

# CONCO>E TŪHURA

FINAL REPORT  
TEC VERSION





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## BACKGROUND/MŌ CONCOVE TŪHURA

**The Construction & Infrastructure Centre of Vocational Excellence (ConCOVE Tūhura) was established in 2020 as part of the Government's Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE).**

ConCOVE is hosted by the Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT), part of Te Pūkenga, the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology. We have had five years of funding and will conclude at the end of 2025.

ConCOVE has developed a unique model for its work: it is project-funded, sector-informed, and, importantly, focused on outcomes. It has positioned itself as being at the nexus of research, industry, and vocational education to help build a more productive, sustainable, and resilient national sector for both industry and employees.

Over the past five years, it has delivered 38 research projects across five core workstreams and enabled critical projects.

ConCOVE has had a clear focus on prioritising its relationships with, and building the capabilities of Māori, Pacific peoples, and women in the sector. Notably, its Māori, Pasifika, and Women's Advisory Groups provided critical advice on issues, trends, and solutions relating to the construction and infrastructure sectors, as well as advice on initiatives to promote Māori, Pacific peoples, and women entering and progressing in the sector.

It has helped translate research into practical tools – including data dashboards, training frameworks, and tool kits.

It has further embedded its impact across the construction and infrastructure sectors through co-designed solutions, partnerships, and capability building.

ConCOVE is now in the end stages of transitioning from project delivery to the legacy phase – where insights learned over its lifespan, must now be carried forward by others.

### **Our mission/Te whakapuakanga**

ConCOVE connects and aligns industry, learners, and the vocational education sector to re-imagine clear, equitable, and supported career pathways within the construction and infrastructure sectors.

*Ka tūhonohonotia e ConCOVE ngā rāngai ahumahi, ngā ākonga, me ngā pūkenga mahi ā rehe ki te whakatū mahi i runga i te huarahi tika, e ngākau tapatahi ana, e tautokotia ana e te rāngai waihanga.*

### **Our vision/Te whakakitenga**

We have inclusive, sustainable, and productive construction and infrastructure sectors with clear career pathways supported by a future-focused vocational education system, honouring Te Tiriti O Waitangi.

*Kua kotahi, kua toitū, kua angitū te rāngai waihanga, ki te whakatū mahi e hāngai ana ki ngā pūkenga mātauranga ō anamata, i raro katoa i te mana o Te Tiriti o Waitangi.*

## OUR JOURNEY/TE ARA I WHĀIA





## OUR JOURNEY/TE ARA I WHĀIA (CONTINUED)

19-23  
**FEB**  
2024

German-New Zealand  
Chamber of Commerce  
delegation visit to  
Munich/Bonn, Germany

27-29  
**FEB**  
2024

Skills fair on quality  
apprenticeships in Turin, Italy  
(Diversity presentation)

25  
**MAR**  
2024

ConCOVE webinar:  
He Ruku Hohonu/  
Māori Level  
4 Carpentry  
Apprentices

9-10  
**APR**  
2024

WILNZ Conference  
(Bystander and Tui  
Tuia presentation)

22-24  
**APR**  
2024

UNESCO BILT Conference  
in Como, Italy (launch of  
UNESCO-UNEVOC BILT  
project with ConCOVE  
Tūhura leads)

17  
**SEP**  
2024

ConCOVE webinar:  
The potential of  
micro-credentials in  
vocational education

17-19  
**JUL**  
2024

Quarry NZ  
Conference (panel  
participation)

10-12  
**JUL**  
2024

NCVER (NO FRILLS)  
Conference in Perth,  
Australia (Tui Tuia,  
Workforce Journey  
Indicators presentation)

4  
**JUL**  
2024

Tūhura: Research  
Insights, Future  
Innovations hui in  
Auckland, New Zealand

29  
**MAY**  
2024

ConCOVE webinar:  
Discover Workforce  
Journey Indicators  
dashboard

17-18  
**SEP**  
2024

ITENZ Conference: Te Pae Āpōpō,  
Building Futures – Transformation,  
Quality, and Sustainability in Vocational  
and Tertiary Education (ConCOVE  
Tūhura project update presentation)

23  
**OCT**  
2024

ConCOVE webinar:  
Training advisors and  
driving workforce  
success

3-4  
**OCT**  
2024

AVETRA conference in  
Sydney, Australia (Degree-  
level Apprenticeships, Tui  
Tuia and UNESCO-UNEVOC  
BILT presentations)

14-15  
**OCT**  
2024

BILT Africa, Accra  
Ghana event  
(UNESCO-UNEVOC  
BILT presentations)

19  
**NOV**  
2024

ConCOVE/UNESCO-  
UNEVOC BILT webinar:  
The future of TVET in  
construction

15-16  
**APR**  
2025

WILNZ Conference: Degree-level  
apprenticeships in construction  
and infrastructure — a  
framework for transformative  
work-integrated learning

1-3  
**APR**  
2025

Workplace Inclusion  
Conference (Diversity  
Works event)

18-19  
**MAR**  
2025

Food & Fibre COVE Research  
& Insights Forum 2025

13  
**FEB**  
2025

Webinar: Eliminating  
sexual harassment +  
Fostering safer workplaces  
in construction

3  
**DEC**  
2024

ConCOVE Research to  
Action: Work-based  
trainer insights for  
apprenticeships

## OUR JOURNEY/TE ARA I WHĀIA (CONTINUED)

12  
MAR  
2025

ConCOVE workshop:  
Elevating the role of  
the training advisor

20  
MAR  
2025

Building our  
Digital Community  
Conference  
(DigiComm25)

1  
APR  
2025

Webinar: Good  
practice guides for  
skill standards

2  
APR  
2025

NZ Initiative Podcast:  
Building better pathways  
for vocational education in  
New Zealand

6  
MAY  
2025

Webinar: Policy setting for apprentices —  
German-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce  
Construction Forum (Bridging the skills gap:  
What New Zealand can learn from Germany's  
dual vocational training system)

30  
APR  
2025

UNESCO online learning  
lab: Flexible and accessible  
learning pathways —  
success stories from the  
construction sector

28-30  
APR  
2025

UNESCO BILT Bridging Conference  
in Malaysia (1. Policies for the digital  
transformation and integration of AI  
in TVET | 2. Industry partnerships for  
scalable and sustainable digital TVET)

21  
MAY  
2025

Master Builders Elevate  
Podcast (Building the  
workforce: smarter  
training, better retention,  
stronger trades)

11  
JUN  
2025

ConCOVE webinar:  
Funding vocational  
education —  
five practical  
recommendations

21- 27  
JUN  
2025

CIEE Conference, Singapore  
(Micro-credentials as the  
link between  
post-secondary and the  
workforce), funded by CIEE

9-11  
JUL  
2025

NCVER (NO FRILLS) Conference in the  
Gold Coast, Australia (AI-generated  
assessments: enhancing inclusivity and  
personalisation in VET assessment design)

31  
JUL  
2025

Webinar: Workforce  
Journey Indicators — live  
walk-through

23-25  
JUL  
2025

Civil Contractors  
New Zealand Conference

22  
JUL  
2025

ConCOVE webinar: Future-  
focused skills: growth  
opportunities for Māori-  
and Pasifika-owned business  
in greener construction

14  
JUL  
2025

Yarns with Andy podcast:  
Recording vocational  
education



## OUR JOURNEY/TE ARA I WHĀIA (CONTINUED)

6-7  
**AUG**  
2025

Building Nations  
Conference

11-12  
**SEP**  
2025

Constructive: Construction  
Industry Forum

16-17  
**SEP**  
2025

ITENZ Conference: keynote  
and breakout session on  
kaiaiko tools

7  
**OCT**  
2025

Webinar: Bystander  
Guidelines (Small actions,  
big impact: eliminating  
sexual harassment in  
construction)

15  
**OCT**  
2025

Building Legends workshops  
(Auckland): Managing teams  
in complex times

5  
**NOV**  
2025

Activation Lab,  
in Wellington,  
New Zealand

31 OCT  
- 2 NOV  
2025

Constructive: Construction  
Industry Forum

23  
**OCT**  
2025

Webinar: AI-Generated  
assessments – transforming  
VET for diverse learners

22  
**OCT**  
2025

Activation Lab  
in Auckland,  
New Zealand

21  
**OCT**  
2025

Learning Connector  
Forum (online)

6  
**NOV**  
2025

Webinar: Degree-level  
apprenticeships – breaking  
barriers to professional  
careers

12  
**NOV**  
2025

Activation Lab  
in Christchurch,  
New Zealand

17-18  
**NOV**  
2025

NZ Vocational Education  
and Training Research  
Forum

28  
**NOV**  
2025

Te Uru Tāngata Annual  
Meeting Bystander  
presentation

17  
**DEC**  
2025

ConCOVE closes

12  
**DEC**  
2025

ConCOVE final Board  
meeting and poroporoaki



## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS/HE KUPU MAI I NGĀ HEAMANA

As ConCOVE reaches the end of its five-year journey, we reflect on what has been achieved, what we have learnt, and where the sector goes next. From the outset, ConCOVE's purpose was clear: to bring together industry, iwi, training providers, and communities to co-create solutions that reshape how Aotearoa prepares people for careers in construction and infrastructure, particularly for Māori, Pacific peoples, and women.

While the organisation will close this year, its impact will endure. The tools, frameworks, and research developed through ConCOVE are already being used in a wide variety of settings across New Zealand.

As we bring our work to a close, we take pride in having met all of the Tertiary Education Commission's deliverables while remaining under budget.

### Key achievements

We are proud of all our achievements. Beyond the number of research reports, events, and webinars, the real success lies in the difference our work is making in the real world.

For learners, we worked with industry to address long-term challenges, such as introducing degree-level apprenticeships to ensure equitable access to fields like architectural design, quantity surveying, and construction management. This is a game changer, boosting participation, enabling upskilling, and driving faster growth. Recommendations like the 'Effective Model of Support for Māori Level-4 Carpentry Apprentices' show how culturally grounded approaches can shorten qualification timeframes and lift achievement rates. This work has also informed practical toolkits and policy recommendations such as the needs-based support/pastoral care artefact for trainers and employers.

For employers, the On-Site Upstanders project provides tools to reduce harassment and build safer worksites. Toolkits to help employers become better leaders and educators are being adopted by industry associations like New Zealand Certified Builders. Reports such as 'Pathways to successful SMEs' shed light on the journey from tradesperson to business owner, and are now informing Industry Skills Boards. Research into women's experiences in construction and infrastructure is creating an evidence base to drive lasting cultural change.

