

Piki Ake

Redesigning the trajectory for Māori Researchers at Aotearoa New Zealand universities

Final Report (March 2024)



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Introduction

'Piki Ake' has been designed to drive an innovative and collaborative step change, whilst developing a new strategic approach to reframing the traditional professional trajectory for Māori academic researchers. It aims to develop and identify levers for improving and growing Māori capacity (volume) and capability (talent) across our universities and wider national research ecosystem while at the same time maintaining a focus on excellence and quality.

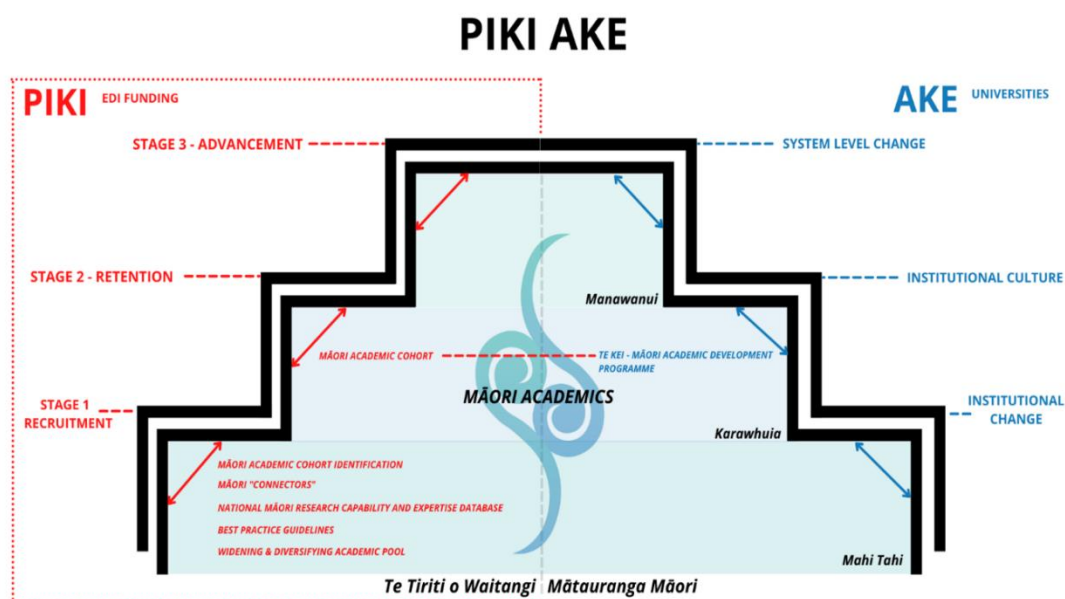
The Piki Ake framework itself is centred around the 'Poutama', a stepped pattern of tukutuku panels and woven mats, which can symbolise genealogies and levels of learning, intellectual advancement and achievement. In this context, Poutama are used to represent the process of scaffolding for the support, development and advancement required to achieve the system level desired change.

On one side – *Piki* – is focused on identifying and developing our upcoming Māori researchers at Masters and PhD levels through the *Piki Ake Transition Programme*, while the other side – *Ake* – focuses internally on the universities themselves, and their policies and strategies. The symbolism of the double-sided Poutama is deliberate; change for Māori researchers in the university sector cannot occur without change being embedded within the universities themselves.

The goal of the Piki Ake Framework is to ultimately ensure that we realise parity between our university academic research workforce and the population at large by 2030. This sector goal requires commitment and determination in order to necessitate *a threefold increase in the current capacity across all our universities*. It continues to be bold and audacious, but we consider this absolutely necessary for the future sustainability of our research workforce and our future as a creative, smart, and entrepreneurial nation.

The programme is underpinned by a strong commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and over the last 18-months has been delivered across the country's eight universities. It is funded through the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Fund managed by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

This report provides details of the Piki Ake programmes progress over the last 18-months and will provide an overview of the proposed next steps for the continuation of the programme across the eight New Zealand universities.



