

Quarterly Report 2025/26

Quarter Four (April - June 2026)

venture
TARANAKI
Te Puna Umanga





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Message from the Chair

Tēnā koutou,

Global uncertainty continued to affect the economic outlook this quarter, while disruption closer to home on State Highway 3 reinforced the importance of resilient infrastructure and strong regional advocacy. It has been encouraging to see Mayors from Taranaki and Waikato working together to seek a more permanent and reliable solution for this critical northern corridor.

Regional economic conditions remain mixed this quarter, with GDP and employment softening, although the dairy sector continues to provide support. Against this backdrop, the Board has supported a sharper strategic focus for Venture Taranaki, ensuring the organisation is well placed to catalyse opportunities that will have the greatest long-term impact on the region.

In the years ahead, resources will be concentrated across three priority focus areas: food and fibre, tourism, and the Taranaki Alliance. This is supported by our foundational economic development functions. These priorities align with opportunities identified through Tapuae Roa and reflect areas where Venture Taranaki can play a distinctive role in supporting investment, employment, diversification and economic resilience.

Encouraging progress is being made across each area. The Taranaki Alliance continues to attract strong industry support as a regionally led platform for securing larger national and international opportunities, while retaining highly skilled talent

Our Branching Out land use diversification programme is progressing commercial outcomes including the Taranaki Hemp Hub and Functional Botanicals, while momentum continues to build across the visitor economy, with strong international growth and continued investment in destination development, and offshore travel trade opportunities.

Looking to the new financial year ahead, we remain focused on ensuring Venture Taranaki is well positioned to respond to immediate economic pressures, while taking a long-term view to regional development, connecting people, catalysing opportunities, and helping to shape a sustainable, thriving regional economy for our people and place.

We thank our shareholders and key regional partners for their ongoing support.



Grant McQuoid
Chair, Te Puna Umanga
Venture Taranaki

Message from the CE

Tēnā koutou,

As we close out the 2025/26 financial year, it is clear that Taranaki continues to operate in a changing economic environment. While parts of the economy remain under pressure, periods like these also reinforce the importance of taking a long-term view and investing in the opportunities that will shape the region's future.

Over the past quarter, Venture Taranaki has sharpened its focus to ensure our people, resources and partnerships are concentrated where they can deliver the greatest regional impact.

As an example, working with industry to kickstart the Alliance has required a considerable investment of time and capability across the organisation. That investment reflects our confidence in the opportunity ahead. More than 80 organisations have now signalled their intent to join, demonstrating strong industry support for a collaborative approach that strengthens regional capability, helps retain highly skilled jobs, and creates new commercial opportunities across sectors including energy, advanced manufacturing, defence, marine and infrastructure.

Momentum has also continued across our other strategic priorities. Branching Out is increasingly moving from research and trials into commercial delivery, with progress on the Taranaki Hemp Hub, Functional Botanicals and the infrastructure needed to support new regional value chains.

Across the visitor economy, our new 'Escape the Ordinary' shoulder season campaign delivered more than 1.47 million impressions across our domestic market in just five weeks, while engagement at TRENZ, New Zealand's largest travel trade event and new partnerships with Waitomo operators are strengthening the pathway from destination awareness to bookable visitor experiences.

Our enterprise support services have also continued to respond to changing business needs. This quarter included the rollout of the AI Advisory Pilot, practical business resilience workshops across the region, and targeted support to help businesses access specialist advice, funding and R&D capability.

These outcomes rely on strong regional partnerships. Thank you to our shareholders, iwi, local authorities, government partners, industry and businesses for continuing to work alongside us.



Kelvin Wright
CE, Te Puna Umanga
Venture Taranaki

Economic overview

The March 2026 Quarterly Economic Monitor showed that economic conditions in Taranaki remained mixed, with the regional recovery continuing to lag behind the national picture. Provisional GDP declined by 0.6% in the year to March 2026, compared with growth of 0.4% nationally. Performance varied across the region, with GDP growing by 1.6% in Stratford District, while declining by 0.7% in both New Plymouth and South Taranaki districts.

The rural sector has continued to play an important role in supporting the regional economy. However, broader indicators point to ongoing pressure across several parts of the economy. Business counts increased by 0.8%, showing some resilience, but employment fell by 1.6%. Residential consent numbers declined by 8.2%, while the value of non-residential consents decreased by 24.2%. Housing and visitor activity also remained subdued. Taranaki house values declined by 3.7%, compared with a 0.8% decrease nationally, while guest nights fell by 2.8% despite national growth of 4.2%.

As reflected in the district-level indicators below, outcomes varied considerably across Taranaki, highlighting both areas of resilience and the uneven nature of current economic conditions.

Annual Results March 2025 / 2026	New Zealand	Taranaki Region	New Plymouth District	Stratford District	South Taranaki District
 Gross domestic product (provisional)	0.4% ▲	\$11,554m ▼ -0.6%	\$7,922m ▼ -0.7%	\$644m ▲ 1.6%	\$2,988m ▼ -0.7%
 Business counts (#)	1.2% ▲	16,086 ▲ 0.8%	10,345 ▲ 0.9%	1,465 ▼ -1.3%	4,276 ▲ 1.1%
 Residential consents (#)	11.0% ▲	438 ▼ -8.2%	344 ▼ -9.0%	38 ▲ 81.0%	56 ▼ -28.2%
 House values (\$)	-0.8% ▼	\$562,498 ▼ -3.7%	\$666,375 ▼ -0.6%	\$441,673 ▲ 3.1%	\$348,051 ▲ 1.9%
 Non-residential consents (\$)	1.2% ▲	\$102.2m ▼ -24.2%	\$50.2m ▼ -45.3%	\$14.2m ▲ 305.7%	\$38.0m ▼ -3.8%
 Employment (#)	-0.8% ▼	54,935 ▼ -1.6%	39,004 ▼ -1.6%	3,490 ▼ -1.2%	12,440 ▼ -1.8%
 Guest nights (#)	4.2% ▲	774,900 ▼ -2.8%	605,100 ▼ -3.0%	72,400 ▼ -4.2%	97,500 ► 0.0%

For each indicator, figures show annual levels, while percentages represent the average annual percentage change over the period March 2025 to March 2026.

Source: Informetric [Quarterly Economic Monitor](#).

Performance reporting



Initiatives Performance and Quarterly Summary

Events, programmes or initiatives to drive change and support regional strategy objectives such as Tapuae Roa and Taranaki 2050.

#	Focus area	Initiative	Project Description	Status
1	Energy	Sector development	Driving industry engagement, strategic decision/making, and energy workforce development through market intelligence, project leadership, and advocacy for supply chain and cluster growth.	
2	Energy	Renewables Accelerator	Develop a prospectus and lead initiatives to identify, package, promote and attract energy/generation and offtake opportunities, while investigating the establishment of a strategic energy zone. <i>* Q4 closing comments: Taranaki Alliance emergent work stream - allocation of energy resources to deliver.</i>	
3	Food and Fibre	Branching Out	Phase two (2023 – 2025): Regional scale land diversification and scaleup of Food and Fibre value chains to generate economic, social and environmental outcomes. Phase three: (2026 – 2028):scale land/use trials into commercially viable, export/focused ventures by building value/chains, infrastructure and capability Better off Funding: Delivery of funding contract through DIA/NPDC for a Hemp Processor and Dryer in region, securing critical components of the value chain for the Branching Out program and commercialisation. Contract delivery 30 June 2027.	
4	Food and Fibre	Platform to Launch	Providing emerging food and beverage businesses the chance to test and refine their product, engage with customers, generate income and build capability and connection across the Food and Fibre value chain.	
5	Food and Fibre	Link Taranaki	Transport and logistics infrastructure Understanding the full role, value, and future of rail services and infrastructure in the region, and what impact it can have on enabling better connections and reducing emissions in our logistical system.	
6	Food and Fibre	Dairy and Agriculture	Support establishment of sustainable business models for future growth, ensuring retention of export market share and positioning the region as a leader in dairy and agriculture.	
7	Food and Fibre	Food & Fibre Sector Development	A coordinated programme to support the growth, resilience, and sustainability of the food and fibre sector through workforce development, sector partnerships, and increased sector visibility and opportunity.	
8	Destination	MEF	Facilitation of the Major Events fund to support and encourage out/of/region visitation, and the smoothing of seasonality via events.	
9	Destination	MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions)	Facilitation of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) sector to support and encourage out/of/region visitation, and the smoothing of seasonality via events.	
10	Destination	Visitor Trade	Continuing to develop and grow our visitor trade connections, working with trade/ready product to connect with international selling opportunity, and supporting trade/ready product development in partnership with the Enterprise team.	
11	Destination	Regional Film Office	Support a film/friendly region, liaising with stakeholders to streamline permitting and centralise film data. Providing reactive film support to productions on the ground and limited proactive business development of film opportunities for the region in line with budget.	
12	Destination	Product and Place. Sector Support and Development	Providing sector support in partnership with the Enterprise and Investment teams to catalyse and de/risk significant sector development opportunities through advice and support, funding and funding support, and cluster activities.	
13	Destination	Regional Promotion	Support a thriving visitor economy through the positioning of Taranaki as a must/visit NZ destination.	
14	Destination	International Education & Digital Nomads	Encouraging talent attraction, outward investment, regional growth and global connectedness.	

