

# TIME FOR CHANGE. BE THE CHANGE.

## *Climathon Waikato 2023 Impact Report*



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*What a day! When creative and passionate people come together, magic happens! So proud to be part of this event. Looking forward to seeing the visions become reality*

- Climathon Waikato Expert



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**In this pivotal year for humanity, the call for decisive climate action is more urgent than ever. So, what happens when you bring together students, professionals, climate experts, and citizens to co-create solutions for our shared climate challenges?**

That's what we sought to find out in the 2023 edition of Climathon Waikato.

Through a series of interactive 'warm-up' events and workshops in the lead-up, plus a 13-hour hackathon-style 'Ideathon', we brought together more than 200 aspiring changemakers. One resounding truth emerged - collaboration holds the key to a greener future.

Based on a global concept, Climathon Waikato's ultimate goal was to provide a platform where diverse individuals could collaborate, learn, rethink the way we live, reimagine the future, and ultimately, use their skills to drive forward transformative change to our climate crisis.

This year marked the second iteration of this event, following a successful 2022 pilot edition held online. The programme was delivered by [Impact Hub Waikato](#), in collaboration with other local climate-solution-focused players, including [The Ministry for the Environment](#), [Trust Waikato](#), [The University of Waikato](#), [Hamilton City Council](#), [Waikato Wellbeing Project](#), and [Seed Waikato](#).

The journey for this year's programme began in October 2022, with a 'Climate Connect Festival', that featured ask-the-expert discussions, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities. In the months that followed, our team hosted a screening of the Kiwi documentary *Living the Change* (in partnership with [YWCA Hamilton](#)), a virtual panel discussion exploring eco-anxiety, and a virtual climate policy simulator (in partnership with [En-ROADS](#)). A particular highlight was our 350km e-bike journey, which saw us spend a week cycling from Hamilton City to Raglan, Ngāruawāhia, Waipā, Tokoroa, Matamata, and Paeroa, and delivering a climate-action event in each.

These warm-up events were attended by over 150 people, and received significant positive feedback for the role they played in connecting, enabling, and inspiring locals. One particularly memorable comment was received from a young person who was new to the climate-action space, but said she felt like she had finally found her "tribe" at our event.

These efforts culminated in the Climathon Waikato Ideathon, which took place at The University of Waikato's Gallagher Academy of Performing Arts from 7am - 10pm on Saturday May 20th. 40 participants (aged 16 - 60+) worked in 8 teams to ideate, develop, test, and validate their ideas for climate action. Every step of the way, they were supported by local mentors, coaches, facilitators, and subject-matter experts. The day concluded with each team pitching their idea to an audience of 65 people and a jury of judges, with the hope of securing prize money to bring their solutions to life.

Each solution proposed during the event addressed at least one of Waikato's five greatest climate challenges - transport, energy, food systems, empowerment and resilience, or biodiversity, as determined by [Waikato Rangatahi Voices](#) for their impact and urgency for the region.

Our team couldn't be more inspired by the ideas that emerged from the day, and by the creativity, enthusiasm, and energy with which they approached the day.

Overall, this year's edition of Climathon Waikato has successfully built on the foundations of last year, to deliver an engaging programme that was more collaborative, accessible, and inclusive than ever before. Through this journey, we used co-design principles to develop a high-quality programme, and built long-term relationships with stakeholders. As this report will explore, each of these goals was fulfilled. Participants and mentors alike highly praised the event, recognizing the value of expert support and networking opportunities. The program also had a positive impact on participants' sense of empowerment and confidence in their capabilities to combat climate change.

Looking ahead, we are already planning the 2024 edition of the programme, which hopes to further engage the broader community (including those from regional areas).

**The Climathon Waikato Team**

**Tijmen Doesborgh, Emma Sinclair, Nanise Ginnen, and Chantelle Cobby**

# A HEARTFELT THANK-YOU

A number of people and organisations made Climathon Waikato possible. As we celebrate the impact we achieved in 2023, we also acknowledge all those who contributed to these incredible outcomes. There is no better way to begin this report than by expressing our appreciation for their support and involvement.

