Do good, better.

PLAY IT STRANGE.
FOR YOUNG NZ SONGWRITERS

Play It Strange

ImpactLab GoodMeasure Report
March 2021

ImpactLab

**ImpactLab
GoodMeasure Report**

Wellington, New Zealand

**Prepared for:
Play It Strange Trust**

March 2021

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Simplifying social impact measurement

I had the privilege in public life to work with people who understood the need for positive change in the lives of those around them and worked hard to achieve it.

Our social services do a tremendous job of bringing positive change to our most deserving individuals and communities. These organisations are built by volunteers and community workers who dedicate their lives to helping others.

Social service workers can see the positive impact of their work. Children thriving, families united, jobseekers in new employment and people empowered to change their life course.

With more tools they could do more good. I want to help them by finding ways to make sure that effort is recognised, results are measurable and they can make decisions about how to do more good.

ImpactLab grew from a desire to make available to community organisations tools that use the power of public information and the latest technology, so these organisations can change more lives.

By measuring social change and positive outcomes, ImpactLab enables charities and social service providers to speak the language of funders, investors and governments.

It has been a pleasure to work with Play It Strange to learn how this organisation changes lives throughout New Zealand.

Calculating social value helps inform decision making and investment and enables you to do good, better.

Thank you for joining us on this journey.

Sir Bill English
ImpactLab Chairman

Contents

Who we are

The team at ImpactLab share the goal of helping all organisations do good, better.

Our story

Our team at ImpactLab has seen the power of understanding social change. Our founders came together working in the public sector, where we led the development of new processes to link social value measurement with decision making. We believe that all organisations should be able to understand and improve their social impact. Our mission is to help impact creators and investors make decisions that change more lives.

Our team

To make better decisions, it's crucial to consider both the hard facts and the human stories that substantiate them. Our family of researchers, data scientists and statisticians are committed to combining powerful analytics with what you know works for your community.

Alongside expertise in data-driven decision making, our team brings a wealth of real-world experience. We are parents, teachers, volunteers and customers of social services.

Our partners

ImpactLab is proud to be partnering with trust company Perpetual Guardian. Together we are using GoodMeasure to improve strategic grantmaking and support collaboration with grantees by applying a consistent measurement framework.