Traffic light criteria

Not started
 Completed
 On track
 Under review
 Cancelled / Off track

Initiatives Performance and Quarterly Summary

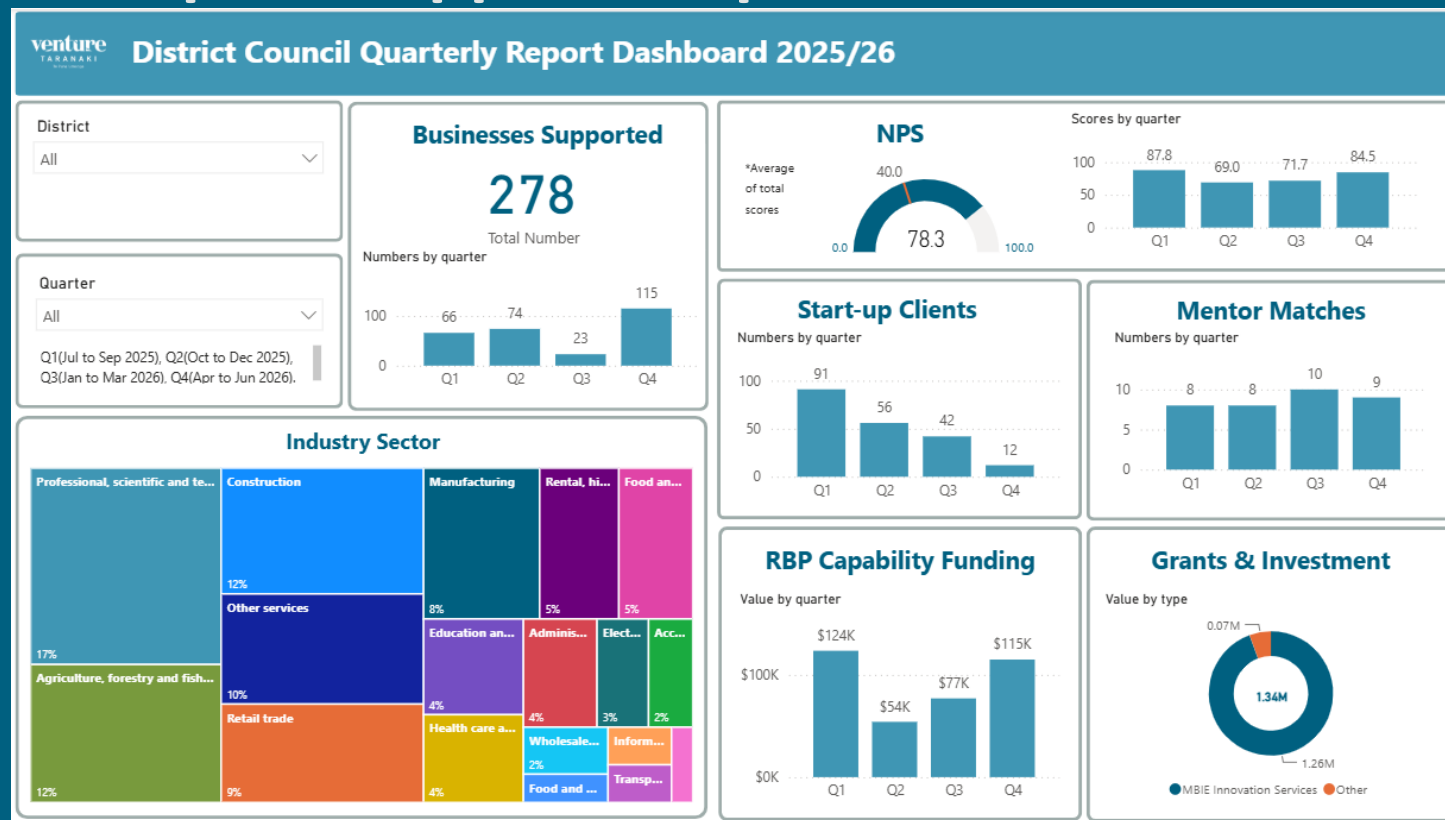
Events, programmes or initiatives to drive change and support regional strategy objectives such as Tapuae Roa and Taranaki 2050.

#	Focus area	Initiative	Project Description	Status
15	New Industry and Investment	Prospectus and Promotion	Attraction of new businesses and investments to the region by creating a compelling destination proposition and addressing barriers, establishing competitive advantage, developing incentives and fostering an environment that is open for business and investment. <i>Develop a prospectus and lead initiatives to identify, package, promote and attract energy/generation and offtake opportunities—while investigating and advancing the establishment of a strategic energy zone.</i>	
16	New Industry and Investment	Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Establishment of regional science and innovation hub to connect, enhance, and elevate Taranaki's R&D activity. The Centre will establish services to support development of local IP, or attraction of external IP through piloting and scaling facilities. Initial research platforms are biotechnology, and integrated ecosystems. Alongside these services are initiatives to build regional science capabilities with coordinated education and outreach programmes.	
17	Foundations	Massey University Partnership and R&D Development	Partnership funding for an FTE located at Venture Taranaki to support R&D funding, food & fibre sector capability and students into Taranaki industries. Includes R&D for Grow Taranaki.	
18	Foundations	Skills and Talent	Ensure appropriate education pathways and in region training and skills development for school leavers and career transitions to support key regional sectors. Direct 'Talent & Skills' projects are delivered directly within each sector workstream.	
19	Foundations	Regional Data & Insights	This function ensures we have access to and development of the right data, dashboards and insights tailored to our unique region, which helps make informed decisions and capitalise on opportunities.	
20	Foundations	Tapuae Roa	Deliver a Regional Strategy function which includes ongoing maintenance and management of Tapuae Roa.	
21	Foundations	PowerUp	To foster, nurture, and grow the capability and confidence of start/ups and innovative enterprises ready to scale within the region by offering a range of support services and activities focused on the idea/to/maturity life cycle of an enterprise: PowerUp Business Ready, PowerUp Accelerator, PowerUp ScaleUp Grants, and PowerUp Supporting Activities.	
22	Foundations	Enterprise support / Regional Business Partners & MBIE Innovation Services	Delivers tailored advisory and funding support to strengthen SME capability, innovation, and growth. Through MBIE's nationwide Regional Business Partner Network, businesses can access training, R&D grants (Callaghan Innovation), and connections that enable them to thrive.	
23	Foundations	Enterprise support / Business Mentor New Zealand (BMNZ)	Provides foundational mentoring support for SMEs by connecting them with experienced mentors who offer independent advice, fresh perspectives, and practical guidance to help them build confidence, capability, and long-term sustainability. * Q4 closing comments: Business Mentor New Zealand's KPI was not met, contract is under review.	
24	Foundations	Enterprise support / Start up	Provides early/stage entrepreneurs with free, confidential one/on/one consultations focused on business planning, idea development, and access to advice and support networks. Includes: StartUp Clinics, Start your own business (MSD) and Univentures 50+ Startup Programme	
25	Foundations	Emergent Opportunities	Keep sight of new regional opportunities, undertake due diligence and research, and maintain innovation ecosystem to support new opportunities to commercialise in Taranaki.	