## Our Funders

Thank you to The Ministry for the Environment, Trust Waikato, The University of Waikato, Hamilton City Council, Waikato Wellbeing Project, and Seed Waikato for believing in our vision and making it possible for us to bring Climathon Waikato to life. We are honoured that our own mission and values align so well with each of these sponsors.

## Our In-Kind Sponsors

Thank you to The University of Waikato for offering the venue for the Climate Connect Festival and the Ideathon.

## Our Steering Group

Thank you to Graham Pollard, Danielle Lorberbaum, and Margi Moore who guided us through the journey and provided invaluable input to ensure we delivered a high-quality programme.

## Our Delivery and Community Partners

Thank you to [Design Factory](#) (who delivered Design Thinking Workshops for our participants), Seed Waikato (who were our key delivery partner for the Ideathon and supported our Eco-Anxiety warm-up event), YWCA Hamilton (who co-hosted our Living the Change warm-up event), En-ROADS (who facilitated our Exploring Ways to Reduce Emissions warm-up event), [Blue Borage](#), En-ROADS, [Earth Diverse](#), [Tomtit Farm](#), and Lily McQueen (for facilitating workshops at our Climate Connect Festival), Billy McQueen from [Rekord Ltd](#) (for photographing the Climate Connect Festival), and Makea Piahana from [Pou Digital](#) (for photographing the Ideathon).

## Our Mentors and Subject-Matter Experts

Thank you to Darren Savage, Graham Pollard, Danielle Lorberbaum, Harland Emery-Sinclair, Amy Satterfield, and Andrew Nicol (who spent the Ideathon working one-on-one with our teams, guiding them through the journey), and Gordon Burt, Elna Fourie, Emma Emery-Sinclair, Nanise Ginnen, Rachael Goddard, Martin Lynch, Emma McQuirk, Margi Moore, Jennifer Nickel, Clare St Pierre, and Sophie Walton (who lent their expertise to help our Ideathon participants refine their ideas).

## Our Hype-Crew

Thank you to Rhys Cooper and Jahvaya Wheki (who brought so much energy and enthusiasm to their role as MC's at the Ideathon), Hayley James and Charlotte Mitchell from Seed Waikato (who ensured the Ideathon ran smoothly), and Manny Fresh (who facilitated our Climate Connect Festival).

## Our Speakers

Thank you to Ngakau Harris Peke from [Para Kore](#), Nanise Ginnen from Impact Hub Waikato, Dennis Turton from Trust Waikato, and Dan Tairaki from [Electrify](#) (who delivered inspiring keynotes and presentations during the Ideathon), Michal Garvey from [Foodprint](#), Dylan Chand from the [Climate Action Conference](#), and Lucy McLean (who shared their experience at our Eco-Anxiety warm-up event), Hayley James from Seed Waikato and Ashleigh Ngow (for sharing how they champion a sustainable future at our Living the Change warm-up event), Rachael Goddard from [Waikato Regional Council](#), Nic Turner from [Mainstream Green](#), Emma Emery-Sinclair from Impact Hub Waikato, Justin Connolly from [Deliberate](#), Mitchell Jordan from Waikato Rangatahi Voices, Tesh Randall from [Raglan Food Co](#), Nadine Simsar from Foodprint, and Harland Emery-Sinclair (who delivered inspirational presentations at our Climate Connect Festival).

