

Quarterly Report 2024-25

Quarter Four (April to June 2025)



venture
TARANAKI
Te Puna Umanga

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Message from the CE

Tēnā koutou

The end of the 2024/25 financial year has been a purposeful period for Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki, with significant progress achieved across key actions in the Tapuae Roa 2025/26 Action Plan.

A notable milestone this quarter was the prioritisation of 25 regional actions under the Future Energy 2025/26 Action Plan. Guided by a newly established CE-level leadership group, this work lays the foundation for coordinated regional responses over the next five years. It signals a collective readiness to lead through transition, leveraging partnerships with EECA, Ara Ake, and others to ensure Taranaki remains a nationally significant energy hub.

The PowerUp programme continues to highlight the strength of the region's innovation ecosystem and reinforces the role of Venture Taranaki in fostering scalable entrepreneurship. In June, the PowerUp Accelerator Showcase drew over 100 potential investors, local leaders, media, and collaborators, as six early-stage founders pitched ventures developed through a 10-week mentor-supported programme.

A key milestone in food and fibre was the commercial launch of Taranaki-grown garlic into local New World supermarkets, marking the first retail success of a trial crop developed through our Branching Out land diversification programme, and demonstrating the tangible outcomes possible when regional innovation is backed by coordinated support and strong sector collaboration.

Strategic promotion and collaboration delivered strong results across the visitor economy. At TRENZ, the Destination team reconnected with travel trade, showcasing experiences to over

50 international agents.

The formation of the North Island Tourism Alliance marked progress toward a united global presence. Meanwhile, the Central New Zealand campaign launched into the Australian market, strengthening trans-Tasman visibility. Domestically, \$179,250 was secured through the Regional Events Promotion Fund to support six major events, earning the third-highest allocation nationally.

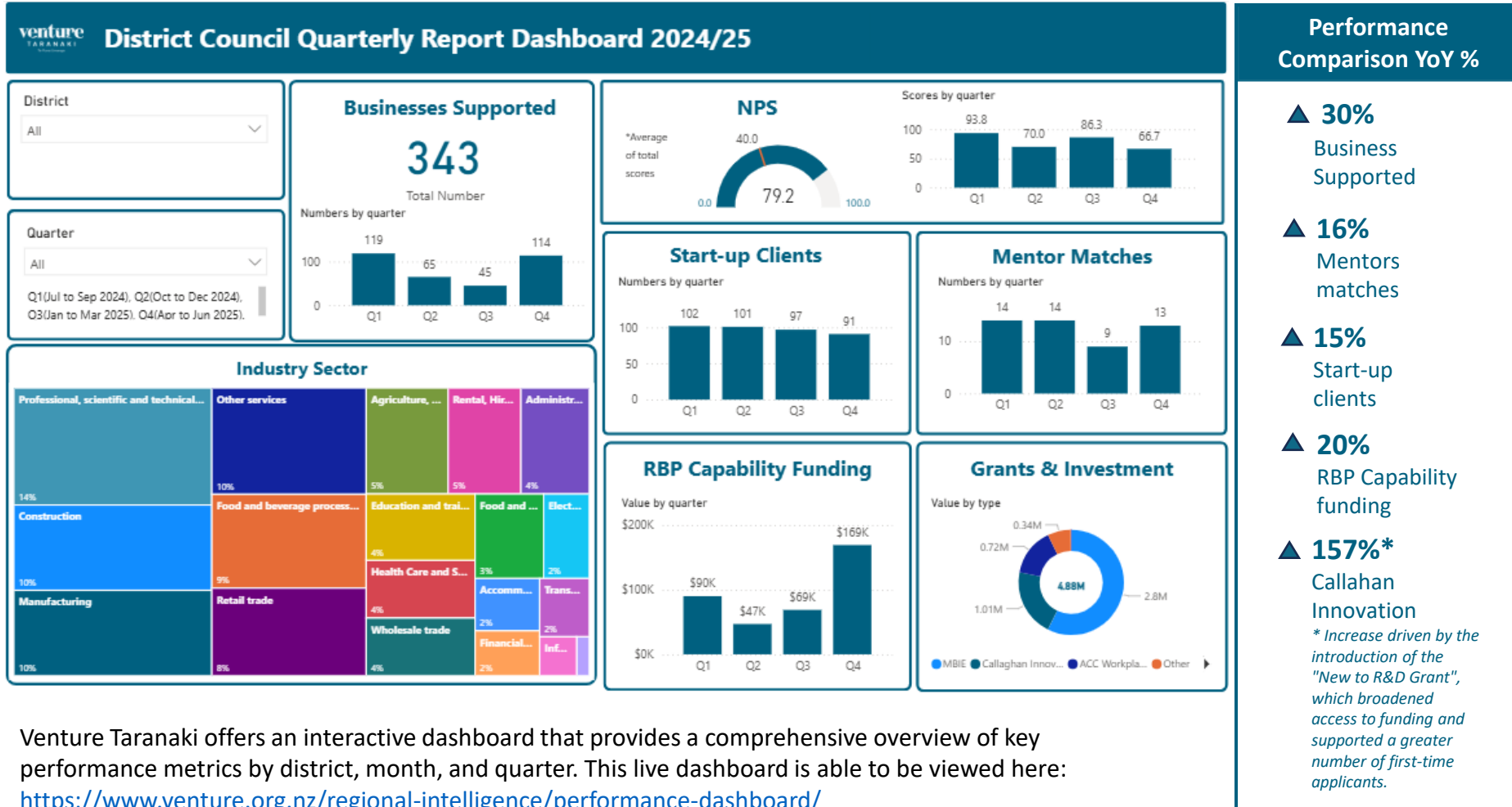
The latest Quarterly Economic Monitor, commissioned by Venture Taranaki from Infometrics, reported a provisional decline of 3.1% in regional GDP for the year to March 2024, mirroring national trends. Encouragingly, signs of resilience included a projected regional dairy payout of \$1.807 billion, rising housing activity, and renewed investment by major firms, reinforcing long-term economic confidence.

As we look ahead, Venture Taranaki remains focused on empowering local enterprises, strengthening our key sectors, and enabling innovation and investment to deliver long-term outcomes for the region.



Kelvin Wright
CE Te Puna Umanga
Venture Taranaki

Key Performance 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.

Strategic Focus Areas Snapshot

Highlighted below is a snapshot of the work undertaken in Q4 that fall within Venture Taranaki key strategic focus areas. For more detail on these projects and workstreams, refer to the following pages.



Energy

1. Taranaki Regional Energy 2025/26 Action Plan

2. Offshore Renewable Energy Forum 2025

3. Regional Energy Scenario Planning



Food and Fibre

1. Taranaki Farmers' Market Refresh

2. Taranaki at E Tipu

3. Branching Out updates

4. Agrivoltaics - Productive Land Use



Destination

2. Regional Promotion

3. Visitor trade

4. Business events

5. Major Events Fund



Enabler & Emergent

1. Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre

2. Massey University Partnership

3. PowerUp



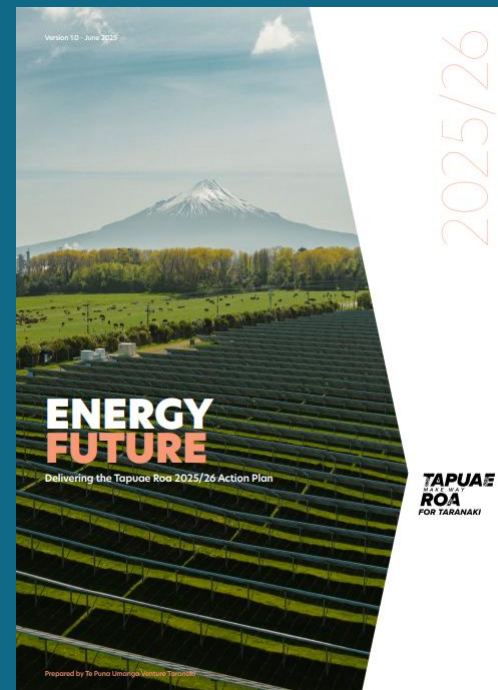
Energy

Tapuae Roa (TR) Regional Energy Action Plan

The TR energy industry group has worked with VT to prioritise approximately 25 energy actions within Tapuae Roa. Given the importance of this industry to the region, but having limited resources, this was a critical step.