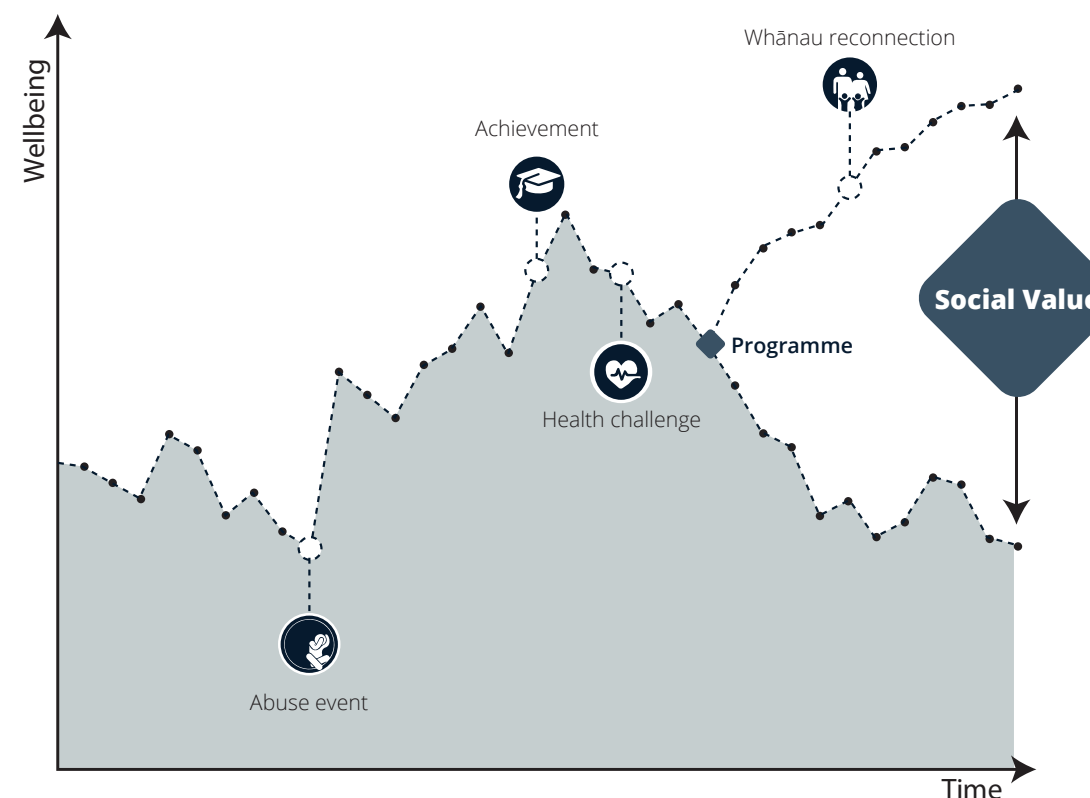:camera: @impactlabnz

:linkedin: ImpactLab Ltd

:twitter: @ImpactLabNZ

:chart: www.impactlab.co.nz

The strength of ImpactLab is a real depth of experience in a public policy context. They understand what evidence would be helpful to enable us to make decisions for the future"

– Debbie Sorenson, CEO, Pasifika Futures

Understanding social value

Social value is the social impact in dollar terms that a programme achieves for participants over their lifetime.

Throughout our lives, different events occur which impact our overall wellbeing trajectory. ImpactLab measures the impact on an individual's wellbeing across multiple domains when they're supported by a programme to make positive changes in their life.

We measure this impact in terms of both positive benefits (such as increased income) and avoided costs to government

To calculate social value, we combine these impact values with

◆ Evidence from global literature about how effective a programme can be.

◆ The size of the opportunity for the people an organisation serves to achieve more positive outcomes.

◆ The number of people supported.

By combining these inputs, the social value calculation helps us understand how a programme or intervention helps change lives for the better. We combine the social value with cost information to calculate a programme's social return on investment.

How we measure social value

Our consistent approach to measurement enables comparisons across wellbeing domains and over time.

Map programme dimensions

ImpactLab engages with providers to understand their people, their service and the outcomes they seek to achieve.

Clean and analyse data

ImpactLab uses the best of data about people's lives to understand what works, for whom, at what cost. We combine publicly available insights from the NZ Treasury, NZ Statistics and other sources. Impact values produced using Statistics NZ's Integrated Data Infrastructure are a particularly valuable resource. The IDI is a dataset containing information on every New Zealander about many areas of their lives – education, health, social welfare, employment and others. It's anonymised, so we can't identify anyone. This adds up to over 166 billion facts, for nine million New Zealanders (some have left the country, and some have passed on), for more than a generation of us.

Collect and synthesise literature

ImpactLab draws on the best academic impact literature from around the world. We access globally screened evidence from top universities and governments to estimate how impactful a programme can be. We also identify service delivery model features associated with the most effective programmes.

Calculate impact

Our algorithm combines New Zealanders' life experiences, with the wisdom about what works from the brightest minds across the world, with what we know about need in communities.

This combination of system level insights and grassroots know-how means we can consistently calculate the expected impact of a programme, and the social return on investment.

Map social value to frameworks

Because we start with individuals' experience, we can organise our insights into the relevant government and international frameworks. The Living Standards Framework is the New Zealand Treasury's way of systematising wellbeing. It has four 'capitals' – social capital, financial and physical capital, human capital and natural capital. ImpactLab's GoodMeasure tool links the social value and return on investment created to domains within human capital.

We can also map social value and return on investment to the relevant OECD Sustainable Development Goals.