## Our Roadshow Heroes, Hosts, Sponsors, and Partners

Thank you to Electrify NZ (who sponsored the e-bikes used during our Roadshow), [Good George Brewing](#) (who provided drinks for our Roadshow events), Hamilton City Council (who enabled our Hamilton Roadshow event), Raglan Food Co, [Hunt and Gather Bee Co](#), [Raglan Artisan Bread](#), Kristel van Houte from [Karioi Project](#), and Peggy Oki from [Origami Whales](#) (who enabled our Raglan Roadshow event), Amy Whetu from [Whetū Group](#) (who enabled our Ngāruawāhia Roadshow event), [Waipā District Council](#), Nic Turner from Mainstream Green, Antony Snodgrass from [Koroneki Developments](#), and Dan Tairaki from Electrify (who enabled our Waipā event), Michael Quintern from [MyNOKE](#) (who enabled our Tokoroa Roadshow event), Martin Louw from [Transition Matamata](#) and Talbert DeJong from [Southern Belle Orchard](#) (who enabled our Matamata Roadshow event), and Nicki Murray-Orr from [Vital Harvest](#) and Matt Bowie (who enabled our Paeroa Roadshow event).

And of course, a massive thank you goes out to all of the Climathon Waikato warm-up and Ideathon attendees and participants, who chose to spend their time advancing climate solutions (and making local history) with us.

# THE JOURNEY

In the 7 months prior to the Ideathon, we hosted a series of online and in-person workshops and community activations to bring people together, spark conversation, and inspire action.

Although each event was unique in concept, content, and delivery, they were all aligned in their intention to engage communities. On average, **76%** of the attendees at each event were new to the Climathon Waikato community, suggesting that our events were successful in appealing to/empowering a broad audience. **9%** went on to attend at least one other warm-up event, and **14%** went on to apply for the Ideathon.



## Climate Connect Festival

A massive day of climate action, bringing people together to listen to local climate activists, participate in ask-the-expert discussions, enjoy interactive activities, and network with other changemakers.

Attended by approx 120 people | 25% had engaged with Climathon before



## Living the Change: A Film Screening + Fireside Discussion

A cosy evening featuring a screening of the Kiwi documentary, Living the Change, followed by a fireside discussion where we explored how we can all take small actions to live more sustainably.

Attended by approx 40 people | 24% had engaged with Climathon before



## Climate Waikato Roadshow

A six-day e-bike journey across the Waikato region to connect, enable, and inspire communities. Our team travelled 350km and delivered events in Hamilton City, Raglan, Ngāruawāhia, Waipā, Tokoroa, Matamata, and Paeroa. Along the way, we covered topics such as the future of transport, championing biodiversity, and homegrown climate action.

Attended by approx 100 people | 23% had engaged with Climathon before



## Eco-Anxiety: An Evening Retreat

A virtual event where we explored what eco-anxiety is, and how to channel it to take positive action for the planet by listening to the stories of environmental changemakers who have taken positive action.

Attended by approx. 40 people | 15% had engaged with Climathon before



## Exploring Ways to Reduce Emissions - An Interactive Online Session

A virtual climate policy simulator where we explored a range of possible futures. Participants tested their ideas for climate solutions and policies and explored what strategies may address climate change.

Attended by approx. 10 people | 33% had engaged with Climathon before



# THE IDEATHON

## *Power Hours*

In the lead-up to the Ideathon, we hosted three virtual power-hour sessions, equipping participants with the tools they needed for change. These were attended by 46% of Ideathon applicants.

May 15

### **Kick-Off**

We looked into what would be happening throughout the Ideathon - including our goals, what support was on offer, and the challenges driving Climathon. Plus, participants had an opportunity to meet and connect with their fellow team members.

May 16

### **Design Thinking and Ideation**

Alongside Design Factory, we looked at Design Thinking - a process that helped participants challenge their assumptions, redefine problems, and create innovative solutions.

May 17

### **Validation**

We looked into how to develop and test viable solutions, and explored effective goal-setting.



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*This initiative has limitless potential and will serve to develop a climate change legacy for future generations to build on*

- Climathon Waikato Expert

# THE IDEATHON

## *Working Day*

The Ideathon itself represented the culminating event of Climathon Waikato.