Piki Ake Programme Delivery

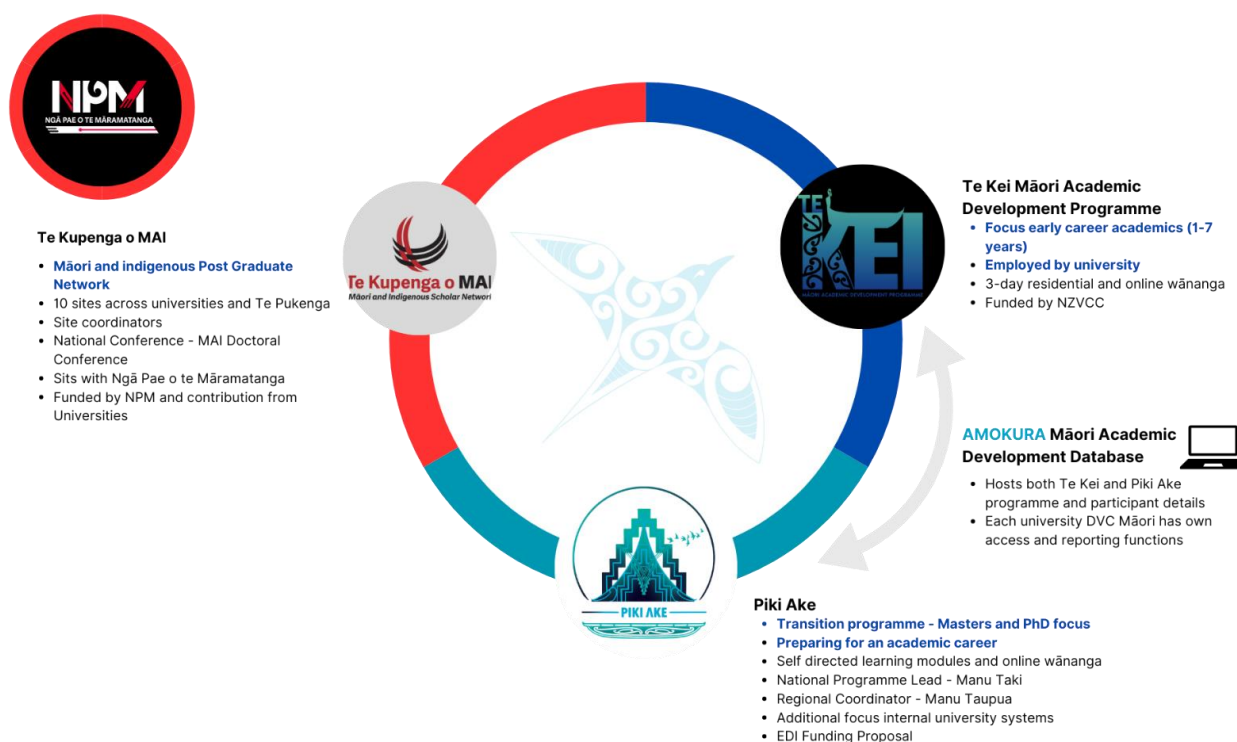
The delivery of the Piki Ake work programme over the last 18-months has seen the development and implementation of a substantial amount of work undertaken by the Piki Ake team at Universities New Zealand – Te Pōkai Tara. Distinctively separated into two work programmes, the primary focus started with the ‘Piki Ake Transition Programme’ and once that had been formulated the internal ‘Ake’ work progression was able to start taking shape. (Appendix 1 & 2)

Fundamental to this work programme is the understanding of where Piki Ake fits into the wider suite of Māori led and designed initiatives targeted at the recruitment and retention of Māori researchers across the Research, Science, and Innovation system. We know that the university sector plays a significant role in developing our Māori workforce, but equally, we understand the key functions of other Māori entities operating in this space, so the avoidance of duplication of efforts, and ensuring the delivery of value across the supply chain has and will continue to be crucial as the programme continues.

The Piki Ake Transition Programme has been purposefully designed to be situated between the work of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga and the Te Kupenga o MAI network and work currently underway across the university sector through the Te Kei – Māori Academic Development Programme.

This placement has allowed us to target those Masters and PhD ākonga who are considering a research career, or who are already on fixed term contracts across the sector. The circular offerings of the programmes are intentional recognising the journey of Māori researchers is not linear but rather one that allows for a range of entry and exit points, and the opportunity for intersectionalities between the programmes.

Māori Academic Development Programmes



Wāhanga Tuatahi – Piki Ake Transition Programme

The Piki Ake transition programme is a whole-of-university sector initiative designed to grow the Māori academic workforce. Aimed at Māori postgraduate students, it provides ākonga with a greater understanding of an 'academic career' and working within the academy.

The programme has been developed using research centred around the following kaupapa Māori principles. These are also aligned with our Te Kei – Māori Academic Development Programme¹ structure.

