

# CONCO>E TŪHURA

## Tui Tuia - Vocational education and training kaiako trilogy convergence narrative

Martin Grant, Adaptation





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**The purpose of this work is to explore interventions into the VET kaiako and training adviser system that arise from the crossover and interconnecting insights across the ConCoVE VET kaiako and training adviser research trilogy.**

## NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Every kaiako or trainer adviser<sup>1</sup> in our vocational education and training system needs our help and support to take their own pathway to being the best they can be in educating or supporting our ākongā.

At the moment the combination of industry work demands and a lower level of support than they need is preventing them being the best they can be and therefore, it is impacting the learning of our ākongā.

This situation can be traced back to our professional development practices, their capability to handle the complexities and demands of both construction and vocational education and even basic things like clarity of roles and expectations.

What would be better is if we all put more effort into our kaiako and training advisers. This will look like providers, industry and funders collaborating more and developing more of a shared point of view of what best practice looks like or creating best practice in this unique context for work-based and provider based kaiako and work-based training advisers.

If we do this we will create a kaiako centric culture where we value and celebrate our kaiako and training advisers alongside our ākongā centred culture. We will have clarity of roles, clear and appealing career pathways and a continuously improving VET system through interconnections and collaborations where learning sits comfortably beside constructing.

## PROJECT NAMING AND WHAKATAUĀKI

The project name, Tui Tuia, is inspired from Papa Kū's whakatauāki that means 'the tapestry of working collectively'<sup>2</sup>. It highlights the strength of combining and weaving the three research pieces together.

E kore e taea e te whenu kotahi ki te raranga i te whāriki.

Kia mōhio ai tātou ki a tātou

Mā te mahitahi o ngā whenu

Mā te mahitahi o ngā kairaranga ka oti tēnei whāriki.

I te otinga, me titiro tātou ki ngā mea pai ka puta mai.

Ā tana wā hoki me titiro ki aua raranga i makere.

Nō te mea, he kōrero anō kei reira.

The tapestry of understanding cannot be woven by one strand alone.

Only by the working together of strands and the working together of weavers will such a tapestry be completed.

With its completion let us look at the good that comes from it and, in time we should also look at those stitches which have been dropped, because they also have a message.

<sup>1</sup> Training Advisers do not see themselves as kaiako or trainers, so in this work they are not referred to as such.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Te Tari Matauranga Maori Services, Manukau Institute of Technology

## THE OPPORTUNITY

We face an existential crisis as we see reducing learner numbers across the construction and infrastructure trades that will have downstream future impacts on our collective ability to deliver quality projects.

The opportunity is to improve our VET kaiako and training advisers system realising our expectations of the them being fundamental in the greater success for ākonga participating in vocational education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The stated issues for the three research projects point to our expectations at a macro level<sup>3</sup>:

1. Work-Based Kaiako: Ākonga in work-based learning contexts will spend roughly 70 percent learning on-job with a work based kaiako/trainer, so they will need good support from work-based trainers to develop their training skills.
2. Training Advisers: The Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships states “the responsibilities of the tertiary education provider are to facilitate the training and support both the apprentice and the employer throughout the apprenticeship” (i.e. the criticality of the Training Advisor role & function).
3. Provider-Based Kaiako: Quality teaching and leadership are important to high quality VET and requires strong teaching across the education workforce delivering teaching quality and ākonga outcomes in vocational education.

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<sup>3</sup>Source: <https://concove.ac.nz/concove-projects>

## KEY FINDINGS: CURRENT STATE

In the current state today there are dynamics at play. A dynamic can be thought of as **a constraint that is holding the system on its current path or shutting off potential**. These dynamics could be the way the system is structured and runs, the type and quality of connections between people, or people's fundamental beliefs about how things should be done, or our mental models.