For the wider sector, we reviewed workplace training and work-integrated learning funding, offering recommendations to government and industry to better align investment with real needs. We also supported advisors and employers to strengthen work-based learning. Organisations such as BCITO, Connexis, and Competenz have adopted practices informed by

our research, while polytechnics have been supported to onboard new kaiako. The Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard and the ConstrucTrend survey are providing valuable workforce data, now carried forward by the Construction Growth Foundation.

Technology has also played a key role. Our AI-generated assessment project could reduce time to market, improve consistency and personalise learning. Augmented Reality in welding shows how digital tools can cut costs, improve safety, and speed up skill development.

All resources will remain publicly available on the Manukau Institute of Technology website and findings have been shared with the incoming Industry Skills Boards.

### Acknowledgements

We acknowledge the dedication of the ConCOVE team, past and present, led by Executive Director Katherine Hall.

We also thank our host MIT, advisory groups, our Board, members, industry leaders, iwi partners, providers, and associations who worked alongside us. Whether sharing data, testing ideas, or challenging us to think differently, you have been critical to our success.

### A call to action

As we look ahead, we are confident our legacy is strong. We leave the sector with one final challenge: pick up what has been started, make it your own, and move forward with confidence. Embed the tools. Apply the frameworks. Adapt the case studies. Use the evidence not just to reflect, but to act.

Together, you can create a sector that is more resilient, inclusive, innovative, and ready to meet the challenges of the future.

Graham Burke

**Co-Chair (Industry)**

Phil Hokianga

*No Rongowhakaata oku Iwi*

**Co-Chair (Māori)**



From L to R: Simon Bilton, George Hollinsworth, Jodhi Warwick-Ponga, Graham Burke, Prof. Martin Carroll, and Phil Hokianga.

## REFLECTIONS ON CONCOVE'S BEGINNINGS

Five years ago, the ConCOVE consortium presented its proposal to the Tertiary Education Commission in Wellington — a five-year plan shaped by a small but determined team. While the interview process was challenging, the consortium's commitment to centring Māori, Pacific peoples, and wāhine/women ultimately resonated. What began as a bold idea has since grown into a sector-wide collaboration that has delivered meaningful outcomes across industry, education, and communities.





## DIRECTOR STATEMENT/HE KUPU NĀ NGĀ KAIWHAKAHAERE

Tēnā koutou katoa,

It's a bittersweet feeling as we reflect on the past five years of ConCOVE. We look back with pride at what we've achieved in a relatively short period of time, at the same time accepting that this chapter is coming to an end.

We set out with ambition, and despite the challenges, we delivered.

Over five years of ConCOVE, we have strengthened capability in the sector through training, webinars, and partnerships. We have grown our subscriber base by 314 per cent, held 14 events, hosted 14 webinars, kicked off 38 research projects, and fostered and nurtured hundreds of significant stakeholder relationships.

We established five focused workstreams which we were able to develop from gathering and understanding more than 130 research insights, to drive tangible change for our sector and the people who work within it.

We were successful in achieving all this, and more, despite the upheavals caused by COVID-19, funding constraints, changing governments, and the ongoing reforms of vocational education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Together, we've made huge in-roads in shaping the landscape for vocational education in the construction and infrastructure sectors, and this report speaks to that.

### Leaving a legacy

2025 marked the final year of operations as ConCOVE. We've had a year to translate all the research knowledge within our kete into a legacy that leaves a tangible, lasting impact on vocational education and wider workforce development in the construction and infrastructure sectors.

Our focus in 2025 has been on building on and embedding the outputs from research funded over the past five years into ongoing initiatives and tools that the vocational education and construction and infrastructure sectors can take away and lead with.

We believe the work we have done has laid some solid foundations for future innovations in vocational education, construction and infrastructure, and for the development of our the construction and infrastructure sectors' workforce in Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Board for their support over the past five years. We are also grateful for the continued support of our industry partners, workforce development councils, providers and associations, and our Advisory Groups for their ongoing contributions.

We have huge gratitude for the entire team at ConCOVE – their dedication has been second to none, particularly as we came to draw the curtain on our final year as ConCOVE.

We are heartened by the response from the sector to support the continuation of the legacy we have established and we look forward to seeing the sector reap the benefits of this work.

My big hope is that the work we have done over the past five years will endure and continue to influence policy, education, and workforce practice in the construction and infrastructure sectors.

Waiho i te toipoto, kaua i te toiroa: Let us keep close together, not wide apart.

Ngā mihi,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Hall'.

**Katherine Hall**  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George Makapatama'.

**George Makapatama**  
Deputy Director





# CONNECT/ WHAKAWHANANGATANGA





## CONNECT/WHAKAWHANAUNGATANGA

2022-2025 highlights



from 2022  
2025 subscriber numbers  
increased from 318 to 1,318



**52%** of members are  
from industry



**30%** of members are  
in vocational  
education and  
training



**445** members in total



**1,233**

subscribers have  
attended ConCOVE  
events in the past,  
virtually, or in-person



**14** webinars



**14** in-person events

**38**

projects  
finished

**89%**

of stakeholders from tertiary training providers, WDCs,  
and government agencies said ConCOVE projects have led  
to changes or prompted discussions.

**In 2025, ConCOVE continued its focus on connecting its vision and project outcomes with active stakeholder engagement, via key events.**

We presented 38 project outcomes and key strategies at various online and in-person events, to a diverse range of key regional and national stakeholders, government bodies, and vocational education providers.

We've continued to see growth in our subscriber base, a clear indication of need for the work we do.

We hope the next phase of vocational education within the sector builds on these evidence-based, innovative, and future-focused strategies to further enhance education outcomes.

## EVENT WRAP-UPS

‘Tūhura: Te Māramatanga ki ngā Tukanga  
– Insights to Actions’ annual event (20–21 Aug 2025)

- 120 attendees
- 18 projects presented

### Project presentations

- Funding discussion paper
- Cook Brothers Construction case study
- Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard
- ConstrucTrend
- Future-focused skills for Māori- and Pasifika-owned businesses
- The Wai Project in Wellington
- Degree-level Apprenticeship (DLA) comparative pilot
- Vocational pathway in schools
- AI-generated assessment
- From tradies to business owners
- Policy settings for apprentices
- Needs-based support
- Tui Tuia
- UNESCO BILT

Webinar	Dates	Registrations	Attendees
He Ruku Hohonu/A more effective model of support for Māori Level 4 Carpentry apprentices	March 2024	139	69
Discover Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard	May 2024	170	138
The potential of micro-credentials in vocational education	September 2024	255	183
Driving workforce success – solution for apprenticeships	October 2024	298	128
The future of TVET in construction: digitalisation, greening, and migration	November 2024	126	63
Research to action: work-based trainer insights for apprenticeship	December 2024	149	85
Eliminating sexual harassment + Fostering safer workplaces in construction	February 2025	169	93
Good practice guides for skill standards	April 2025	525	315
Strengthening support for apprenticeships: issues and opportunities	May 2025	263	154
Funding vocational education: five practical recommendations	June 2025	181	108
Amotai, ConCOVE, and Poutama Trust webinar: Future-focused skills	July 2025	214	130
Bystander Guidelines: small actions, big impact — eliminating sexual harassment in construction	October 2025	96	45
AI-generated assessments: transforming VET for diverse learners	October 2025	351	241
Degree-level apprenticeships: breaking barriers to professional careers	November 2025	162	90





















## BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: FUTURE-FOCUSED CONCOVE RESEARCH KEY TO DEVELOPING IWI-LED PROJECT WAI



**Hera Whaanga**  
*Project Manager | Project Wai*  
*– Infrastructure Training Facility of Excellence*

**Project Wai, led by Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira, is about addressing key water infrastructure issues in the Wellington region.**

Hera Whaanga, Project Manager of Project Wai, says it's a critical piece of work to safeguard the future of the region's water infrastructure and the spiritual connection the Iwi have to the region's natural environment.

"We're living in a time of environmental urgency – failing pipes means we lose one third

of our drinking water, sewage leaks pollute our harbour, iwi whakapapa to, and have deep spiritual connection with, the harbour, so to see it impacted in this way hurts our Iwi deeply," says Hera.

The team are set on establishing a regional infrastructure training facility of excellence that will help address those very issues.

"We're not just tweaking an old antiquated system that is failing to address the problems – it's a full system reset that adequately embeds Mātauranga Māori into the framework, enabling skilled kaitiaki to come out to this facility and then have the skills and capabilities to work in the wider water infrastructure sector.

"If done well, we believe our approach has the potential to be applied nationally, even internationally."

The value of ConCOVE-led research essentially means the Project Wai team don't have to conduct the research themselves.

"It means we're able to forge ahead into the development phase quickly," says Hera.

"We don't have to figure out the 'how' by ourselves – we can pick out insights and recommendations from ConCOVE's research and apply it in practice, now."

Hera explains there are multiple pieces of ConCOVE research which have proved useful most useful in establishing the framework for Project Wai.

**These include:**

- The 'VET in schools' project which looked at the current state of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools with the goal of producing a compelling business case for change. The outputs have included a systems gap analysis and a business case to advance a consistent and equitable model for VET in schools for Year 12 and 13 students in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- The Degree-level Apprenticeship (DLA) comparative pilot which looks to contribute to the mainstream adoption of degree-level apprenticeships within the tertiary education system by developing frameworks to enable wider uptake of a flexible and responsive delivery mechanism for degree-level apprenticeships aligned with industry needs.
- The framework for Māori in high-skill roles – a project which looked at building an understanding of skills shortages experienced by Māori firms and building a framework to support Māori into high-skill roles in the sector.
- ConCOVE's work in appreciating and supporting neurodiversity in VET.

Project Wai is currently in the concept design phase – a detailed proposal has been developed to seek out investment, a dedicated project team has been set up, and the team are exploring investment partnerships.

"We've partnered with more than 30 organisations to build the concept design – community, government, local councils, schools, you name it," says Hera.

"It's been a real collaborative effort, while remaining iwi-led."

ConCOVE's support has been integral to getting to where they are today,

"The team at ConCOVE has actively engaged with us – they've been genuinely willing to help us with our kaupapa," says Hera.

The team had the opportunity to travel to Auckland and sit down with the whole ConCOVE team to get firsthand insight into ConCOVE's research.

"It was really hard to pick out just a few pieces of research that we wanted to adapt for Project Wai – they are all hugely relevant to our needs.

"To single one out as an example, we were hugely grateful for the portion of funding we received from ConCOVE for 'VET in schools' – our job is to re-package this now so that it can be embedded into Project Wai to shape our vocational education training pathway."