- Tikanga – values and practices
- Tuakiritanga – identity
- Pūkengatanga – skills and knowledge
- Whanaungatanga – relationships

The programme contains six online self-directed learning modules (5 hrs - fortnight) and two blended online wānanga (3 hrs). The programme runs for 14 weeks, twice a year. [OB]

There are two online-blended wānanga per cohort, the first after a couple of modules and one at the end. These wānanga are for each university's cohort to come together to reflect on the programme and to meet virtually other cohorts across the other universities. During these wānanga, guest speakers present and ākonga are then given time to reflect and wānanga in their groups on key questions. The kaupapa of the guest speakers covers material from the modules completed.

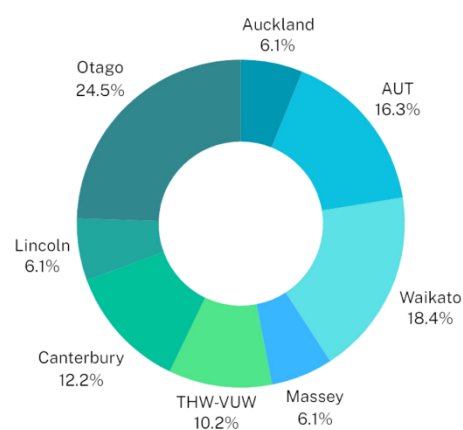
In addition, the university's Manu Taupua may organise additional in person or online hui for the participants to wānanga thoughts around the questions posed in each module, or to meet key individuals/teams across the institution. For an ākonga to successfully complete the Piki Ake Transition Programme they must complete the modules, attend the online wānanga and complete the Research Career CV. Each university's Manu Taupua manages the completion process for their cohort, enters the data into the system and informs the Manu Taki.

Cohort – Participants

A set of programme guidelines were developed for each university to consider when identifying potential ākonga of the programme, but ultimately it is up to each institution.

- Whakapapa Māori.
- Be enrolled in a PhD or Masters level programme at a New Zealand university.
- We encourage participants from a range of disciplinary backgrounds.
- Must be able to commit for the entire Piki Ake programme.
- Have an interest in pursuing an academic career.

Since its implementation the Piki Ake Transition Programme, 55 ākonga Māori have successfully completed the programme. These ākonga range from across all our eight institutions, and from a range of different disciplinary areas – which is encouraged.



¹ www.tekei.co.nz

Programme Evaluation

Following the delivery of the programme an evaluation is conducted with the ākongā, and a separate process is also undertaken with our Manu Taupua / Office of DVC Māori across the eight universities.

Ākongā are asked a series of questions around the programme content, wānanga and timing on a scale: Tino pai (very good), Pai (good), Tōna pai (satisfactory), Kaore i pai (poor), Tino kino (very poor)

- How did you find out about the Piki Ake Programme?
- How did you find the mix of kaupapa throughout the programme (i.e. Tuakiritanga, pūkengatanga, tikanga, whanaungatanga)?
- The facilitation of the programme by your university's Manu Taupua?
- The online wānanga for the Piki Ake programme were...?
- How useful did you find the resources provided for each module of the Piki Ake programme?
- What were the best aspects of the Piki Ake programme? Open question
- What aspects of the Piki Ake programme could be improved? Open question

All the commentary has been overwhelmingly positive, some comments include:

This was a very good introduction into what we need to do as Māori researchers, and for me it was at the perfect time near the start of my PhD journey.

Some of the authors I was familiar with, and some of the publications I had even used as references for assignments. I think this was a good indicator that I'm already thinking about some of the wider issues for Māori and research, and that my own work lines up with what Piki Ake is trying to achieve.

The wānanga were probably my favourite part of the Piki Ake program - the speakers were incredible, and a great mix of people at different stages of academia. Wānanga are almost always better in person, but the online wānanga is more accessible for more people (and Jaylene did a great job of getting through the awkward bits that come with Zoom wānanga!). I liked the advertisement of Te Kei and the kanohi ki te kanohi wānanga sounds like a great next step, but I think the online wānanga is more appropriate given the scope of Piki Ake.

Some of the most useful I think I've ever read. Thank you

If anything, I would love to have an even longer programme. The fortnightly shift between modules was the perfect amount to get the mahi done, and so I would've loved to have one or two more modules (as I enjoyed this programme so much).

Thank you so much! Ahakoa he tino pakeke au (ehara i te mea, he ECR au!), he hāngai tonu ngā rauemi ki a au.

Ngā mihi nui to all those involved, I'm very grateful for the opportunity and learnings from Piki Ake!

I enjoyed the content and learning throughout the program. The academic/research cv is beneficial in seeing my strengths and highlighting areas for further development.