Below are the key findings of the dynamics present in the system today from the three research pieces. The dynamics were created via a thematic analysis of the conclusions of the three research studies and a convergence workshop with the three research teams. The purpose of this analysis was to identify crossovers and interconnections. It is important to read the three individual research reports to fully understand the detailed insights into the challenges and recommendations in each.

### WORK BASED KAIAKO DYNAMICS

1. The lack of attitudes, preparedness, skills and confidence of a trade person to be a work-based Kaiako. (Trainer attitudes. Lack of role understanding. Leadership skills but not training skills. Lack of development opportunities. Insufficient support from education providers.)
2. The project and productivity demands, and investment, cultural and collaboration constraints on construction and infrastructure firms running work-based learning programmes. (Organisational culture. Underdeveloped culture of learning. Lack of collaboration. Productivity pressures. Unwillingness to invest.)
3. The technical challenges and deficiencies of workplace apprentice programmes that make a Kaiako's job more challenging. (Work-based learning program shortcomings. Misalignment with apprenticeship qualifications. Poor recognition of prior learning.)

### PROVIDER BASED KAIAKO DYNAMICS

1. The poor attraction, recruitment, transition and onboarding of a trade person into a provider as a Kaiako. (Onboarding and development Gaps. Transition and learning curve challenges. Misalignment of expectations and roles. Attitudinal and psychological challenges.)
2. The underdeveloped ongoing pathway-based professional development mentoring and support of a tradesperson as a provider based kaiako. (Workplace culture and relational barriers. Inadequate practical guidance. Lack of structured pathways. Digital skills overlooked. Lack of leadership, management, mentorship and support. Advanced responsibilities too early.)

### TRAINING ADVISER DYNAMICS

1. The limitations on the Training Adviser's capability and capacity to support the apprentice and the employer. (Not right skill set. Case load limitations and constraints. Managing diverse apprentice cases. Agency and leadership. Intricacies of apprentice schemes.)
2. The wide diversity in the scale, scope and definition of the Training Adviser as a critical functional role in delivering a capable future workforce through apprenticeships. (Unclear roles and responsibilities. Operational and organisational Issues.)

These dynamics in turn point to intermediate outcomes or areas for improvement across the system and the crossovers between the three areas.

## INTERMEDIATE OUTCOME CROSSOVERS

Work Based Kaiako	Provider Based Kaiako	Training Advisers
<p>More collaborations and partnerships across the VET system for better practices and mechanisms for improved learner outcomes. (Stakeholder partnerships. Collaborations between education and industry. Industry and provider engagement. Technology and best practices adoption.)</p>	<p>More collaborations and partnerships across the VET system for better practices and mechanisms for improved learner outcomes. (Collaboration for Kaiako development. Cross-sector cooperation.)</p>	<p>More collaborations and partnerships across the VET System for better practices and mechanisms for improved learner outcomes. (System-wide collaboration. Cross-role understanding. Compliance to quality. Continuous improvement. Practice audits.)</p>
<p>Improved Kaiako professional pathways, learning, development and support. (Work-based trainer support. Trainer qualification pathways. Ongoing professional development. Assessment and feedback. Embedded learning in workplace.)</p>	<p>Improved Kaiako professional pathways, learning, development and support. (Holistic development. Kaiako-centric approach. Structured development plans. Clear communication of pathways. Role clarity and framework. Practice audits. Capacity building. Workplace learning options. Practical training tools. Flexible learning approaches. Adult learning programmes. Leadership and management support.)</p>	<p>Improved Training Adviser professional pathways, learning, development and support. (Adviser autonomy to be a leader. Empowering decision-making. Practices for caseload management. Learning navigator' role. Clarity in role definition. Framework-based guidelines. Accountability mechanisms. Relationship time &amp; support. Comprehensive support systems.)</p>
<p>Better support from leaders of firms as the employer doing work-based learning for apprentices. (Leadership in training. Firm's capacity. Capability assessments. Employers as trainers and leaders.)</p>	<p>Improved transition from industry into the being a provider based Kaiako. (Effective management of transitions. Structured onboarding.)</p>	
<p>Improvements to practices surrounding the apprentice to enable a greater level of success. (Apprentice preparedness. Independence and growth. Qualifications aligned to programs.)</p>		<p>Improvements to practices surrounding the apprentice to enable a greater level of success. (Enhanced employer communication. Apprentice transfers across trades.)</p>

## FUTURE VIEW

This view of the future was built forwards from the current state dynamics and intermediate outcomes in a workshop with the three research teams. It explores some possible ultimate outcomes of the VET kaiako and training adviser system in a better future state.

