



Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi
INCORPORATED

18 September 2025

Tēnā koutou,

SUPPORT LETTER FOR THE WHAREWAKA PROJECT – TE MATAU A MĀUI

On behalf of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Inc. I am writing in full support for Piripi Smith seeking funding for the whare waka project in the Ahuriri Marina.

The waka *Te Matau a Māui* holds immense cultural, educational, and community value for the people of Hawke's Bay, New Zealand, and the People of the wider Pacific Ocean. As a traditional double-hulled voyaging canoe, this waka hourua is a living classroom and a treasure that connects us to the ancient navigation, waka building, and sailing knowledge of our Ancestors. The waka embodies the values of kaitiakitanga, whanaungatanga, and mātauranga Māori. And continues to inspire tamariki, rangatahi, pākeke, and kaumātua alike through hands-on learning, storytelling, and voyaging.

Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi Inc are the proud owners of the waka hourua '*Te Matau a Māui*', with the Ātea a Rangi Educational Trust, who are responsible for the operations, education and training. Over many years, the Trust has provided educational programmes, art projects, training in celestial navigation, and opportunities for schools, community groups, manuhiri, and tourists to engage with traditional celestial navigation and waka kaupapa. Through these activities, thousands have experienced the unique sense of identity, pride, and environmental awareness that waka hourua fosters.

The Wharewaka project is a vital next step. A dedicated whare will:

- Showcase Māori and Pacific whakairo art. Pou, sculptured traditional sails outside and traditional and contemporary art forms for the wharewaka education centre. Where the artist's will be acknowledged.
- Include a safe berth and floating pontoon for the waka hourua to moor to.
- Provide a secure and protective home for *Te Matau a Māui*, ensuring her preservation for future generations.
- Create a purpose-built facility for education, training, environmental and marine awareness, community engagement, and visitors to the region.
- Enable the continuation and expansion of waka-related programmes, particularly for rangatahi Māori and Pacific, who are inspired and empowered by connection to their cultural heritage, as well as the protection of te taiao and te moana.
- Strengthen Hawke's Bay's ability to host national and international visitors, positioning the region as a centre of excellence for traditional navigation and voyaging. A cultural gateway into Ahuriri/Napier. The Ātea a Rangi star compass, built by the Ātea Trust, goes hand in hand with the waka hourua, creating a world-class learning environment.

This project is not only about preserving a waka — it is about safeguarding mātauranga, revitalising cultural practices, and providing opportunities for present and future generations to learn, connect, and thrive. We strongly endorse the Wharewaka project and believe it is essential for sustaining the kaupapa of *Te Matau a Māui* waka hourua. We encourage funders to support this important initiative, which will leave a lasting legacy for the people of Hawke's Bay and beyond.

Ngā manaakitanga,



Chrissie Hape
NGĀTI KAHUNGUNU IWI INC
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE