Master's thesis

NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Department of Geography

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Knowledges of Development

Analyzing Local Development within Aotearoa New Zealand in The Globalization Era

Master's thesis in Globalisation and Sustainable Development
Supervisor: Dr. Elizabeth Barron
May 2023

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Abstract

Knowing is the first step in the act of becoming. Local communities around the world have developed forms of active knowledge embedded in local landscapes and ways of being. In Aotearoa New Zealand, local development organizations use these knowledges as tools to create change. The thesis presents a research project which investigates these knowledges of development and identifies 42 operational tools and 34 field tools using Thomas Hyllan Eriksen's classification of knowledge and the Community Economies Framework of J. K. Gibson-Graham.

The project centers on the case of Understorey, one of several projects to emerge from the rubble of post-quake Christchurch. This time of change in Christchurch has been complicated by crises of globalization, including climate change and a global pandemic. The tools and knowledge Understorey uses to practice development in Christchurch are informed by the local concept of *mauri ora* studied by the Huritanga research team. In partnership with this team, the project uses joint interviews to situate local knowledges within the knowledge landscapes of Aotearoa New Zealand.

All of these knowledges simultaneously exist within a larger discourse created through processes of globalization. These expert knowledges are wielded by powerful officials in expert knowledge systems to set development agenda at the national and international level. The project identifies three officials — Gerry Brownlee, Bob Parker, and Mark Solomon — working to reembed development knowledge into the local experience through the knowledge production cycle.

The thesis traces this cycle by sharing the stories of some of the knowledges identified in the research project. As these knowledges travel between local and expert

knowledge systems through the work of local and expert development actors, the city of Christchurch becomes transformed and new knowledges are produced. By sharing these stories and presenting them with respect to local *rangatiratanga*, the thesis discovers the tools that community organizations use to meet local goals and uncovers their relations to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems. It presents knowledge as discourse, as research guide, and as a tool. In the end, the thesis finds that creating knowledge and proactively adapting to change creates development.

Acknowledgement and Welcome

This thesis and research project are a result of many months of research and discussion with friends and colleagues from around the world. I want to make special mention of Dr. Kelly Dombroski and Dr. Amanda Yates from the Huritanga Research Team in Aotearoa New Zealand, who helped inspire this project, and Dr. Elizabeth Barron who helped bring everything together and kept this project on track.

I want to acknowledge the support of my parents, inlaws, and my husband, Nicholas Bunderson Toler. His patience and support kept my red thread from fraying at the edges and helped keep my wandering prose on solid ground. Our daily walks with Tlats'ux and Eskaaya helped me to keep things in perspective. I want to acknowledge their support and importance to the success of this work.

Finally, I am grateful to the many individuals who donated time and knowledge to this project. I am grateful to have had your words to keep me company through this long process, and I am sending out this thesis for you to use to further the work you have already accomplished in your communities.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.
Greetings and welcome to all, wherever and whenever you may be.

The *pepeha*, or introductory poem, on the next page is a traditional form of introduction in Aotearoa New Zealand. It situates the speaker in the 'landscapes of our ancestors' and in recognizing this relationship brings together many different ways of knowing (Yates et al., 2022).

Ko Timpanogos te maunga

Ko Utah Lake te moana

Ko Utah ahau

No Wītana, Tenemaka, Ingarangi, Kotiana ōku tūpana.

I te tau 2022, i haere ahau ki Aotearoa ki te ako.

Ko Jason Eric Bunderson Toler tōku Ingoa.

Ngā mihi ki ngā mana whenua o ngā rohe nei.

Timpanogos is my mountain

Utah Lake is my lake

I am from Utah,

and my ancestors come from

Sweden, Denmark, England, and Scotland.

In 2022, I went to Aotearoa to study and learn.

My name is Jason Eric Bunderson Toler

My greetings to the people with traditional authority there.

Timpanogos er mitt fjell

Utah Lake er min innsjø

Jeg kommer fra Utah

og forfedre mine kom fra

Sverige, Danmark, England, og Skottland.

I 2022, reiste jeg til Aotearoa for å studere og lære.

Mitt navn er Jason Eric Bunderson Toler

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List of Abbreviations

CBD	Central Business District
CCRP	Christchurch Central Recovery Plan
CEF	Community Economies Framework
CERA	Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority
DAC	Development Assistance Communities
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
LDO	Local Development Organization
MDG	Millenium Development Goal
NESH	The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities
NSD	Norwegian Centre for Research Data
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC COP	Conference of the Parties for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WEF	World Economic Forum
WRRP	Waitaki Resource Recovery Park

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 The Local Development Story

The winter of 2022 marked a period of change in *Ōtautahi* Christchurch, the largest city on Aotearoa New Zealand's South Island. For the first time since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, Christchurch Airport opened to visitors from outside the country. In addition, a changing climate brought a late winter snowfall for the first time in over 50 years. The winter of 2022 also marked the tenth anniversary of the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan, the government's response to the city-levelling quake of 2010/2011. The city's plan shifted from recovery-based to investment-based development as winter passed into spring. This new approach meant that many community projects key to the city's recovery were cut to make room for endeavours with more significant economic and financial grounding. One of these projects was The Green Lab's innovative coworking space, 'Understorey.'

The tale of Understorey officially ended on December 02, 2022. Rooted in disaster, crisis, and recovery, Understorey embodied the city's promise to build back better following the earthquake of 2010/2011. Understorey and their parent organization, The Green Lab, have shown adaptability and resiliency in Christchurch in the face of catastrophe. Since the Green Lab's founding in the aftermath of the quake, they have created projects which address not just disaster recovery but the challenges of climate change, the social justice movement, and the pandemic which began in

2020. Understorey tackles all of these together, taking a local and holistic approach to development rooted in the lived life experiences of its founders and members.

Stories like this are unique. Nevertheless, they are also present to varying degrees in all communities. Local community actors work together to fulfill the aspirations and goals of community members. However, these projects often operate unseen. Many are staffed by volunteers who agree with the organization's vision and are passionate about the work yet need help to spread awareness and put together advertising. They work together to meet the goals of the community in which they live, work, and play.

What are these community goals, and what tools do community organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand use to define them and achieve success? Just as significantly, how do these measurements affect the strategies and methods they use in practice? These questions form the first of two research questions for this thesis: *What tools do community organizations in New Zealand use to gauge local development needs and meet community goals?*

This thesis answers this question by looking within local and global knowledge regimes and spaces of power. By using the saga of Understorey to inform and guide this discussion, it becomes possible to identify perspectives and projects capable of meeting local development needs in Christchurch. In the case of Understorey, The Green Lab has put together a highly customized toolbox built from local resilience and perseverance lessons. These 'knowledge regimes' are informed not just from local ideas and knowledge but knowledges of all types gathered from around the globe (Eriksen, 2017).

To fully understand the Christchurch toolbox, however, it is necessary to look beyond the local perspective of Understorey. Throughout New Zealand, similar local community organizations have developed tools and programs tailor-made for their communities. From The Happiness House nestled in Queenstown's Southern Alps to the sweet potato fields of Kai Rotorua in the heart of the North Island, each organization has found ways to adapt and thrive within local society. Each of these community toolboxes is unique, and comparing their corollaries, commonalities, and

conclusions can illuminate new insights into the intricacies of local development practice. Placing these perspectives side by side and learning their stories can help us *abduct*, or learn through experience and juxtaposition, the answers to these questions. These experiences help us discover the conclusions these local community groups draw from the data they gather about development in their communities.

Finally, and crucially in the context of Understorey, any answer to these questions of local development is only complete with an understanding of the broader global context in which they are situated. Each community exists within a confusing array of interconnected and often normativizing forces embodied by council, government officials, business interests, researchers, and other community organizations. This network governs how communities interact not just in New Zealand but around the world. Scholars of globalization call this mesh 'Industrial-Modernism' (Yates, 2019, p. 7) or the 'Western development model' (Kothari et al., 2019). Experts within this system of knowledge approach development from a different perspective. For this reason, this thesis orients the research question by asking: *How do local agendas relate to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems?*.

In summary, this thesis looks at the tools local organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand use and studies their relation to those used by expert actors. This thesis answers two questions: **What tools do community organizations in New Zealand use to gauge local development needs and meet community goals? Furthermore, how do their agendas relate to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems?** Using the case of Understorey, this thesis shows how these tools encouraged locals to invest enormous amounts of time and effort into an organization seen as vital to the sustainable economic future of the city. At the same time, the thesis shares expert perspectives on the development transition in Christchurch, which suggest Understorey struggles to provide a concrete return on investment. For these officials, the city was better served by phasing out the project so council funds could be reinvested elsewhere. In this case, and the case of local development in general, it is crucial to take our analysis one step further to discover why these systems disagree and how knowledge is produced in *Ōtautahi* Christchurch.

1.2 Understorey by The Green Lab

Throughout this discourse, we follow the story of a coworking project named Understorey run by the Green Lab, a Local Development Organization (LDO) in Christchurch, New Zealand. In the words of Khye Hitchcock, The Green Lab project leader, "Understorey [tuatoru] is a community, events, co-working, and collaboration space that pops up in vacant spaces in the heart of Ōtautahi Christchurch" (Hitchcock, 2019). This project encapsulates the Green Lab's approach to development following the 2010/2011 Christchurch quake. Originally called 'Greening the Rubble,' Green Lab focuses on creating "urban green spaces that support strong social connections and promote wellbeing in Ōtautahi Christchurch" (Dombroski et al., 2022). These places are mobile, dynamic, and responsive. The Understorey is one of many projects The Green Lab runs, and Understorey has undergone several phases at different locations. The third and final installation of the Understorey coworking project was installed in the Welder community space in downtown Christchurch. Last year, I visited the Welder and met the Green Lab team running the project.

While there, I learned about the many aspects of the Understorey space. For many, Understorey is an affordable working space with internet, printers, and meeting spaces focusing on carbon-neutral and socially inclusive operations. I was able to work there for several months in the Winter of 2022 and used this space not just for work but to build connections in the city. Understorey's low costs brought people in from all walks of life, and for the Green Lab, profit plays second-fiddle to "community, wellbeing and environmental sustainability" (Dombroski et al., 2022).

Furthermore, their location is rooted in a clear concept of place. Hitchcock and their partner both have ties to *pakeha*, foreign settlers primarily from Europe, and *tanata whenua*, people with multi-generational ties to the land extending back centuries. Understorey uses both *pakeha* and *māori* concepts to ground itself in the local community called Christchurch by *pakeha* and *Ōtautahi* by *tanta whenua*. Their foundational *kaupapa*, similar to a mission statement, seeks to learn from nature and is constantly evolving as the space is co-created through community participation.

Understorey also serves as a social gathering site for Queer Games Night. Members

of the LGBTQ+ community in *Ōtautahi* Christchurch play a large part in the daily operation of Understorey and many of The Green Lab's projects throughout the city. The site also serves as a hub for green knowledge, with events organized at Understorey to work in local community gardens, share seeds and know-how, and discuss climate-conscious work in the city. Understorey is stuffed full of plants, trees, and fish, all of which are cared for by The Green Lab volunteers and can be sold and cycled through the community in a local exchange system.

The site works on a system of needs-based pricing, with payment from each according to ability and shared according to need. While at Understorey, I interacted with a wide diversity of community members, including volunteer organizers, small business owners, and high school students. It is easy to see the links that Understorey forges throughout the community, and it has become an integral part of local identity and practice.

Their success in the community was also supported by Christchurch city council. As part of the Build Back Better initiative, council funded several projects around the city to save their community. The quake nearly levelled central Christchurch and made large suburban areas throughout the city uninhabitable. Thousands fled the city in those first difficult years after the event. An organization called 'Life in Vacant Spaces' (LIVs) documented the efforts of local community members, including The Green Lab, to bring life back to the city. Many of these projects were made possible through a massive development scheme by council and community members.

However, as recovery moved from the reconstruction to the improvement stage, funding began to be redirected following more traditional investment and development patterns (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. 99). Understorey's financing agreement was predicated on a move towards self-sustained community funding. The agreement required more detailed reporting of their expenses and operations within a framework provided by council. In November 2022, council decided that their investments were no longer justified under the council framework. Through personal communication, I was told that local community members and the owners of the Welder community site offered to help partially cover the costs of continuing Understory's operation. However, this support covered less than 25% of

the costs previously covered by council funding. After a discussion with the community, The Green Lab decided to discontinue the project and focus on preserving those still supported by the council.

1.3 Research Overview

My research project, 'Development Knowledges of Local Community Organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand,' focuses on a subset of LDOs selected from around New Zealand, including Understorey. Each LDO was interviewed to learn about their work, values, and mission. The project aims to discover the tools and strategies used by LDOs and relate them to agendas set by the government and other expert knowledge holders within expert knowledge systems. In addition to answering the research question, this project helps us discover why Understorey was shut down.

The research for this project was carried out in partnership with the *Huritanga* Research Team over several months at the end of 2022. *Huritanga*, or *Huritanga mo te mauri-ora*, is one of four research teams funded by the national government to address one of New Zealand's eleven science challenges: Building Better Homes, Towns, and Cities. My goals for this project and the goals of the *Huritanga* team align in several respects.

Huritanga mo te mauri-ora translates roughly to 'change for holistic wellbeing' and encapsulates the local concept of holistic systems change. *Mauri-ora* is a term used in Aotearoa ('New Zealand' in *te reo*) to refer to holistic wellbeing, from *ora* 'life, health, and wellbeing' and *mauri* an 'interpenetrating life-field' (Yates, 2019, p. 6). My research findings focus on discovering evidence for how *mauri ora* surfaces in the local knowledges of Aotearoa New Zealand. The team bridges local knowledge systems and the formative or normative knowledge behind the council governance system by bringing this term into a National Science Challenge context. I am researching both perspectives in this paper and extensively use the research carried out by *Huritanga* team members.

Data for this project was gathered through a series of unstructured interviews con-

ducted across New Zealand by myself and other team members. I also use participant observation to reflect on my experience living with local community members and published works created by the *Huritanga* team and related groups.

These sources have been compiled into a research corpus and coded for meaning and context. This coding allows me to conduct a brief discourse analysis of this corpus to identify primary tools and strategies used by LDOs throughout New Zealand. I analyze this corpus using the Community Economies Framework and knowledge frameworks introduced throughout the thesis. My analysis focuses on learning by abduction and is presented to make it accessible to community members wishing to incorporate this research back into the community. I isolate how different actions naturally arise from these interpretations and help to inform development practice worldwide.

1.4 Knowledge as a Framework

Using the knowledges gathered during the this project's research phase, I construct a framework to answer the two central research questions presented near the beginning of this Introduction. First, to lay the groundwork for understanding the knowledge systems at the heart of this question, I briefly introduce global discourses of development in Chapter 2. One of these discourses is the Community Economies Framework (CEF) by Gibson-Graham (2013). The CEF gives us the vocabulary and means to understand how community actors create local discourse by focusing on community economies and making space for local perspectives and values that challenge global norms. I also share some of the many local development discourses in Aotearoa New Zealand.

With these tools in hand, I present my study's methodology and ethical considerations in Chapter 3. Many of these are taken from Hay and Cope (2021) and include semi-structured interviews and discourse analysis. I also use this chapter to position myself and my research and guide the conversation around my findings.

Using this methodology and building upon the bedrock of development discourse,

I bring everything together in Chapters 4 and 5. First, I formally introduce the project and present a code book informed by knowledges and discourses of development. I also reflect on my research experience and my position within the knowledge production space. Second, I present my findings and analysis as an informal *kōrero*, or discussion. I do this to make the project approachable from a local perspective and to offer this knowledge back to the community. This chapter also begins to answer the research question and presents a list of development tools which surfaced during my research project and interviews. These tools include both development knowledges and strategy and help LDOs operate as an organization and work in the field. I then relate these knowledges to the tools and strategies used by three expert officials in Christchurch: Gerry Brownlee, Bob Parker, and Mark Solomon. Their positions are outlined in the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan and the Shape Your Place Toolkit.

I also introduce some of the various community development organizations in New Zealand. The various local community actors, people, places, and life experiences are shared with as much fidelity as possible. Their values and perspectives on development are used to build an understanding of the various tools they use to direct their efforts, focusing mainly on the case of Understorey in Christchurch. I want to encourage the abduction of new perspectives on development in our discussion by moving to a discussion on development in the era of globalization. By placing these discussions back-to-back and presenting both as faithfully as possible with their particular system of knowledge, I draw out several interesting observations about how we see development work and call into question some of our most basic assumptions about how we live our lives.

All of this helps me answer the second question in Chapter 6, which relies on a wealth of expert knowledges about development to construct a model of the knowledge production cycle. In this chapter, I also show how knowledge also serves to limit the scope of this study. While I draw on research conducted throughout New Zealand and abroad, my focus centers on the case of Understorey by The Green Lab and the knowledges they share. I trace the flow of knowledge through the knowledge production cycle and discuss Understorey's role in that process.

Finally, I summarize my findings, discussion, and the knowledges of this thesis in Chapter 7. My analysis uses Understorey to speak to salient issues in the interactive space between local and global development narratives. In the process, we learn how to identify how these interactions happen. I end by looking at the implications of these findings for normative development practice globally and the implications within the lives of local development actors in Aotearoa New Zealand. Finally, my concluding remarks reflect on my position as a researcher within this globalized framework and present a new approach to understanding development outcomes in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad.

Chapter 2

Global Discourses on Development

2.1 Knowledges of Development

"'Development' is a plastic word, an empty term with positive signification" (Kothari et al., 2019, p. xiii). Actors around the globe have each adapted the word according to situation and context. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, defines the goal of development within the context of sustainability as a holistic way to address "a confluence of crises that threaten the very survival of humanity" (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2021). Wolfgang Sachs, editor of *Pluriverse: A Post Development Dictionary*, defines development in a colonial context as a "powerful ruler over nations ... the geopolitical programme of the post-colonial era". (Kothari et al., 2019, p. xi). From the perspective of the small town of Oamaru, New Zealand, Waitaki Resource Recovery Park (WRRP) views development as a way of building capacity at the park. Development includes not just resource recovery but the 'recovery of people.' In their words, "we build them up so that they are capable [and] able to move into full-time employment" (full interview transcripts are presented in Appendix A). Development includes teaching literacy skills, culinary skills, and time management at WRRP.

Each development discourse highlights a different lived-life experience and world-view, intersecting development and economic, environmental, and social domains.

Eriksen (2017) introduces a sound heuristic method for organizing these discourses into spheres of 'local (or experience-based) knowledge' and 'expert knowledge.' Building off of Scott (1999), Escobar (1995), and Antonio Gramsci (1971), Eriksen argues that knowledge is utilized differently by different actors in development contexts, and Gibson-Graham (1996) examines these knowledges from a post-structuralist perspective. Knowledge structures like the economy are "embedded in and [give] shape to other aspects of social life" (Gibson-Graham, 1996, p. 98). Eriksen builds upon this notion of *embeddedness* and uses the concept to help define and differentiate local 'concrete' knowledges from expert 'abstract' knowledges. Eriksen and Campbell call these expert knowledges *disembedded*, or extracted from the local context through "the contribution of the state (along with markets and NGOs)" (Eriksen, 2017, p. 22). Scott (1999) refers to this type of state-extracted knowledge as 'high modernism' and argues, along with Latour and Porter (1993), that expert knowledge holders use these knowledges to create a fictional divide between 'modern' and 'traditional' society. These types of expert knowledge systems are often *hegemonic*, near systems of power, and the nexus of knowledge and power helps explain why "abstract expert knowledge usually overrules local, partially embodied knowledge" (Eriksen, 2019, p. 12).

This embedding concept presents us with a problem. Post-structuralist views of knowledge, such as the Community Economies Framework introduced later in this chapter, rely on an inextricable link between knowledge, time, and space (Gibson-Graham, 2013). However, Eriksen (2017) defines expert knowledge, the same knowledge used to support the structures that post-structuralists critique, as disembedded from that same context. Understanding how knowledges are created, how they transfer between local and expert knowledge domains, and how knowledge informs local practice is at the heart of the research question. To examine these concepts in the context of Understorey, we must first discover how scholars like Eriksen and Gibson-Graham frame these knowledges and how to recognize them in practice.

To investigate different discourses of development, I first examine various expert knowledges around development with a focus on the UN Sustainable Development Report (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2021), the

Planetary Boundaries framework (Rockström et al., 2009), and academic actors across a wide range of disciplines. Then I show how these voices and the conflicts they create are a closed ecosystem of knowledge with a broad scope (Eriksen, 2017).

To contrast these knowledges, I have chosen to use the Community Economies Framework by Gibson-Graham (2013). I introduce this framework and identify four key pillars which support community economies and help to embed the theory within local knowledge systems. Instead of forming a closed ecosystem, the Community Economies Framework opens up the theoretical space to variegated local practices worldwide. Throughout the summary of both systems, I focus on the embeddedness, or disembeddedness, of development solutions. I argue that some development frameworks attempt to enact local change without leaving the confines of the expert knowledge ecosystem. In contrast, others construct theory to allow for locally embedded knowledges to take root and access power systems usually kept out of reach.

Finally, to bring these forms together, I discuss how expert and local knowledges surface in New Zealand. I draw from Yates et al. (2022) and Yates (2019) produced by leading researchers in the *Huritanga* team. In my research, I encountered various local identities, including *Māori*, immigrant and *Pakeha*, and many more. I focus on how these different actors embody different forms of development knowledge and how their actions shape the knowledge ecology of the islands. The Aotearoa New Zealand perspective shows how understanding the global development problem requires looking beyond the confines of the 'all-encompassing' expert frame and into the embedded foundation upon which it rests.

2.2 Expert Development Knowledges

In general, development is seen by official international actors as an economic affair. These international actors include regional and national politicians, transnational and multinational business leaders, researchers, academics, and others. Discourses of development generated by these actors are classified as 'expert knowledges' (Eriksen,

2019). Many of these knowledges are formulated at international conferences and summits, often with a particular theme or focus. For instance, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP UNFCCC), held annually by the UN since 1995, focuses primarily on energy and emissions policy and developing sustainable development initiatives. In Davos, the World Economic Forum (WEF) hosts an annual conference of primarily private stakeholders to promote collaboration around important 'levers' in order to "address the current challenges while at the same time setting them against the backdrop of attendant system transformation imperatives" (WEF: World Economic Forum, 2023). In practice, this means promoting investment and continued economic growth worldwide, ideally governing this investment further to promote international cooperation, peace, and global development.

There is significant debate within these forums regarding the role of public and private investment and business practice in international development. From this perspective, development is an outcome of investment by individuals, corporations, and governments and must therefore be governed so that this development happens equitably and sustainably. In the January 2023 Davos conference, the Secretary General of the UN, António Guterres, presents one version of this development discourse.

> "We learned last week that certain fossil fuel producers were fully aware in the 1970s that their core product was baking our planet. Just like the tobacco industry, they rode rough-shod over their own science. Big Oil peddled the big lie. And, like the tobacco industry, those responsible must be held to account. Today, fossil fuel producers and their enablers are still racing to expand production, knowing full well that their business model is inconsistent with human survival.
> [Continued division] could cut global GDP by a whopping $1.4 trillion. . . The North-South divide is deepening. . . over a morally bankrupt financial system in which systemic inequalities are amplifying societal inequalities. . . We need to bridge all these divides and restore trust. . . by reforming and building fairness into the global financial system."

(Guterres, 2023)

Here we see many of the defining elements of a disembedded expert-level discourse. The global knowledge space is divided into several warring divisions: the 'North' vs. the 'South,' or the 'Big Oil' business model vs. the model of 'human survival.' Holding it all together is the 'global financial system,' which must be controlled through reform and transformative holistic development.

The UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are purported to do just that. These goals are the governing tools of the international development trade. In their most recent report, Guterres argues that these goals can also address the disastrous effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, the War in Ukraine, the climate emergency, and ongoing food, energy, humanitarian, and refugee crises. Zhenmin calls this a 'roadmap for survival' and argues that the SDGs present clear solutions to these problems (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2022).

The SDGs are not the only solution presented within the expert knowledge ecosystem but are among the most prestigious. This prestige gives the SDGs clout, making them more likely to be adopted by local powerholders in local development agendas. Another well-known solution-oriented discourse is the 'Planetary Boundaries' framework, which uses many of the same techniques as the SDGs to build an alternative 'roadmap for survival' (Rockström et al., 2009). In this case, the roadmap explicitly addresses the climate crisis and argues that a safe and just future for humanity rests on keeping our developmental activities within specific planetary boundaries.

Both approaches rely on what James Scott calls 'High-Modernist' thinking (Scott, 1999). A high-modernist approach uses broad-based measuring techniques to capture information on demography, the environment, the economy, and society to shape our world to a specific model or plan. Each plan is different. In the case of the SDGs, this plan involves reducing wage-based poverty, increasing formal education, equalizing social participation, and coordinating our response to global crises. In the Planetary Boundaries Framework, building an ideal society requires reducing CO2 emissions, managing freshwater use, maintaining a balance in the atmosphere, and meeting a base level of societal needs.

Each of these goals works towards achieving a static set of predetermined conditions. There are many such projects within the expert knowledge space. These projects are often responsible for the spread of specific knowledge regimes around the world. For example, following the collapse of the USSR in the late twentieth century, the United States used what John Williamson (1989) called the 'Washington Consensus' to spread neoliberal development practices worldwide. As a culturally and politically influential state, the United States can influence the actions of local actors by embracing specific policies and reinforcing them with economic incentives and structural adjustment programs (SAPs). In this way, disembedded expert knowledge becomes re-embedded into specific local environments.

There are, of course, countless more discourses within this space that have shaped modern development practice. I want to mention only a few of the more recent developments here. Beginning in 1960, scholars such as W.W. Rostow began building early modernist development frameworks, such as the 'five stages of growth,' which aimed to help states develop along a one-dimensional axis from 'traditional' to 'modern.' Other scholars, such as John Friedmann, Andre Gunder Frank, and Immanuel Wallerstein, challenged this view by introducing dependency theories. In this view, the wealth of core states depends on systems of extraction and poverty within peripheral states, precluding the possibility of linear modernist development. When the Cold War ended in the 1990s, Francis Fukuyama declared the 'end of history' as the liberal democracy of Europe and the United States seemingly triumphed over the Marxist-Leninist development systems of the Soviet Union. This claim was disputed by post-structuralists and feminists like Gibson-Graham, who argued against the structural narrative present in neoliberal and capitalist practice (Gibson-Graham, 1996).

Scholars today work to position themselves in this developmental milieu. Within the Huritanga research team, Dr. Dombroski and Dr. Yates have published work that uses these concepts to expand on local ideas of wellbeing and place (Yates, 2019; Yates et al., 2022). This system is complex and continually evolving, and we must recognize this system as incomplete. Expert knowledge holders exist within a disembedded system of theory and counter-theory, of grand systems and universal

conjectures. However, in practice, how do these holistic approaches hold up when applied within a locally embedded framework of experiential knowledge? In the next section, I introduce the Community Economies Framework, which provides one perspective (Gibson-Graham, 2013). Later, my research project with Understorey provides another. In times of local crisis, when the time-honoured ways of local knowledge holders fail in the face of a changing climate or a global pandemic, these perspectives focus on how local actors turn to these expert knowledge systems to provide a way forward.

2.3 The Community Economies Framework

Something has happened to the economy, and J. K. Gibson-Graham, Jenny Cameron, and Stephen Healy believe it is high time we took it back. In their book 'Take Back the Economy: an ethical guide for transforming communities,' they present their plan for transitioning to a community-based economy called the Community Economies Framework (CEF). The framework can be understood through its entrenchment within alternative development methodology and community actors' actualization of certain fundamental principles. In this view, it is not enough to focus only on how economic models are dependent on current hegemonic, neoliberal, or 'western' power structures; it is also necessary to 'reorient' towards the knowledges and needs developed in local contexts. It is a 'postcolonial theory' in the terminology of Young (2003) as it involves a "conceptual reorientation towards the perspectives of knowledges, as well as needs, developed outside the west" (Young, 2003, pp. 4, 6).