Some of the rūnanga team members were able to travel to Germany with ConCOVE and learn about their VET system.

"That was a hugely rewarding experience – it showed us that what we want to achieve, can be achieved with the right support and evidence-based outcomes to back us and achieve real systems change."

ConCOVE has been actively involved from the very beginnings of Project Wai, with representatives attending every workshop held by the Project Wai team. Executive Director Katherine Hall is also part of the project steering group and presented at the first workshop.

"That really helped set the tone for the project," says Hera.

"Katherine's presentation really knuckled down on the importance of innovative thinking, Hera credits the people first approach to ConCOVE's work as having been a real cornerstone of their partnership.

"When you're engaging with us, and with ConCOVE, it's not about dollar signs – it's about people, that's the beauty of the project and our partnership with ConCOVE.

"Everything ConCOVE does is about adapting it to the stakeholder – they have a real innovative approach that is future-focused, not now-focused," says Hera.





# ALIGN/WHAKAHANGAI



## ALIGN/WHAKAHĀNGAI

**We established our project fund in October 2022. From there, we invited the sectors to submit projects that addressed the most pressing issues in vocational education and training within construction and infrastructure.**

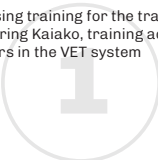









With more than 30 projects coming through from industry, ConCOVE evolved into a project delivery phase from 2023 to 2025.

Importantly, every ConCOVE project has been developed with a systems-change lens, aiming to influence the future of the vocational education system in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Throughout, we have been focused on ensuring that our research outputs are embedded in the system, driving better outcomes for industry, learners, and providers.





WORKSTREAM SUMMARY LEADS AND BUDGET		WHAT WE WILL DO: Produce outputs   Share information   Engage and collaborate		ARTEFACTS AND TAONGA for the VET system and sectors
Trainers	Formalising training for the trainers, empowering Kaiako, training advisors, and employers in the VET system 	<b>Tui Tuia</b> > Produce output: sector-wide training advisor job description > Engage and collaborate: create Kaiako onboarding toolkit	> Produce output: develop and launch National Competency Framework for training advisors > Share information: create and share case studies of employer good practice	+ Job description for training advisors + Good practice guidelines for employers as trainers (already completed) + Onboarding toolkit for Kaiako + National competency framework for training advisors
	Supporting employers: sharing information and insights with SMEs about leadership and business growth, and effective people practices 	<b>Leadership capability development</b> > Share information: from research on pathways to successful SMEs > Collate insights and share information: multiple completed research projects with leadership insights	<b>Effective employer people practices for apprentices and learners</b> > Collate insights and share information: multiple projects about effective employer practices > Produce output: toolkit on effective employer people practices	+ Recommendations for pathways to successful SMEs + Package of research on leadership insights + Package of research on effective people practices + Toolkit on effective people practices
Employers	Supporting learner career progression 	<b>Future-proofing skills needs through qualification system innovation</b> > Produce output: background paper for a future-focused standards system > Engage and collaborate: Waihangā Ara Rau on carpentry qualification design + Recognition of prior learning project in industry > Produce output: complete AI-generated assessment project > Share information: about all of the above	<b>Entry and career progression:</b> > Share information: package VET in schools research, share with Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira > Engage and collaborate: support the Wai Project run by Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira, and provide advice and design on piloting the Wai Project > Produce output: toolkit for industry to engage with schools	+ Background paper on future-focused standards system + Package of research on VET in schools + Toolkit for industry-school engagement + Wai Project. New learning approach for the water sector (note this is led by Ngāti Toa with ConCOVE support)
	Supporting collaboration and innovation in the construction and infrastructure sectors – sharing data, evidence, and insights 	<b>Continuous informed future decision making</b> <b>Workforce Journey Indicators project</b> > Produce output: complete phase 2, update data tool > Share information: share final tool with wider sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data	<b>ConstrucTrend project</b> > Produce output: ConstrucTrend survey and report > Share information: communication of results with sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data (urgent)	+ ConstrucTrend Longitudinal Survey Report (survey to be repeated by future owner) + Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard (to be updated with refreshed data by future owner)
Learners	Supporting collaboration and innovation in the construction and infrastructure sectors – sharing data, evidence, and insights 	<b>Continuous informed future decision making</b> <b>Workforce Journey Indicators project</b> > Produce output: complete phase 2, update data tool > Share information: share final tool with wider sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data	<b>ConstrucTrend project</b> > Produce output: ConstrucTrend survey and report > Share information: communication of results with sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data (urgent)	+ ConstrucTrend Longitudinal Survey Report (survey to be repeated by future owner) + Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard (to be updated with refreshed data by future owner)
	Supporting collaboration and innovation in the construction and infrastructure sectors – sharing data, evidence, and insights 	<b>Continuous informed future decision making</b> <b>Workforce Journey Indicators project</b> > Produce output: complete phase 2, update data tool > Share information: share final tool with wider sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data	<b>ConstrucTrend project</b> > Produce output: ConstrucTrend survey and report > Share information: communication of results with sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data (urgent)	+ ConstrucTrend Longitudinal Survey Report (survey to be repeated by future owner) + Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard (to be updated with refreshed data by future owner)
Data backbone	Supporting collaboration and innovation in the construction and infrastructure sectors – sharing data, evidence, and insights 	<b>Continuous informed future decision making</b> <b>Workforce Journey Indicators project</b> > Produce output: complete phase 2, update data tool > Share information: share final tool with wider sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data	<b>ConstrucTrend project</b> > Produce output: ConstrucTrend survey and report > Share information: communication of results with sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data (urgent)	+ ConstrucTrend Longitudinal Survey Report (survey to be repeated by future owner) + Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard (to be updated with refreshed data by future owner)
	Supporting collaboration and innovation in the construction and infrastructure sectors – sharing data, evidence, and insights 	<b>Continuous informed future decision making</b> <b>Workforce Journey Indicators project</b> > Produce output: complete phase 2, update data tool > Share information: share final tool with wider sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data	<b>ConstrucTrend project</b> > Produce output: ConstrucTrend survey and report > Share information: communication of results with sector > Find future owner, someone who will continue to update data (urgent)	+ ConstrucTrend Longitudinal Survey Report (survey to be repeated by future owner) + Workforce Journey Indicators dashboard (to be updated with refreshed data by future owner)
Enabling projects	Projects to support other workstreams. 	<b>A. Digital and enabling technologies for a future-ready workforce</b> > Produce output: research into future workforce skill needs for Māori and Pasifika-owned businesses (nearly complete) > Engage and collaborate: work with Amotai and Poutama Trust to share the research output above > Collate insights and share information: multiple completed research projects with digital insights	<b>B. Needs-based support</b> Engage and collaborate: workshop with Waihangā Ara Rau and MBIE to co-design future research to be led by Waihangā Ara Rau or MBIE on needs-based support, support delivery (the workshop will use and build on previous research outputs)	+ Research paper on future workforce skill needs for Māori- and Pasifika -owned businesses + Guidance on good practice needs-based support (note, ConCOVE is supporting this, not leading it)
	Projects to support other workstreams. 	<b>C. Creating workplaces where all genders thrive – Te Maru o Hine</b> > Engage and collaborate: pilot tools in education settings with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa > Produce outputs: practical resources and guidance for tane allyship	<b>D. Creating workplaces where all genders thrive – Tauiri</b> > Engage and collaborate: pilot tools in industry settings with Mates in Construction and Vertical Horizonz > Produce outputs: practical resources and guidance for upstanders	+ Practical resources and guidance for education and industry to support all genders to thrive

# KEY INSIGHTS FROM STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS

Our latest 2025 stakeholder survey results show that ConCOVE has performed strongly against all TEC measures. Key highlights we’re especially proud of include:

- **Awareness and engagement are at their highest levels since the survey began.** Nearly 80% of stakeholders indicated that they have seen or are well aware of the work ConCOVE is doing.
- **This awareness is translating into action.** Out of the 99 stakeholders who are aware of at least one ConCOVE project, more than two thirds (72%) reported that at least one has led to changes or discussions within their organisation.
- **Stakeholders are increasingly recognising ConCOVE’s influence on sector-wide collaboration:** an increase in satisfaction from 65%-84% to 81%-89%.
- **Stakeholder satisfaction with ConCOVE’s communication improved,** with 75% finding the information depth and detail just about right or enough, up from 58% in 2023.
- **ConCOVE continues to contribute towards equity in vocational education,** with the overwhelming majority reporting ConCOVE’s work benefits them:
  - 98% of female respondents agree ConCOVE’s work benefits women, up from 94%.
  - 94% of Māori respondents agree, up from 91%.
  - 88% of Pacific people agree, a significant rise from 77%.

*“ConCOVE has been a treasure trove of strategic and operational information in high-impact areas of construction and infrastructure.”*

*“Your work allows industry to access the most relevant, timely information and distil it to implement change, uplift, and impact with much greater efficiency.”*

72%

**Influence:**

Out of the 99 stakeholders aware of at least one ConCOVE activity, more than two thirds (72%) have seen at least one project that led to changes or prompted discussion within their organisations.

**Focus areas for the future:**

Stakeholders want to see ConCOVE’s research and models actively used across the vocational system.

**Three key themes:**

**1. Keep outputs visible and accessible**

Respondents called for open access to ConCOVE’s website, reports, and data so that others can continue to build on its work.

*“Keep the website live and hand on all the IP to someone who will genuinely do something with it.”*

**2. Embed work into delivery**

Stakeholders stressed that the next phase must focus on practice, not new research. They see the biggest levers for change sitting with training providers, employers, and policy agencies responsible for implementation.

*“Most of the levers for change are not sitting with ConCOVE — the biggest changes need to happen in the delivery space.”*

**3. Preserve the kaupapa**

Many expressed concerns around losing the collaboration and system coordination ConCOVE established.

