## Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau

**AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE** 



# Promoting equity, safety and well-being for all women

## **Annual Report 2020**

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**Charities Commission Certificate of Registration No CC27188** 

## COMMITMENTS

#### **Vision**

A society which has achieved equity for women.

#### **Mission Statement**

Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Women's Centre enables the well-being of women, especially women's empowerment and safety.

## **Philosophy**

We recognise Māori as tangata whenua, and are committed to working from a feminist perspective that understands that different systems of oppression intersect.

#### Our values-based culture

We are committed to good practice, high ethical standards, collaboration, community development, evaluation and sustainability.

## Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Women's Centre is:

- A friendly place to get involved and to belong
- Open to women of every ethnicity, income, culture, sexual orientation, age and ability
- Responsive to today's challenges
- Trusted in your community for over 40 years

#### 2020 - 2025 Strategic Directions:

## 1. Whakatoa (Empowerment)

All women become more able to speak up for themselves and participate in community, enhancing their wellbeing and improving social equity. AWC models organisational empowerment and inclusivity of all women in its internal decision-making and activities.

## 2. Kia whakanuia ngā tāngata whenua (Recognising tangata whenua)

Māori hold unique status as first peoples of Aotearoa. Our work with wāhine Māori will address persistent inequalities affecting Māori communities.

- 3. Kia haumaru te noho, wāhine mai, tamariki mai (Safety) New Zealand has unacceptable rates of violence against women. We facilitate women's safety at the individual, cultural and legislative levels.
- **4. Kia whakanuia ngā take wāhine (Raising awareness)**Our work is based on sparking community conversations about experiences of inequality and about diverse visions of social and gender equality, including the experiences and aspirations of Māori, Pasifika, migrant, disabled and Rainbow women.

## GOVERNANCE BOARD REPORT

### By Mira Taitz, Chairperson

It feels strange to be writing this report in a year unlike any we have known. While a sense of unity under lockdown was important in achieving health goals, it was soon pointed out that Covid did not affect everyone equally. Inequities of gender manifested in new ways, and racism continued, as a toxic force that harms and that kills. The pandemic exacerbated inequality. Women suffering domestic abuse were at greater risk of being killed by men. The effects of

poverty and toxic stress were compounded. Essential workers were unable to stay home under lockdown. Women's work grew as they took on more childcare and education at home. Conversations among feminists and change makers turned to whether the pandemic was an opportunity to create new ways of working and living, for greater environmental and social equity. In 2021 will we take up these challenges?

Under lockdown, our staff quickly adapted to working from home and providing services remotely. Most of our face-to-face services had to be cancelled but some of our



Mira Taitz

courses and groups met online. Thank you to all the staff who quickly shifted to new ways of working and supporting our community! It was a bonus for staff to discover that online courses suit some of our community better, and we plan to continue to use this option as well as kanohi ki te kanohi. For many of us this year, our emotional health was impacted negatively, and AWC board is focused on prioritising staff well-being so that we can better serve our community.

When Covid levels went down we felt a huge sense of hope at the chance to connect in person. As community education, Rainbow Women's Group, Single Mums on Sundays and services like massage and counselling met face to face, we rejoiced! Many people have reported the deep joy they experienced in being able to gather in a group. For me, a highlight was attending the fundraiser screening of *Baby Done*, and having a chance to meet the director, Sophie Henderson, for an inspiring and uplifting korero about her work in broadening the types of women and experiences shown to us on screen.

AWC continues its journey to honouring te Tiriti o Waitangi, in our work on our five-year strategic plan which carries us to 2025. This year has seen a focus on our tikanga, and some milestones for us as we hosted our first whakatau to welcome new wāhine Māori staff members. The journey has not always been straightforward, but we persist on this path. For 2021 we look forward to further work on growing our understanding of practicing in a culturally safe way and upholding Te Tiriti.

This is the last year that I will be chair as I look for more balance in my life. I have enjoyed the job and learned an enormous amount and am grateful to AWC for the amazing community and support you provide.