Below are 10 key actions, with many already underway:

1. Strategic energy leadership formation: CE level group providing TR guidance and 'at scale' responses, now and over the next 5 years.
2. Enhance regional energy communications.
3. Energy scenario planning and regular industry scans.
4. Maintain an Energy Industry Action Group to provide private sector guidance and collective momentum on regional energy actions.
5. Being 'Open for Business', develop a regional energy investment prospectus.
6. Investigate Taranaki being a dedicated Strategic Energy Zone.
7. Play a leadership role in energy transition, leveraging partnerships such as EECA, Ara Ake and others.
8. Advance emerging forms of energy, especially in areas such as offshore wind, biogas and biomethane, green hydrogen and P2X, and rural energy.
9. Position the region as an energy and engineering talent export hub, helping businesses pursue new opportunities, partnerships and collaborations.
10. Partner to update and advance the Energy Talent Pipeline workplan.



Future Energy 25/26 presents the prioritised actions.

This is a living document, noting the evolving energy and regional economic situation.



Energy

Offshore Renewable Energy Forum 2025

During Q4, Venture Taranaki supported the 2025 Offshore Renewable Energy Forum, partnering with the New Zealand Wind Energy Association, Ara Ake, and the Taranaki Chamber of Commerce to host the event in Taranaki.

Held on 2 April, the one-day forum brought together more than 100 industry leaders, government officials, iwi representatives, and global experts to explore the potential of offshore wind for both Aotearoa and the region.

Now in its fifth year, the forum focused on what is needed to advance the commercial success of offshore wind in New Zealand including investment, supply chain development, and supportive policy frameworks. Attendees also heard from environmental experts and iwi leaders, reinforcing the importance of a holistic and inclusive approach.

Venture Taranaki Chief Executive Kelvin Wright led a panel discussion reflecting on insights from his recent trade mission to the UK, home to the world's second-largest offshore wind market.



Kelvin Wright CE VT, Hayden Mackenzie, NZTE; Michael Tucker, Ministry for the Environment; Rick Zwann, British High Commission; Hannah Fallon, ORE Catapult



Energy

Supporting Regional Energy Scenario Planning

During Q4, Venture Taranaki supported the Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) with energy scenario planning to inform and strengthen spatial planning across the region.

This work, which will continue into Q1 2025/26 under TRC's leadership, aligns well with Tapuae Roa actions, particularly in relation to future planning for industry, investment, and employment.

Progress in Rural Energy Initiatives

The Rural Energy Group met on 6 May to review project progress and reflect on the successful completion of the Save Energy on-Farm project.

During Q4, Venture Taranaki also visited the Dairy Trust Taranaki farm in Hāwera, operated in partnership with Fonterra and Nestlé. The farm features an on-site solar installation that helps offset the majority of its electricity costs.



Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki, Strategic Partner in the Save Energy on Farm project



Food and Fibre

Strategic Support Delivered: VT's Role in Reinvigorating the Taranaki Farmers' Market

In July 2023 during a period of future uncertainty, VT's Strategic Projects Lead, Matt Lamb, joined the Taranaki Farmers' Market Board as a Trustee.

The market faced low vendor turnout, minimal customer engagement, and financial instability, with potential closure looming.

VT sees the Farmers' Market as a vital platform for emerging food producers to test products, engage with customers, and grow their businesses. Supporting its survival was seen as essential to the region's future food sector success.

Between July 2023 and June 2025, Matt led work to secure funding for new equipment, refine the market coordinator role, improve stakeholder relationships, and led conversations that resulted in a summer pop-up series at Tasman Prospect (2025).

Since 2023, stallholder numbers have grown by 33%, income has risen by nearly 80%, and social media followers have doubled to over 8,000.

The Trust is now financially stable, with stronger relationships between the Board and stallholders, and improved engagement through regular meetings.

This hands-on project demonstrated VT's ability to make a positive impact in a different way. With the market in a strong position and led by connected food sector leaders, VT has confidently stepped back.



Farmers' Market Summer Pop-up - Feb 2025



Farmers' Market at Huatoki Plaza - June 2025



Food and Fibre

Taranaki at E Tipu: Leading the future of food and fibre

Venture Taranaki took part in E Tipu: The New Zealand Future Food and Fibre Summit, the country's foremost event focused on innovation and future trends in the primary sector.

VT featured in a key panel discussion on Economic Development and the Primary Sector, facilitated by GM Investment Stacey Hitchcock, where Branching Out Project Manager Michelle Bauer shared insights on the region's land diversification progress and how lessons from the Branching Out initiative can be applied nationally.

During the summit, ASB and Lincoln University also launched the report *The Future Use of Land and How to Fund It*, which spotlighted Branching Out and the Taranaki Rural Energy Project as exemplar initiatives shaping the future of land use in Aotearoa.



Michelle Bauer (Branching Out Project Manager) and Stacey Hitchcock (GM Investment, Venture Taranaki) share the Taranaki land diversification journey at E Tipu.



Branching Out featured in the ASB and Lincoln University report.

Branching Out

Taranaki-Grown Garlic Hits Supermarket Shelves

A locally grown garlic variety developed through the Venture Taranaki Branching Out programme has successfully reached supermarket shelves, marking a key milestone in the region's food and fibre diversification efforts.

The garlic has also gained recognition in the local hospitality sector. Richard Ponder, Executive Chef at Haukai Bistro and Bar, praised it for its “lovely creaminess and a slight nuttiness,” noting it has “none of the bitterness you often get with imported garlic” and calling it “a stand-out ingredient that’s right at home in our kitchen.”

This success demonstrates the practical impact of the Branching Out initiative, helping landowners explore viable, high-value crops suited to the region's conditions. It reflects how coordinated support and industry collaboration can deliver tangible outcomes that strengthen the local economy and food ecosystem.



Garlic harvested in 2024 as part of the Branching Out trials on local shelves



Richard Ponder, the executive chef at Haukai Bistro and Bar

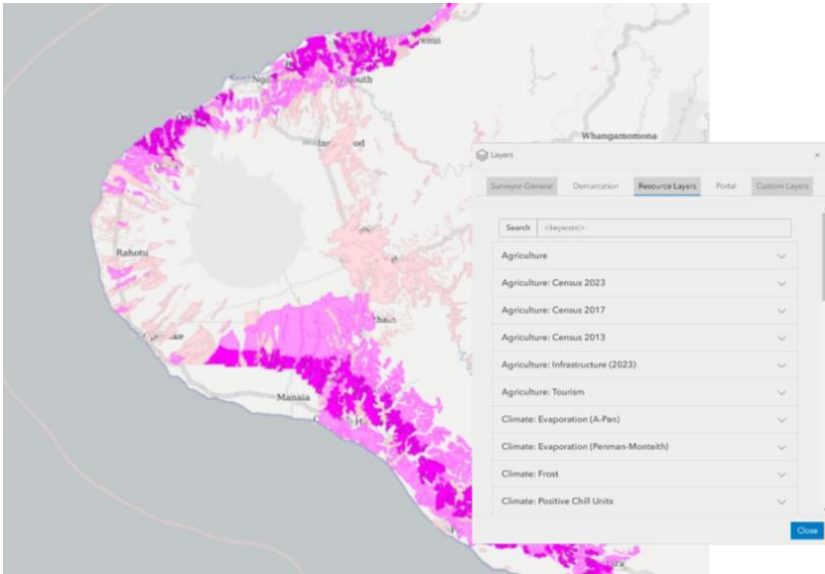
Branching Out Pilot Trials Achieve Full Delivery Milestones

All Year Two pilot trials under Branching Out Phase 2 have been completed as planned, including planting, harvesting, and detailed post-harvest activities. Products have been cured, processed, and made available through select retail channels, enabling off-take testing and consumer response analysis. Final reports have been submitted to MPI, and botanical crops are now undergoing bioactive testing, highlighting strong regional diversification goals.