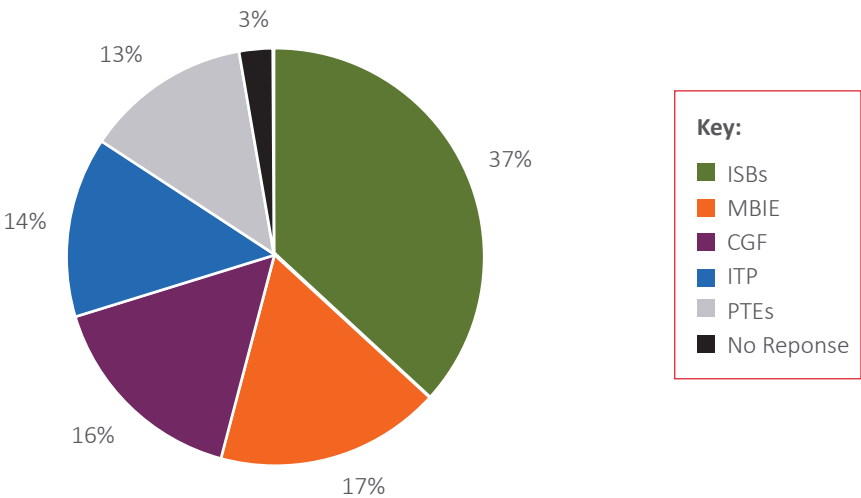
*“New Zealand needs the COVEs — the mandate, kaupapa, and outputs need to continue.”*

*“This work must not be lost. It’s all too easy for research like this to end up filed away and not finding its way into business-as-usual processes.”*

**Carrying the work forward**

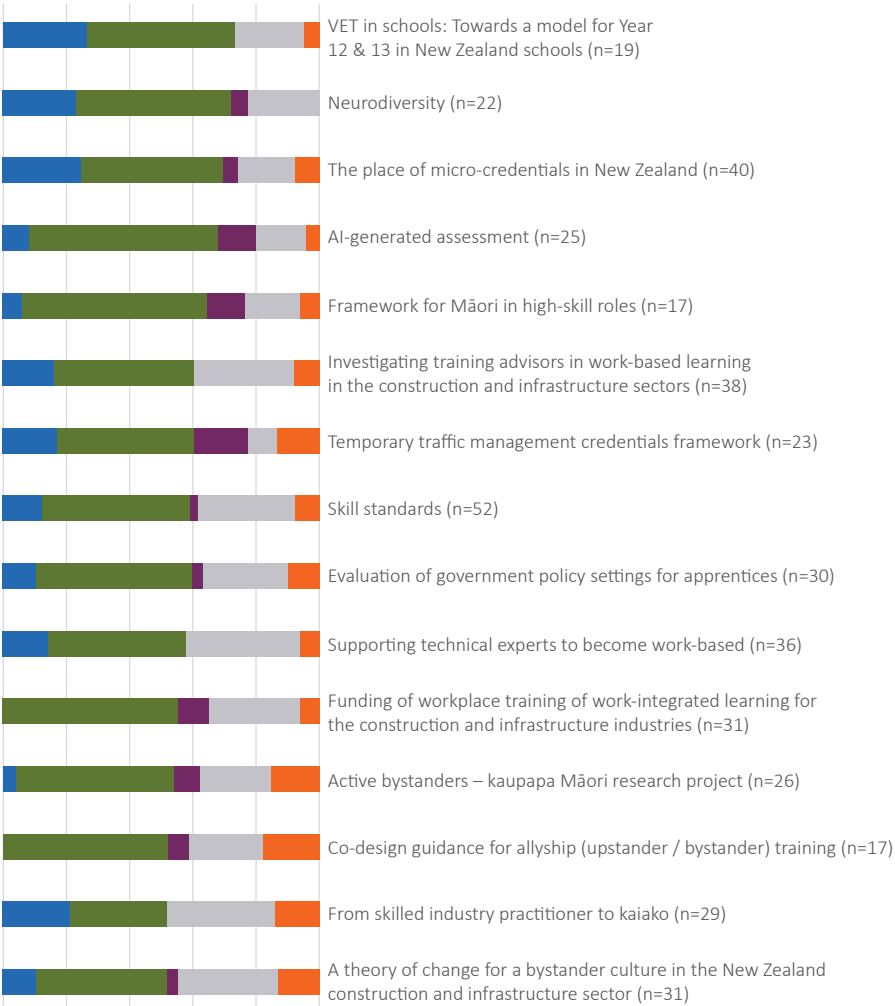
As ConCOVE nears the end of its funding, stakeholders emphasised that its work must not stop with the organisation itself. The 2025 survey results show strong agreement that ConCOVE’s research, projects, and ways of working should continue through established sector institutions.

Stakeholders perspectives on ConCOVE’s resources, solutions, and influence on collaboration and sharing (n=101 in 2024, n=93 in 2025)



*“A wider government lens is required. Government departments come and go and there is review needed of these. You’re also missing the role of industry bodies. The Tertiary Education Commission has the ability to incentivise collaborative and innovative models of funding.”*

# KEY INSIGHTS FROM STAKEHOLDER SURVEYS (CONTINUED)



## ConCOVE project influence on stakeholders \*(2025 only, sample size differs by project)

### Key:

- The project has led to changes

Know about it but it has no relevance

The project has prompted discussions
- Know about it and had prompted thinking

Aware but don't know much

“Most of the levers for change are not sitting with ConCOVE. The biggest changes need to happen in the delivery space. Outputs must be delivered to the sectors and used as examples of good practice and efficiencies.”





## PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF RESEARCH AND PROJECT OUTPUTS



**Mark Cartwright**

*Deputy Executive Director Industry Training and Innovation  
Otago Polytechnic*

**As Deputy Executive Director Industry Training and Innovation at Otago Polytechnic, Mark Cartwright is grateful for the plethora of tangible outcomes that has emerged from ConCOVE's treasure trove of research – and that people are at the heart of it.**

The vast array of research outputs from ConCOVE has allowed Otago Polytechnic to evolve its structure to be as efficient as possible in the industry training space, ensuring it has the right people in the right roles, so that growth in those sectors is maximised.

"ConCOVE's training advisor competency framework for example, has been really handy for mapping out the role of the training advisor and how they engage with industry," says Mark.

"It's allowed me to show how a training advisor role would add value, create the position within our organisation, develop the position descriptor, and utilise that sort of role to service our learner and employer needs."

The development of provider-based VET kaiako development pathways is another useful project output. This was the result of a dedicated ConCOVE project to analyse the current kaiako training and support to identify effective practices in classroom-based tertiary education.

"It's provided a lot of the information to inform our processes in relation to onboarding kaiako into Otago Polytechnic from the industry.

"All in all, we've been able to shine a spotlight in areas we may not be doing so well in, how we can tweak processes, and adapt processes to make the onboarding journey as successful as possible."

### Measuring impact

"We've got a framework to be able to measure how successfully these research outputs have been integrated into our programmes – we can look at the growth of our programmes for example, and how well our programmes operate after changes have been implemented.

"With the kaiako training side of things, we can measure success through looking at staff retention and conducting workplace engagement surveys for example."

“It’s tangible project outputs like these that are helping Otago Polytechnic raise skills and capability across the infrastructure and construction sectors.

#### **People first**

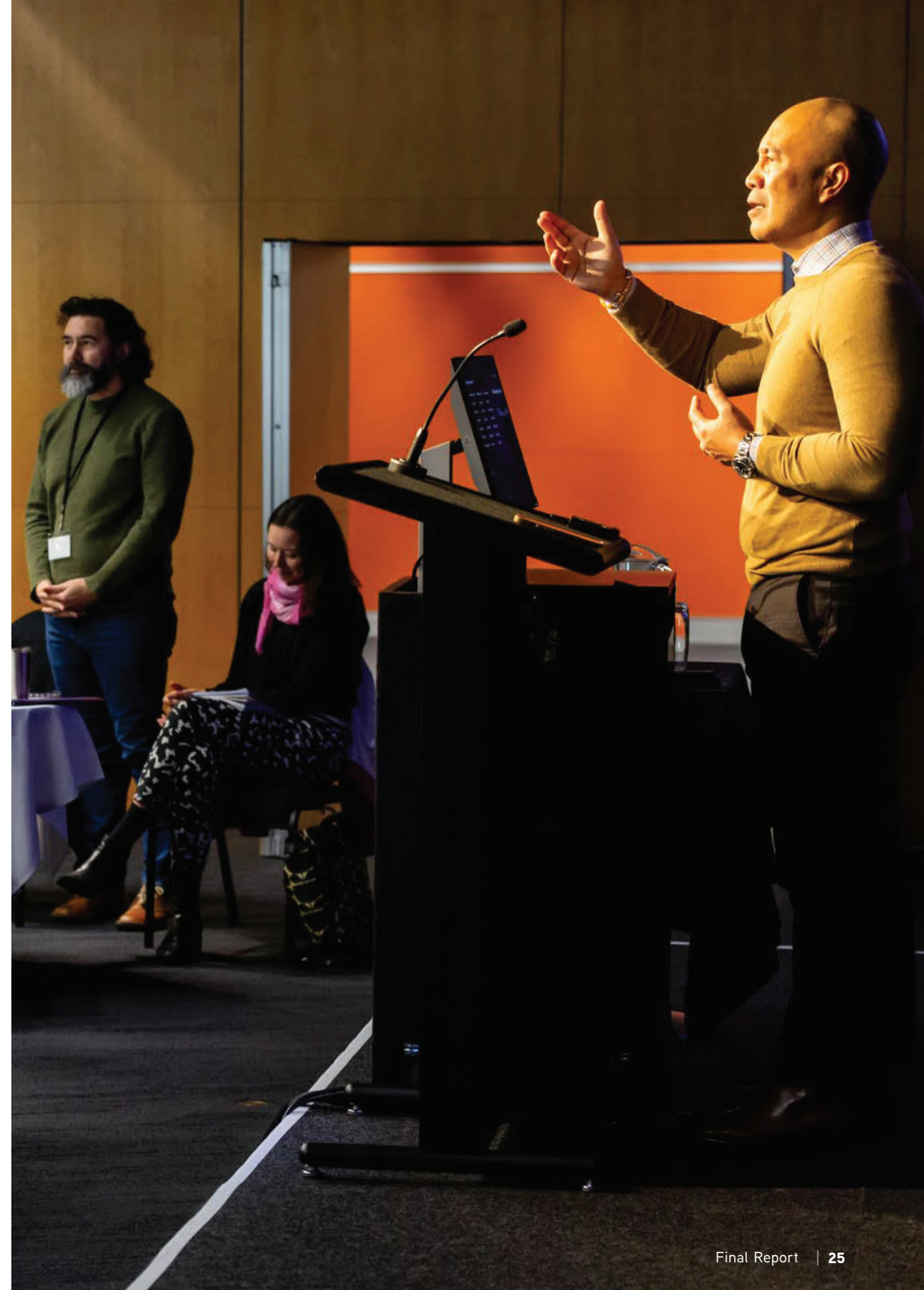
Otago Polytechnic is a people-focused organisation, and this focus aligns clearly with ConCOVE’s research.

“Upskilling and helping people to achieve success is what we’re all about, and ConCOVE’s research has people at the heart of it,” says Mark.