Traffic light criteria

Not started
 Completed
 On track
 Under review
 Cancelled / Off track

Enterprise support snapshot



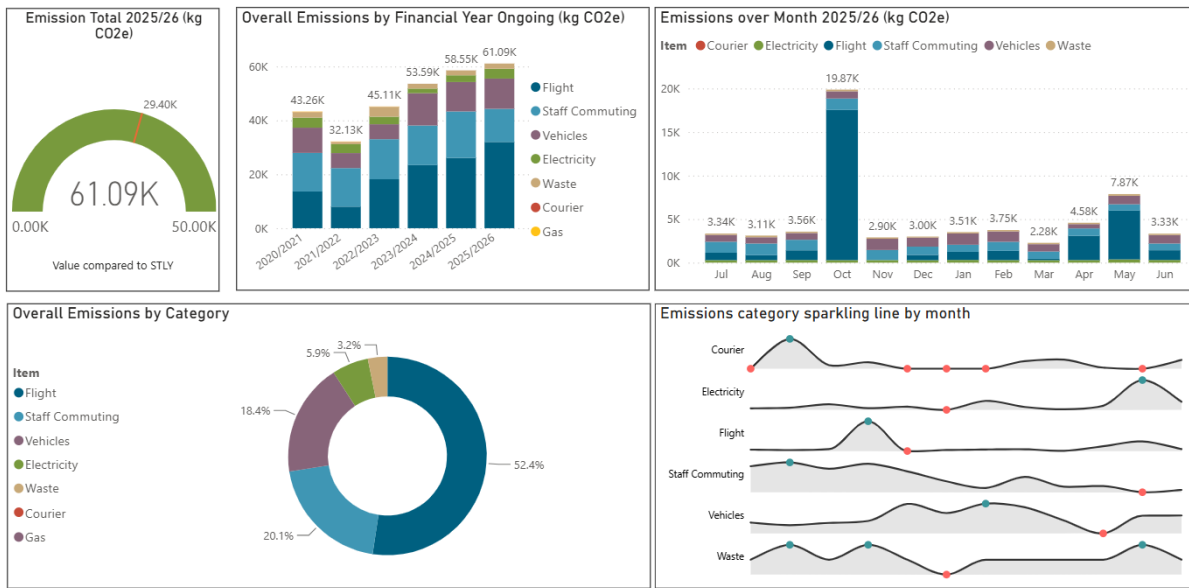
Venture Taranaki offers an interactive dashboard that provides a comprehensive overview of key performance metrics by district, month, and quarter. This live dashboard is able to be viewed here:

<https://www.venture.org.nz/regional/intelligence/performance/dashboard/>

Note: The dashboard is for internal use only and is not linked to the public website.

Sustainability and Emissions Summary Report

Venture Taranaki Carbon Emissions Footprint Dashboard



Total emissions were 61.09 tonnes of CO₂e, a 4.3% increase from FY2024/25.

Flights remained the largest source, accounting for 52% of emissions and increasing by 22.7%, mainly due to strategic international travel supporting regional connections and opportunities.

Vehicle emissions increased by 2.9%, with the Branching Out diesel vehicle remaining the main fleet contributor due to travel distances and seasonal activity from October to February.

Staff commuting emissions decreased by 28.7%, partly reflecting organisational restructuring, workforce changes and staff working from home during the year. Electricity and waste increased, while courier emissions remained minimal.

This live dashboard can be viewed here:
www.venture.org.nz/regional-intelligence/performance-dashboard/

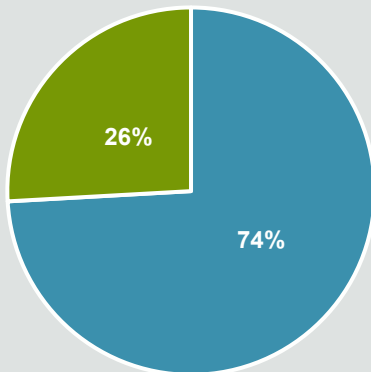
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Leveraged Revenue Summary

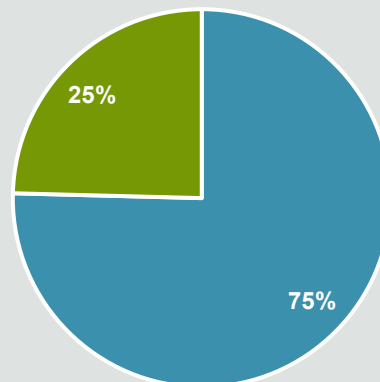
BUDGET SUMMARY	Q4 2025/26 Year-to-date Actual					Q4 2025/26 Year-to-date Budgeted				
END OF Q4 2025/2026	Revenue	NPDC Core Investment	NPDC other*	Leveraged Revenue	Expenditure	Revenue	NPDC Core Investment	NPDC other*	Leveraged Revenue	Expenditure
Total	\$6,694,868	\$3,939,397	\$1,379,512	\$1,375,959	\$6,491,472	\$6,346,519	\$3,939,397	\$1,122,646	\$1,284,476	\$6,340,011

* "NPDC other" includes NPDC funding towards MEF and additional non/core projects (Branching out, Taranaki Innovation centre, Emergent opportunities)

Q4 2025 / 26
Actuals



Q4 2025 / 26
Budgeted



NPDC Core Investment Leveraged Revenue

Externally Funded Projects 2025–26

	Title	Cost Centre	Funder	Start Date	End Date	Traffic Light	Commentary
1	Univentures 50+ Startup Programme Contract	Economic Development	MSD	06-05-25	04-07-25		The purpose of this contract is to engage Univentures to deliver a programme director role and integration support services as part of a pilot Hybrid Model business startup programme for individuals aged 50+ in Taranaki.
2	Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Regional Investment	Toi Foundation	20-11-24	20-11-25		Feasibility and business case development for Taiao/Biotechnology to connect, enable, develop and accelerate Taranaki's science and technology sector.
3	Central NZ	Destination	MBIE	28-04-25	31-12-25		To attract visitor to Central NZ in shoulder and off-peak. Wellington is lead agency, receiving and managing funding of all activities in partnership with VT and other Central North RTO's.
4	PKW Farms Branching Out Trial MOU	Regional Investment	PKW Farms LP	01-07-25	31-12-25		To support the optimisation of agronomic practices in preparation for a potential staged expansion of cultivation and processing operations.
5	Branching Out Phase 2	Regional Investment	NPDC;STDC	01-07-22	01-02-26		To diversify food and fibre value chains to generate better economic, social and environmental outcomes for Taranaki.
6	Branching Out Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures Grant	Regional Investment	MPI	16-12-22	01-02-26		To diversify food and fibre value chains to generate better economic, social and environmental outcomes for Taranaki.
7	Branching Out Pivot Award Research Project	Regional Investment	Massey University	01-04-25	01-04-26		Testing the power of sensory consumer science in distinguishing Taranaki crops and value-add products for market advantage. In partnership with Massey University (who will receive the funds) and Begin Distilling.
8	Icehouse Business Owner Programme	Economic Development	The Icehouse	09-10-25	06-06-26		This programme is facilitated by an Icehouse business coach. Minimum number of 8 participants enables breakeven cost to Venture Taranaki. If minimum numbers cannot be met, the contract will be annulled and the programme cancelled.
9	Regional Event Promotions Fund	Destination	MBIE	24-06-25	24-06-26		To support regional dispersal, visitor growth and attraction via major regional events.
10	Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Regional Investment	NPDC	01-01-25	30-06-26		Feasibility and business case development for the Applied Innovation Centre to connect, enable, develop and accelerate Taranaki's science and technology sector.
11	Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Regional Investment	Taranaki Regional Council	01-01-25	30-06-26		Feasibility and business case development for the Applied Innovation to connect, enable, develop and accelerate Taranaki's science and technology sector.
12	Branching Out	Regional Investment	AGMARDT	05-01-25	30-08-2026		De-risking the process of introducing novel crops: A collaboration to develop a seed/propropagation toolkit for Taranaki and Northland landowners
13	Stratford Economic Development Strategy	Regional Investment	SDC	27-06-25	30-06-26		Develop a new Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan for Stratford District that will inform and guide Council's economic priorities, partnerships, and investments over the next 10+ years.
14	Business Mentors New Zealand	Economic Development	BMNZ	01-07-25	30-06-26		To facilitate delivery of the Business Mentors programme to mentors and mentees on behalf of BMNZ. 33 mentor matches were completed against a target of 50. The shortfall reflects the transition of programme responsibility following the Enterprise Support Advisor restructure