Integrated Platform for Land Use Diversification in Taranaki

The GIS-based decision-support platform developed through the Branching Out programme empowers Taranaki landowners and businesses to explore high-value, sustainable land use alternatives. It brings together existing data layers, such as climate, soil, crop trials, and infrastructure, in a practical, user-friendly tool shaped by real farmer insights.

Once early-stage options are identified, landowners can access farmer-focused resources to refine their thinking and connect with the Branching Out team for targeted support in market validation and horticultural development. This support is delivered in collaboration with Taranaki Catchment Communities to ensure regional alignment.



Example view of the GIS-based platform for land use decisions.

The platform's impact extends beyond Taranaki, with other regions committing to adopt an expanded version. Its collaborative, open-access model avoids duplication, promotes consistency, and delivers cost efficiencies, highlighting both national relevance and the region's leadership in land use innovation.

Branching Out and the GIS tool have also fostered collaboration between the country's Public Research Organisations (PROs) and those working on real-world land use diversification, value add, and commercialisation. This not only benefits the region but also creates new engagement models that strengthen PRO alignment with national priorities like economic growth.

By bridging science, regional insight, and practical support, the tools and relationships developed stand as a cornerstone for future land use resilience, supporting long-term productivity, sustainable growth, and alignment with national food and fibre, climate, and economic development priorities.

Agrivoltaics: Exploring dual use on highly productive land

A recent agrivoltaics report was developed in collaboration with a major solar project to explore the potential benefits and business case for integrating agriculture and solar energy production on the same land.

This initiative addresses growing concerns over the use of highly productive farmland for large-scale solar developments, which can create tensions between clean energy goals and food security. By assessing crop compatibility, land-use efficiency, and economic viability, the report demonstrates that agrivoltaics offers a promising dual-use solution, allowing for renewable energy generation while maintaining agricultural output. This approach presents a strategic opportunity to balance land-use priorities and support more sustainable, multifunctional landscapes.



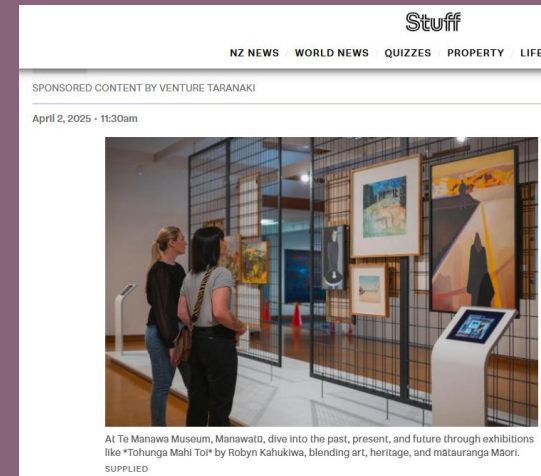
Destination – Regional Promotion

Fill Your Cup – Shoulder Season Campaign

In April, VT launched a burst of the 'Fill Your Cup' visitor campaign, targeted to domestic audiences (Auckland, Wellington, Waikato, Whanganui, Manawatū) to encourage arrivals through the shoulder/off-peak period. This was live across Stuff, TVNZ, and paid social media, and gained over 253,469 impressions.

Complimenting this activity, an Easter blog was developed on our website promoting all there is to see and do over the Easter/Autumn off-peak period. Paid social media boosted this post to our domestic audiences, generating over 76,292 impressions.

A key focus this quarter has been the promotion of the Coastal Arts Trail, with an integrated campaign delivering national exposure, including print advertising in the Sunday Star Times Travel Magazine, and a sponsored content digital article across Stuff, which generated over 210k impressions, 1.5k views, and 547 clicks to the CAT website. VT also hosted content creator, Lilia Alexander along the trail, helping to build the Coastal Arts Trail image library and rolling out engaging short form video of the trail to her Instagram following of over 32,900.



Promotional content for the Coastal Arts Trail and 'Fill Your Cup' campaign, combining social media posts and sponsored articles to highlight the region's vibrant arts and culture offering.



Destination – Regional Promotion

Regional Tourism Boost Fund - Central NZ Campaign

Taranaki is part of a successful joint bid that secured \$600,000 from the Government's new \$3 million Regional Tourism Boost Fund. Developed alongside Wellington, Nelson, Marlborough, Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa, Whanganui, and Manawatū, this new campaign aims to drive short-term visitation from Australia across the quieter autumn and winter months.

Launched in May, the campaign showcases the unique proposition that makes Central New Zealand regions so special and included strong incentive deals on flights from Australia to Wellington (gateway airport), across booking platform, Webjet, along with a range of digital promotions using Meta, Tripadvisor, and programmatic display. Results so far show 19,000 active users on the Central NZ landing page, over 42,000 clicks across the Tripadvisor campaign page with experiences booked currently sitting at 318pax and counting, plus webjet flight sales results still to come.

Landing page of centralnz.co.nz, part of the Regional Tourism Boost Fund

Regional Tourism Boost Fund - North America Campaign

This quarter, Taranaki was also part of a new nationwide tourism initiative targeting US and Canadian visitors, showcasing New Zealand as a diverse year-round destination and encouraging regional dispersal beyond the traditional tourism centres.

Led by Tātaki Auckland Unlimited, this campaign kicked off via an Air New Zealand promotion, which encourages North American visitors to add a domestic destination to their international fare to explore more of Aotearoa.

The campaign highlights road trip experiences and hidden gems throughout Aotearoa and will showcase Taranaki as an epic journey from the Forgotten World Highway through to the world-class Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre. Results to come.





Destination

Visitor Trade

In May, Visitor and Events Advisor Melissa Devine attended TRENZ in Rotorua, re-connecting with existing agents and meeting new agents interested in discovering Taranaki and potentially bringing their clients and businesses to Taranaki. TRENZ is Aotearoa New Zealand's premier event for the global tourism trade industry, attracting thousands of attendees from around the world. This year Venture Taranaki attended as did Hāwera-based Weir Tours. The team met with 50 agents utilising the two-day international tourism trade event to showcase the region's visitor products and services.

In May VT held the Q4 Visitor Hui in South Taranaki at Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga. A small group gathered to hear from South Taranaki District Council's Economic Development Officer Scott Willson who gave an update on tourism in South Taranaki. VT then gave an update on what we have been undertaking at Venture Taranaki and what we have coming up.



L to R (Holly Collins (VT), Nicole Attrill and Callum Williamson (Weir Tours), Melissa Devine (VT))



Visitor Industry Hui – South Taranaki.



Destination

Business events

In June Venture Taranaki attended Meetings in Auckland in partnership with New Plymouth Event Venues and Novotel New Plymouth. Meetings is the largest national business events trade show in Aotearoa. Across two days, the team met with over 20 Conference/meeting organisers to share the Taranaki business events proposition. This business events proposition includes events and conference spaces and rooms, accommodation, pre/post conference experiences and transport. Interest in smaller regions continues to grow with conference/business event organisers looking to take their events outside of the main centres.