- A training and learning culture that sits alongside the project culture inside the industry.
- A kaiako centric sector (alongside ākongā) where our kaiako are more actively nurtured, developed, and celebrated
- Clear pathways for people into and within any of the three kaiako roles.
- Clarity of the functions and of the roles and criteria for quality across and between all the kaiako roles.
- We are continuously exploring, developing and learning, and celebrating the successful across the VET system
- Kaiako professions and professionals are valued and celebrated.
- Strong provider and employer/industry interconnections.

## TRIGGERING TRANSITION TO A DESIRED FUTURE STATE

The core question for this work is **what actions could trigger system to transition?** The use of the transition word is purposeful as it more accurately represents the nature of the shifts systems go through.

There is **risk in expecting individual people to change** when the desire for equilibrium or certainty is considered as a fundamental human mindset in systems.

Many models and frameworks exist in the domain of systems practice that point to **interventions that will trigger a system to transition.**<sup>4</sup> Three of the more relevant models to this work are The Waters of Systems Change, Three Horizons and Multi-Level Perspective.

The [Waters of System](#) change model outlines **six conditions that need to be present** and, therefore, where systems innovation needs to occur for transition to occur at the structural, relational and mental model levels. The limitation of this model is that it points to the 'what' but not the 'how'.

The [Three Horizons](#) model outlines the **emergence of new patterns** (Horizon 3) within the existing system (Horizon 1) that gather momentum and then result in a shift to altered state in parts of the system. It calls out the role of innovations in this process (Horizon 2).

