

REPORT 1

INSIGHTS REPORT

Insights to inform the **Future of Work** for
Pacific peoples in **South Auckland**.

An Initiative of Alo Vaka:
The Auckland Pacific Skills Shift

MARCH 2022



MATANGI FOU

A **thriving local economy** supported by
a **thriving Pacific community**



Acknowledgement

We wish to acknowledge and thank those who participated in a representative cohort that was convened to provide insights for the current reality analysis. We are grateful for their time and valuable knowledge for contributing to the development of this report.



The Cause Collective

The Cause Collective is a community organisation that aims to create the conditions for communities to thrive from this generation to the next. The organisation is focused on transforming the way in which community and public services are experienced by individuals, families and whole communities.

As a population-focused organisation, TCC has a particular interest in Pacific peoples across Aotearoa, underserved and South Auckland communities. The organisation works upstream to address the causes of complex problems and further downstream to strengthen prevention systems. This is achieved by delivering end-to-end services to communities, clinical and provider networks and to delivery partners.

For more information about the Matangi Fou initiative please contact:

Contact

P. + 64 9 869 02433 | E. info@thecausecollective.org.nz | www.matangifou.nz

A: 15 Earl Richardson Avenue, Manukau

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MATANGI FOU

Matangi Fou is the name of an initiative that partners Pacific communities and business leaders with The Cause Collective, to deliver a set of breakthrough initiatives to support the Future of Work. These initiatives aim to create conditions for transformation in the labour market for Pacific workers and their families. The initiatives have a focus on Pacific peoples who live in South Auckland but are designed for scale with communities facing similar challenges.

The shared goal we are working towards is that the Pacific workforce actively participates in quality employment opportunities in new and emergent industries. Transformation looks like a thriving local economy supported by a thriving Pacific community.

Note on terminology used in this report

For the purposes of Matangi Fou, the terms **Future of Work** and **jobs of the future** are used interchangeably to describe employment opportunities in new and emergent industries. The terms also refer to the reconfiguration of existing industries which will need to respond to demographic shifts, globalisation, COVID-19, climate change and technology advancement. These terms consider that some jobs and industries will cease to exist if they are unable to adapt to labour market conditions.



Insights to inform the **Future of Work** for
Pacific peoples in **South Auckland**.

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“

I feel like every **job** in the **future** is going to have a **digital component**, it **doesn't mean** we all got to be a **computer scientist**

”



Amplifying the Voices of Pacific Communities in South Auckland

In August 2021, fieldwork was conducted to understand the perspectives of Pacific communities in South Auckland about the Future of Work. The fieldwork included a survey of 100 households. Participant interviews and focus groups were also held to inform the development of this report. Feedback from all sources was thematically organised into seven key insights about what Pacific communities understand about the Future of Work.

Overall, Pacific peoples reported feeling unprepared for the Future of Work as their priorities were focused on issues of survival and meeting immediate needs. Pacific families understand the importance of planning for the Future of Work but are unclear how to go about it. This is due to lack of access to knowledge or information that explains what the Future of Work will look like and how it is relevant to their current reality.

The **initiatives** have a **focus** on **Pacific peoples** who live in South Auckland but are **designed for scale** with **communities facing similar challenges**.

Pacific peoples hold firm views about other labour market participants being more qualified and experienced for jobs of the future. This makes them reluctant to put themselves forward. A lack of self-belief deters thinking about pursuing career aspirations or better quality jobs in an emergent industry.

The report also finds that Pacific peoples are more likely to align their career aspirations to their values and to what they are passionate about rather than financial incentives. The Pacific workforce places a high value on work that enables a social benefit while supporting the local economy.

Take-home message for policy makers, designers and deliverers

This report seeks to amplify the voices of Pacific communities in South Auckland, so they are included in the early planning and design of the Future of Work in Aotearoa New Zealand. The insights gathered through the fieldwork provide important information for policy makers, designers and deliverers involved in shaping the Future of Work.

The key take-home message for decision makers is that Pacific inclusion in jobs of the future will not happen organically. It will require an intentional effort and targeted support, services and programmes. This is because of the existing inequities and inequalities that affect the Pacific population. Navigating a system that was not designed using the current reality of Pacific communities makes it hard for Pacific workers to see themselves in the Future of Work.

With Pacific peoples estimated to make up a third of Auckland's total workforce by 2026, it is in the interests of both government and industry leaders that Pacific communities thrive. This can only occur when Pacific peoples are viewed as partners in building Aotearoa New Zealand's economic future and included early in planning for the Future of Work.

