



Contents

Foreword	3
Our Story - Our Purpose	5
Strategic framework	6
CEO Report	7
Investing in football communities	10
Football trends	14
Growing the Foundation	15
Financial update	19
Looking ahead	22
Our thanks	24
Our people	25
Contact us	27



Foreword

It is a privilege to write to you for the first time as Chair of the New Zealand Football Foundation. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge and thank Aliessa Staples for her outstanding leadership over the past three years. She leaves the Foundation in a strong position, and we are grateful for her commitment and contribution to our mission.



Having recently returned to New Zealand after eight years in the UK, I am delighted to be taking on a role that is so close to my heart. Throughout my time abroad, I remained a passionate advocate for football and the opportunities it creates for young New Zealanders.

Football has a unique ability to bring people together, build confidence, and create lifelong connections, and I am proud to help ensure more people can experience those benefits.

I am also pleased to welcome Will Sellar and Santha Brown to an already strong governance team. Together, we bring new skills, energy, and a shared commitment to growing the Foundation's impact. Looking back on the highlights of the last 12 months there is much to be proud of, but so much more still to do, and excitingly, so much potential for the Foundation to create positive change across the game we love.

National
participation up
6,000 in 12
months to
182,000

9% ↑ in Māori,
7% ↑ in Pacific
Peoples & 10%
↑ in Asian
participation

Over 3,000
girls (aged
4-12) enrolled
in Fantails
across 70 hubs

\$121,000
invested back
into football in
2025, taking
total giving to
over \$2.2m





Later in the year we'll be developing a new long-term strategy to guide us on our next phase of growth which I'm excited to get my teeth into, as well as some new fundraising campaigns that I know will resonate with many of you who have gained so much from having football in your lives.

On behalf of our Board of Trustees, thank you to all our donors and supporters for your incredible support. Your generosity has helped open doors for more people to experience the joy, connection, and opportunities that football provides. Together we are not simply funding programmes — we are helping shape futures.

This 2025/26 Impact Report reflects the difference your support has made and the lives that have been positively changed through football.

Thank you for being part of something special and for helping ensure that ***no one is left on the sidelines. Kāore he tangata e mahue ana ki ngā tahataha.***

Ngā mihi,

Dave Newick
Board Chair



Our Story - Our Purpose

Football in Aotearoa isn't one thing. It's many.

It's kids covered in smiles and tomato sauce, and ageless athletes bound by friendships and strapping tape. It's coaches, shaping character. And referees, helping the game to flow.

It's families on the sidelines and communities in the stands. It's the unseen work of volunteers long before the first whistle. And the chaos of a winning goal.

Because football mirrors life. It's joyful — unpredictable — hopeful. It's millions of interconnected stories. Some, getting a little taller every time they're told.

At the New Zealand Football Foundation, we're here to supercharge those stories, by investing in the people, places, and programs that help the game to thrive.

Because football is a shared language. It connects. It uplifts. It opens doors. This isn't about trophies or titles. It's about making sure the game belongs to everyone.

Our vision is that no one is left on the sidelines. This is football, powered by all of us. This is the New Zealand Football Foundation.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Vision

No one is left on the sidelines.

Purpose

Enable more New Zealanders to experience the joy of football and develop a love of the game for life.

Mission

Raise and distribute funds to create opportunities and remove barriers to community football.

Values

MANAAKITANGA / ENHANCE RELATIONSHIPS

We nurture our relationships to improve the wellbeing of the football community.

NGĀKAU TAPATAHI / INTEGRITY

Our people act and behave with honesty, transparency and fairness to ensure trust and confidence in our direction and decision making.

MAHI NGĀTAHI / COLLABORATION

We partner with purpose to realise real change to community football.

AROĀ KI TE ANAMATA / FUTURE FOCUS

We take a long-term view to maximise the Foundation's impact on future generations of football players.

POIKIRI HEI PAINGA - FOOTBALL FOR GOOD



CEO's Report

Because someone chose to give, every child who picked up a football for the first time and every young referee who found the confidence to blow the whistle or lead a coaching session, had the opportunity to do so. They invested in a simple but powerful belief: that everyone deserves the opportunity to experience the joy of football.