Gibson-Graham's Community Economies Framework embraces this postcolonial tradition by pulling the perspective of holistic development away from a western lens and embedding it within non-western experiences. It also focuses on structures of knowledge and power within the economy, specifically from the perspective of the *subaltern* social groups which have been displaced from systems of power (Hay & Cope, 2021). By embracing knowledges from the pluriversal space, the Community Economies Framework acts as a trellis which local knowledges can use to climb into spaces of power.

Unlike the grand normativizing constructs of closed expert systems, open systems argue that no universal system exists for describing the local world. Instead, the local world exists within what Kothari et al. (2019) call a 'pluriversal' system. This *pluriverse* is a "broad transcultural compilation of concrete concepts, worldviews, and practices from around the world, challenging the modernist ontology of universalism in favour of a multiplicity of possible worlds (Kothari et al., 2019, p. xvii). The framework acts as an expert knowledge frame, yet it is one in which conflicting local viewpoints, which Eriksen calls 'clashing scales,' are allowed to exist.

To take back the economy, we need to broaden our economic thinking to accept alternative means of production. J. K. Gibson-Graham argues that the economic 'machine' was never genuinely embedded in local practice. Instead, the economy is nothing more than a creation of expert knowledge systems built for a particular time and place and separated from the reality of production. The "economist-operators" and "financiers ... tasked with oiling and priming its key valves and spigots" (Gibson-Graham, 2013, p. 3) feel confident in their regulation of global capital flows. However, despite this confidence in the model, the impacts on migration, natural resources, the environment, and wealth inequality are impossible to control or predict, suggesting the system is larger and more complex than we expect.

From this point of departure, the Community Economies Framework takes off. Understanding that the modern economy is only a model created to comprehend increasingly globalized production systems, the CEF argues that this system is an abstraction of methods built for a specific time and place. Therefore, it is incompatible with continually evolving practices embedded in other knowledge systems, including the contemporary economy we live in today. Moreover, from Eriksen's perspective, re-embedding this system into our communities creates conflict with economic knowledges already present in local space. Either way, both agree that to take back our collective economies and integrate them into local knowledge systems, we must first step back and look at things from a new perspective. And the best place to start this discovery process is from within our communities.

2.3.1 The Pillars of Community Economies

Gibson-Graham (2013) asks us to 'take back' work, business, property, markets, and finance. While all five are present in the saga of Understorey, the work of this LDO focuses primarily on four: *work*, *business*, *property* and *finance*. I use these four pillars to help classify the development knowledge I discover in my study. As part of the discovery process, the Community Economies Framework helps us define these concepts through observation from real-world experiences. While we can make some natural extensions of traditional economic concepts into a community-oriented space, others require re-imagining to embed our abstract understanding and make the terms concrete, local, and relatable. Taking back the economy requires thinking outside the economic box.

Work is the part of the day in which we make our living (Gibson-Graham, 2013). For many people, work forms part of their identity. In the formal economy, work is often limited to nine-to-five income-based labour. However, work also includes home-making, parenting, scavenging, personal education, and other parts of the informal economy (Gibson-Graham, 2013). The balance between the formal and informal economy is represented in the CEF as an iceberg (see Figure 2.1). One crucial part of each community involves balancing paid labour and everyday life. The boundary between these two is often fuzzy; work-life and home life are conflated into a singular lived experience for many economies. We can measure this balance by mapping our day onto a 24-hour clock and tracking our daily interactions. The habits we form from day to day have a significant impact on our local community and environment.

Business represents the organization of various goods and services in the community and the labour used to produce them. As with work, businesses can exist as formal entities or informal associations (Gibson-Graham, 2013). The CEF approaches business from the worker's perspective and asks questions like: 'How long does it take the worker to produce the value of their income?' or 'How is the surplus value allocated?'. Where we draw the line, whether in a private business or community-owned cooperative, determines development outcomes within our communities.

Property encompasses all the things we interact with or use in our lives (Gibson-

Figure 2.1: Diverse Economies Iceberg by Community Economies Collective is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. (Community Economies Collective, 2022)

Graham, 2013). Many of these are tangible, and some we own exclusively. Others, like water rights, electricity, and internet access, are less tangible, and public institutions often own infrastructure. Depending on where we live, state or local community organizations may collectively own many important properties like schools, roads, and hospitals. Commoning, or creating or reinforcing public assets, is integral to the CEF (Gibson-Graham, 2013). Community economies often rely on formal or informal common assets accumulated through generational ownership or public acquisition.

Finance within a community economy extends to much more than just dollars and cents. A budget, on a fundamental level, is simply a way to manage expectations (Hillhouse, 2023). Community-level powers of savings management, taxation, debt, and investment are often reserved for local government. However, these financial tools are only proxies. Actual return on investment is determined by decisions made by all community members affecting cultural preservation, well-being, health, security, and belonging. The Community Economies Return on Investment model (CEROI, Figure 2.2) looks at collective actions taken by community members to manage risk and investment in their societies through local activities. Actions include neighbourhood clean-up events to protect the local environment, establishing coops, community center activities, and other cooperative events. CEROI allows us to turn a budget sheet of dollars and cents into a holistic way of managing expectations across the entire spectrum of well-being investment.

These four pillars of finance, property, business, and work are only part of the CEF. Local markets, where and how we gather and distribute resources, efforts to include diverse human and more-than-human[1] community members, and other interrelated processes all play a vital role in the economy of our communities. The CEF helps us take back these vital concepts by redefining them from the perspective of our local knowledge systems. As Gibson-Graham writes, "There is no one right answer; rather, there is a diversity of answers. The lesson continues with prioritizing choices concerning these ethical concerns that connect our habits to the preservation and continuity of our habitat" (Gibson-Graham, 2013, p. 197)

[1]More-than-human is an approach to alternative development that focuses on the mutually dependent relationship between humans and the environment (Mcgregor & Alam, 2022)

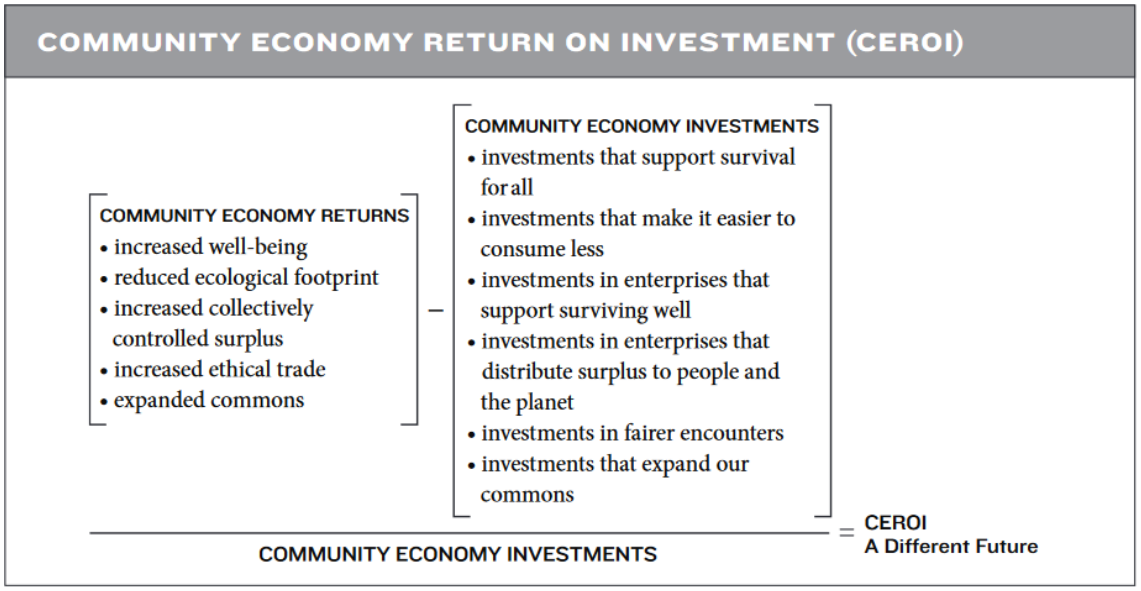

Figure 2.2: Community Return on Investment model (CEROI), taken from Gibson-Graham (2013)

2.4 Development Knowledges of Aotearoa New Zealand

The story of Aotearoa is perhaps best told by Gavin Bishop in his book, 'Aotearoa, The New Zealand Story,' which won Children's Book of the Year in 2018. The story begins with the asteroid impact of the Cretaceous and the spread of people and their gods throughout the Pacific. Next, he tells how Māui fished up the North Island, *Te Ika-a-Māui*, from his South Island canoe, *Te Waka-a-Māui*. People of all sorts came to the islands, first from *Hawaiki* and then, later, from Europe. They hunted the local birds and sea life and clothed *Aotearoa* with names. The Treaty of Waitangi was signed between the *Māori* and *Pakeha* in 1840. Still, divisions among *Māori* tribes and between *Pakeha* and *Māori*, worsened by the introduction of the musket, devastated the population of the islands. Eventually, after the World Wars and the introduction of new globalized trade, transport, and commerce systems, New Zealand became a land of many customs, cultures, and peoples. Today, the government and people of Aotearoa New Zealand have begun to develop a system of care for the environment and the historic lifestyles of both *Pakeha* and *Māori* in order to save what endemic plants and animals remain and honour the treaties foundational to their shared history (Bishop, 2017).

Through these shared experiences, the peoples of Aotearoa New Zealand have developed knowledges particular to this isolated corner of the world yet highly responsive to global systems of westernization, colonization, and modernization. From these knowledges, we can learn both consequences and responses to mixing endemic and foreign flora and fauna, promoting globalized production systems, and managing settler-colonial and indigenous relations. Each of these issues represents a 'clash of scales' between expert and local systems of knowledge faced by people worldwide. These New Zealand knowledges of environment, production, and society are at the heart of *mauri ora*. We can use them to locate knowledges of development in Aotearoa New Zealand.

One of the oldest knowledges of developing the local environment evolved around the cultivation of *Kūmara*, or sweet potato. The *Kūmara* is the primary crop traditionally grown by *Māori* in Aotearoa. Hundreds of varieties were developed, each uniquely situated for particular growing conditions and dietary needs. However, in the 1940s-50s, black rot introduced from abroad devastated nearly all *Kūmara* crops across the North Island. Mr. and Ms. Gock, immigrant *Kūmara* farmers from China, developed a rot-resistant strain of this sweet potato. Instead of patenting the crop, they shared their strain freely with all the *Māori* and *Pakeha* farmers of the island. This story shows us the importance of community and inclusion in creating environmental knowledge in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is evidence of a developmental model highly adaptive to environmental challenges.

New Zealand's responses to the challenges of normative production systems in the islands are exemplified by the Waitaki Resource Recovery Plant (WRRP) in Oamaru. They have developed knowledge of local recycling methods across the entire production spectrum. In an interview conducted by the *Huritanga* research team, we learned how the islands historically relied on shipping waste abroad, resulting in prohibitive costs leading to dumping and pollution. In order to address this issue, WRRP gathers household, commercial, agricultural, and some industrial wastes and processes the waste on-site. They fix furniture, sell fertilizer and green waste, operate a second-hand shop, and bale everything from plastics to tetrapak, which can then be sent to local industrial sites for reprocessing. As a result, WRRP manages

to recycle 95% of waste locally within New Zealand (Appendix A T.2). Many similar businesses and production facilities throughout New Zealand embrace local production systems while allowing for responsible international trade. Integrating the local within the global while making room for the wide variety of practices among New Zealanders is one of many developmental knowledges on the islands.

Social knowledges, especially within academia and government, have long been divided into two domains: indigenous *Māori* and settler-colonial *Pakeha*. Bringing these together has proven extremely difficult, with the government addressing unrest arising from a period of *Pakeha* preeminence by attempting to honour the Treaty of Waitangi. Unfortunately, the expert knowledge toolbox available to the government has little to offer for such an endeavour. To address this, they have tasked researchers like the *Huritanga* Team to develop a governance framework which *Māori* scholar Amanda Yates has called the "Mauri Ora Compass" (Yates, 2019) (Figure 2.3).

Mauri Ora refers to the 'interpenetrating life-field' of 'life, health, and wellbeing' (Yates, 2019, p. 6). It incorporates aspects of the Planetary Boundaries framework and traditional *Māori* practice. Yates et al. (2022) expand on the concept of wellbeing governance to synthesize wellbeing in New Zealand with local and expert knowledges around the world. The Mauri Ora Compass incorporates these knowledges holistically, as demonstrated by the author's use of an introductory *pepeha* in the published text. These poems, shared in both English and *te Reo*, are familiar in *Māori* discourse and situate the author in "the landscapes of our ancestors". Such grounding is an integral part of *Mauri Ora* knowledge and is one of many social development knowledges in Aotearoa New Zealand. I use the Mauri Ora Compass to help categorize the knowledges I discover throughout my research project.

These social, environmental, and economic knowledges have all developed through discourse between local and expert knowledge systems. The lived experiences within Aotearoa New Zealand, including a history of colonialism, environmental vulnerabilities, and social reconciliation, have shaped how knowledge is created and transferred throughout the islands. This knowledge production cycle and how it relates to the expert knowedges presented earlier is discussed in Chapter 6. Each development tool, strategy, and knowledge we discover in the Understorey coworking space inter-

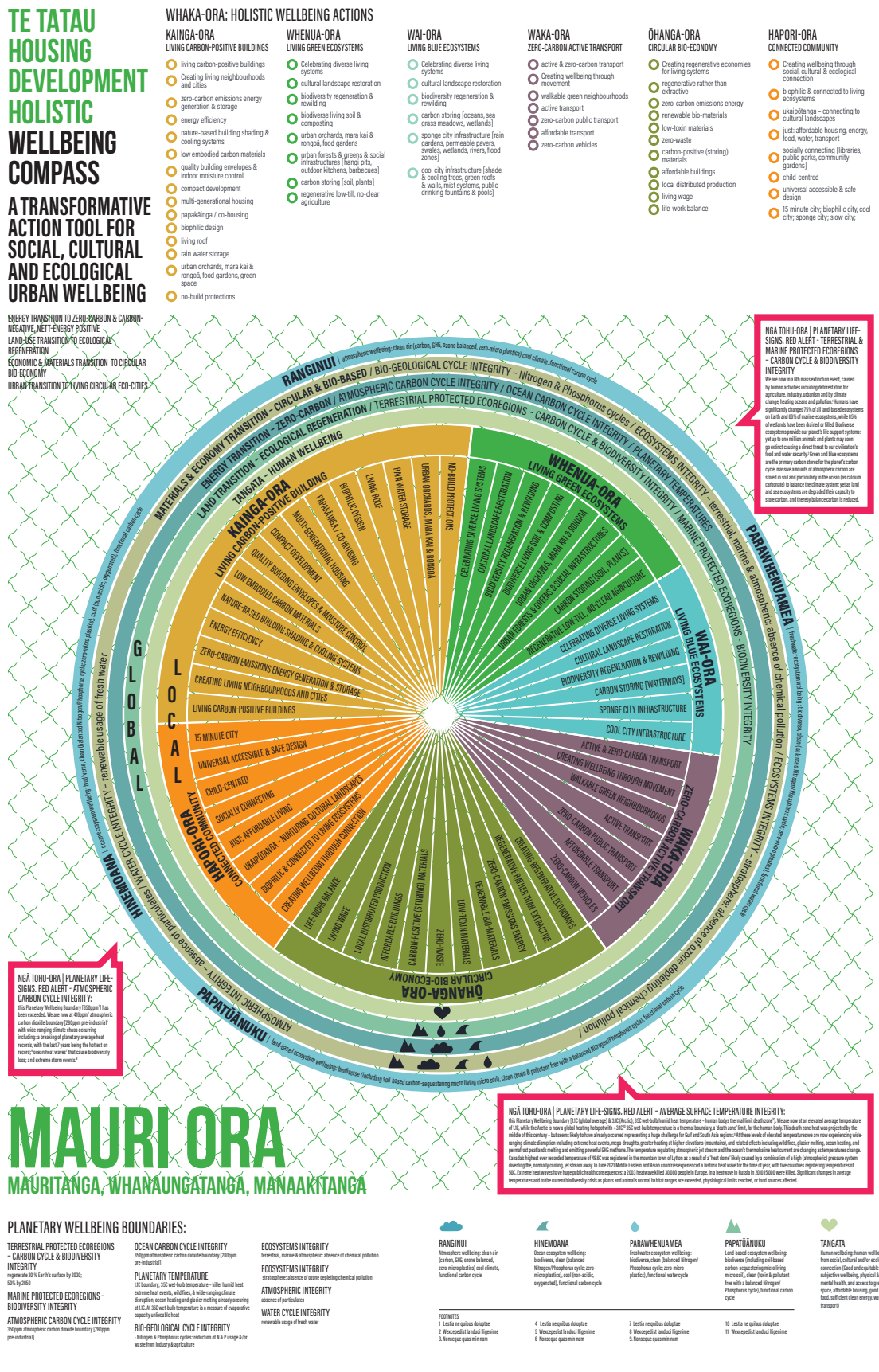

Figure 2.3: Mauri Ora Compass

sect with these knowledges and uses them to inform their practice. We can use the stories presented here to help us understand where the knowledges of development within Understorey come from, how they affect practice going forward, and how they relate to officials in positions of power.

2.5 Knowledge is Discourse

Throughout this chapter, I have introduced various knowledges that have given rise to unique yet interconnected discourses surrounding critical development themes: environment, the economy, and society. Expert knowledge systems use these discourses as frames for development 'roadmaps' such as the SDGs or the Planetary Boundaries framework. In contrast to these high-modernist systems lie the pluriversal approaches of local knowledge systems, which help give rise to community economies. The Community Economies Framework gives us a way to understand these pluriversal economic knowledges and categorize them using the pillars of work, business, property, and finance. Lastly, we explored the history of Aotearoa New Zealand, and the knowledges of the *Kūmara* farmers, resource-recovery workers, and researchers who helped create discourse around the role of Aotearoa New Zealand within a globalized society.

These discourses arise from perspectives and worldviews embedded in time and space. Knowledge is separate from discourse, but each reinforces and supports the other. Knowledge is created by exposure to and conflict with local and normative discourse, and this discourse is, in turn, changed in the way it is embedded and re-embedded within our lives. This kaleidoscopic dialectic is fully displayed in the colourful development discourse of *Mauri Ora* and hints at a system of knowledge production present in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Gibson-Graham argues that the economy is also a discourse, acting as "the supreme being whose dictates must unquestioningly be obeyed and, at the same time, an entity that is subject to our full understanding and consequent manipulation" (Gibson-Graham, 1996, p. 94). Expert knowledge holders have attempted to em-

bed this discourse into local economies for the past century. As a result, many communities have found themselves distanced from traditional means of production. The Community Economies Framework allows communities to 'take back the economy' by presenting a different perspective. In this view, the economy is a set of "decisions around how to care for and share a commons, what to produce for survival, how to encounter others in the process of surviving well together, how much surplus to produce, how to distribute it, and how to invest it for the future" (Gibson-Graham, 2013, p. xvii). In this view, knowledge is a product of the economy.

The economy is one of the most tangible things in our lives and encompasses real and concrete actions we each take daily. Atop these actions, our current understanding of the economy sits like the tip of an iceberg (Figure 2.1). Below the surface are economic systems ignored in the value calculations of the modernist economic machine, including work at school and home and the contribution of churches, retirees, and volunteers. Understanding the economy requires acknowledging the interdependence and inter-reliance of work, business, property, and finance through tools like the CEROI.

Each of the knowledges discussed here, whether expert, local, or otherwise, becomes discourse as they are embedded within individual life experiences. These experiences reach around the world, tied together by community economies, shared and living culture, and common purpose. All development systems, from the international SDGs to the locally adapted Mauri Ora Compass, arise from interaction within these spaces of commonality. Global development discourse has been criticized for relying upon a plastic and mutable definition of development, yet the power of transformational holistic development relies upon that very versatility.

Eriksen's classification of knowledge, the Community Economies framework, and the Mauri Ora Compass provide a new approach to understanding local development discourse. Armed with these insights, we can imagine what an answer to the research question might be. The tools we identify should encompass local and expert knowledge, four economic pillars of the CEF (work, business, property, and finance), and the local values of wellbeing and *mauri ora*. In the following chapters, I present a methodology and research project to help us discover how concrete and tangible

knowledges of development arise from discourse within LDOs and local community economies.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Positioning the Research

Researching knowledges of development is ethically situated and dependent on accurate representation of individual moral and cultural beliefs. Therefore, to answer the primary research question, this project takes extra care to position research outcomes within individuated frames of reference. I also use local knowledges and traditions, such as the practice of *Pepeha*, the informal dialogue of *Kōrero*, and the principle of *Rangatiratanga* to make my research familiar to those from Aotearoa New Zealand. My project takes a multiple methods approach, used to show both 'the extent of a phenomenon and ... correlations between multiple forces' while also 'providing process-based insights, understandings of the lived experiences of different conditions, and generating possible explanations for phenomena' (Hay & Cope, 2021, p. 5). Care and effort have been taken throughout this process to protect those involved in the project and recognize the positionality with which I incorporate and interpret these findings as a researcher.

While I analyze each portion of the research question independently, comparing results from all methods using a standard analytical lens is essential. I use field-based and discursive-based research, and bringing the two together allows me to answer the primary research question. This answer relies on a few main perspectives from Scott's work *Seeing Like a State*. In this book, Scott introduces the concept of 'high-

modernism' as discussed in Chapter 2. High-modernism is, among other things, a "rational design of social order commensurate with the scientific understanding of natural laws" (Scott, 1999, p. 4). There are countless examples of this thinking throughout development work and urban planning, and the Huritanga research team in New Zealand focuses on precisely this sort of Urban Change.

Development is often seen as a responsibility of the state. Therefore, local actors in places like Aotearoa New Zealand must embed their work within a framework understandable to state actors using the lens of high-modernism. The Huritanga research team has presented one such framework, the Mauri Ora Compass, introduced in Chapter 2. Other development actors have developed similar frameworks within local development organizations; therefore, I focus on these LDOs as my primary unit of analysis. To build and visualize these frameworks, I use fieldwork and discourse analysis. The fieldwork allows me to identify the tools development actors use, and the discourse analysis allows me to visualize the implicit framework these tools inform. I use the results from both methodologies to visualize how knowledges of development are produced and shape development practice in both expert and local contexts.

Addressing these concerns methodologically allows us to identify the development tools used by local development actors and study how they interact with expert knowledge structures without placing a value judgment on either perspective. As stated above, the study has two primary goals. First, the study aims to identify the tools local development actors use in Aotearoa New Zealand. Second, the study needs to situate these experiences within a larger framework of expert knowledge systems informed by global governance norms. To do this, we use the terms presented in the previous chapter, specifically within the Community Economies Framework, which uses an approach to knowledge which opens up the expert knowledge space to development actors, community members, and researchers. However, before adopting and adapting these strategies into methods, it is essential to lay out the ethical concerns relevant to this study.

3.2 Ethical Considerations

The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees within The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH) identify five affected groups within the research process: the research community; research participants; groups and institutions; commissioners, funders, and collaborators; and those receiving and disseminating the research. Ethical considerations have been given to how each group is represented within this research. In addition, the research community, participants, and institutions have been given special consideration (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2022).

For this project, I broadly presented the research community in Chapter 2, selecting individuals representative of the discourse from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, my research takes place in partnership with the expert knowledge system of the Huritanga Research Team, who provided access to the study area and introductions, direction, and funding. My interview with 'Understorey' was performed alongside two researchers associated with Huritanga Research Team leader Dr. Kelly Dombroski. I position myself as a researcher in this context through self-reflection when presenting my findings. This reflection provides the context necessary to understand the results of this study and the limitations of my conclusions.

Furthermore, working within local communities and with local development actors involves the exposure of subaltern life practices. This type of research involves the study of "social groups excluded from dominant power structures, be these (neo)colonial, socio-economic, patriarchal, linguistic, cultural and/or racial" (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014, p. 1). Arnold et al. (1991) identify six attributes which position individuals according to "fields of power and ongoing histories of social differentiation" (Hay & Cope, 2021, p. 25). These factors of marginalization and discrimination include race, gender, nationality, differing ability levels, class, and sexuality. This critical reflexivity is necessary for developing ethical approaches to research and can uncover new and vital aspects of the research subject.

During this study, I engaged with individuals with various differing positionalities. Some individuals experience discrimination because of poverty and living situations.

Others experienced alienation due to personal sexuality or gender that differed from the societal norm. Many program participants have strong identities built around personal perceptions of nationality and the right to land. As a foreign researcher, it is tempting to label these positionalities in general terms using words informed by the expert systems drawn from this research. I avoid this wherever possible. Some individuals embrace terms like 'queer' or 'indigenous' and incorporate them into their identity; others reject these labels as limiting. Often, these generalizing terms group individuals who see themselves as distinct from one another in fundamental ways. This methodology must give space for all individuals to define their position within this research project in their own words.

Finally, this project takes place within the context of NTNU's Department of Geography under the supervision of Dr. Elizabeth Barron. Dr. Barron's work on Community Economies provided the shape and context of this project, and the Community Economies research network determined much of the course of this study. My results are shaped just as much by my interactions with these groups and institutions as they are by the research participants and research community.

Understanding this positionality is fundamental to approaching power relations across differing levels of development. Many of them are protected by law. This study was approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) and follows their guidelines for research practice. These guidelines ensure that all data is anonymized and securely stored to reduce the risk of exposing personally sensitive information. Participants were also notified of the study through a written letter attached to this report (see Appendix B). Because this study was carried out in partnership with the Huritanga Team in New Zealand, many of the same materials used for ethics approval in New Zealand were reused for this study. Information is shared between our groups using secure servers, and the interview guide and disclosure information are also included in Appendix B.

3.3 Field Work

The first research question asks, *What tools do community organizations in New Zealand use to gauge local development?*. To understand these development toolboxes, I have done fieldwork in various local communities in Aotearoa New Zealand, including Christchurch, Oamaru, Queenstown, Rotorua, and Wellington. These towns were chosen for their mixture of income levels, urban and rural geographies, and varied sociographic histories. The fieldwork was conducted between August and October 2022 and centred on semi-structured interviews organized jointly with the Huritanga Research Team. Most of this work uses the research principles and strategies outlined in *Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography* (Hay & Cope, 2021).

In addition to presenting strategies and methods, Hay and Cope also identify many vital parts of the research process. For example, the 'research diary' played an organizing role in my research. During fieldwork, I kept daily field notes on an audio recording device. In these notes, I capture the general feeling of my interviews, important information that might have been missed, and new insights and understandings that evolved from discussions with research participants. Tracking the evolution of my development understanding helped refine the research question fundamental to the work. Some of these notes are included in Appendix A.

I used two primary qualitative methods during fieldwork: the case study and the semi-structured interview. The case study is "an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units" (Gerring, 2004, p. 342). For this study, cases were selected from various sites in Aotearoa New Zealand. Each case is typified by a focus on development action by local actors within a broader normative framework. Furthermore, these cases were selected for the rich diversity of identities and positionalities at the site. Finally, as Hay and Cope argue, these individual case studies are *generalizable*, meaning that the general findings from these sites can be applied to a broader research question through analytical generalization.

Two primary strategies for approaching a case study are Single-Case Design and

Multiple-Case Design. For this study, 'Understorey' acts as a focus to direct inquiry and is classified as a *critical* case. A critical case is a case that tests the propositions set forward by the theory. In this project, 'Understorey' acts as an instigator of a knowledge production process driven by the intersection of local and expert knowledge systems and can therefore provide evidence for or against the propositions of the theories in this study (Yin, 2014).