Number of songwriters

487

Age range

Year 9 – 13

Gender of songwriters

Male	Female
25%	75%

School Decile breakdown

- 4-6 24.5%
- 1-3 24.5%
- 7-10 51%
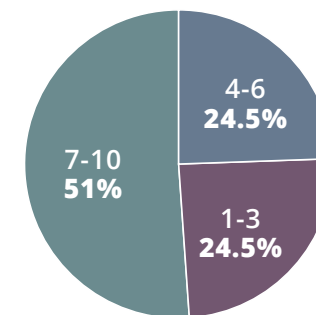
Location
Entries received
in song competitions

35% Auckland Northland

6% Central North

20% East Coast

34% South Island

5% Wellington
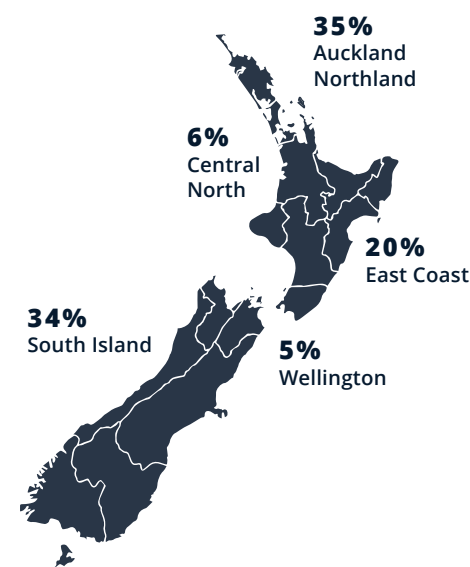
Play It Strange's songwriters

Play It Strange support and encourage young New Zealand songwriters to write, record and perform original songs.

Through songwriting, students can express themselves and their culture, find their own voice and grow their sense of belonging and connection with others. The annual Lion Foundation Secondary Schools' Songwriting Competition and the Peace Song Competition, create an opportunity for young artists to have their songwriting talents recognised and celebrated. Students entering can appear as soloists or as part of a group, and are judged on the quality of their lyrics and music.

Finalists are selected from hundreds of entries and connected with recording studios around New Zealand, where they are supported to record professionally. From 458 entries in 2019, 65 songs were recorded and featured on the Play It Strange albums. For some students, becoming a Play It Strange finalist is the first time that their school is made aware of their talent. First-hand experience of careers in the music industry as artists, producers, technicians and sound engineers, can inspire students to consider new education and employment pathways.

Finalists can receive feedback and advice from the Play It Strange team as they work to finalise their songs for compilation on the Lion Foundation Songwriting Competition Album. This album is shared across online platforms like Bandcamp and Spotify, generating thousands of streams every year. The winner of the Lion Foundation competition receives a substantial prize package in excess of $10,000, supporting the student to create and produce a full music video alongside their song.

A relationship with Play it Strange helps aspiring musicians to form strong relationships with leading members of the New Zealand Music Industry. Annual award shows allow the winners to give live performances and form a network of Play It Strange alumni, building and fostering community amongst young musicians.

