Literature scan:

An internet that is better for people

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RESEARCH & COMMUNICATIONS

About this document

This literature scan was carried out by Kelly and Anna Pendergrast of Antistatic in late March and early April 2022. It was written to provide a basis for informing the design of participatory research about "an internet that is better for people" which has been commissioned by InternetNZ and will be carried out by Toi Āria and Make Everything Achievable.

This literature scan is in four parts and aims to build understanding about work that has already taken place, or is currently underway, around concepts of "an internet for good" and "an internet that is better for people". The four parts are:

1. Framing "the internet" and putting "the internet for good" in context
2. Envisioning what a desired future state might look like
3. Surfacing underlying values
4. What communities have already said on related issues.

The information in this document is to the best of our knowledge correct and up to date at time of writing.

Contents

1. Framing “the internet” and putting “the internet for good” in context 5
Framing “the internet” 6
Closing analysis on framing “the internet”: 9
Contextualising the “internet for good” 9
A “free and open” internet 10
Net neutrality 10
Evolving ways to think about internet “openness” 11
Ensuring everyone can access the internet 11
Identifying and mitigating online harms 12
Closing insights 14
2. Envisioning what a desired future state might look like 15
A note on scope and focus 15
Visions of the Internet in 2035, Pew Research Center 16
The Future of Digital Spaces and Their Role in Democracy, Pew Research Center 17
Civic Signals, New_ Public 18
Whose Knowledge? Campaign 19
Infrastructure: Building the World We Deserve, Siegel Family Endowment 20
“Young People, Technology and the Future of te Reo Māori”, Te Taka Keegan and Daniel Cunliffe 22
“Hangarau me te Māori: Māori and technology”, Te Taka Keegan & Acushla Sciascia 22
People, Power and Technology: The 2018 Digital Attitudes Report, Doteveryone 23
The four key principles of a “Good” Web, Catch 22 24
Report of the Secretary-General: Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, United Nations 25
Meaningful Connectivity Report, Alliance for Affordable Internet (2022) 25
3. Surfacing underlying values 27
Introduction 27
Frameworks for understanding values 27
Philip Brey: underlying values and beliefs shape how we view the internet 27
Public Interest Research Centre: values tend to show up in clusters 28
Values in the Aotearoa New Zealand context 30
Values can change over time 31
Examples of values-driven frameworks in Aotearoa New Zealand 31

Mana-Mahi Framework 31
Ngā Tikanga Paihere 32
Tikanga Ipurangi 33
Kia Takatū ā-Matihiko / Digital Readiness Programme 33
4. What communities have already said on related issues 34
Scope and process 34
Overview of engagement 34
Theme 1: Minimising harm 34
Theme 2: Increasing belonging, inclusion and social cohesion 35
Theme 3: Digital inclusion (including connectivity) 35
Other engagement 35
Analysis 35
Details of engagements 36

1. Framing “the internet” and putting “the internet for good” in context

This section is intended to provide grounding and context for Toi Āria and Making Everything Achievable (MEA) as they plan their public engagement and research.

This section is in two parts:

- **Framing “the internet”:** This is a short definitional and framing piece which draws on international and New Zealand literature that talks about the internet in a way that is accessible for wide audiences (focusing on the internet as users understand it rather than the specific technical aspects). This aims to help inform how Toi Āria frames their public conversations and engagement.
- **Putting “the internet for good” in context:** a brief scan to contextualise how the idea of the internet for good was defined historically, for example by internet and standards organisations. This will help InternetNZ frame this project in contrast to previous work, and provide grounding for the shift towards a people-focused understanding of the internet.

The internet and the web — what are they, technically?

The internet is the global system of interconnected computer networks, which uses the internet protocol suite (TCP/IP) to communicate between networks and devices. Originally the term was styled as a proper noun — “the Internet” — but as the term entered common parlance, the lowercase, common noun spelling has become widespread. The Chicago Manual of Style and Associated Press both updated their style guides to reflect the lowercase spelling in 2016.

The World Wide Web (“the web”) is a global collection of documents and other resources, linked by hyperlinks and identified by global identifiers called URIs (Uniform Resource Identifiers). The resources of the Web are transferred via the Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP), may be accessed by users by a software application called a web browser, and are published by a software application called a web server.

Throughout this document, we use the terms “the internet” and “the web” more broadly, reflecting their popular and colloquial usage, while acknowledging that both terms do indeed have a specific technical meaning.

Framing “the internet”

This section provides an overview of how researchers, scholars and everyday people discuss and define the internet.

Key points:

1. The internet has a technical meaning, but when people talk about “the internet” in everyday conversation they tend to be referring to a whole range of concepts and activities. It is a useful catch-all term that most people are happy to run with.
2. Researchers often use the term “the internet” when talking to people — often with no further qualifications.
3. However, the term “the internet” can be vague, abstracting and obfuscating, and can make it hard to talk about individual or political agency.
4. So, when researchers go out and talk to people about specific aspects of the internet or online experience, they use a range of other terms and techniques to focus conversation.

The internet (traditionally styled as “Internet”) has a technical meaning. However, non-experts tend to use the term “the internet” as a catch-all for a broad range of things and ideas. This makes it a useful, albeit imprecise, term for prompting conversation.

In her 2011 article “What We Talk About When We Talk About the Internet,” writer Vicky Osterweil posits that “that “Internet” has won out over “web” as the *mot juste* precisely because it is less descriptive and more euphemistic. She argues that the terms we use to describe digital processes and technologies — from smart phones to google searches — are often purposefully imprecise. Talking about “the internet” (rather than the world wide web or another narrower term) gives people a big umbrella within which to describe a broad range of interactions, processes, and feelings.

In their essay “Whither the Public Internet?”, authors William Lehr, David Clark, Steve Bauer, Arthur Berger and Philipp Richter argue that “seeking a single definition of the Internet is complicated and may be unnecessary,” however “there remains a need to understand what the concept means in light of its growing importance as a topic of policy concern.” Instead of a singular definition, they propose three lenses for characterising the internet:

1. **abstract architectural** (the technical definition describing the network of networks),
2. **network complementors** (application and content providers that use the Internet as a platform for the deployment, implementation, and operation of their applications and services), and

3. **customer experience** (the range of services, content, and applications that users can expect to access via the internet, and their experiences when doing so).

Within the customer experience lens, the authors list activities such as being able to "browse the Web, use email and chat, participate in social network applications such as Facebook and Twitter, engage in e-commerce via sites such as Amazon and eBay, and stream media from YouTube and Netflix." They also stress that "For most customers, the technical details of how the experience is supported and what firms, networks, or capabilities have to be aligned and participate to make the experience feasible is either irrelevant or beyond their understanding." Thus, it is likely that the "customer experience" lens could help conceptually focus the scope of conversions in the "Building an internet that is better for people" project as it likely covers the areas of activity that people generally refer to when they talk about "the internet".

The internet and te reo Māori

Ipurangi is the te reo Māori word for "the internet". In reference to the whakapapa of the term, translator Ian Cormack noted in a 2018 tweet *"The original meaning of ipurangi is 'the source of a stream'. Someone used it metaphorically and extended its meaning to 'internet' and it became used in this sense."*

The *Dictionary of Computer Related Terms edition 2* (2006) compiled by Karaitiana Taiuru lists both "ipurangi" and "īrangi" as te reo Māori words for the internet, with the translation for the latter coming from the Taumauri Trust. In the 3rd edition of the dictionary (2018), ipurangi is listed as the sole term for the internet. The term "īRangi" (with capitalisation styling) is now used specifically to refer to iTunes. We note that both the capitalised "Ipurangi" and lowercase "ipurangi" are included in the dictionary edition 3, mirroring the use of both styles in English.

2. Researchers often use the terms "the internet" and "going online" when talking to members of the public about their internet experiences and opinions — often with no further qualifications or definitions.

The Pew Research Center, a major US-based research and survey think tank, survey people by simply asking about "the internet." In their research on people's opinions towards the internet, shared in the report *Declining Majority of Online Adults Say the Internet Has Been Good for Society*, the research questionnaire used phrases like "Do you use the internet or email, at least occasionally?" and "would you say the internet has mostly been a good thing or a bad thing for society?"

Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI), an alliance of businesses, governments, and civil society actors hosted by the World Wide Web foundation, also ask people questions about "the internet" with no further explanation. For example, in their recent research report *Advancing Meaningful Connectivity: Towards Active and Participatory Digital Societies*, A4AI

asked people about where they “access the internet”, what kind of “mobile internet package” they have, and what kind of “internet-capable device” they own.