At the New Zealand Football Foundation, our purpose is simple but ambitious — to ensure no one is left on the sidelines. Every investment we make, every partnership we build and every decision we take is guided by that vision.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, partners and supporters, we introduced more girls to football, reduced barriers in the women's football pathway, supported the next generation of referees, delivered footballs to communities where they were needed most, and strengthened programmes that help young people develop a lifelong love of the game.

Together, we invested \$121,000 into community football in 2025, taking the **Foundation's total investment since inception to more than \$2.2 million**. While those numbers are important, it's what they represent that matters most — thousands of opportunities created for people to play, coach, referee and belong through football.

While I'm proud of what we've achieved, I also know the demand for support far exceeds the funding we currently have available. Across New Zealand, football communities are full of inspiring ideas, talented young people and dedicated volunteers who simply need someone to believe in them. Philanthropic investment removes barriers that would otherwise prevent people from experiencing the joy of football.



One story that has stayed with me this year was supporting a young girl to access a unique football opportunity that would otherwise have been out of reach because of her family's health and financial circumstances. A few days later, her mum shared these words with us:

“I don’t know what to say, or how to respond, I have tears in my eyes. Just when life feels cruel and hard, someone comes along to remind you that goodness and joy certainly still exist. It’s quite overwhelming that someone has offered to help us, in such a significant way”.

Moments like these remind us why the Foundation exists. The greatest impact isn't measured only in dollars invested or footballs distributed, but in the hope, confidence and opportunity that generosity can create.

To achieve our ambition of reaching a Fund value of \$10 million by 2030, we strengthened our fundraising capability through the appointment of Partnerships Manager Scott MacKay, helping create greater opportunities for football communities in the years ahead.





What inspires me most are the people behind the numbers: young players discovering confidence, referees finding courage, volunteers giving their time, and communities coming together through football. These stories remind us that football is about far more than 90 minutes on a pitch — it is about connection, opportunity, wellbeing and belonging.

None of this would be possible without our supporters. To every donor who has contributed or advocated for our cause, thank you. Your belief in the Foundation and the power of football creates lasting impact across Aotearoa New Zealand.

New Zealand is home to more than 29,000 registered charities competing for limited philanthropic support. We are grateful that individuals, families and organisations continue to choose football as a way to build stronger, healthier and more connected communities.

If our vision resonates with you, we'd welcome the opportunity to show how your support can help ensure ***no one is left on the sidelines.***

Kāore he tangata e mahue ana ki ngā tahataha.

Ngā mihi,

Neil Coventry
CEO



Investing in football communities

"Our OFC Women's Champions League campaign cost over \$180,000, and did not provide prize money (like the men's equivalent competition), creating a significant financial burden for our club. We're incredibly grateful for the Foundation's equity investment in our Women's team to support us to compete at the highest level of club football and provide that aspirational pathway for girls from New Zealand".

Auckland United FC

"The Foundation's investment into our Thriving Communities Project has allowed us to work more deeply alongside our clubs and communities, particularly in South Auckland, supporting increased capability and diversity in our region".

Northern Region Football

"NZFF funding has helped scale the Milo Fantails programme as an affordable, inclusive entry point for girls (4–12), supporting delivery funding and equipment for 60 hubs nationally. Supported by 104 female coaches and an 80% satisfaction rating from participants, Fantails' now plays a key role as an entry point and pathway for girls football".

New Zealand Football

"By giving new referees the mentoring, support and equipment they need, the Green Shirt Programme is building greater sustainability in our referee workforce. The ongoing investment from the Foundation has been critical to the programme's success and positive impact on football communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand".

New Zealand Football





Investing in women's football pathways

For the third year in a row we supported Auckland United's participation in the **OFC Women's Champions League**. With campaign costs exceeding \$190,000, the Foundation's investment helped **reduce financial barriers** to competing on Oceania's biggest stage.

In July 2026, Auckland United made history by securing a third consecutive title, becoming the first club to achieve a three-peat and earning qualification for the FIFA Champions Cup, where they will play North Korea's Naegohyang Women's FC. By investing where funding gaps remain, the Foundation is supporting pathways in the women's game and enabling those players to inspire the next generation of girls to dream bigger.