In addition to facilitating songwriting competitions, Play It Strange advocate for education around the value of songwriting. As a result of Play It Strange's advocacy work, the Level 3 NCEA Songwriting internal was developed and implemented, giving students throughout New Zealand the opportunity to connect their talent with educational qualifications.
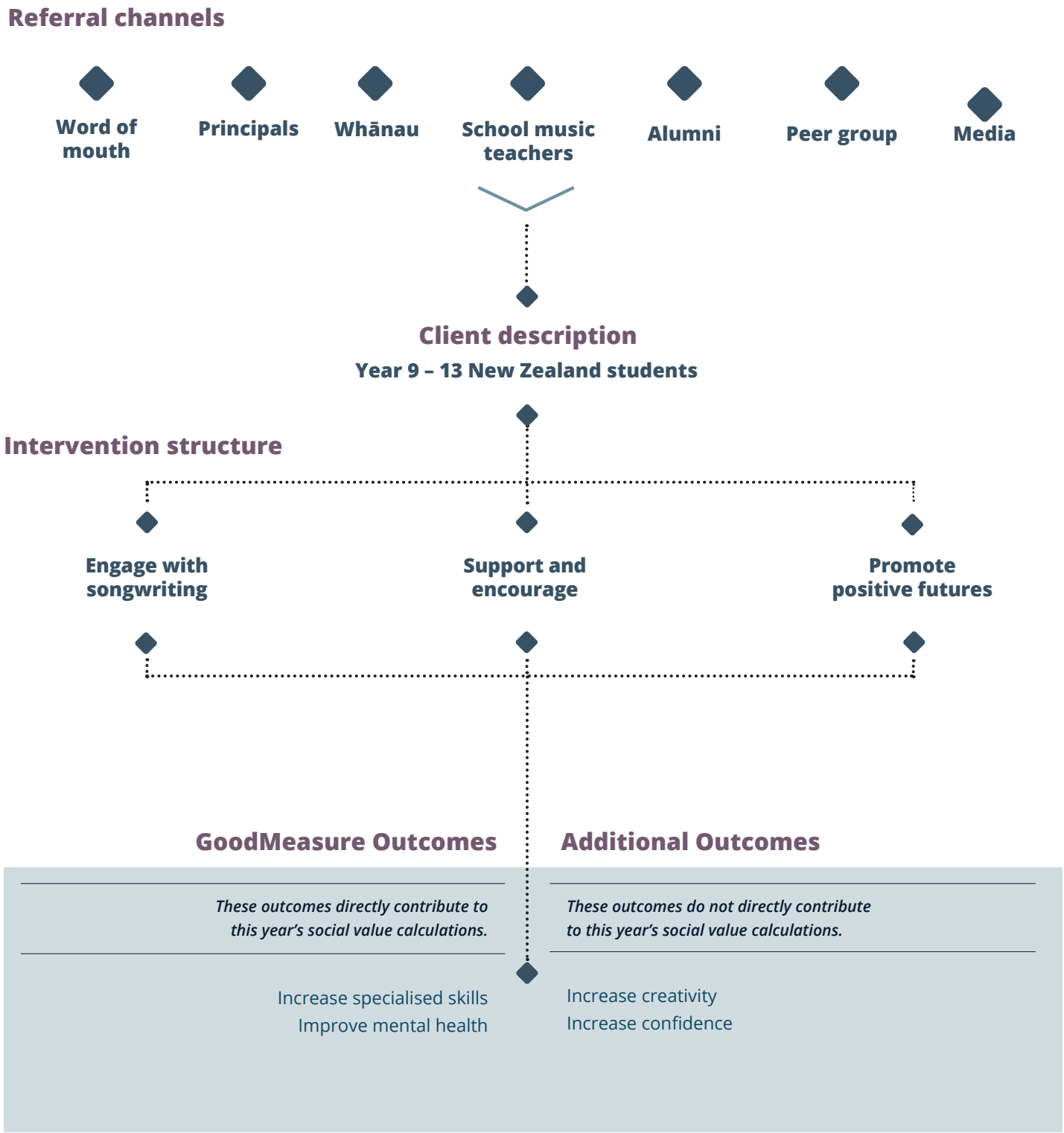
The change journey

Play It Strange provide a platform for young songwriters to engage with songwriting, support and encourage them to hone their craft, and promote positive futures both within and beyond the music industry.

Engage with songwriting

Play It Strange foster relationships with schools and Heads of Music.

Young people write, compose and record an original song.

Skills developed from songwriting include self-expression, lyric writing, prosody, melodic and harmonic composition, awareness of musical structure, and performance skills.

Online entry forms and recordings are submitted to Play It Strange along with a lyric sheet.

School principal and/or music teachers endorse entries to a Play It Strange competition.

Level 3 students can submit songs for NCEA Level 3 Songwriting credits.

All songs are judged by the Play It Strange team with equal weighting given to lyric writing and musical composition.

Finalists and prize winners in each category are announced.

Support and encourage

Lion Foundation finalists receive a $750 recording studio session, a $50 Rockshop voucher, and a certificate.

The Lion Foundation winner receives an NZ On Air – Making Music grant to the value of $10,000 for recording their song, producing a video and doing online promotion. They also receive a $1000 Rockshop voucher and certificate.

The Peace Song winner receives a recording session to the value of $750 and a certificate.

Other awards recognise excellence in lyric writing and te reo Māori.

Recording sessions give students a real-world view of the music industry and enable them to create a professional recording of themselves and their composition.

Winners perform live at the annual Play It Strange awards show.

Promote positive futures

All finalists appear on the Play It Strange album which is shared on online platforms like Bandcamp and Spotify.