Relationship building continues with PCOs including those who we connected with at Meetings and the NZ Business Expo and we continue to support across the following conferences and business events that are currently considering Taranaki as a region for their conference/business event:

- Cardiac Society – Annual Scientific Meeting
- NZ Young Farmer of the Year Contest
- Funeral Director Conference
- Holiday Parks Regional Meeting and Conference
- Brewers Guild NZ Regional Road Show
- Cardiac Society – Annual Scientific Anaesthesia ASM Meeting
- NZ Masters Plumbers Regional Meeting – confirmed



L to R – Melissa Devine (VT), Rayna Mani-Ryan (Novotel New Plymouth), Angela Wasley and Cassie Billing (New Plymouth Event Venues)

Destination – Major Events

Attracting and supporting major events in New Plymouth district

Events contracted in Q1: 2

Events contracted in Q2: 3

Events contracted in Q3: 0

Events contracted in Q4: 14 *(details below)*

No.	Event Name	Contract Date	Event Date
1	Festival of Lights – Summer 2025/2026	April 2025	20 Dec 2025 - 25 Jan 2026
2	Taranaki Open Fours Bowls 2026	April 2025	Men - 19-25 Jan 2026, Women 27th Jan - 1 Feb 2026
3	Winter Fest 2026	April 2025	18-28 June 2026
4	NZ Tattoo and Art Festival 2025	April 2025	29 - 30 Nov 2025
5	Taranaki Sustainable Trails 2025	April 2025	31 Oct – 16 Nov 2025
6	Taranaki Arts Trail 2025	April 2025	31 Oct – 9 Nov 2025
7	Reimagine Festival 2025	April 2025	9- 19 Oct 2025
8	Coastal Five 2025	April 2025	15 - 16 Nov 2025
9	Taranaki Fringe Garden Festival 2025	April 2025	31 Oct – 9 Nov 2025
10	Taranaki Garden Festival	April 2025	31 Oct – 9 Nov 2025
11	Taste & Tales 2026	June 2025	tbc
12	Festival Autumn	May 2025	April 2026
13	Taranaki Arts Show 2026	June 2025	10 - 12 April 2026
14	Feastival Winter	June 2025	3 - 7 Sept 2025

Event Spotlight – Te Matatini o Te Kāhui Maunga



63,000 +
visitors, spectators
and whanau



\$17Million
Visitor expenditure



\$24Million
Direct economic
contribution

Te Matatini o Te Kāhui Maunga was held in Ngāmotu New Plymouth from 25 February to 1 March 2025, celebrating te ao Māori through five days of kapa haka excellence, kai, toi Māori and whānau-friendly activities. The event achieved a 9.0 audience satisfaction rating, with visitors spending an average of \$915 each in region. It also delivered strong cultural and social benefits, strengthening local pride and kotahitanga (togetherness).



61%
out of town visitors



479,598 viewers
live on Māori Television



+ 71k
Visitor nights



25
marae hosted

*Reporting on events is often delayed due to event impact report timing



Enabler & Emergent

Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre (TAIC)

Science Outreach and Community Engagement

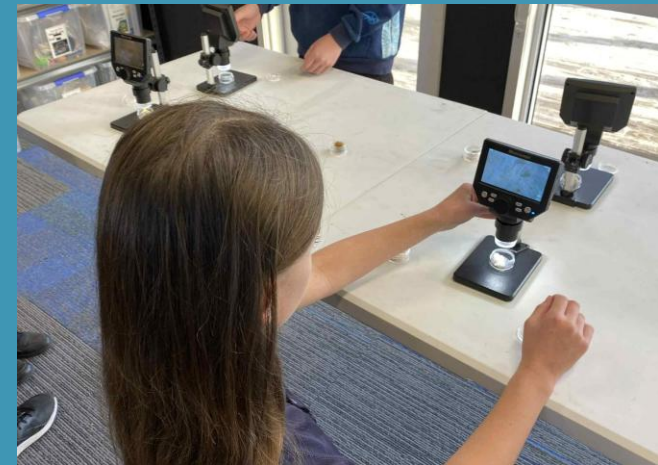
The STEM Outreach Experiences online platform was launched to support schools delivering a local science curriculum. Teachers can access outreach from local companies and organisations, including the Taranaki Applied Innovations Centre's own science sessions covering biotechnology, energy, and earth science. Two schools have already made use of the platform, with sessions delivered to 90 students so far.

Three drop-in sessions were held in Hāwera, Stratford, and New Plymouth to raise awareness of the TAIC and receive feedback.

Taranaki Biotech

An initial assessment of the region's biotechnology opportunity has been carried out, with a business case now in development. Biogas has been identified as a significant opportunity to grow existing industry and tackle local challenges regarding waste.

The TAIC has established a partnership with SCION Research, with a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) close to completion. An MoU with the Callaghan Biotechnology Group is now in development.



Students exploring energy and earth science using the TAIC's STEM Outreach platform — supporting local curriculum delivery with hands-on learning.



Enabler & Emergent

Massey University

Sharkbait Master's Project: National Exposure and Industry Interest

The Sharkbait Master's Project, supported by Venture Taranaki, reached a successful conclusion in June 2025. Led by Master's student Jerome Chua, the project developed an innovative crayfish bait using seafood waste. It has since attracted strong interest from industry partners looking to scale and commercialise the product. During this quarter, the project gained widespread national media attention, featuring in [Seafood New Zealand](#), [RNZ](#), [NZ Herald – The Country](#), [The Post](#) and others.

This level of exposure has helped shine a light on regional innovation and efforts to support more sustainable seafood practices.

Jerome will also present the project at the Seafood NZ Conference on 6–7 August.

ASEAN Visit

Venture Taranaki hosted two groups of ASEAN Agribusiness Scholars in the region on 16–17 May and 6–7 June.

The groups visited five local businesses, connected with Venture Taranaki, and learned about the Branching Out project.

Asean Scholars Cohort visit to Dairy Trust Taranaki



Jerome Chua, Master's student at Massey University, pictured with the innovative crayfish bait featured in national media.





Enabler & Emergent

PowerUp Accelerator programme and Showcase night

The PowerUp Accelerator launched in April, supporting six early-stage founders from across Taranaki through a 10-week intensive programme aimed at growing their ventures into scalable, investment-ready businesses.

Each founder was paired with a dedicated mentor and received tailored guidance through sessions on financial modelling, forecasting, intellectual property, business structures, and founder wellbeing. Participants also gained access to co-working space at Venture Taranaki and pitch practice sessions with the VT team.

The programme concluded with a successful Showcase Night on 26 June at the Devon Hotel, where founders pitched their ventures to a live and [online audience](#) of over 100 attendees. As a result, one venture has since received interest from a potential investor, while another has attracted national media attention, highlighting the programme's real-world impact in accelerating regional entrepreneurship.

Feedback received: "I think this program is invaluable for companies wanting to push past the idea of concept to the growth - it is a wonderful stepping stone"; "Love the way Venture Taranaki so active and supportive, a lesson other regional business entities could well use as an example"; "Great event, quality of speakers and pitches was fantastic"; "I did jump online to watch the pitches and the guest speaker – it was a really slick event! It looked as though there was a great level of engagement and energy in the room too"



Rockpool Collective, Zoa, Elshaw, ExplainIT, BOTALLOW, and Her Strength — six innovative startups from the VT PowerUp Accelerator, spanning aged care, premium vodka, healthcare, education, skincare, and women's sport performance.