Mark notes that what makes ConCOVE unique is the fact that they’re an organisation dedicated and focused on improving educational outcomes within the infrastructure and construction sectors, to benefit the people who are part of it.

“We haven’t had that sort of focus on those sectors from a vocational education training perspective before – there was very much a need for it, and there still is a need for it.”

“On a wider scale, it’s helped break down barriers between industry training organisations – we’re all working toward a common goal to improve vocational education training in the sector.”





CONCOVE  
TŪHURU

The Next Generation Of Construction  
& Infrastructure Vocational Education

Reimagining | Align | Connect

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# REIMAGINE/ RANGAHAU





## REIMAGINE/RANGAHAU

ConCOVE's vision and mission statement support innovation and excellence in vocational education and training within the construction and infrastructure sectors. Innovation and excellence require an understanding of best practices through a variety of forms.

At ConCOVE, we're interested in practical research projects that benefit learners, employers, and industry. Here are all our ConCOVE projects to date.

Approved projects, with further detail, can be found at [www.manukau.ac.nz/concove](http://www.manukau.ac.nz/concove)



### Funding workplace training and work-integrated learning for the construction and infrastructure industries

A project to explore how funding and incentive structures for vocational education and training could be optimised to better meet the needs of the construction and infrastructure sector.



### A case study: augmented reality in welding training

A case study to share the story of a local group apprenticeship organisation, ATNZ, in using augmented reality (AR) in its welding apprenticeship programme. ATNZ has purchased six welding simulators to train apprentices in welding, with very successful results. AR is complementary to the role of the trainers and this case study explores the role of trainers in the context of virtual reality delivery.



### Future workforce skills for Māori- and Pasifika-owned businesses in construction

An industry analysis to point to and select a small number of innovative, future-proofed and future-focused green construction/infrastructure technology and/or skills that have well-evidenced success in overseas markets, whether widely scaled or solidly niche, or which are innovating locally in Aotearoa but lag behind or have not scaled here.



### Active bystanders: Te Maru o Hine — a kaupapa Māori theory of change for addressing sexual harassment against wāhine through tāne allyship

A report outlining a Kaupapa Māori Theory of Change to empower bystanders to challenge sexual harassment in construction and infrastructure. Grounded in the sacredness and mana of wāhine as descendants of Hinetitama, it uses a Māori worldview to shift norms, strengthen accountability and build safer, more supportive workplaces. It also fills key gaps in evidence on prevention and bystander action from a te ao Māori perspective.



### A theory of change for a bystander culture in the New Zealand construction and infrastructure sector

A project to facilitate a co-designed Theory of Change (TOC) to underpin the development of a programme of work focused on bystander intervention in the construction and infrastructure sectors.



### Degree-level Apprenticeship (DLA) comparative pilot

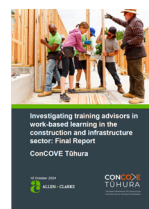
A project to contribute to the mainstream adoption of degree-level apprenticeships within the tertiary education system by developing frameworks to enable wider uptake of a flexible and responsive delivery mechanism for degree-level apprenticeships aligned with industry needs.



### Tui Tuia Trilogy:

#### Supporting technical experts to become work-based trainers

A project to identify key capabilities and good practices that support effective work-based training. It will lead to the development and trial of tools and resources that support work-based trainers to improve their practice.



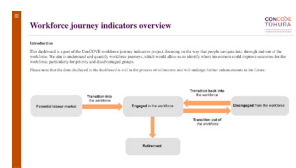
### Investigating training advisors in work-based learning in the construction and infrastructure sectors

Focused on construction and infrastructure, this project aims to enhance vocational education in New Zealand, by analysing systemic forces for workforce development alongside future trainer considerations.



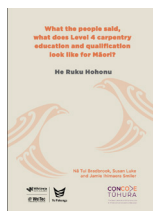
### Industry skilled professional to kaiako

A project to explore and define the common elements of institution-based VET kaiako (IBVK) quality; identify the current requirements for IBVK, both initial and ongoing, and how these are being met; explore how effectively current development pathways support the development of IBVKs, given quality principles and stakeholder perspectives.



### Workforce Journey Indicators data – Phase 1 and 2

A data project to understand how people navigate into, through and out of the construction and infrastructure workforce.



### A more effective model of support for Māori Level 4 Carpentry apprentices — reducing the time it takes to get qualified

A project to examine the current support model for ākonga Māori who are completing a Level 4 qualification in Carpentry, to better understand how the model could be improved to be more effective.



### Framework for Māori in high-skill roles

A project to identify the current industry trends in terms of what the industry urgently needs and particular skills, and to develop a framework for supporting more Māori into high-skill roles in the industry.



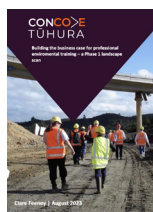
### The New Zealand quarrying industry's possible futures toward 2030

A report to include a suite of recommendations and associated strategies to future-proof the New Zealand quarrying industry. These recommendations will be used to support vocational training development for the quarrying industry.



### Temporary Traffic Management (TTM) credentials framework

A project to develop a comprehensive understanding of international and national best practices in TTM and other vocational training systems; identify effective strategies, structures, and components that can be adapted to the New Zealand context, focusing on priority groups such as Māori, Pacific peoples, and women; and establish a solid knowledge base for the TTM Credentials Framework Governance Group, guiding the development of the future TTM credentials framework in relation to the priority groups.



### Environmental competency training – civil focus

Phase 1 will include a landscape scan of the current and upcoming legislations for the government's environmental goals, to establish what knowledge and skills are required by various roles, to inform training. This phase serves as a scoping exercise for the business case.



### Strengthening support for apprenticeships – issues and opportunities

An analysis commissioned to constructively contribute to policy formulation aimed at improving labour market outcomes for the sector. The analysis focuses primarily on government-funded apprenticeship support programmes as a key intervention to ensure workforce quantity and quality.



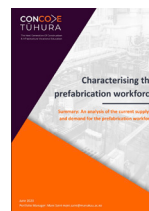
### Women's experiences working in construction and infrastructure

A project which proposes to quantify the extent and impact of discrimination and harassment for women working in Construction and Infrastructure to inform a VET solution to reduce and eliminate these behaviours over time. While the problem is well-recognised anecdotally, there has been no attempt to measure and define it. It is the first data-driven project in Aotearoa to quantify and describe the actual situation.



### BRANZ zero-carbon project

A systems gap analysis to recommend changes to enable Degree-level Apprenticeships (DLA) as a delivery mechanism in New Zealand.



### Offsite Manufacturing (OSM) workforce forecast

A project to explore alignment with other entities (such as the Construction Sector Accord, WAR, and HAR) that are also doing work in the OSM space; and further research into technology adoption in OSM in New Zealand, and what this will mean for the composition, size, and market share of the workforce.



### Implementing change in a sector dominated by small- to medium-sized enterprises

A project to understand what channels and methods, and the characteristics of communications, are required to effectively implement change, and how we can embed these in our projects and into vocational education, particularly work-based learning.



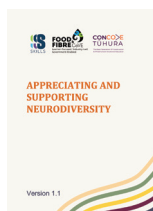
### Civil and heavy engineering construction: a requirement for a robust and reliable training pipeline

A report outlining the root causes of the issues with civil heavy machinery training, conceptual solutions analysis, and recommendations for how this issue can be addressed, including the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders to implement change.



### Skill standards

A project to develop good practice user guides for awareness and support in the transition from unit standards to skill standards.



## Neurodiversity: appreciating and supporting neurodiversity in VET

A research project which stems from the recognition of neurodiversity as an asset rather than a deficit, acknowledging the diverse ways individuals experience and interact with the world. With an estimated 10 per cent of New Zealand's population being neurodiverse, there is untapped potential to address the challenges they face in education and employment, particularly within key industries experiencing skill shortages.



## Where is the front door? An investigation into the workforce entry points within the Construction and Infrastructure sector

A project to scope and map the multiple entry points into the construction and infrastructure sectors, including interventions that support entry into the sector.



## VET in schools: towards a model for Years 12 and 13 in New Zealand schools

A project looking at the current state of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in schools with the goal of producing a compelling business case for change. The outputs will be a systems gap analysis and a business case to advance a consistent and equitable model for VET in schools for Years 12 and 13 students in New Zealand.



## A case study: Cook Brothers Apprenticeship Academy

A case study which examines the Cook Brothers' Construction Apprenticeship Academy through a series of interviews with current apprentices and Cook Brothers' staff, including carpenters, site managers, and senior executives. The case study also highlights the programme's key benefits and challenges and provides recommendations for the Construction industry and vocational education system to design and improve apprenticeship models across New Zealand.



## The place of micro-credentials in New Zealand

Micro-credentials and digital credentials are emerging as potential game changers in vocational education, especially in promoting lifelong learning, yet they remain relatively misunderstood both domestically and internationally. This issue affects a wide range of stakeholders, including learners seeking relevant and accessible professional development opportunities, employers striving to address skills shortages and foster workforce capabilities, educational institutions navigating the changing vocational education landscape, and government bodies responsible for policy development and regulation.



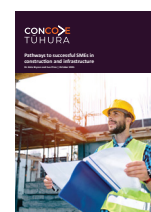
## AI-generated assessment

A project which seeks to revolutionise assessment design, moderation, and delivery using artificial intelligence to create high-quality, engaging, and personalised assessments that better meet the diverse needs of learners and industries while maintaining rigorous standards.



## ConCOVE and BCITO employer contributions to apprenticeship support report

Funded by BCITO and ConCOVE Tūhura, this research was undertaken to better understand and quantify the often-unseen contributions employers make to supporting apprentices, with the aim of ensuring these efforts are recognised in future policy and planning. The objective was to estimate the value of employer support — including time and direct financial contributions — across the construction sector, using a survey of 317 BCITO employers combined with publicly available data.



## Pathways to successful SMEs in construction and infrastructure

Research mapping pathways into business ownership to identify optimal timing and types of support for construction enterprise success. Small and medium-sized enterprises in construction and infrastructure face high failure rates. There was a need to understand the journey to business ownership, identify critical intervention points, and evaluate current support mechanisms including vocational education and industry programmes to enhance preparation and ongoing support to better prepare tradespeople for business.



## Apprenticeship toolkit for employers

A toolkit designed to help employers in the construction and infrastructure sectors make their apprenticeships more enjoyable, cost-effective, less risky — and therefore generate a sustainable return for their businesses faster. Applying the toolkit will enable employers to better engage, equip, and develop their apprentices, ultimately enabling businesses to realise a quicker return on their investment.



## Advancing pastoral care and needs-based support in the construction and infrastructure sector

A suite of four companion documents developed by ConCOVE Tūhura and Waihanga Ara Rau to address one of the most persistent challenges facing Aotearoa New Zealand's construction and infrastructure sector — sustaining a skilled, inclusive, and resilient workforce. The research identifies significant workforce gaps and highlights the critical role effective pastoral care and wraparound support play in improving worker wellbeing, retention, and productivity.





### ConstrucTrend: Vocational workforce survey

A vocational workforce survey which aims to identify skills gaps, training needs, and alignment issues within current qualifications and standards, while providing WDCs and education providers with relevant workforce insights. It is intended to improve the relevance of qualifications and standards across the three trades, support long-term vocational workforce planning, deliver a scalable survey framework for future use, and enhance the inclusion of Māori, Pacific peoples, and women in the resulting insights.



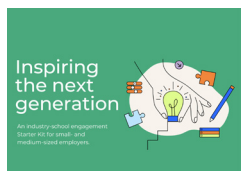
### VET training advisor capability and competency framework

A framework which gives the sector a shared view of the critical navigating role of training advisors. It sets out what “good” looks like, and how training advisors can grow over time, so that ākonga and employers get consistent, high-quality support. This framework was co-designed with providers and training advisors from across the sector, building on earlier research into work-based training support roles. It reflects real practice and real pressures and offers a practical way to lift the impact of training advisors on learner success, employer confidence, and workforce development.



### Provider-based kaiako onboarding toolkit

A toolkit which gives providers a structured way to design a strong, repeatable onboarding experience for new kaiako, focusing on the first phase of their journey and connecting onboarding with ongoing professional growth. Built with VET providers and informed by research on Kaiako development, the toolkit treats onboarding as an experience that can be designed, tested, and improved over time, supporting stronger kaiako retention, better learning experiences for ākonga, and closer links between industry knowledge and teaching practice.



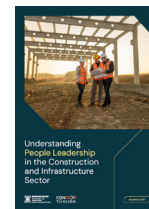
### Inspiring the next generation: an industry-school engagement starter kit for small- and medium-sized employers

A starter kit designed for small and medium employers which offers simple, practical guidance to help them connect with schools, engage with students, and build a future talent pipeline into vocational careers. Developed with ConCOVE Tūhura, ThinkPlace, and sector stakeholders, the Starter Kit brings together insight from educators, employers, and people who sit between both worlds. Employers can read the whole kit or go straight to the step that matches where they are now. For VET stakeholders and industry, it supports more consistent, high-quality school engagement, and helps young people see real pathways into trade and technical careers.



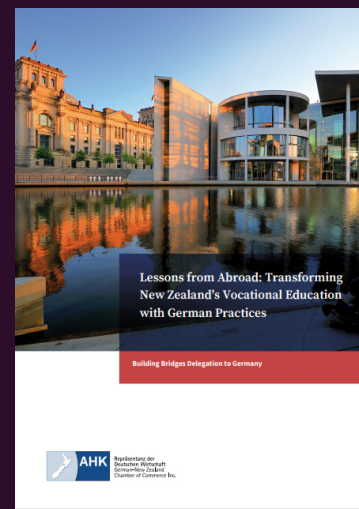
### Te Maru o Hine in action: I Stand with Her (Safe Men on Sites)

‘I Stand With Her: Safe Men on Sites’ builds on the research findings from Te Maru o Hine. It is a kaupapa dedicated to building workplaces in construction and infrastructure where everyone feels safe, respected, and supported. It brings together research, industry knowledge, and mātauranga Māori to address sexual harassment and gendered harm while fostering a culture of respect and collective responsibility. Resources can be found here: <https://www.temanawahoukura.org.nz/istandwithher>



### People leadership toolkit

The ‘People leadership toolkit’ helps lift everyday leadership across the construction and infrastructure sector. Many supervisors step into roles for their technical skill rather than their people capability, creating gaps in communication, mentoring, cultural responsiveness and wellbeing support. The toolkit offers simple, practical tools to build confidence and consistency. By turning evidence into action, it supports safer, more inclusive workplaces and long-term workforce sustainability.



## LESSONS FROM ABROAD: TRANSFORMING NEW ZEALAND'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION WITH GERMAN PRACTICES

In February 2024, the ‘Building Bridges’ delegation travelled from New Zealand to Germany to examine the German vocational education system, with a particular focus on construction. Led by the German-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce and supported by German partners, the visit included ConCOVE as one of 11 delegates representing 13 organisations across industry, iwi, and education.

The delegation explored how Germany's established vocational education structures, strategies and partnerships could inform a more flexible and responsive model for New Zealand's construction and building sector. This report summarises the group's observations, shared learnings, and exchanges, and outlines next steps to strengthen New Zealand's vocational education ecosystem.



## Q&A WITH EMMOLINA MAY

*Academic Staff Member - Construction and Architecture,  
Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology*



**As a registered Quantity Surveyor, Emmolina May, has worked on construction projects of all sizes and kept running into the same frustrations: graduates weren't meeting industry expectations. Now a lecturer at Toi Ohomai, she discusses the impact the Degree-level Apprenticeship (DLA) pilot will have on Quantity Surveying (QS) workforce development.**

**What inspired Toi Ohomai to partner with ConCOVE on the DLA pilot in Quantity Surveying?**

Seeing the quality of QS graduates continue declining first-hand, I realised: if I want to change this, I needed to start where it all begins – education. Inspired by my partner's plumbing

apprenticeship, I began to wonder: why couldn't QS adopt the same model?

While researching, I discovered ConCOVE was already exploring this pathway. So, when ConCOVE reached out to me, in my capacity as Chair of the NZIQS Education Committee, to discuss their DLA pilot and seek an education partner, Toi Ohomai stood out. The pilot aligned perfectly with Toi Ohomai's goals, and the rest is history.

**How does this pilot align with Toi Ohomai's goals of raising skills and capability across the sector?**

It aligns very well. The pilot is about building capability where it's needed, and making education more accessible. By blending work with study, it's creating a pathway for QSS who are job-ready, resilient, and equipped with skills the sector needs.

**What makes this initiative unique compared to traditional pathways into QS?**

It gives learners workplace immersion from the start. Aside from technical skills, employers will have someone who can communicate effectively, manage deadlines, understand workflows, and navigate the human side of projects.

**How have industry partners been involved in shaping the curriculum and delivery?**

We have industry partners on the journey from day one. The industry leaders and NZIQS senior leadership ensure the programme reflects the academic rigour and professional standards expected of QSS, while receiving input from contractors, consultants, and client-side companies ensures it also meets the needs and the gaps of industry.



We then adopted NZIQS competency framework as our benchmark.

**What challenges have you encountered?**

For learners, balancing work with study is their biggest challenge. Employers are learning how to integrate study commitments into project schedules. We've had to make content more flexible, more applied, and easier to connect to workplace realities. Funding and regulatory structures are still catching up, but they're essential to make the model sustainable.

**How does this model help learners gain practical skills alongside academic qualifications?**

The model gives learners academic qualifications and workplace maturity that makes them industry-ready. They're exposed to real-world challenges from day one and are developing the interpersonal skills industry needs.

**Do you see this way of delivery addressing skills shortages in quantity surveying?**

Employers need Qs who are technically competent, confident communicators, negotiators, and who can handle the realities of projects. This model not only increases the quantity of Qs but also raises graduate quality — that's the real solution to the shortage.

**What lessons are you learning that will shape future apprenticeship models?**

Every learner's situation and every employer's environment is different, so the delivery model can't be one-size-fits-all. It's also important to keep industry involved to ensure the curriculum stays aligned with real-world needs. DLAs are relatively new in New Zealand — we're navigating funding and regulation structures that weren't designed for them. It's taught us what changes are needed to support growth.

**How do you see this initiative evolving in the next five years?**

I see this model growing as more employers recognise the benefits of apprentices who contribute earlier, stay longer, and develop into well-rounded professionals. It has the potential to become a mainstream QS pathway. Our delivery model must also stay flexible and respond quickly to a rapidly evolving industry.

**What does success look like?**

Success would be we're ready to run the programme, with a curriculum that's been tested, refined, and aligned with NZIQS competencies and industry expectations. Success would also be measured by employers saying, "this works", and learners showing growth in capability and confidence. On a bigger scale, success would be creating a model that can be sustained, scaled, and applied to other parts of the sector.

**What excites you about leading this project?**

Seeing the difference we're making, before the programme has fully run. It's a privilege to lead this project and contribute to reshaping QS education alongside an incredible group of people — ConCOVE teams, NZIQS, Toi Ohomai colleagues, and industry leaders.

**How would you describe the pilot's impact in one sentence?**

It's a collective effort bringing education and industry closer together, creating opportunities for learners, and building the kind of professionals our sector needs.

**What sort of benefits will there be for industry?**

Graduates can contribute from day one, saving time and resources of the employers, all the while feeling supported by their education providers, thus building loyalty, developing competence, and lifting QS capability for better project outcomes in New Zealand.







## Q&A WITH REBECCA FOX

*Workforce Development Manager, Civil Contractors  
New Zealand Inc - EPIC Careers in Infrastructure, Civil Trades*



**Civil Contractors New Zealand (CCNZ) is the national association for civil contractors, providing a voice for more than 800 member businesses and organisations. For Rebecca Fox, Workforce Development Manager at CCNZ, ConCOVE's work has been a game changer in developing tools that can be used in real-world settings and has shone a light on the critical work of civil contractors in New Zealand. We sit down with Rebecca to discuss the impacts of ConCOVE's research in civil contracting.**

### **Which pieces of ConCOVE research are most relevant to CCNZ?**

There are so many relevant pieces of research that ConCOVE has conducted. The pieces I often refer to the most in my line of work are "Where is the front door?", the work of bystander culture, and the work of developing supervisors, verifiers, and trainers through 'Capabilities and good practice of work-based trainers', as well as 'Good practice guidelines for employers as trainers'. Latterly we've contributed to, and will benefit from, the employer toolkit as well.

### **How does ConCOVE research align with the broader goals of CCNZ in raising skills and capability across the construction sector?**

CCNZ is horizontal build — think of all the important construction elements, networks, and connections required for a modern busy life that need to be established before the vertical build takes place. All the work that has shone a light on the work we do as civil constructors has been a game changer.

Pointing out the differences between the way people learn in this sector where the employer is the trainer (think practically no pre-employment training, block courses, etc.) and developing tools that can be used in a real-world setting has been a game changer. Research is important to inform practice, but ConCOVE has taken that even further by developing tools that have real practical use.