UNICEF surveyed 14,000 children around the world about their internet use and activities for their 2019 *Global Kids Online* report. In survey questions, they use the terms “the internet” and “going online,” asking questions like “How often do you go online” and “how long do you spend on the internet” with no further elaboration.

3. While “the internet” is a useful catch-all term that most people have an intuitive (if unspecific) understanding of, it might not be sufficient for conversations about particular aspects of online experience. The broadness and abstractness of “the internet” can make it hard for people to see and think about how individuals — internet makers and internet users — have agency to change aspects of the internet.

In her essay “What We Talk About When We Talk About the Internet”, writer Vicky Osterweil points to the limitations of the term “the internet” when trying to understand the political and social forces that shape our online lives and activities, noting that within the space of the browser window, “all information appears to come from one source: ‘the internet.’” This leads people to act and talk as though the internet itself has agency. For example, she points to a New York Time headline “Facebook and Youtube fuel the Egyptian Protests,” whereas a more accurate description of events would be “Egyptians fighting for freedom find Facebook and Youtube useful tools.” Osterweil notes that “Each and every step in technological evolution is produced and managed by people, and, more substantially, the governments, companies and systems that pay them” and cautions that ascribing agency to the internet itself “can make these eminently human forces invisible, hidden euphemistically behind the ‘apolitical’ historical narrative of ‘science.’”

In his 2013 book *To Save Everything, Click Here* (PDF available here), writer and technology researcher Evgeny Morozov points to the confusion that can result from lumping a broad range of topics under the “internet” catch-all: “Given how fuzzy the very idea of “the Internet” is, derivative concepts like “Internet freedom” have become so all-encompassing and devoid of any actual meaning that they can easily cover the regulation of 3D printers, the thorny issues of net neutrality, and the rights of dissident bloggers in Azerbaijan.” Morozov suggests we need to pay attention to individual technologies and individual actors in order to respond effectively and affect change.

In their 2015 article “Histories of the Internet: Introducing a Special Issue of "Information & Culture," historians and technologists Thomas Haigh, Andrew L. Russell and William H. Dutton suggest that “the expanding scope of the Internet has created a demand for different kinds of history that capture the development of the many technological and social practices that converged to create today's Internet-based online world.” This indicates there is likely a need for different kinds of conversation and public engagement that capture the breadth and diversity of people’s experience of the internet.

4. As "the internet" is understood broadly and sometimes prevents people from thinking about personal agency or specific actors, it can be helpful to deploy other terms in addition. When researchers want to talk to people about particular aspects of the internet or online experience, they have used a range of techniques to prompt more focused conversation, including: using nuanced and focused terminology, and describing specific scenarios.

"The internet" isn't the only framing that organisations and projects have used to understand people's understanding of the internet. New_ Public notes in its Building better digital public spaces framework that "Thinking about digital communication through the lens of 'spaces' is important because it encourages us to consider how spaces shape relationships — rather than just information exchange." The scope of digital spaces covers search engines, messaging apps and social media.

Closing analysis on framing "the internet":

There is likely no need to define what you mean by "the internet" when talking to people. However, when deciding on the scenarios to discuss with people, there is an opportunity to use more nuanced terms or describe specific scenarios that will help guide people towards certain kinds of conversation.

The "3 lenses" framing provided by Lehr, Clark, Bauer, Berger and Richter in "Whither the Public Internet?" — specifically the "customer experience" lens, although a different term might be preferable for public conversations — might be useful for setting the parameters of what kinds of activity most people think of when they think about the internet.

Contextualising the "internet for good"

Ensuring the internet has benefit for people has been an important focus for developers, activists and civil society since its inception and the development of the world wide web.

We have identified three broad themes where these discussions have focused to date:

- a "free and open internet" and network neutrality
- ensuring everyone can access the internet
- identifying and mitigating online harms.

This section provides background and information about each of these areas, and some key texts and quotes. It also discusses the tensions that can lie at the intersection of these themes — for example, some proposed approaches to preventing online harms can have impacts on net neutrality.

We note that this section does not include a detailed timeline of developments in each of these areas, which are out of scope for this scan.

A "free and open" internet

From early in its development, the internet and world wide web were designed not to be controlled by any one government, corporation or entity.[1]

The World Wide Web Foundation, the international non-profit co-founded by world wide web inventor Tim Berners-Lee, describe their mission as "to establish the Open Web as a global public good and a basic right, ensuring that everyone can access and use it freely" — a statement that encompasses both a "free and open" internet and an internet with universal access. In his 2009 paper "The open Internet: What it is, and why it matters", internet pioneer Vint Cerf says "The Internet is a general-purpose platform, not designed for any particular application and in fact neutral with regard to the applications it supports. End-users are in control of what content and applications they use and create."

Net neutrality

Net neutrality is a key term in conversations about an open internet. It is the concept that internet service providers (ISPs) must or should treat all internet communications equally, and should not differentiate based on source location, content type, user, or platform.[2] In a *Vox* explainer on net neutrality, Timothy Lee writes "It says your ISP shouldn't be allowed to block or degrade access to certain websites or services, nor should it be allowed to set aside a "fast lane" that allows content favoured by the ISP to load more quickly than the rest." Proponents of net neutrality suggest that bias by ISPs can result in stymied innovation and restricted free speech.

The idea of net neutrality has been important since the early days of the internet and world wide web, and is a key aspect of what people mean when they discuss a "free and open internet". The term itself was coined by Tim Wu in 2003, in his paper "Network Neutrality, Broadband Discrimination." Net neutrality has been an important principle and concept in legal battles in the US at the federal level. The impacts of US net neutrality decisions have impact further afield, as explained in this 2015 InternetNZ discussion paper.

Area of tension: internet openness and mitigating online harms

There is a tension in places between internet openness and some proposed approaches to mitigating online harms. For example, some legislators (including in New Zealand) have proposed legislative requirements for ISP-level internet filtering as a tool to prevent the spread of harmful content. This blog post from InternetNZ's then-Chief Executive Jordan Carter provides an outline of issues that people have raised about this approach.

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[1] Berners-Lee, T. (2021). "It's time to recognise internet access as a human right". World Wide Web Foundation. Retrieved from: https://webfoundation.org/2020/10/its-time-to-recognise-internet-access-as-a-human-right/

[2] Merriam Webster Dictionary, retrieved from: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/net%20neutrality

Evolving ways to think about internet "openness"

In some places, there have been discussions about whether the concept of "openness" needs to evolve to reflect the current state of the internet. For example, in September 2019, InternetNZ released a discussion starter paper called *Internet openness*. The paper proposed a draft definition of what internet openness requires for the coming years, recognising the need to make space for "reasonable policy responses to real online harms". The draft definition outlined in the discussion paper is "Internet openness means enabling people to observe, participate, and innovate, on both the core Internet infrastructure and major online services".

Ensuring everyone can access the internet

One key theme in discussions about an "internet for good" is around ensuring that everyone has access to the internet. This idea has been framed in a number of ways — including bridging the digital divide, digital inclusion, the internet as a human right and meaningful connectivity. There are differences between the framings, but they share the underlying theme that universal internet access is important for society and equity.

There are a range of impacts stemming from uneven distribution of internet access. In their comprehensive "The digital divide - An introduction", Alexander van Deursen and Jan van Dijk at the University of Twente's Centre for Digital Inclusion conclude:

> *"Unequal access to the Internet has varying consequences in several areas of society: the economic (e.g., acquisition and maintenance of jobs), the social (e.g., development and maintenance of social contacts), the political (e.g., voting and other kinds of political participation), the cultural (e.g., participation in cyber-culture), the spatial (e.g., the ability to lead a mobile life) and the institutional (e.g., recognition and attainment of citizens' rights)."*

The different framings of idea that everyone should have internet access are discussed in more detail below:

Bridging the digital divide: as outlined in their introduction to the digital divide, van Duersen and van Dijk note that the concept of the digital divide arose in the 1990s, originally to talk about the gap between people who did and did not have access to information and communications technologies (ICTs). It later became more common to talk specifically about those who have internet access and those who do not. Some discussions and definitions of the digital divide (or divides) also look at wider factors beyond connectivity. Van Duersen and van Dijk note that a number of scholars have highlighted conceptual issues with the digital divide. However, the concept has been a useful way to understand the benefits associated with ICT access and usage and negative consequences that relate to non-access and use.

