

## Instructions

Kia ora. The questions below are to help InternetNZ understand the triumphs and challenges you have faced to date in your mahi we have supported.

We want to celebrate your successes and understand the obstacles you have encountered so far. This will help us all to learn what we could do differently next time.

This form will be placed on our website for transparency.

Please complete and submit this form no later than the date stipulated in your funding agreement. Should you be unable to meet the deadline, contact us to arrange an alternative date, by emailing [funding@internetnz.net.nz](mailto:funding@internetnz.net.nz). You may not be eligible to apply for further grants from InternetNZ if this is not submitted. The completion of this form should be overseen by someone with an intimate knowledge of the funded mahi.

## Final project report

**\* indicates a required field**

For your convenience, you will find some information for this section has prepopulated from previous forms you have completed.

Please amend any details as needed to ensure we have the most accurate information.

### **Project title \***

Digital inclusion of migrant owners of small businesses: an investigation of technology readiness for internet-based services

### **Provide a short summary of the work that was completed as part of this project / research. \***

The project has been completed as initially planned in the proposal. In the first five months of this project, the team gained ethics approval from AUT and conducted thorough background research, and reviewed relevant materials providing valuable background information for this current project. Moving to the first stage of data collection (i.e., one-to-one in-depth interview), the team interviewed 23 migrant owners of small businesses. Qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis. The findings guided the following survey design. And then the second stage of data collection - online survey - successfully received over 400 respondents, which is slightly lower than initially proposed. The last stage is to analyze the quantitative data with the facilitation of SPSS. A report with the key findings from two complementary stages is produced.

Describe the "who, what, where and when" of your initiative.

### **Is your mahi for this project complete? \***

Yes  No

If your initiative is still in progress, pick "no"

**Start Date**

**Finish Date**

01/04/2020

Must be a date.

31/03/2022

Must be a date.

**When do you anticipate that your project / research will be completed?**

Must be a date.

Leave blank if this is an ongoing initiative or if finish date is unknown.

**Are there any areas where you need further support to complete this mahi?**

Nothing at this stage.

**What are the outcomes of this project? \***

Through two complementary stages, this project gained a thorough understanding of the readiness of the migrant owners of small businesses for using internet-based services in the background of digital inclusion. Below are the key outcomes:

- Developed an overall picture of the level of readiness to use internet-based services for the migrant owners of small businesses, which hopefully will provide useful insights for the government's digital inclusion action plan

# Migrant business owners' attitudes towards using internet-based services

Internet is perceived as a must have tool in the current business environment. Among the first stage in-depth interviews with participants, most of the participants believe that "No Internet, no business". It is identified that the COVID situation further highlights the importance of the Internet. 94% of survey respondents believe COVID makes the Internet become more important for their businesses. The first stage interviews demonstrate that many migrant small business owners are forced to adapt to the use of the internet, digital marketing, online booking system and new online business models in the COVID period.

# Migrant business owners' preferences of different internet-based services

99% of respondents express they have the accessibility to digital devices. Internet-based services (e.g., email, social media & marketing, Zoom, specific platforms etc) are commonly recognized in assisting business productivity, profitability and performance. Marketing and advertising (67%), communications (55%), online booking systems (43%), and business operation systems (42%) are widely used functions of the Internet and technologies in the operation of the business.

# Migrant business owners' perceived barriers and difficulties of using internet-based services

Although there's wide recognition of the importance of the Internet and technologies, several different barriers are also identified among the migrant owners of small businesses. Lack of digital skills/knowledge and lack of budget/investment are the top two factors. This project identifies that many migrant business owners face challenges in using internet-based services and technologies due to their own limited knowledge and experience. At the same time, the small size of businesses makes it difficult to have enough budget or investment, which becomes another barrier. Besides that, personal reasons (e.g., language), safety and security concerns are also widely mentioned. It is found that some migrant business owners with English as the second language find it hard to use internet-based services due to the language challenge. The concern of "not safe", "not reliable" also stops some of them from using internet-based services in the operation of the business.