**What makes ConCOVE research unique?**

ConCOVE has employed people with unique skills sets — remarkable researchers and communicators, people who are able to take technical concepts and turn them into workable useable outcomes. I have never seen research that has been quite like this before. It's really applied and unique to our civil construction environment.

**What sort of benefits will there be for industry?**

Practically speaking, industry needed ConCOVE then and still does now.

Never before have we had such wide scale research over such a relatively short period of time in the civil construction area. We are so lucky to have this research and the resulting tools to continue to inform policy and practice. The benefits of this research are not short term, they are long term — if the work is kept alive.

I really believe that stopping funding for this sort of work is foolish, but it's proving difficult to convince funders that research is key to inform practice.

**What kind of feedback have you received from learners, industry, etc.?**

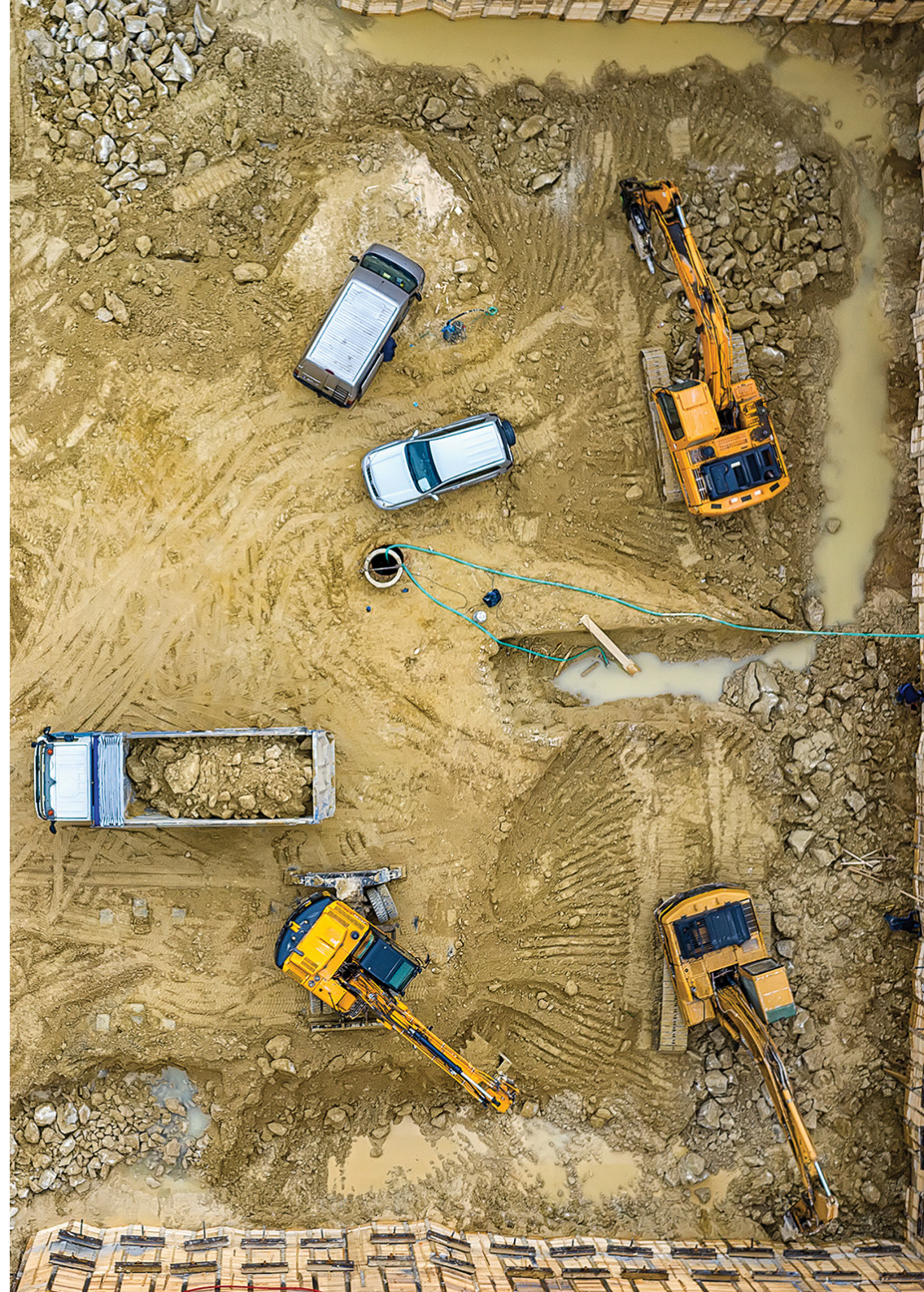
We've received plenty of feedback — including the importance of waiting for the research to be completed before developing strategy for our own organisation, or amending the strategy, supported by new research findings.

**What excited you personally about ConCOVE's research?**

ConCOVE research is new, exciting, and has been carried out in a way that hadn't been done before. It has visibility and brings together a well-connected community of practice that finally had a collective voice and platform.

**ConCOVE will close at the end of 2025 – what would be your view on its legacy?**

That the work of ConCOVE continues to be used to inform policy and practice and the organisations that will act as caretakers for this work, continue to keep it current, relevant, and front of mind.







## PRIORITISING DELIVERY BEYOND 2025

**The vocational education landscape continues to evolve — marked by system reforms, shifting government priorities, and sector-wide funding pressures.**

Through this environment, ConCOVE has remained focused on delivering practical tools and evidence-based insights that address real sector needs.

ConCOVE concludes its delivery of vocational education training for the construction and infrastructure sector at the end of 2025 as per its TEC funding agreement.

So, where to from here?

We call upon employers within the sector to adopt and champion the tools we have created so that a workforce can be developed that has the skills and capabilities needed, and to attract, grow, and retain its key talent.

We urge providers to integrate insights from our research into their programme delivery so they can witness sustainable improvements in all areas of vocational education.

The sector cannot move forward without research and innovation in vocational education being considered an investment priority. We need the key policymakers on board to fund innovation in this space beyond 2025, and we need them to commit to a more resilient and consistent national approach to training and education.

ConCOVE closes this chapter with a strong legacy which includes an expansive library of research, tools, and frameworks; sector-wide connections and trust; and proven approaches in relation to co-design, inclusion, and systems change thinking.

On a final note, system change takes time, commitment, and courage — but the groundwork has been laid, and it's up to the next iteration of leaders and researchers within vocational education and training to take it to the next level.

The future of vocational education is collaborative, adaptive, and grounded in real-world application. The next step is not invention, but implementation.

### Tūhura: (Verb)

To discover, disclose, bring to light, unearth, open up, explore, investigate.

Ko te mahi o te pūkenga kaiwhakaatu,  
kia mōhio ai te tīmatanga,  
kia kite ai te whāinga,  
kia mahere mai te haerenga.

The role of the skilled wayfinder,  
is to know the start,  
envision the destination, and chart the journey.



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- Tony Tang, Vector Limited
- Tracy Burkhart, Waihanga Ara Rau
- Tracy Davis, TOA Architects
- Tracey McLennan, Otago Polytechnic
- Travis Timoko, Te Wānanga o Aotearoa (Wānanga)
- Trent Seaton, BCITO – The Building & Construction Industry Training Organisation
- Troy Coyle, HERA
- Troy Lagor, Vertical Horizonz New Zealand
- Tua Karalus, Deep Dive Division
- Vanessa Veart-Smith, Connexis
- Vanessa Nash
- Verina Jones, GGINZ (Glass and Glazing Institute of NZ)
- Vicki-Lee Tyacke, Horowhenua Learning Centre
- Wade Banks, Sopersmac
- Wayne MacGillivray, Te Aratika Industry Training Limited
- Wayne Maynard, Social Labour Supply
- Wayne Stokes, Kia Tupato Ltd
- Wayne Kohi, Kohi EHS Consultancy Limited & Te Roopu Marutau o Aotearoa
- Wendy Baker, Brosnan Construction
- Wendy Palmer, Lifelong Learning Practice
- Whitney Murrie, TSA Management
- Whitney Murrie, Women in Trades
- Will Hepburn, Tier1 Group
- Zeno Park, Nuri Construction Ltd

## CONTINUING THE MOMENTUM

The momentum created through ConCOVE's research and collaboration is being carried forward by a range of committed partners across industry and the vocational education sector. Their leadership ensures the findings, tools, and frameworks developed through this work continue to shape practice and policy in the construction and infrastructure sectors.

We extend our sincere thanks to all the organisations that have committed to continuing this mahi. Their willingness to embed, adapt, and champion these outputs demonstrates a shared commitment to improving outcomes for learners, employers, and the wider workforce.

These include:

- Master Brick and Blocklayers
- Master Joiners
- NZ Certified Builders (NZCB)
- National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC)
- Institute of Refrigeration, Heating and Air Conditioning Engineers of New Zealand Inc. (IRHACE)
- Construction Growth Foundation
- NZ Transport Agency (NZTA)
- Downer Group
- Hawkins NZ
- Civil Contractors New Zealand (CCNZ)
- BCITO
- Connexis
- Southern Institute of Technology (SIT)
- Toi Ohomai Institute of Technology
- Competenz
- ITENZ
- Youth Employability Aotearoa (YEA)
- Mates in Construction
- Diversity Agenda NZ
- Te Uru Tāngata
- Vertical Horizonz (VHNZ)
- Te Wānanga o Aotearoa
- Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT)
- Unitec
- Otago Polytechnic
- Amotai
- Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira
- Mischewski Consulting Limited
- Solutionary

Special thanks to those who have taken on the role of kaitiaki for key pieces of work, including:

- **Construction Growth Foundation** – leading the continuation of ConstrucTrend and Workforce Journey Indicators (WJI)
- **ITENZ** – supporting work on: Kaiako Development Pathways, Training Advisor roles, Capabilities and Good Practice of Work-based Trainers, and the Industry–School Engagement Toolkit
- **Youth Employability Aotearoa (YEA) and Careers and Transition Education Association NZ CATE** – jointly supporting the Industry–School Engagement Toolkit and further developing industry–school connections

We also acknowledge the partner research organisations whose contributions underpinned the development of ConCOVE projects and research outputs. Their applied research has provided the foundation for future policy, training design, and sector-wide improvement.

## THE FINAL SERIES OF CONCOVE WORKSHOPS

The final series of ConCOVE workshops in Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch brought together employers, education providers, researchers, and industry representatives to share findings and determine how best to sustain and apply the work moving forward.

We held two sessions in Auckland and Wellington – one for employers and one for educators in each location. We held one combined employer–educator session in Christchurch. Each workshop was designed to showcase the outcomes of multiple interconnected projects, encourage collaboration, and provide people with the opportunity to plan how to take best practices back to their own organisations.