For this study, one case alone is not sufficient. Therefore, it is essential to recognize that inherent issues arise when using this case-study methodology and in generalizing identity studies. In a commentary on using case studies in identity- and semiotic-based research, de Saint-Georges (2018) argues for various logics governing generalization. One in particular, the process of abduction, explains how knowledge arises through juxtaposing the elements of the case study with other case studies and sources of knowledge. As this research question heavily relies upon the juxtaposition of knowledge, this study uses additional minor cases to triangulate the development strategies used by the primary case throughout the entire study. These design methodologies allow us to integrate a single-case methodology into an abductive multiple-case design.

Additionally, abduction allows meaningful conclusions to be drawn by presenting local and expert knowledge alongside each other throughout the thesis. Abduction works best with engaging narratives, stories, and experiences (de Saint-Georges, 2018), which can be captured through what Hay and Cope call the 'semi-structured interview.' In this type of interview, some questions are often written beforehand in an 'interview guide.' These questions form the backbone of the interview but do not constrain it. Instead, they help to bring different aspects to the interview, such as storytelling, opinion, and hypothetical contrast. Finally, an interview is a powerful tool that can help to give voice to subaltern groups. The term subaltern encompasses identity groups based on "class, ethnicity, age, gender, sexuality, and disability" (Hay & Cope, 2021, p. 149). The guide for the interviews in this project is included in Appendix B.

The data used in this research was gathered with the permission of the individual participants and represents an ongoing dialogue between this project, the Huritanga

Research Team, and the local development organization each participant represents. Reports made by the Huritanga team are made public in New Zealand, and I worked to encourage ongoing collaboration between the research team and the various research participants. This way, the research process evolves from an extractive model into a collaborative one. Each group is in a position to help further aid the others. My responsibility as a researcher is to ensure that research participants are remembered and supported after completing the primary research.

Each interview forms the core of the various cases used in this project. As stated above, the primary methodology of this study uses a single-case design, and these additional cases are used only to triangulate the tools used by 'Understorey.' To these cases, I have added additional documents and reports published by three expert knowledge holders in local positions of power. These individuals represent federal, municipal, and indigenous authorities in Christchurch. Together, these resources provide a foundation from which I can conduct the primary discursive analysis of this study.

3.4 Discourse Analysis

To identify the research knowledges within each case and to relate the stories and narratives uncovered through this project's interviews and case studies to the narratives of officials in positions in power, I use a 'Foucauldian Discourse Analysis' (Hay & Cope, 2021) framed by local and expert development knowledges. Michel Foucault explicitly put forward this type of analysis to understand positions of knowledge and power (Foucault & Gordon, 1980). A discoursive analysis also studies knowledge production as it is geographically situated. Hay & Cope argue that for Foucault, discourse simultaneously produces and reproduces knowledge and power (power/knowledge) through what it is possible to think/be/do/experience (Foucault & Gordon, 1980; Hay & Cope, 2021, p. 334).

Within each knowledge frame, I also identify the presence of the community's economic knowledges of work, business, property, and finance. By contrasting these

with local narratives and life experiences, we can utilize the logic of analytic abduction to discover *How local development agendas relate to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems.* I do this by identifying local development knowledges in the statements made by the officials chosen for this study and related documents. The presence or absence of these knowledges provide insight into mainstream development methods and shows their positional relationship to the methods developed through local identity and practice.

Due to the nature of the discoursive method, the exact methodology for this approach must be embedded within the subject knowledge itself and, therefore, can vary significantly between projects. For this analysis, I adapt many methodological steps suggested by Hay and Cope (2021) into a context more appropriate for Aotearoa New Zealand. These steps allow me to model the knowledge production cycle presented in Chapter 6.1. Again, it is essential to note that these findings are inherently individuated. Nevertheless, while I avoid over-generalizing the findings in this paper, I invite community members to use them to situate their local development knowledge.

The analytical process used in this paper has five steps. First, I reflect on my fieldwork and organize the documents, interviews, and other knowledge artifacts into a development corpus. Second, I code or label this corpus for meaning using the four pillars of the CEF, the three types of development methodology, and locally recognized values of *mauri ora*. Third, I present the dialogue between the various parts of this corpus to identify what Foucault calls the 'effects of truth.' Fourth, I identify ways in which the dialogues presented talk past one another, how they conflict and essential topics which one or the other omits from the conversation. Fifth and finally, I invite and prepare a way for this new understanding of development discourse to be taken back by community members and expanded upon from a locally authentic context.

3.5 Knowledge is a Research Guide

The knowledges presented in this chapter come from various sources and backgrounds. Each method I used here was abstracted into a book, article, or lecture, which I then took time to interpret in the context of this research project. This interpretation is a form of knowledge production. In this chapter, local knowledge disembedded by expert knowledge holders has been reembedded into my research. I have attempted to present my understanding in a way faithful to the source and in a way that you, as the reader, can understand and interpret. Nevertheless, I have done this from my position as a North American researcher at a Norwegian university.

For those from the islands approaching this analysis, I want to present these steps in a way consistent with local practice. Therefore, before I began this thesis, I followed local tradition by sharing my *pepeha* and presented myself and my family as connected with the land and people I come from. A *pepeha* allows me to present my research as a *kōrero*, or conversation, with a level of informality and mutual respect that the concept conveys. In the final step of my analysis, and throughout our discussion, I take my analysis beyond the level of explanation and critique and follow the principle of *rangatiratanga*. This practice, central to the Treaty of Waitangi, recognizes the sovereign right of self-determination within the lived life practices discussed here. I use this practice to inform change within my sovereign domain and invite others to take the conclusions presented here and use them according to the ways and means available to each of us by nature of our *Rangatiratanga*.

The stories and experiences I present in the following two Chapters inform through the process of abduction the knowledges of development formed and produced in the discoursive *kōrero* of Aotearoa New Zealand. I have also listed vital knowledges that resonate with the theories discussed in Chapter 2. However, these findings ultimately result from my positionality as a researcher. Please take time to read through the interview texts provided and research the organizations in Appendix A. The knowledges that we take from the stories in this thesis depend on how we situate ourselves within our own social and cultural landscapes.

Chapter 4

Development Knowledges of Local Community Organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand - A Research Project

4.1 Project Introduction

The knowledge landscapes of Aotearoa New Zealand are complex and multi-layered. Since human settlers first began arriving one millennium ago, different knowledges of development have grown and evolved within variegated strata of culture, language, and power formed between and among local groups. *Māori* tribes, with ownership rights over vast territories in both the north and south islands, share living space with *pakeha* settlers, predominantly from Europe. Contemporary development strategy is established formally through nationalized systems of knowledge and power, such as the 2014 'National Science Challenges.' Informally, development knowledges arise from efforts by Local Development Organizations (LDOs) to address specific challenges community economies face. These economies represent a holistic view of localized systems of work, business, property, and finance (see Chapter 2.3). This chapter presents a targeted research project into the tools

and strategies used by LDOs within local economies and positions them within the formalized expert knowledge systems of New Zealand.

Foundational to this project is the work of Thomas Hylland Eriksen on local and expert systems of knowledge and power. Eriksen's work allows this project to understand how the foundational myth of Aotearoa New Zealand gives rise to the knowledges we discover throughout the following chapters. Central to this myth is the 1840 signing of the Treaty of Waitangi (Bishop, 2017) establishing *pakeha* and *Māori* as *tangata tiriti* and *tangata whenua* — people of the treaty and people of the land. By classifying all on the islands as *tangata*, this discourse attempts to unite two different historical traditions to integrate local economies and knowledge systems. Unfortunately, the protections of land, rights, and treasures written into this document were ignored in the often violent process of further integrating traditional *iwi* into settler communities. Today, the treaty holds expert knowledge systems to account and directs development funds and policy. This project uses this understanding of the treaty as a starting point for understanding local development knowledges.

Structurally, this project follows the methodology outlined in the previous chapter and meets the ethical restrictions set by the NSD agreement included in Appendix B. Additionally, this project has been conducted with the Huritanga Research Team under Dr. Kelly Dombroski. Dr. Dombroski co-leads one of the four focus areas of the Building Better Challenge, emphasizing urban wellbeing. Urban wellbeing is an essential part of the community economies architecture. The research carried out in this project promises to advance both the national science challenge and the community economies framework. In addition to Dr. Dombroski, the research team is led by Dr. Gradon Diprose at the Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research Institute and Dr. Amanda Yates at the Auckland University of Technology. The goal of the Huritanga team is to kick-start 'regenerative system change for holistic urban wellbeing,' or *'Huritanga mo te mauri-ora'* in *Te Reo Maori*. Many of the interviews in this project were carried out jointly with one or more of these team members.

4.2 Project Outline

The work for this project began in the field. This first phase, as mentioned, was carried out in partnership with the Huritanga research team in New Zealand. This group of researchers, tasked with finding the solution to one of the New Zealand government's eleven 'Science Challenges,' uses a mixture of community economies development methodology alongside more globally recognized frameworks such as the Stockholm planetary boundaries model for measuring the impact of human activity on the planetary environment (Yates, 2019). The 'Mauri Ora Compass' is built on top of these models, and I use the compass to create a codebook and direct my analysis. I participated in the initial research for this *Mauri Ora* project and have used many of the interviews in this study to help with the *Mauri Ora* compass as well.

Phase one took place in the autumn of 2022 and includes interviews with seven LDOs throughout New Zealand. Four of these — Understorey by The Green Lab, the Waitaki Resource Recovery Park, the North Otago Youth Centre, and Happiness House — are located on South Island, and three — Kai Rotorua, SCION, and Kai Cycle — are located on North Island. The interviews were carried out using different strategies and methods outlined in the methodology. Two sites permitted direct recording; the remaining five were summarized using personal interview notes and a fieldwork journal. All three interviews on the North Island were conducted and later recorded by either Dr. Dombroski or Dr. Yates, and their notes are not included in this project. I, Dr. Dombroski, and other academic colleagues arranged interviews on the South Island. All cases are summarized in Table 4.1 and introduced fully in Chapter 5.

Phase one was initially planned to include interviews from Trondheim, and interviews began in November 2022. However, at this time, Understorey announced it would be shutting down starting in December 2022 due to a lack of funding. This unexpected event opened up a new possibility for this study to address an issue of critical importance to the people of Christchurch. The study was reworked to fit these new changes. Instead of focusing on a cross-cultural comparison of develop-

Site Name	Site Location	Interview Type	Main Interviewer	Years in Operation
Understory	Christchurch	Audio Recording	JBT & Others	2021-2022
Waitaki Resource Recovery Centre	Oamaru	Audio Recording	Dr. Kelly Dombroski	2003-Present
North Otago Youth Centre	Oamaru	Post-Interview Notes	Jason Bunderson Toler	2014-Present (Current Iteration)
Happiness House	Queenstown	Post-Interview Notes	Jason Bunderson Toler	1991-Present
Kai Rotorua	Rotorua	Post-Interview Notes	Dr. Amanda Yates	2016-Present
SCION	Rotorua	Post-Interview Notes	Dr. Amanda Yates	1947-Present (1992-Present Current Iteration)
Kai Cycle	Wellington	Post-Interview Notes	Dr. Kelly Dombroski	2015-Present

Table 4.1: Case Summary

ment knowledge, this project takes in several artifacts of knowledge from the expert knowledge framework relevant to the case of Understorey. It uses them to conduct a discourse analysis of development within Aotearoa New Zealand at the intersection of local and expert knowledge systems.

Phase two began in early 2023. As outlined in the methodology, the interviews conducted in the first phase form the core of a research corpus. Using a Foucauldian discourse analysis, I have compiled a code book centred around several key themes. These themes are informed by the literature presented in the first few chapters and by reflection and conversation with people throughout Aotearoa New Zealand. Many participants raised two key concerns about the development process in our discussions. First, how can each LDO fairly measure development needs and outcomes, and second, how can they implement their vision of development?

These two concerns manifest themselves differently depending on circumstance and context. These contexts and circumstances are as unique and varied as the islands themselves. Their shared history informed the creation of the holistic *Mauri Ora Compass*, and I have adapted the five categories of the compass into five key themes: Indigenous Life Ways, Settler Traditions, Environmental Protectionism, Local & Sustainable Economies, and Community Resiliency. When discussing policy, LDOs in Aotearoa New Zealand often address these five themes in their practice. Furthermore, in engaging with LDOs, local and federal governments find it appropriate to structure discussion and presentation of development proposals around these five topics. It is vital to stress that there are many valid and essential concerns outside of these topics and that I am limiting the discussion of thematic emphasis to these five major topics due to my personal experience and connections with local people and projects.

I have made some changes to the thematic presentation of these values for this paper. In my research, I found that the categories of the Mauri Ora Compass worked well for urban areas such as Christchurch and even some indigenous rural areas in the north. However, in other rural areas, specific development values are realized differently from this framework. These generally revolve around work ethic, social practice, and tradition. For this reason, I decided to separate values that resonate

more in indigenous contexts and identify those that resonate more in settler-colonial contexts. There is a lot of overlap here, and putting these values together helps unify the development narrative of Aotearoa New Zealand. However, to fully identify the development knowledges of New Zealand, I need to recognize the different knowledge origins of settler and indigenous ideologies.

Placing these into the analytical framework, we now have a list of thirteen codes in four major categories. To this list, I have added one additional code to include statements of value. These statements guide LDO operations and often delimit how and where LDOs can spend time and resources. As part of the standard practice in discourse analysis, I also use codes for sentiment from strongly positive to strongly negative. The complete codebook is presented in Table 4.2. Using these codes, I have pulled out a list of development tools and practices discussed in the corpus.

With this codebook complete, we can now turn to the interviews and begin to pull out the knowledges that inform development practice in Aotearoa New Zealand. Before we do that, however, I want to reflect on my own experiences. I include this reflection to help explain the decisions behind my methodological choices.

4.3 Project Reflection

While researching this project, I encountered unexpected obstacles, challenges, and opportunities. These have left a unique mark on this project and helped shape my research outcome. In addition, I have had to learn and adapt to using new skill sets and unfamiliar research tools. These problems challenge the design, methods, and findings of this project.

The design for this project was partially inspired by coincidence and circumstance. Initially, this project focused mainly on indigenous development practice as an alternative to mainstream development methodology. I talked with a teacher of traditional practice in Norway and discussed several options with my supervisor Dr. Barron. At the same time, I pursued an internship with the Huritanga Team in Christchurch. These conversations changed my perspective on development and opened

Code Category	Code	Description
Tool Type	Measuring Tool	Used to gather opinions, set direction, and measure outcomes of development policy
	Implementation Tool	Strategies and practices used to effect development and create change
Holistic Development Theme	Indigenous Life Ways	Related to historical and contemporary practice developed locally
	Settler Traditions	Related to historical and contemporary practice developed abroad and imported through migration and trade
	Environmental Protectionism	Promoting endemic flora and fauna, reducing pollution, and managing ecological risk
	Local & Sustainable Economy	Promoting local supply chains, limiting production, and developing green technology.
	Community Resiliency	Improving livelihoods by building and reinforcing links between community members, community organizations, and government.
Community Economy Framework	Work	Directed towards ways of making a living
	Business	Organization of goods and services, labour, and production
	Property	Ownership practices of places and things in the community
	Finance	Patterns of savings, debt, and investment affecting cultural preservation, wellbeing, health, security, and belonging
Knowledge Type	Local Knowledge	Knowledges embedded in time and/or space
	Expert Knowledge	Knowledges disembedded and abstracted, often hegemonically
Other	Values	Rules and principles used to guide LDO operations.
Sentiment	Strongly Positive Positive Negative Strongly Negative	

Table 4.2: Development Knowledges of Local Development Organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand Code Book (compiled from Eriksen (2017) and Gibson-Graham (2013))

my eyes to how integrated the global development system has become. Indigeneity is part of our global discourse, not separate from it, and treating historical patterns of practice as modern imperatives do a disservice to contemporary communities. Ultimately, I decided to focus on local development in all its forms to triangulate and investigate the shape of modern development practice.

More practically, the methodology behind this project has changed and evolved several times. When I went to New Zealand my research question focused on investigating different understandings of development. The Huritanga team provided me with the direction I needed. During my fieldwork, Dr. Dombroski introduced me to her work as a feminist geographer and shared her research methods as we worked together. I learned how to set up and conduct an interview, take research notes, and record, analyze, and source data. I am an anxious person, and cold-calling LDOs to set up an interview was difficult. As a result, I could not schedule as many interviews as I would have liked, which ultimately limited my final corpus. However, it also allowed me to dive deeper into the individual knowledges that I found and begin to understand the links between expert and local ways of knowing.

Finally, as discussed in the outline of this project, the findings have been influenced by the announcement that Understorey would close in December 2022. The decision to pivot to Understorey was also influenced by the limited number of interviews I could conduct in the field. I only managed to record three interviews, including one outside the final project corpus. While my voice notes helped identify effective development strategies and tools, I only remembered the full details of a few of the unrecorded stories and experiences that were shared with me. I have shared these where appropriate, and I rely on my methodology to help shift the focus to the stories I can access.

This project has undergone several changes and revisions over the past year. Other problems have also arisen: issues learning NVIVO, missed deadlines, and many others. My direction was informed by my participants and co-researchers and by chance and circumstance. I share these experiences so that we can approach the stories in the next chapter together on equal footing. This project results from all these different processes coming together, and I have done my best to represent

the values, opinions, and beliefs of all involved. Overcoming these challenges has put this project in a unique position to identify the tools and strategies of local development actors in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Before you begin the next chapter, I encourage you to read or reread my *pepeha* included at the beginning of this thesis. Our *kōrero* in the next chapter is informed by my personal history as a researcher. These lived life experiences also inform the experiences of the many participants in this project. I have done my best to embed myself in the local knowledge systems of which they are a part. I also want to invite you to situate yourself within the Aotearoa New Zealand context and imagine, just for a moment, that the stories come from your own land and family, *whenua* and *whanau*.

Chapter 5

Sharing Development Knowledge

5.1 Case Introduction

Nau mai, tauti mai.. Kia ora, and welcome.

Our conversation begins in *Ōtautahi* Christchurch. It is mid-august, and I have just arrived after a two-day journey from Trondheim, Norway. I am starting a position as a researcher with the Huritanga team at Canterbury University. Although I did not know it then, I would spend the next two months travelling around the islands, meeting representatives from local development organizations, LDOs, and learning about their work. In time, I would assemble these informal interviews into a corpus. By studying this corpus, I would learn to recognize the knowledges—practical strategies and tools—that bind together these practices.

Perhaps you know many of them already. Some may be new. Either way, I hope we can learn from one another. Let me begin by introducing each one in turn. There are seven in total: Understorey, Waitaki Resource Recovery Park, the North Otago Youth Centre, Happiness House, Kai Rotorua, SCION (a Crown Research Institute), and Kai Cycle. I will introduce them in the order I met them, travelling south from my home base in Christchurch before flying north to Rotorua and, finally, Wellington.

5.1.1 Understorey

Understorey, or *tuatoru*, was a coworking space run by The Green Lab in *Ōtautahi* Christchurch. When the big quakes hit in 2010-11, killing 185 people, much of the central city was condemned, and about 70% of the buildings were damaged or destroyed (see Appendix A). As the city was rebuilt, Understorey worked to encourage people to come to the central city by hosting events and cultivating a green and vibrant office space. Their *kaupapa* looked to learn from nature and foster sustainable growth in the community. After the pandemic of 2020-2021, Understorey adapted its coworking model to encourage people now working at home to come back and rebuild a feeling of belonging to the *Ōtautahi* Christchurch community.

When I visited Understorey in the winter of 2022, I was impressed by their down-to-earth staff. They made space for me, and I used their coworking desks to write out the report for a research group I was part of called *Huritanga mo te mauri-ora*. The Huritanga team paid Understorey so that those of us in Christchurch could use their services. I spent several mornings there, using their common kitchen and internet and meeting new people.

5.1.2 Waitaki Resource Recovery Park

If you travel south of Christchurch along Highway 1, you will come to the small town of Oamaru. Around 20 years ago, Waitaki Resource Recovery Park began operations there. A few years after they opened up, financial problems almost had the council cut their funding. However, local Kiwis came together and marched to city hall, and the city agreed to continue funding the project. Today, they are self-sustaining and gather recyclable material from Waitaki District. Much of this is processed on-site. You can stop by and check out their second-hand shop and garden center or take home an old piece of furniture to give it a new home.

I visited the park with Dr. Kelly Dombroski in September 2021. I had set up an interview with the site that day, and they were nice enough to give us a tour as well. They have an expansive property, and you can see that they put a lot of time and

effort into making things flow.

5.1.3 North Otago Youth Centre

When visiting Oamaru, the North Otago Youth Centre is easy to miss. Tucked into a small alley behind the Food Pantry on Eden Street, they provide an after-school hangout for many of the kids from the local boys' and girls' schools. Funded entirely by local donations, they have game tables, a gaming room, instruments, and lots of food. In addition, they make space for a Sunday church group and an LGBT group on Mondays.

I found their place by accident. I was in town for the day visiting the Waitaki Resource Recovery Park nearby and found myself wandering down their alley. When they saw me walking by, they waved me in, and we had an excellent *kōrero* about their mission, what they do, and how they try and improve the community.

5.1.4 Happiness House

Happiness House is well-established in old Queenstown, nestled in the southern Alps. Their founder, Pat Bird, wanted to create a home where everyone in the community could feel welcome. While things have changed a bit since Happiness House was founded in 1991, you can still find them working in the kitchen and garden of an old family home. I felt a sense of belonging there, leaving with bread and tea from the kitchen. They offer free counselling, food, daycare, sewing and repair workshops, and good conversation in the common area.

5.1.5 Kai Rotorua

Kai Rotorua is a horticulture site just outside Rotorua town. Local *whānau* come by to help plant, cultivate, and harvest *kūmara*. Much of the harvest is sent to local boys and girls schools throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, while the rest is sold locally for a few dollars a basket. In addition, they help teach kiwis how to care

for *Papatūānuku* and have helped set up backyard gardens around the area.

Dr. Dombroski and I were invited to the farm by Dr. Amanda Yates, a leader of the Huritanga team with deep roots in Rotorua. Dr. Yates led the interview with Kai Rotorua, and I followed along, asking questions wherever there was a gap. I was slightly uncomfortable in this unfamiliar space, and I was grateful to have Dr. Yates to guide the interview and help me properly introduce myself.

5.1.6 SCION

SCION is a Crown Research Institute (CRI) in Rotorua. They work with businesses and industries to develop sustainable practices that respect the local environment and encourage growth. This CRI is almost 100 years old, and they have changed a lot over that time. Today, they have helped to pioneer new uses for local wood to help reduce local dependence on foreign trees. Perhaps you used the compostable 'biospife' they developed in partnership with ZESPRI with your kiwifruit this morning. When I visited SCION, this biodegradable plastic spoon/knife made of kiwifruit waste was proudly displayed.

I was not the primary interviewer at SCION, and Dr. Yates again took the lead. Dr. Yates has good connections with people at the organization, and I am grateful that I was given the space to fit this interview into this research project. I learned how SCION approaches development and embeds their work into local practice.

5.1.7 Kai Cycle

Kai Cycle's unique business model stands out among the many urban gardens in Wellington. Dedicated to urban sustainability, Kai Cycle owns a fleet of delivery bicycles that roam the city searching for compost. This compost is used to help grow a large community garden they have established near the Hospital. Once the plants have grown, Kai Cycle members around the city pick up their vege boxes and bring home a constantly changing variety, including kale, carrots, *kūmara*, and salad.

This informal interview was led by Dr. Kelly Dombroski and Dr. Gradon Diprose, both of the Huritanga team. Dr. Dirpose lives in Wellington and knows many LDOs around town. An intern from the United States joined us, and it was a very cozy feeling with all four of us there together. They brought in local perspectives that I would have missed otherwise.

5.2 Knowledges of Development

I have divided the results from my interviews into two sections. First, I focus on operational knowledges, including all the business, financial, employment, and leasing strategies used by the LDOs in the study. The second section focuses more on field knowledges, including the tools used in partnership with the community. For example, deciding how many people to hire is operational knowledge, while using that labour to build a community garden is an example of field knowledge. These findings address the first part of my research question for this project: *What tools do community organizations in New Zealand use to gauge local development needs and meet community goals?.*

5.2.1 Operational Knowledges

The operational knowledge space is extensive, and the experiences and circumstances of these eight sites have all created something unique. I have pulled out 42 strategies and tools in my interviews using seven codes from the project codebook: Business, Financing, Property, Employment, Local (Embedded), Expert (Abstract), and Values-based. These 42 knowledges are summarized in Figure 5.1. I want to point out that I only marked the knowledges referenced in our interview. Several knowledges used by these LDOs were not discussed, and I did not mark them. I want to share a few stories from our conversations that show how many of these knowledges are embedded within the local experience.

Let me begin with a story I was told in my conversation with the Waitaki Resource Recovery Park (WRRP) about employment:

> "Quite a number of years ago, we had a young guy come through corrections. He was doing PD work and he was just about finished his hours. Originally had 200 hours that he had to do, which is quite a lot. And he only had about two weeks left to go. And he changed, his whole attitude changed, he had become withdrawn and wasn't talking like he had been. So I said to him, I said, 'What's wrong?'
> And he goes, 'I don't know what to do, you know?'
> And I said, 'What do you mean, you don't know what to do? You know, if I can help I'll help.'
> And he goes, 'I'm gonna have to offend again.'
> And I said, 'Why're you gonna have to offend again?'
> And he goes, 'So I can come back.'
> I said 'You don't have to offend! You can stay as a volunteer!'"
>
> - Waitaki Resource Recovery Park
> *(See Appendix A T.2)*

From this short story, we can learn a lot about the strategies WRRP uses to run their operation and their importance to the community. We learn how they hire and pay workers, how they set hours, and whom they hire. These are all fundamental knowledges to have in an organization. WRRP shows how this can be done by hiring from corrections and managing worker-hour targets.

Understorey also hires workers at their site, and this quote from our interview gives some insight into a different set of employment knowledges:

> "We have the equivalent of 2.45 full-time workers. So out of them we try and do as much as we can... I have people that have chronic illness that can't do more than 10 to 12 hours a week, and that's fine. And then I have people that have their own creative practice or another thing that they're pursuing, and they only work the same amount of time a week as well. The organization ... is reasonably flexible within the individuals' needs, rather than trying to force everybody onto the same role and shape, which is, I guess, kind of the *Kaupapa*."

- Understorey

(See Appendix A T.1)

What can we learn by abducting these two stories together? First, an organization's work is prominent in developing operational knowledges. For Understorey, much of the work involves caring for plants, helping out new visitors, and general administration. The number of hours required is small, and only one or two people are needed to handle the day-to-day. For the Resource Recovery Park, however, work involves long hours of manual labour. The park hand sorts most of its recyclables, which leads to a higher quality product but requires the development of different hiring and working knowledge.

Both keep close accounts of working hours and carefully budget their operating expenses. The funding for both of these organizations comes from City Council. Part of their funding agreements require audits, reports, and tracked spending. Compare this to the strategy developed by the North Otago Youth Centre (NOYC), which receives all its funding from a few large donors. Instead of reports, NOYC has a working relationship with the primary donors and visits every week to discuss how things are going.

Detailed accounting is expensive and can take up large portions of an organization's time and resources. During the interview, three of the eight cases in this study discussed accounting as a difficulty. For example, Understorey's accountant works 8 hours a week tracking the project's spending, matching costs to a long list of budgeted expenses, including salaries, projects, and materials. Before the accountant began, the project leader took on this responsibility, and it took a lot longer to tally these numbers each day for the funding report.

In addition to financing, property knowledges also differ from case to case. Most cases in this study lease the property they operate on, and several use common areas. For example, a public road cuts through the centre of WRRP, and guests queue up on this road to drop off their recyclables. Understorey occupies a shopfront in a small, indoor mall or courtyard. In addition, they share their space with a few restaurants and a wellness studio.

Finally, operational knowledges are influenced by many different community values. One of these is the value of self-sustainability. This value turned up again and again throughout the project and was also reflected in the values published by city and government officials. I want to introduce Understorey's perspective here to give us time to think about what it means and how it influences their operational knowledge. Later, we can abduct this understanding with the perspectives shared by various officials.

> So I think it feels very clear to my board at the moment and to us as an organization that there's still a need for organizations like ours ...We'll work with a community for a year or so and then let them take over and be self-sustaining. But I guess that's where we see ourselves fitting into the ecology of the cities, maybe a little bit of a 'Hey, we could do things differently,' a little bit of a 'community gardens and like social green spaces are awesome,' and a little bit 'capitalism sucks.' It's kind of where we sit.
>
> *(..and later on)* And I guess we better be realistic about these things. And workout, if we can turn this into sort of a little self-sustaining bubble [and] if we got to the point where it was self-sustaining with a little bit on top which we could put it to other community projects, whether that would be worthwhile or whether it needs to move somewhere, where it's more accessible to other demographics.
>
> - Understorey
> *(See Appendix A T.1)*

These operational knowledges are summarized in Figure 5.1. The hiring strategies LDOs use, how they interact with common space and the community, how they conduct business and the values they follow all shape how development is carried out in the community. Each knowledge is uniquely embedded and helps to improve wellbeing and *mauri ora* in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Development Knowledge *(Tool or Strategy)*		Happiness House (HH)	North Otago Youth Centre (NOYC)	Waitaki Resource Recovery Park (WRRP)	Understorey (U)	Kai Rotorua (KR)	Scion Crown Research Institute (SCION)	Kai Cycle (KC)	
EMPLOYMENT	Paid Staff - LDO directed hours	X	X	X	X		X		"We also work with the likes of corrections, we take on community workers, we work with schools, we do youth programs." -WRRP
	Paid Staff - Other directed hours				X				
	Paid Staff - Staff directed hours		X		X				
	Internships and Work-share			X		X			
	Volunteers	X		X	X	X		X	
PROPERTY	Lease Property			X	X			X	"This a wonderful space but ..[I don't know if] they would feel safe enough coming through." -U
	Common Property			X	X				
	Own Property	X					X		
FINANCING (NO GRANTS)	Local Municipality	X		X	X	X	X	X	"I think part of the responsibility of having this [Council] funding is for us to make it easier for others." -U *Our members pay us to collect their compost and use it here at our site.* -At KC
	Local Community Fundraising	X			X			X	
	Charitable Trust	X	X	X					
	Business Income	X		X	X	X		X	
	Service In Kind				X	X		X	
	Goods Donations	X	X	X	X	X		X	
	Private Donors	X	X						
BUSINESS OPERATIONS	Flexible project boundaries				X				"The whole purpose of setting this up is so that people steal it." -U "we do get 80,000 cars coming into our site to drop off recyclables a year." -WRRP
	Presenting the Business to Others				X		X		
	Plop projects				X				
	Multi-project operations				X		X		
	Gathering User Data		X	X	X				
	Business Targets (Deliverables)				X		X		
LOCAL KNOWLEDGES	Flexible income structures				X	X			"I'm not here to compete with anyone. I'm much more interested in how we can all find ways to work together and provide value for everyone." -U
	Local Community Recruiting		X			X			
	Partnerships (Local, City, Edu.)	X		X	X	X	X		
	Using local community networks				X	X	X		
	Marketing Campaigns			X	X				
	Collaborative Partnerships	X		X	X		X		
	Negotiation of goals and values		X	X	X		X		
EXPERT KNOWLEDGES	Using flexible targets				X				"We usually work as much as we can to then, what the council likes to call `leverage' that budget by talking to suppliers and getting them to sponsor accountables." -U
	Multiple Funding Streams	X		X	X	X	X	X	
	Budget Negotiation				X				
	Keeping an Accountant			X	X		X		
	Setting a Budget			X	X				
	Leveraging the Budget				X		X		
	Meetings, Audits, Reporting		X				X		
VALUES	Establishing a *Kaupapa*				X				"We would rather recycle it in New Zealand as much as what we possibly can" - WRRP *We're here to provide for the kids, and if they want something we do our best to provide it* . -At NOYC
	Quality standards	X		X					
	Local Priority	X		X					
	Integrity and Productivity			X		X			
	Natural Environment			X	X	X	X		
	Making the space a home	X	X	X					
	Drive to be self-sustaining			X	X	X			

Figure 5.1: List of Identified Operational Knowledges, classified by case, code, and mentions in interviews.

5.2.2 Field Knowledges

Field knowledges are what we usually think about when we think about development. Field knowledges include community gardens, sewing workshops, community nights, and social clubs. These ideas can catch on, spread quickly around a community, and are more concrete. When I was working with the Huritanga team, locating these Field knowledges was our primary goal. Our team was given funding by the government to figure out how to 'build back better' and to learn from both new projects and projects that had been going on in Aotearoa New Zealand in one way or another for centuries. I have included a list of a few predominant field knowledges using the development theme codes from the codebook in Figure 5.2. I want to discuss three of these knowledges in this section: community gardens, communal kitchens, and compost.

Many of you may already be familiar with the story of the black rot of the 1940s-50s that almost wiped out the *kūmara*. However, I have include a summary on page 23 for those unfamiliar with the story. According to Kai Rotorua, Joe and Fay Gock and his wife single-handedly saved the *Kūmara* from extinction by sharing their disease-resistant strain with *Māori* and *pakeha* farmers and were awarded a Queen's Service Medal by the government. This story inspired Kai Rotorua to do the same with their own land, and school children and families are encouraged to come and learn about the mighty *kūmara* from the local farmers here as they help to grow food for the community.

Community gardens can also be built small for urban communities. Nearly all of the LDOs I interviewed mentioned their involvement in community gardens, and I would not be surprised to find those that did not mention them involved in one way or another. They can be found near churches, government buildings, community centres, and neighbourhoods from Bluff to Cape Reinga. Community gardens are not unique to Aotearoa New Zealand. However, they are such a prominent centrepiece of development that they have merged with indigenous practices of land sharing to become a wholly Kiwi phenomenon. Community gardens are a powerful development tool or knowledge that helps local communities deal with the dangers of food scarcity,

Development Knowledge *(Tool or Strategy)*		Happiness House (HH)	North Otago Youth Centre (NOYC)	Waitaki Resource Recovery Park (WRRP)	Understorey (U)	Kai Rotorua (KR)	Scion Crown Research Institute (SCION)	Kai Cycle (KC)	
SETTLER TRADITIONS / INDIGENOUS LIFE WAYS	Free Counselling for Community	X							"[The Community Garden] became a standalone enterprise, … we got the grants to be able to employ people." -WRRP *Two people were in the used clothing shop … The clothing has often been repaired by volunteers, and the house also runs a repair workshop where local community members gather to learn how to repair their own clothing.* -Field Journal (HH)
	Food Donations	X				X			
	Crisis Help		X						
	Community Gardens	X		X	X	X		X	
	Used Clothing Shop	X							
	Small Book Shop	X							
	Sharing land with neighbors					X	X		
	Domestic Drop Off Program			X					
	Coworking Space				X				
	Second Hand Goods Shop			X					
	Garden Corner Store			X		X		X	
	Selling Topsoil			X					
LOCAL ECONOMY	Clothing Repair Workshop	X							"We pride ourselves on the fact that we're just not doing recycling, we're actually recovering of people." -WRRP
	Sewing Training	X							
	Interview Training		X						
	Gardening Workshops					X			
	Local Writers Workshop				X				
	Employee Literacy Program			X					
	Employee Cooking Programs			X					
COMMUNITY RESILIENCY	Community Meeting Area	X				X			"We have things like Queer Games Night which is a monthly occasion. Or *Whare Tīhau* starts again tomorrow which is a monthly reo and social club for those who got *whakapapa Maori* in their *whanau* and various other applications that come along with this that build community." -U
	Knitting Circle	X							
	Kitchen and Talking Space	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Community Play Area	X	X						
	Church Group Weekly Meetings		X						
	LGBT Group Weekly Meetings		X						
	Smoking and Gathering Spacing		X						
	Queer Games Night				X				
	Social Club				X				
	Menz Shed			X					
THE ENVIRONMENT	Seed Bombs				X				"I've applied for a funding application to employ somebody to do a feasibility study on developing an actual composting facility." -WRRP
	Plants in Vacant Spaces				X				
	Green Waste Mulching			X				X	
	On-Site Recycling			X					
	Composting Facility			X		X		X	

Figure 5.2: List of Identified Field Knowledges, classified by case, code, and mentions in interviews.

build relationships with our human and more than human neighbours, and develop the local environment.

Just as common as community gardens are community kitchens and talking spaces. These are implemented differently depending on the organization, and you may even have access to one in your community. When we stopped by Kai Rotorua, the first thing we did was to get to know each other at the outdoor kitchen table. Our interview at Understorey was held while sitting on their couches, drinking tea and coffee from their kettle. As I worked there, I would regularly be offered coffee or tea by the people working there. Almost all LDOs have a dedicated area for holding conversations and sharing food or drink. These conversations form a vital part of the landscapes of wellbeing within Aotearoa New Zealand by giving space for people to meet and share ideas and wisdom between neighbours and generations.

The last tool I want to mention is composting knowledge. I got to run my hands through a lot of compost while in the field. I have already shared how Kai Cycle uses bicycles to gather compost as a business model. Kai Rotorua also has a community compost area, and they set theirs up in partnership with Massey University to study the effect of different techniques. Understanding and caring for our land, our *whenua*, lies at the bedrock of development and *mauri ora* in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our contact at the Waitaki Resource Recovery Centre detailed a composting tour throughout North Island as the first step to setting up a composting facility. I want to end this short presentation of field knowledges with their story to explain the ramifications that composting practice can have on the local community.

> "I've just been on a composting tour. .. It was good seeing what they were doing, as well. And although we don't have extra land here that we could then develop on here, [we] would probably look at going to a different site because we're still residential, so we've got to be very careful with any smell that goes outside our boundary. And there's a top 10 holiday park across the road who, even though our mulch smells – to us and other people – sweet, they find it offensive. So we try to change processes on what we do."

- WRRP

(See Appendix A T.2)

These field knowledges are built upon a foundation of local community practice going back centuries. While I separated settler traditions and indigenous life ways in my analysis, I combined these categories in Figure 5.2. Many of these field knowledges draw on both local and foreign history and practice and have become locally embedded within Aotearoa New Zealand. Aspects of *mauri ora* can be found throughout the various field knowledges I discovered. By sharing these knowledges with each other, we participate in co-creating new knowledge and ways of being.

5.3 Official Perspectives

The stories I have shared through our conversation have shown the considerable diversity in knowledges of development in Aotearoa New Zealand. In my work, I have been classifying all the knowledges we have talked about to this point as 'local' or 'experience-based' knowledges. Frequently, these knowledges are earned through long periods of trial and error. Many of these knowledges also draw from expert knowledge systems to access funding and figure out solutions to tricky problems. The second part of my research question asks *how do these agendas relate to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems?*. As part of this analysis, I want to take an informed look at three of these officials in Christchurch. I will discuss other expert knowledge systems in the next chapter.

The officials I selected for this study are Gerry Brownlee, Bob Parker, and Mark Solomon. All three are included in the Central Christchurch Recovery Plan (CCRP) released in 2012. Gerry Brownlee was the New Zealand Earthquake Minister in charge of the federal response to the quakes, and his team put together the CCRP. Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker helped direct federal funds into rebuilding investments during the quake. Finally, Mark Solomon was the first Kaiwhakahaere (Chair) of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, the Māori governing body over most of South Island, set up in 1998. He provides a contrasting view to the other two officials in this

study. We can learn how local knowledges relate to these perspectives by looking at this document and the strategies and tools they chose to use to rebuild the city.

Gerry Brownlee was appointed head of the Christchurch Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) when the department was created in March 2011 (Church & McCammon, 2017). He oversaw the funnelling of 4 billion NZD into the various anchor projects and investment strategies outlined in the CCRP. In his view, the earthquakes were an 'unprecedented opportunity' to rebuild for the long term. Applying knowledge from international design and development experts, Brownlee used the 1906 San Francisco earthquake response to inspire this new international city. He called it 'the gateway to the South Island.' It was built around 17 anchor projects and relied on cooperation with "local government, iwi, businesses, investors, non-governmental organizations and the community". (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. iii).

Bob Parker shares Brownlee's enthusiasm for this new investment strategy. Parker saw the CCRP as a framework for directing foreign and local investment into community infrastructure projects such as hospitals, schools, and parks. The anchor project strategy presented by the CERA fits well with this perspective and allowed Parker to showcase a green and sustainable city to the world (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. iv).

Mark Solomon's perspective is muted in the CCRP. His statement is the shortest of the three included in this study and focuses on only three things: people and community, regional partnerships, and place-based resiliency. Solomon does not mention investment, anchor projects, or funding. Instead, he quotes local kaumātua and community leader Aroha Reriti-Crofts "Build the whānau and you will build the city" (CCRP, p.iv). His most direct statement was made in *te reo*, which, unlike the English text, makes Solomon's perspective on the quake clear. He calls it:

> He toki ki te rika e paopao nei i te ara whakamua mā tātou.
> *An axe to the age that is blocking the way forward for us.*
>
> - Mark Solomon
>
> *(Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. iv)*

The perspective of Ngāi Tahu throughout the report shows a similar disconnect. For example, the CCRP presents two histories of Christchurch. The first begins with the Ngāi Tahu migration to Canterbury and the gradual development of the region that later became known as Ōtautahi. The second begins much later, when "the city of Christchurch was founded in 1850 on flat, swampy ground where the Canterbury Plains meet the Port Hills" (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. 13). Each reads as a complete history of the city, a stand-alone narrative without any reference to the other.

We can understand this relationship by looking at the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act of 2002, which sets out government priorities in times of crisis (IRFC, 2021). This law gives the tools and strategies set out in the recovery plan precedence over any other functions or powers, including those legislated by the city council, the land transport and public transport management acts, and the conservation, reserves, and wildlife acts. As stated in the CCRP, officials empowered by these laws "must not make decisions that are inconsistent with the Recovery Plan. If there is an inconsistency, the Recovery Plan prevails." (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. 7).

The knowledges and strategies officials use in this recovery process are evidenced just as much by what the plan states as by what it omits. One of the first acts of the CERA was the decision to condemn thousands of residential properties in eastern Christchurch. While the city did offer to buy out insured homeowners in this 'red zoned' area, those without the legally required insurance were left on their own. Mike Coleman, a spokesman and leader of the Wider Earthquake Communities' Action Network (WeCan), asked in his outgoing statement, "Do people really care about the CBD, when they are struggling to find a place to live, pay mortgage, inflated rents, inflated insurance levies, rates on homes they do not live in?" (Coleman, 2013). In the CCRP, this event is mentioned in passing as one of many local 'memories' that residents might each remember differently.

This story highlights the central tension between national and local investment practices in the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan. On the one hand, the city received more than 100,000 suggestions on how to make the city more accessible, more di-

verse, and greener (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012). They made space for what they called 'the transitional phase,' which occurs between "early recovery through to return of a functioning central city" (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. 97). They explicitly use the developmental themes of environmental protectionism, a local and sustainable economy, and community resiliency. They also incorporated many aspects which protected the settler traditions of the city in order to bring them into the new and updated design. Their extensive use of *te reo* acknowledged Indigenous lifeways.

However, the message expressed by the language did not always match, as shown by Mark Solomon's use of *te reo* to call for a break from past practices. To make room for development, the CERA would condemn and demolish much of the city, including many historic churches and cultural sites. Additionally, their goal for high-quality inner-city housing within a growth-restricting frame of green space created some of the most expensive properties on the island, pricing out many locals in exchange for foreign investment. As Understorey puts it, "Most of the residential buildings that were there were completely destroyed, and now they're being replaced with really expensive, brand-new builds, which are being turned into Air-BnBs!" (See Appendix A T.1).

City investment in local transitional projects like Understorey was seen as a temporary informal solution which would slowly be phased out in favour of more permanent, long-term investment. These include 17 anchor projects, including two new sports centres, a new central library, a large shopping mall, a river park, and a bus interchange. In this document, I could only discover 6 of the 34 field knowledges I discussed earlier listed among these projects. 2 of these, community gardens and composting sites were only listed as projects 'that will be considered over the course of the recovery' (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. 59).

Several of the remaining knowledges I found listed under transitional strategies, including pop-up shops, land-sharing initiatives in the form of free parking, and affordable food markets. From the council's perspective, these tools and strategies act primarily as transitional knowledges, and will gradually be phased out in exchange for a modern, high-quality, developed core. I have included the city's transition

strategy in Figure 5.3.

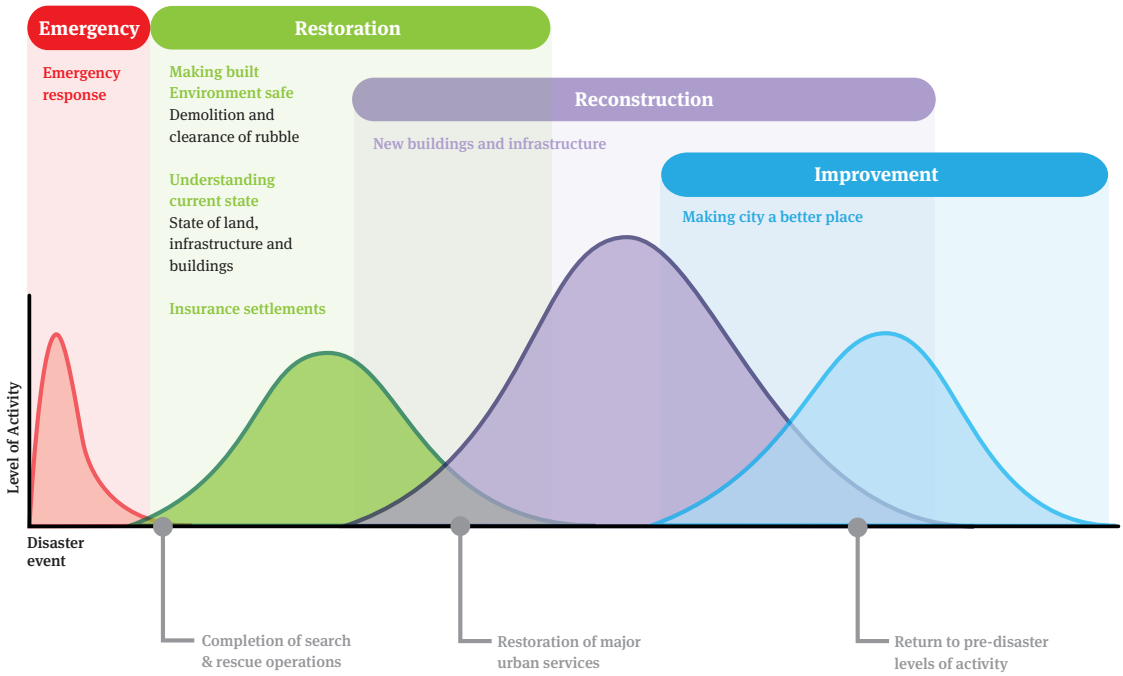

Figure 5.3: The Path to Recovery, taken from the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority, 2012, p. 99)

To apply for funding during this transition period, community-led development organizations used one of six guides and toolkits to assemble an application. I have chosen to focus on only one, called Shape Your Place. This toolkit provides recommendations for funding sources from both government and non-government sources. It also gives examples of successful projects, including one by The Green Lab called Koha Garden (Christchurch City Council, n.d.). This community space was a temporary installation built with permission of the local land owner, used to help enliven the community until the land owner decided to develop the property privately.

To pay for these projects, applicants can choose from one of many funding grants available. Five of the eight funds published their finances publicly and offered a combined total of NZD $8.3 million to applicants in the 2021/2022 financial year (Christchurch City Council, n.d.). While the requirements and guidelines for each fund differ, the Sustainability Fund gives us a helpful rubric to see how the city grades funding applications[1].

[1]This rubric can be found online at https://ccc.govt.nz/culture-and-community/community-funding/sustainability-fund/

According to this rubric, the city uses five criteria to grade funding applications: Relevance, Benefit, Legacy, Deliverable, and Measurable (Christchurch City Council, n.d.). When talking to Understorey, they mentioned that their project delivers on many of these criteria. They clearly outline their relevance and benefit to council agendas and keep detailed records of Understorey operations and demographics. As a pre-established site, Understorey also meets the requirement of being ready to deliver in four months. However, as discussed throughout this chapter, Understorey chooses to refrain from requiring payment from people who come by to use the space. Keeping to an opt-in payment strategy is a key part of their *kaupapa*. However, keeping the barrier to entry low means a heavier reliance on council funding to maintain operations and a long road to financial independence.

Looking through the perspectives of these various officials, the differences between expert and local knowledge systems become evident. The expert knowledge ecosystem is complex, and I will leave that discussion for another time. This project looks to emphasize local knowledge and discover how officials in expert knowledge systems perceive this local knowledge. The knowledges of development shared by these officials have an important place in the knowledge production cycle, and there is much to learn from these perspectives.

These officials also make important decisions that impact the financial security of LDOs in Aotearoa New Zealand. The stories we have heard from the different LDOs involved in this study have all shown how necessary transitional funding is to their operations. As the city moves from a transitional rebuilding state towards a 'functional central city,' they cut non-self-sustaining projects like Understorey to make room for larger anchor projects with more sustainable, long-term investors. Those projects that continue to get funded often fill in the gaps until a permanent installation takes their place.

5.4 Knowledge is a Tool

The knowledges we have discovered here are all tools in the development toolbox. Some, such as the operational and field knowledges discussed at the beginning of our conversation, are used by LDOs to address immediate and long-term needs within their communities. Others, like the city council development plan, use local knowledge as a temporary tool, which can be set aside once the development work is complete. Each person working in development uses these knowledges differently. By understanding these differences, we can evaluate how they fit within the larger narrative space of Aotearoa New Zealand.

In the next chapter, I introduce the knowledge production cycle, the process through which the knowledges discussed in this chapter change and evolve. Recent globalization trends have amplified this cycle, and many of the knowledges I found in my study are informed by development understandings taken from local contexts continents away. For example, many of the knowledges employed by Christchurch City Council are built off of a capitalist practice developed to promote specific financial independence knowledges including foreign investment and long-term financial planning.

Understorey has a distinct relationship with capitalism which can sometimes set them at odds with more mainstream economic knowledges, and they made that very clear in the interview.

> I think capitalist mentality is based on a scarcity model. And it's really hard to get people to step out of that. And even sometimes I catch myself stepping into that. [When] I noticed people have like, 'borrowed' something, I've written, or things like that, I'm like, 'Arrrgh!' And then I'm like, 'wait a minute. No, I want people to do that!' The whole purpose of setting this up is so that people steal it.
>
> - Understorey
>
> *(See Appendix A T.1)*

How we use these local or expert knowledges determines the outcome of our development efforts. It can be difficult, sometimes, to step out from our place of knowing. But by using knowledge as a tool, we can reshape our understanding of development. While I may not be a Kiwi, I recognize many of these tools and strategies. I encourage you to use these tools to broaden your approach to development. To all those who shared their knowledge with me, thank you for sharing your stories with all of us here. Until we meet again. *Ngā mihi nui* and *kia ora*.

Chapter 6

The Global Development System

6.1 A Land of Many Names

Aotearoa New Zealand is a land of many names. Each incorporates numerous knowledges embedded in time and space or abstracted into administrative 'high-modernist' frameworks. Take the name 'Aotearoa New Zealand,' for example. *Aotearoa*, place of the 'long white cloud' in *te Reo*, has recently come to represent the hybrid indigenous-settler identity embedded in the nation. The term likely originated referencing part or all of the North Island. 'New Zealand' is abstracted from Dutch settler history in Zeêland and more closely represents the administrative state established in the treaty of 1840 (Bishop, 2017). Look back through the previous chapters. Wherever I have used this full name, you will find a hidden moment of discourse between local and expert knowledges. The dialogue hidden in the etymology of this name is a perfect metaphor for the ongoing development discourse happening today.

This penultimate chapter draws together the thread that has tied this thesis together. Using Understorey as a guide and referencing the wealth of knowledges I have introduced, this chapter discusses development knowledges in the context of expert and local discourse in the era of globalization. In doing so, I first use project findings to build a model of the knowledge production cycle. Then, using this model, I discuss some of the ways that the development knowledges of Aotearoa

New Zealand relate to those used by officials in expert knowledge systems with a focus on uncovering the 'effects of truth' referenced in the methodology. By the end of this chapter, we will be ready to answer the research question guiding this thesis.

6.2 The Knowledge Production Cycle

The Knowledge Production Cycle is built off of ideas of knowledge and power introduced by Michel Foucault. Below, I have included a selection from his 1976 lecture to Le Collège de France. Stop here, for a moment, to capture the feeling behind these words. Afterwards, I rely on the power of abduction to guide the remaining discussion.

> "We have repeatedly encountered, at least at a superficial level, in the course of most recent times, an entire thematic to the effect that it is not theory but life that matters, not knowledge but reality, not books but money etc.; but it also seems to me that over and above, and arising out of this thematic, there is something else to which we are witness, and which we might describe as an insurrection of subjugated knowledges.
>
> I believe that by subjugated knowledges one should understand something else, something which in a sense is altogether different, namely, a whole set of knowledges that have been disqualified as inadequate to their task or insufficiently elaborated: naive knowledges, located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity. ... It is far from being a general commonsense knowledge, but is on the contrary a particular, local, regional knowledge, a differential knowledge incapable of unanimity and which owes its force only to the harshness with which it is opposed by everything surrounding it- that it is through the re-appearance of this knowledge, of these local popular knowledges, these disqualified knowledges, that criticism performs its work."
>
> - Michel Foucault
>
> *(Foucault & Gordon, 1980, pp. 81–82)*

Notice how Foucault gives directionality to knowledge. Local knowledges arise or appear from a place of obscurity. Foucault attempts to view this movement from outside the system of traditional knowledge, which we have re-specified here as 'expert' knowledges, yet remains invested in that system. We can say, therefore, that local knowleges *inform* expert knowledges through insurrection and criticism. This upward movement is a primary driving force in knowledge production, aided by expert actors inviting local knowledge holders into the expert knowledge space.

Many of the knowledges we discovered in the project analysis and discussion fit this typology. At the same time, many of these knowledges are legitimized and rationalized by their connection to expert knowledges and knowledge systems. Local actors make these abstracted frameworks concrete by embedding them in local practice. These actions, over time, transform this abstract expert knowledge into embedded reality, pulling down expert knowledge and using it to inform local knowledge. This embedding process is the primary force which counterbalances the upward movement of knowledge insurrection and is affected by expert actors promoting and enforcing expert policy.

Supporting these two primary forces are a host of secondary forces on both sides. Local and expert knowledge ecosystems are nearly infinite in their variety and complexity. The Community Economies Framework helps illuminate many mechanisms informing local knowledge ecosystems using visualizations like the iceberg (Figure 2.1). This approach shows how local knowledge systems are 'more than human,' incorporating embedded aspects of place (Yates, 2019; Yates et al., 2022). Scott helps illuminate the inner workings of expert knowledge systems, showing how the state shapes the possibility space of knowledge formation. In this 'high-modernist' model, efficiency and transparency necessary to run the state is gained at the expense of local complexity and dependency on specific ways of thinking (Scott, 1999). Figure 6.1 provides a generalized diagram of the knowledge production cycle.