The **insights** gathered through the **fieldwork** provide **important information** for **policy makers, designers** and **deliverers** involved in shaping the Future of Work.

Why Pacific peoples and South Auckland Views on the Future of Work Matters

South Auckland and the Pacific peoples who live there are a vibrant and diverse community. While we often hear about the challenges and deprivation of the area, it is also a place of opportunity and will experience accelerated economic growth.

Representing 33 percent of Auckland's population, South Auckland plays a key role in Aotearoa New Zealand's economic success. With 10 percent of working aged people in South Auckland unemployed, getting the labour market in South Auckland working is a strong priority¹.

Matangi Fou is a place-based initiative centred in South Auckland. Approximately 81 percent (256,923) of the South Auckland population by local board area live in deprivation 8, 9 and 10 areas. Pacific peoples make up almost half of this cohort (48 percent). Because of this, Matangi Fou takes a population and a place-based approach to considering the Future of Work for Pacific peoples.

With 17,760 businesses located in South Auckland and increasing infrastructure investment, greater employment opportunities are emerging – opportunities which need to be leveraged with greater support².

With **17,760 businesses** located in **South Auckland** and **increasing infrastructure investment**, greater employment **opportunities** are emerging.



¹ Foundation North: Investing For Impact in South Auckland Full Report.

² Auckland Co-design Lab - The Attitude Gap Challenge: A South Auckland Employment and Skills Challenge Summary report

There is major urban development occurring in the area including the Transform Manukau programme which will generate up to 28,000 direct and indirect jobs over the term of the programme. Led by Panuku Development Auckland, Transform Manukau will focus on regenerating the Manukau Central area.

Light rail and the intensification of the Auckland Airport area will also play a key role in Aotearoa New Zealand's future economy. The area is home to several of the country's largest logistical centres and manufacturing companies. There is also a major housing and urban development programme planned for South Auckland which will result in over 20,000 new homes built in the area.

Workforce projections indicate that by 2026, Pacific peoples will comprise one third of Auckland's total workforce. However, the Pacific workforce tends to be employed in lower-skilled occupations which comprise over 30 percent of Pacific workers.

Many of these occupations are identified as highly suitable for automation or disruption from industry 4.0 technologies.

Pacific families experiencing social and economic conditions are deprived of the skills and opportunities they need to thrive in new and emergent industries. They have the lowest wages and asset base and experience the greatest rates of in-work poverty of any ethnic group in New Zealand.



About **half** of the **population living** in South Auckland **dep 8 –10 areas** are **Pacific people**.

The Fieldwork

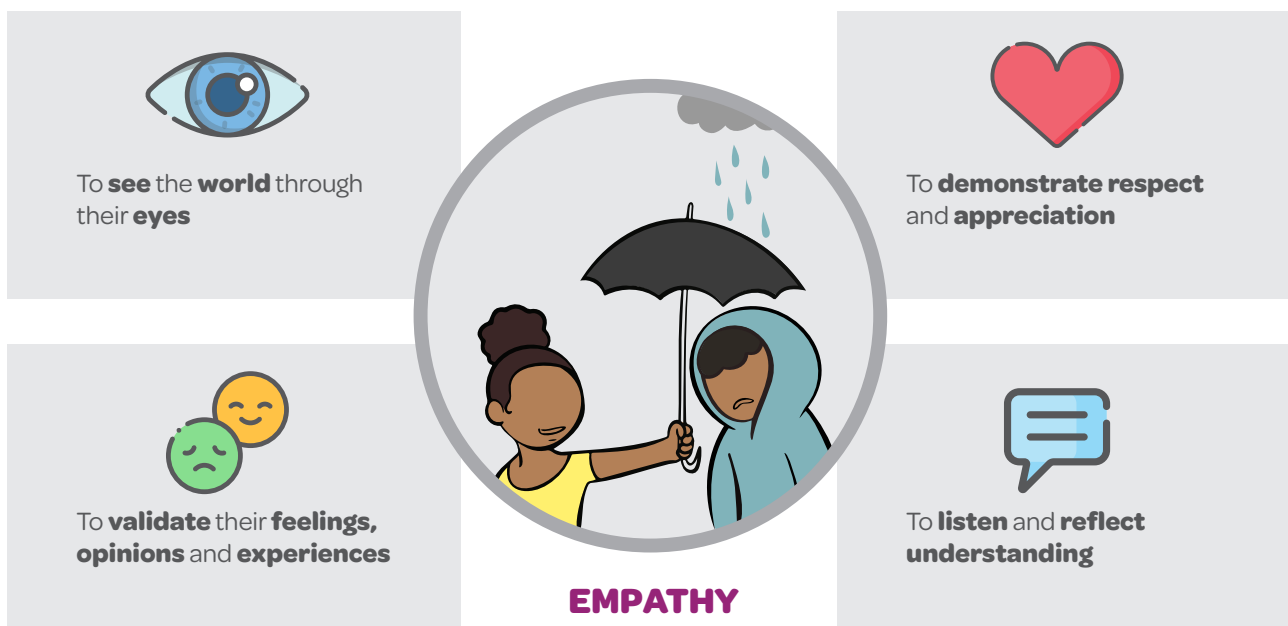
Our insight gathering process used a mixed method approach to gather a cross-section of Pacific voices from South Auckland. Fieldworkers began by reviewing a sample of relevant information and literature to inform the insight gathering process. This resulted in the identification of three lines of inquiry:

- Understanding and awareness of the jobs of the future.
- Employment aspirations for the participant and their families.
- Likelihood of acting on their employment aspirations for the future.

The insight gathering process used the following methods to collect participant data:

- 100 households participated in an online survey.
- 2 online focus groups totalling 40 participants.
- 11 phone interviews conducted with participants who could not connect online.
- Youth talanoa (discussion and engagement) with 19 young people.

Once information was gathered, it was analysed and synthesised and analysed by the team using design thinking to better understand participant needs, and how they think and feel about lines of inquiry. This is part of stage one of a design process to empathise with end-users.



When analysing Pacific data, the fieldwork team also applied the organisation's cultural frames of reference. These are grounded in Pacific values and pedagogy, underpinned by the principles of Nga Vaka o Kāiga Tapu³.

A set of recurring themes emerged from this process, enabling fieldworkers to identify the attitudes and beliefs of participants about their current and future work aspirations. This information has been used to help develop personas and mental models for Matangi Fou⁴.

In considering the themes from the fieldwork, analysis was then conducted using a critical thinking lens to identify what the implications of the fieldwork could be for Matangi Fou initiatives.

Participants

While fieldwork targeted South Auckland residents, about five percent of participants stated they lived outside the South Auckland boundary.

Target participants of the online survey were Pacific households, however many identified with multiple ethnicities. The age range of participants was 15 to 59 years of age with a median age of 32 years. About half of the participants were in full-time employment and 34 percent were unemployed or not active in the labour force. A further 15 percent stated they were in part-time employment.

The online focus group comprised of 39 Pacific residents living in South Auckland. All participants were over the age of 18 with the majority in some form of employment. More than 60 percent of the participants were female.

Phone interviews were conducted with Pacific peoples. While Pacific language-speaking support was made available, it was not requested by the interviewees.

Talanoa sessions with Pacific young people were completed using youth development methods of engagement with young people aged 13 to 24 years.

Limitations

COVID-19 presented challenges for the fieldwork which resulted in the team using online and telephone methods of engagements where it was not possible to engage face-to-face. This limited our ability to conduct observation inquiry as part of the process.

³ Nga Vaka o Kāiga Tapu are eight Pacific ethnic-specific evidence-based frameworks developed in partnership with Pacific communities nationally and the Ministry of Social Development. These frameworks share a set of principles which guide practitioner practice to uphold the wellbeing of Pacific families and communities.

⁴ Work on personas and mental models is available in this report series.



INSIGHTS

INSIGHT 1:



Pacific peoples hold **aspirations** to participate in the **Future of Work**, but individual career **aspirations** are subordinate to **collective wellbeing**.

Participants stated that they held many career aspirations for themselves and for their children. However, many were clear their priority was on providing financial support in the present so their families could afford essential items such as food, power, petrol and rent. Participants felt that this limited their ability to plan for the future and that their career aspirations were viewed more as a 'dream' than a possible reality.

Some young people noted that many peers had not returned to school from the COVID-19 lockdowns and were now working to help their families make ends meet. The predominant view was that sometimes you must sacrifice for the wellbeing of your family.

It was commonplace for participants to reference their family obligations, such as taking care of aging or sick parents or family members. They pondered the impacts this would have on the types of employment and training opportunities they would consider. Others spoke of the hardships of being single parents and the challenges of looking after children and working.

Findings

Pacific families who live in survival mode are not thinking about their career aspirations because they are focused on meeting the immediate needs of their families.

Many Pacific peoples who care for vulnerable family members feel unable to consider future work aspirations until those obligations have concluded.

Finding discretionary time to think and plan for the future, or to attend training and education opportunities is challenging. This is due to the family, cultural and community commitments many Pacific peoples have.

Considerations for the Future of Work



Doing what is best for the 'collective' as opposed to the 'individual' often drives decision making behaviours about work and career aspirations.