The term “digital divide/s” has previously been used by the government and organisations like InternetNZ in New Zealand, but broadly the discussion has moved towards using a “digital inclusion” or “digital equity” framing.

Digital inclusion: in Aotearoa New Zealand, the aim to ensure people have access to the internet is broadly framed as digital inclusion (and also digital equity). For example, the New Zealand Government released *Te Mahere mō te Whakaurunga Matihiko the Digital Inclusion Blueprint* in 2019, Internet New Zealand has digital inclusion as a key priority.

In their 2017 report to MBIE *Digital New Zealanders: The Pulse of Our Nation*, the Digital Inclusion Research Group explains “‘Digital inclusion’ refers to an outcome in which all New Zealanders have equitable opportunities to participate in society using digital technologies.” The “MAST” framework — motivation, access, skills and trust — is used by the Pulse of our Nation report and the *Digital Inclusion Blueprint* to frame the elements required for a person to be digitally included. In the 2018 report *Out of the Maze: Building Digitally Inclusive Communities*, researcher Marianne Elliott highlighted that capacity — that is the time, energy, and resilience to engage with the internet and digital technology — is also important in achieving digital inclusion.

Internet as a human right: as the internet has become near-ubiquitous and essential to many people’s lives, NGOs and other advocates have discussed whether access to information in general, or access to the internet specifically, should be considered a human right. In 2019, the UN issued a non-binding resolution about human rights and internet access, referring to “the promotion, protection, and enjoyment of human rights on the internet”. The resolution condemns countries that intentionally disrupt citizens' internet access, and reaffirms the UN’s stance that "the same rights people have offline must also be protected online."

Meaningful connectivity: the Alliance for an Affordable Internet’s Meaningful Connectivity framework sets out what kind of connectivity (and devices) are needed for people to be able to engage online in a meaningful way. It proposes that an online/offline dichotomy is not helpful and that “We have meaningful connectivity when we can use the internet **every day** using an **appropriate device** with **enough data** and a **fast connection.”**

The overarching theme in these framings is that the internet is a key tool for participation in society, and governments and organisations should ensure that everyone globally can have access. The “digital inclusion” (and to some extent, digital divides) framing also looks at other things needed beyond connectivity and devices — such as skills, trust in digital services and a meaningful reason to want to engage (motivation).

Identifying and mitigating online harms

Another conversation around realising an “internet for good” has involved identifying a range of online harms and undertaking work to mitigate these harms. The Minister of

Internal Affairs, Jan Tenneti has discussed this in the context of "keeping people safer online".

There are a range of ways to frame harms that are the result of, or exacerbated by, the internet and digital technologies. In many cases, these harms pre-date the internet, but the speed and scale of information transfer has amplified their effects. In their 2019 report *Digital Threats to Democracy*, the Workshop identified seven key digital threats to inclusive democracy:

- increasing power of private platforms
- foreign government interference in democratic processes
- surveillance and data protection
- fake news, misinformation and disinformation
- filter bubbles[3] and echo chambers
- hate speech and trolling
- distrust/dissatisfaction with democracy.

Other broader digital harms which have been identified include:

- the dissemination of child sexual abuse material (further information from Netsafe)
- the dissemination of other objectionable content (a recent example is the livestream video of the March 15 terror attack and the manifesto of the attacker)
- online bullying
- identity theft and fraud.

There has been significant focus on addressing a range of these issues in Aotearoa New Zealand in recent years. While it is out of scope of this section of this scan to discuss in detail, some examples of work and tools to address online harms are:

- The Harmful Digital Communications Act 2015
- The Government's comprehensive review of online content regulation
- Countering violent online extremism [also see: The Christchurch Call]
- The Ministry of Justice's proposals against incitement of hatred and discrimination in Aotearoa New Zealand
- Aotearoa New Zealand Code of Practice for Online Safety and Harms (Netsafe)
- New Zealand's Cyber Security Strategy 2019 (DPMC)

[3] The Merriam Webster dictionary defines filter bubbles as: "an environment and especially an online environment in which people are exposed only to opinions and information that conform to their existing beliefs".

- Addressing COVID-19 vaccine misinformation e.g. information on the CERTNZ and Government Covid-19 websites.

Closing insights

The World Wide Web Foundation, led by web pioneer Tim Berners Lee, states that "We're working for a future in which the Web empowers everyone, everywhere, to take part in building a fairer world." This mission statement encapsulates an understanding of the internet that was popular among early internet innovators — that the internet is an innate good, and that the priority for government and civil society organisations should be to ensure the internet is free and fair, help everyone get access, and then get out of the way.

More recently, conversations about online harms and safety have necessarily become part of the conversation about an "internet for good." Tragedies like the the 15 March terror attacks; the prevalence of online mis- and dis-information; and the widely-publicised challenges of content moderation on major platforms have made it clear that the internet can exacerbate harm just as it can enable good.

Moving forward, there is room for conversations that address people's experiences of the internet and online life in a nuanced, empathetic way, and provides space for people to imagine not just an "internet for good" in the abstract, but an internet that is better for them, their loved ones, and their communities.

2. Envisioning what a desired future state might look like

In this section, we provide an international scan of literature that focuses on describing and developing what an internet for good might look like, drawing out key themes and framing. The scan centres on work done by non-governmental organisations, independent researchers and civil society groups. It specifically focuses on the framing of "an internet that is better for people", including:

- the language and framing organisations use to talk about an internet for good (and especially making it better for people)
- visions for an internet for good, and what that might look like in practice.

On the following pages, we present summaries of a number of key reports and pieces of research that talk about what a desired future state for the internet might look like.

A note on scope and focus

We note that in our review of research that centres the experiences of Māori communities, other Indigenous communities, and internet users in developing countries, we found less work on how to make people's experience of using the internet better, and more work that focused on making the internet *available* to people, whānau, and communities. This likely reflects that Indigenous communities and people in developing countries have historically had more challenges in accessing robust, consistent, and affordable connectivity.[4]

While the scope of this section is focused more on envisioning the qualities of a future internet that is better for people, we have also included some work on the future of internet infrastructure, access, and ownership. This reflects that work on Māori and Indigenous aspirations for the future of the internet often centres on the ways that access to the internet, and/or ownership of internet infrastructure or spectrum, can be enablers for helping people, whānau, and communities to improve economic prosperity and self determination.[5] It also accounts for the fact that the internet does not function in isolation, but is inextricably linked with physical infrastructure and social infrastructures.

Note: some key terms are highlighted in blue throughout this section.

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[4] See for example: *Waiting to Connect: The Expert Panel on High-Throughput Networks for Rural and Remote Communities in Canada*, Council of Canadian Academies, Council of Canadian Academies, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.cca-reports.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Waiting-to-Connect_FINAL-EN_digital.pdf; and *Report: Digital inclusion user insights — Māori*, Department of Internal Affairs, 2021. Retrieved from: https://www.digital.govt.nz/dmsdocument/177~report-digital-inclusion-user-insights-maori/html.

[5] For example: *2019 Indigenous Connectivity Summit Report*, Internet Society, 2019. Retrieved from: https://www.internetsociety.org/resources/doc/2020/2019-indigenous-connectivity-summit-report/

Visions of the Internet in 2035, Pew Research Center

In their 2022 report *Visions of the Internet in 2035*, Pew Research Center asked 434 technology innovators and developers, business and policy leaders, researchers and activists about their vision for a better future internet.

Language and framing

The report uses the following language to frame the research question and the goal of the report:

> [Respondents were asked to] *"Imagine a better world online"*
>
> *"In this report, the questions focused on the prospects for improvements in the tone and activities of the digital public sphere by 2035"*

In their extended prompt to survey respondents, the authors also use the terms "a better world online", "digital life," and "digital realm" to describe the aspects of the internet they are interested in exploring.

The survey prompt invites respondents to think creatively and to share a vivid description of a better future world online. It is worth reading the prompt in full:

> *"We invite you to imagine a better world online: What is one example of an aspect of digital life that you think could be different in 2035 than it is today? We invite you to create a vignette of something you would like to see taking place in a "new and improved" digital realm in 2035. Your example might involve politics or social activities or jobs or physical and mental health or community life or education. Feel free to think expansively – and specifically."*

The prompt resulted in responses that were full of vivid and specific descriptions, provocative ideas, and visions for creative and positive future developments.