In 2021, I hope we can rise to the challenges offered by our wonderful forum speakers this year, in how we address racial and gender inequality and the climate emergency. Laura O'Connell-Rapira, who presented for us online, spoke of the climate emergency, which we know affects women disproportionately, and how low-carbon jobs like caring, healing, teaching, nursing, and gardening present new opportunities for centring whakapapa and Papatūānuku, and empowering women in decision-making. Dr Tracey McIntosh gave us inspiration when she told us that "Every positive social change in the history of humanity – whether it be the abolition of slavery, dismantling of apartheid, gay liberation, marriage equality – right up to the moment of change, people believed it couldn't happen. Our work can create transformative change."

## SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

## This year's activities fell broadly into the categories of:

- health and welfare services for women
- personal counselling
- · community education
- support groups
- partnering with other agencies to provide a voice for gender equity
- · providing community forums
- support for lesbian and rainbow women.

## HEALTH AND WELFARE SERVICES FOR WOMEN

## Women's Support: Support, Information, Referral and Advice

This year over 3,100 women from all over Tāmaki Makaurau have sought assistance from this free service available to all women. Women have made contact by phone, email or in person about: domestic and sexual violence support, women's health, housing, food banks, redundancy, mental health, relationship break-up, single parenting, sexual harassment, educational courses and workshops, counselling support, budgeting resources, migrant support, support and events for lesbians and rainbow women, and much more.

In 2020 Women's Support provided **intensive support** to 83 women. Working from a strength-based approach, Centre staff and volunteers provided intensive face-to-face or telephone support to women experiencing major distress and seeking assistance with immediate needs. Empathetic listening, support and validation are provided. Information is given, and referrals are made to specialised crisis care services for ongoing assistance.

#### Personal counselling

The Centre has benefited from its experienced and skilled counselling team: **Jane Tyrer** and **Anthea Randell.** Our counsellors are fully qualified members of a professional association and receive clinical supervision.

During the year Anthea slowly transitioned from working entirely at the Centre to working exclusively from her home practice. We continue to refer women to her who require sensitive claims counselling. Jane continues to work at our Centre focusing on supporting people to navigate their way through difficulties, clarify their values and strengths, and find enthusiasm for new possibilities.



Counsellor Jane Tyrer

#### Therapeutic massage

Affordable massage for beneficiaries and other women on low incomes is available at the Centre. Our masseuse Lorelei is highly skilled making this service very popular. Bookings have to be made well in advance.

### Free mammograms

Once again we were delighted to host the Mobile Breast Screening Unit at our Centre. It provides free screening for women aged from 45 to 69.

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

We have had another successful year delivering our **well-attended and highly praised classes**. Despite Covid disruptions we offered a total of 27 courses/ workshops delivered on 17 topics. Due to Covid we introduced online classes and found that some women prefer online classes because it's hard for them to attend in person due to needed to be at home with their children.

#### We were delighted to offer these popular classes again this year:

- Aroha Dance with Rosanna Marks
- Building a New Life After Separation with Danielle Turnbull
- CV and Job interview Skills with Wendy Rowe
- **EFT: Tapping for Women** (ONLINE) with Robyn Shepherd
- **Get Knitting: Beginners and Intermediate** with Barbara Woodman
- Girls' Self Defence with Morgan Libeau
- Menopause Informat
- ion with Robyn Fausett
- Memoir Writing with Maria de Jong
- **Positive Change** with Anna Keyter
- Questioning with Cissy Rock and Carol Davey
- **Regenerative Yoga** with Amanda Hookham-Kraft
- Te Reo Māori me ona Tikanga with Kahurangi Apiata and Tutira Williams
- Understanding Money with Lisa Dudson

**At our new workshop, Learn and Create** participants had fun collaging images of inspirational women with Lucie Blaževská. Lucie also volunteers with



Lucie Blaževská

us for our Women's Support Service and is an artist and graphic designer.

Maria de Jong

Memoir Writing

We partnered with Wahine Toa, the Women's Self Defence network to deliver our adult **Women's Self Defence** classes and also ran specific workshops for seniors (65+) and migrant women. We are thrilled with the feedback from

these workshops including the emotional shifts many women had from feeling

power-less to powerful. We are very grateful to be working with a wonderful tutor, Julie Poirier, who has been described as "inspiring, empowering and fun."

Our two wonderful tutors for **Te Reo Māori and Tikanga Māori:** Tutira Williams and Kahurangi Apiata brought humour, kindness and generosity to their teaching and received outstanding feedback from the course participants.