Play It Strange promote the album and foster an awareness of the power of social media and streaming.

Play It Strange continue to support, promote and mentor alumni.

Some previous winners and finalists have gone on to have international careers as artists and performers.

Play It Strange support the development of the NZ Music Industry through encouraging emerging artists.

Play It Strange advocate for songwriting as a curricular component of NCEA and build relationships with schools and Heads of Music.

Outcomes map

The outcomes that Play It Strange aim to achieve and how these are reflected in the GoodMeasure calculation.

Referral channels

Word of mouth · Principals · Whānau · School music teachers · Alumni · Peer group · Media

Client description
Year 9 – 13 New Zealand students

Intervention structure

Engage with songwriting · **Support and encourage** · **Promote positive futures**

GoodMeasure Outcomes

These outcomes directly contribute to this year's social value calculations.

Increase specialised skills
Improve mental health

Additional Outcomes

These outcomes do not directly contribute to this year's social value calculations.

Increase creativity
Increase confidence

GoodMeasure results summary

Every year, Play It Strange delivers $619,926 of measurable good to New Zealand society.

Play It Strange's real-world value is even greater than this, as some outcomes such as an increase in creativity cannot yet be directly quantified with available data.

When we consider the operating costs of Play It Strange, we can calculate the social return on investment that is generated for every dollar that is invested in the programme.

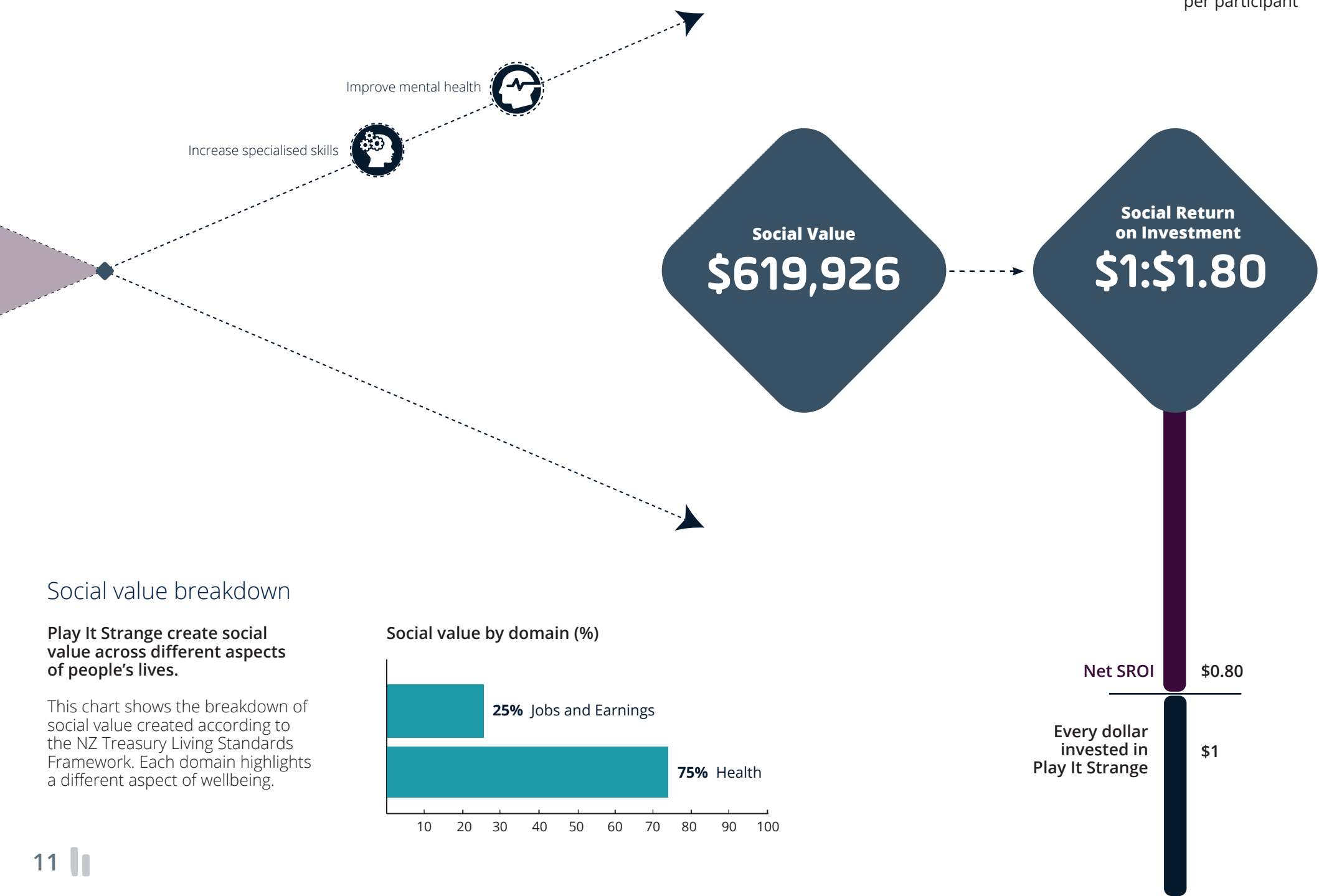|	
Social value generated for each participant	$1,273
Measurable benefits as proportion of programme cost	180%
Cost of the programme per participant	$717