*Our Manu Tapua was * inclusive and sensitive to our needs; * facilitated with methods that suited our learning styles; * role modelled for us * integrated traditional knowledge * contributed to decolonisation efforts * facilitated efficiently and effectively online*

From the Manu Taupua perspective, we used a combination of both online and in-person wānanga to talk through four different elements surrounding the programme, its design and implementation – programme content, communications, online wānanga, and operational delivery.

It is important to recognise that although there is a programme structure, it is important to allow for each university to maintain a level of autonomy in how they look to implement different components of the programme. During these evaluations, Manu Taupua shared different techniques to engage ākonga or additions their institutions added to the programme.

The range of innovations were truly reflective of the cohort of ākonga that were participating on the programme, and included such things as:

- *After each module, students were asked hand in their reflective commentary for each module to their Manu Taupua. This was then reviewed and used to create some collective discussion points for their next meeting. The Manu Taupua used this as the basis of their reporting back to the DVC Māori on the progress of the cohort through the modules.*
- *The development of an on-boarding and off-boarding programme sessions to assist with building further whakawhanaunga prior to the programme starting and ensuring the ākonga had support for their future intentions.*
- *Extension of invitations to the institutions Te Kei participants to attend online wānanga opportunities as a way of utilising Tuākana-Teina relationships.*

The Manu Taupua during their December 2023 wānanga were also asked about future iterations of the programme and how we can continue to look to integrate the programme into university BAU. There was lots of discussion around the importance of a programme such as Piki Ake and some key recommendations from this group included:

- *Continuing to increase the number of Piki Ake participants onto the Te Kei Māori Academic Development pathways programme. It could be considered that Piki Ake might a precursor requirement.*
- *Ensuring the programme remains responsive to external systems that impact the university sector – continuation of content reviews every few years.*
- *Integration of Piki Ake Alumni to the programme to allow opportunities to ‘give back’ – ‘Where are they now’ pieces.*
- *Strongly support the ongoing work around ‘AKE’ and the development of a university workforce strategy for Māori which recognises our fluidity as Māori between organisations/opportunities and our iwi/hapū.*
- *Strongly support the ongoing development of Māori success indicators for programmes such as Piki Ake, not being restricted by western system approaches.*

From both participants and the Manu Taupua evaluations, we have been able to successfully reinforce that the programme has been designed to deliver a programme pitched at the correct level for our upcoming Māori research workforce.

Wāhanga Tuarua – AKE

We know that the career trajectory of Māori researchers is different to that of their non-Māori colleagues. We know that Māori researchers often face cultural and social isolation within the academy due to being the only one or two in their department (Kidman et al, 2015)² as well as having to engage within a system that either does not recognise or marginalises Mātauranga Māori (Pihama et al, 2018).³

The net result is that the value and potential that Māori researchers and academics bring to universities and the national and international research sector is often misunderstood or not valued, and they are often forced to become more mainstream, or they are simply overlooked in the current processes governing recruitment, retention, reward and development. In other words, Māori researchers often must not only ‘leave their identity at the door’ if they are to succeed in the academy,⁴ but they must often set aside their personal commitments to create greater access for research to their communities.

Whilst the Piki Ake Transition Programme has been underway, a concurrent dialogue has been underway across Te Kāhui Amokura (Deputy Vice-Chancellors Māori committee) and the Human Resource Directors to discuss issues of data and monitoring, recruitment, retention and isolation experienced by many Māori academics. The challenges are long withstanding and require a shift in organisational behaviour. To achieve this, the AKE work programme looks to develop to set forth a series of specific policies and HR targets through a *‘University Sector Māori Workforce Development Strategy’*. This will assist with the sector coordination of working towards the bold and audacious goal of parity by 2030.

The first steps in the workstream have required a full review and coordination of the sectors national Māori workforce data, first conducted in 2015. This is a rigorous process requiring the collection and comparison of data sets across each universities internal staffing systems, all of which are not the same and require an agreement on any discrepancies e.g., role definitions etc. This is currently underway.

Over the remainder of this year this work will continue to be a priority.

² Kidman, J., Chu, C., Fernandez, S., & Abella, I. (2015). Māori Scholars and the University. Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, Victoria University, Wellington.

³ Pihama, L., Lee-Morgan, J., Tiakiwai, S., Smith, L., Tauroa, T., Lonebear, D., Mahuika, R., & Seed-Pihama, J. (2018). Te Tātua o Kahukura. A National Project Report to Ako Aotearoa. Ako Aotearoa, Wellington.

⁴ Ngā Kete Mātauranga (2021).