- The segments of the migrant owners of small businesses in terms of technology readiness

To gain more in-depth insights about the migrant business owners' technology readiness,

this project breaks down into different segments based on ethnicities and sectors. The data analysis demonstrates that there are both similarities and differences among different groups. For example, Europeans tend to use the Internet for the purpose of communications and marketing and advertising, while Asian groups often use the Internet for online booking and business operation. Asian participants (97%) believe COVID makes the Internet become more important in the business, while slightly less European (89%) believe so. Asian participants perceive more barriers in using Internet-based services than Europeans. In terms of the sector difference, the tourism, hospitality and accommodation sectors perceive a higher level of lack of skills and knowledge. Hence, the identified differences among different groups signal different strategies for next step's digital inclusion initiative implementation.

- Strategies for enhancing the technology readiness

This project investigates the strategies to further enhance the technology readiness of migrant business owners. The data analysis identifies that respondents propose the following training is highly expected: IRD system training, financial support, network security training, online transaction, and the use of website services. Hence, to further implement the digital government initiative, the following strategies could be considered: 1) provide IRD system training for migrant business owners; 2) set relevant financial support or tax incentive to support small businesses' adoption of Internet-based services and technologies through the partnership among different government agencies (e.g., InternetNZ, MBIE, Inland Revenue); 3) organize relevant workshops to address business owners' concerns of using Internet-based services such as the safety and security issues, online transaction, digital communication approaches and so on.

Describe major achievements or outcomes of the project in terms of benefits for participants and/or others.

### **Who have you worked with to make this project happen?**

The PI has worked closely with the research assistants to deliver the project as planned, including conducting online interviews and recruiting survey respondents. The project also received support from the university including administration, ethics application support, and budget management. Moreover, the informal network of business owners has played a valuable role in recruiting participants and enhancing the impacts of the project.

For example, staff, volunteers, other organisations or support that has been instrumental in this mahi.

### **Describe any changes from the original proposal and the reason the changes were required.**

The project was generally delivered as planned except for two small changes: The first change is the way and the scope of conducting interviews. As mentioned in the last report, the interviews were conducted online due to the lockdown, which is different from the initial proposal of face-to-face interviews.

The second change is to expand the interview and survey participants from the two initially-proposed cities, i.e., Auckland and Wellington. In practice, the interviewees are mainly from these two cities but also include those from other regions such as Hamilton and South Island. For the second stage survey, respondents are recruited online and they are across the whole country. This change ensures a wider and better representative sampling approach compared with the idea in the original proposal.

We may use this information to help inform others undertaking similar work.

### **What did you or your team/organisation learn as a result of doing this project? \***

The team has learned a lot throughout the process of doing this project, including the insights related to the topic, the way how to deliver the project in a more effective way, as well as practical and policy implications. These include:

The diverse technology readiness of migrant owners of small businesses: The team found that there are big differences in terms of the technology readiness of migrant owners of small businesses, which is related to individual knowledge, education background, skills and preferences. With the fast changing business environment and various emerging digital tools, the migrant business owners have to face the unavoidable digital trend regardless of their readiness.

Wide recognition of the importance of the Internet: There is a wide recognition of the importance of the Internet in the operation of business. "No internet, no business" has become a common agreement.

Various barriers facing individual business owners: We identify that the migrant owners of small businesses encounter barriers in using Internet-based services, among which language, skills and knowledge, lack of budget or investment are common ones. How to address these challenges becomes a key step to support their use of the internet and technologies, which is also key to the success of their businesses.

Besides the above aspects directly relate to the research topic, we also learn the importance of recruiting participants in a proactive and feasible way. The COVID pandemic brought challenges in the delivery of the project. The team has to shift the way of how to collect high quality data despite the disturbance. At the very initial stage, we tried our best to follow the planned approach in recruiting interview participants, which focuses on interviewees from Auckland and Wellington. However, we figured out that actually widening the geographic locations enables the team to gain more representative data in a faster way, so we expand participants from two cities to the whole country, which turned out to be a correct and smart decision.