7:00am	<b>Settling in and grounding</b> Our participants settled in for the day with a grounding exercise.
7:30am	<b>Shared breakfast</b> Participants mixed and mingled while enjoying a free shared breakfast.
8:15am	<b>Opening ceremony</b> To officially kick-off Climathon Waikato, we gathered together to explore our journey to date, our goals for the day, and listen to a guest speaker.
9:00am	<b>Team ideation</b> Alongside their mentor, our teams debriefed from the opening ceremony, discussed initial ideas, and made a plan for the day.
11:00am	<b>Break</b> Feat. free snacks
11:30am	<b>Team ideation</b> Teams continued to work together to develop their ideas, with support from our subject-matter experts.
1:30pm	<b>Lunch</b> Participants mixed and mingled while enjoying a free shared lunch.
2:00pm	<b>Team ideation</b> Teams continued to work together to develop their ideas, with support from our subject-matter experts.
4:00pm	<b>Break</b> Feat. free snacks
4:30pm	<b>Pitching workshops</b> With support from Design Factory, our participants learnt how to prepare and deliver an impactful pitch.
6:30pm	<b>Dinner + mix &amp; mingle with guests</b> Our participants enjoyed a free dinner, while connecting with esteemed community guests.
7:30pm	<b>Gala and Showcase</b> We settled in for a glamorous and celebratory evening, where all teams pitched their ideas in front of our judging panel.
9:30pm	<b>Prizegiving</b> We celebrated all participants, and presented five winning teams with cash prizes to turn their idea into reality.

# BY THE NUMBERS

## *Marketing and Outreach*



**21,717** people **reached** across Climathon's digital channels  
(91% increase from 2022)



**171** followers  
(122% increase from 2022)

**16,553** people **reached**  
(76% increase from 2022)

**908** people **engaged**



**231** followers  
(77% increase from 2022)

**3,900** people **reached**  
(301% increase from 2022)

**2,273** people **engaged**



**111** followers  
(50% increase from 2022)

**1,264** people **reached**

**45** stakeholders **shared** Climathon's content on their channels  
(309% increase from 2022)

**1** **media feature** (Waikato Herald)

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*It was awesome to create our own ideas, be in touch with mentors, and connect with other people who wanted to make a difference*

- Climathon Waikato Participant





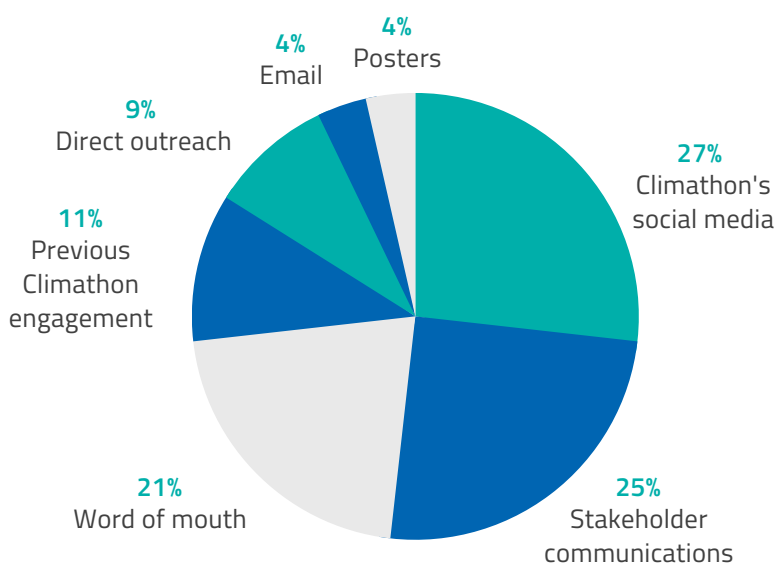
# BY THE NUMBERS

## *Ideathon Applicants*

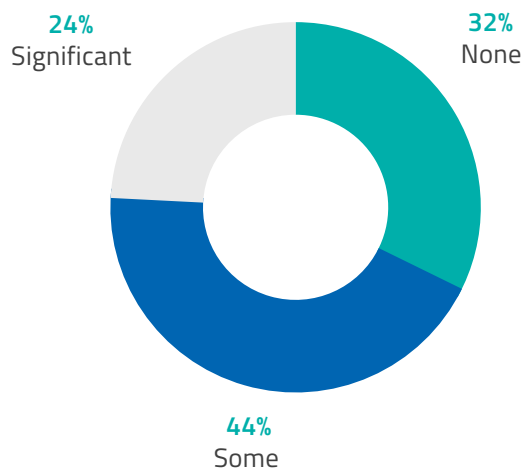
**62**  
applications  
received

From Hamilton City,  
Waikato District, Waipā District,  
South Waikato District,  
Hauraki District, and  
Thames-Coromandel District