Pathways for Pacific peoples to jobs of the future must articulate the payoff for their family's collective wellbeing.



There is potential to harness the 'buffers of time' for family carers or those who are unable to work, due to family commitments and cultural obligations. This could be used to prepare them for re-entering the workforce in new and emergent industries.

INSIGHT 2:



Pacific peoples feel unprepared for the Future of Work because of their **lack of awareness and understanding** about **technology advancements** and what the **jobs of the future** might be.

Overall, most participants did not feel they had a good understanding of what the Future of Work looked like and what the opportunities might be for themselves and their families. When they considered the jobs of the future there were several comments about the automation of industries and robots taking over manual labour on factory floors. Others spoke about their lack of ability to navigate the changing workplace environment because of technology.

Many participants said thinking about jobs of the future was not a priority for them, but it would be for their children. Some unemployed participants shared that they wanted a job that could provide stability for their family. Some participants gave minimal consideration about how the Future of Work might impact on their existing employment arrangements or the industries they were interested in pursuing.

Except for computer science studies, many people were unsure about the study pathways that could lead to new and emergent industry opportunities. They were also unclear about what those new and emergent industries might be and how to access upskilling opportunities.

Some participants reflected on the speed of changing technology and how children in their families were much more advanced than adults in picking it up. These children were even providing adults with digital support as they lacked confidence in using technology. For these participants, talking about jobs where tech skills would be required was a daunting prospect.

There was consensus from the participants that if the Pacific community did not embrace technology, they would be 'left behind'. They would also continue to see families in low paying jobs, something which had not changed since Pacific migration to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Other participants shared stories of Pacific peoples as navigators and early pioneers, and that we should look to the past as an example of having courage to venture into new frontiers in the Future of Work.

Findings

Pacific families understand the importance of planning for the Future of Work but are not clear about how to maximise opportunities, access knowledge or relate it to their current realities.

Pacific peoples who are unable to connect the jobs of the future to their current reality will find planning for something they are unable to visualise near impossible to achieve.

Considerations for the Future of Work



For Pacific communities to prepare for the Future of Work, they must be able to visualise a clear pathway from their current reality and set of family circumstances to jobs of the future.



Because the focus for many Pacific families is meeting their immediate needs, they are unlikely to actively seek out information to inform them about the Future of Work. This must be packaged appropriately, customised to their current reality and made easily accessible to them.

INSIGHT 3:



Pacific peoples feel they **lack** the **necessary qualifications** and **experience** to participate in the **Future of Work**.

Many participants felt their lack of qualifications and work experience were major barriers to pursuing career aspirations and better-quality jobs in emergent industries. Participants also felt 'inadequate' about not having the right qualifications or tools to apply for new roles or promotions in their existing workplace.

In general, participants said without formal qualifications, they would not be able to participate in the future economy of Aotearoa New Zealand. Additionally, the competition from highly qualified graduates made them question whether they should bother retraining if they were unlikely to be hired.

If they were to train, participants said hands-on training was their preferred form of learning. With limited time due to family, work and social commitments, participants felt small programmes would be beneficial.

They also felt the soft skills they had developed in community work, church and volunteering should be more widely recognised in workplaces.

Findings

The perception that others are more qualified and experienced makes Pacific people reluctant to consider better-quality jobs or to consider taking a promotion.

A lack of self-belief deters thinking about pursuing career aspirations or a better-quality job in an emergent industry.

Considerations for the Future of Work



The potential payoff for Pacific peoples in taking on studies or re-training must be explicit as the level of sacrifice required is high (discretionary time of families living in 'survival mode').



Work experience in emergent industries could help to shift mindsets about taking on jobs in new and emergent industries.

INSIGHT 4:



Pacific peoples themselves **identify** a **lack of self-belief** and **confidence** as **major barriers** to considering **new career pathways**.

Participants reflected on what it would take to try a career in new and emergent industries, and for some, they considered what it would take for them to re-enter the workforce. Many stated that they were interested in taking a 'leap of faith', especially to help their families and to role model to their children. However, they described feeling a lack of confidence to try something new and reported feeling fearful about trying something unknown.

For some, there was a real fear about re-entering the workforce and whether they could compete with others for the same jobs. Others mentioned the anxiety that had been created through COVID-19 and living in uncertain times, and whether they would be better to stick to lower paying jobs that were secure.

Some young people reflected on the negative stereotypes portrayed by media of Pacific and Māori youth from South Auckland. They worried about not having equal opportunities to pursue their chosen careers if they encountered bias in the system. This includes not having equal access to mentoring, education and support services that would embolden them to enter new industries where few Pacific peoples had ventured.