Enabler & Emergent

ScaleUp Grants

As part of the Venture Taranaki PowerUp Scale-Up Grant pilot, ten grants were issued to support high-potential regional businesses. The funding aimed to remove key growth barriers such as market access and capability building. Over the next six months, final reports are being collated to assess outcomes, nine grants have been used, and one was returned.

"The Scale Up Grant has been a transformative catalyst for The Virtue's journey to becoming a global fragrance brand. With the grant's support, we were able to accelerate our expansion into new markets, particularly Australia, where we've seen a significant interest in our brand. The funding allowed us to invest in establishing key partnerships with Australian retailers. It also enabled us to refine our distribution networks and invest in on the ground market research. Beyond the financial boost, the grant gave us the confidence and validation to take risks and pursue ambitious goals. It's helped us build a foundation for long-term growth and set the stage for even greater success in the years to come. We're incredibly grateful for the opportunity and can't overstate how important this support has been in elevating The Virtue to new heights" - Brooke Lean - The Virtue



Brooke Lean - The Virtue – Devon St West new store

Masterclass: Unlock the Power of People

The last Masterclass workshop was held on 18 June and focused on building strong team culture and improving recruitment practices. Presented by Paige Croft (People Passion) and Jordan McFadyen (Done By Nine), the session offered practical, easy-to-digest guidance on workplace culture, hiring, and performance. Participants learned how to shape a culture people want to be part of, recruit with confidence, and lift performance while retaining great people. This session formed part of our ongoing efforts to support local businesses with relevant, actionable capability-building opportunities.

"Was great to see some of the 'heartcentred' parts of business covered by VT and in this session"; "The presenters were interesting, informative and relevant. Thank you" – participant feedback



Paige Croft and Lucy Bridger presenting at the PowerUp Masterclass

Regional Development Agency Functions

Enterprise Support

Research and Development support - Callaghan Innovation

Q4 saw a noticeable decline in R&D grant applications, likely due to a combination of economic uncertainty and confusion following the Government's announcement to disestablish Callaghan Innovation. Although R&D grant access remains unchanged, this perception may have contributed to reduced engagement. Nationally, only 13 R&D grants were approved during the quarter.

One of these was a "New to R&D Grant" (\$49,000) awarded to a company previously supported by Venture Taranaki. While the founder remains based in the region, the business is now registered in Auckland, where new software development staff have been hired.

To encourage regional engagement and clarify available support, Venture Taranaki continues to maintain a visible presence across the region. In Q4, VT Senior Enterprise Adviser Nick Field visited the Stratford Library to meet with business owners, discuss R&D and innovation opportunities, and provide tailored guidance. This outreach reflects VT commitment to making enterprise support accessible in all parts of Taranaki.



VT Senior Enterprise Adviser Nick Field remains active across the region.

Business Mentors

VT was thrilled to recognise Jenny Henderson as a dedicated mentor who has supported small business owners in Taranaki for over 12 years.

Jenny was awarded a Pin of Recognition for her outstanding contribution, having guided around 20 entrepreneurs through the ups and downs of business ownership with empathy, practical support, and valuable advice.



Kayleen Schoeman- Business Mentor coordinator Taranaki; Jenny Henderson - Volunteer Business Mentor; Brook Tracey- Business Services coordinator National office

Regional Development Agency Functions

Enterprise support - Business Success Story

Blue Petal – Handmade botanical products

Blue Petal is a locally grown Taranaki business creating handmade botanical products and seasonal honeys inspired by native plants and traditional knowledge.

Founder Martina approached Venture Taranaki to strengthen her marketing strategy, identify the right partnerships, and grow her customer base through clear market positioning and business development.

Her products were featured at the Taste of Taranaki WOMAD Pop-up, gaining valuable exposure and reaching new audiences.

Since working with Venture Taranaki, Blue Petal has:

- Accessed Regional Business Partner co-funding for marketing capability
- Expanded brand visibility through local promotional opportunities
- Built valuable networks to support ongoing business growth



“The support has been invaluable. Their network opened doors I wouldn’t have reached otherwise, and the help with marketing has been especially beneficial.”– Martina, Founder of Blue Petal

Stakeholder and Strategic Partnerships

Enterprise Support

Institute of Directors Partnership

Venture Taranaki also launched a new partnership with the Taranaki branch of the Institute of Directors to strengthen governance capability as a driver of business growth.

The first event, held in Q4, brought together SME Managing Directors and professional directors for a roundtable-style discussion on governance pathways and board engagement.

A second event is scheduled for late July, featuring a panel session and discussion forum.

Additional activities, including a formal governance workshop delivered by the Institute of Directors, are planned for the next six months.



SME leaders and professional directors connect during a round-table session on governance pathways and board engagement, part of a new partnership with VT and the Institute of Directors.

Univentures partnership - Business at 50+ programme

In Q4, Venture Taranaki piloted the Business at 50+ programme, funded by the Office for Seniors (Ministry of Social Development).

This initiative offered a startup programme tailored specifically for older people and was delivered in partnership with Univentures, following a similar successful model trialled in Canterbury.

Eight participants took part, working through online modules, one-on-one advisory sessions, and group cohort meetings.

"We're thrilled to bring the Starting a Business at 50+ programme to the Taranaki region, helping those over 50 to step into entrepreneurship confidently." - Dr Chris Kirk, CEO of Univentures

Feedback received: *"This has motivated me to pursue an idea I have had for years," and "This has helped me figure out and narrow down both what I am selling and who are my customers."*