Moreover, we gained great insights into the potential strategies for further implementing the digital inclusion program. Providing financial and technical support for migrant small business owners and organizing digital training and workshops are two key aspects for the government to consider. In summary, the team learned a lot in the last 18 months. We'd like to say a big thank you to InternetNZ for supporting the project!

Describe some areas for improvement and/or reasons for success and/or challenges. How will the things you learnt inform future projects?

**How will you share the outcomes and lessons from this mahi? \***

The team is planning to draw the data and develop one or two academic publications in international journals. We also aim to present the findings to audiences at relevant national or regional conferences, which is believed to be valuable to enhance the impacts of this project. To share the outcomes with the migrant business owners, we plan to develop a post with key take-away messages and share it online such as Facebook group and LinkedIn to further promote this project, and we are also keen to discuss with InternetNZ how to share the findings with a wide range of audiences through different channels.

What channels/mediums were used?

**Which population group/s were affected by this project or program? \***

Social and economic status > Immigrants and migrants

Please choose only the group/s that were at the very core of this project/program.

**Did you reach the audience you intended? \***

Yes. The project has reached the audience in a wider and more effective way than initially planned. The team has talked with 20+ migrant business owners in different sectors across the country. 400+ survey respondents have been aware and engaged in the project.

The COVID lockdown forced the team to shift to online, and the digital tool (e.g., Zoom, Teams, social media, Qualtrics) enable the team to reach wider, more diverse and targeted audiences, i.e., migrant business owners all over New Zealand.

Reflect on who you set out to help, and whether this changed at all through the course of the project.

**What has the feedback been to date? \***

In general, migrant business owners have been interested in the project. They appreciated the opportunity provided for them to give voice, particularly in the COVID period. They think that

this project is meaningful and in-time, and hope this project can provide insights for the government and help them to survive during the COVID.

Consider whether you have permission before quoting any specific piece of feedback.

**We'd love to see some visual and/or audio representations of your work. Please share it below.**

**Upload files:**

*No files have been uploaded*

and/or

**Provide web link:**

Must be a URL

and/or

**Provide additional details:**

Please include captions, if relevant

**Can we use your media content in our communications? \***

Yes  No  Please contact us first  
 e.g. in our annual report

## Financial report

**\* indicates a required field**

### Project income and expenditure

Please provide details of any project income (funds received) and project expenditure (funds spent) to date.

Use the 'Notes' column to provide any additional information you think we should be aware of.

Income Description	Income type	Confirmed funding?	Income amount (\$)	Notes
InternetNZ		Confirmed *	\$24,700.00	

**Grants Round (Open) 2019/20**  
**2020 Grant Round Final Report**  
**Application GR000042019/20 From Dr Caroline Qi**  
 Form Submitted 31 Mar 2022, 11:13am NZDT

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<b>Expenditure description</b>	<b>Expenditure type</b>	<b>Expenditure amount (\$)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Salaries and wage	Salaries and wages	\$11,275.72	
Research expense	Project and production	\$3,627.49	
Overheads	Overheads	\$5,800.00	

**Income and Expenditure Totals**

<b>Total income amount</b>	<b>Total expenditure amount</b>	<b>Income - expenditure</b>
\$24,700.00	\$20,703.21	\$3,996.79
<small>This number/amount is calculated.</small>	<small>This number/amount is calculated.</small>	<small>This number/amount is calculated.</small>

**Have you experienced any issues with your intended project budget to date? If so, please explain reasons for any major variances or for providing incomplete information:**

No, but we could not attend conference as planned due to the pandemic.

**Feedback**

You are almost at the end of your final report. Before submitting, please take a few moments to provide some feedback.

**Please indicate how you found the acquittal process:**

- Very easy
- Easy
- Neutral
- Difficult
- Very Difficult

**How many minutes in total did it take you to complete this form?**

120

Estimate in minutes (i.e. 1 hour = 60 minutes)

**Please provide us with your suggestions about any improvements and/or additions to this form that we might consider:**

**InternetNZ is a membership organisation. Would you be interested in hearing more about becoming a member?**

- Yes please
- No thanks
- I am already a member

