

Process for engaging with rangatahi (e.g. as shadow trustees)

What ways might we involve rangatahi in our governance?

Your board needs to determine the **nature of the engagement with rangatahi**, including whether the rangatahi will hold any particular 'role'. Some of the common examples we have seen include:

a) Rangatahi holding no formal role

- i) This is the lowest level of expectation.
- ii) Rangatahi usually have a meet and greet with the board and observe one or several board meetings to get a feel for the organisation and for governance.

b) Rangatahi becoming a 'shadow trustee' with no voting rights

- i) This role is also known as an 'observer trustee' or 'associate trustee'.
- ii) Usually a nomination or selection process is held or rangatahi are shoulder tapped to determine the suitable rangatahi.
- iii) This involves a low level of commitment from rangatahi, as they usually would only need to:
 - 1) Read the board documents that are shared in advance of the meeting.
 - 2) Prepare a short introduction about themselves to share with the board.
 - 3) Turn up to board meetings and listen to the board discussions.
 - 4) Possibly provide a brief reflection to the board at the end of the meeting around the things they heard and found interesting, or any particular thoughts that they had on agenda items being discussed.
 - 5) Have a short debrief session with the Chair or the CEO/GM after the meeting.

c) Rangatahi becoming part of a rangatahi advisory group for the organisation

- i) This typically involves a group of rangatahi collectively providing feedback to the CEO/GM or to the governance board.
- ii) The CEO/GM, full board, or a sub-committee of the board could be the 'organiser' of this and decide to set this up.
- iii) It would likely require the 'organiser' to determine several areas that they are wanting rangatahi feedback on, and providing clear information on these areas as briefs, and then creating the opportunity/environment for the rangatahi to share their feedback.

d) Rangatahi becoming a full board member

- i) This is diving in at the deep end, and is not recommended unless the rangatahi is suitably prepared (has the capability, confidence and spare capacity to fully contribute to the board) and the board is looking to take on new board members.
- ii) This should happen through the standard board member appointment or election process, factoring in the preference for age diversity on the board.
- iii) It may also happen by the rangatahi being co-opted onto the board via a board decision.

What steps might we consider to ensure a smooth engagement between our board and a rangatahi or a new trustee?

1. Board determines whether it is ready to have a rangatahi engage at board level

a. E.g. consider the following questions and ideally write these down:

- i. Why does the board want to have a rangatahi engage at governance level?
- ii. What are the traits, characteristics, strengths and skills that the board is wanting a rangatahi to bring with them to the board table?
- iii. What demographic factors matter? Is there a certain age band that the board are preferring?
- iv. Is the board in agreement about having a rangatahi engage with the governance board?
- v. What are the expectations that the board intends to place on the rangatahi?
- vi. Has the board drafted a specific succession planning policy for the board?
- vii. What is the process that the board will use (if several are interested, or to ensure an open, democratic process) to choose which rangatahi are chosen?
- viii. Does the Trust Deed prevent the board from determining its own ritual and process for engaging rangatahi?
- ix. Is the board expecting the engagement with rangatahi to link into the trustee election process?
- x. Does the organisation serve the community that the young person is part of?
- xi. Is the Chair or a board member able to provide an induction for the rangatahi around the way that the governance board and the organisation works?
- xii. Are clear board decision-making processes in place, and policies that can be shared with the rangatahi as part of their induction?
- xiii. Is a board member able to be an informal mentor to the rangatahi and answer their questions about governance, or any concerns if they have some?
- xiv. Is the board an inviting and safe space for the rangatahi to be welcomed into, in terms of good behaviours and cultural safety?
- xv. Have there been steps taken by the board previously to increase diversity (including age diversity on the board)? What were the outcomes and the learnings from this?
- xvi. Will rangatahi be asked to co-design a succession planning approach for the Trust to ensure that it is suitable for rangatahi?
- xvii. Are there strategic partners to the Trust that could be approached as potential learning ground for rangatahi to be involved with or practice governance on?

2. Board passes a resolution demonstrating this agreement and commitment

- a. *E.g. passing a resolution that "The board has resolved to engage a rangatahi in board meetings as part of overall governance succession planning, learning from the perspectives of rangatahi, and to get new insights into certain strategic areas that the*

board is grappling with. Options for engagement, and potential candidates are yet to be determined and approved by the board.”

3. Board recruits rangatahi

- a. Usually this is through identifying, shoulder tapping, taking nominations for, or otherwise recruiting one/several suitable rangatahi
- b. This is easier to do once the board has determined the role that the rangatahi will play in the board
- c. The specifics of the engagement and the position should not be formalised yet as there is merit in having a period of getting to know one another and seeing if it is a good fit.