Traffic light key

All KPIs met, contract complete or reporting period complete

All KPIs substantially met (within 90%), contract complete

All KPIs on track to be substantially met by completion of contract

Some KPIs not on track to be substantially met by completion of contract

Some or all KPIs not substantially met, contract complete

Contract yet to commence

Externally Funded Projects 2025–26

	Title	Cost Centre	Funder	Start Date	End Date	Traffic Light	Commentary
15	Waitomo Chalets Trade - Partnership Pilot	Destination	Tawa Group	15-04-26	31-03-2027		The Pilot is designed to support trade-ready tourism operators based in the area of Waitomo District Council and/or Ōtorohanga District Council by maintaining visibility with international and domestic travel trade and encouraging multi-day itineraries connecting Waitomo and Taranaki.
16	Waitomo Top 10 Holiday Park Travel Trade Pilot	Destination	Tawa Group	15-04-26	31-03-2027		The Pilot is designed to support trade-ready tourism operators based in the area of Waitomo District Council and/or Ōtorohanga District Council by maintaining visibility with international and domestic travel trade and encouraging multi-day itineraries connecting Waitomo and Taranaki.
17	THL Travel Trade Partnership	Destination	THL	26-06-26	31-03-2027		The Pilot is designed to support trade-ready tourism operators based in the area of Waitomo District Council and/or Ōtorohanga District Council by maintaining visibility with international and domestic travel trade and encouraging multi-day itineraries connecting Waitomo and Taranaki.
18	Branching Out - Better Off Funding	Regional Investment	DIA via NPDC	05-05-23	30-06-27		Capital/operational grant for a dryer and hemp processing/manufacturing.
19	STDC Contract for Service	Economic Development	STDC	01-07-24	30-06-27		To provide regional development services to South Taranaki
20	SDC Contract for Service	Economic Development	SDC	01-07-24	30-06-27		To provide regional development services to Stratford District
21	Regional Business Partnership Programme	Economic Development	MBIE	01-07-25	30-06-27		To support business growth by providing businesses with access to advisory services, training, and funding opportunities.
22	VT, HTPKT and TKOTA MOU	Economic Development	Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa	23-01-26	30-06-27		To create a culturally grounded, flexible model of business support that enables Māori enterprises to build long-term capability, grow sustainably, and contribute meaningfully to whānau and hapori prosperity - secure, thriving and connected.
23	Branching Out Phase Three	Regional Investment	STDC	01-01-26	31-12-27		Implementation of Branching Out Phase 3
24	Massey University Partnership	Regional Investment	Massey University	01-09-12	30-06-28		Connection for Taranaki industry, businesses and organisations with Massey University expertise, knowledge and innovation to encourage greater development, innovation and growth.
25	Taranaki Alliance	Regional Investment	NPDC	01-01-26	31-12-28		Phase 2 funding for final business case development underway, extended to be completed by 30/06/2026 for final decision gate to proceed. In progress.
26	Branching Out Phase Three	Regional Investment	NPDC	01-01-26	31-12-28		Contribution to the delivery of Branching Out Phase Three. In progress and on track.
27	BTAG	Economic Development	MSD	15-03-21	N/A		To support emerging businesses with developing a business plan, training in business skills, advice and project reports. Referral-based informal funding agreement. No formal contract in place for work ongoing.

Traffic light key

All KPIs met, contract complete or reporting period complete

All KPIs substantially met (within 90%), contract complete

All KPIs on track to be substantially met by completion of contract

Some KPIs not on track to be substantially met by completion of contract

Some or all KPIs not substantially met, contract complete

Contract yet to commence

Strategic focus areas update



Strategic Focus Areas Snapshot

Below is a snapshot of the work undertaken in Q4 across Venture Taranaki strategic focus areas.

ENERGY	FOOD AND FIBRE	DESTINATION	NEW INDUSTRY & INVESTMENT
• Energy Prospectus and Inward Investment • Sector development • Offshore Wind updates	• Branching Out – Phase 3 • Land Use Portal • Hempcrete Development Plan	• Industry support • Visitor trade and partnerships • Regional Promotion • Major Events	• Taranaki Alliance • Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre

FOUNDATIONS

Massey University Partnership

- Branching Out
- Manaaki Scholars Programme

Enterprise Support

- RBP AI Advisory Pilot
- Adapting to Change Workshops
- Starting a Business at 50+

PowerUp

- PowerUp Accelerator Showcase 2026
- Masterclass series
- ScaleUp Grants



ENERGY

The Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Bill passed under urgency on 1 July 2026



Energy

Energy Prospectus and Inward Investment

Energy Prospectus

During Q4, Venture Taranaki continued to progress the development of a regional Energy Investment Prospectus to attract investment and showcase Taranaki as a region open for business. This is a priority action within the Tapuae Roa Energy Future work programme.

Work to date has included advancing a stocktake of the region's current and future energy resources, refining the region's positioning as a preferred location for energy-intensive and value-add industries, and identifying key investment opportunities that can be enabled by the region's energy advantage. The prospectus is being developed using a visual format, similar to the H2 Taranaki Roadmap, to clearly communicate the region's competitive strengths and future opportunities.

This work is being undertaken in collaboration with key businesses, Invest New Zealand, infrastructure providers, local authorities and other regional partners, while also drawing on the energy scenario analysis and precinct work being led by the Taranaki Regional Council. During the next quarter, the team intends to present the proposed opportunity portfolio to key industry players to seek feedback and help refine the final prospectus.

Investment

A significant renewable energy investment enquiry from an international consortium was also supported this quarter, with Venture Taranaki coordinating the regional response to the client's initial site selection criteria and technical checklist.

The team also responded to a separate enquiry from an international client of Invest New Zealand exploring the establishment of an engineering and manufacturing operation in New Zealand, with the potential to create approximately 150 jobs. Working with local councils and industry partners, Venture Taranaki coordinated information on potential industrial sites, supporting infrastructure and regional capability to meet the client's initial feasibility requirements.



Energy

Sector development

During Q4, Venture Taranaki (VT) continued to support a range of national and regional energy initiatives, including:

Bioenergy New Zealand: VT continued its representation on the Bioenergy Association of New Zealand Steering Group, contributing to the development of national priorities and actions to accelerate the growth of New Zealand's bioenergy sector. The Steering Group brings together industry leaders, researchers and technical specialists from across the country.

BusinessNZ Energy Council: VT continued to contribute to the BusinessNZ Energy Council's Future Energy Opportunities working group, which is developing an implementation plan following the New Zealand 2050: A Long-Term Vision report. This work focuses on the actions required to realise New Zealand's opportunity to leverage abundant, affordable and low-emissions energy as a competitive advantage. VT has provided recommendations and a strong regional economic development perspective to help shape the programme of work.

Regional Decommissioning Study: VT progressed the initial scoping of a regional decommissioning study to better understand the timing, scale, regulatory considerations and economic implications of future oil and gas decommissioning activity in Taranaki. The study is intended to inform long-term regional planning, including workforce transition, supply chain opportunities and infrastructure readiness.

International Energy Conference: VT contributed to the development of the European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers (EAGE) Workshop – Unlocking New Zealand's Upstream Potential, to be held in Auckland in September 2026. The workshop will bring together international and domestic experts to discuss the future of New Zealand's upstream energy sector.



Hiringa's hydrogen truck showcased in Taranaki as part of the NZ Hydrogen Council speaker series.

Hydrogen economy developments:

VT supported Hiringa's hydrogen truck showcase through the NZ Hydrogen Council speaker series, helping raise awareness of hydrogen transport opportunities and reinforcing the vision of the [H2 Taranaki Roadmap](#). At the time (2019), many of the ideas in the roadmap felt ambitious. Several years on, that vision is no longer just conceptual. The truck's visit created an opportunity not only to view the vehicle, but to reflect on the years of work, vision and persistence that have helped position Taranaki and its energy industry and companies as New Zealand's early hydrogen leaders.



Energy

Offshore Wind

The Offshore Renewable Energy (ORE) Bill passed under urgency on 1 July 2026, establishing New Zealand's first regulatory framework for offshore renewable energy developments. The legislation provides greater certainty for investors and developers and removes a key barrier to progressing offshore renewable energy projects in New Zealand, in particular offshore wind.