Tutira Williams and Kahurangi Apiata

## **COMMUNITY EDUCATION CONTINUED**

It was a delight to bring back Anatola and Ross from Family planning to run **Open and Honest: Talking to Children about Sex and Sexuality.** We ran

these workshops in person as well as online which suited parents who lived far away or who would have had difficulty getting childcare while they attended the classes. The evaluation of the workshop found that one of the most useful learnings was "the value of opening conversations to break the ice and normalise healthy conversations and learning."



Jan Eggleton

Also new was Workplace Harassment and Bullying with Jan



Anatola Finau

Eggleton. This workshop gave women the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills on how to deal with workplace harassment in a relaxed and informal setting.

We provided two **Building a New Life after Separation** workshops this year facilitated by
Danielle Turnbull. This one-day workshop delivers
invaluable support in the processing of grief and
anger post-relationship break-up. Danielle then
supports the participants to review their identity and
reconstruct their lives.

#### Thank you to all our skilled and passionate tutors

We are proud to provide a women-centred community education programme in a supportive environment: a space where people can gain new skills, build their self-confidence and increase their feelings of belonging to their community.

We have had the privilege of working with incredibly skilled, wonderful tutors who understand how special it is to run groups in a women's space. We cherish their input in growing women's



Danielle Turnbull

resilience, power and self belief. We sincerely thank the tutors of our courses and workshops, listed on page 12. Also listed on that page are the many agencies we partner with to improve outcomes for women. We also acknowledge and thank our funders whose generosity enables us to provide a wide range of services in community education.

#### Thank you very much Ellie!

Our beloved Ellie Lim who has run our Women's Support and Community Education programme since July 2008 is leaving us! With great empathy, vision and organisational skills, Ellie has looked after Women's Services and community education incredibly well for more than a decade. Ellie would also win first prize in any workplace for being an amazing colleague. We will miss her greatly, but we're pleased she'll be applying her talent and creativity to an exciting new role from early 2021.



Ellie Lim

## SUPPORT GROUPS

### Single Mums on Sundays

Like so many planned events this year, Single Mums on Sunday (SMOS) has done the Covid shuffle and went online on occasion. In September we farewelled **Suzette Jackson**, and **Emily Phillips took on the role of Coordinator.** 

SMOS provides an opportunity for single mums to relax and engage with each other in a non-judgmental space.



SMOS Christmas Party 2020

Mums are able to have a break from their children who are cared for by experienced childcare workers on site. The mums are provided with food from **KiwiHarvest** each month easing the financial pressure of running a single income household.

Sharing strengths and problem-solving skills encourages mums to see that **they are doing an amazing job**, and mums build a sense of capacity and capability which they can draw on in their day-to-day roles.

We are fortunate to have received funding for a new year of Single Mums on Sunday through the

Grassroots Giving Programme, administered by the Auckland Foundation. This funding not only allows us to run a monthly event for our single mums, but also allows for us to run special events for Christmas and Mother's Day, allowing us to make space for our mums to feel treasured and cared for.

## **Supporting The Rainbow Community**

Providing support and connection to **rainbow communities** is an important part of our work. This year **Cissy Rock and Carol Davey** delivered our **Questioning** course online, offering women a supportive space to talk about same sex attraction. Carol is a former participant of the group and attending Questioning contributed to significant positive changes in her own life. Cissy is a leader in the rainbow community and runs her own facilitation company Community Think.

Our monthly **Rainbow Social Nights** run this year by **Ellie Lim** alternate between a DVD night and a Board Games night. These nights are a fun, inexpensive, relaxed opportunity for lesbian, bisexual, takatāpui, trans and queer women to connect outside the bar and club scene. It is a culturally diverse group with between 16 - 30 women attending each time.

For some women, being part of this group, being accepted and included, feels like a homecoming.



Some of our Rainbow Women's group at a games evening

## HIGH SCHOOL PEER SUPPORT PROJECT

Kia ora rā

Ka rere ngā mihi ki te katoa, ko Ranginui e tū iho nei ko Papatūānuku e takoto ki raro rā, ko ngā tāngata katoa i waenganui Tihei Mauri Ora

2020 has brought about considerable challenges to our high schools engagement kaupapa, te maha hoki o ngā piki me ngā heke, with many plans created and many plans undone. These challenges have provided opportunities for necessary re-evaluation and growth, for the betterment of our mahi.