Initiatives Performance and Quarterly Summary

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

	Initiative	Strategic Area	Description	Target Performance		Summary
				Current	Status	
1	Industry Intelligence and Response	Energy	Scanning, market intelligence, analysis and info to support briefings, decisions and actions.	100%	On Target	Ongoing industry scans and engagement with TRC (Energy Scenario work), the Taranaki Energy Forum, Bioenergy Association working groups, MBIE (ORE Bill update), and a range of industry stakeholders to ensure visibility over emerging energy sector developments.
2	Taranaki Regional Energy Strategy	Energy	Development of a strategy to plan a regional response to our energy transition, advocacy and regional leadership coordination.	100%	On Target	During Q4, VT released the Taranaki Region Future Energy Plan, which prioritises and activates 25 actions from the Tapuae Roa Taranaki Regional Energy Action Plan. The plan is the result of extensive engagement, including input from over 40 regional energy companies, and has been shared with stakeholders such as the CEO Forum, Ara Ake Energy Network, and NPDC.
3	Energy Sector Development	Energy	Specific actions, projects, network and cluster development, delivery and momentum.	100%	On Target	1) Taranaki Rural Energy Group: The group met on 6 May to review project progress following the successful completion of the Save Energy on Farm Project. Venture Taranaki also visited the Dairy Trust Taranaki farm during Q4, operated in conjunction with Fonterra/Nestlé in Hāwera, which includes an on-farm solar set-up to offset the majority of their energy costs. 2) National and International Relationships: Engagements included meetings with MBIE and EECA, and submission of feedback on the Electricity Authority's green paper on decentralised energy. 3) Taranaki Regional Energy Transition Accelerator (RETA) Programme: The programme concluded earlier in the year. VT continues to engage with EECA to support ongoing transition plans for local companies in light of shifting government priorities. 4) Industry Projects, Networks, and Cluster Activities: Activities included advancing emerging forms of energy – in addition to offshore wind and hydrogen, VT focused during Q4 on bioenergy and low-heat geothermal opportunities. VT also commenced development of an industry energy prospectus, which will continue into 2025/26.
4	Branching Out Phase 2	Food and Fibre	Regional land diversification and development of food and fibre value chains to generate economic, social and environmental outcomes.	96%	On Target	1) Post-Harvest Activity and Reporting: Products cured and sold through select retailers for pricing and offtake testing. Botanical crops dispatched for bioactive analysis. 2) Product and Market Development: Consultant engaged to deliver market validation for selected crops. 3) Year 2 Pilot Trials: All trials planted and harvested as per design. Final report submitted to MPI. 4) Land Diversification Tool Development: Vendor selected and development underway toward October 2025 delivery. 5) Pilot Scale Hemp Decorticator and Dryer: Dryer build complete; processor delayed to October 2025. Co-operative model under exploration to support long-term operation.
5	Platform to Launch	Food and Fibre	Providing emerging food and beverage businesses local and national opportunities to test, validate and refine their product, engage with customers and grow their business.	100%	On Target	1) Auckland Food Show Delivering: 7 of 8 vendors for the Taranaki stand confirmed, with one replacement due to vendor withdrawal. Final space reserved for regional promotion. Event to be held end of July 2025. 2) Taranaki Farmers Market: VT completed its two-year support role, including Board participation. Ongoing assistance will continue where needed.
6	Link Taranaki - Export and Infrastructure	Food and Fibre	Investigation into transport and logistics barriers and opportunities for the region and supporting local businesses to expand into export markets to diversify revenue streams and increase market.	100%	On Target	An interim report on rail in Taranaki has been completed. Work is ongoing to explore options for inland ports and to strengthen transport and logistics across the region, including discussions with CNI/LNI on developing a comprehensive transport and logistics strategy.
7	Dairy & Agriculture Sector Development	Food and Fibre	Supporting the dairy and agricultural sector to decarbonise and establish sustainable business models.	100%	On Target	1) E-Tipu Summit: VT attended and led a key panel on Economic Development and the Primary Sector at NZ's leading food and fibre summit. 2) Industry Engagements: Site visit to Fonterra (22 May) and participation in DairyNZ event in Hāwera (25 May) with 200+ farmers and rural professionals.
8	MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions)	Destination	Development of the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) sector to support and encourage out-of-region visitation, and the smoothing of seasonality via events.	100%	On Target	1) In June Venture Taranaki attended Meetings in Auckland in partnership with New Plymouth Event Venues and Novotel New Plymouth. Meetings is the largest national business events trade show in Aotearoa. 2) Ongoing relationship building with PCOs continues, including connections made at Meetings and the NZ Business Expo, with continued support provided to around seven conferences and business events currently considering Taranaki as a host region.
9	Regional Film Office	Destination	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.	100%	On Target	No specific film office activities, stakeholder engagement, or new film productions reported during Q4.
10	Regional Promotion	Destination	Programme of targeted domestic and international campaigns to attract visitors to Taranaki.	100%	On Target	1) Regional campaigns such as Fill Your Cup and Coastal Arts Trail generated strong engagement, with over 250,000 impressions across digital and print platforms, including TVNZ, Stuff, social media, and influencer content. 2) Secured \$600,000 from the Regional Tourism Boost Fund (Central NZ campaign), launched in May with digital promotion via Webjet, Meta, and Tripadvisor – reaching over 18,000 users to date. 3) Participated in the Regional Tourism Boost Fund – North America campaign, with Air NZ-led promotion positioning Taranaki as a domestic add-on for US/Canadian travellers. 4) Attended TRENZ 2024 in Rotorua, meeting with over 50 international agents and promoting Taranaki products. 5) Held Q4 Visitor Hui in South Taranaki at Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga to share updates and strengthen local tourism engagement. 6) 14 major events were contracted during Quarter Four, aiming to contribute to visitor spend and enhance the region's profile.

Initiatives Performance and Quarterly Summary

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

	Initiative	Strategic Area	Description	Target Performance		Summary
				Current	Status	
11	Regional Strategy	Enablers	Ongoing maintenance and management of Regional Economic Development Strategy.	100%	On Target	Tapuae Roa updates ongoing. Discussions underway with Energy sector stakeholders to refine priorities and actions, and consideration being given to presenting updated action plan in Q2 FY 25/26
12	Skills and Workforce Development	Enablers	Supporting economic growth of the region by attracting and retaining skilled talent, addressing skill gaps and fostering collaboration, business education institutions and government agencies.	100%	On Target	1) Sector Advisory Support: VT worked with Scariatti and the Branching Out team to integrate crop-specific workforce needs into the Land Use Dashboard. 2) Taranaki Workforce Development Network: Hosted a Summer of Tech webinar for local companies to promote regional talent pathways. 3) International Education: Continued support for TRFU and Francis Douglas Memorial College on a new international education product for 2026. 4) Skills Leadership and Pathways: Supported the Green School's launch of the Green Camps initiative by hosting an event at VT with over 20 local providers exploring partnership opportunities.
13	Regional Intelligence	Enablers	Publications, dashboards and events tailored to our unique region, which helps us make informed decisions and capitalise on opportunities.	100%	On Target	1) Regional Data & Insight portal updated with relevant dashboards and data. 2) The latest Quarterly Economic Monitor, commissioned by Venture Taranaki and prepared by Infometrics, has been publicly shared through a press release highlighting key economic updates impacting the Taranaki region. It has also been uploaded to the Venture Taranaki website for public access, along with previous editions.
14	Massey University Partnership	Enablers	Partnership funding for an FTE located at Venture Taranaki to support R&D funding, food & fibre sector capability and students into Taranaki industries.	98%	On Target	1) Sector Capability Development: 8 projects supported in 2024–25, including Branching Out, AgritechX, and regenerative agriculture initiatives. 2) R&D Funding: \$280k secured, exceeding the \$250k target. Includes AGMARDT funding and pending Bioresource Processing Alliance support. 3) Student Connections: 13 students/graduates placed, 54% at postgraduate level. Additional postgrads engaged in Taranaki-linked projects. 4) Enterprise Capability: 53 organisations engaged, with 66% receiving Massey support. Slightly under target but with strong ongoing support. 5) Massey Engagement in Region: 3 initiatives delivered, including Farm Bioreactor Open Day in Q4.
15	Investment Attraction	Enablers	Attraction of new businesses and investments to the region.	100%	On Target	1) New Connections: Ongoing discussions with potential investors and industry exploring opportunities in the region. 2) Investment Proposition Development: Investment Prospectus planning underway, with initial interviews conducted with local stakeholders. 3) Investor Relationships: Continued engagement with MBIE/MPI and investors, with a key focus on the PowerUp Accelerator Showcase, which attracted national investor interest both in person and online.
16	Curious Minds	Enablers	Grant distribution and support for participatory science projects under MBIE contract	100%	On Target	Completed in Q2.
17	Tech and Innovation	Enablers	Foster and enable the tech and innovation community in Taranaki.	100%	On Target	Focus on the development of the Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre.
18	Enterprise Support	Enablers	Regional Business Partners - Strategic Support.	91%	On Target	1) Callaghan Navigator Advisory: R&D grant applications declined nationally in Q4 due to economic uncertainty and confusion following Callaghan Innovation's disestablishment announcement. One New to R&D grant (\$49,000) was awarded to a company previously supported by VT. 2) Regional Business Partners – Three One-to-Some trainings were held this quarter, all focused on AI. Additionally, a food industry-specific marketing strategy workshop was delivered, attended by nine businesses. The most requested services this quarter included marketing strategies, business strategy and succession planning, leadership and management development, payroll, sales, and AI.
19	PowerUp	Enablers	A range of support services and activities focused on supporting the idea -to maturity life cycle of an enterprise.	100%	On Target	1) ScaleUp Grants: Final reports are being collated to assess pilot impact over the next 6 months. Of the 10 grants issued, 9 were used and 1 returned. 2) PowerUp Accelerator: Launched in April with six founders completing a 10-week programme including mentoring, expert workshops, and pitch coaching. Culminated in a successful Showcase Night on 26 June with 80+ attendees; two ventures received national interest and investment inquiries. 3) Masterclass – Unlock the Power of People: Final FY session held on 18 June. Focused on team culture, recruitment, and performance, with insights from Paige Croft (People Passion) and Jordan McFadyen (Done By Nine).
20	Centre for Applied Innovation	Emergent	Discover, connect, and elevate Taranaki's potential for new industries and innovation	100%	On Target	1) An initial proposal was circulated to stakeholders, and a one-pager was developed to outline the biogas opportunity. 2) The centre is now hosting workshops and public events. The STEM Outreach Experiences platform is operational, with schools already booked. 3) A report is in development on the landscape and capability mapping for local and national biotech and scientific R&D activity.