For Taranaki, this is a significant milestone, given the region's world class offshore wind resources, opens the door to generate renewable energy at scale, and creates the foundation for attracting new investment in advanced manufacturing, low-emissions fuels, energy-intensive industries and high-value employment. The achievement reflects several years of collaborative work by Venture Taranaki, industry, iwi, Ara Ake and Central Government to build the evidence, partnerships and momentum needed to establish New Zealand's offshore renewable energy sector.

Venture Taranaki contribution:

Year	Activity
2019	Identified offshore renewable energy as a strategic opportunity to diversify Taranaki's energy economy and build on the region's existing capability.
2020	Published Offshore Wind – An Energy Opportunity for Taranaki , one of New Zealand's first strategic assessments of the opportunity.
2020–Present	Established the annual Offshore Renewable Energy Forum with Ara Ake, bringing together government, industry, iwi, developers and international experts.
2021	Published the Power-to-X report , highlighting opportunities to leverage large-scale renewable energy for future industry development.
2022–2025	Supported national policy development, contributed to research, strengthened international partnerships and promoted Taranaki as New Zealand's preferred location for offshore renewable energy investment.
1 July 2026	Offshore Renewable Energy Bill passed, providing the regulatory certainty needed to enable future offshore renewable energy investment.

The passage of the ORE Bill marks the beginning of the next phase of development. It aligns strongly with Venture Taranaki's broader Energy Future work programme, including the development of a regional Energy Investment Prospectus, energy precinct planning and initiatives to attract energy-intensive industries that can leverage the region's growing renewable energy advantage.



FOOD AND FIBRE

Image credit: Branching Out trial crop ashwagandha, featuring the project ute supported by Tasman Toyota.



Branching Out

Phase 3 Progress

Phase 3 of the Branching Out Land Use Diversification programme continues to build momentum, focusing on supporting expanded production, establishing enabling infrastructure, and strengthening the market and supply chain foundations needed for commercial growth.

CAPEX Infrastructure (Better Off Grant Enabled)

The team has progressed the commissioning of the pilot-scale hemp processor towards near final completion. This equipment will provide the catalyst for establishing the Taranaki Hemp Hub over the last quarter as a regional centre for hemp fibre processing, innovation and industry development. The Taranaki Hemp Hub will bring together growers, researchers, manufacturers and construction professionals to accelerate commercial applications, convert locally grown hemp fibre into industry-ready materials, and unlock value from land use through to commercial products.

Progress has also continued on the functional botanicals drying facility, with work focused on procuring ancillary equipment required to efficiently process commercial volumes of root material. Together, these investments will provide critical regional processing capability and reduce barriers to industry growth.

Production and Commercial Scale-Up

The Branching Out programme continues to support growers in maintaining expanded production areas while strengthening market opportunities across priority value chains.



One hectare of kumara was harvested in Q4, providing valuable insights into what commercial production involves - from mechanisation and field operations through to crop maintenance, harvest and curing.

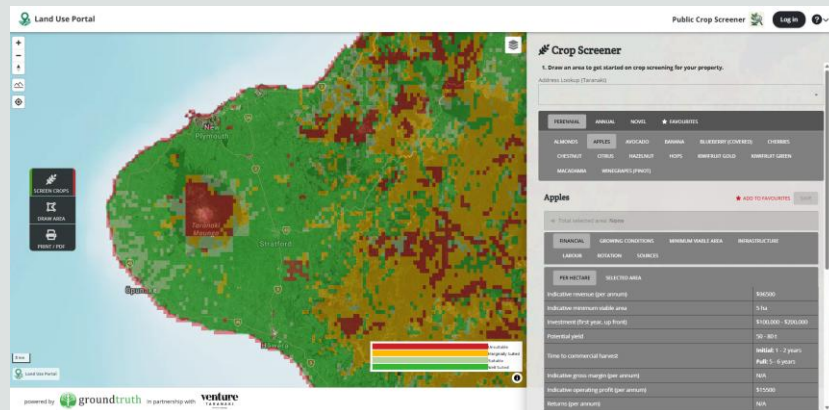


Branching Out

Industrial hemp production reached another milestone this quarter, with the increased production area successfully harvested, retted and baled before being transported to the pilot-scale hemp processor for commissioning and processing. Recent regulatory changes to allowable THC limits has created the opportunity to introduce a wider range of hemp cultivars better suited to New Zealand growing conditions, biomass production and fibre quality. The team is working with seed suppliers to identify and import new cultivars that will strengthen the future competitiveness of the industry.

Functional botanicals activities over the quarter have focused on securing commercial supply agreements across priority value chains and strengthening domestic and international market connections. Business development activities are progressing, including Letters of Intent (LOIs) with prospective customers, while the Branching Out team continues to provide technical support to growers as commercial production expands.

Sustainable crop rotations: Garlic production concluded with the sale of larger volumes successfully through local supermarkets. Kūmara production reached harvest, with curing facilities prepared to manage several tonnes of product, building capability and confidence for future commercial-scale production.



The Land Use Portal, a free online tool designed to support landowner diversification decision making, is in the final stages of development.

Land Diversification and Future Growth

Development of the **Land Use Portal** is nearing completion and will provide landowners with an enduring decision-support tool, presenting crop suitability mapping for more than 30 land use options to support informed diversification decisions.

The land use portal will also enable expansion beyond annual crops (hemp fibre, botanicals and high value vegetable crops) by identifying high-value horticultural opportunities capable of contributing to New Zealand's future horticultural growth and export success. This work broadens the pipeline of commercially viable land use options and supports long-term growth beyond the life of the programme.



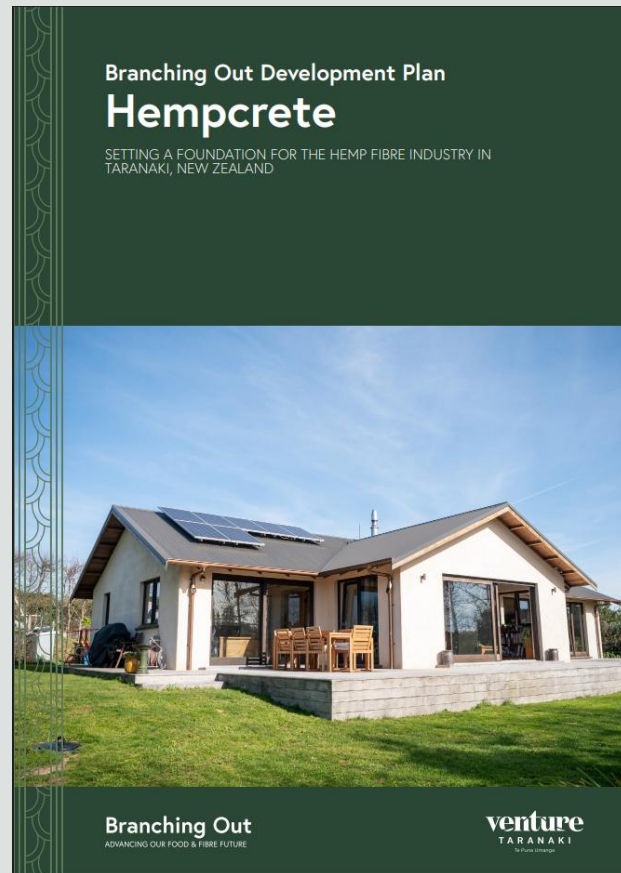
Branching Out

Hempcrete Development Plan

The programme released the Hempcrete Development Plan, providing the first regional roadmap for developing a commercially viable hempcrete industry in Taranaki. The plan identifies hempcrete as the most immediate market opportunity for locally grown hemp fibre and outlines the processing, manufacturing and market development required to establish a scalable value chain.

Early modelling indicates that, based on material and labour costs only, hempcrete homes could be built at around 5% higher cost than conventional construction while reducing annual heating demand by approximately 26%. Combined with the commissioning of the pilot-scale processor, industry training and growing market interest, the roadmap provides a practical pathway for commercialisation and regional industry growth.

*Venture Taranaki – Branching Out
Development Plan, Hempcrete, May 2026*





DESTINATION

New visitor attraction campaign, 'Escape the Ordinary' launched in Q4.