A significant part of this growth has been through the hiring of our Rangatahi Coordinator, **Kiriataahua Te Maapi Pene** at the start of this year. Kiri works closely with Gabriella Brayne and has offered a deeper perspective in Tikanga Māori, Te Reo Māori, and Te Ao Māori as a whole.



We started the year by organising a Rally for Reproductive Rights to support the Abortion Legislation Act: our aim was to enable young women to help shape Aotearoa in ways which support their flourishing (such as calling for safe and accessible healthcare without stigma and unnecessary mental distress). Several of our high school group members spoke powerfully in front of over 300 people.

We also spoke to students at St Dominic's

College for their International Women's Day festival, and to senior students at Ngā Puna O Waiōrea on the relationship between upholding te Tiriti and empowering women. Having been unable to visit schools for the majority of the year due to Covid, however, most of our mahi shifted into the online world.

During the first lockdown, we initiated a Facebook ropū (group) **Tuia Te Papa** alongside AWC's wonderful intern Olivia Thompson, which currently has over 100 members. An Instagram account was created which now has 2,400 followers. On both platforms, we work to create, share, and discuss relevant kaupapa with our rangatahi about intersectional equity and the issues young women are facing. This has proven to be an important resource for engagement with our project.

More recently, we hosted a Zoom Kōrero for the first time with two incredible pou (pillars) in our community, **Anatola Finau** and **Lee Tere**. This year of Covid and rāhui has exposed (and furthered) many issues and barriers around sustaining hauora (health), especially for our rangatahi. Therefore, the kōrero we hosted aimed to approach these issues from an indigenous kaupapa, showing

how self-care is a journey centered in manaakitanga and kotahitanga as a whole.

Moving forward we are looking to explore further ways to engage with our rangatahi kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) and in the online world, whilst also taking a closer look at their needs as our world continues to shift.

Ngā manaakitanga,

Kiri and Gabriella



Gabriella (L) and Kiri (R)

## **FUNDRAISING**

This year we held several events including our first ever digital fundraising campaign **Donate A Kate**, celebrating Suffrage Day on 19 September, 127

years since women won the right to vote in New Zealand.

The project itself was so much fun to work on and we owe Michele A'Court a HUGE thank you for participating in our video. Usually Michele heads up our annual comedy gala "Feminists Are Funny" but like many other events, this had to be postponed until 2021. Everyone loves Michelle, and clearly missed her this year, judging



Fabulous comedian Michèle A'Court, who generously supports our annual fundraiser



Michele with some of our staff; Chris, Ellie, Leonie, Kiri, Gabi and Sophie

by the amount of times the video was viewed!!

It was also really exciting to see our fellow community organisations and many other important voices supporting us.

Also a gigantic thank you to our Givealittle donors for the amazing messages of support. We are so grateful to all of these wonderful people who enabled us to reach our dream goal of \$10,000.

This enables us to continue our commitment to safety, equity and wellbeing for all women. Over 4,000 women and their whānau have benefited from our services and support this year.

We were so lucky to show the hilarious and at times very poignant film **Baby Done**, this year at the newly refurbished Lido Cinema. To be together again, free to mix and mingle, and then to have a **Q and A with Sophie Henderson**, writer of the



film, was a real treat. Sophie's understanding of gender-based issues and women's experiences, and



Mira Taitz, our Chairperson with Sophie Henderson, Baby Done writer

her description of how she translated this into her stories, was insightful and inspiring.

Thank you so much to all of you who came out to the movie and also for the great questions!

It's wonderful seeing so many new people supporting the Auckland Women's Centre and we are very grateful.

We are excited to let you know that Feminists Are Funny will be back next year.

**Sophie and Chris** 

## A VOICE FOR WOMEN'S EQUITY

Te Wāhi Wāhine o Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland Women's Centre has been a leading champion of women's rights in the wake of Covid-19, providing independent, constructive commentary and also supporting others to reduce intersectional inequity.