Supporting the next generation of referees

This year we celebrate five years of support and investment into the **Green Shirt Respect Programme**, helping recruit and retain the next generation of football referees. By removing the cost of referee training and starter equipment, and pairing new officials with experienced mentors, the programme creates a supportive environment where referees can develop with confidence.

Since launch we have seen a **44% increase in community referees** and a **29% increase in active female referees** across the country. Every new referee helps make football possible for thousands of players each weekend, ensuring more games can be played in a safe, positive and respectful environment.





NEW ZEALAND
SPORT RECREATION
AWARDS 2026

Sir Eion and Jan, Lady Edgar
Lifetime Achievement
Award winner
Barry Smith QSM



NEW ZEALAND
SPORT RECREATION
AWARDS 2026



Find out more about our football history project and watch
Barry receive his lifetime achievement award



Where confidence takes flight

In 2026, we continued our support of **MILO Fantails**, helping more young girls discover the joy of football in a fun, safe and welcoming environment.

This year, more than **2,400 girls** took part in **60 Fantails hubs** across Aotearoa, building confidence, developing fundamental movement skills and making lasting friendships through the game. An amazing 92% of participants said they would continue their football journey beyond the programme.

By investing in programmes like Fantails, we're helping ensure more girls have the opportunity to play, belong and thrive.

Removing barriers, one ball at a time

To date, we have distributed nearly **11,000 footballs** to schools, clubs, federations and community organisations across Aotearoa New Zealand.

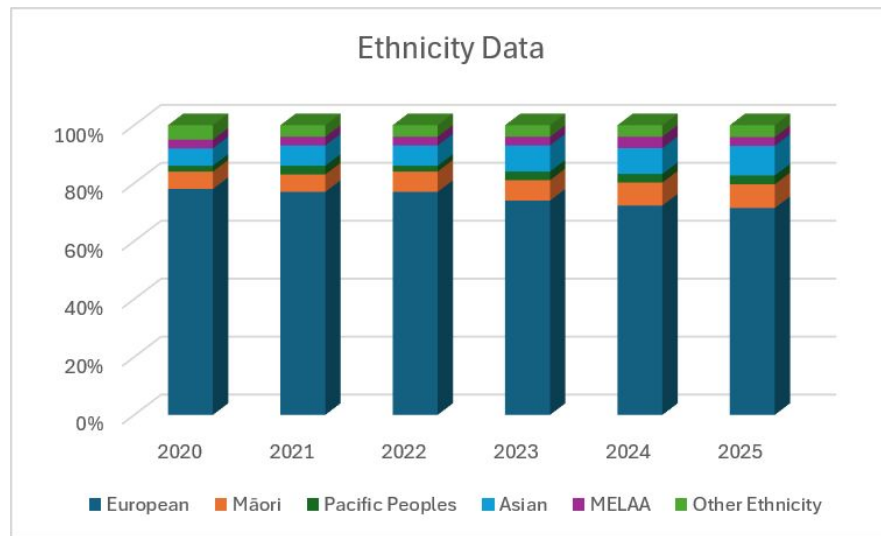
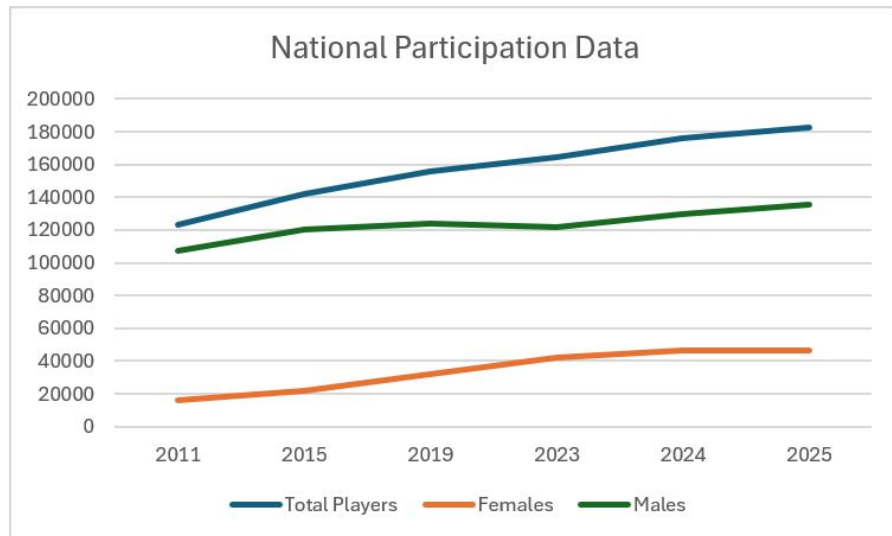
Each football represents more than a piece of equipment — it's an opportunity for a child to play, connect, and build confidence. Whether it's a school lunchtime kickabout, a holiday programme or a local club training session, every ball helps create moments that inspire a lifelong love of football. By removing barriers to participation, we're helping more young New Zealanders access the beautiful game. Because every child deserves the chance to play.