This model helps us understand the tension between Ericksen's embedding and disembedding processes and the post-structural perspectives of the Community Economies Framework. As knowledges enter the expert knowledge space, they bring along views, biases, and dependencies particular to the time and space in which

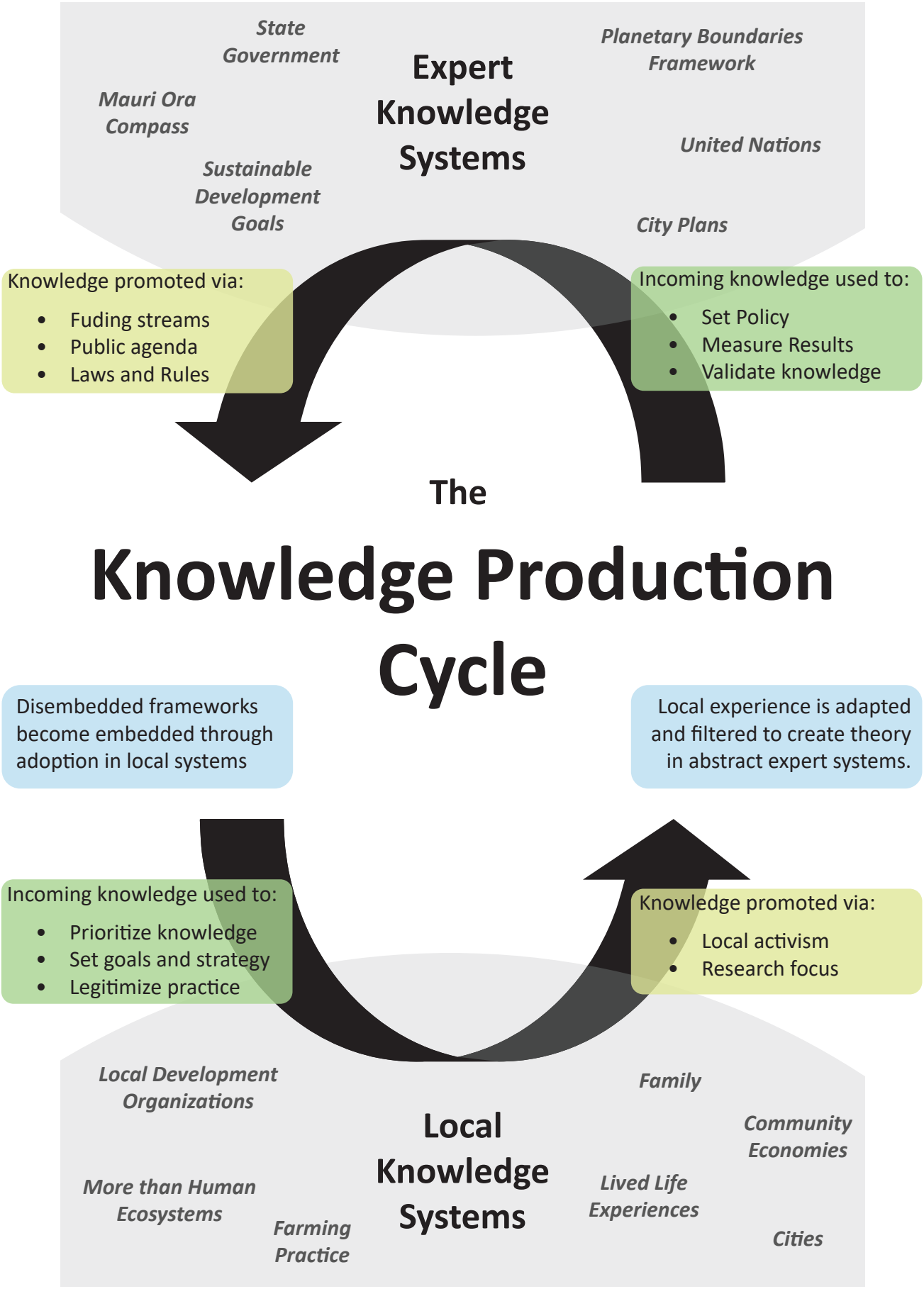

Figure 6.1: The Knowledge Production Cycle.

they were formed. Later on, local and expert actors work to embed this knowledge at a new time and/or place. Post-structuralist perspectives examine this process and identify the dependencies integral to the knowledge transferred into this new space. These perspectives provide tools like the CEF to help local actors avoid pitfalls accompanying the adoption of these types of knowledge structures. Eriksen's model of knowledge focuses more on how knowledge moves between knowledge regimes and how it evolves through processes of embedding, disembedding, and reembedding. Both approaches help us identify the transition point between expert and local practice.

6.3 Engaging with Expert Knowledge Systems

Understorey is very clear in its position within the knowledge production cycle. After our interview, our group briefly discussed how Understorey fits into the broader development space and the meaning behind its name. An understorey is a collaborative network of mutually dependent organisms working to maximize limited resources (See Appendix A T.1). The Understorey sits between the forest floor and the canopy, facilitating communication between those above and those below. If we look at the knowledges we have discovered, this position is reflected in their chosen tools. Understorey feels a responsibility to use its connections with the council to help others grow. Moreover, this growth does not have to be upwards. Understorey is willing to help individuals and organizations grow in whichever direction they will.

In the other direction, their relationship with expert knowledge systems in the form of Christchurch City Council is challenging to pin down. They engage with the council's funding system and help the city deliver their strategic vision by adapting their strategic and field knowledges to fit the task. In return, they receive some degree of stability through multi-year funding agreements. However, Understorey and The Green Lab must still use tricky negotiation tactics to extract much of the required funds. Even after reaching an agreement, the council could still cut funding, forcing out two other projects. Eventually, the council cut funding for Understorey itself.

As discussed in Chapter 5, Christchurch city council evaluates projects on five criteria. Understorey's most significant weaknesses in these criteria is in legacy, or ability to sustain the project beyond the funding period. By the traditional definition, a self-sustaining LDO raises as much money as it spends. On the topic of self-sustainability, Understorey tries to "be realistic about these things" in order to "turn this into sort of a little self-sustaining bubble." (See Appendix A T.1). However, it is equally important that Understorey deliver benefits according to their *Kaupapa*.

In order to do this, they try to 'marry' their user data to local demographics, and they have adopted a pay-as-you-will model for their co-working space. Value is primarily created by transferring knowledge and experience between Understorey and those they work with or exchanging goods and services. Measuring self-sustainability on these terms, similar to the CEROI model within the CEF (see Chapter 2.3), easily meets the legacy requirements for the council. Going by monetary value alone, however, Understorey failed to use its three-year financing agreement to properly 'leverage' the budget.

These discrepancies between two perspectives, between the locally concrete and the administratively abstract, are at the very heart of the research question. From the council's perspective, successful projects keep to council and community value frameworks, make their work statistically visible, and leverage the budget efficiently. From the local community perspective, successful projects are those most engaged in community building and mutual investment in common assets and returns more felt than measured. The time, money, goods and resources individuals choose to invest in an LDO are expected to result in greater individual and community wellbeing.

Christchurch Council also views the development knowledges in Understorey's toolbox much differently. For the council, these tools are best used in a temporary space. As the city rebuilt after the earthquake, the city saw a need for these development knowledges and provided funding for Understorey. But as the city began to function again, the funding for temporary development strategies was redirected. This linear model of four-stage growth, shown in Figure 5.3, re-imagines modernist linear development models of the 1950s and 1960s. The Green Lab (then called Greening

the Rubble) running Understorey saw this shift and decided to run a survey asking "Does the city still need Greening the Rubble?"

In their words, "the answer from that surveying, from that questioning was yes, a city is kind of always in flux. It's always shifting and reshaping, and population is constantly changing" (Understorey, see Appendix A T.1). Development is ultimately a way of addressing change. As people and places grow and evolve, development organizations are the ones that help keep things running. For example, when a changing economy puts you out of a job, a local community garden can reduce your grocery bill enough to make ends meet. Composting and recycling facilities help keep the economy local, sustainable, and affordable. By hosting workshops and social groups, LDOs like Understorey allow people to discuss common problems and work out the way forward together.

6.4 The Era of Globalization

The ecology of *Ōtautahi* Christchurch does not exist in a vacuum—development knowledges within the city form through a cycle of knowledge production that reaches across the globe. Eriksen defines our contemporary era as "a period of complex and uneven development, marked by crises which are increasingly perceived as being global in character, but which remain local in their effects" (Eriksen, 2017, p. 7), a process which some argue is quickly running out of control (Giddens, 2002). All of the LDOs in this study mentioned these crises. My study took place in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which upended systems worldwide, including in Aotearoa New Zealand. Many LDOs I worked with also orient their work to mitigate the ongoing climate crisis. These events shape development practice through direct impact and increasing knowledge sharing and adoption trends between Aotearoa New Zealand and the rest of the world.

The presence of foreign knowledge in Aotearoa New Zealand is not new, but recent trade, communication, and technology developments have accelerated the global knowledge production cycle. I have already mentioned how Understorey uses know-

ledge as a tool to freely share ideas to offset the competition of capitalism. I have also shown how the city uses a linear development model similar to early modernist ideologies. This high-modernist approach to development can be best understood using the knowledge production cycle in Figure 6.1.

We can break this example into a step-by-step process to unpack how this knowledge is produced. One place to begin is in 1959 when 'The Stages of Economic Growth' by W. W. Rostow was published. This book represents the point at which the idea of staged linear growth enters into expert knowledge systems. It is not the only point, but it is representative of a general societal push to the same effect. This work, and others like it, catalyzed the creation of a disembedded developmental knowledge framework we call modernism. This work has many biases and values specific to where and when it was published.

Over the next several decades, the idea of modernism would evolve and change. The idea of modernist development becomes linked to ideas of high-modernism and state control, transparency, and response (Scott, 1999). In 2002, the federal government of New Zealand passed the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act, laying out federal requirements for action in case of disaster (IRFC, 2021). These knowledges existed within an abstract international expert knowledge system which oversaw the administration of Christchurch. Evidence for these knowledges surfaces in knowledge artifacts, including laws, textbooks, and published articles, each entering the expert knowledge space through the hands of a knowledge creator informed by local and expert systems.

When the earthquake struck, experts exposed to these nebulous knowledges were mobilized to deal with the disaster. Working with Christchurch City Council, they released their recovery plan within a year of the quake. Laws and rules enforced this agenda and represent the point that these knowledges began to be re-embedded into local knowledge systems. This process was carried out by actors representing expert knowledge systems, such as the government's Earthquake Minister Gerry Brownlee and Mayor Bob Parker, and actors representing local knowledge systems, like the representative from Green Lab interviewed in this project.

The process by which this embedding happened differed in each system. Because the council had a position of power in the community, the council could write laws and rules and direct public funds to embed these knowledges from the top down. Many of these rules were built using experience disembedded from foreign disasters, such as the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Excellent examples of expert actors engaging in the embedding process are the council's anchor projects, their funding of transition projects in the CBD, and the red-zone district in eastern Christchurch. These actions transformed parts of the CBD into lively gathering places and many eastern urban neighbourhoods into empty green spaces. While in Christchurch, I biked through these new gathering places and stopped and talked to people from all over the country. I also rode from one end of the red zone to the other, biking for hours along crumbling asphalt through overgrown gardens and sunken foundations. The feeling of loss was overwhelming.

Actors like Understorey embed these knowledges differently. Instead of pushing from the top down, they coordinate with grassroots organizations to selectively pull down the knowledges that fit their individual needs. This bottom-up approach can enact rapid change but focuses on incremental knowledge sharing to strengthen local communities and deal with emergent issues through pre-established support structures. Some expert knowledge holders can act similarly. For example, Mark Solomon uses his position within the expert knowledge system to promote local community solutions by sharing the voices of local actors and refraining from dictating specific strategies.

As these knowledges are embedded in the community and Christchurch rebuilds, research groups like the Huritanga team come in to learn how these changes have affected local knowledge systems. At the same time, Understorey works to publish its knowledge through reports, briefings, and budget statements. They also share their knowledge through interviews with researchers from universities and government-funded research groups. These tools help reintroduce local knowledge into the expert knowledge system.

These processes of embedding and disembedding happen continuously as an ongoing dialogue between expert and local knowledge systems. Because knowledge changes

as it moves through expert and local space, those working in this border zone, such as Understorey and Christchurch City Council, often find themselves talking past one another. In this way, a project that local actors see as popular and thriving can be defunded by a government that sees it as unsustainable and temporary. Each actor evaluates the situation using knowledges dependent upon their particular system of knowing.

6.5 Knowledge is Development

Knowledge is many things. It can be a discourse or act as a research guide. Knowledge can be positionality, and what we know defines who we are. Knowledge is also a tool, and the way we use our knowledge can create powerful changes in our local community and the world. Furthermore, in this chapter, we have learned that knowledge is development. Sharing and evolving our knowledge through processes like the knowledge production cycle is what it means to develop personally and in our communities.

I came to this project with two goals in mind. The first was to discover the tools that community organizations in Aotearoa New Zealand use to gauge local development needs and meet community goals. I presented my findings in Chapter 5, and I am sure many more are waiting to be discovered in the interview texts I provided in the Appendix. Ultimately, however, all the tools I found were nothing more than knowledge, specialized and conditioned for the local ecology of each LDO. By sharing these knowledges with each other and with me as a researcher, these organizations gave communities the tools necessary to meet whatever goals they set. This type of open knowledge sharing embodies the spirit of *rangatiratanga* that I witnessed throughout the islands, and I have attempted to share this knowledge with you in an attempt to do the same.

I also came to this project to discover how these tools and strategies relate to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems. In this chapter, I have provided a model of the knowledge production cycle showing how local and expert actors inter-

act. The knowledge shared through this process often relies on values particular to specific local contexts. The Community Economies Framework shows how to avoid embedding assumptions that endanger our local culture and practice. Nevertheless, the processes of embedding and re-embedding are critical facets of knowledge creation. In my opinion, using capitalist, high modernist, or Community Economies ideology in local space is not wrong. Instead, we must avoid using our locally embedded understanding of these ideas to re-embed them elsewhere.

We need to rely on the embedded knowledges of local communities and give them the space they need to pull from abstract knowledge systems what they need and to adapt it as they will. Respecting the sovereignty of individuals over their own knowledge is development. Sharing and changing knowledge is development. Development is not simply an empty word with positive signification. It is a word that encompasses all the various ways of knowing, changing, and adapting in our societies. This change is happening at an ever-increasing rate in this era of globalization. By sharing our knowledge through discourse, research, tools, and development, we prepare ourselves to weather whatever earthquakes may come our way.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

How do we support those that do want to go up?
Can we provide shelter and habitat ...for a period of time before
they go shooting off into the sky?
(Understorey, see Appendix A T.1)

Knowledges of development are as varied as the people and places that develop them. In Aotearoa New Zealand, development knowledges support the community's needs, the environment, and the local economy. Historically, development happens from reasons grounded in indigenous lifeways and settler traditions, yet both have merged to create a modern local identity. Understorey is one member of this development ecosystem and the knowledges they have developed capture these core principles of life on the islands. Understorey stands at the heart of the knowledge production cycle, lifting local knowledges into expert spaces in exchange for funding and support from the government, council, and research groups like the Huritanga team. Understorey also serves as an interpreter of knowledge, helping local community members embed specialized practice into strategic and field operations.

In this way, knowledges of development evolve. This thesis asks two questions: First, *what tools do community organizations in New Zealand use to gauge local development needs and meet community goals?* Second, *how do their agendas relate to those drawn by officials in expert knowledge systems?*. I have used interview data,

reports, and official toolkits to answer these questions and discover how development happens. Decisions on renting private or common property, how to pay staff, where to apply for financing, how to run the business, and how to become self-sustaining are all critical to the success of LDOs in Aotearoa New Zealand. The knowledge behind these decisions informs events, community projects, accessibility strategies, and workshops.

Along the way, I have introduced the many forms that knowledge can take. Knowledge is discourse, shaping how we think as locals embedded in space and as experts interpreting abstract data from around the world. It influences how we structure our economies around the four pillars identified by the Community Economies Framework and drives growth and change within our communities. In Aotearoa New Zealand, knowledge discourse builds on several themes identified in the Mauri Ora Compass. Knowledge is a research guide, and my choice to focus on abduction, semi-structured interviews, and discourse analysis framed the project's conclusions. Knowledge is positionality, and my position as a researcher and student is shaped by my land, *wheuna*, and my family, *whanau*. Knowledge is a tool, and the strategic and field knowledges developed by Understorey, the WRRP, and others are deeply embedded within Aotearoa New Zealand space and history. Finally, knowledge is development. The process by which we discover, learn, and communicate with one another lies at the very heart of what it means to *become* as a community.

The mission of Understorey, their *Kaupapa*, reflects an innate understanding of the way knowledge works. In seeking to learn from the environment and community in which they worked, Understorey became an integral part of the day-to-day life of *Ōtautahi* Christchurch. They hosted a writers' workshop. They ran a co-working space. They filled their corner of the city with plants and life and created a space where local society's boundaries were softened, and people could reach across to learn from one another. They hosted queer games night, where people were introduced to each other in a space free from prejudice and discrimination. At Understorey, people were encouraged to express and develop their own identities in ways that would be nearly impossible outside that space. Understorey achieved its vision. They sheltered and supported all who came through their doors, whether they were

seeking to grow tall, spread wide, or change the way they lived from day to day.

Understorey also showed expertise in navigating the bureaucratic jungle. They leveraged the available funding to use local labour and community donations. They gathered user data to promote their space and keep it accessible to all in need within the community. They paid staff a living wage for the hours they could work and budgeted their expenses to stay within their means. They set and met business targets, built collaborative partnerships, and negotiated a values-based strategy that fits the city's vision.

In the end, however, Understorey did not last. The five metrics of council funding were used as evidence to cut support. From the perspective of officials in the expert knowledge space, Understorey failed to create a sustainable business. When Understorey was shut down, community members and the local landlord offered to cover business costs. Ultimately, these funds were insufficient to allow Understorey to continue operations without raising costs or cutting pay, violating their underlying *Kaupapa*. Understorey was shut down in December of 2022.

Nevertheless, there is more yet to come from the efforts of this innovative co-working space. While operations have ended, the knowledges developed are still present throughout the local community. The community gardens they supported, the writers they hosted, and the connections they built continue to grow and evolve within the community. In addition, the Green Lab, Understorey's parent organization, continues to promote small development projects around the city. One day, when the time is right, Understorey may return again.

After experiencing the saga of Understorey, it was tempting to become regretful and bitter about the prospect of local development within Christchurch. I saw the city building infrastructure for the affluent and focusing on foreign investment at the expense of local interests and identities. I thought as Yeates did in 'The Second Coming,' that the storm of our globalizing world prevented the expert falconers from hearing the cries of the falcon. However, I have come to believe something else entirely by studying forms and paths of knowledge that weaved through the Understorey experience.

Development is not an isolated event. It is not a machine built to change people and communities from one state into another. Knowledge and how we discover it is just as crucial to development as giving food or providing service. The change that Understorey brought about lies just as much in the struggle of its creation as it does in its day-to-day operations. Understorey accomplished something remarkable by tackling the knowledge production cycle at all stages, from the local through to the expert and back again. It changed the way the city thinks.

It has been over ten years since the quakes nearly levelled *Ōtautahi* Christchurch. As the seasons have changed, the city has been rebuilt with investment and planning brought in by expert officials. At the same time, local organizations have worked to develop new spaces where local values and knowledges can thrive. Sometimes this was done by sneaking seed bombs into the pockets of construction workers. Other times, this was done by integrating into systems of knowledge production and embedding and re-embedding development practice. Understorey represents only one part of a larger, dynamic whole, yet the knowledges they developed have begun to define the city. Thank you to those Kiwis who have stuck with me to the end. I encourage you to visit the *Ōtautahi* Christchurch and see what the city has become.

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Appendix A

Interviews and Field Notes

The following field notes and interviews were gathered while I lived in Aotearoa New Zealand between August and October 2022. I have attempted to transcribe interview recordings as close to the original text as possible. All knowledges presented in these texts are owned by the respective knowledge holder in adherence to the *rangatiratanga* and sovereignty of the participants of this study. I am grateful to each and every person in this study, including those who were not included in the final case selection. *Ngā mihi* and thank you. Until we meet again.

- *JEBT* Eric Bunderson Toler (JEBT)

T Interview Transcripts

T.1 Understorey (by the Green Lab)

Interview conducted Sept 12, 2022

Participants:

- *The Green Lab Representative*
- *Interviewer A*
- *Interviewer B*
- *JEBT*

Location:
Understorey Common Area

Interview Start

The Green Lab Representative

Can we just do a little introduction of each other, just so that we're all aware of where we are at? And so you all hopefully have a way.

I'm *The Green Lab Representative*, my pronouns are 'they,' 'them.' I've been running the Green Lab since 2019, end of 2019, but I joined in 2018.

Background is in contemporary art. I have a Master's degree as an artist, but volunteer in things like, curating and community organization. As part of that I'm really interested in well-being economies, ways to upset capitalism and just generally create a better kind of world for all of us to be in. So I also believe in Understorey which is a little nugget of something, which I hope might show that this is something

that we can do into the future. And all three of you are studying us in different ways. Or, studying in adjacent fields.

So, yeah, I thought it would be, rather than me having three separate conversations just to have a conversation altogether and also hopefully that, we can also get you chances to cross-pollinate and share each other's research and things like that if that's appropriate, so, Okay, thanks for coming in.

I'm gonna throw it over to you.

Interviewer A

Ok, I'm *Interviewer A*. I'm doing my PhD weirdly enough in the business school at UC. But that's just because my supervisors are there. So I came up through the arts and my undergrad honours [degree] was in sociology and anthropology where I sort of got introduced to the term capitalism and what that all meant.

And so anyway from now, with my PhD, I'm really interested in the work part of the economy. Sort of been reading a lot of anti-work and, like, post-work literature and then basically decided that I wanted to look at the Understorey as part of one of my case studies. So looking at the repair revolution also in Christchurch and then the Understorey of course, as just sort of thinking about more than capital –

Oh hey Kelly!

Dr. Kelly Dombroski

Hi

Interviewer A

Yeah. More than capital ways of organizing and then of course this is a workspace. So, I thought it was really awesome and I wanted to learn more about it.

Interviewer B

Yeah, I'm *Interviewer B*. I'm from Norway. And I'm doing an internship here as part of my Masters in globalization and sustainable development. I also have a background in economics, a bachelor's degree. So that's where I feel like the

field where I learnt most is like economics and community economics, which I've been introduced to recently, so my internship, in my internship, I'm researching community economics and return on investment.

Yeah, so yeah, just started so everything is still very new. But yeah, that is sort of like, where it goes. I'm trying to put a monetary value on investments of time and energy resources.

JEBT

And then my name is Jason. 'He' 'him' are my pronouns.

Kelly

See you guys later

Everyone

See you!

JEBT

I'm from North America, generally, and I am doing a master's program right now with *Interviewer B*, we're in the same program together, and I am here, studying urban renewal and transformative change.

So I'm doing a bunch of small tiny little case studies on dozens of different sites and places and organizations throughout New Zealand and the rest of the world. And we're putting together a report for the Rotorua city council on how transformative change works.

Interviewer A

Awesome.

The Green Lab Representative

It's an interesting place to be working.

JEBT

Apparently they uh, they want someone figuring out how to do it, especially with what's been happening recently because if you guys have been following the news over the past month with their homeless situation in Rotorua. Been having some deaths. This is how their policy works.

Interviewer A

Right.

The Green Lab Representative

That's terrible.

JEBT

Yeah, yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

Okay. So there seems to be like a really nice little Venn diagram between all of your practices which makes me really happy, I'm all about the Venn diagram. So what, I mean, we have a little bit of time this afternoon, what's the most useful way, kind of approaching this? I'm really happy to answer questions about what we do if that's helpful for all of you like to kind of give you that background so that I can do that once, rather than three times or four times, or however many it is between Kelly and Sally and all of the other people that we've worked with. What's, do you want to ask questions, what's the best way to ...

Interviewer A

I guess, a general rundown would be useful.

I personally would like to talk through aligning what I'm trying to do with something that would help you guys,

The Green Lab Representative

Great, Sounds good.

Interviewer A

But yeah, I would be keen to hear some background,

The Green Lab Representative

So a general ...

Interviewer A

Yeah, how it works.

The Green Lab Representative

start with a general run-through? This is really helpful for me because I'm currently writing a presentation to Rotary, which I have to do for Wednesday. So, help me organize my brain a little too.

JEBT

Interesting place to work.

The Green Lab Representative

I don't know. I don't know if we'll even get any funding out of it. it's just getting our name in front of people that connected within that space. And so we talked a little bit about at the start, the Green Lab started in 2010 as Greening the Rubble and it was a post quake organization, specifically formed out of that disaster. So there's a whole, I'm sure you all have lots of literature around post-quake Christchurch, it's been used as a case study for disaster rebuild, like in academia across the world.

It's a very, very interesting set of circumstances to, I guess, spawn new ways of thinking. And I think there's sort of three core organizations that came out of that period, which are still operating in the central city particularly, which is ourselves, Gap-Filler, and Life in Vacant Spaces. And then all three organizations still have central city, central council funding from Christchurch City Council, which we're currently two years into a three-year funding agreement with them.

And so the initial people that formed Greening the Rubble were possibly, maybe a little bit more ecologically focused than we currently are, although I feel like they're sides of the same coin. Around 2010 there was a very strong kind of that first wave

of climate change, kind of, movement was very present in the media. And it was very much around, literally what the name says, greening the rubble. And the first kind of interventions were that sort of thing, were literally sending seed bombs in the pockets of recovery workers, and people that were allowed in the cordoned-off areas. So I'm not sure if you know much about the history of the earthquakes, but there was one in 2010 in either September or October, that was really big but didn't do too much damage because of where it was centred. It was still a really life-shattering event but nobody died in that one. But the second one in February of 2011 killed 185 people and was centred directly under the central city and we lost 75% of the buildings, which is a huge, huge amount of social fabric to be kind of destroyed over.

And the destruction of that was not just instantaneous. It was like, buildings were still coming down when I moved to Christchurch in 2015 you know they were still working out how to detonate and destroy buildings which were no longer safe for habitation. So it was a long period of destruction and like, I guess tearing the fabric of people's kind of social mapping.

So all three of those organizations, Gap-Filler, Greening the Rubble, and Life in Vacant Spaces kind of started with the same general goal, which was to fill those gaps, was to green the rubble, was to make sure that there was life in vacant spaces, there's kind of a nugget in all of that where each one of the organizations was trying to provide a way into returning to the central city. To supporting the central city's wellbeing, to encourage play and like noticing the beauty of plants or whatever it was, like to provide relief from an earthquake context

As we've moved further away from that the need for those organizations has shifted. Our organization went through a period probably in 2017 when the board of the time asked some very serious questions. Like is there a point in us continuing from this point? Does the city still need Greening the Rubble?

Because at that time we sort of got rid of a lot of those rubble sites and there was a lot of rebuild happening, all that sort of thing. But the answer from that surveying, from that questioning, was yes, a city is kind of always in flux. It's always shifting

and reshaping and population is constantly changing.

But also, I guess the pressures of that earthquake, there's a lot of mental health issues, in Ōtautahi specifically there's a lot of, you know, there was lots of babies that were, you know, they're quake babies, my son's thirteen, he was one when it all happened. Like there's a lot more anxiety coming through all that sort of thing. So this, it was those sort of things that people are aware of. But also I think, I feel like, with the amping up of, you know, like all these global events climate change because there's pressure on late-stage capitalism, to kind of squeeze us into being more productive, less and less connected with each other and then lockdowns happen with the plague.