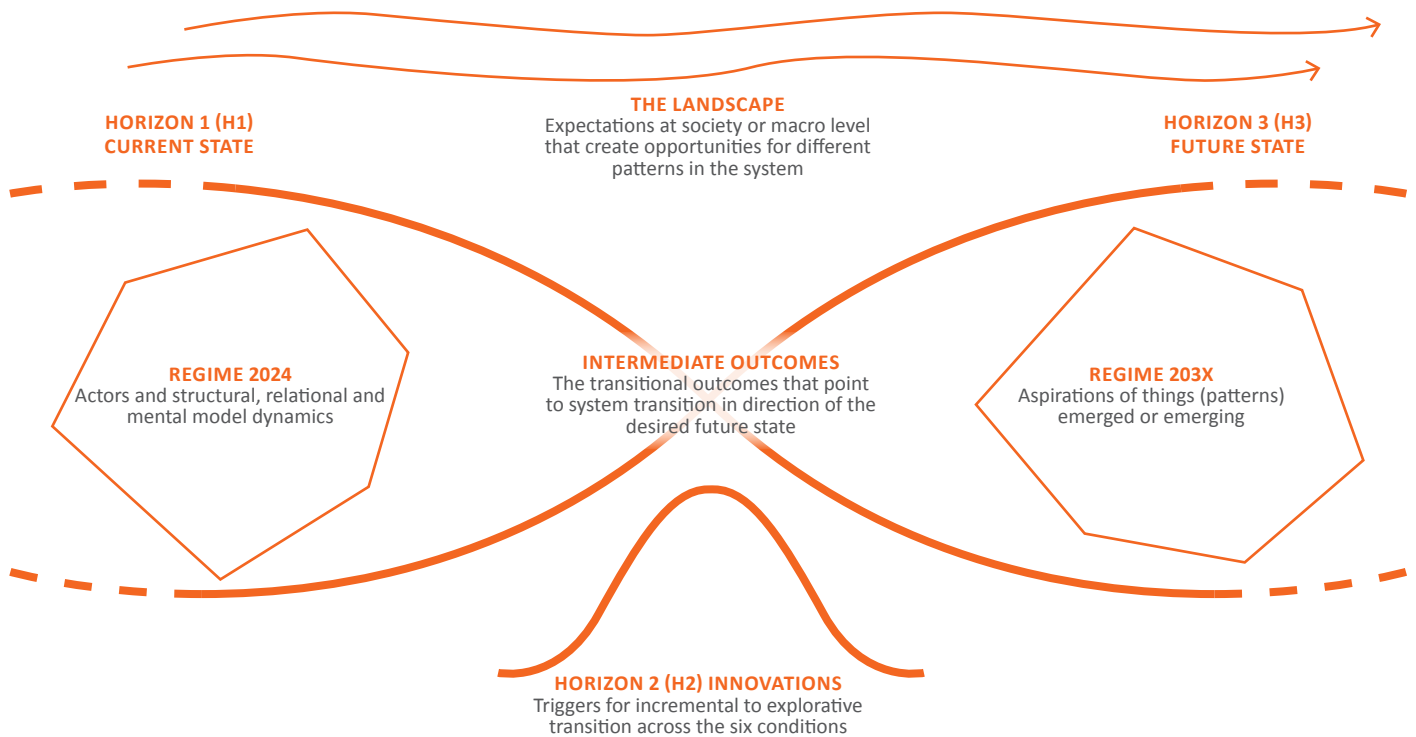
The [Multi-Level Perspective](#) model captures the role of innovations in the system that start out in niches and then how the **mature innovations infiltrate the regime** or core operating centre of the system to alter its state. The macro landscape sets expectations of the regime and of innovators for the need for change.

The transition visual below captures these three models and the ideas within them.

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<sup>4</sup> Models that inform transition trigger development include: Waters of System Change (Kania et al), Three Horizons (Sharpe), Multi-Level Perspective (Geels), Causal Layered Analysis (Inayatullah), Two Loops (Berkana), Systemic Design (Design Council), ASHEN and PAGODA (Cynefin), Leverage Points (Meadows), Transition Domains (Perez), Transformative Outcomes (Ghosh et al), and the Panarchy model (Collins et al)





Another consideration in the design of the interventions is the **agency and behaviours of the actors**. David Snowden in his blog outlining his PAGODA<sup>5</sup> framework for intervention design makes this point about intervention proximity to actors,

“Emergence happens in a complex system when many rich local interactions between actants [actors] exist; change is bottom-up, although it may be stimulated top-down.”

Lastly, we need to consider the **value of relationships, peer-to-peer learning and feedback loops** for actors to reconsider their mental models that in turn impact all of the other five conditions for systems change.

On one hand it is true that all systems are in a constant state of flux to varying degrees with new patterns emerging continuously. On the other hand, it is also true the system is perfectly designed for the outcomes it is currently delivering and its actors are largely more comfortable in the status quo.

An actor or actors with an agenda to different outcomes or faster transitions needs to intervene to trigger these outcomes.