Football continues to grow

Football participation continues to reach new heights across Aotearoa New Zealand. Since 2011, player numbers have grown from **123,000** to a record **182,591** in 2025.

The strongest growth has been in women's and girls' football, with participation rising from **16,101** to **46,817** players — an increase of almost **191%**. Over the same period, male participation grew from **106,899** to **135,774** players (**27%**). As more people choose football, the need to invest in accessible, inclusive community football continues to grow.



*MELAA - Middle Eastern, Latin American or African

Football is becoming more diverse

Football continues to reflect the changing face of Aotearoa New Zealand. Since 2020, participation among **Māori** has grown from **6% to 8%** of all players, while **Asian** participation has increased from **6% to 10%**.

These trends highlight football's growing appeal across diverse communities and reinforce the importance of ensuring the game remains welcoming, inclusive and accessible for everyone. Targeted grants like the one we made to the [Thriving Communities](#) project support some of the great work taking place in this space.

Creating a Legacy for Football

Established following the All Whites' qualification for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, the New Zealand Football Foundation was created to ensure the benefits of football would continue to be felt across Aotearoa New Zealand. Sixteen years later, the All Whites' return to the FIFA World Cup in 2026 is another proud milestone and a reminder of football's power to inspire future generations.

The Foundation exists not only to invest in football today, but to create a lasting legacy for football communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Over the past year, we strengthened the Foundation by growing our community of supporters to more than **6,400 people**, building new partnerships and protecting the long-term sustainability of our capital fund. Together, these efforts help remove barriers, create opportunities and ensure no one is left on the sidelines.

Growing our supporter community

Every supporter helps create opportunities across the football community. Whether through a donation, advocacy, volunteering or a commitment to leave a future legacy, every contribution helps more people experience the joy of football.

"The Awhero Nui Trust, our family charitable trust, supports the NZ Football Foundation not just because of the assistance they provide to football in general, but also because of how their work brings communities together and can lift under resourced communities through the sport of football. Our relationship with the Foundation fits our strategy to partner with established organisations that operate successful programmes in New Zealand".

Awhero Nui Charitable Trust

Register with
us to receive
updates





"If you're thinking of making a difference consider donating to the NZ Football Foundation, who give back to our football ecosystem by supporting programmes such as the Green Shirt Campaign (supporting those stepping into refereeing) and Milo Fantails Programme (supporting girls to experience football in a safe and fun environment)".

Dr Johanna Wood

This year we welcomed **eight generous new donors** who, alongside our long-time supporters, contributed **\$196,364** to help remove barriers and create opportunities across Aotearoa New Zealand.

We were also grateful to receive a significant donation in honour of the late **Chris Scott**, a long-standing member of the Northern Football Region refereeing community, who passed away following a battle with cancer in 2024. The gift in Chris's name, will support the national Green Shirt Respect Programme, helping mentor the next generation of referees who share his love of the game.

Growing our partnerships

Strong partnerships create lasting impact. By working alongside businesses, trusts, foundations and football organisations, we combine resources and expertise to create greater opportunities for communities across Aotearoa New Zealand.

The appointment of our **Partnerships Manager Scott MacKay** in May 2026 marked an important step in growing the Foundation's long-term impact. Scott is building relationships with organisations that share our vision, laying the foundations for partnerships that will strengthen programmes, reach more communities and help achieve our ambition of raising **\$10 million by 2030**.