Visions for an internet for good

The Pew report summarises the key themes present in respondents' descriptions of an improved future internet:

> *"Many envisioned a vastly more hospitable online environment that facilitates socially enriching relationships; the flowering of knowledge-creating communities; growth of truth-seeking group discussions; and new kinds of interactions enabled by artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR). At best, they imagine tech-aided collaborations – sometimes global in scale – that can tackle the world's most pressing questions."*

The key areas of change that respondents thought could lead to better digital interactions and improvements throughout society are summarised in the report, sorted into the following categories:

- *Building better spaces* [ie that redesigned and innovative digital platforms could codify new norms for discourse and facilitate open and honest conversations]
- *Constructing effective communities* [ie communities that collect and share knowledge, or inspire debate and trust, or help diminish inequalities, or build a culture of global education etc]
- *Empowering individuals*
- *Changing economic life and work*
- *Altering "reality"*
- *Tackling wicked problems.*

The Future of Digital Spaces and Their Role in Democracy, Pew Research Center

The *Visions of the Internet in 2035* report followed a related 2022 report, *The Future of Digital Spaces and Their Role in Democracy*, which also polled experts and solicited input on the future of the internet. In this piece of work, Pew framed the conversation using terms like "public online spaces", "digital life", and "digital tools and forums". The key research question was phrased as following:

> *"Looking ahead to 2035, will digital spaces and people's use of them be changed in ways that significantly serve the public good?"*

While this report is not as directly relevant to work on how to build an internet that is better for people, it is worth looking at for its use of concrete language and specific prompts. The follow-up questions (available in methodology section) use a series of prompts about different aspects of online life and digital spaces to elicit feedback:

> *"If you answered YES to the last question, please tell us how you imagine this transformation of digital spaces and digital life will take place: What reforms or initiatives may have the biggest impact? What beneficial role do you see tech leaders and/or politicians and/or public audiences playing in this evolution? What will be noticeably improved about digital life for the average user 2035? What current problems do you see being diminished? Which will persist and continue to raise major concerns?"*
>
> *"If you answered NO to the last question, why do you think digital spaces and digital life will not be substantially better by 2035? What aspects of human nature, internet governance, laws and regulations, technology tools and digital spaces do you think are so entrenched that things will not much change? Are there any ways in which you think things could change for the better – even if the change isn't dramatic?"*

"YES" responses were summarised in the following categories:

- *Social media algorithms are the first thing to fix*
- *Government regulation plus less-direct "soft" pressure by government will help shape corporations' adoption of more ethical behavior*
- *The general public's digital literacy will improve and people's growing familiarity with technology's dark sides will bring improvements*
- *New internet governance structures will appear that draw on collaborations among citizens, businesses and governments.*

"NO" responses were summarised in the following categories:

- *Humans are self-centered and shortsighted, making them easy to manipulate*
- *The trends toward more datafication and surveillance of human activity are unstoppable*
- *Haters, polarizers and jerks will gain more power*
- *Humans can't keep up with the speed and complexity of digital change.*

Civic Signals, New_ Public

Throughout 2019 and 2020, the organisation Civic Signals (which later became New_ Public) researched and talked to over 100 experts from disciplines ranging from social psychology to urban planning about the qualities of flourishing public, or semi-public, spaces. They then tested the framework that emerged from this research with thousands of people in 20 countries, and shaped a set of recommendations, published in 2021, for creating better online public spaces.

Language and framing

In their focus groups, researchers asked participants high-level questions about their opinions of social internet spaces, and followed up with specific prompts to elicit more detailed answers. The specific prompts include:

> *"Tell us about a rewarding social experience; it can be online or offline. How would you describe a rewarding social experience in general? What do you think made the experience rewarding? What key elements make the experience rewarding?"*
>
> *"If you think about your offline conversations and your online conversations, what do you wish your online conversations had that you get from your offline conversations? In other words, what is missing in your online conversations that you have in your offline conversations?"*[6]

[6] "Method for focus group" document, downloaded from https://newpublic.org/signals

Visions for an internet for good

The Civic Signals research stresses the connections and similarities between offline public spaces and online public spaces. "Humans have designed spaces for public life for millennia – and there are lessons here that can be helpful for digital life," they note.

Researchers surveyed the elements that contribute to "flourishing and equitable physical public spaces" and which might be applicable when working towards better digital public spaces. These are outlined below. They note:

When we examine flourishing and equitable physical public spaces, they often:

- *Develop programming – social activities – that draw different groups in, without over-optimizing for any one group*
- *Offer visual cues as to what kinds of behavior are invited in the space*
- *Are designed to be physically accessible and attractive to many different populations*
- *Engage stewards, leaders, and maintainers who can do the labor of community-building*
- *Are designed in partnership with the communities that use them.*

The four building blocks of flourishing online spaces that the researchers identify are:

- *Welcome (people must feel welcome and safe, and ideally comfortable and secure)*
- *Connect (bringing people together to form connections with each other, with resources, and with power)*
- *Understand (helping us make sense, together, of the world around us)*
- *Act (when the other pieces are in place, digital spaces can inspire us to work together to support our own communities and others', and to become better, more informed, compassionate, and involved citizens of the world around us.)*

Note: The Inclusive Aotearoa Collective's 2020 research on belonging includes insights about the ways and structures of welcoming. These could be helpful when thinking about the Civic Signals building block of "welcome" in an Aotearoa New Zealand context.

Whose Knowledge? Campaign

Whose Knowledge? is a global campaign, launched in 2018, to centre the knowledge of marginalised communities — "the majority of the world," in their words — on the internet. Their work takes the form of framing, critique, and projects. They particularly work with women, people of colour, LGBTQI communities, indigenous peoples and others from the global South to build and represent more of all of our own knowledge online.

Language and framing

Whose Knowledge? frame their goal for the internet and the digital world as:

> *"Whose Knowledge? is a radical re-imagining and re-design of the internet, so that together we build and defend an internet of, for and by all,"* and
>
> *"Whose Knowledge? is a global, multilingual campaign to design an internet based on knowledge justice and equity by centering the leadership of marginalized communities."*

They connect historical injustices and the ongoing impacts of colonialism and unequal development to the silos and limited perspectives present on the internet today. In their language and framing, Whose Knowledge? discuss how the lack of representation of diverse voices online has negative impacts in the broader world, and they acknowledge that changing the internet will require many voices and careful, coordinated work:

> *"Many of us remain unseen and unheard, and this is made worse when our histories and knowledges are missing online. And because this is such a big and complex problem, we know that efforts to re-imagine the internet, and knowledges on it, will require a multitude of us working together."*

Visions for an internet for good

In their 2021-2023 prospectus, Whose Knowledge? describe their mission to help build a better and more equitable internet — "knowledge justice" — as necessarily tied to racial justice and climate justice. They also emphasise the need to look at historic wisdom and indigenous bodies of knowledge:

> *"We believe strongly that we cannot imagine our digital futures without reflecting on our analog pasts. Most critically, we cannot re-imagine knowledge and re-design a just and equitable internet or planet without drawing from the wisdoms of our ancestors and indigenous peoples."*

This approach, which centres different ways of knowing and different knowledge traditions, likely has relevance for designing engagements that are appropriate for and unique to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Infrastructure: Building the World We Deserve, Siegel Family Endowment

In the 2020 white paper *Infrastructure: Building the World We Deserve*, the Siegel Family Endowment propose the internet and social structures as essential "infrastructures" alongside the pipes, roads, and wires that people traditionally understand as infrastructure.

Language and framing

The key framing device in this paper is to situate digital systems and social systems as "infrastructures", as a way to position them as essential underpinnings of a healthy and vibrant society, and in order to describe the interdependencies between the physical, digital, and social aspects of infrastructure. For example:

> *"For decades, the physical, digital, and social dimensions of infrastructure have typically been treated as separate issues, leading to siloed thinking and short-term solutions. But infrastructure doesn't exist in isolation in the real world. For instance, a library isn't just a storage facility for books. It's a physical space that forges community bonds and offers digital access..."*

Research for the white paper included talking to a broad range of experts to learn about their experiences and gather ideas for improving infrastructure (including social and digital infrastructure).