<sup>5</sup><https://cynefin.io/wiki/PAGODA>

# TRANSITION TRIGGER OPTIONS

Trigger	Rationale	Looks Like
VET Kaiako system transition backbone	System transition work is more effective when there are people whose role it is to align and coordinate the work of the whole via co-ordination, convening, project management, showcasing, communicating, etc. Refer Collective Impact Forum <sup>6</sup> model.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A team of 2-3 FTE funded for a constrained period for salaries, expenses and overheads to deliver work programme.</li> </ul>
Storytelling of kaiako trilogy – individually and as a collective	Stories are central to our human cognition and decision-making processes. They inform our internalized framing of the way the world works, and therefore directly impact actors’ behaviours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webinars for remaining two studies and one for the trilogy</li> <li>• Creation of encompassing VET Kaiako framework by trilogy research teams</li> <li>• Engagement with likely champions, e.g. unions, those with energy, etc.</li> </ul>
Convene Kaiako VET practice innovation design groups	Convened by the backbone, actors from the regime working together on shared aspirations are more likely to create practical implementable solutions alongside appreciation of the views and needs of the others around them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design projects with working groups on topics driven bottom-up from the members or top down from the sponsors – refer appendix for example projects. Refer Australian National Road Safety Partnership Programme.<sup>7</sup></li> </ul>
Resource system capability and capacity to mainstream mature innovations into the regime (industry, providers, institutions)	A mature innovation is one that is gaining adoption and has high chances of creating a tipping point in the system. The pressures of competing demands are frequently cited as reasons for slow or no adoption. Resourcing the regime could help mitigate these risks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funding of expert advisers to support implementation within organisations.</li> <li>• Co-funding implementation programs</li> </ul>
Build and nurture early innovators in VET kaiako system in technology, institution, knowledge or economic spaces.	The innovations on the edges of the system are the future. These innovators need to be identified, connected, nurtured and sometimes protected from the pressure of status quo in the regime.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Run innovator network</li> <li>• Run innovation incubator or accelerator</li> </ul>
Trigger new innovations in gaps via expectation setting and support	Actors who see the whole system can see gaps where they could trigger innovations. This is not at all dissimilar to ConCOVE’s current role in the system. But it could be expanded beyond research to innovation support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VET Kaiako innovation gap analysis report</li> <li>• Run innovation competition e.g. UK Net Zero Heat Innovation Lab<sup>8</sup></li> <li>• Provide start-up seed funding</li> </ul>
Advocate for upstream reviews of key policies that affects Kaiako	Upstream policy decisions are a significant influence on actors’ behaviours downstream. Working with policy advisers from multiple agencies in the system, the goal is to identify and where funding policy creates unintended consequences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trilogy policy whitepaper</li> <li>• Cross agency policy lab</li> <li>• Funding rules targeting kaiako professional support and development</li> </ul>
Close knowledge gaps important to transition	Targeted work such as is required in any of the work programme projects that goes deeper into areas raised in trilogy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short cycle research closing knowledge gaps for example global evidence gathering, user needs analysis or foresight models</li> </ul>

<sup>6</sup><https://collectiveimpactforum.org/>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.nrsp.org.au/>

<sup>8</sup><https://iuk-business-connect.org.uk/news/net-zero-heat-programme-innovation-labs-blog/>