Protecting our legacy

The Foundation's capital fund is at the heart of our long-term impact. Through prudent stewardship and investment, we continue protecting this legacy while creating opportunities for football communities today and into the future.

Since the Foundation was established, the original **\$4 million** capital investment has grown to **\$6.95 million**. During the same period, the Foundation has invested more than **\$2.2 million** back into football, helping remove barriers, increase participation and strengthen the game across Aotearoa New Zealand.

Looking ahead

Creating a lasting legacy for football requires long-term thinking and collective action.

In the years ahead, we will continue growing our supporter community, strengthening partnerships and creating new ways for people to support football — including through legacy giving, with our **free online Wills partnership with Footprint** launching in August 2026.

Together with our donors, partners and the wider football community, we can continue ensuring everyone has the opportunity to experience the joy of football.



Become part of the team

Since 2010, the Foundation has invested over \$2.2 million into football communities across Aotearoa. A gift in your Will - no matter the size - helps ensure future generations can experience the joy of football long after the final whistle.

To make it easy, we've partnered with [Footprint](#), New Zealand's largest provider of online Wills. Through our partnership you can write a legally valid, lawyer-reviewed Will completely **FREE** in as little as 15 minutes - and, if you choose, include a gift to the Foundation nationally or to your local region. Your Will is reviewed by professional drafters, registered on the New Zealand Will Registry, and stored free in a secure facility.



Leave a legacy

A gift to the New Zealand Football Foundation in your Will is a powerful way to support the game you love beyond your lifetime.

Your legacy will help us expand the reach of grassroots programmes that help future generations experience the joy, connection, and lifelong benefits of football. No matter the size of your gift, it will help ensure that football remains a force for good for generations to come.

If you already have a Will, you can also choose to leave a gift to the NZ Football Foundation by updating your existing Will with your lawyer or legal adviser. Please contact Scottm@footballfoundation.org.nz or visit our [website](#) for more information.

\$6.95m capital
fund value.
15 supporters
contributing \$196k
to our mission in
2025.

\$2.2m invested
back into football
since est.
\$121k invested
into community
football in 2025.

Financial Update

The Foundation is pleased to report a strong financial performance in FY 2025. As at 31 December 2025 the net assets of the Foundation increased to **\$6,952,000**, up \$267,000 from the year opening balance and edging us closer to our **2030 target of \$10million**.

The Foundation achieved revenues of \$633,000, which included donations and grants of \$201,000, interest and dividend income of \$214,000, and investment revaluation gains of \$218,000.



Expenses reduced by \$5,000 from the previous year, but market volatility saw a reduction in investment portfolio gains compared to the previous two years.

Outgoing **grants totalled \$118,000** with key projects supported including \$70,000 to 60 Fantails hubs, \$30,000 to the Green Shirt programme, \$5,000 to Auckland United Women's OFC Champions League campaign and support of the national football archive project.

The Foundation is grateful to Chris Lambert, Grant Collie and the team at Forsyth Barr for their management of our investment portfolio and our auditors BDO.

A full copy of the **audited financial statements** can be downloaded [here](#).