Visions for an internet for good

The white paper is interspersed with case study scenarios showing "smarter infrastructure in action." The case study examples use vivid descriptions to show how the three elements of infrastructure can support each other to create positive change in specific scenarios. The authors emphasise the importance of looking at historical examples and models in order to inform the future:

> *"Creating a new vision for infrastructure is difficult, but we've been here before."*
>
> *"But amid all this talk of change, it's important to keep one thing in mind: Infrastructure must meet future needs, not just current ones."*

The final scenario provides a high-level look at how the three infrastructures might interrelate in a future society, with vivid descriptions of different aspects, including:

> *"1: Physical innovations, such as water bottle stations and solar trash compactors, orient community behavior toward sustainable practices that improve society's longterm well-being. Moreover, the data they collect helps measure the impact of these decisions and reveals further opportunities for improvement.*
>
> *2: Citizens engage with their local representatives, while tech workers build civic tools based on government data. The increased use of technology within government can help unlock insights and innovations for improved responsiveness and service.*
>
> *3. Digital tools, like touchscreen information boards and public Wi-Fi, help people navigate their physical space and provide information about social events around town."* [etc]

"Young People, Technology and the Future of te Reo Māori", Te Taka Keegan and Daniel Cunliffe

In this 2014 chapter, authors Keegan and Cunliffe lay out the argument for fostering te reo Māori through ensuring it is incorporated into technology applications and on the internet. While the chapter is not specifically about the internet, it is included here to indicate another area where researchers have argued the internet can play a part in realising aspirations for Māori.

The writers argue that the use of te reo Māori on the internet and in other arenas of technology "may have the potential to increase young people's desire to use the language. Through an association with technology a language may be perceived as relevant, modem, cool or even sexy and young people may be more inclined to use it."

Visions for an internet for good

Throughout the chapter, the writers indirectly argue that an internet that is better for Māori is an internet where te reo Māori is visible, incorporated into interfaces where appropriate, and has a robust community of users.

> *"Where there is a larger mass of people [using te reo Māori online], it is more likely that there will be a discussion of a wider range of topics (music, cooking, politics, etc.), from a variety of different viewpoints, leading to a more dynamic, vital and self-sustaining community. This will hopefully appeal to and encourage speakers, who will in turn create more content, which in turn may attract and encourage others in a virtuous circle."*

"Hangarau me te Māori: Māori and technology", Te Taka Keegan & Acushla Sciascia

This 2018 chapter takes a wider view of technology than just the internet, but its focus centres on how pre-digital practices can be transferred to, and fostered by, the internet age.

Language and framing

The authors look back at Māori innovation and technology development throughout the centuries in order to look forward towards future opportunities for Māori to use and develop technology. By bringing the past to bear on the present and future, the chapter charts the whakapapa of contemporary technology and aims to highlight the opportunities for Māori to "adopt and shape technology for their own benefit."

Visions for an internet for good

The authors discuss the need for Māori values and principles to be adapted for the internet era. This might include "Virtual whanaungatanga", which offers "a framework and process

made up of values, which enables relationships to be formed, strengthened and maintained in culturally recognisable ways." They also discuss what role tapu might play in the online world, asking "could applications of tapu to virtual spaces merely be an extension of cultural practices and articulations of identity?" and look at how the internet might provide avenues to complement to kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) practices:

> *"Broadening kanohi ki te kanohi as a values-based practice to include virtual forms could be more inclusive of Māori living away from their ancestral lands, allowing them to continue to maintain meaningful connections to their hau kainga."*

People, Power and Technology: The 2018 Digital Attitudes Report, Doteveryone

Doteveryone's *People Power and Technology: The 2018 Digital Attitudes Report* looks beyond internet usage to explore how the British public thinks and feels about the internet technologies "shaping our world and changing our lives." This focus notes that until recently, much public internet research focused on the basics of internet use and access.

Language and framing

2,538 respondents were surveyed by research partners BritainThinks, and a number of focus groups were carried out to support the survey. A comprehensive list of survey questions is not included in the research. However, some of the questions took the form of descriptive scenarios, where people were asked to rate the acceptability of various scenarios in order to understand how people make tradeoffs in their understanding and use of the digital world. Scenarios included things like:

> *"If an online retailer began offering free 1-day delivery for lower income families in my community, but this resulted in local shops closing down"*

> *"If my local Council made cost savings by transferring all their services online and reduced my Council tax as a result, but this meant that some members of the community found it difficult to access these services"*

Overall the scenarios aimed to highlight how people understood the conflict between "individual benefits and societal impacts"

Visions for an internet for good

The report highlights key trends in opinions about the internet as it is today, noting:

> *"The internet has had a strongly positive impact on our lives as individuals, but people are less convinced it has been beneficial for society as a whole. 50% say it has made life a lot better for people like themselves, only 12% say it's had a very positive impact on society."*

Based on the findings of their survey, Doteveryone summarises a set of essential recommendations they think can help move towards an internet that is better for people. We note that these recommendations are based on the researchers' analysis rather than on the direct opinions and thoughts of respondents. The recommendations are:

- *Investment in new forms of public engagement and education, from both government and technology businesses*
- *Shared standards for understandability and transparency so everyone can understand more about the products and services they use*
- *Independent regulation and accountability, so standards are upheld and people know who to turn to when things go wrong.*

The four key principles of a "Good" Web, Catch 22

Catch 22, a UK-based public service design and delivery business that builds resilience and aspiration in people and communities, undertook a major consultation on online harms and young people in 2021. This research focuses on negative impacts of online content and interactions. However, throughout their research, many of the young people consulted were quick to point out the positive impacts and affordances of the internet as well as the harms.

Visions for an internet for good

In their blog post "The four key principles of a 'good' web", Catch 22 lay out four principles they think could improve the internet and people's online experiences, based on insights learned directly from what children and young people are asking for. The principles are:

- *Guidelines that work* [whatever is put into legislation must be fit for purpose and there must be consequences if online platforms don't abide by the laws']
- *Opportunities* [ways to thrive online, and to embrace the opportunities provided by the internet]
- *Options* [for users to be enabled to use a range of sites and tools without their behaviour being unduly manipulated or limited]
- *Digital inclusion.*

The "opportunities" principle is of particular note, and supports the argument for moving beyond only talking to the public about harms, towards asking people what they want to see in the future, and how the internet could better serve them.

> *"When we talk about a 'good web' it shouldn't be just about the desire to create an online world where we're preventing people being exploited, harmed or exposed to things they shouldn't be. It should be about more than surviving online – it should be about thriving online."*

> *"Listen to what users are saying – especially young people – and especially young people who have been exposed to online harms. But equally, let's listen to people who are thriving online."*

Note: the full report on online harms, *Online Harms Experienced by Children and Young People: 'Acceptable Use' and Regulation* contains many quotes from children and young people about the positive impacts of the internet.

Report of the Secretary-General: Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, United Nations

The UN Secretary-General's 2020 *Roadmap for Digital Cooperation* was produced following consultation with a 20 person panel, co-chaired by Melinda Gates and Jack Ma, and gathering feedback from over 100 entities and organisations.

Language and framing

The high-level goal of the Roadmap is:

> *"a safer, more equitable digital world, one which will lead to a brighter and more prosperous future for all."*

Visions for an internet for good

The Roadmap centres around 8 key areas for action, to achieve a safer and more equitable digital world. These are:

- *Achieving universal connectivity by 2030*
- *Promoting digital public goods to create a more equitable world*
- *Ensuring digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable*
- *Strengthening digital capacity-building*
- *Ensuring the protection of human rights in the digital era*
- *Supporting global cooperation on artificial intelligence*
- *Promoting trust and security in the digital environment*
- *Building a more effective architecture for digital cooperation.*

Meaningful Connectivity Report, Alliance for Affordable Internet (2022)

This 2022 report by the Alliance for Affordable Internet surveyed people across 9 low- and middle-income countries on their level of access to the internet. It advances the idea that to benefit from digital technologies, people need not only nominal internet connection but "meaningful connectivity" in order to make the most of what the internet has to offer.

Language and framing

The report discusses meaningful connectivity as “a way to support more inclusive societies and strengthen digital economies,” and frames building meaningful connectivity as a way to move towards “active and participatory digital societies.”

Visions for an internet for good

The authors define meaningful connectivity through a framework that focuses on four pillars:

- *4G-like speeds*
- *Smartphone ownership*
- *Daily use*
- *Unlimited access at a regular location, like home, work, or a place of study*

The report’s key recommendation is that Governments must prioritise reliable, affordable, and meaningful connectivity for their citizens if they are serious about securing the benefits of a digital society for everyone.

3. Surfacing underlying values

Introduction

We expect that people's thoughts about what an *internet that is better for people* will look like will be underpinned by the values they hold and prioritise. As defined by the Collins English Dictionary, values are "the moral principles and beliefs or accepted standards of a person or social group". This definition reflects broadly how we will be discussing values in the following section.