# AOTEAROA'S VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING KAIAKO SYSTEM TRANSITION

**Aim: Greater success for ākonga apprentices participating in vocational education in Aotearoa New Zealand**

### Project issues

**Work-based Kaiako**

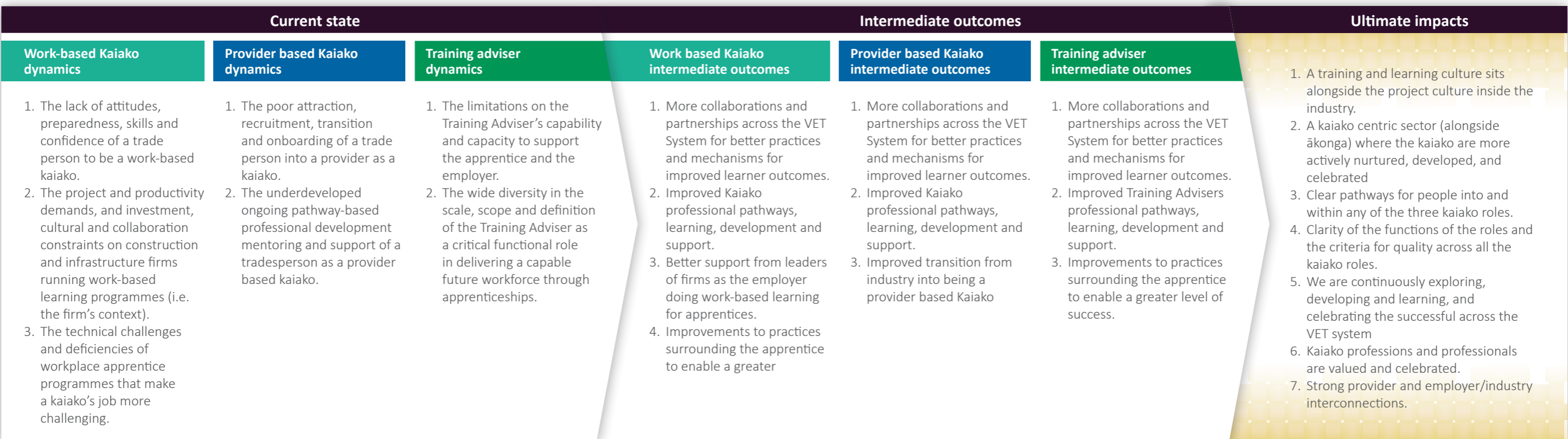
Ākonga in work-based learning contexts will spend roughly 70 percent learning on-job with a work based Kaiako/trainer, so they will need good support from work-based trainers to develop their training skills.

**Provider based Kaiako**

Quality teaching and leadership are important to high quality VET and requires strong teaching across the education workforce delivering teaching quality and ākonga outcomes in vocational education.

**Training advisers**

The Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships states “the responsibilities of the tertiary education provider are to facilitate the training and support both the apprentice and the employer throughout the apprenticeship” (i.e. the criticality of the Training Advisor role & function)



### Transition triggers

VET Kaiako system transition backbone	Storytelling of Kaiako trilogy	Kaiako VET practice innovation working groups	Resources to mainstream mature innovations	Build and nurture early innovators in VET Kaiako system	Trigger new innovations in gaps	Advocate for upstream reviews of key policies	Close knowledge gaps important to transition
<p><b>Actions:</b> A team of 2-3 FTE funded for a constrained period for salaries, expenses and overheads to deliver work programme.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> Webinars for remaining two studies and one for the trilogy. Creation of encompassing VET Kaiako framework collectively by the three research teams.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> The backbone runs design projects with working groups on topics driven bottom-up from the members or top down from the sponsors.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> Funding of expert advisers to support implementation within organisations. Co-funding implementation programs.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> Run innovator network. Run innovation incubator or accelerator.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> VET Kaiako innovation gap analysis report. Run innovation competition.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> Trilogy policy whitepaper. Cross agency policy lab.</p>	<p><b>Actions:</b> Short cycle research closing knowledge gaps for example global evidence gathering, user needs analysis or foresight models.</p>

## NEXT STEPS

It is imagined this work would be valuable for, but not limited to,

1. VET Providers individually and collectively
2. TEC
3. NZQA
4. Ako Aotearoa
5. Unions
6. Ministry of Education
7. Industry Associations
8. Policy Advisers to other Government Agencies

The next most practical step is for people desiring a better future state, to paraphrase the [Collective Impact Forum](#), ***“bring people together in a structured way to achieve change around a common agenda...a network who advance by learning together, aligning, and integrating their actions to achieve population and systems level change.”***<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>collectiveimpactforum.org

## APPENDIX: PRACTICE INNOVATION PROJECT EXAMPLES

(List not ordered or prioritised or complete)

1. Role definitions with codified skill classifications
2. Kaiako professional support and development practices across variety of provider and employer contexts
3. Maximising the value of training advisers for the good of the learners.
4. Application of International Labour Organisation toolkit in Aotearoa.
5. Scaling of micro credentials work
6. Development of kaiako New Zealand qualifications and credentials framework
7. Leadership in learning for work-based leaders
8. Bridging work-based kaiako and provider-based kaiako for the good of the learners.