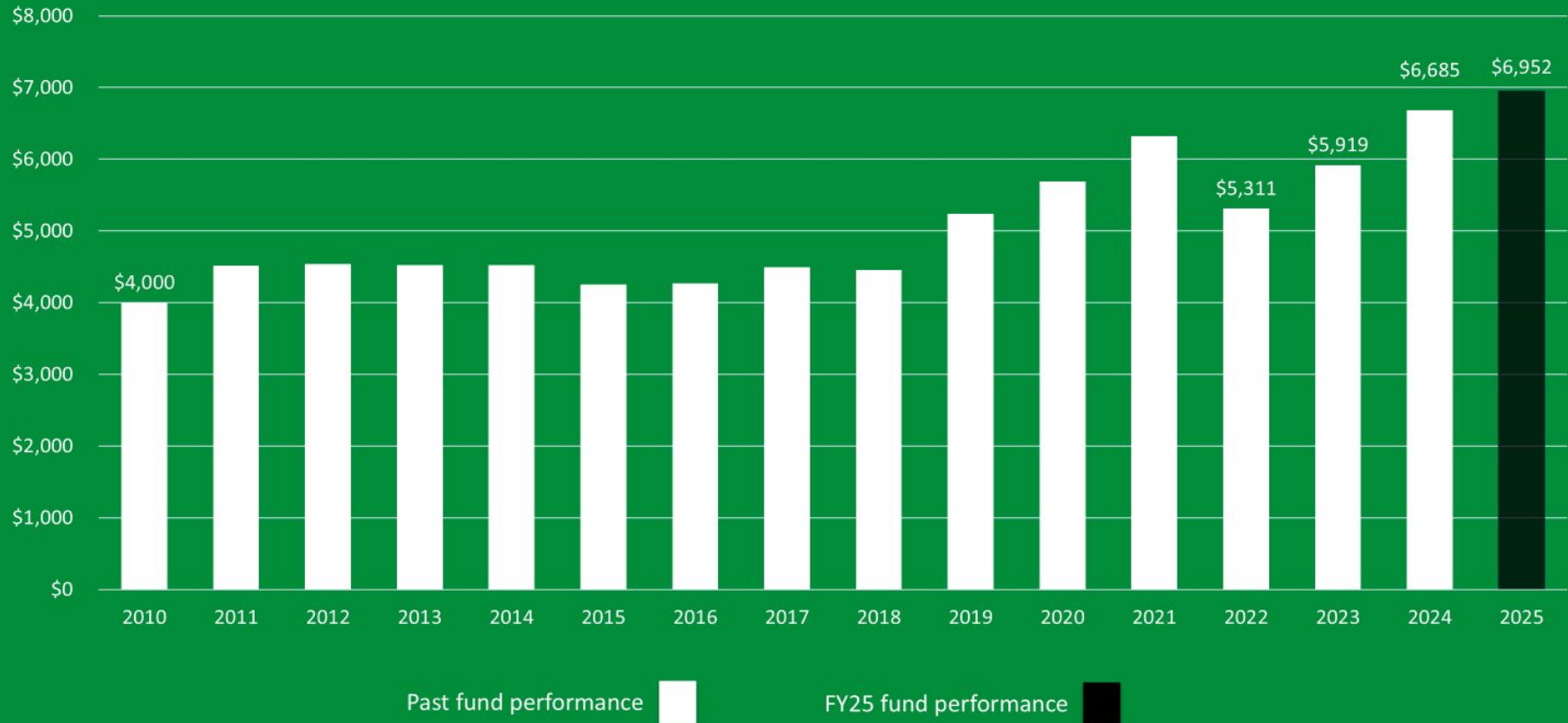
Financial Performance



Summary - FY Ending 31 Dec	FY25	FY24	FY23
Donations, incoming grants, sponsorship and events	201,137	231,442	190,889
Investment Earnings (Interest & Dividend Income)	213,998	205,494	182,175
Total Revenue	415,135	436,936	373,064
Outgoing Grants	112,000	130,642	10,000
Employee/Contractors/KiwiSaver	153,560	148,685	37,917
Portfolio Fees	32,164	29,390	27,169
Legal/Banking/Accounting/ACC/Insurance	10,301	13,735	11,476
Other	58,224	48,819	9,375
Total Expenses	366,249	371,271	95,936
Net Surplus	48,886	65,665	277,127
Capital Gain (Investment Portfolio)	218,043	701,017	330,010
Net Surplus After Capital Gain	266,929	766,682	607,137

NZFF net assets to end 2025 (000)

Our Goal
\$10m by 2030



Looking Ahead - 2026/27

Looking ahead to the next 12 months we are focused on the following priorities and opportunities:

New donor and partnerships - Build a sustainable pipeline of major donors, trusts, foundations and corporate partners. We are also launching a [FREE online wills offer](#) to the football community through our partners **Footprint**.

Growing our impact - We will continue to focus funding into projects and programmes that remove barriers to participation - including those targeting women and girls, underserved communities and referees.

Growing our reach - Grow our digital engagement and supporter communications with impact storytelling that connects with donors.

Our new strategy - Later this year we'll be developing a new long-term strategy. NZ Football recently set their new [Strategic Direction 2026-2035](#) that will help to inform where our support is needed within the football ecosystem.