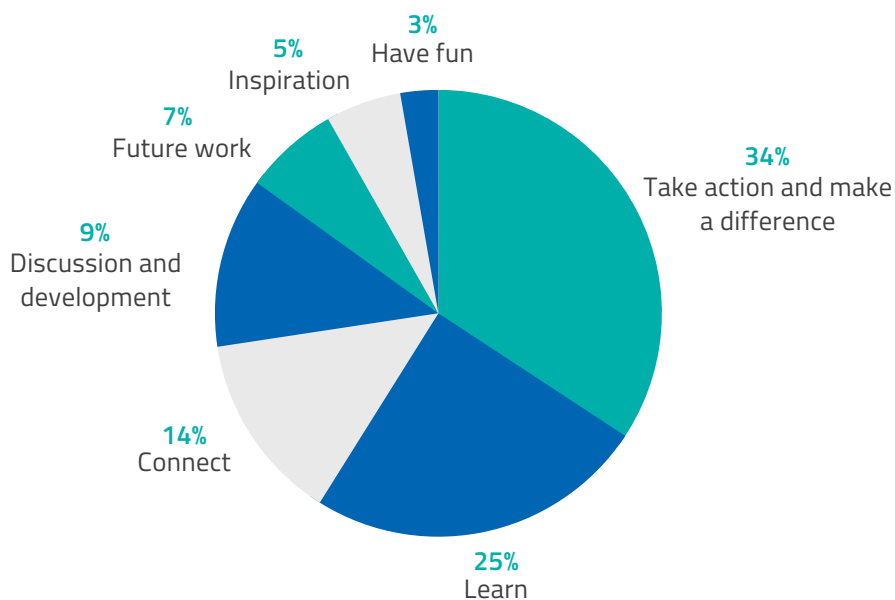
How applicants **heard** about Climathon Waikato:



The amount of climate-action **experience** applicants were bringing:



**Reasons** for applying:



# BY THE NUMBERS

## *Ideathon Participants*

41

participants completed the programme

8

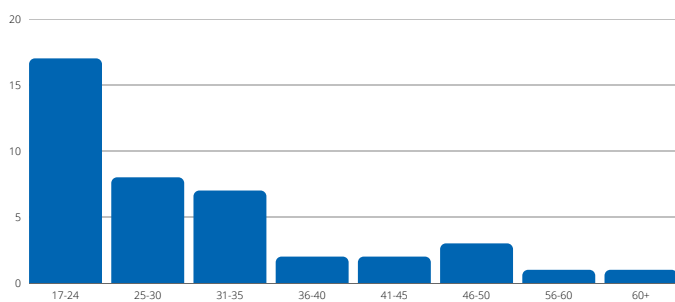
teams were formed and pitched their ideas

17

mentors and subject-matter experts supported participants

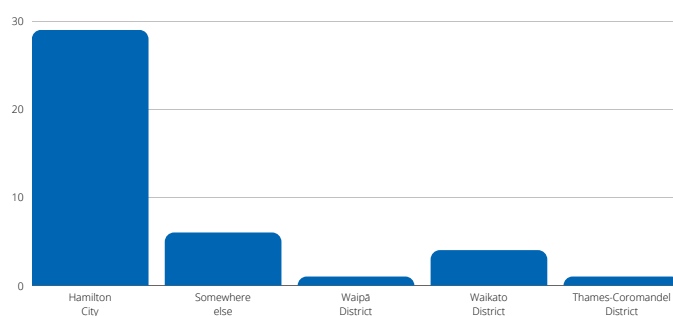
2,200

hours of collective climate action



29

average age of participants  
(44 years in 2022)



70%

from Hamilton City

68%

of participants were **brand-new** to the Climathon Waikato community

9%

of participants previously participated in **Ideathon 2022**

26%

of participants attended a **warm-up** event in the lead-up

# THE IMPACT

## *From the Ideathon*

In collaboration with [Huber Social](#), the Impact Hub team conducted a thorough impact measurement assessment, designed to understand the difference that the Ideathon made for participants.