**Dr Hinemoa Elder** fortified us with inspiration, hope and solace at our March forum even before lockdown was announced. In a wonderful evening of solidarity and mana wahine, Hinemoa spoke to **Stacey Morrison** about how stories – the traditional conduit for Indigenous wisdom – can convince people on an emotional level why they should care about the climate emergency: "data alone is not going to save us." She also gave advice for when we feel overwhelmed: "Keep breathing." In the anxious weeks that followed, that was genuinely helpful.



Stacey Morrison (L) & Hinemoa Elder (R) with our rangatahi coordinators Kiri Pene and Gabriella Brayne (centre)

In April, in spite of the upheaval of lockdown, AWC released policy recommendations to encourage Covid-response spending towards **caring**, **human rights and intersectional equity**.



Laura O'Connell Rapira on screen

In May, we furthered this discussion of how Tiriti -based and intersectional equity approaches for wāhine Māori and women could create a better post-pandemic world: our first-ever online forum starred ActionStation director **Laura O'Connell Rapira** talking to returning interviewer Stacey Morrison. Like Hinemoa, Laura centred care for **Papatūānuku**, emphasising **whakapapa** (ensuring all decisions work for Papatūānuku and all the generations to come) and

rangatiratanga (ensuring whānau, hapū and iwi have decision-making power and resources to look after all their members).

All this collaborative thinking informed our subsequent calls for policy-makers to apply a gender and better-world lens to the Covid response and beyond, including: a **Spinoff op-ed** about news that 90% of jobs lost were those of women; a query about new government **procurement** policies (to see if they really *would* favour women, as announced) and a briefing to the incoming Minister for Women **Jan Tinetti** on Te Tiriti o Waitangi, representation, unpaid work & caring, paid work, violence, poverty, health, and climate change.

And of course, we had an election! AWC is now a founding member of the **Gender Justice Collective**, which surveyed women and non-binary people, and interrogated parties about their equity achievements and goals, to inform a policy scorecard.



In other collaborative work, we published a piece in the **Dominion Post** calling for badly-dated social welfare **relationship rules** to be scrapped so that all women have full control over their own finances, and publicly supported other calls from allies for **liveable incomes** for families in severest poverty.

Finally, the AWC-led **Coalition for the Safety of Women and Children** had a productive and busy year, producing a detailed paper on the effects of **gender and colonisation** on family violence for the inaugural Minister for Preventing Family Violence and Sexual Violence **Marama Davidson**, and successfully lobbying for a reversal of the Government position of **stalking**. The Government held that existing laws covered every stalking situation until media investigated a stalking case and featured **Alison Towns** from the Coalition explaining how current laws had let the victim down. The upshot: the Joint Venture for Family Violence and Sexual Violence is now reviewing current and required legislation – and even better, involving the Coalition in that review.

Watch this space...

## THANK YOU!

AWC gratefully receives support from many different volunteers, agencies and funders.

We owe a huge vote of thanks to members of the **Governance Board** who provide AWC with big picture thinking, strategic guidance and support within a collective framework. We wish to especially thank our Chairperson, **Mira Taitz**, who readily gives thoughtful advice when frequently called upon between meetings. Sincere thanks are also due to **Ruth Busch** (Secretary), **Charon Leesing** (Treasurer), **Jo Elvidge, Katherine McAlpine, Marewa Grimsdale, Margo Athy, Sarah Dunn and Sarah Herbert** for their invaluable knowledge, skills, ideas and volunteering at our events.



Board members
Back row: Charon, Sarah Herbert, Katherine and Sarah Dunn
Front row: Rewa, Mira, and Margo
Absent: Jo and Ruth

Sadly, several of our Board members are not standing again next year. We will miss Rewa Grimsdale's and Sarah Herbert's advice, particularly on mātauranga Māori; Sarah Dunn's thoughtful input, especially on comms matters; and Katherine McAlpine's expertise in community building. Thanks very much to these amazing women for generously giving their

time, skills and energy to the Centre, especially **Katherine** who has done a huge amount of top quality volunteer work for the Centre for over 6 years.