4. Board undertakes background checks on the rangatahi

- a. This is to keep the Trust safe in case of potential issues with engaging certain rangatahi that may bring the Trust into disrepute
- b. This process may include:
 - i. Online background check
 - ii. Police background check
 - iii. Reference checks/calls

5. Rangatahi meets with the Chairperson for a governance familiarisation

- a. This meeting may be held individually, or as a group session if there are more than one rangatahi the board is engaging with.
- b. This meeting can cover:
 - i. The different topics that the board tends to discuss in board meetings.
 - ii. What the board is seeking to achieve from the engagement, and the expectations of the rangatahi.
 - iii. What to do if the rangatahi is feeling unsafe, uninformed, or uncertain.
 - iv. How the initial whakawhānaunga process will work and any tikanga that need to be observed.

6. Rangatahi meets with the CEO/GM for an operational familiarisation

- a. This meeting will help the rangatahi to learn more about the key people within the organisation, and the resources that are available to the board to execute the strategy
- b. This meeting can cover:
 - i. What the organisation chart looks like
 - ii. What the key strategies and projects are that are being worked on
 - iii. Clarifying board meeting dates, times and logistics
 - iv. Clarifying key person contact details
 - v. What the Trust business includes, including potential site visits to operational locations or sites of significance to the Trust

7. Rangatahi signs a confidentiality agreement (if required) demonstrating their commitment to keeping certain organisational information confidential

- a. E.g. template here: [Board observation confidentiality agreement](#)

8. Rangatahi is sent board meeting preparation information prior to the board meeting

- a. This will help them understand the context of the conversations that happen in the board meeting.
- b. Some board papers might not be shared with the rangatahi if they contain sensitive or confidential information.

9. Rangatahi and the board enter a dating phase to determine if it is a good fit

- a. Ideally the rangatahi undertakes board observations, attending 2-3 board meetings to see how the governance board operates, what it talks about, and for each part to determine whether they want to deepen the engagement.
- b. The rangatahi needs to feel:
 - i. That it is a safe environment to listen, and/or to participate and ask questions
 - ii. That they will be well supported to learn more about the organisation and about governance
 - iii. That they can commit the time required
 - iv. That they can fulfil the expectations of the board
 - v. That they are comfortable with the practices and decision-making processes that the board is using.

10. Rangatahi has a debrief session with the Chairperson or the board member who will act as mentor to talk about their experience at the board meeting

- a. This gives them a space to ask questions, clarify things that they still don't quite understand, and provide feedback on what they saw and heard.

11. Board decides the nature of the engagement with rangatahi and communicate this with rangatahi for their acceptance

- a. *i.e. whether the rangatahi will just be observing, or will take on some type of 'role' within the organisation*
- b. *Refer to page 1 above for more detail on this.*
- c. *It is best if the board formally passes a resolution to agree this nature of engagement or the particular role the rangatahi will take on.*
 - i. *For example: "The board has resolved to appoint (name of rangatahi) to the role of (role title here) for a period of one year."*

12. Rangatahi signs a Position Description relevant to the role they take on

- a. This ensures that there is clarity for the board as well as the rangatahi around what is expected of them, as well as information around some of the details such as claiming travel expenses
- b. E.g. refer template here: [Associate Trustee Role Description - template](#)

13. Rangatahi undertakes some form of development or training in core governance concepts

- a. *This will help ensure that they are aware of what governance is, and are comfortable and confident with what is happening at the board meetings.*
- b. *This is especially important if they are given some or all of the responsibilities of governance*
- c. *For example they might be given some briefings by the chair, be sent material to read or watch, or participate in a programme like [Ka Eke Poutama](#).*

14. Board provides induction documentation to rangatahi

- a. *This is to ensure that the rangatahi are suitably briefed and familiar with how the board and organisation work.*
- b. *This can include copies of:*
 - i. *Constitution/Trust Deed and other relevant legal governance documentation*
 - ii. *Board Charter and policies*
E.g. template here: [Board Charter template](#)
 - iii. *An organisational chart*
 - iv. *Trust strategy document*
 - v. *Contact details for other directors and key staff*
 - vi. *Glossary of key terms, definitions and acronyms (particularly related to the sector the organisation is in)*
 - vii. *Current year's meeting schedule and the annual board calendar*
 - viii. *Previous meeting minutes*
 - ix. *Terms of Reference of Board Committees*