External Project KPI 2024-25

Title	Cost centre	Owner	Start date	End date	KPI	Result	Traffic light	Commentary	Description
Regional Workforce Development	Regional Investment	Toi Foundation	21/03/2024	31/08/2024	Multiple	Completed		One off funding grant to undertake a feasibility study.	Feasibility report on creating a collective action network among various workforce development organisations, educational institutions, employers, and government agencies to enhance workforce development efforts and address regional economic needs.
Participatory Science Platform (extension)	Regional Investment	MBIE	7/01/2024	31/12/2024	Multiple	Commenced in July 2024		This contract is a six month extension to complete the programme by 31 December 2024. Final report due February 2025.	To encourage collaboration between scientists and communities, fostering engagement in scientific research and empowering individuals to actively participate in scientific endeavors.
Regional Event Promotions Fund	Destination	MBIE	26/07/2024	28/02/2025	Multiple	Complete		All events have been delivered and our post event reports have been sent as at 18 March	To support regional dispersal, visitor growth and attraction via major regional events.
Business Mentors	Economic Development	BMNZ	7/01/2024	30/6/2025	50 matches per annum	50 (100%)		New partnership and promotion initiatives in place this year have increased interest.	To facilitate delivery of the Business mentors programme to mentors and mentees on Behalf of BMNZ.
Regional Event Fund	Destination	MBIE	12/01/2020	30/6/2025	Extensive	Complete		All conditions have been met, final report submitted, and contract complete as at March 2025.	To support the development and hosting of events that drive regional economic growth & attract visitors to specific regions in NZ.
Business over 50 programme	Economic Development	Office for Seniors	12/05/2025	4/07/2025	Delivery report	On track		3-way contract for service between OFS, VT and Univentures	3-way contract for service between OFS, VT and Univentures to run an 8-week start-up programme for people over 50. A cohort of 8 is now underway.
Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Regional Investment	Toi Foundation	20/11/2024	20/11/2025	Multiple	On track		Project underway and on track	Establishment of an Applied Innovation Centre/Taiao and Biodiversity outcomes to connect, enable, develop and accelerate Taranaki's science and technology sector.
Central NZ	Destination	MBIE	28/04/2025	31/12/2025	Multiple	On track		On track, all promotional activity in progress	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. Total contract value \$600k with MOU in place between Wellington and VT.
New Industry Acceleration - Applied BioTech	Regional Investment	NPDC Economic Development Reserve Fund	1/01/2025	31/12/2025	Multiple	On track		Project underway and on track	This project will assess Taranaki's existing capabilities for biotechnology industry while identifying essential steps to attract startups and established companies for scaling and commercialisation.
Branching Out	Regional Investment	NPDC, STDC, SDC and other partners	1/11/2022	31/12/2025	Multiple	On track		Deliverables on track.	To diversify food and fibre value chains to generate better economic, social and environmental outcomes for Taranaki.
Branching Out	Regional Investment	MPI	1/11/2022	31/12/2025	Multiple	On track		Milestone 8 report completed June 30 2025.	To diversify food and fibre value chains to generate better economic, social and environmental outcomes for Taranaki.
Branching Out	Regional Investment	Bashford Nicholls & Massey University (Pivot Award)	1/04/2025	28/02/2026	Multiple	Due to begin April 2025		Project underway	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.
Branching Out	Regional Investment	Agmardt	5/01/2025	30/4/2026	Milestone and final	On track		Contract in partnership with Northland Inc.	De-risking the process of introducing novel crops: A collaboration to develop a seed/propagation toolkit for Taranaki and Northland landowners
Stratford Economic Development Strategy	Regional Investment	SDC	27/6/2025	30/05/2026	Multiple	On track		Project underway	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.
Massey Partnership	Regional Investment	Massey	1/09/2012	1/06/2026	None	On track		Contract re-signed for another two years. Partnership program on track and delivering on all KPIs.	Connection for Taranaki industry, business and organisations with Massey University expertise, knowledge and innovation to encourage greater development, innovation and growth.
Regional Event Promotions Fund	Destination	MBIE	24/06/2025	24/06/2026	Multiple	On track		On track, third party agreements with all event producers being finalised and signed.	To support regional dispersal, visitor growth and attraction via major regional events.
Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Regional Investment	Taranaki Regional Council	1/01/2025	30/06/2026	Multiple	On Track		Project underway and on track	Establishment of an Applied Innovation Centre to connect, enable, develop and accelerate Taranaki's science and technology sector.
Taranaki Applied Innovation Centre	Regional Investment	NPDC Economic Development Reserve Fund	1/01/2025	30/06/2026	Multiple	On track		Project underway and on track	Establishment of an Applied Innovation Centre to connect, enable, develop and accelerate Taranaki's science and technology sector.
Regional Business Partner	Economic Development	MBIE	7/01/2022	30/6/2027	Multiple	182 (103%) NPS 83		Number of engaged clients and NPS on track against KPI. Callaghan Innovation KPIs no longer required, but client engagement level is being maintained.	To support business growth by providing businesses with access to advisory services, training, and funding opportunities. Contract extended to end June 2027.
Branching Out - Better Off Funding	Regional Investment	DIA - via NPDC	5/05/2023	30/6/2027	Multiple	On track		Deliverables on track.	Capital/operational grant for a dryer and hemp processing/manufacturing.
Branching Out Phase Three Delivery	Regional Investment	NPDC	1/01/2026	31/12/2028	Multiple	Not started		Phase three to begin on 1 January 2026. Agreement to access up to \$50,000 prior to project for project continuity.	Contribution to the delivery of Branching Out Phase Three implementation
BTAG	Economic Development	MSD	4/01/2022	No end date	None			Referral-based contract, ongoing.	To support emerging businesses with developing a business plan, training in business skills, advice and project reports.