Others generously contributed time, skills and effort to our crèche, mail-outs, forums, garden, posters and newsletter design, fundraising, Women's Support, research, writing and our library. These volunteers include:

Anoushka Maharaj, Aorewa McLeod, Barbara Thomborson, Devina Ramlu, Ellen Michie, Jenny Collins, Jenny Naea, Jolene Parker, Julie Thompson, Kathleen Ryan, Katrina Wolff, Lucie Blaževská, Lucy

MacKenzie, Marewa Grimsdale, Maria Boow, Mina Patel, Nikki Wendel-Symonds, Orfhlaith Mulhivill, Pauline Pope, Raine Shirley, Ruth Jackson, Sandra Furness, Stefania Saranaki (Red Design), Tiara Betham and Toni Chase.

We would particularly like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to our amazing Patron, **Dr Judy McGregor**. Judy works tirelessly for women's human rights and makes a huge contribution to our Centre.



Our Patron: Dr Judy McGregor

We supervised two students this year **Olivia Thompson and Manon Keane** who contributed their careful reflection, compassion, and social work skills.

We also wish to express our special thanks to **The Women's Bookshop** for kindly donating books to our Women's Library. We sincerely thank the **tutors** of our courses and workshops, listed on the following page. Also listed on the next page are our **funders** whose generosity enables us to provide a wide range of services and programmes to women.

## THE AUCKLAND WOMEN'S CENTRE WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING FUNDERS, TUTORS AND ORGANISATIONS WHO SUPPORTED OUR WORK:

**FUNDERS** 

ANZ Staff Foundation Akarana Community Trust

Auckland Foundation -Covid-19 Community Response Fund

Auckland Foundation **Grassroots Giving** 

BlueSky Community Trust

Blue Waters Community Trust Rosanna Marks

COGS

**Dragon Community Trust** 

Foundation North

Four Winds Foundation John Ilott Charitable Trust

Lion Foundation

Maurice Paykel Charitable

Trust

Milestone Trust

NZ Lottery Grants Board

**New Zealand Community** Trust

One Foundation Pub Charity Inc.

Rule Foundation

Sir John Logan Campbell

Residuary Estate

The Gift Trust

The Trusts Community

Foundation Ltd

Trillian Trust

Waitematā Local Board

**TUTORS** 

Amanda Hookham-Kraft

Anatola Finau

Anna Keyter

Barbara Woodman

Carol Davey

Cissy Rock

Claire Virtue

Danielle Turnbull

Emma Farry

Jan Eggleton

Julie Poirier

Kahurangi Apiata

Lisa Dudson

Lucie Blaževská

Maria de Jona

Morgan Libeau

Robyn Fausett

Robyn Shepherd

Ross Palethorpe

Tutira Williams

Wendy Rowe

Zaif Khan

**ORGANISATIONS** 

Auckland Lesbian Business

Association (alba)

Auckland Sexual Abuse HELP

Auckland Women's Refuge

**AWA Associates** 

Barnardos

Belong Aotearoa

Breast Screen NZ

**Business and Professional** Women, Auckland

Charlotte Museum

Child Poverty Action Group

**CADS** 

Citizen's Advice Bureau

Dayspring Trust

Eastern Women's Refuge

Family Works Northern

Framework Trust

Grey Lynn Community Centre

Grey Lynn Library

Hearts and Minds

**Human Rights Commission** 

Inner City Women's Group

KiwiHarvest

Leys Institute Library

Lifewise

Living Wage Movement

Aotearoa NZ

National Council of Women

New Zealand Family Violence

Clearing House

NZ Pacific Women's Watch

North Shore Women's Centre

Oranga Tamariki

**OUTline NZ** 

Rainbow Auckland

Rainbow Youth

Rape Prevention Education

Salvation Army

Shakti Asian Women's Centre

Shine

Stop Demand

Te Rito Rodney

Te Wharepora Hou

The Women's Bookshop

Tū Wahine Trust

Violence Free Waitakere

Waitematā Local Board

Women's Health Action

Women's Centre Rodney

Women's Centre Waitakere

Women's Studies Association

Working Women's Resource

Centre Youthline

YWCA, Auckland

Zonta Club of Auckland

2020 has been a year with unique challenges and we would like to thank all of our funders for choosing to support us. We are incredibly grateful that you continue to support improving the lives of women and children.

























Lottery Grants Board
Te Puna Tahua

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