The Living Standards Framework is a practical application of national and international research around measuring wellbeing.

It was designed drawing from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) internationally recognised approach, in consultation with domestic and international experts, and the NZ public.

Definitions

Jobs and Earnings: Freedom from unemployment

Health: People's mental and physical health

Improve mental health

Increase specialised skills

Social Value
$619,926

Social Return on Investment
$1:$1.80

Net SROI — $0.80

Every dollar invested in Play It Strange — $1

This means that every dollar invested in Play It Strange delivers **$1.80** of measurable good to New Zealand.

(Jan 2019 - Dec 2019)

Social value breakdown

Play It Strange create social value across different aspects of people's lives.

This chart shows the breakdown of social value created according to the NZ Treasury Living Standards Framework. Each domain highlights a different aspect of wellbeing.

Social value by domain (%)

- 25% Jobs and Earnings
- 75% Health

10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

GoodFeatures

GoodFeatures are actionable insights drawn from relevant literature review. Research has connected these actions with positive outcomes for participants.

Use GoodFeatures to prompt discussion about your programme design and service delivery compared to examples of effective practice from around the world

◆ **Engaging songwriters**
- The programme has minimal entry requirements, allowing students of varying musical experience to participate in songwriting and enter competitions.
- The programme is co-designed and facilitated by an experienced musician (songwriter, producer, or facilitator) in consultation with a music therapist.
- The programme engages with youth as equals, establishing trust by keeping power dynamics to a minimum.
- The programme enables participants to share their lyrics with each other and perform their songs to an audience.
- The programme includes a medium by which songwriters can receive feedback and praise from each other, teachers, and the audience.

◆ **Developing songwriting skills**
- The programme introduces students to various aspects of songwriting and performance. This may include guided listening activities in which students listen and respond to several songs, identifying features such as chord changes, use of metaphor, and structure.
- The programme creates a safe, nurturing environment to allow songwriters to share personal experiences and deep feelings in their lyrics.
- The programme utilises group songwriting to enable young songwriters to create and explore social connections and identity.
- The programme is as non-directive as possible, instead focussing on ways to express and understand emotions, ideas, and self-identity.
- The programme is flexible, allowing students to work alone, in large groups, in small groups, and in pairs. It also allows students to take homework, and bring new ideas, products, or pre-existing pieces with them to subsequent sessions.
- The programme incorporates visual arts, movement, listening, discussion, reflective journaling, and teambuilding activities into the songwriting environment.

References and further reading

In compiling our reading lists we consider a wide variety of topics, focusing on specific aspects of service delivery or outcome attainment. Here are a selection of readings that may be of interest.

Brown, E. et al. "Spitting Rhymes and Changing Minds: Global Youth Work through Hip-Hop." *International Journal of Development Education and Global Learning*, vol. 11, iss. 2, 2019, pp. 159–174.

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Baker, F. et al. "Reliability and validity of the Meaningfulness of Songwriting Scale with university students taking a popular songwriting class", *Arts & Health,* vol. 10, iss. 1, 2016, pp. 17-28.