In this section, we outline some of the ways researchers have talked about values and value sets, and consider the ways underlying values may inform people's opinions on specific topics from social media to connectivity. We then outline a range of values-driven frameworks and resources used in an Aotearoa New Zealand context that relate to the use and implementation of digital technologies. We also look at how values may differ across cultures and locations, and how they can transform over time.

Frameworks for understanding values

Philip Brey: underlying values and beliefs shape how we view the internet

In his 2006 article "Evaluating the social and cultural implications of the internet", Philip Brey argues that the way people think about the internet — including their opinions about the internet's benefits and harms — depends strongly on their underlying values and beliefs.

He notes that people's underlying assessments of, and disagreements about, the benefits and disadvantages of the internet are either normative (values-based) or empirical (fact-based) assessments. However normative and empirical assessments are often strongly interwoven, as people's understanding of how the internet works and what its impacts are are also affected by their value system and level of knowledge.

> *"People have different opinions on what the benefits and disadvantages [of the internet] are and also differ in the way in which they balance them against each other. Underlying these different assessments of the Internet are different value systems."*

While the values that underlie people's claims about the internet may be individual and idiosyncratic, Brey notes that "frequently they are part of more widely shared value systems or ideologies."

These "widely shared value systems or ideologies," which he calls "comprehensive doctrines," range from world religions to political tendencies. These comprehensive doctrines tend to have formed over long periods of time, be shared by large groups of people, and serve as general frameworks and value systems that shape how people within

certain communities and societies understand the world. Some of these doctrines described in Brey's article are outlined in the table below.

Comprehensive doctrine	Values
World religions like Christianity, Islam and their different strands	Religious systems often include a transcendent conception of good and bad, according to which standards for goodness are given by a divine being.
Consumerism	Holds that physical wellbeing and the collection and consumption of material goods is the greatest good and highest value in life.
Postmaterialist	Emphasises nonmaterial and nonhedonistic values like personal growth, quality leisure time, contemplation, meaningful relationships, care for the environment, social equality, and spirituality.
Libertarianism	Individuals should decide for themselves what is good or bad, as long as they leave each other free.
Conservatism	Can be understood as an ideology that strives to preserve existing social order and the institutions that sustain it.
Communitarianism	A political ideology that holds that the state should preserve communities and should often prioritise the interests of communities over those of individuals. It presupposes a limited concept of the good according to which individual wellbeing is dependent on the wellbeing of communities.

Public Interest Research Centre: values tend to show up in clusters

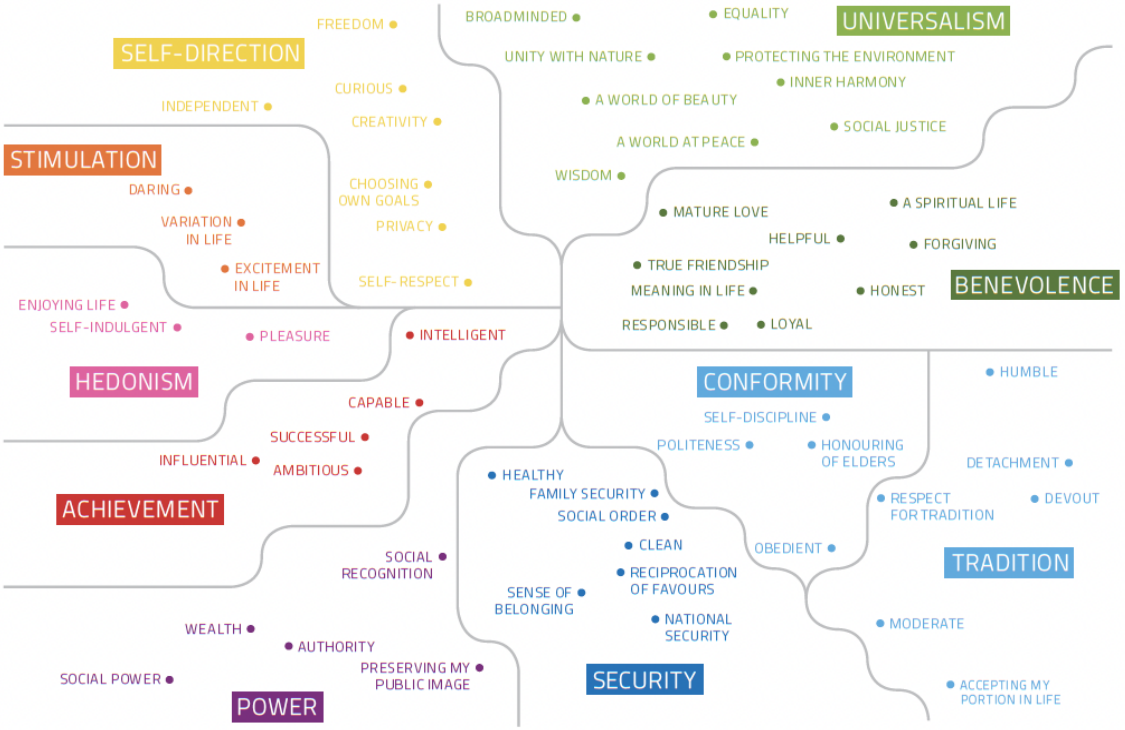
The UK-based Public Interest Research Centre (PIRC) examines the impact of values on people's thoughts and behaviour in its *Common Cause Handbook*. Similar to Brey, the authors argue that values underlie people's behaviour and decisions across all kinds of domains, saying:

> *"In both action and thought, people are affected by a wide range of influences. Past experience, cultural and social norms, and the money at our disposal are some of the most important. Connected to all of these, to some extent, are our values—which represent a strong guiding force, shaping our attitudes and behaviour over the course of our lives. Our values have been shown to influence our political persuasions; our willingness to participate in political action; our career choices; our ecological footprints; the amount of resources we use, and for what purpose; and our feelings of personal wellbeing."*

The *Common Cause Handbook* sets out what researchers have identified as commonly-recurring human values.[7] The authors argue that these can be found across cultures and geographies, and that "each of us is motivated by all of these values, but to differing degrees".

The *Handbook* also notes that these values tend to appear in clusters: "Rather than occurring randomly, these values were found to be related to each other. Some were unlikely to be prioritised strongly at the same time by the same individual; others were often prioritised strongly at the same time." That is, people who value "equality" tend to be likely to also prioritise related values like "protecting the environment," but are less likely to strongly value "social power."

The authors map these individual values into clusters of connected values: "The closer any one value 'point' is to another, the more likely that both will be of similar importance to the same person. By contrast, the further a value is from another, the less likely that both will be seen as similarly important." The values used by PIRC, and their categories and clusters are illustrated in the diagram below.[8]



[7] The Common Cause Handbook references the following texts: Schwartz, S.H. (1992). Universals in the content and structure of values: theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In M.P. Zanna, ed. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 25. Orlando: Academic Press, pp. 1–65; Rokeach, M. (1973). The Nature of Human Values. New York: The Free Press.

[8] We note that the values identified by the PIRC are also used in an Aotearoa New Zealand context by research and training organisation The Workshop in their 'Narratives for Change' training.

Values in the Aotearoa New Zealand context

The scholarship covered above situates values at a high level and in a global context. However, work to understand values in an Aotearoa New Zealand context should also take a locally situated lens.

The Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand website notes that "While not all New Zealanders have the same views, there are some values that most New Zealanders think are important. These include: democracy; the rule of law (rather than being ruled according to the whims of leaders); protection by government; fairness and equality; honesty." It adds "Many Māori, and also non-Māori, place a high value on honouring the Treaty of Waitangi and Māori rights. New Zealanders are generally in favour of multiculturalism, but some have at times been less welcoming to immigrants."

The report *A Pacific Perspective on the Living Standards Framework and Wellbeing* discussed significant differences between Pākehā (European) fundamental values and Māori and Pacific peoples' values. These are outlined in the table below.[9]

Pākehā	**Pacific Peoples/ Māori**
Individual Secular Consumer Conflictual Competitive	Communal Spiritual Ecological Consensual Collaborative

The report *An Indigenous Approach to the Living Standards Framework* situates values in relation to how Māori perceive wellbeing. It notes:

> *"Whānau, hapū and iwi values vary across Aotearoa New Zealand, informed by the range of needs, interests and aspirations they have for their own wellbeing. It is also important to acknowledge that Māori are a heterogeneous population whose perspectives are varied by separate experiences, local mātauranga and whakapapa; all of which shape their interactions with others."*

In a 2006 lecture to the Treasury on measuring Māori wellbeing, Mason Durie notes that while there are differences in tikanga and kawa between iwi and hapū, "there are some values that are shared in all Māori traditions and which constitute an important core of Māori culture and philosophy e.g. manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga, karakia."

