes it is difficult for those close to innovations to truly see their potential and value.

Certainly in Australia we often look to innovations from the UK, Canada and the US to offer us glimpses of how we could approach challenges ahead. Yet, having reviewed many place-based innovation programs, initiatives, and investments around the world, we are hard pressed to see anything, anywhere that has the rigour, the vision and the extraordinary people (whānau, community members, team members, partners, funders) that make up TSI. It is not perfect - it is complex, it is a work in progress, it is human. And yet there are glimpses in this work that we should all take note of. Glimpses of what it is that could grow a new social contract; that could address the structural inequities that have persisted for too long; that could provide insights and evidence for creating better futures with and for people, places and our planet.

Thank you for the opportunity to review, to learn from and reflect on the work of TSI and to continue to be inspired by all you are doing, learning and sharing.

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About the Review + Reviewers

Purpose

The purpose of this review was to understand key strengths and impacts associated with TSI's work and to explore how these can be built on to respond to emerging challenges and opportunities for TSI and the people of south and west Auckland.

Team and approach

An appreciative review methodology was deliberately chosen as the lead researcher, Professor Ingrid Burkett has a high degree of familiarity with TSI's work having completed an earlier review in 2017. Professor Burkett is Co-Director of the Yunus Centre at Griffith University (Brisbane, Australia) and is internationally recognised for her work designing processes, products and knowledge to deepen social impact and facilitate social innovation in policy, community development, local economic development, disability and social investment fields. She led the foundation of social procurement in Australia and has written and researched extensively in this field.

Professor Burkett was supported in this review by Cathy Boorman, a senior research assistant and PhD student at the Yunus Centre. Cathy has significant experience leading social policy and service system reform programs in the State Government as well as managing and delivering community services in Local Government and non-Government organisations. Cathy is currently undertaking a PhD exploring how place-based initiatives in Australia, New Zealand and Canada mature in pursuit of population-level wellbeing.

Both reviewers have worked closely with many place-based and social innovation initiatives in Australia and elsewhere.

This deep and broad knowledge combined with the Yunus Centre's commitment to maximising impacts for people, places and the planet, meant that the review started from a position of valuing and seeking to better understand TSI's work in order to contribute to its continued evolution in pursuit of improved wellbeing for south and west Aucklanders.

Methodology

The review approach included:

- a detailed review of nineteen (19) published and eight (8) unpublished documents including: project reports; reviews; case studies; and process tools. Twenty-two of the documents reviewed were published by TSI (often in partnership with Government and non-government collaborators) and five (5) were published by external authors from academic and or consultancy backgrounds.

- Eighteen (18) interviews were undertaken to identify and explore perspectives regarding strengths, challenges and opportunities. Ten of these interviews were with TSI staff, one with a Senior Executive within Auckland Council and one with a Senior National Government employee.