MacDonald, R. et al. Handbook of Musical Identities. *Oxford University Press*, 2017.

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Watson, V. et al. "Praisesongs of Place: Youth Envisioning Space and Place in a Literacy and Songwriting Initiative." *Research in the Teaching of English*, vol. 53, iss. 4, 2019, pp. 297-319.

Draves, T. et al. "Music Achievement, Self-Esteem, and Aptitude in a College Songwriting Class." *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education,* iss. 178, 2008, pp. 35-46.

Tobias, E. "Hybrid spaces and hyphenated musicians: secondary students' musical engagement in a songwriting and technology course" *Music Education Research*, vol.14, iss. 3, 2012. pp 329-346.

Baker, F. et al. "Turning Experience into Learning: Educational Contributions of Collaborative Peer Songwriting during Music Therapy Training." *International Journal of Music Education.* vol. 30, iss. 2, 2012. pp 133-147.

Cantor, J. "Fearless innovation -songwriting for our lives: inspiring learners with arts-based practices that support creativity." *Multicultural Education,* vol. 14, iss. 2, 2006, pp. 57 - 65.

Myers-Coffman, K. et al. "The Resilience Songwriting Programme for Adolescent Bereavement: A Mixed Methods Exploratory Study." *Journal of Music Therapy,* vol. 56, iss. 4, 2019, pp. 348–380.

Thomassin, K. et al. "Specific coping strategies moderate the link between emotion expression deficits and nonsuicidal self-injury in an inpatient sample of adolescents." *Child Adolescent Psychiatry Mental Health,* vol. 11, iss. 21, 2017.

GoodMeasure

by **ImpactLab**

Whether you're funding change-making organisations or delivering the services that make a difference, GoodMeasure simplifies impact measurement so you can learn what works and make a bigger impact.

We take great pride in providing a research process that our customers can trust. GoodMeasure's power comes from calculations using multiple reputable data sources, including the Treasury Living Standards Framework for Wellbeing. GoodMeasure also uses the best of the worldwide evidence about what works. This includes published literature and evidence databases from world renowned academics and impact organisations.

Contact us

www.impactlab.co.nz

info@impactlab.co.nz

Understanding social value

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We measure this impact in terms of both positive benefits (such as increased income) and avoided costs to government.

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Helping you do good, better.

Our team

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Sir Bill English
ImpactLab Chairman

GoodMeasure for Play It Strange

Every year, Play It Strange delivers $619,926 of measurable good to New Zealand society.

## Understanding Play It Strange's impact

Play It Strange help young, New Zealand secondary school students to realise that songwriting is an essential, creative endeavour that reflects and develops New Zealand's cultural identity and supports their own personal growth and learning.

What does Play It Strange do?

Through the Lion Foundation Song Competition and Peace Song Competition, Play It Strange provide a framework that enables students to write, record and perform original song compositions. Successful entries are professionally recorded in studios around New Zealand and featured on the annual Play It Strange album. Through award shows, digital marketing, prize packages and feedback, Play It Strange support young songwriters to reach their full potential.

Whom does Play It Strange serve?