I'm not gonna stop calling it that. People are like 'What plague?' and I'm like, you know, the global pandemic? Yeah, they, you know, and that changed the way that we were working as well. So I think it feels very clear to my board at the moment and to us as an organization, that there's still a need for organizations like ours that are offering alternative possibilities that are taking care of our communities where we can, offering ways for communities to take care of themselves by providing, you know, I guess that first boost of momentum with things, like the community garden that you visited the other night. You know, we'll work with a community for a year or so. And then let them take over and be self-sustaining, but I guess that's where we see ourselves fitting into the ecology of the cities, you know, maybe a little bit of a 'Hey, we could do things differently,' a little bit of a 'community gardens and like social green spaces are awesome,' and a little bit 'capitalism sucks.' It's kind of where we sit. In the organization itself there are, like shockingly I'm up to about nine people which seems very strange because when I started there were three of us and, but we're all I have 32 hours a week, but everybody else is super part-time. By choice and physical limitation as well. So, I'm pretty conscious of making sure that the work situation is comfortable for those that are working with me.

So I have people that have chronic illness that can't do more than sort of 10 to 12 hours a week and that's fine. And then I have people that have their own creative practice or like another thing that they're pursuing, and they only work the same amount of time a week as well.

So, that kind of structure of the organization is reasonably flexible with them that have, within the individuals' needs, rather than trying to force everybody onto the same role and shape, which is, I guess kind the *Kaupapa*. I don't know if you've come across that word yet? Probably, maybe?

Interviewer B

Yeah

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. Do you have a general sense of the umbrella-ing of what that is, like the theme and purpose and like values of it? Yeah, it's kind of all those things.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. It's a helpful umbrella word if you have a sense of it but maybe it's too short of one. Would you, can you think of other...

Interviewer A

I feel, yeah, those descriptors, I think, yeah, that's how I would describe it. Yeah, purpose. Okay.

The Green Lab Representative

Purpose and how you, yeah. Okay,

Interviewer A

Like your ethics, I guess?

The Green Lab Representative

Ethics. Yeah.

JEBT

Basically the *raison d'être*.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. Also that, yeah. But yeah, it can be a little bit bigger than that or like wider than */audio error/* maybe can be like the theme of the discussion as well, so, yeah.

Is that?

Interviewer A

That sounded amazing.

The Green Lab Representative

So I think we have the equivalent 2.45 full-time workers. So it's not a lot of people hours so out of them we try and do as much as we can. We have a certain number of products we have to deliver within our council spending agreement, which is at the moment is seven projects over three years, and I think, four, at least four of them have to be central city.

Interviewer B

So then a community garden can be one of those.

The Green Lab Representative

Yes, one project.

Interviewer B

Do you enrol in several projects at the same time? Or do you do one project and then move on to the next one?

The Green Lab Representative

Usually, there usually is crossover.

Interviewer B

Yeah

The Green Lab Representative

Bcause there's different people that work on different things.

Interviewer B

Yes exactly. But it's not like you could do five community gardens at the same time. It's like, what are these things?

The Green Lab Representative

Oh, no! At least, well I mean if I had funding to do it and enough people that I knew could deliver within our *Kaupapa*, then we could.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

But we're kind of limited by both funding and capacity.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

So, yeah I mean theoretically if I had enough funding to pay somebody full time they could do maybe two community gardens at once. Do two days at one or two days at another and have an admin day.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

But I don't have that much funding.

Interviewer B

Yeah

The Green Lab Representative

It would be dreams to have that much funding. I'm also conscious that, like I mean we say community garden but it might be a community gathering space, or a, you know, something that provides wayfinding or somewhere for people to come together or, given that there are a lot of community gardens in Christchurch and we're not responsible for very many of them.

And it's, I don't know, this is the longest project I think we've ever done where we've occupied the project. Before I started at The Green Lab there was a lot of, um, I don't want to say just plop projects, but they kind of were like, we would build a project and just leave it to speak for itself.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

And that was the nature of putting projects in public space. They became like little parks and different spaces, and that's for me, that's part of something you can do. But the longer we have worked, the more that's obvious that the community connections are not built just in the construction thereof.

It's how you maintain that, how you provide space for people and sometimes that means hosting a space. So.

Interviewer A

So with those seven projects over three years, have any of them, like what are those?

The Green Lab Representative

So we have been graciously allowed to count the two versions of Understorey as two projects – thankfully, as they were. Moving this is a massive amount of work.

Interviewer A

Yeah, I can imagine.

The Green Lab Representative

And then, so there's the *Mairehau* community garden and we're working on one other project which is in the direct development phase of the moment, which is gonna be called *Wāhi Taiao*.

It's a space for nature which is an outdoor gathering.

Interviewer A

Cool.

The Green Lab Representative

Kind of reflective of The Pod, but we're a bit different.

Interviewer A

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

I mean those kind of boundaries around projects are quite arbitrarily defined for council.

Interviewer A

Right, Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

So for this *(gesturing to the space)*, this is a single project, but we have things like Queer Games Night which is a monthly occasion.

Interviewer A

I saw the poster on Facebook.

The Green Lab Representative

Or *Whare Tīhau* starts again tomorrow which is a monthly *reo* and social club for

those who got *whakapapa* Maori in their *whanau* and various other applications that come along with this that build community. And somehow the council sees all of that as one project due to numbers.

Interviewer A

A long going on, and a lot to organize.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. So it's, you know ... I have super funding for queer games, for example, so it's serving a very specific community need.

Interviewer A

Right.

The Green Lab Representative

So I was able to, you know, it's kind of almost it's own project within a project.

Interviewer B

It's sort of been somewhere else. And then it will be ..

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. But because we have the space and like this — the — I think there's a safety in knowing that we've put together a space, we know who can be in here, and when, or how this space works.

Interviewer B

Yeah. And it's nice to use it.

The Green Lab Representative

And the crossover between the queers that like, play board games and the queers that like plants is pretty high.

All

Laughter

The Green Lab Representative

It's nearly a circular Venn diagram.

Interviewer B

And how - this might be a question that is, there's an obvious answer to. But these products for example, community garden. How does it work? Is it a community reaching out to you? Do they pay for it? Do you use the funding to buy the things that they — how is — ?

The Green Lab Representative

I will spend more time with you on this because I know that this is very important to your research, but it's a little bit of all of the things that you just said.

So in this case, the community that we're working with was referred to us by another community that we've previously done a building *project?* with.

Interviewer B

Yeah, you said.

The Green Lab Representative

And there's usually a period of meeting and negotiation and going, 'Well how does this work?'. And so for us we might have to say we've got—I'm just going to throw numbers at it—like we've got $20,000 that we can bring to a project and that includes our time, materials, budget, and whatever else we can put towards it. And what have you got that you can bring to the project? And they might not have a specific number but they might have somebody that's employed one day a week that can, like, participate in the organizing of people, they might have some materials budget, they might be happy to go to a specific funder and say, 'hey, we've got this opportunity, can you give us some funding?' And those budget things usually work out as you go along. We usually start with a, 'we have this amount of budget' which, in reality, looks like 250 hours and, plus, a small amount for materials.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

And we usually work as much as we can to then, what the council likes to call 'leverage' that budget by talking to suppliers and getting them to sponsor accountables. Or getting the garden, or the community, to approach the suppliers to ask for sponsorship. Yeah. So we have a reasonable success rate with getting sponsorship with other people's projects. It's harder to get ongoing sponsorship of our projects.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

It's an interesting buzz, but, for example, for this project, actually City Care are an ongoing supporter. They would have spent maybe $2,000 to clear the site for us. So digging up the car park that was there and scraping it back so that there was no contaminant and that top layer of soil. And they brought a digger in and they did that like right at the beginning of the project. And that's, we didn't have to organize that beyond having a meeting with them on site and saying, this is what we need doing. Here's the full spread and the lines, off you go.

Interviewer B and ***Interviewer A***

Right.

The Green Lab Representative

And that's, I mean, in the early days, I've looked at some of the project budgets from before I was involved and in that period of time when the construction industry was just booming because they were building all the new things and tearing old things down, you know, they would spend, you know, they'd be like, oh, we've got twenty guys who are doing a community volunteering day. Like what do you want done? And we'll come to your site with diggers and like 20 people's worth of hours? Or,

whatever. And then contribution would be you know, in the tens of thousands of dollars and now it's a lot harder to get that now.

Interviewer B and ***Interviewer A***

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

We're still working through some of those processes. That's, we get a lot of *pro bono* help from organizations at the design phase, like, Black Robin who is in here are gonna help us with the construction drawings for the *Wāhi Taiao* pods, and that design has been done by DC and Merlin which is a landscaping architecture firm.

And they'll be putting, I'm asking them for like how many hours and like a dollar value set so that we can report back on it.

Interviewer B

So it's instead of it being like, if this was a commercial thing, it would be somebody contacting me and you have an amount that it would cost you.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

Interviewer B

It'd be like, yep, you have to pay us this and then we will get you this. But instead, it's more of a collaboration.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

Interviewer B

Yeah. So yeah, we have this to offer and you have this to offer and we're together gonna make this.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. And I think I'm, I think part of the joy, I guess one of the things that motivates me to work in a non-profit, is that it kind of creates reasons to collaborate. I don't like the forced, the false competition of capitalism. Like, I'm not here to compete with anyone. I'm much more interested in how we can all find ways to work together and provide value for everyone.

So, like, when we said this up, for example, we had maybe 20 odd businesses that gave us furniture, or little bits and pieces, to support the first version of Understorey. The one that's still here and has been for every year is the printer. We're not paying for the hire of that we just pay for printing and that's Sharp.

We're like, we love what you're doing. We want to support it. You know, what, what's something that would help? Do you want a printer, do you want a display monitor? And they came and installed it, they moved it three time for us. We haven't paid for any of that.

And we're just about to, I've just written an MOU, we're gonna be doing some greening of the offices as a bit of a trade.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

So they get a super-discounted rate for that.

Interviewer A

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

Like "we'll loan you some plans and you'll loan us a printer and everyone will be happy. But, you earn lots of money so you can pay us a little bit for that." But you know, that's the sort of vibe.

At the previous industry we had, like, a really big dining table that sat, like, maybe 15 people if you pushed it, not with COVID, but, you know, like a really beautiful

table from the local and sustainable furniture manufactory and things like that. That, you know, they just lent it to us for nearly a year.

Interviewer B

Wow, that's great! Um ...

The Green Lab Representative

So, stuff like that. Then they also lent us like, they make really sustainable bean bags which are really inaccessibly priced for an organization like ours, but they loaned us for a year. Cause it meant that their products was getting in front of people. They came and did a photoshoot for their website in this space, but we were able to kind of work together in that way. So it's like there's not really a dollar value on any of those things, but everybody was getting something out of it.

Interviewer B

Yeah, exactly.

Interviewer A

Yeah.

PAUSE

Interviewer B

Oh, before I forget, I saw that you had added me in the workspace, you know, what you sent me a picture of? But I, uh,

The Green Lab Representative

I need to resend it because it expired?

Interviewer B

Yeah, that's, sorry.

The Green Lab Representative

No, that's fine.

Interviewer B

Thank you. Perfect.

Interviewer A

.. to Kelly, since you mentioned that, the whole invoicing for using this space. So, did she figure out how to do that?

The Green Lab Representative

I think we're doing one through Massey but I don't ...

Interviewer A

Oh yeah, true. I think, I'll have to ask her about that.

The Green Lab Representative

I think it was just, uh, setting up us as a supplier and sending an invoice to her for X amount of months or whatever it is.

And yeah, I mean this is also ... So, we have an agreement through Life In Vacant Spaces. Their purpose as an organization is to facilitate the use of spaces that would otherwise be sitting empty. Which gives, you know, entrepreneurs, gives creatives, gives people that want to do plant-filled workspaces, that sort of thing, a chance to be in those spaces without necessary having to pay the full commercial fee.

But that does involve partnership with private landlords. So the big, there's often an agreement between Life in Vacant Spaces and the landlord. They negotiate, whatever that is, and then our organization pays a fee, which covers a certain amount to them and they pay the landlord.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

And as part of that, Life in Vacant Spaces is able to access a rates rebate for the landlord for the proportion of the tenancy that we occupy. So I guess it's another

way for the city council to encourage tenanting spaces. And to not leave it.

Interviewer A

Yeah, cause it's ..

The Green Lab Representative

The council likes to use the phrase "a broken smile," which I just absolutely hate. But that's the term that they use. They don't want it to be lots of vacant spaces in the central city because it like, like, it impacts the city center as a whole.

Interviewer A

Yeah, I feel there's still so much. But, you know, cause I recently went to England to see family and then came back and had to drive through the city to get back to my house. I just forgot how much rubble and containers and random stuff are still, you know.. And my parents' neighbours only just rebuilt their house.

The Green Lab Representative

Yep **nodding agreement**.

Interviewer B

Wow. That's taken some time.

Interviewer A

Yeah, a very long time.

The Green Lab Representative

I've heard people say that it's like when the quakes happened they're like 'it was like a ten year rebuilding.' Like, people have since said that it was just a way to get people to not despair, but it's probably gonna be fifty. You know, before we get back to that level of population density.

Interviewer A

Yeah. Right.

The Green Lab Representative

And I mean we say a lot of this but like, if you look back through the stats, they were having problems with the central city population density before the quakes.

So we have I don't know how much of Christchurch you know, *(tears off a sheet of paper and lays it in front of the group)* but if the central city is like here, there's a really big mall here, here, here, and here.

All

Laughter

The Green Lab Representative

So we were already a donut city.

Interviewer A

Yeah, that's true.

The Green Lab Representative

There was nothing happening here anyway. Like the population before the quakes between like 1980 and 2010 remained probably about 20,000 in this area. There was not really any growth, not really any decline. Post-quakes absolutely shattered that.

Most of the residential buildings that were there were completely destroyed and now they're being replaced with really expensive, brand-new builds, which are being turned into Air-BnBs!

Interviewer B

Yeah, exactly.

The Green Lab Representative

So there is the goal to try and get higher than this population back to the central city and it's been in the council's long-term plan for a really long time and I think part of the reason that they still keep funding us is that we're part of what makes

the central city somewhere that people can be.

Interviewer A

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

It's a relatively small investment for a relatively high return and so, it's really complicated, like the central city here is a very complicated space. It's multiple levels of problem.

JEBT

Did it change with the plague? In 2020 did it change? When everyone had to leave?

The Green Lab Representative

So there was kind of quite a lot of, I mean, for some reason, this country likes restaurants as a startup business and so many of them fail, I can't remember the exact stats but it's a really high percentage of restaurant startups fail. But the hospitality industry just, because a lot of that central city ground floor is hospitality and it just absolutely got slammed that first... , because we were locked down for the three and a half months or something?

Interviewer A

Yeah

The Green Lab Representative

Like before you could even get takeaways. So there was a whole bunch of businesses that weren't getting any income.

JEBT

You couldn't get takeaway?

The Green Lab Representative

No. There was nothing. Everybody was literally home during this period.

JEBT

So you weren't open either.

The Green Lab Representative

We weren't open, no. But, I mean this didn't start until September last year so we're just a year old. But it was created in response to I guess a lot of the changes in the way that people are working that hybrid model that people started during lockdown. Working at home doesn't actually suit a lot of people. It's not very good for our social isolation stats. And it's also like it's a class-based issue too.

Like if you can't afford Wi-Fi at home,

Interviewer B

Or a separate room.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah, or separate space, or, you know,

Interviewer A

Or a nice quality, nice quality ...

The Green Lab Representative

Sometimes I just want to get away from my cat, to be honest. Like I kind of mentioned what it's like trying to work with a really, really busy family.

Interviewer B

Three toddlers.

The Green Lab Representative

Three toddlers. So, providing a space where it would, were like big commitments for people to have to, you know, you don't have to pay a month in advance. You don't have to pay a day in advance. You can just show up on the day of, and if you can't afford to pay for that day then don't.

Interviewer B

Right

The Green Lab Representative

You know. And offering that, I was a little bit worried at the start when we kind of started offering it that people would, you know there's always that fear that people will take advantage of that kind of generosity, but actually what we found is that most people pay the middle rate.

Interviewer B

Yeah, that's great.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. So if they can pay they are. And if they can't then it depends. The lower rate is the second most, so...

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

I think people like the idea of being able to help out other people as well, and if you give people the opportunity to participate in community that usually helps.

Interviewer B

And you also have very low fees.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

Interviewer B

So, for example, I've noticed that a lot of you guys don't double-glaze your houses so you know, in the winter I can imagine that it, it's almost cheaper coming here.

The Green Lab Representative

So there's all of those things that we were sort of thinking about when we made this. And it might not all be written down anywhere, because we don't have time to do the writing of it but those are definitely part of the consideration.

In the stats that we had out at our first couple of understories was definitely things like—one of my favourite ones to trot out to council is that it's like we're 72 or 73% women and non-binary people. Which to me, like, I don't have the direct correlation, but like, I do know that when the first lockdown hit 11,000 women lost their jobs. I know that women are generally the people that are doing child care, have multiple commitments struggle with, like, long-term commitment to spaces when they have to be very flexible with child care or that sort of thing. Um you know the people that maybe are disadvantaged by, like, a really business-oriented workspace were able to use our space.

And we're not, we're certainly not 70% women and non-binary people across the general population.

We also found the stat, um, when we looked at self-nominated, like ethnic distribution the first couple married quite closely the census data for Christchurch, which was actually very, very reassuring, that we weren't, kind of, leaving anybody out.

I don't know how we will fare with this newer version. This a wonderful space but it is located in a very white-wellness space, which is okay, it's serving purpose, but it does, this part of town is not frequented by people and I don't know if we hit the capacity or like that reach potential to reach people that like don't know that this is here well enough to kind of, or, that they would feel safe enough coming through.

Interviewer B

Yeah. Walking in those doors and ..

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah, it's a barrier. Yeah, and I guess we better be realistic about these things. And workout whether if we can turn this into sort of a little self-sustaining bubble,

whether or not that's like, if we got to the point where it was self-sustaining with a little bit on top, which we could put it to other community projects, whether that would be worthwhile or whether it needs to move somewhere, where it's more accessible to other demographics.

What was the question, sorry?

Interviewer B

And it's hard too because, you know, this is just my thoughts after three weeks here, but I feel like if people knew what it was like, how this vibe is and what kind of people are here and like you can come as you are, right? It would, I feel like that the space is not the, well this space *(gesturing to Understorey)* is not the problem, but that space *(gesturing to the mall outside the doors)* might be the problem because people don't, you know they don't access this place, if that makes sense.

The Green Lab Representative

Yep. And there's not street frontage, and there's not...

Anyhow long-term we probably need somewhere with more natural light. My plant person she's like, every time I go and look at a new place, she's like "where the windows?" Sorry, sorry. K, not this one. Fine.

What if I took the awning off, would that work?

Everyone

Laughs

Interviewer B

I was wondering if we, one day, not today, but if we, just sometime in this week, could just look into, oh, my meeting with Kelly today. And if we could look into, I'm trying to make like a first draft of the first part of the CEROI. So if we could sit down one day and just take a look at it, I just haven't made it yet.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah, that's totally fine. Let me know.

Interviewer B

Yes, perfect. Thank you.

The Green Lab Representative

And do you have any questions? Is this useful?

JEBT

Oh, It's very useful. I mean, I'm a little bit jealous to be honest because they don't have this where I'm from, or anything like this where I'm from, and we, my husband, he's been trying to write his PhD dissertation at home for six years.

We've got two dogs and you know they take up most of his time. We've lived across, we've moved from Canada to Norway in that time, and it doesn't work. Just doesn't. So having a place like this would be, I mean, he'd be done in six months.

The Green Lab Representative

We have a few people that are doing PhDs in, it's good to see them. Especially the Wednesday writers' group, right? People frantically writing their PhD.

JEBT

It would just be amazing.

It seems, it seems listening to you talk about the interactions with the city council. It seems almost as if the role of the city council is to make it as difficult as possible.

The Green Lab Representative

You can say that, I can't say that, they feed me.

Everyone

laughter

JEBT

But I mean do you experience a lot of you know, seemingly arbitrary restriction?

The Green Lab Representative

I think because we have a 10-year history working with them we have a few little pathways through. And I think part of the responsibility of having this funding is for us to make it easier for others. So, when we go through a process with a community garden and it gives it that kind of momentum at the start, we've already done that. So we know how to get the land license from, I think we worked with LIVS too, and they have the legal templates. You don't have to hire a lawyer because they already have all that set out and they can go through that with the landlord and then we can go through council and check that there's no building restrictions on any of the structures that we're looking at and that we're in the right zone for whatever project we're doing. Is it mixed use? Is it commercial? Is it, you know, if it's purely residential we might be in trouble.

All of that sort of stuff. So it's kind of, I think the council funds our organizations in order to kind of create a few little pathways through them.

And they do other funding as well. And I think whilst there's a lot of bureaucratic mind games within council they also are quite good at funding other organizations to do the work that the bureaucracy prevents them doing themselves.

JEBT

So the city council does two things. They give you money to work.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

JEBT

And then they provide access to institutions that let you deal with the red tape?

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. Well, they provide access through their own red tape.

JEBT

All right.

The Green Lab Representative

Sometimes it takes me a lot of emails but....

JEBT

OK. Do you think a newcomer, like if there is an organization that the city council wanted to sponsor, do they have that sort of toolkit available that they can give to people or is there something you've had to figure out through trial and error?

The Green Lab Representative

So if you go on their website, they have a toolkit, can't remember it's called. It's, I don't find it particularly useful, but that's maybe because I've had those experiences, but they..., so like as a starting out point, they would suggest you go through like some of the smaller grant funding and it's usually about having like a little bit of a track record of, like, I've done this before and they have various different departments and councils.

So we're part of urban regeneration. But there's like the Events Department which'll have a separate super-funding. And then there's like a community funding pot, which I think it's called Strengthening Communities, which has a reasonably high subscription rate, But they will give multi-year funding to the organization.

So, like, there's a queer youth organization that get's multi-year funding for that and it's because they're providing infrastructure which the city as a whole needs. But the council doesn't want to provide itself.

Usually, they'll only part fund. A lot of the funds are like: "we'll fund up to X% of your project and you have to demonstrate that you have enough funding, or like the rest of its covered."

And some of that you can say with like putting a dollar value on your volunteer hours which you know, sometimes it can be like 40 50% of a projects' value and

you've got volunteers showing up every week.

So it's all, there's all like lots of different ways through that.

JEBT

Do you, does the city council require a lot of you, is it a trust-based model, your relationship, or do they require transparency, accountability? All those budgetary requirements?

The Green Lab Representative

A bit of both.

So I've been working with them for more than a decade now. So there is a reasonable amount of trust when we negotiated our three-year funding, we went to them with a, like this is what we want to do for three years and they came back and we negotiated to the point where both parties were happy. They then gave us less funding and I said, we're gonna drop two projects. You're giving us less money, we're gonna do less projects.

So that's the sort of, it's quite a good relationship in that way. We do have to provide six-monthly reports. So once, like a ...

JEBT

Six?

The Green Lab Representative

Oh, no no. Like, six, like twice a year.

JEBT

Oh, twice a year. Biannually.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah biannual reporting. So, one's like a halfway of the year and then there's an end of year report and that goes through to the, the sitting council has access to our documents, but the summary of it goes out publicly.

JEBT

And do they have like requirements that have to be in that report?

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah, we have a list of things that we have to report back on, so

JEBT

And is it quantitative, qualitative or just ..

The Green Lab Representative

Both? Yeah, user demographics, how many things we delivered and then like verbal written feedback. And you know for those and, this is the before and after of this project and all that sort of stuff. It's a lot.

JEBT

Yeah, that sounds like a lot.

The Green Lab Representative

But that's, any kind of philanthropic funding kind of works like that?

JEBT

There's a standard development practice when you deal with organizations around those, like, types of things and those often are the very barriers that stop people from getting into the funding in the first place.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. And that's the, so, because we have that funding it means that like as much as we can, we can try and umbrella other organizations that might not have charitable trust datas or whatever.

JEBT

So you can be like a parent or a sponsor.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. So if somebody else wanted to do a project with us and they wanted to apply for funding but they didn't have incorporated status we could apply for that funding and hold it for them and..

JEBT

Then, include that in your report, and.. OK. Do you have an administration branch or is that just you?

The Green Lab Representative

No, I have somebody that does accounts and some amazing stuff for 8 hours a week. I do a lot of it as well but she all of the nice zero things which makes our life a lot easier.

Yeah, I bought in somebody to do an overhaul of our accounts and systems in early last year I think it was. Or was it the year before? I feel like it was last year. It can't be last year. It was only last year. But that's changed again because now I can run a project report and it tells me how much we've spent, how much how much is left based on the, like, budget predictions that I've done and where it was spent. So when council is like we want to know how much money you spent on our grant. I can just like click them as a funder and it prints out a sheet. And It's like this much on salaries, this much on projects this much on the materials, this much on whatever and just send it to them.

Interviewer A

That is so much simpler.

The Green Lab Representative

That shit's glorious because it used to take me so long.

Interviewer A

Do you find a lot of the organizations in Christchurch should kind of have been in competition for funding? Or do you feel that you're all kind of in the same boat,

kind of like 'Oh, I needed that?'

The Green Lab Representative

I think that's—again, this is one of the problems of spawning unnecessary competition. But also the like limited pool of funds.

Interviewer A

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

That is a bit of both. Like, I'm more inclined towards sharing resources and like not competing with each other for funding. But going, 'well can we apply together?' or, like 'what projects can we do that are — or are there ways that we can support each other?'

Interviewer A

Yeah

The Green Lab Representative

That's not always possible. That relies on a very high trust model. And I think capitalist mentality is based on a scarcity model. And it's really hard to get people to step out of that.

And even sometimes I catch myself stepping into that. Yeah, where like I noticed people have like, 'borrowed' something, I've written, or things like that and I'm like, 'Arrrgh.' And then I'm like, 'wait a minute. No, I want people to do that!' The whole purpose of setting this up is so that people steal it.

So it's that kind of like the psychology of ownership and scarcity and false competition is something that I'm kind of interested in not participating in. But it is hard not to because only, you know, like a funder will come back to you and you've spent, you know, a good week or two on a funding application, they'd be like 'not enough funds!'

And you're like, could you not have just put that on the website? Like, that you had not enough funds to meet demand?

Interviewer A

Yeah, exactly.

The Green Lab Representative

Because then I wouldn't have bothered applying.

Interviewer B

Mm-mm. You could have spent those two weeks on something else, you know?

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah, yeah. And I think that's, I mean, there's probably loads of reporting in literature and plenty of surveys for the not-for-profit community. Things like, 'what is your biggest barrier?'

And it's always like the bureaucracy of funding and the solution is always for people to trust us more. And people say that they don't have 'em and still have a six-page application form, so...

Interviewer A

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

Well, there's some funders have like less reporting than others like, with the projects we're, like, ¡*Rounthe*¿ foundation's pretty good on reporting like if things don't go exactly as you have planned as long as you tell them how and where things went, then they're not usually too worried about seeing the exact cost breakdown of thing blow-by-blow, which is nice. But other funders, you can't even get the funding without having like three quotes for the same item.

Interviewer B

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

Those are the ones we do not bother.

Interviewer B

Yeah, we have a lot of those problems back home as well, where you need to have a receipt to get the money. And then it's like, so my father is doing this thing for a youth club back home and he's done everything himself and he really wanted to buy furniture used, right?

But then you don't get a receipt. So then he's not getting the money for it so he has to buy brand new things. And it's like, 'okay, fine.' Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

And like the time it takes. Like, sure. I understand if you're like that, that process works if you're buying like a uniform for a group of 20 children.