Destination

Visitor Trade and Industry Partnerships

Tourism Trade

In May, the Destination Team attended TRENZ in Auckland at the newly opened International Convention Centre. Hāwera-based, Weir Tours also attended. TRENZ is New Zealand's premier event for the global tourism trade industry, attracting thousands of attendees from around the world. The team met with 46 agents, who are exploring Taranaki and adding the region to their clients itineraries. Before TRENZ, the team also hosted five members of the Tourism New Zealand Trade Team, from Australia, India, Singapore and United Kingdom. It was a first-time visit for them all, providing a valuable experience of what Taranaki has to offer as a 'like no other' destination.

A new annual travel trade pilot partnership with three Waitomo tourism operators strengthens Waitomo's role as the northern gateway to Taranaki, following changes to regional tourism funding in Waikato. The partnership enables Venture Taranaki to represent selected Waitomo experiences through its travel trade programme, supporting multi-day itineraries that extend into Taranaki. By promoting the regions as a complementary visitor journey, the initiative aims to increase visitor dispersal, length of stay and visitor spend, while expanding exposure for Taranaki tourism operators through established domestic and international trade networks.

Quarterly Hui

In June, VT held the Q4 Visitor Hui, which brought together 50 tourism operators from across the region. The hui provided updates on Venture Taranaki's destination activity, upcoming opportunities and industry insights, while creating valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration. Attendees also heard from West End Precinct about the new on-street developments, and from King & Queen Hotel Suites, which shared its experience of partnering with Venture Taranaki to grow tourism outcomes.



TRENZ 2026 - Visitor and Event Advisor Melissa Devine and General Manager Destination Janet Reynolds



Q4 Visitor Industry Hui at Strategy Collective



Destination

Business Events

Business Events

In June, Venture Taranaki partnered with the New Plymouth Event Venues team at Meetings 2026 in Auckland, New Zealand's largest business events trade exhibition. Over two days, the team met with 46 conference and business event organisers to position Taranaki as a compelling destination for future conferences and events. These face-to-face engagements are critical for building relationships, increasing destination awareness, and influencing future event decisions, as business events are typically secured years in advance.

The event generated a number of qualified leads, with several organisations now considering Taranaki for future conferences and business events.

Opportunities secured include national associations, corporate organisations, professional services clients and an Australian event, with potential events ranging from 20 to 250 delegates and extending through to 2030. These leads provide a strong pipeline of opportunities that will now be progressed through ongoing destination sales and relationship management.

Meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) are an important contributor to visitor expenditure and regional economies, with delegates often arriving mid-week and off-peak.

In 2025, the sector generated **\$916 million** in visitor spending across New Zealand and is expected to continue growing.

In the year ending June 2026, Taranaki hosted events attracting nearly **10,000 delegates**, generating an estimated **\$6.6 million** in direct visitor expenditure.

International delegates often extend their stay before or after events, creating further opportunities for the regional visitor economy. Business events also showcase Taranaki to new audiences, encouraging repeat visits with friends and family.

\$916M

NZ MICE visitor spend, 2025

\$6.6M

Direct visitor expenditure in Taranaki
(est.)

Source: "The value of multi-day conferences to New Zealand in 2025" Fresh info; MBIE Reliance on tourism | Sustainable Tourism Explorer



Destination

Regional Promotion - International

Tourism Boost Fund

Q4 marked the conclusion of the 'One Flight' campaign, funded through Ministry of Business Innovation, and Employment (MBIE) Regional Tourism Boost Funding and delivered in partnership with Hamilton & Waikato Tourism, Visit Ruapehu, and Destination Great Lake Taupō.

The campaign encouraged Australian travellers to take Jetstar's direct flights to Hamilton Airport, then explore the wider central North Island, including Taranaki. Campaign activity has been strong, with more than 152,000 engagements on Meta and over 21 million impressions across Jetstar platforms, including a dedicated landing page, post-booking emails, and inflight entertainment.

A printed food journey brochure was also developed as part of the campaign, showcasing regional hospitality experiences and supporting local food and beverage operators to connect with visitors.

Looking ahead, Regional Tourism Boost Fund Round 3 has opened for applications, and Venture Taranaki has Expressed Interest for four separate global campaigns alongside regional and national partners. Application outcomes are expected in August 2026.

One flight to savouring the moment. Fly direct to Hamilton, NZ and you are within a few hours of nearly everywhere! You could be dining with ocean views by the evening!



One flight
Hamilton International Airport
Taranaki
New Plymouth
Great Wharfedale
Bay of Plenty
Waikato

One flight to journeys in epic surroundings. Fly direct to Hamilton, NZ to be surrounded by walkways, cycle trails and journey's that will take your breath away. Get on board today.



One flight
Hamilton International Airport
Taranaki
New Plymouth
Great Wharfedale
Bay of Plenty
Waikato



ne flight
to adventures
through majestic
lands

Hamilton International Airport
Hamilton
Taranaki
New Plymouth
Great Wharfedale
Bay of Plenty
Waikato

Book your tickets to the heart of New Zealand with a new direct route from Sydney. In just three hours, you'll land at Hamilton Airport, your fast, friendly launchpad to the wild. From there, the road leads straight to hidden trails, beautiful peaks and adventures that will stay with you for a lifetime.

Campaign assets encouraging Australian travellers to explore the Central North Island.



Destination

Regional Promotion - Domestic

Escape the Ordinary

The team launched a new shoulder-season visitor attraction campaign, 'Escape the Ordinary', in May, inviting our domestic market to give up the rush for the region's awe-inspiring natural landscapes. Rolling out across billboards, buses, TVNZ On Demand, YouTube and paid social, the campaign delivered over 1.47 million impressions in just five weeks, including 197,000 through TVNZ On Demand. YouTube was a standout, holding view-through rates of 66 to 71 percent against a 30 percent target, more than double the industry norm.

Roady - Waitomo

Venture Taranaki partnered with travel creators Roady, and Waitomo based operators, THL on an influencer campaign encouraging off-season travel, following an incredible road trip from Waitomo through to Taranaki. Rolling out across Instagram, Facebook and TikTok, the campaign reached over 336,000 people and generated more than 486,000 views, 7,400 likes and 2,200 saves. The audience was predominantly New Zealand based (61 percent), followed by Australia and the UK, and sat in our core 25 - 44 age range. The campaign was strategically timed to roll out once SH3 reopened post the January slips, to showcase that the roads were back open.

*Top: 'Escape the Ordinary' bus advertising.
Bottom: Digital creative from the Roady campaign.*





Major Events

26

Total events
contracted

19

Events
contracted
this quarter

No.	Event Name	Contract Date		Event Date
1	Rock the Bowl - (Bowl of Brooklands Concert)	July 2025	Q1	29 December 2025
2	Americarna 2027	July 2025	Q1	18-21 Feb 2026
3	Coastal Five – additional funding to leverage new partnership	September 2025	Q1	15-16 November 2025
4	NPDC - Bowl event (UB40)	October 2025	Q2	14 February 2026
5	The ANZAC Day Classic	November 2025	Q2	25 April 2026
6	NPDC - Bowl event (Full Metal Orchestra)	9 Dec 2025	Q2	7 March 2026
7	Taranaki Longboard Classic	6 March 2026	Q3	30 May – 1 June 2026
8	NZ 10km & Race-Walking Championships	12 May 2026	Q4	29 August 2026
9	Taranaki Fringe Garden Festival	21 April 2026	Q4	30 October – 8 November 2026
10	Americarna	16 June 2026	Q4	24 – 27 February 2027
11	Coastal Five	12 April 2026	Q4	13-15 November 2026
12	Egmont Honey Half Marathon	3 June 2026	Q4	17 April 2027
13	FMG New Zealand Young Farmer of the Year Grand Final	1 May 2026	Q4	2-4 July 2026
14	Sporting match (Stadium Taranaki)	1 May 2026	Q4	Tbc (2027)
15	Novotel North Island Junior Netball Championship	17 June 2026	Q4	5-7 July 2026
16	NZ Tattoo & Art Festival	13 May 2026	Q4	28-29 November 2026
17	Spring Fringe Arts Festival	13 May 2026	Q4	12-22 November 2026
18	Sustainable Backyards Trails: Backyards, Builds and Farms	28 May 2026	Q4	30 October - 15 November 2026
19	Taranaki Arts Trail	27 May 2026	Q4	30 October - 8 November 2026
20	Taranaki Garden Festival	13 April 2026	Q4	30 October - 8 November 2026
21	The Devon Hotel Taranaki Men's and Women's Open Fours	14 April 2026	Q4	18-24 January 2027 (Men's) 26-31 January 2027 (Women's)
22	TSB Festival of Lights	13 April 2026	Q4	19 December - 24 January 2027
23	Winter Fest	13 May 2026	Q4	17-27 June 2027
24	Womad	26 June 2026	Q4	12-14 March 2027
25	Feastival - Autumn 2027	26 Jun 2026	Q4	June 2027 - Tbc
26	Feastival - Spring 2027	26 Jun 2026	Q4	October 2025 - Tbc



Major Events

Event spotlight – The Classics NZ v Classics Australia

BRAND PRESENCE



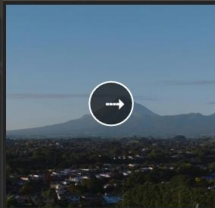
Field Markings

Taranaki Like No Other branding featured prominently on the Stadium Taranaki field – visible to 5,110 in-stadium and 137,480 national broadcast viewers on TVNZ 1.