New Zealand students in Year 9-13 (typically aged 13-18) can enter the song competitions. In the year in scope 487 song writers collaborated across 458 individual and group entries to the competitions. 65 students received recording opportunities and an overall winner of each competition was announced.
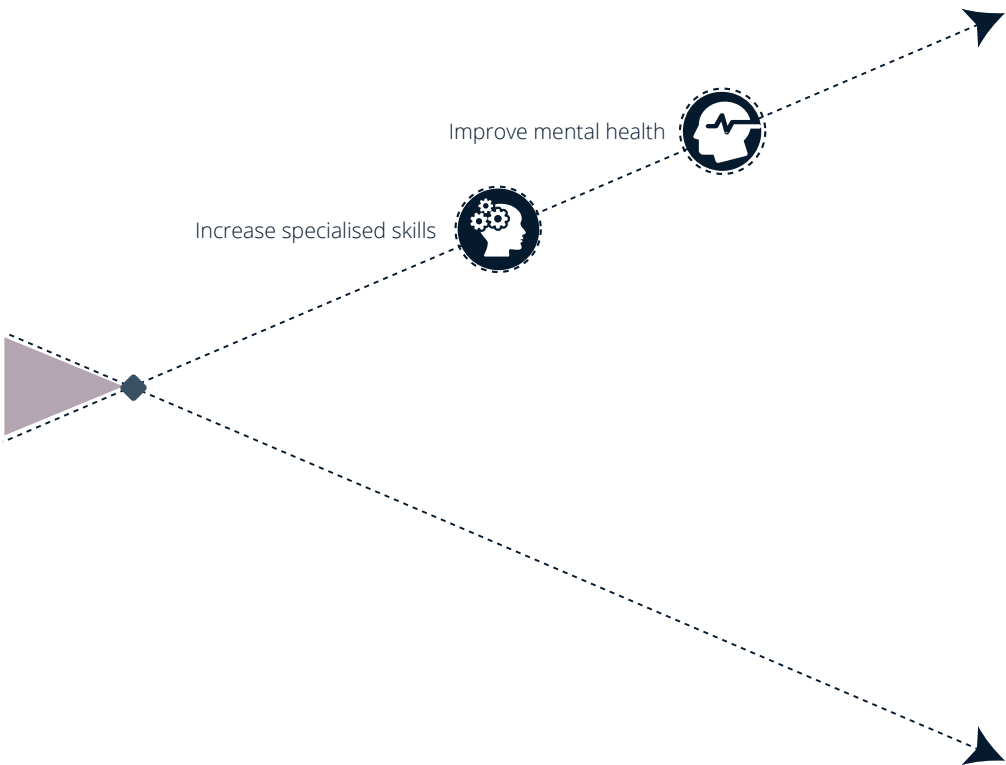
Improve mental health

Increase specialised skills

GoodMeasure outcomes

These outcomes directly contribute to this year's social value calculations.

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Increase confidence

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Social value definition

Social value generated for each participant	$1,273
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Cost of the programme per participant	$717

When we take into account the operating costs of Play It Strange, we can calculate the social return on investment that is generated for every dollar in the programme.

Social Return on Investment
$1:$1.80

Every $1 invested in Play It Strange results in $1.80 returned to NZ
(Jan 2019 - Dec 2019)

Appendix

Below is a list of definitions of key terms
contained in this report

Amount invested

The dollar amount that has been
invested in a specific programme,
in New Zealand dollars.

Cost per person

The dollar amount invested in
the programme divided by the
number of people supported
by the programme (include
those who did not successfully
complete it).

Domain

A domain is a way of dividing or
filtering the subject and outcome
material in your ImpactLab
results. ImpactLab refer to
domains as per the New Zealand
Treasury's living standards
framework domains.

Population

The group of people supported
by the programme, in terms of
age, gender, and ethnicity.

Programmes

The services delivered by the
provider for the amount invested

Social ROI

This is the Social Return
on Investment. It is
calculated by comparing
the social value generated
bythe programme to the amount
invested in it

Social Value

The social impact in dollar
terms that the amount invested
achieves for participants over
their lifetime. The social value is
calculated by combining impact
values with a service delivery
quality score, with the size of
the opportunity to support a
population, and the number of
people supported.

Attribution

Some data and information
used in the Social ROI
calculations is licensed under a
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license. It is attributed to the NZ
Treasury.

Disclaimer

This disclaimer sets out
important information about
the scope of our (ImpactLab
Limited) services. It should be
read in conjunction with the
contract that we have entered
into with you (or your company/
organisation) for our services,
including the applicable terms
and conditions.

We have endeavoured to
ensure that all material and
information on GoodMeasure
(including all ROI calculations
and impact numbers) (together,
the Information) is accurate
and reliable. However, the
Information is based on various
sources, including information
that you have provided to us,
which we do not independently
verify. Accordingly, we do not
provide any representations
or warranties in relation to
any information, including
any representations or
warranties relating to the
accuracy, adequacy, availability
or completeness of the
information or that it is suitable
for your intended use. We do
not provide advice or make any
recommendations in relation to
decisions, financial or otherwise,
that you may make.