Interviewer B

Yeah

The Green Lab Representative

You can go, I need 20 t-shirts, 20 shorts, 20 pairs of socks, 20 pairs of boots. You're done. You can get quotes for those easy, but if you're doing a project like this, I'm like, I need approximately 350 plans of all different varieties.

Interviewer B

Yeah, exactly.

The Green Lab Representative

And the cost of those keeps going like this, because whichever is part of the week, it's more expensive.

Interviewer B

And then it's like, okay, I can drive over there and get them but that will cost me,

right? So it's like, all these things that you won't get funding for. And then you have to do it, like, the more expensive way, less sustainable way, it takes more time.

You know,

JEBT

There seems to be an inverse relationship between efficacy and transparency.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

Love that. I'm gonna use that in my next response to a funder.

JEBT

I mean, you want to be transparent, it's the democratic thing to do, but it just takes so much time and effort. Like, when I was working with my church organization, they had a very effective organization where they were able to help all of the widows in the area, they were able to give food to everybody, but they just did that based on what felt right and they didn't keep track of where all their donations went. They just went into a big pot and they pulled out of it whenever they needed to.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. And I mean, for us, if we could, say they're a funder, we need $10,000 worth of the materials for this project, it'll go on plants like wood fixings, soil, whatever, I can't tell you exactly the quantity of each of those yet because I haven't had conversations with suppliers even. But to do all that work before getting the funding is like ... long sigh.

Anyway. We should probably move to a different line of investigation because I can bitch about funding more, but ...

Everyone

Laughter

The Green Lab Representative

How inefficient it is as a model, but how necessary it is when you have a space like this. And I guess the other like thing right now, particularly, is like so many of our funding sources come from gambling which is a huge social problem so. And it's almost impossible to avoid it.

JEBT

Public funding comes from gambling?

The Green Lab Representative

One of the biggest social funders is the lotteries commission, which is funded by lotto.

Interviewer B

That's actually the same in Norway.

JEBT

Well, they made that illegal now.

The Green Lab Representative

I mean, it would be great. And I mean, on one side of that, you have to sit with like, well, I'm taking funds from this problem and turning it into community benefit.

But on the other hand, like the continuation of providing gambling machines to low-income communities is still creating a problem. We're not going to solve their problem by creating green spaces for people to hang out. Cause they're addicted to gambling, so it's hard.

Interviewer B

Yeah, it is.

Interviewer A

How do you find people find out and decide to come and use the Understorey?

The Green Lab Representative

I can pull the stats up for that. A lot of it's word of mouth. And we've done social media campaigns. We've done.... We did a radio campaign with RDU for a little while, unfortunately, that kind of kicked off right when we moved into that sort of really big OMICRON wave in March. Just delightful. I was like, 'I've just got this radio thing organized and now everybody's staying at home. Wonderful.'

We did a poster campaign for the first Understorey as well, with Phantom Billstickers, which was quite good. Got quite a few people through that. And I think we've got signage, which I want to put on the street now, which hopefully will help direct people here.

But I think part of us running events and having events is also that invitation to like come to an event and then people are like: 'Oh, what is this place?'

Those are probably our kind of key ways of getting people ... [to come in].

We had, on the website there's like a podcast from the first Understorey and things on there too.

So I was interviewed by PlainsFM, or something like that, for their head segment and you know, we did all the new project launch sort of stuff. Like, there was a picture in the press and stuff like that for the first one month. We're sort of a year past that now it's hard to get free publicity from the media when it's not a new project.

(Quick coffee break).

Interviewer B

This is very interesting.

Interviewer A

It must be so difficult to make decisions about what to put time and effort into when everything is so uncertain.

The Green Lab Representative

In general, and in our organization.

Interviewer A

Yeah.

The Green Lab Representative

I think having three-year funding has really made it a lot easier in a lot of ways because when we worked on year-to year, it was very difficult to get traction on anything.

I was like, 'I don't know if I'm gonna have a job in three months!'

Like the security for our staff has been a lot better.

Interviewer B

I read in the 'Life in Vacant Spaces' book, I can't remember what project it was, but it was one of the projects where they had a lease for 30 days at a time.

The Green Lab Representative

That's what we're on, yeah.

Interviewer B

Yeah, and that must almost be like, so I, I can understand that most times, you know, it goes on by itself and it's all cool, but, you know, if you suddenly just get the message and like 30 days and you have to be out. It's a very like unstable, very like,

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah

Interviewer B

How do you build something on that?

The Green Lab Representative

A lot of trust. I mean, when we were at our last venue, we got 30 days notice and I had to find somewhere else for us to go and negotiate a new agreement and all of

that sort of stuff –

Interviewer B

In 30 days?

The Green Lab Representative

within 30 days and organize the moving of everything.

Interviewer B

That's crazy.

The Green Lab Representative

So that's yeah. That's one of the things that, having a long-term lease would make it a lot easier to cope with that stuff.

Interviewer B

And then of course like a 30-day lease also protects the owner of the land. Like I get that part, it just makes it very vulnerable.

The Green Lab Representative

But I think it's, I mean, it's still playing into that, like if they got a tenant that was willing to pay full market value. Then that's obviously the preference than a project that might create a good feeling in the space that isn't paying as much as it would be. And that's the, I guess that's the payoff for us is that it allows us to come into these spaces without paying those full ...

Interviewer B

It's a lower price but a higher insecurity, or like.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. So that's the cost. The cost of making a space where it is, you know, you can come in for five dollars a day. You know, if we were paying full market rate, we couldn't do that I don't think.

Interviewer B

That's not much, that's less than a coffee.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah. And that was always the purpose was to make it less than, a coffee cause like, hopefully most people can find a way to give that.

Interviewer B

And then you can also sit here instead of sitting at a coffee shop.

The Green Lab Representative

I mean, if you have any brilliant ideas on how to reach more people, please let me know. Because, you know.

Interviewer A

Public reels.

Interviewer B

Yeah!

Interviewer A

Cause that's how everybody gets their information.

The Green Lab Representative

True, I need to make more reels. It's not my favourite.

Interviewer A

It's not even a tik-tok thing anymore. It's like,

The Green Lab Representative

It's just reels everywhere.

Interviewer A

Yeah, you know those reels.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah, we don't have a tik-tok account, so ...

Interviewer A

That's kind of, it's interesting seeing all the different types of organizations using tik-tok. Cause it's just like, I don't know, it's like when Facebook used to be like the cool space and then it just turned into a business.

***Interviewer B*s**

Yeah.

JEBT

Well that's the thing. As soon as the businesses go on the platform, it turns into a business platform and so people move into something new. So is there in point in ... (all this)?

The Green Lab Representative

I feel like Instagram is probably our little niche. Because of the - the nature of the work is quite visual, you know? So that's been .. you know, we have probably the same amount of followers on Facebook and Instagram which is not too bad. It's a little bit ... three and a half thousand or three, just over three thousand on both.

Which is, It's not that many, but it's also a huge amount of if you haven't paid for them.

And the stats are pretty local. Like, there's 3,000 people and most of those people are in Christchurch or at least in Aotearoa.

It's actually real people we're engaging with, not bots.

Interviewer A

Yeah, true.

The Green Lab Representative

Food for thought?

Interviewer A

Yeah, a lot.

Goodbyes and End of Interview.

INTERVIEW END

Post Interview comments:

The Green Lab Representative

I feel like we're not quite at the bottom. I think that's part of why it's called Understorey is really thinking about that.

So, we're not in that grassroots level, we're in that tier between ..

JEBT

You wouldn't consider yourself a, community member that needed this and created it?

The Green Lab Representative

Well, I mean, yes, in some ways but no, in, like, that I have an almost full-time job with a regular income and I get paid to do this work.

Grassroots is action from community where people are not getting paid and are doing things in collaboration with each other based out of need and care that doesn't involve a financial transaction, I don't think.

JEBT

So you would .. OK.

The Green Lab Representative

And like we can be a conduit between grassroots and council and I think that's the

important part of how we are.

JEBT

So were you hired for this, or did you volunteer here?

The Green Lab Representative

I was higher for the green lab, not for this specifically.

JEBT

It's really interesting how you see grassroots being outside of capitalist structures.

The Green Lab Representative

I think it tries to link in but I think it starts outside.

JEBT

It starts outside.

The Green Lab Representative

Yeah.

Other Comments

The Green Lab Representative

She had it specifically made for thinking about what we were doing, which is quite helpful. But I think I've never, so like, Understorey was chosen as a metaphor for where we feel that we sit. Like I'm not interested in us becoming the big trees or the canopy right?

JEBT

You're not trying to make a profit.

The Green Lab Representative

Nope, not trying to make a profit but also not trying to be, like we don't need to take up that space. We don't need to grow to that extent like, we're localized.

JEBT

So I can't ask you to set up a branch in Norway and..

The Green Lab Representative

Probably not. I mean but the thing is like I'm open to sharing the model you know what I mean? But I don't want to run it. And also I think that like what we're doing here works because Christchurch maybe has the experience of lots of pop-up projects and like understands that you know we might have to move or we might have to, you know, like there's a willingness to engage in that kind of temporality, uh, short-term project.

Final Comments

The Green Lab Representative

I think you've seen this paper or at least parts of it?

So for me, a visualize where we sit in the Understorey is an understorey specialist. And they've been working on models based on like interconnectedness of a forest and we have often framed the way that nature works together as very competitive but actually it's quite collaborative and all of the networks between trees and their offspring ...

Interviewer A

The secret life of trees?

The Green Lab Representative

The secret life of trees, but also like mushrooms.

Interviewer A

Yeah, totally.

The Green Lab Representative

And the mycorrhizal network, they're all kind of talking to each other and like, in a healthy ecosystem you have to have, like, the big trees provide shelter for the trees

that are coming up. But also, you have a whole level of plants that are diverse that create like biodiversity for your, for your pollinators for your animals, for the other plants around them.

Like you have to have that diversity. That. It can't just be a monocrop. And when we move into monocropping the whole ecosystem falls apart.

You know this!

So, like, I guess we're trying to conceptualize the city as that. Like, we don't need, like, some big corporations? Sure. Fine. But like, actually, what makes the city interesting to live in is the Understorey.

Yeah. And the grassroots feeds into that. But, you know also operates without. You know, it's not necessarily there, yeah, so that's how I think about it. And that's why it's called understorey.

It's like, how do we support .. How do we support those that do want to go up?

Can we provide shelter and habitat and whatever for them for a period of time before they go shooting off into the into the sky or, you know, the, the grassroots below that maybe we'll always be like the moss covering the forest floor and dealing with those small problems that like communities can very specifically get into but you can't take it out beyond enablement scale.

That was, I guess a way for me to visualize what we were doing.

JEBT

Growth does not always have to be upwards.

The Green Lab Representative

No, it doesn't.

T.2 Waitaki Resource Recovery Park

Interview conducted Sept 21, 2022

Participants:

- *WRRP Representative*
- *Dr. Kelly Dombroski (Kelly)*
- *JEBT*

Location:
WRRP Head Office

Interview Start

***Kelly*:**

We won't take up more than a few minutes of your time.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, that's okay. I'm not too worried about that.

***Kelly*:**

Thanks great.

***WRRP Representative*:**

The problem is, I end up talking for long periods of time and end up talking too long, sometimes, because I'm really passionate about –

***Kelly*:**

Those are the kinds of people we love when we're researchers!

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, so we've been going for nearly 20 years.

So originally it was started and it was only two mornings a week. And was just solely drop off of recyclable material. And then it extended to four days a week and so on and so on.

So we are actually open seven days a week. And we process – So the last financial year from July '21 to June '22, we recycled round about nearly two and a half thousand ton of material (that's through our site).

***Kelly*:**

That's very exciting, two and a half thousand tons.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah.

***Kelly*:**

That's a massive operation!

***WRRP Representative*:**

It is, yeah.

JEBT:

Are there (a lot of) people?

***WRRP Representative*:**

There is, there's lots.

So we pride ourselves on the fact that we're just not doing recycling, we're actually recovering of people. So we take a lot of people who are marginalized, don't get employment elsewhere, and we build them up so that they're capable to be able to move into full-time employment or move to other areas of employment and quite a few of them we take on ourselves. So if we haven't got a position available then we'll help them gain employment somewhere else.

We also run a literacy program that's available for all our employees and they still get paid while they're doing it. So they don't lose any money. Because what we've noticed over the years especially with marginalized people when they come through is they do the five-pocket-shuffle looking for glasses, saying they've left their glasses but in actual fact, a lot of them can't read or write.

So we do that, we've taught some of our staff how to cook. One staff member just recently, he – fantastic worker we didn't want to lose him but – he was late every single day.

So we then got him an alarm clock so that they had the tools to be able to get to work.

***Kelly*:**

I love that.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So yeah, we're not about finding reasons to make people leave. We're about finding reasons to make them stay.

***Kelly*:**

And how many people are employed here now?

***WRRP Representative*:**

So we've got roughly, equivalent to about 15 to 18 full timers. But we also have anywhere up to 20 volunteers, as well. So it's quite big. We could always do with more staff but budgets and that sort of thing because we are a non-profit organization. So we do have to be careful that we're not, you know, in the red too much every year.

***Kelly*:**

So is it a charitable trust?

***WRRP Representative*:**

It is yes.

***Kelly*:**

Okay

***WRRP Representative*:**

So we have several different areas here. So we've got our shop where we sell second-hand goods that come in. We've got our garden corner where we actually recycle plants and sell them over there, or as we do buy some and but, you know, to make the plant area sustainable as well.

We also have quite a team of volunteers over there. There's about six volunteers in that area as well. We have the local MenzShed here. So they've got a site here and so they have, I think they've got about 10 volunteers in that area as well.

We've also got what we call our domestic drop off. So that's where anybody coming in – because we don't have a curbside collection in Oamaru. So that's where people bring their recycling in directly. They see the guys in there and we hand sort. So that's why we have such a quality product.

And it's more sought after what we do because it's plain, as you can see why.

The bale that's going around there. So we don't have a high contamination rate in our bales, which is really great.

***Kelly*:**

And we do those bales go?

***WRRP Representative*:**

So those ones, that one there was soft plastic. So we're part of the soft plastic packaging forum. So, we signed up with them. We accept soft plastics. We bale it and send it away back up to them. So they go up to Future Post in the North Island and get made into fence posts.

***Kelly*:**

I saw an article about that!

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah. And so we were also the first place in New Zealand where we could recycle the Tetra-pack products. So like yeah, like *¡unclear¿*.

***Kelly*:**

Soy milks is my thing, we go through so many of them!

***WRRP Representative*:**

So I was on a study tour, a couple years ago now, nearly a couple years ago and there was a man on there from Tetra-pack and I said, well, 'You're not gonna want to speak to me.' and he goes, 'Oh why is that?' And I said 'because your product is rubbish.'

***Kelly*:**

Oh I see.

***WRRP Representative*:**

I said, 'Plain and simple. It's got so many components to it. It's absolute rubbish.' And so me and him actually ended up talking a great deal over the period of the tour. And then after the tour as well and we sort of, you know, he said, 'well how would you like to do a trial of recycling them?' And so we did.

And so we've sent away pretty much round about 9 to 10 ton of between soft plastics and Tetra-packs away which is an extra, you know, 9 to 10 ton that's not going into landfill and we previously would -

***Kelly*:**

So where do you send it?

***WRRP Representative*:**

So we send it, it gets sent to Hamilton, back to them, and then they send it to save - well it goes to Save Board and gets made into building sheets, so instead of like

gib board and things like that or the custom boards, you can actually use them as well, so their website's really good.

And so it would be worthwhile having a look at that.

***Kelly*:**

And so that's all within country, it's not going overseas. ***WRRP Representative*:**

So there's only, we send 95% of the products that we recycle here in New Zealand. There's only one thing that we send offshore.

***Kelly*:**

What's that?

***WRRP Representative*:**

That's *cylotrack?*, unfortunately, there's nobody in New Zealand who will touch it, unfortunately.

***Kelly*:**

But I mean, that's impressive because that's not the situation probably 20 years ago when you started.

***WRRP Representative*:**

And it's also not the situation for a lot of other people in New Zealand. A lot of them are still sending offshore.

***Kelly*:**

So is that reflecting of your values as a manager?

***WRRP Representative*:** Yes. Yeah. We would rather recycle it in New Zealand as much as what we possibly can rather than sending anything overseas and at least, then we know that whatever's happening to it in New Zealand is guaranteed that that's what's happening with it. So yes. And we do ask the questions by, you know, when we send it away, what is happening with it?

I have been around three of the sites in New Zealand that is actually accepting our stuff and seen their processes as well. So that's really good to get a good gauge of what's happening in that as well.

Jason:

Is there an extra cost to sending it locally? Or is it just a knowledge gap between yourself and others?

***WRRP Representative*:**

There is an extra cost. The freight from Oamaru to anywhere in New Zealand is actually quite expensive. So, you know, we have to take into effect the freight and then, you know, the money we're gonna make from it because even though we're not for profit, we need to be sustainable so that we can continue employing people and doing what we're doing.

Sometimes you would get more by sending it offshore but we would still rather do it responsibly in our own country then, you know, adding to the carbon footprint as well. And a lot of stuff we do try to send by rail. So there's not as much carbon footprint for each of the items as well.

So we're very, very conscious of on what we're doing.

***Kelly*:**

I've so many curious questions about – But what – I'll try and say the two so you can help me remember them. But one is – oh no, they're going! – One is to hear more about you and how you got into this. And the other question is about, has anyone done any overall assessment around carbon, you know carbon saving or anything for your organization?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah I'll start with a second one cause I hate talking about myself.

***Kelly*:**

I can see that!

***WRRP Representative*:**

I like to talk very slow. So carbon footprint – I have started to look into it a little bit but don't understand it enough myself to be able to do the overall picture just yet but I have started to look into it a little bit. But I'd say the most carbon footprint print that we actually create would be the fact that we have to – like staff getting to work and going home.

And the vehicles that do come through our site. Because we do get 80,000 cars coming into our site to drop off recyclables a year. That's not the people, that's just how many cars come through. And as you can see by the constant flow of traffic, and today is one of our quiet days.

So yeah so yeah that is one of the things and also the carbon that we have to use to create to make the stuff recyclable. So we've got green waste. So we mulch that up, and make it into a mulch, sort of, like a garden enhancer.

And so there's the carbon for that as well and then, you know, that going out the door and then the, you know, so there's lots of different components to it. So even though we are trying to be sustainable and develop a sustainable way of life, there's gonna be a lot of carbon associated to that because in order for us to make the products recyclable –

***Kelly*:**

But then you're preventing a whole lot of things going into landfill, which weighs that out.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yes, it does. Yeah, so yeah, so once I get my head around it. Yeah, I'll be able to look into that a lot more.

Kelly:

Oh no. I mean, the reason I asked is because I feel like one of the strengths of our wider research program is that we connected in with researchers all over the country and if that was something that you wanted someone to come in and do, I mean I

can't promise anything and I can't do it either – I don't know how to do it – but you know, like if the student enrolled and that was a project that they wanted to do, you know that could be a way of the researchers supporting your organization.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, that would, we would certainly look into doing something like that. Yeah.

***Kelly*:**

Yeah. That's cool. Yeah.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So I've been here for 15 years.

So, originally, I left school at 15, I didn't have a great time at school. So I didn't even have school C [certificate] or anything like that. And I had been working in lots of other different fields from preschool, you know, helping preschools and things like that in cooking.

And I was actually a dry cleaner for a number of years as well. And I seen that ad in the paper for an office person. And I thought, I know how to turn on a computer. I know how to do PAYA and GST.

***Kelly*:**

There you go!

***WRRP Representative*:**

Cause I've done it as a treasurer. But apart from that, I actually had no office experience at all. And so I thought, well, I won't apply and then, oh yeah I will. So I applied and I came and I had my interview and I was honest and open about my experience. And but that I am a fast learner and so I had a chance to come in and do one morning volunteering just to see how it would go.

And before the first hour was up, I was offered a job.

***Kelly*:**

I love it, love those stories.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So yeah. And so the next day in I've brought chocolate cake. Because I'm an amazing baker.

***Kelly*:**

Well there you go. I hope you said that in the interview too!

***WRRP Representative*:**

No, no, I always try to downplay myself as much as possible, but –

***Kelly*:**

I remember my mom ringing me from the office when she got her first job. Like 'I have to open a word document. Can you tell me what a word document is?' And I would be at home on the phone going, 'Can you see a little blue W?' you know.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So I take lots of notes, like, I've bought notebooks and I go through about 10 a year. But when I was in there with a lady because I actually only had half a morning training with her before she was due to leave, because they hadn't been able to get anybody. And there was supposed to be another lady coming and volunteer the afternoon. But I had a notebook with me and I was writing down the processes, like, I've never ever used a payroll program, you know, accounting program at all.

And so, I was writing it down and she goes, 'oh, you -.' And I said, 'you don't mind me writing it down even though I'm volunteering, because if I need to, you know, do more or if I do get the job, at least I've started.' And they said no.

So that was one of the things that they loved about the fact that I was, you know, proactive about, you know –

***Kelly*:**

– taking responsibility to write it all down! So you don't have to ask the same person

over and over again which is probably what I would have done.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So yeah. So and plus it was also audit time. So we get audited every year with being a charitable trust. And so also had to do an audit and I've never ever done anything like that again.

***Kelly*:**

That's huge.

***WRRP Representative*:**

It was. And, about a week or two after I got the job, I found out that the whole park was in jeopardy and because of council funding and things like that. So it was looking like the park was going to close. And so, my boss actually, Maren, at the time said to me, that, you know, if you want to leave, you can and there's no hard feelings because of the situation, but one of the local – one of our local supporters, actually ended up doing a march, organizing a March and they walked from here to the local council and it was a, you know, very quiet and calm march. But it was enough to make the council realize what an asset they actually had.

***Kelly*:**

Yeah! Otherwise they would have to do half of that stuff, eh?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah. And so we've been here ever since. So, yes. So I was just in the office and later became health and safety officer and site manager quite quickly because I showed initiative and thing like that.

And last year I completed a diploma in business management.

***Kelly*:**

Wow, congratulations!

***WRRP Representative*:**

And I've been the boss now for coming up three years. So slowly moved through but, there's not one area here that I can't do. So I'm the only one who's actually trained to cover every single area we've got. So if there's a need, if we're short staffed, I just throw on some gloves and a vest and go out and give a hand and, you know.

***Kelly*:**

What would you say is the thing that you're most proud of with this organization achieving?

***WRRP Representative*:**

To be totally honest, I think it's the people, the people that we rescue. We also work with the likes of corrections, we take on community workers, we work with schools, we do youth programs. And to me, it's more about the recovery of people. It gives them a sense of somewhere to go and belonging.

Just to give you a little example. Quite a number of years ago, we had a young guy come through corrections and he was doing PD work and he was just about finished his hours. Like he originally had 200 hours that he had to do. So it's quite a lot. And he only had about two weeks left to go. And he changed, his whole attitude changed, he had become withdrawn and wasn't talking like he had been and I said to him I said, 'what's wrong?'

And he goes, 'I don't know what to do, you know?'

And I said, 'what do you mean, you don't know what to do? You know, if I can help I'll help.'

And he goes, 'I'm gonna have to offend again.'

And I said, 'Why're you gonna have to offend again?'

And he goes, 'So I can come back.'

I said 'you don't have to offend; you can stay as a volunteer!'

***Kelly*:**

Just ask, yeah, that's right! That's brilliant.

***WRRP Representative*:**

And he did, he stayed for quite a while.

And then we helped him get a full-time job and it was the first full-time job he'd ever had in his life. And it's, you know, it's just things like that and to me those are the stories that actually make the place. You know, yes, we are doing the right thing by the environment, but we're actually also doing the right thing by the people.

Yeah.

JEBT:

Same thing in some ways.

***Kelly*:**

It is, yeah, they're not separate.

***WRRP Representative*:**

We've got one volunteer, he's now in his seventies, and he's been with us pretty much, not long after we started, but when his sister passed away, it was actually really after her funeral that she could go peacefully knowing he had a home. Yeah, because we took him in and we look after him. And he doesn't have paid work, but that's because we could never pay him as much as he could get off his disabilities. But he's happy to volunteer, he's got a home. He comes here now, only twice a week but he still calls in on his off days and has a cuppa but it's those sorts of stories you couldn't write, you know, or write a script on those stories because it's just what happens.

***Kelly*:**

So two follow up questions to that. One is the other side of that question. What's the thing that's the most challenging? And then I want to come around to the operational like – and do you get contracts from council or how does all that work?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, so the most challenging thing would be staff as well.

***Kelly*:**

That's always the way, isn't it?

***WRRP Representative*:**

And customers, like, because unfortunately, with health and safety, there's no such thing as common sense anymore, and because we're an open site. So it's actually classed as a public road outside, so, when we're open it's exactly the same road rules as out on the road.

So, you know, we'll get people who try to let kids sit on the back of a trailer or –

***Kelly*:**

Yeah, I know what you mean.

***WRRP Representative*:**

– speeding around and it's quite an open site but there's so many potential hazards. So I'd say health and safety and customers are probably the worst. Before, like if a car was coming around the wrong way – you know, we've got a one-way system for a reason but there's no way you can have two cars going opposite direction out there. So it is a challenge, but it's a challenge that we, you know, we know about. We work with. And that's why we have such a low speed limit with going around the site.

We've got speed bumps.

***Kelly*:**

And the wrong way and the right way signs. That's a lot of work.

***WRRP Representative*:**

And the thing is, you can put as many signs up as you like, but they're not gonna read them. You know, just as an example, one day many, many years ago, I had a

guy come to the front to the office and was well before I was the boss, but he, he goes off being in a car accident and I said, 'Are you okay?'

And he goes, 'Ah, you know, you know, I'm fine.'

And he goes, 'I've driven my car off the bank.'

And I thought, but the creek because that's the bank. And so, went to head out there and he goes, 'no, no, no, up there.'

And I said, 'there is no banks up there.'

And he goes 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.'

So, we went up there. He had driven in the wrong way. So he'd driven past three no-entry signs. He then went to turn around on the concrete pad and like we had ropes up that were you know spray painted a neon so quite visible and there was a, you know, no-entry sign there as well and he drove off the edge of the concrete. And just went straight down like that!

And it's like, 'okay.'

So we run the tow truck and try to get them. The tow truck came in and actually lifted up. No damage to the car. What. So. Ever.

But it's like, how the heck could you have just, you know, you can clearly see that there is nothing there and it's roped off.

Yeah and it's like ahhh. So unfortunately, sometimes when people say 'You can't fix stupid.' It does actually apply. ***Kelly*:**

I can see your face!

And then in terms of the operational so it's a charitable trust.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah.

***Kelly*:**

With paid employees, with volunteer employees and then you obviously make money when you sell the recycled stuff sell the things in there, but do you also get money from the city council to run this?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah.

***Kelly*:**

Presumably, otherwise, they would have to do this, right?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yes. So because there's no curbside collection, we do have a funding agreement in place with council. So council is really supportive. We have a very, very good relationship with Council.

It never used to be the case, many years ago, but we've got two really great waste people there now who are very proactive. And we will meet several times a month to discuss any ideas we've got, or anything else we can do. And within the next two weeks, we're going to start doing wee videos that we can put on our website and they'll put on their social media website as well to just give people an idea on, you know, because they can look at our pamphlets and go, 'Oh well, I don't really understand it all.' So just very short videos that we're going to be doing as well.

So we're constantly trying to bring our profile up, and yeah, do things like that. So we have a great relationship with Council now which is, which is amazing.