Golf Day Signage

Brand signage and presence across the ANZAC Day Classic Golf Day, reinforcing the Taranaki Like No Other identity with corporate guests and sponsors.



Halftime Sizzle Reel

A Taranaki Like No Other branded video sizzle reel aired nationally during the TVNZ 1 halftime break, reaching 158,500 viewers and showcasing the region's lifestyle and visitor offering.

The ANZAC Day Classic • Stadium Taranaki • 25 April 2026 | Presented by Venture Taranaki

TARANAKI
like no other



NE WE AHE • 2.30PM KICK OFF
TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW AT TICKETK

COMMUNITY & EVENT EXPERIENCE

Connecting with the Taranaki community across the ANZAC weekend



School Visits & Education

Players visited New Plymouth Boys' High School, New Plymouth Girls' High School and Vogeltown Primary School, and toured the rugby collection at Puke Ariki museum.



All Black #1 — James Allan

Discovering All Black #1's unmarked grave and unveiling a headstone in the lead up to the match. Covered by Seven Sharp (TVNZ 1) and the Taranaki Daily News.



ANZAC Commemoration

ANZAC moments were woven throughout the match day – from poppies on player uniforms to a moving on-field ceremony featuring a military flyover, brass band and the Last Post.



Corporate Hospitality

450+ hospitality guests including approximately 10% from outside the Taranaki region. A key revenue and stakeholder engagement tool for the event.

The ANZAC Day Classic • Stadium Taranaki • 25 April 2026 | Presented by Venture Taranaki



5,110 450

Total attendance Out-of-region visitors



770 1.8

Room nights generated Average nights



\$185k \$315k

Direct Visitor Spend (est.) Total economic contribution (est.)



158,500 94,506

Broadcast Reach on TVNZ Social Media Reach



**NEW
INDUSTRY
AND
INVESTMENT**

Taranaki Alliance

Strategic and International Engagement

During Q4, the Taranaki Alliance entered a new phase of development, focusing on growing membership, strengthening partnerships, and positioning regional capability for future opportunities. Activity centred on expanding domestic and international connections while refining the Alliance's operating model.

The Alliance's international profile continued to strengthen through a series of targeted engagements with international commercial partners. Venture Taranaki hosted two international delegations in-region during the quarter.

In early April, a representative from LocoProject visited Taranaki to understand the region's advanced manufacturing and engineering capability. The Slovakian manufacturer of mining vehicles and heavy equipment was exploring Taranaki firms as assembly partners and distributors across Australasia. Later in April, senior representatives of one of Australia's leading commercial and defence shipbuilders visited to assess regional capability, resulting in an invitation for a Taranaki delegation to visit shipbuilding facilities in Perth during Q1 2026/27.

The Alliance's growing reputation has also generated direct referrals from government. Following a recommendation from the New Zealand Ministry of Defence, Australian-based shipbuilder Civmec has invited Taranaki Alliance representatives to visit its major shipbuilding and manufacturing operations in Perth in late July, reflecting increasing recognition of the Alliance as a credible gateway to regional industrial capability.

Following a change in Ministerial portfolios, Venture Taranaki hosted the new Minister of Defence, Hon Chris Penk, during his visit to New Plymouth on 14 April.

Venture Taranaki coordinated a session between the Minister and Taranaki Alliance companies to provide an update on Alliance progress, the region's positioning as an industrial hub, international relationships and opportunities being advanced, and direct industry perspectives on the value of the Alliance model.



Venture Taranaki hosted the new Minister of Defence, Hon Chris Penk, during his visit to New Plymouth on 14 April



Locoproject visiting local industry

Taranaki Alliance

Industry Engagement and Membership Development

A significant milestone in April was the Taranaki Alliance Industry Briefing, which gave local organisations an overview of the strategic purpose of the Alliance, an update on progress, and an outline of how organisations could become members. The response has been extremely positive, with more than 80 organisations submitting letters of intent, to express interest in becoming members, demonstrating broad industry support for the Alliance concept.

To ensure future services are shaped around industry needs, Venture Taranaki engaged with many prospective members one-to-one to understand priorities and opportunities. These engagements led into planning for a series of industry workshops held in July 2026, open to all organisations that have submitted a letter of intent, to seek feedback on key aspects of the Alliance such as membership structure, fees and the opportunity pipeline process.

Strategic Opportunity Development

The Taranaki Alliance has continued to position regional capability against nationally significant investment opportunities. During the quarter, the Alliance worked with a major New Zealand company to support the inclusion of Taranaki Alliance members in a consortium for a large-scale industrial construction opportunity valued at up to \$500 million. Additionally, the work of the Alliance has resulted in the first purchase order and payment to a local firm. A Taranaki Alliance member is now providing replacement parts to sustain their fleet of heavy-duty vehicles in New Zealand and Australia.



The Industry Briefing in April was attended by over 100 local business leaders.

Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre

Investor Event and Transition

An event, 'Investing in the Advanced Bioeconomy', was held to formally hand over the leadership of the Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre (TAIC) from Venture Taranaki to a private company established to carry it forward into the future.

An audience of stakeholders and investors heard the journey of TAIC to date, the opportunity it presents for the Taranaki region, and the business case developed for its delivery. Following this, attendees were able to visit the repurposed bioprocessing facility proposed to host the Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between the Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre and Venture Taranaki to support a continued relationship between the two organisations. This support includes working together to secure funding or investment opportunities, stakeholder and government engagement, and business and innovation support pathways.



*Left: Stakeholders and investors gathered for the TAIC investor event.
Right: Site tour of the proposed Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre facility.*



FOUNDATIONS

Massey University Partnership

During Q4, the Massey University partnership continued to strengthen the Taranaki innovation ecosystem through regional capability building, international engagement and research collaboration.

Key highlights included:

- **Branching Out:** Achieved key milestones including support of the launch of the [Hempcrete Development Plan](#), completion of the Hemp Industry Strategy, support for hemp research and cultivar trials, and collaboration with industry, iwi and research partners. The programme also delivered a Hempcrete Construction Workshop in partnership with the Australian Hemp Masonry Company, helping build capability for the region's emerging bio-based construction sector.
- **Regional funding and research:** Multiple externally funded regional projects are progressing through the Bioresource Processing Alliance (BPA), AGMARDT and Pivot Award programmes, enabling Taranaki businesses and organisations to develop high-value bioproducts from beef by-products and hemp fibre, advance composting solutions, strengthen commercialisation, and access new research funding.
- **Manaaki Scholars Programme:** Hosted 54 Manaaki Scholars from 32 ASEAN, African and Latin American/Caribbean countries, showcasing the region's agrifood expertise through visits to Venture Taranaki and regional agrifood businesses.



Left: ASEAN Manaaki Scholars visiting Taranaki. Centre: Latin American and Caribbean Manaaki Scholars. Right: Hemp Bio-concrete being mixed for Pivot Award-funded Bio-concrete project.

ENTERPRISE SUPPORT



Enterprise support

RBP AI Advisory Pilot

The AI Advisory Pilot is a trial programme to help small and medium-sized businesses successfully implement productivity improvements. The initiative was influenced by findings from the 2025 MIT study *The GenAI Divide: State of AI in Business 2025*, reporting that despite \$20–40 billion in enterprise investment in AI, 95% of organisations were seeing little or no return. While tools such as ChatGPT and Copilot can improve individual productivity, it can be difficult to convert those gains into business profits when underlying processes remain inefficient.