[9] The report writers borrowed these values from the work of Waldegrave et al., while making one addition (competitive/collaborative). Reference: Waldegrave, C., Tamasese, K., Tuhaka, F. & Campbell, W., 2003. Just Therapy - a journey. A Collection of Papers from the Just Therapy Team, New Zealand. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Values can change over time

The values that people hold are not necessarily stable and consistent — they can change over time. In the *Common Cause Handbook*, PIRC notes that "large-scale, widespread changes in values have been observed across the world at different times, and attributed to different factors". These factors can include education, increasing use of technologies (e.g. mass media or the internet) and the influence of media, business, and political and social movements. There can also be a significant change in people's attitudes following major events.

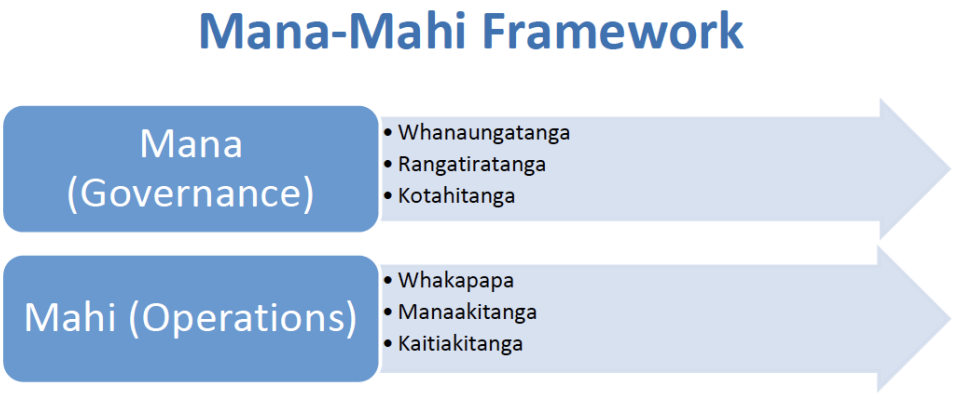
In their analysis of New Zealanders' responses to the World Values Survey, 1985 -2019, Paul Perry and Polly Yueng of Massey University identify changing trends in how people in New Zealand think about a range of issues. They note that between 1985 and 2019 "Declining religiosity is particularly evident, along with increasing environmental concern, increasing social tolerance and support for gender equality, a general increase in trusting other people, as well as increasing value placed on the Treaty of Waitangi."[10]

Examples of values-driven frameworks in Aotearoa New Zealand

Below, we outline a selection of frameworks which apply Māori concepts and values to different aspects of digital technologies in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Mana-Mahi Framework

The Mana-Mahi framework, outlined in the charter of Te Mana Rauranga (the Māori Data Sovereignty Network), describes principles for developing work on Māori Data Sovereignty at both the governance level (the "mana" part of the framework) and operational level (the "mahi" part of the framework).



[10] Perry, P. Yeung, P. *Keeping New Zealand in the World Values Survey, 1985-2019: A Brief Project History and Selected New Zealand Social Trends from the World's Largest Non-Commercial Social Survey.* Aotearoa New Zealand Journal of Social Issues, vol. 1. https://ojs.aut.ac.nz/anzjsi/article/view/52

The TMR Charter outlines each of these areas in more detail and what they might look like in practice. The Mana-Mahi framework may have applications in areas beyond Māori Data Sovereignty. For example, in the 2020 report *Māori Perspectives on Trust and Automated Decision-Making*, researchers at Te Kotahi Research Institute suggested that the framework could also be applied to the use of automated decision making. The report provides specific details about what each aspect of the framework could look like in practice in the context of automated decision-making.

Ngā Tikanga Paihere

Ngā Tikanga Paihere is a framework developed by Stats NZ to guide researchers in the ethical use of microdata in the Integrated Data Infrastructure. The framework is built around five principles and 10 supporting tikanga. While it was developed specifically for users of the IDI, Stats NZ is investigating its use in broader contexts to guide ethical data use.

Mā ngā tikanga e arahina - *Be guided by good principles*

Literature Scan: an internet that is better for people. Antistatic, April 2022.

Tikanga Ipurangi

Te Wānanga o Aotearoa have issued Tikanga Ipurangi Digital Guidelines for students participating in its iAkoranga digital learning environment. The guidelines are based on Te Wānanga o Aotearoa's Kaupapa Wānanga framework — which guides the organisation's way of working, and how it puts its mission, philosophy and values into action.[11]

The Tikanga Ipurangi Digital Guidelines outline how the four takepū (applied principles) that make up Kaupapa Wānanga can be applied to the digital learning environment. The four takepū are:

- Kaitiakitanga (Responsibilities)
- Āhurutanga (Safe Spaces)
- Koha (Contributions of Consequence)
- Mauri Ora (Well-being).

Kia Takatū ā-Matihiko / Digital Readiness Programme

Kia Takatū ā-Matihiko was the National Digital Readiness programme which ran between 2017 and 2020, funded by the Ministry of Education. The programme — which was framed around Māori concepts — aimed to support teachers and kaiako to implement the revised curriculum content for digital technologies and hangarau matihiko.

A 2020 article in the Education Gazette provided information about the framing for the programme notes "The programme is centred around the purakau/ legend of Māui and Mahuika, who had fingernails of fire. Māui wanted to improve people's lives by bringing fire into the world and stole her fingernails which unearthed a world of possibilities for people to develop technologies and ingenious thinking. Learning characteristics include being curious, brave and determined – represented by Māui – and kaitiaki, ethical and reflective – represented by Mahuika."

[11] Te Wānanga o Aotearoa. (2017). *Te Manu Student Handbook.* Pg 8. https://www.twoa.ac.nz/tauira-students/te-manu-tauira-handbook

4. What communities have already said on related issues

This section is a scan of prior work done in Aotearoa to engage people and communities around issues related to “an internet that is better for people”. This aims to ensure the participatory research does not double up on work that has already been done, avoid overburdening communities, and ensure researchers can draw from insights that have already been collected.

Our aim was to gain an understanding of the kinds of relevant engagement and participatory research that has taken place in the past few years. We looked particularly for engagement which went beyond formal submission processes, and where groups of people in communities were involved.

Scope and process

The writeup below is focused on understanding what engagement has taken place, rather than the outcomes or insights shared through that engagement.

We looked for public engagement that has been run by government agencies, researchers and other non-governmental organisations since 2019. We have focused on engagement processes where there was a particular focus on getting broad community feedback (rather than, for example, targeted engagement with specific expert groups).

Overview of engagement

In this scan, we identified 13 engagement processes looking at issues that intersect with the concept of an internet that is better for people since 2019. While we expect this is not exhaustive, it does provide insight into the types of discussions that have already taken place, and the groups that have been engaged with to date. A full table of engagement can be found at the end of this section of this report.

We identified three main themes covered by engagement processes:

- Minimising harm
- Increasing belonging, inclusion and social cohesion
- Digital inclusion.

Theme 1: Minimising harm

Engagements in this theme were related to government proposals to mitigate the harms from hate speech and objectionable/harmful content (although one process was facilitated by the Human Rights Commission rather than a government agency). There was one significant public engagement process (19,000+ submissions) in this category, as well as two processes which focused specifically on talking to people affected by harmful speech.

Much of the work that drove engagement in this area was in response to the 15 March 2019 Christchurch terror attacks, or the subsequent report from the Royal Commission.

At time of writing, we were unable to find information about the themes and details that emerged from these engagements (for example through summary of submissions).

Theme 2: Increasing belonging, inclusion and social cohesion

While much of the engagement in this theme was government-led, there was less emphasis overall on specific legislative outcomes or proposals. Instead, focus was on building understanding of what is needed for social inclusion and belonging. Much of the engagement we found in this category was in response to the 15 March 2019 Christchurch terror attacks, or the subsequent report from the Royal Commission.

Theme 3: Digital inclusion (including connectivity)

Most of these engagements focused on understanding the needs of people who are not digitally included. It also included Māori-led engagement on the future of the 5G spectrum. This theme was more likely to include engagement which had detailed discussions with groups of individuals as part of the process. We also found more research projects in this area, as opposed to government-led engagement around legislative proposals.