FIFA Women's World Cup - The Ford Football Ferns will represent New Zealand in Brazil in June-July 2027.





FIFA
WOMEN'S
WORLD CUP
BRASIL 2027

FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP BRASIL 2027
QUALIFIED

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all our donors, partners, supporters, staff and the legions of volunteers spreading joy through football across the country.



Legacy Donors - Dr Johanna Wood, Sir Eion and Jan, Lady Edgar and the Edgar Family, Mark Stewart & Murray Holdaway

Major Donors - Frank van Hattum, Bill Moran, Steve Horne, Andrew Clements, John Lyon, Deryck Shaw, the NZPFA, Carol Waller, Dr Barbara Cox, Noel Barkley, Mike Norris & Ken Billot

And to all our amazing supporters and volunteers



Photo Credits: New Zealand Football, Photosport and Phototek

NZFF Board of Trustees



Dave Newick

Board Chair

Dave is a CE and community-focused leader with a career spanning commercial and sport environments. In his most recent role he led a global B2B organisation through strategic and operational transformation, strengthening financial performance. Dave served for six years as President of a large Auckland football club and is also involved in motor racing. Dave joined the Foundation in March 2026.



Garth Gallaway

Garth is a litigation partner at Chapman Tripp, based in Christchurch. He Chairs the Arts Foundation and the Maia Health Foundation and he is a Board member of the Arts Council of NZ. Garth has been a member of the Radio Sport cricket commentary team for over 20-years, and he is Honorary President of New Zealand Football. Garth joined the Foundation in February 2015.



Barbara Dreaver

Barbara has 30 years experience in journalism (radio, print and tv) and is currently working for TVNZ news and current affairs as the Pacific Correspondent. She was named an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in the 2024 for Investigative Journalism and Services to Pacific Communities. Barbara joined the Foundation in January 2025.



David Bell

David is a Partner and CFO at Oriens Capital, based in Tauranga, with previous roles including Barclays Investment Bank in London, and KPMG in the UK, Russia, and NZ. David played national league football and more recently became a director of the Waikato Bay of Plenty Football Federation. David joined the Foundation in February 2021.

NZFF Board of Trustees



Lucy Pomeroy
Deputy Chair

Lucy has an extensive background in public health, science, and transport.

She is currently Sector Manager, Parliamentary Group at the Office of the Auditor General. Lucy is a former New Zealand volleyball representative and is involved in community football as a parent and coach. Lucy joined the Foundation in February 2021.



Will Sellar

Will has significant investment and commercial expertise, contributing experience in capital allocation, long term value creation, and governance across sport, technology and financial services. Will is a Principal at Wiggins Limited, a private investment company focused on early-stage New Zealand businesses. Will joined the Foundation in March 2026.



Richard Kerr-Bell

Richard, Ngāpuhi, Te Rarawa, Ngāti Kuri, Te Aupouri, is Director NZ Salvation Army and has a background in education, social services and community sport. Richard is a long-time community coach and serves as the the New Zealand Football Executive Committee representative on the Foundation. Richard joined the Foundation in June 2025.



Frank van Hattum

In addition to his director and management career Frank is a former NZ International, 41 games, Inaugural Chair of the Capital Football Federation, and former Chair of NZ Football. His is a former Executive member of OFC and a former member of FIFA associations committee. He is an Honorary Life Member NZ Football and joined the Foundation when it was established in 2010.



Santha Brown
Board Observer

Santha has extensive experience working across local government, sporting organisations and community stakeholders, including serving as Programme Director for the Auckland Host City Programme for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. Santha joined as an observer in February 2026.

Get involved

If you'd like to get involved or explore a collaboration, please get in touch.

Contact Us

Scott MacKay - Partnerships Manager

E: scottm@footballfoundation.org.nz

M: 021 636 167

Neil Coventry - CEO

E: neilc@footballfoundation.org.nz

M: 021 0265 2828

Follow Us

[Website](#)

[Newsletter](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

Donate



Registered Charity CC44218

545 Don Buck Road, Westgate, Auckland, 0614



NEW ZEALAND Football
FOUNDATION