Wāhanga Tuatoru- Key Performance Indicators

The initial KPIs set in place for the Piki Ake programme included elements from each component of the framework. The table below provides details on the progress made against each of those KPIs and an update on the next steps.

Performance Area	Framework Area	Measure Target		Target Start Date	Status	30 March End Date – Progress Overview	Next steps
All Performance Areas	Piki Ake	Increase the number of Māori researchers within the university system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15% of Māori researchers within the university system by 2030 	January 2022	<i>In-progress</i>	This will be an on-going priority for the university sector through the development of the national collective strategy, but also at a regional level, each university will continue to progress its own priority areas.	
Delivery of Objectives	Piki	Recruitment of Piki Ake connectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x national connector (1 FTE) 8x connectors (0.4 FTEs) 	March 2022	<i>Completed</i>	Although completed, this imposed a significant challenge at the start of the programme. UNZ was required to recruit twice for the Manu Taki position, opting for a secondment opportunity and ensuring the salary remained competitive was fundamental. For the Manu Taupua, the reduced budget and reduction of a full-time role to 0.4FTE staff, was less appealing to our Māori research community. Most universities were required to attach this role onto existing roles within the DVC Māori offices.	The on-going challenge for members of Te Kāhui Amokura as they look to integrate these roles into BAU will determine where the Manu Taupua position should be located.
Delivery of Objectives	Piki	Successful development of transition programmes modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All transition programme modules are available online 	April 2022	<i>Completed</i>	Developed by Māori academics and researchers for ākonga Māori a series of six modules has been co-designed to support the delivery of the Piki Ake Transition Programme.	The modules content will undertake yearly reviews to ensure it remains relevant to the sectors priorities/challenges.
Delivery of Objectives	Ake	Establishment of comprehensive Māori academic staff reporting and monitoring system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reporting and monitoring national system 	June 2022	<i>In-progress</i>	Work for this workstream is currently underway through the development of the 'University Sector Māori Workforce Development Strategy'. For the identification of the Māori academic and research development cohorts, the university developed and owned system AMOKURA is being utilised.	This will be an on-going work priority for Te Kāhui Amokura and the HR Directors.
Investing in People	Piki	Identification of Māori academic cohort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of Māori academics identified (based off university % population) 	May 2022	<i>In-progress</i>	Through the Piki Ake Transition Programme the identification of a Māori Masters and PhD national cohort is underway. This KPI is linked to the AKE work stream.	This will be an on-going priority for the university sector through the development of the national strategy.
Capability	Piki	Number of identified Māori academic cohort completed transition module programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 80-100% completion rate of identified cohort in online transition modules 	September 2022	<i>Completed</i>	At the completion of the first two cohorts of the Piki Ake Transition programme, there was an 87% completion rate – where participants completed their self-directed learning modules over the course of 12-weeks.	As the programme progresses the identified KPI will remain a focus of the Piki Ake Transition Programme.

Other impacts of this investment was that a collective and collaborative approach across all eight universities in Aotearoa will be realised to deliver the changes needed in the research workforce that will have a life far beyond the duration and size of this investment. Alongside the KPI deliverables, the following short and medium-term goals were identified. The table below provides an update on this progress.

Short term goals	30 March End Date – Progress Overview
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarity on the shared and unique barriers to academic and research development for Māori throughout Aotearoa (focused on the part universities play but building collaboration with related areas such as CRIs etc etc). 	The UNZ team has spent time with the CRI sector in assisting them in the development of their collaborative strategy. Using a wānanga approach, we have been able to share our understandings of the current challenges faced by our Māori researchers and more broadly discuss alignment of future opportunities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interrogation of current sector approaches by Māori for Māori to address those barriers leading to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-design of new approaches developed with a specific focus on recruitment (processes), retention (systemic initiatives that enable Māori academics to fit and flourish) and advancement (rethinking professional development and promotion policies and procedures). 	Continue to develop our understanding of the Māori academic and research workforce will progress under the workstream for AKE. Led by the DVCs Māori, informed by the work of Senior Māori academics similar to the design of Te Kei, innovative and sustainable approaches will look to be utilised.
Medium term goals	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growing number of early career academics completing the Piki Ake Transition Programme and staircasing into the Te Kei Programme. 	Two ākonga who completed the Piki Ake Transition Programme, were successful in acquiring permanent positions within their university and were placed into our second Te Kei cohort.