Participants explored a wide range of tools and research outputs addressing capability development, inclusion, and system change. Highlights included:

- **Employer-focused artefacts**, such as: Good practice guidelines for employers as trainers; Capabilities and good practice of work-based trainers; Effective people practices toolkit; and Degree-level apprenticeships.
- **Provider-focused artefacts**, including: Kaiako development pathways; National competency framework for training advisors; Onboarding toolkit for kaiako; and AI-generated assessments in VET.
- **Cross-sector and cultural frameworks**, such as: Upskilling Māori construction practitioners; Te Maru o Hine – kaupapa Māori theory of change; and Bystander culture: on-site upstanders.

The workshops also reinforced the importance of collaboration across the sector. Participants recognised that lasting impact will come from coordinated action — embedding these resources into everyday practice, updating them as the industry evolves, and continuing to learn from each other.

Workshop participant, Marcia Hintz of New Zealand Certified Builders Association, says the workshop she took part in was a great, productive session – relaxed, practical, and focused.

*“The planning resource was brilliant, especially the ranking tool that helped me map out my next steps and see how the projects could build on what we’re already doing – it really supported my forward planning and showed how we can further develop our work,” says Marcia.*

*“I left feeling inspired and confident, and by that evening, using a range of AI tools, I’d already turned one project into a draft online interactive programme.”*

As this phase concludes, ConCOVE acknowledges all those who have committed to carry the work forward. Their ongoing involvement ensures that the ideas and initiatives developed through this collaboration will continue to deliver benefit to learners, employers, and the industry as a whole.



## BOARD MEMBER STATEMENTS – LOOKING BACK ON FIVE YEARS OF CONCOVE



### **Co-Chair – Phil Hokianga**

Director, Vertical Horizonz New Zealand  
Director, Toitu Tairāwhiti Housing Ltd  
Trustee, Rongowhakaata Iwi Trust



### **Co-Chair – Graham Burke**

Director, WZ Services Ltd

“ConCOVE commenced as a key component of the government’s reform of vocational education.

We started our journey with ConCOVE as part of the initial consortium formed by Manukau Institute of Technology to develop a pitch to the Tertiary Education Council. The COVEs were the first entities to stand up under the Review of Vocational Education, and with a strong emphasis on Te Tiriti. Developing a proposal that encompassed the needs and voices of industry and our priority groups of Māori, Pacific peoples, and Wāhine was no mean feat, and we also had to come to terms with what was a new concept of “Co-governance”.

We succeeded in our proposal and established ConCOVE with Māori/industry co-chairs and a Board which fairly represented our priority groups and our industry sectors. It wasn’t all smooth sailing, including the challenges caused by COVID-19, the establishment and disestablishment of Te Pūkenga, and significant shifts in the political landscape.

The ConCOVE Board has performed at the highest level through all of this and is a testament not only to the quality of our Board Members, but also the tikanga that has set our course since day one. We are immensely proud that we have set a path that has proven itself and I am sure will be followed in the future, despite changing political environments.

He whakatuakī – Ko te mahi o te pūkenga kaiwhakaatu, kia mōhio ai te tīmatanga, kia kite ai te whaingā, kia mahere mai te haerenga.

The role of the skilled wayfinder is to know the start, envision the destination and chart the journey. We are committed to this transformational change.”

It has been a privilege to be a part of ConCOVE to rethink reimage and reshape outcomes for Māori, Pacific peoples, and wāhine within the construction and infrastructure sector.

Aku mihi anō ki a tātou e huihui mai nei.”



### **Board member – Professor Martin Caroll**

Deputy Chief Executive Academic  
Unitec and Manukau Institute of Technology, Te Pūkenga

“ConCOVE has been an extraordinary moment in time. COVEs provided a rare opportunity to significantly boost research-based efforts to improve the way that vocational education and training can meet the needs of industry.

Bringing together industry bodies, employers, VET providers, and worker unions, including Māori, Pacific peoples, and female world views and expertise, ensures a truly holistic view of the challenges and opportunities COVEs can address.

I’m proud of the way the Board, staff, and partners of ConCOVE have taken it from a tentative start during the heart of the pandemic, to a well-polished applied research centre of excellence. Most of these projects will continue to deliver value long after ConCOVE.

That said, my key takeaway is that the challenges and opportunities of the construction and infrastructure industries are complex and longstanding. They deserve a long-term investment in applied research.”



### **Board member – Pamela Bell**

Professor of Practice  
Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington

“Being part of the ConCOVE Board over the past five years has been a journey in exploring the breadth and depth of what inclusion truly means. Together, we have been part of inclusion in action, through governance, operations, and research project outcomes. I am super grateful to work alongside all the people who have put their expertise, energy, and passion into this mahi.”



**Board member – Amos Kamo**  
 Director Policy & Performance, Kāinga Ora  
 New Zealand Infrastructure Commission Te Tii Advisory Group  
 member  
 Proprietors' Representative, St Peter's College Board of Trustees

“Hei aku nui, hei aku rahi, tēnā ra koutou katoa.

I've been fortunate to have been part of ConCOVE since its inception and have greatly valued the opportunity to contribute to its strategic direction in the development of research initiatives and innovative ideas for the enhancement of vocational education in New Zealand. The opportunity to support the development of new ideas, practices, and inclusivity into industry has been exciting and often inspiring.

The ConCOVE journey has in many ways spearheaded the beginning of new ways of thinking about how to support, enable, and enhance the future needs of our construction and infrastructure industries through ethical and critical approaches to research.

It has been a privilege to serve on the ConCOVE Board. Working alongside such great people under the leadership of our Co-Chairs Graham Burke and Phil Hokianga has been one of the most rewarding parts of the journey. My thanks to Katherine Hall and the ConCOVE team – their dedication to the kaupapa has truly inspired me.

Ko te manako ko te aroha tētahi ki tētahi, tēnā ra koutou katoa.”



**Board member – David Fabish**  
 Director, Boulder Bay Consultants Ltd.  
 EAG Construction and Specialist Trades ISB

“It has been a great honour to serve on the ConCOVE Board and contribute to our construction and infrastructure sectors vocational education training needs. The high calibre, independent research outcomes will result in both improved worksites and a more skilled workforce. The focus on outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples, and fostering a more attractive industry for women to work and thrive in, are personally my proudest ConCOVE outcomes.”



**Board member – Mackenzie Ashby**  
 Capability Manager, Northpower

“Being part of ConCOVE has given me the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to an organisation focused on improving outcomes for learners, employers, and providers across the vocational education system.

I'm passionate about creating space for opportunity — especially for young and vulnerable groups. Serving on the board has allowed me to support mahi that will influence the employer experience and learner journey, as well as the broader system. It has been a privilege to help guide initiatives that aim to make vocational education more inclusive, responsive, and future-focused.”



**Board member – Vai Punivai**  
 General Manager - Customer Experience, BCITO

“After spending 20 odd years in the VET sector, I've seen it all – I saw ITOs being consolidated down over several years, while industry skills' needs grew in the opposite direction.

No one wrote a driver's manual for providers on how to deal with these opposing dynamics – all it did was force them into an 'island' to think alone and for themselves.

Fast forward 20 years, we now have a mismatch system of all-sorts, a mixture of one-size-fits-all, with some tailored approaches sprinkled in.

Enter ConCOVE – magic. My involvement with ConCOVE was like taking a panadol for a 20-year-old headache.

I began to see the sector and all its correlating issues clearly, but what impressed me the most was the way the Board and the team found ways in a short period of time to surge through political mountains and resistance to define ways forward for its industries.

ConCOVE symbolises what it is to be a Kiwi: brave, persistent, ask, work hard, get up, and care. I'm absolutely proud to be part of the ConCOVE legacy and I applaud all my colleagues and the team for standing up a purpose that is going to live on, as legacy.”



## APPENDIX: SUMMARY OF TEC MEASURES

ConCOVE high-level impacts	Mandatory focus area	ConCOVE measures	2025 survey results (compared to 2024)	2025 sample size
Excellence in vocational teaching and learning within the overall network	1. Curriculum and Programme design excellence	Māori in the sector are satisfied ConCOVE's activities are working toward benefiting Māori.	94% of Māori stakeholders agree with this statement (91% in 2024).	15 out of 16
		Pacific people in the sector are satisfied ConCOVE's activities are working toward benefiting Pacific peoples.	75% of Pacific stakeholders agree with this statement (77% in 2024).	6 out of 8
		Women in the sector are satisfied ConCOVE's activities are working toward benefiting women.	98% of stakeholders identified as women agree with this statement (94% in 2024).	46 out of 47
	2. Key sector and industry opportunities and issues identified and addressed	Industry, employers, providers, Te Pūkenga, WDCs, and RSLGs consider the resources and recommendations produced by the COVE to be valuable and/or practical.	95% of stakeholders from non-COVE organisations agree with this statement (88% in 2024).	81 out of 85
	3. Uptake	Te Pūkenga, and the relevant WDCs and RSLGs feel project findings and recommendations can be adopted or adapted for the benefit of the sector.	89% of stakeholders from tertiary training providers, WDCs, and government agencies said at least one ConCOVE project has led to changes or prompted discussions (5% for strategic themes in 2024).	42 out of 47
			86% agreed at least one project's findings and recommendations can be adopted or adapted by the sector.	48 out of 56
Innovation in vocational teaching and learning within the overall network	4. Innovation in solutions developed	Industry, employers, providers, WDCs, and RSLGs agree solutions and recommendations developed or contributed to by the COVE are innovative.	95% of stakeholders from non-COVE organisations agree with this statement (84% in 2024).	75 out of 79
Strong connections within and across the vocational education system by strengthening links between providers, industry and communities	5. Connections and collaboration	Te Pūkenga, WDCs, and other COVEs agree the ConCOVE has effectively collaborated and communicated with them.	93% of stakeholders from tertiary training providers, WDCs, and CoVEs found the frequency enough (79% in 2024).	50 out of 54
			94% of stakeholders from tertiary training providers, WDCs, and COVEs found the level of detail enough (81% in 2024).	51 out of 55
			96% found the collaboration effective to some degree (100% in 2024).	45 out of 47
	6. Driving connections across the system	Stakeholders feel ConCOVE has increased collaboration, and the sharing of practice, data, evidence, and knowledge and capability development across the sector.	90% of stakeholders agree ConCOVE has increased collaboration (82% in 2024).	80 out of 89
			94% of stakeholders agree ConCOVE has increased sharing of practice, data, evidence, knowledge, and capability development across the sector (81% in 2024).	84 out of 89