***Kelly*:**

And then do you have to apply to funding for other grants and things like that as well?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah. So we do. So with a huge increase in the freight recently that we were going to be paying to send our glass away, we applied to the glass packaging forum for funding to be able to extend our bunkers, to buy the new machinery, to – what

we needed to add to our machinery in order to change the way we're doing the operation. So that we could actually send it to a different place that would then send it on to Auckland.

And so we received funding from there. Applied for funding to lots of different places if I've got specific ideas, you know, on different things that we're doing. We're currently – I've applied for a funding application to employ somebody to do a feasibility study on developing an actual composting facility as part of us.

Whether or not it would be okay if it's, you know, going to be worthwhile not just for the environmental impact, but also whether or not it should be something that we should do or rather the council should do and also increasing and doing food waste and things like that.

***Kelly*:**

Oh Gradon! I mean Gradon Diprose who's on our project, he's running the food waste and organic waste part of our nationwide study. And so he's created a map with community composting facilities over the whole country.

***WRRP Representative*:**

I've just been on a composting tour.

***Kelly*:**

Oh, have you? Awesome! I was just going to say, because it's so interesting to say, where did you visit?

***WRRP Representative*:**

So we went to Wanoki and through Raglan, those two there. And two other sites. One was a community one in Auckland. If that's okay. And I can't remember the name of the first one, actually. I've got it on my itinerary.

***Kelly*:**

Well, because the government just did a review of all the food waste stuff because we got rung about that as well.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah. So, it was Wanoki and then TransZero waste and Kelmarna garden store.

It's in Auckland. And what was the first one? Enviro-Fruit site tour in Cambridge. So yeah.

***Kelly*:**

So that's quite a range, eh?

***WRRP Representative*:**

It was.

And it was good seeing what they were doing, as well. And although we don't have extra land here that we could then develop on here, it would probably look at going to a different site because we're still residential, so we've got to be very careful with, you know, any created – any smell that goes outside our boundary. And there's a top 10 holiday park across the road who, even though our mulch smells – to us and other people – sweet, they find it offensive. So we try to change processes on what we do to –

***Kelly*:**

Interesting. Yeah, yeah.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So and we've also developed a landscaping area where we sell topsoil. What they class as forest floor, which is just straight the branches and the leaves shredding and pig manure as well.

***Kelly*:**

So you're kind of set up to have the inputs for good compost there, aren't you?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah.

***Kelly*:**

One of the PhD students on the project, he's also the one of the founders of 2020 compost in Christchurch. So they're using red zone land and taking the – because we don't have organic waste collection in the central city – and taking all the food waste from central city and then getting free from arborists taking their bark chips. So they don't have to pay to put it in the council landfill and then using that to make compost and they're doing – yeah, like quite, it's been scaled up quite a lot.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah. And I – we'd love some land to be able to do something. So yeah, it's my 10 year plan is to develop a site specific for us to be where we can actually improve the operations on what we're doing. Have it set up a little bit better a little bit more user friendly.

***Kelly*:**

Yeah, no banks to drive off.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yes, Yes. But also, you know, so we can actually develop other things within the community like we have two Lions stalls here. Barn waste stalls where they sell their fruit, and their sheep manure bagged up. We like to be able to help community groups so yeah, I'd love to be able to do more of that, but we need more space to be able to do that. So yeah I would do –

***Kelly*:**

Who owns this space?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Council.

***Kelly*:**

Okay.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So we leased it off council.

***Kelly*:**

Oh, amazing. Yeah and so I don't think I had any more questions, unless you wanted to –

***JEBT*:**

Um, I did want to ask. Are you related to running the community garden across the way?

***Kelly*:**

Oh yes.

***WRRP Representative*:**

So we actually originally started that.

JEBT:

You started that?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yes. So Maren and myself were on the board and we originally got them set up and going. And once they became a standalone enterprise, we backed off. So that was, that was our original involvement. We got the grants to be able to employ people and so forth. So, you know, we did, we did start it.

JEBT:

And now is it run by council or – ?

***WRRP Representative*:**

No, no. Now, it's run by, they're run by themselves. So they get the funding and things like that themselves now, so, yeah.

***Kelly*:**

So that's cool. Yeah, we did try and get in touch with them too.

***JEBT*:**

Yeah, we didn't hear anything. But it looks like a nice place.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, it is. It's lovely up here. Yeah, yeah. So yeah.

So we've had a hand in doing lots of different things. There is transfer stations around the district that their recycling gets brought to us. So then we hand sort it even though it's sorted at the site and then co-mingled. So then we sort it all over again.

Yeah. But yes. So we've got an MOU between us and council and the people that collect it. So that meant that we didn't have to go out and buy the infrastructure to be set up to do it. But as long as we actually were able to accept it and process it then, yeah.

So we get the profit from the material being dropped off here.

***Kelly*:**

Yeah, no, that's amazing. Thank you so much. I think there so much for us to think about and come back to on and you guys have a website that we can – obviously –

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yes, yes, definitely, yeah.

So we've got some pamphlets here. I can give you a couple of pamphlets. Yeah, so we do actually have a mini recycling station as well and set up in our shop where we have items that we signed up to the tera-cycle program. So we can offer another 10 different product lines that we can't take in our normal domestic or commercial like toothbrushes, toothpaste tubes, hair spray cans, the dye things from, you know, in makeup things. So, on the Placetets of New Zealand website they've got a map of

New Zealand that shows the products that people are recycling. And even though Auckland and a few other places are taking one to seven, the threes and fours and sixes and sevens aren't actually recyclable in New Zealand at the moment. So that's still going to landfill. Or they're shipping them overseas. So we only accept what we can actually recycle, we won't accept anything that we can't recycle.

***Kelly*:**

No, because then you have to pay to get rid of it.

***WRRP Representative*:**

That's right.

But I'm currently working on another proposal where, the face masks, the disposable ones, and four sixes and sevens, will be able to be recycled in New Zealand. So, but it would cost us quite a bit to join it, as well as to pay for the product to go, so working with council to try and get extra funding to be able to do that.

So it's just a wait and see, but if they actually put on that website, exactly what they did – we did – there wouldn't be enough room for anybody else on there because of what we're doing. And it also highlights that, you know, we are doing a great job here in Waitaki, and yeah, especially for the amount of people we've got. Just cardboard and glass alone, there was over a thousand ton of what we recycled last year. So they are our two biggest ones that –

***Kelly*:**

And do you feel like people are really coming and giving it to you, as if, are people still chucking heaps of stuff in landfill in Oamaru, or it's become sort of a cultural thing to come here?

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, there is. But the only way we can really see getting that market is if there becomes a curbside collection. But the thing is, those sorts of people are the ones where, they won't clean the item before they put it into the bins. So you're still gonna have that problem.

Because the items, unless you've actually got a full facility where you can wash everything –

***Kelly*:**

Yeah, they've gotta be cleaned, yeah.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Then, it's still gonna be dirty, so you still not gonna be able to recycle it even if you get it. So it's around the education and on teaching people. But one of the things I would love to do is develop a food rescue scheme as well where we can rescue food from businesses throughout the town and then distribute it to the people we really need. So that's another thing that we're hoping to work on as well.

***Kelly*:**

That's great. We've done some research on food rescue and, maybe just the main centers, Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and what's really interesting is the really diverse range of people who are doing it. Like, some people are really passionate about not wasting food, and some people are really passionate about food not going to landfill. And some people are passionate about 'these people should have food,' and they're all sort of working together but every person you talk to has a different take on what they're doing.

***WRRP Representative*:**

I want to be able to incorporate all of it. Like you know, do the food rescue part first. What can't be rescued, can it be used in a different way? If it can't be used in a different way, then what the end process is going to be. So you know there's you know, the three steps as far as I'm concerned.

So, yeah. Hopefully, we'll be able to get something up and running.

***Kelly*:**

Have you got a team of people interested in that besides, you, or that's it? Or you just start things, and –

***WRRP Representative*:**

I just start things coming up with ideas, I don't sleep, you know, I don't sleep. And I just keep thinking and thinking and thinking.

***Kelly*:**

I mean, it looks like it's working.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yes, yes definitely.

***Kelly*:**

Yeah, yeah, that sounds great and great to hear what you're planning to do next as well, because all of those things are part of, for us and in terms of looking at how urban areas become more sustainable, all of those are part of the puzzle.

***WRRP Representative*:**

Yeah, and if the feasibility can study comes back and says that, you know, it should be a council initiative, you know, then we'd look at seeing whether or not council would actually engage in us to be able to do it, but, you know, never say never, as far as I'm concerned like, you know, our shop used to only be open four days a week and now we're open seven days a week.

You know, and just the place keeps growing and growing and growing. But unfortunately, we've got running a space because the more we do, the less space we've got, so yeah.

***Kelly*:**

Well, thank you so much for your time.

***WRRP Representative*:**

You're very welcome.

Interview End

N Field Notes

N.1 North Otago Youth Centre

Interview conducted Sept 21, 2022

Participants:

- *NOYC Representative*
- *NOYC Assistant*
- *JEBT*

Location:
NOYC Common Area

Interview Notes

The interview was with *NOYC Assistant* and *NOYC Representative*, a mother and son.

The interview began with a discussion of their work at the centre. *NOYC Assistant* works 10 hours a week and *NOYC Representative* works 15. Both are in paid positions, with money being taken from the Charitable trust to cover their hours. Both said they work more than the hours they're given.

The charitable trust is funded by wealthy families in the area, with no council funds.

NOYC Assistant has been working there the longest. He started coming as a young person at the age of 13. He is now involved in teaching and education and he currently works as a teaching assistant at the local school. He also has a position at the local restaurant and Brewery, meaning he works three jobs.

NOYC Representative got into the job because of her son, *NOYC Assistant*. She

spends a lot of her time during the week at the centre. Together they oversee a large group of local children from young teenagers to kids up to 25. However, people are welcome to come outside of this advertised range.

They have a church group that meets at the centre on Sundays, and an LGBT support group that meets at the centre on Mondays.

They focus primarily on providing a space where people in the community can find help and support with whatever they need, be it driver's licenses or government forms. If they want, *NOYC Assistant* and *NOYC Representative* have offered to walk people to their job interviews to sit with them there. But this request must come from the kids. *NOYC Assistant* and *NOYC Representative* serve the kids, they won't try and push employment or advocate for certain lifestyles. They are there to do what the kids want to do.

They work together with adults as well, including crisis management. There are oftentimes situations that parents are not able to handle. However, they do not have any council funding so a lot of their work relies upon the members of the charitable trust. Their work thus caters to them.

They do not do reports, but *NOYC Representative* sits down with them once a week to inform the board of their progress and activities. When I was there, there were about a dozen kids playing video games and using the game tables. On the late night of the week, they can have significantly more come by. They will have food, and they have a kitchen that is open for use for the kids. They have instruments that *NOYC Assistant* will use with the kids.

They have very few rules. According to *NOYC Assistant* and *NOYC Representative*, the only rule they enforce is the rule against drugs and alcohol. However, they do allow people to smoke outside. For this reason, they have set up in a space off the main street. It is more difficult to find, but it avoids unwanted attention and sending a bad image to the city.

They have set up a place outside for people who want to do that sort of thing. They said this can present a barrier to new people coming to the centre, but usually with

people who have been once or twice there is very little problem with people smoking or drinking outside the centre.

Both *NOYC Assistant* and *NOYC Representative* were very interested in the research project. I left them a project brief.

NOYC Representative was very passionate about how they do not change people. She was adamant in saying that they do not offer workshops. They are done elsewhere, she says. Other people can handle that. They do not offer classes. The centre is there for the youth, and they take their directions from the patrons. They are very kid-directed, and use the suggestions from the kids to develop the centre.

NOYC Assistant really likes video games, for example, so he developed a space to play video games at the centre.

In terms of group dynamics, *NOYC Assistant* talked about how groups would often form and persist at the centre for several years. *NOYC Assistant*'s group of friends used the centre for many years, but after they moved on, newer kids kept coming and forming new groups. This shows that the centre has a lifecycle, is vibrant, and full of life.

The centre is hard to find, but it does have large windows. It presents an open atmosphere for the public. *NOYC Representative* has no problem waving to people she might see wandering by.

They are both passionate about their work. They are open to collaboration if anyone wishes to work in that direction.

The interview ended with a discussion of the local area. They both boasted that Oamaru has more thrift shops than many other towns. *NOYC Representative* mentioned that they had a very good Food Centre, and they were very happy about the quality of the items they have at thrift shops. They said people were very open with recycling and sharing their items. They said it is a large town with a small-town atmosphere.

The Local Food Bank contact number is 434 5514

N.2 Happiness House

Interview conducted Sept 23, 2022

Participants:

- *HH Representative*
- *JEBT*

Location:
Walking through Happiness House

Interview Notes The interview was supposed to take place in the office; however, a member of the community was currently getting counselling in the office. Therefore, we did a walk-and-talk. This worked well, because I was able to see the various parts of the facility during the conversation.

The Happiness House currently employs 4 staff and 1 licensed therapist. All are paid by the Charitable Trust that runs the foundation. They have several partnerships with local organizations to help expand their services.

While I was there, two people were in the used clothing shop and one was receiving counselling. I was told this was the slowest period of the week, and that they close tomorrow for the weekend. The clothing shop was started by the founder of Happiness House, Pat Bird. She has since passed, but they have a large photo of her on the wall next to the room in which they sell clothing. The clothing has often been repaired by volunteers, and the house also runs a repair workshop where local community members gather to learn how to repair their own clothing. They sell school uniforms, a variety of children's clothes, a good selection of warm clothing, and quite a bit more.

They also have a small, one shelf library of used books they sell for a few dollars each. All of their wares are set up in a room inside the happiness house, giving it a

very informal feel.

The house also has a large room dedicated as a community space. It is used to hold meetings as needed by the community, and also hosts most of the programs run by happiness house. In addition to the clothing repair workshop, they have training in sewing, a knitting circle, and other knowledge sharing programs.

The kitchen of the house has been turned into a social space. Oftentimes, community members will come by for a cup of coffee and sit to talk a while. Today, the kitchen was full of about a dozen boxes of produce and other food which had been dropped off by Kiwi Harvest, a food rescue organization operating in Queenstown. The amount varies wildly from week to week, and often goes bad within one day of receiving it. One of the boxes was full of about 2-3 dozen packages of bread and buns. Unfortunately, the way it works, they don't receive the food until a few hours before closing time on Friday. Because they are closed on the weekend, anything they don't get rid of by the end of the day either gets tossed or left outside the house for those who are able to come by and get it later.

They also have a large freezer full of rescued food.

The remainder of the house is dedicated to working space and counselling space. Counselling is provided free of charge to anybody who needs it.

The green yard of the house was turned into a children's play area and a small food garden. Mothers could come by and leave their kids to play in the green while they went inside to drink coffee.

The funding for happiness house comes from council funds and partner organizations. These connections have been built up over time and now provide a small income for the managers of the space, however, much of the work is still done by volunteers.

Both people I talked to say their favourite aspect of the place is the free invitation to drink coffee or tea together in the kitchen. They get to meet new and interesting people all the time this way, and build a closer connection to the community.

N.3 Kai Rotorua

Interview conducted Oct 12, 2022

Participants:

- *Kai Rotorua Representative*
- *Dr. Amanda Yates*
- *Dr. Kelly Dombroski*
- *JEBT*

Location:

Walking through the Kai Rotorua gardens

Interview Notes

Not Included. Please contact the Huritanga Research Team for more information.

N.4 SCION Crown Research Center

Interview conducted Oct 12, 2022

Participants:

- *SCION Representative*
- *Dr. Amanda Yates*
- *Dr. Kelly Dombroski*
- *JEBT*

Location:

Sitting at Eastwood Cafe

Interview Notes

Not Included. Please contact the Huritanga Research Team for more information.

N.5 Kaicycle

Interview conducted Oct 14, 2022

Participants:

- *Kaicycle Representative*
- *Dr. Kelly Dombroski*
- *Dr. Gradon Diprose*
- *Intern*
- *JEBT*

Location:

Walking through the Kaicycle gardens

Interview Notes

Not Included. Please contact the Huritanga Research Team for more information.

Appendix B

Project Approval Packet

The following information packet includes all information sent to the Norwegian ethics approval board NSD for this approval of this project. Ethics approval from Aotearoa New Zealand was obtained for parallel research carried out by the Hurit-anga research team and is not inclued in this appendix.

Sikt

Notification Form

Reference number
481490

Which personal data will be processed?

- Name (also with signature/written consent)
- Photographs or video recordings of people
- Sound recordings of people

Project information

Project title

Identity Driven Developement - Jason Bunderson - Masters Project 2023

Project description

Information gathered for a Masters Thesis written to fulfill the requirements of a Masters Degree in Globalization and Sustainable Development at the NTNU Institute of Geography. The Masters Thesis is examining the role of identity in development and the link between local development and regional, national, and international governance and oversight.

If the collected personal data will be used for other purposes, please describe

This data will also be used as part of the URBAN WELLBEING - NGĀ KĀINGA ORA Research Project under the Building Better program in New Zealand. Approval for this has already been granted by the relevant institutions within New Zealand.

Explain why it is necessary to process personal data in the project

This Masters Thesis is exploring the connection between local experiences in development through different levels of administration. Personal experiences shared through interviews will be needed to research these local experiences. Records will be taken to ensure accuracy of the data, and photographs will be taken to help put together a field guide on these experiences.

External funding
Ikke utfyllt
Type of project
Student project, Master's thesis

Contact information, student
Jason Eric Bunderson Toler, jasoneb@stud.ntnu.no, tlf: 40105563

Data controller

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)
Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for geografi

Project leader (academic employee/supervisor or PhD candidate)
Elizabeth Barron, elizabeth.barron@ntnu.no, tlf: 73591963

Will the responsibility of the data controller be shared with other institutions (joint data controllers)?
No

Sample 1

Describe the sample

Local development actors with experience in interfacing between local development activities and governance and oversight bodies. These local development actors will be primarily located in Trondheim.

Describe how you will recruit or select the sample

I will be selecting people based on their involvement in local development initiatives. These people will be selected using contacts within the Community Economies Research Network, the Urban Wellbeing Research network (who is a partner in this research) as well as contact networks obtained from interviews.

Age
18 - 120

Personal data relating to sample 1
- Name (also with signature/written consent)
- Photographs or video recordings of people
- Sound recordings of people

How will you collect data relating to sample 1?

Personal interview

Attachment

Interview Guide.docx

Legal basis for processing general categories of personal data
Consent (General Data Protection Regulation art. 6 nr. 1 a)

Information for sample 1

Will you inform the sample about the processing of their personal data?
Yes

How?
Written information (on paper or electronically)

Information letter

Urban Wellbeing Research Information Sheet_Final.docx

Third Persons

Will you be processing data relating to third persons?
No

Documentation

How will consent be documented?
- Orally

Describe how oral consent will be documented

Oral consent will be recorded as part of the interview process.

How can consent be withdrawn?

By emailing any project leader listed on the notification letter, specifically the Partners in Norway listed with their email address at the bottom of the form.

How can data subjects get access to their personal data or have their personal data corrected or deleted?

All data will be stored on NTNU's servers and will be available on request. The email for these requests will be shared in the project

description shared with interviewees.

Total number of data subjects in the project
1-99

Approvals

Will you obtain any of the following approvals or permits for the project?
Ikke utfyllt

Processing

Where will the personal data be processed?
- Computer belonging to the data controller
- Mobile device belonging to the data controller

Who will be processing/have access to the collected personal data?
- Student (student project)
- Project leader
- External co-workers/collaborators inside the EU/EEA

Will the collected personal data be transferred/made available to a third country or international organisation outside the EU/EEA?
Yes

Transfer of personal data (or making personal data accessible) to institutions/organisations outside the EU/EEA
Massey University, New Zealand, All data will be stored on a secure server. Access to this server will be limited to the data controller. Transfer will occur only through shared access directly from NTNU or Massey University servers.

Information Security

Will directly identifiable data be stored separately from the rest of the collected data (e.g. in a scrambling key)?
Yes

Which technical and practical measures will be used to secure the personal data?
- Record of changes
- Multi-factor authentication
- Restricted access
- Access log

Duration of processing

Project period
15.01.2023 - 15.06.2023

What happens to the data at the end of the project?
Personal data will be anonymised (deleting or rewriting identifiable data)

Which anonymization measures will be taken?
- Personally identifiable information will be removed, re-written or categorized

Will the data subjects be identifiable (directly or indirectly) in the thesis/publications from the project?
No

Additional information

Questions for community-led wellbeing project partner participants:

- Please tell us about your role/involvement with [name of project]?
- Why did you get involved/initiate [name of project]?
- How long did [name of project] run for? How did it end and why?
- What issue or concern was [name of project] attempting to address/did address?
- How would you describe how the project went?
- What do you think the effect/impact of the project was?
- What do you think the [name of project achieved]?
- What kind of feedback did you get about [name of project]?
- What invigorated you or inspired your about this project?
- What barriers or challenges did you encounter trying to run [name of project]?
- Do you have a favourite or meaningful moment from the [name of project]?
- What advice would you give to someone else attempting to run something similar?
- We are trying to think about how we invest in different kinds of systems, and what the 'returns' on investment are. If you were to describe how you have invested in this project, how would you describe it? If you had to describe the returns, what would they be, and who would see the benefits of those returns?
- If you had to imagine that the funders of this project were investors, how would you describe the 'return' on investment?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell us about [name of project] that we haven't discussed?
- Are you willing to have your photograph taken?
- Are you willing to have your photograph and story displayed in a guide celebrating local development initiatives? (NOT REQUIRED).

Note: Workshop/s with community partners will explore similar questions to the interview schedule. The exact format of workshop/s will be co-designed with community partners.

- Tell me a bit about your role
- Take me through the timeline of [name of project] from the start until now?
- What sites have you been using?
- How did you decide to change things/what kinds of factors did you consider?
- What kinds of trade offs do you have to make in your decision-making?
- What role do wellbeing considerations have in decision-making? Whose wellbeing?
- What data or evidence do you use when you are making decisions? How do you know the things you know?
- Anything else you would like to add?

01 January 2023

Huritanga Systems Change for Urban wellbeing

Information for participants

Please read this information before deciding whether to participate in this research.

What is the aim of the project?
Around New Zealand, local authorities are having to make investment decisions about how to prioritise support for community-led wellbeing projects. Current decision-making frameworks are not well equipped to account for, and value, holistic wellbeing projects that involve both ecological and human aspects. This research seeks to better understand the wellbeing impacts/ outcomes of urban circular economy practices by focusing on community-led wellbeing projects.

Who is carrying out the research?
The larger national research team comprises: Associate Professor Kelly Dombroski (Massey), Dr Gradon Diprose (Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research), Dr Matt Scobie (UC), and Associate Professor Amanda Yates (AUT). This aspect of the research will be carried out by **Assoc Prof Kelly Dombroski, with intern Jason Eric Bunderson Toler.** This information will also be used as part of a master's thesis at norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet (NTNU).

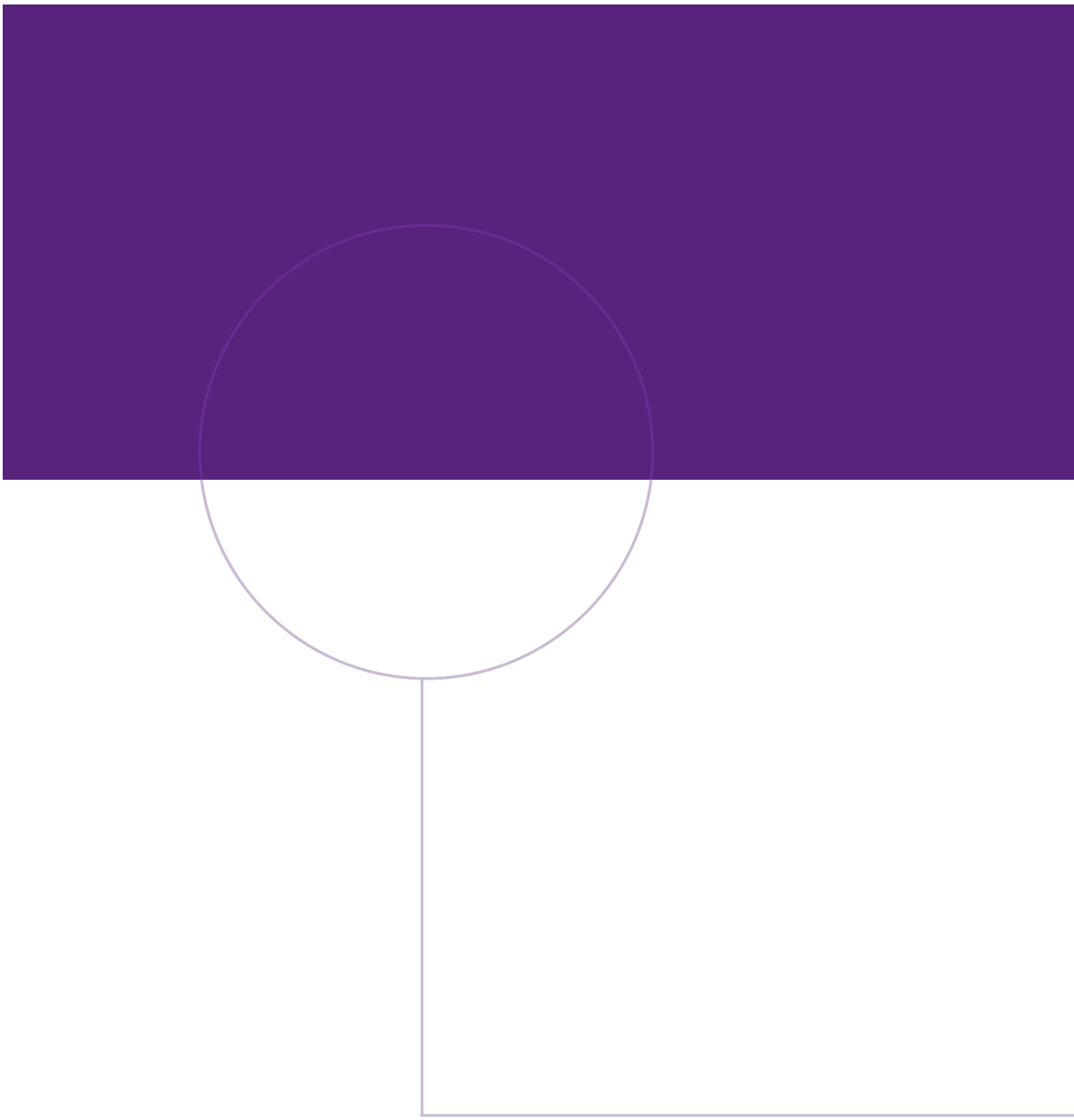
What would you like me to do?
We invite you to participate in an interview and/or workshop to discuss your knowledge and experiences of community-led wellbeing projects. An interview will take between 30-60 minutes. If you are involved in a community-led wellbeing project we may ask to take your photograph, and you may be approached at a later stage to be involved in a community exhibition or similar.

How will the information be stored and used?
Information from interviews and workshops will be used to document the impacts and outcomes of community-led wellbeing projects. You will not be named or have you image in any publicly facing research outputs, unless you agree to this. Data will be stored with the participating academic institution with access limited to participating researchers. Anonymized data and findings may be used by the project team for academic publications (including dissertations), conferences, presentations, policy briefings, community exhibitions, and open-source toolkits. Your data will only be processed based on your consent, and if you would like to limit the use of your data for any of these purposes, please let us know by emailing the address below.

How long will the information be stored?

The information will be stored with the institution for the duration of the project. Your name will not be stored with the data unless you agree to this. All information stored after **August 31, 2023** will be anonymized with all personal information removed.

More information
Please contact Associate Professor Kelly Dombroski, kelly.dombroski@canterbury.ac.nz, or Dr Gradon Diprose, diproseg@landcareresearch.co.nz



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