Wāhanga Tuawhā – Key Achievements

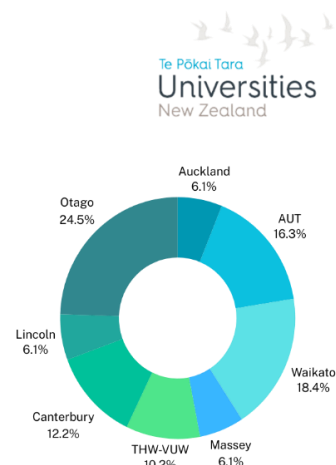
Over the course of the last 18 months, there has been a substantial amount of work being undertaken to co-design, create and then implement the Piki Ake Transition Programme. Some of those achievement include:

- *An 87% completion rate of the programme over two cohorts of its delivery. This includes the completion of the module material, attendance at the online wānanga and the completion of the Research Career CV.*
- *A total of 55 Māori Masters and PhD enrolments from various disciplinary backgrounds across the eight Aotearoa New Zealand universities.*
- *Our 8 Manu Taupua roles formally established within our DVC Māori offices, trained, and supported by our Manu Taki throughout the duration of the programme's delivery.*
- *4 Online Blended Wānanga delivered across the regional hubs with 8 Māori guest speakers covering a broad range of relevant and kaupapa Māori orientated subjects.*



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Māori Masters and PhD enrolments from across the eight NZ universities



4 ONLINE BLENDED WĀNANGA

Including 8 Māori guest speakers from across the university sector

8 MANU TAUPUA

Facilitating the delivery of the Piki Ake Transition Programme



MANU TAKI



One national programme lead

87% COMPLETION RATE

Participants completed 6 self-directed learning modules over 12-weeks

www.pikiake.nz



The impact of both the Piki and Ake work programmes based off our redesigned MBIE Equity, Diversity and Innovation funding investment has progressed expediently. This programme has required the establishment of a new infrastructure at a regional level for the universities, and the implementation of a collaborative hub and spoke operating model within UNZ.

This then enabled the progression of the Piki Ake Transition Programme. Alongside our Te Kei – Māori Academic Development cohorts, we now have at a national level an identified cluster of Māori researchers across our institutions, where we can identify their disciplinary area, their proficiency level of Te Reo Māori, track their employment status and understand the distinct types of academic development support they have or have not yet received. Through our newly established systems we can build/tailor support or identify cross sector opportunities that might be of interest to them. This is not something we have previously been able to do.

Having a clear entry point that is linked to an induction/academic development programme like the Piki Ake Transition Programme will assist with our wider national strategy plans for future proofing of our Māori research and academic workforce.

Wāhanga Tuarima – Key learnings, Challenges and Next Steps

There have been several challenges and key learnings following the project's initiation. We believe the challenges are a direct reflection of the wider challenges currently being faced by the Research, Science, and Innovation system, where there are a disproportionate number of Māori researchers across all areas/projects, policy development etc.

Whereas our key learnings are reflective of the evolution of the Piki Ake programme over the previous two cohorts, and discussions with the HR Directors which have influenced our intentions about how the programme will look to move forward.

These challenges directly impacted the recruitment of both our Manu Taki – National Programme Lead and Manu Taupua roles within each of our universities. This caused a delay of four months before the project was able to begin, and it required UNZ to sought MBIE's support to extend the duration of the project to ensure we would be able to deliver on our intended outcomes. This was granted until the 30 March 2024.

UNZ were required to advertise twice for the Manu Taki role. The demand for Māori talent across both public and private sectors was and remains high. Opening the role to a secondment opportunity for 12-months and ensuring the salary remained competitive was fundamental.

Similarly, recruitment for the Manu Taupua positions was an arduous task. The reduced budget and reduction of a full-time role to 0.4FTE staff, was less appealing to our Māori research community. The universities looked to find other part-time roles across their institutions to combine roles. Most Manu Taupua have been working in Māori research or postgraduate support roles. The timing between recruitment of these Manu Taupua roles varied, and we chose to deliver the first programme to those universities who already had filled their roles. We used this as our pilot cohort.

Despite the recruitment and thus the impact on the timing for delivery of our project, two cohorts of ākonga Māori were still able to actively participate in the programme and for most successfully complete. We learnt through the ākonga evaluations, and hui-ā-tinana with the Manu Taupua that having more opportunities to connect both in person and digitally was important to ākonga and them as facilitators, and that the timing of the programme could be redesigned to enable longer periods for each module to be completed and more opportunities for the hubs to connect and wānanga post completion of each module. The content needs to remain relevant and there needs to be an agility with the programme being able to ensure it still fits within the initial Māori academic development framework across the RSI system as noted earlier.