Other engagement

In addition to engagement that fell into the themes above, we also found additional relevant consultation. For example:

- Engagement on the "Towards a Digital Strategy for Aotearoa" (2021)
- The Infrastructure Commission's "Aotearoa 2050 campaign".

Analysis

Overall, there does not appear to be public engagement that has focused specifically on understanding individuals' or communities' views on what a "better internet" would look like for them. However, there has been a range of submissions processes and hui which talked to people about specific harms, or about issues relating to meaningful access to the internet, all of which intersect with the concept of "an internet that is better for people".

Only engagement in the "digital inclusion" theme and the Digital Strategy for Aotearoa engagement had a particularly strong digital or internet discussion focus, whereas the other themes looked at broader issues that are also relevant in online environments.

Many of the public engagements that we found — especially around the harms and social cohesion themes — are related to the response to the 15 March 2019 terror attacks on Christchurch mosques. While these engagements were not specifically around people's views of an internet that is better for people, they do relate to peoples' experiences online, reflecting the live streaming component of the mosque attacks and subsequent distribution

of the attacker's video and manifesto (both which have been classified as objectionable). The three areas of work the government has been focusing on in response to the 15 March terror attacks are:

- supporting our diverse communities,
- tackling harmful behaviour and discrimination, and
- keeping New Zealand safe.

While many of the engagements focused on solving particular issues like hate speech or digital exclusion, there were some engagements where people were asked more open ended questions about a future they would like to see. For example:

- The Social Cohesion engagement from MSD included the question *What does social cohesion mean to you and what would Aotearoa New Zealand look like if social cohesion was improved?*
- The Digital Strategy for Aotearoa engagement included questions about the big issues and opportunities for shaping a digital future in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- The Belonging research by the Inclusive Aotearoa Collective asked a number of questions including *"When do you feel like you belong?".*

Details of engagements

Engagement	Details	Who was engaged with
Theme 1: Minimising harm		
Discussions with affected communities about the impact of harmful speech	In 2019, The Human Rights Commission and Ministry of Justice both facilitated a series of community conversations with groups who may have experienced, or been at risk of experiencing, harmful speech. These engagments had the purpose of feeding into the Ministry of Justice's wider work against the incitement of hatred and discrimination.[12]	We found references to this engagement taking place,[13] but were not able to find more details about groups engaged with, the types of questions asked, or if there was a specific component about online harm.

[12] For instance see Devlin, C. (2020). *Justice Minister Forges Ahead with Hate Speech Laws for New Zealand*. Stuff.co.nz. Retrieved from: https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/120264595/justice-minister-forges-ahead-with-hate-speech-laws-for-new-zealand

[13] Ministry of Justice Discussion. (2021). "*Proposals against incitement of hatred and discrimination*". Retrieved from: https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/documents/publications/incitement-discussion-document.pdf

Proposals against incitement of hatred and discrimination in Aotearoa New Zealand	Between June and August 2021, the Ministry of Justice consulted on six proposals to protect against the incitement of hatred and discrimination in Aotearoa New Zealand. The proposals outlined in the discussion document did not specifically focus on the internet, except to clarify that offences can occur in any medium, including through online channels.	The Ministry of Justice received 19,000 submissions on the proposals, and held 30 meetings with over 290 participants. Proactively released Cabinet documents note that officials had planned focussed engagementwith with Māori, Pacific peoples, faith-based groups (including Muslim), disabled people, ethnic communities, and (former) refugee and immigrant communities. Officials also planned to engage with people who are "diverse in sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sexual characteristics (SOGIESC)." At time of writing, a summary of submissions had not been published online.
Media and online content regulation	The Department of Internal Affairs, supported by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage, is leading work on a comprehensive review of content regulation in New Zealand. The DIA website notes that the review "aims to design and create a new modern, flexible and coherent regulatory framework to mitigate the harmful impacts of content, regardless of how it is delivered."	The DIA website indicates that targeted stakeholder engagement would take place in mid- to late-2021 including engaging with specific stakeholders to inform proposals for public consultation. Wider consultation would take place in early 2022.
Theme 2: Increasing social cohesion/ belonging /wellbeing		
Conversations with Aotearoa New Zealand's Muslim Communities	During June and July 2019, the Minister for Ethnic Communities, supported by the Office of Ethnic Communities facilitated dialogues with Muslim communities around the country. A key question asked was *"what practical steps can we take to improve social inclusion, and enhance intercultural and*	The engagement comprised a series of 13 hui with 250 attendees from New Zealand's Muslim communities. Attendees included: Muslim women, youth, Imams and community leaders. Hui were held across Auckland, Hamilton, Napier, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin. A report was released outlining key themes from the hui.

	interfaith unity?"	
Social Cohesion for Everyone in New Zealand	The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) is leading a programme of work on strengthening social cohesion in Aotearoa New Zealand. From June – October 2021, MSD undertook engagement about social cohesion based around a series of questions.	To date, there have been 30 hui/meetings and 341 written submissions (along with additional engagement with key individuals and 3 Māori hui). No summary of submissions is available at time of writing.
Belonging	In 2020, the Inclusive Aotearoa Collective undertook research on Belonging, asking participants: ● When do you feel like you belong? ● What stops you from feeling like you belong? ● What needs to change to make you feel like you belong?	Researchers spoke to 860 people through individual conversations, group hui, and a survey. Participants represented 77 ethnicities from 52 countries. Research findings are available online.
Better Later Life Strategy	In 2019, The Office for Seniors undertook engagement on its draft strategy "Better Later Life". One of the proposed areas for action of the strategy was "Enhancing opportunities for social connection and participation". Most submitters agreed with this being a theme (and it made the final strategy).	There were 246 submissions from groups and individuals. A summary of submissions is available on the Office for Seniors' website, along with information about the final strategy.
Theme 3: Digital Inclusion (including connectivity)		
Digital inclusion user insights research	In 2020 - 2022, the Department of Internal Affairs led user insights research on digital inclusion to understand the lived experiences of people in relation to digital inclusion.	Four research reports have been published to date, providing an overview of the experiences of: ● disabled people (27 participants) ● Māori (51 participants — including 37 individuals and reps from 6 organisations), ● Pacific peoples (47 participants)

		• former refugees and migrants with English as a second language (41 participants, in partnership with the Ministry for Ethnic Communities).
Out of the Maze: Building Digitally inclusive Communities (research)	Marianne Elliott of the Workshop led research in 2019, interviewing people about their experiences of digital inclusion. The research was presented in the report *Out of the Maze: Building Digitally Inclusive Communities*.	The research was based on group discussions with 62 people. The research focused on young people (aged 16-24), including young people in remote communities, young people with disabilities, migrant and former refugee young people with English as a second language, and Māori and Pasifika young people. It also focused on parents and caregivers of school-aged children.
Radio Spectrum Allocation	The Māori Spectrum Working Group (MSWG) was established to oversee Māori interests and engagement in radio spectrum, and to reach an enduring solution. It has undertaken engagement to gauge the needs of Māori groups, iwi and community in regards to the allocation of the 5G spectrum and seek input and recommendations.	Engagement over the two years leading up to the long term spectrum auctions has included a series of in-person and online national and regional hui. The MSWG website notes "support was given by various hui and groups to progress to a Memorandum of Understanding with the Crown, which was signed in February 2022."
Other engagements		
Digital Strategy for Aotearoa	The New Zealand Government is developing a Digital Strategy for Aotearoa. Public engagement took place during late 2021 to ask for feedback on a discussion document and the three proposed themes of: • Mahi Tika — Trust • Mahi Tahi — Inclusion • Maki Ake — Growth	This engagement comprised virtual hui, submissions and an online engagement tool. A summary of engagement has been published here. Alongside general virtual hui, there were specific hui for Māori, youth, and Pacific peoples and hui focused on digital accessibility.
Aotearoa 2050	The Infrastructure Commission of New Zealand undertook the "Aotearoa 2050" research	The survey had 23,638 responses with over 8000 comments. Responders were from many

	survey to ask New Zealanders what they want Aotearoa to look like in 2050. The results will shape the Commission's 30-year infrastructure strategy.	locations across Aotearoa. 81% of respondents were Pākehā. Internet infrastructures were included in the survey and "Reducing the need to travel by implementing non-built infrastructure options like working from home was popular."
Literature review on diversity, belonging and inclusion	To support its Belonging research, the Inclusive Aotearoa Collective collective commissioned a literature review to understand what work has been done before in Aotearoa New Zealand around diversity, belonging and inclusion.	The report can be found here (PDF), and is for the timeframe 2014-2019.