Delivered through Venture Taranaki as part of the Regional Business Partner Network, the programme provides practical, tailored support from consultants who work directly with businesses to identify where AI can create value and improve productivity. The focus is on moving beyond experimentation to measurable operational improvements, ensuring technology investments align with genuine business needs and outcomes. The pilot helps businesses streamline operations, improve customer service, reduce administrative workloads, and support growth.

Participating businesses could access funding covering up to 50% of eligible costs, capped at \$15,000, reducing the financial barriers to adopting new technologies and giving access to specialist expertise. Support is delivered in two stages: the development of an AI roadmap to identify and prioritise opportunities, followed by co-funded consultancy support to implement improvements.

To date, an initial \$45,000 budget has been distributed to Taranaki businesses across sectors including food and fibre, manufacturing, and technology, with additional funding available nationally. Some businesses choose to complete only Part One and implement identified improvements using internal capabilities. Several Taranaki businesses were early adopters of the scheme and may be featured by MBIE as successful case studies.



Top: Kieran Lee (N16) and Nick Carey (Green Meadows Beef) presenting practical AI implementation case studies at the "2026 Great New Zealand AI Roadshow" in New Plymouth. Bottom: Jenn Patterson promoting the RBP AI Advisory Pilot programme at the same event.

Enterprise support

Adapting to Change Workshops

The Adapting to Change Workshop was rolled out in June 2026, delivered as Series 1 of the three-part Business Resilience Workshops initiative funded by MBIE through the Regional Business Partners Network. The initiative targeted Taranaki business owners and teams to better anticipate, respond to, and adapt to change. The free, interactive three-hour workshops provided practical tools, guided reflection, and business planning strategies to help participants understand their current business environment, identify risks and opportunities, and build greater resilience and agility.

Three workshops were delivered across Taranaki, with two in New Plymouth delivered through DOSO and He Toronga Pakihi ki Taranaki, one in Hawera delivered through Te W'anake The Foundry, and one online.

Participants responded positively to the content, materials, and relatable examples. The cohort-based environment was also valued, as it enabled participants to exchange ideas and hear how other businesses are navigating similar challenges.



*Top: Participants at the Adapting to Change Workshop in Hawera.
Bottom: Business owners attending the New Plymouth workshop as part of
the Business Resilience Workshops series.*

Enterprise support

Starting a Business at 50+

Venture Taranaki partnered with Univentures during Q4 to deliver the 8-week startup programme titled “Starting a Business 50+”. This is an online course helping people over 50 to start up a business. The programme covers product, marketing, market research, social media, planning and financials.

The programme started well, however, 6 out of 8 of participants dropped out of the course for various reasons over the 8-week period, primarily due to changes in family circumstances. The remaining two participants were highly motivated and both will move forward with viable business models this year. The feedback has been great and everyone had a positive experience.

Venture Taranaki is evolving its approach to startup and new business support, with the current clinic format concluding this year. This reflects a strategic decision to focus direct startup support on the priority areas of food and fibre and tourism, while continuing to support entrepreneurs and innovators across all sectors through connections, and referrals.

The startup ecosystem in Taranaki has developed significantly in recent years, with a growing range of support and pathways available. Venture Taranaki will continue to connect startups with services including Business Mentors New Zealand and DOSO, a local organisation supporting founders and the wider startup ecosystem.

Venture Taranaki also acknowledges the significant contribution Sharon Albrechtsen has made to the startup community in Taranaki. For 30 years, Sharon has delivered startup support in a range of formats on behalf of Venture Taranaki, helping generations of local entrepreneurs take their first steps in business. Venture Taranaki thanks Sharon for her longstanding service and wishes her all the best for a well-earned retirement.



PowerUp

PowerUp Accelerator Showcase 2026

PowerUp continued to strengthen the region's innovation ecosystem in Q4, wrapping up six years of the innovation and entrepreneurship programme in its current format.

A major highlight was the 10-week PowerUp Accelerator Programme, which brought together five high-potential startups for an intensive programme of mentoring, expert-led workshops and tailored business support.

Participants refined their business models, strengthened their market propositions and developed the capability needed to pursue growth opportunities. The programme culminated in the PowerUp Accelerator Showcase, held in May 2026 at The Devon Hotel.

The event brought together investors, founders, mentors, business leaders and members of the innovation community to hear live pitches from five emerging ventures: Rooted Harmony, Green Loop, Kermit Shade & Shelter, TipJar and Flytte.

Hosted by David Downs and featuring guest speaker Iain Hosie, the Showcase created valuable opportunities for founders to build connections, gain feedback and raise the profile of their businesses.



Left: Founders from the five Accelerator ventures – Kermit Shade & Shelter, Green Loop, Rooted Harmony, Flytte and TipJar. Centre: Guest speaker Iain Hosie. Right: Host David Downs.

PowerUp

ScaleUp Grants

All six ScaleUp grant recipients have now submitted their final reports. These reports outline that project objectives have been completed and detail the immediate benefits of the programme.

Specific feedback from one recipient explains the impact of the grant extends beyond simple financial support, while another outlines that the procurement trip that the grant helped to subsidise has resulted in significant immediate growth.

"We would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the team involved in reviewing and approving Glasgow Scaffolding and Rigging Ltd as a recipient of the Scale Up Power Up Grant.

Investing in Fall Arrest Safety Nets has been a goal of ours for a long time, however receiving external support through this grant made taking that next step significantly more achievable. Beyond the financial assistance, the grant also helped hold us accountable to our growth strategy and encouraged us to actively work toward expanding and strengthening our business." – **Glasgow Scaffolding and Rigging Ltd**

"The procurement relationships established during the China visit have enabled FarmGen to purchase more than 50 battery systems directly from manufacturers... FarmGen is now supplying battery systems at approximately \$450–500 per kWh—representing a reduction of around 45–50%... These outcomes have positioned FarmGen as one of New Zealand's leading suppliers of agricultural solar and battery systems. Farmgen has grown from 2 staff to over 10 in the last 6 months due to its growth." - **FarmGen Solar Ltd**

PowerUp - Masterclass series

Throughout the year, PowerUp delivered a series of targeted Masterclasses that connected entrepreneurs and business owners with expert insights and practical knowledge, spanning a broad range of topics including Governance, R&D funding, Women in Business, and sales.

Two Masterclasses were delivered in Q4:

- **Governance for SME Business** held on 23 April was a collaboration with the Institute of Directors, providing SME businesses with an introduction to governance via Advisory Boards.
- **Strategic Marketing** on 28 May was facilitated by expert marketing professional Saskia Thornton on "why your marketing isn't working".

Both were sellout events and drew positive feedback from attendees.

The quarter also highlighted the value of connections across Venture Taranaki wider initiatives.

One notable example was Rooted Harmony, founded by PowerUp Accelerator participant Shivani Nardekar. The business produces wellness drink blends featuring Ayurvedic adaptogens and botanicals, including Ashwagandha grown and trialled through the Branching Out programme. This connection demonstrates how Venture Taranaki's work in food and fibre diversification can create commercial opportunities for emerging entrepreneurs, linking innovation, regional supply chains and new product development.



Coming up next quarter

July 2026

- IURC Hemp Workshop session: 15 July
- Branching Out – Hempcrete wānanga: Kāinga Rau: From Whenua to Whare
- Taranaki Alliance Industry Workshops: 14 – 16 July
- Taranaki Alliance Perth Delegation: 28 – 30 July
- Business Resilience Series Two: 27-31 July (New Plymouth, Hāwera and Stratford)
- Student Experience Grants open 13 July

August 2026

- NZ Cruise Association Conference: 12-13 August
- KiwiNorth tourism trade delegation to Australia: 24 – 27 August
- Business Resilience Series Two: 10-12 August (online and New Plymouth)
- Taranaki Alliance – Perth Industry Delegation 27 – 30 July
- Taranaki Future Energy Forum: 28 August
- Student Career Grants open 31 August

September 2026

- Visitor Industry Hui: 9 September
- Taranaki Alliance Membership Muster: Date TBC
- Transpower Future Grid workshop hosted with Venture Taranaki (TBC)
- IURC Slovenia Exchange visit: 28 Sept – 2 Oct
- Tourism Masterclass series begins