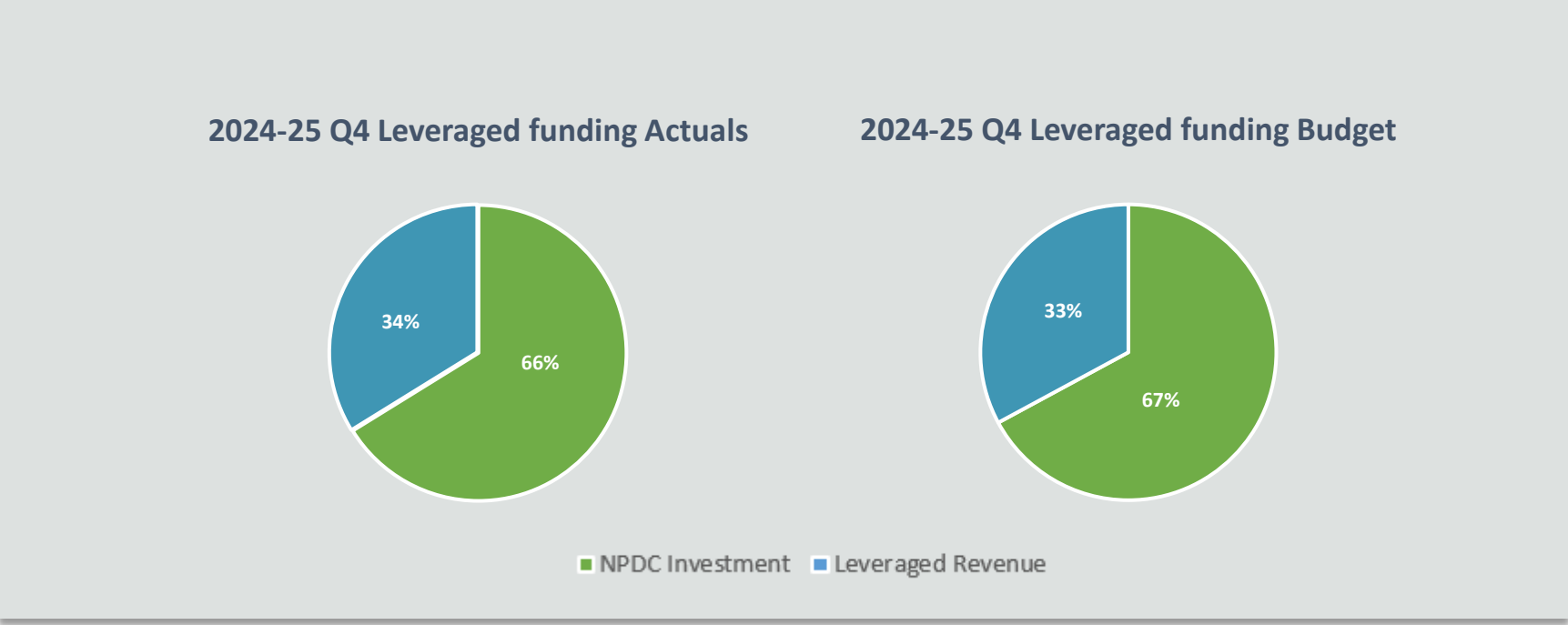
Traffic light key

	All KPIs met, contract complete or reporting period complete
	All KPIs substantially met (within 90%), contract complete
	All KPIs on track to be met by completion of contract
	Some KPIs not on track to be met by completion of contract
	Some or all KPIs not substantially met, contract complete

Leveraged Revenue Summary

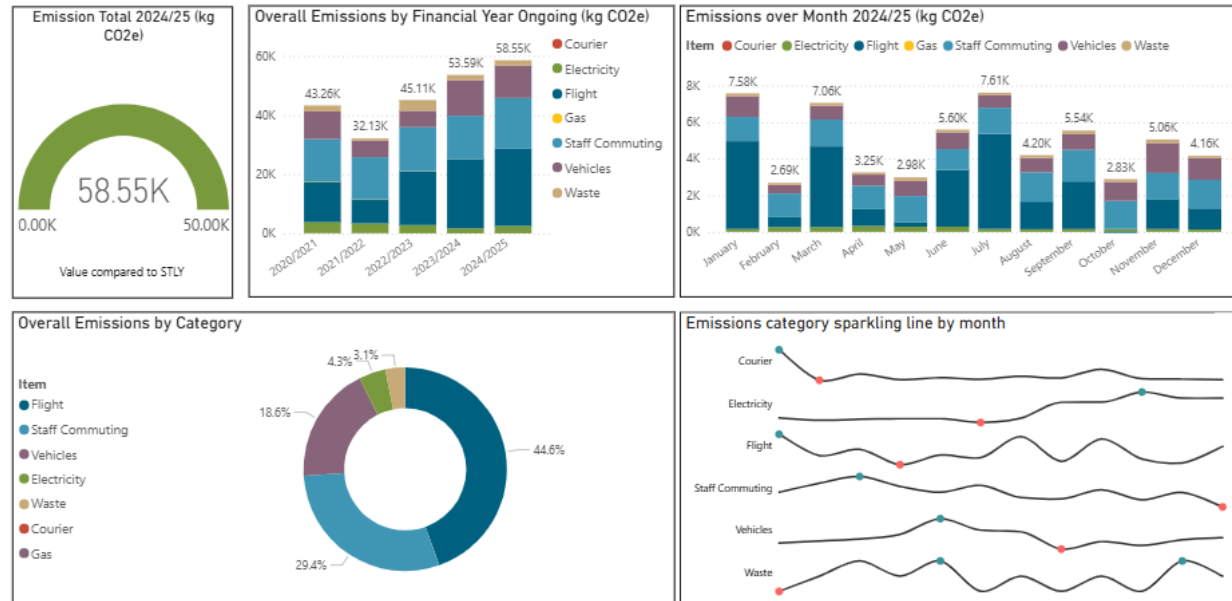
BUDGET SUMMARY	Q4 2024-2025 Year-to-date Actual				Q4 2024-2025 Year-to-date Budgeted			
END OF Q4 2024-2025	Revenue *	NPDC Investment	Leveraged Revenue	Expenditure	Revenue *	NPDC Investment	Leveraged Revenue	Expenditure
Total	\$6,635,308	\$3,674,410	\$1,877,219	\$6,628,624	\$6,879,236	\$3,674,410	\$1,800,552	\$7,694,812

**Revenue, expenditure and NPDC investment includes only core funding for the purposes of leveraged funding calculations, MEF and additional NPDC funding towards non-core projects are excluded (Branching out, Taranaki Innovation centre, Emergent opportunities) to avoid significant variations year-to-year*



Sustainability and Emissions Summary Report

Venture Taranaki Carbon Emissions Footprint Dashboard



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

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

Total emissions for the financial year were 58.55 tonnes of CO₂e, representing a 9% increase compared to FY23/24.

Flights were the most significant contributor, making up 45% of total emissions. Although domestic travel declined, overall flight emissions rose by 11% year-over-year, driven by the greater impact of international travel.

Staff commuting made up 29% of emissions and increased by 17%, reflecting a return to more consistent on-site work across the organisation.

Vehicle emissions, which contributed 19% of the total, decreased by 9%, partly due to reduced operational demand from the Branching Out programme in the second half of the year and the gradual shift to hybrid vehicles.



Coming up next quarter

July 2025

- 1 July – Callaghan Innovation Student Grants open
- 8 July – Rural Energy Meeting (VT, Federated Farmers, Taranaki Catchment Communities, Powerco, Ara Ake, TRC)
- 13 July – Startup Weekend
- 17 - 18 July – BioGas Bridge Event
- 23–27 - Auckland Food Show
- 29 July – Biotech Connect at Juno Gin
- 30 July – Presenting at NPBHS Year 12 Pathways Afternoon – Future of Work
- 31 July – Institute of Directors roundtable and panel event

August 2025

- 5 August – PowerUp Business Ready applications open
- 6 August – Travel Trade Growth Programme for tourism operators
- 12 & 14 August – Micro:bit Teacher PLD – Conservation Technology in the Classroom
- 14–15 August – Cruise Conference – Napier
- 19 August – Q1 Visitor Industry Hui
- 18–19 August – Taranaki Careers and Training Expo

September 2025

- 1–4 September – Kiwi North Trade Event – Australia
- 3 September – PowerUp Masterclass 1: Sales with Mike Clark from Think Right
- 11 September – Science Symposium
- 23 September – Economic Event
- September – Energy Workforce Strategy and Action Plan: Employer interviews begin
- September – Better Off Funding: Dryer and hemp processor received in region