All participants were asked to complete a baseline survey before the Ideathon, and a shift survey after. The results of these two surveys, which were completed by 26 participants, were then analysed to understand the shift in wellbeing and other key dimensions.

These results found that:

- Climathon increases wellbeing
- Climathon builds connection
- Climathon builds empowerment
- Climathon builds inspiration and hope

### WELLBEING



**6%** average increase in **wellbeing**

*Wellbeing measures an individual's satisfaction with life. This is a commendable shift considering the length of the programme, and shows that the Ideathon has provided an experience that positively engaged participants*

### CONNECTION



**43%** average increase in **knowledge of who to approach to support their ideas** for climate change ideas

**37%** average increase in **sense of connectedness** with people who can act on climate change by

### EMPOWERMENT



**32%** average increase in **confidence and empowerment** in introducing ideas to others

**17%** average increase in **knowledge of how to work with others** to act on climate change

### HOPE



**22%** average increase in **hope in the future**

**32%** average increase in **knowledge of what actions their community is taking toward climate change**

More information on Huber Social's methodology can be found [here](#).

# IDEAS AND WINNERS

All ideas that were developed throughout Climathon addressed at least one of the Waikato's five greatest climate challenges - transport, energy, food systems, empowerment and resilience, or biodiversity, as determined by Waikato Rangatahi Voices for their impact and urgency for the region.

Ideas were evaluated on their connection to the five challenges and guiding principles, local relevance, team, development potential, and transformative potential. All teams received feedback on their idea from our jury of judges. Four teams were chosen as recipients of a cash prize of \$1,000 each, to support the realisation of their ideas. These prizes were awarded in the categories of Wintec Student, Innovation, Community, and People's Choice. The Grand Winner, whose idea demonstrated exceptional promise and ingenuity, was granted a prize of \$2,000.

## Transport

- Team 6: A campaign for a 30 km/hour speed limit across Hamilton to create safer spaces for people, pedestrians, and cyclists to encourage transport mode shift **(Grand Prize Winner)**.

## Energy

- Team 8: An app helping families create healthy homes by providing personalised information analytics and energy conservation tips **(Wintec Students Prize Winner)**.
- Team 9: An app using gamification to help young families take small achievable steps toward a healthier home.

## Food Systems

- Team 1: A community garden within the grounds of the University of Waikato, where students can learn about, and be involved in, garden food production.
- Team 2: An app connecting communities to farmers **(Innovation Prize Winner)**.
- Team 3: An interactive food trail using stealth education to build awareness about alternative, localised food production.

## Empowerment and Resilience

- Team 4: A community web network that connects aspiring enviro-changemakers to eco-conscious organisations **(People's Choice Winner)**.
- Team 5: A platform helping changemakers upscale their impact through positive storytelling **(Community Prize Winner)**.
- (See also team 2, 3, and 7)

## Biodiversity

- Team 7: Storytelling to inspire a sense of ownership, awareness, and caring for urban greenspaces and biodiversity.



# FOLLOW-UP AND SUPPORT

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

Within a month of the Ideathon, we hosted our first miniature reunion in Seed Waikato + Impact Hub Waikato's new co-working space. This was an informal gathering designed to help participants and mentors reconnect, debrief, and explore what future support will be most useful.

The Impact Hub Waikato team has reached out and engaged with all participants to understand their specific needs and aspirations. Providing tailored support is a top priority, ensuring that every action taken is directly responsive to participants' unique goals. These ongoing conversations ensure that the support provided remains relevant and evolves in line with participants needs.