It was also crucial that the Piki Ake Transition Programme was delivered more than once in the project's timeline for us to move beyond a typical 'pilot phase'. Māori across all areas of the education sector have been exposed to various 'pilots' which have often not led to further action, so it was important that we moved rapidly to learn as much as possible to plan for our Piki Ake – Phase Two which is system integration as business as usual.

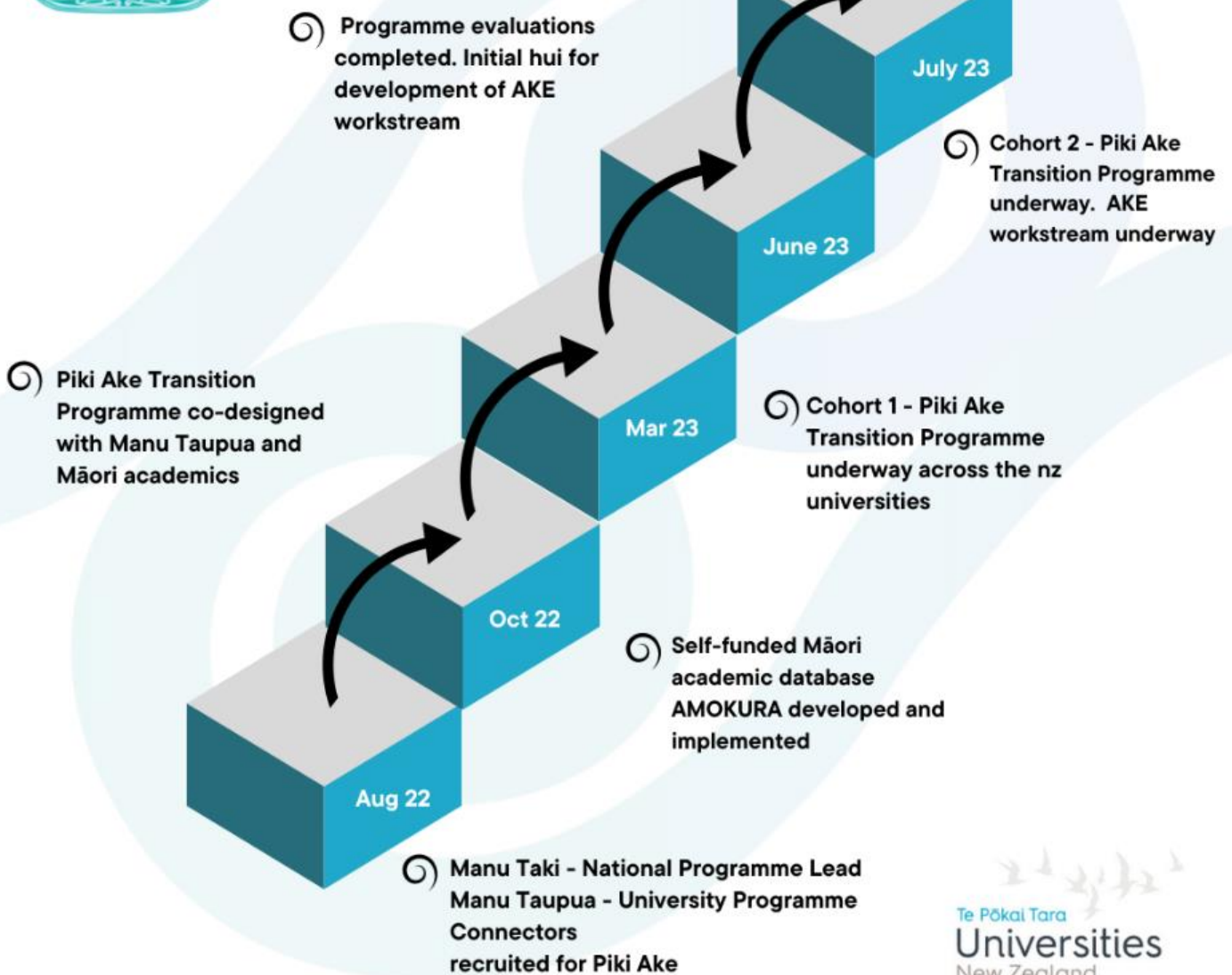
As the project formally ends its EDI funding commitment to MBIE, the commitment from our institutions does not. The Piki Ake Transition Programme will continue to be delivered across 2024. The challenges that now arise are due to a sector which remains under significant financial and Māori capability and capacity pressure. Continuing to align what is currently well established, financially viable and already underway for Māori researchers and academics across the sector will remain a top priority. We will continue to look for collaboration opportunities.

Wāhanga Tuaono- Appendices

Appendix 1 – Piki Ake Work Programme Progress (August – July 2023)



PIKI AKE WORK PROGRAMME August 22 - July 23

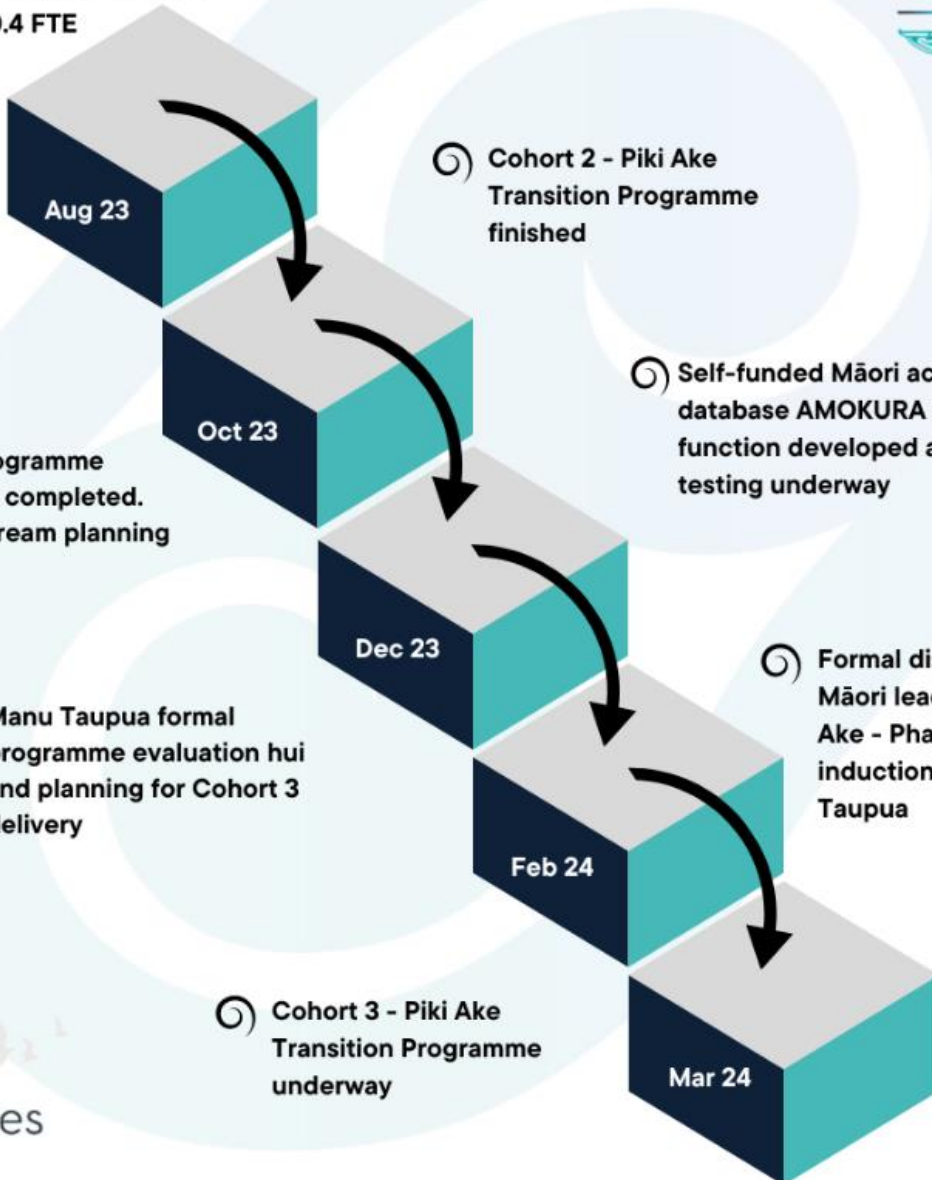


Appendix 2 – Piki Ake Work Programme Progress (August – March 2024)

PIKI AKE WORK PROGRAMME Aug 23 - March 24



Manu Taki - National Programme Lead Contract reduced 0.4 FTE



Cohort 2 - Piki Ake Transition Programme finished

Self-funded Māori academic database AMOKURA reporting function developed and testing underway

Akonga programme evaluations completed. AKE workstream planning underway

Manu Taupua formal programme evaluation hui and planning for Cohort 3 delivery

Formal discussions with Māori leaders about Piki Ake - Phase 2. Training and inductions for new Manu Taupua

Cohort 3 - Piki Ake Transition Programme underway