Findings

The fear of failure and 'not being good enough' are barriers facing Pacific workers pursuing opportunities in new and emergent industries.

Negative stereotypes of Pacific young people from South Auckland make them feel that they might not have the same treatment or access to support to ready them for jobs of the future.

Considerations for the Future of Work



Fear of the unknown can be overturned by making information about the Future of Work widely available, and by normalising it as part of the community narrative (it's not just for a few but for all).



Providing examples of Pacific peoples who are pioneering in new and emergent industries can inspire others to follow in their footsteps.



Sharing Pacific stories of resilience, success and handling failure in new and emergent industries can build empathy that leads to action.

INSIGHT 5:



Job stability, work–life balance, and giving back to the community are major motivators for the Future of Work for Pacific peoples.

Participants felt it was important to seek jobs that would enable them to have a work-life balance. Many participants who were in employment spoke about working long hours and trying to find a balance with their family and cultural roles and responsibilities (e.g. child rearing, tangi, church activities). Young people spoke about the stresses of working part-time, studying and performing their family roles and responsibilities.

Parents talked about ensuring they had secure employment to provide for their families and children, or others they were responsible for such as grandparents. Participants placed a high value on work that enabled them to give back to their community and to support their local economy. Often they referred to doing what they were 'passionate' about. Many wanted to do work that made a difference to the community rather than high paying jobs they were not passionate about.

Alongside passion, people mentioned work that was aligned with their own personal values. For most, making money was secondary to fulfilling passion and values. When participants discussed the topic of money, this was viewed as important, but only as a means to live comfortably, secure their children's futures and help others.

Findings

Pacific peoples are more likely to align their career aspirations to their values and to what they are passionate about.

Financial incentives are important but are not necessarily the primary driver in decision-making about career planning for Pacific peoples.

Considerations for the Future of Work



Creating the conditions for Pacific workers to thrive in jobs of the future will require employers to consider the factors that motivate their workforce beyond financial incentives.



Pacific people are more likely to be attracted to new and emergent industries that demonstrate how their products or services provide a social benefit to their workers and/or end-users.

INSIGHT 6:



COVID-19 has **highlighted** the **social and economic inequities** that **exist** for **Pacific families** in South Auckland.

Pacific peoples and South Auckland communities have been disproportionately effected by the COVID-19 outbreaks in Aotearoa New Zealand from 2020-2022. Participants spoke openly about the hardships they faced during this time, and the important role that family support played in keeping families 'afloat'.

Participants shared their concerns about the labour market and COVID-19. While some participants had lost their jobs, others knew of family members or neighbours who had their hours reduced or who had also lost their jobs due to the pandemic. This made participants feel uncertain about the future and anxious about what their job prospects might be in the Future of Work.

There were many participants who spoke about the challenges of not being able to afford connectivity or devices to work from home. Despite government investment into devices for schools, participants reported that there were not enough to go around and either families were sharing or using parents' work devices.

Many of the participants spoke about how technology was becoming more infused with daily activities making them feel helpless to participate, resulting in another layer of exclusion added to their lives. The participants felt there needed to be increased investment in building people's capabilities to navigate the digital space.

Findings

Connectivity and access to digital devices remains an issue for high deprivation communities.

Pacific peoples are more likely to be in low paid or casual jobs and consequently suffer considerable impacts from job losses or reduced working hours because of COVID-19. This has a domino effect on their families and community.

Considerations for the Future of Work



Active participation in a digital economy will require a targeted strategy and investment for those who would otherwise not have access to these opportunities.



COVID-19 presents opportunities for people who have lost jobs to retrain and pivot into new and emergent industries if the pathways and support are made available for them.

INSIGHT 7:



Pacific families want **information** and **support** to give them **options** about the **Future of Work**. Information needs to be about **locally based opportunities** and delivered by a **trusted source**.

Participants spoke about their previous engagements with 'the system' (unemployment and training agencies) and the challenges they had encountered. Many stated they did not feel 'safe' or well supported by agencies, and there was a disconnect between service delivery and the needs of Pacific families. Participants reported feeling embarrassed and ashamed for seeking government help for employment opportunities and income support. Others commented that they were made to feel a burden on the system when asking for help.

Participants expressed mistrust in the system and that their experiences would deter them from engaging in conversations about the Future of Work. Others expressed their concern about Pacific workers being taken advantage of and not knowing their rights. Again, these experiences made participants wary of accepting support from agencies to help them position for jobs of the future.

Findings

There is mistrust in services and systems that support Pacific peoples into employment and training pathways. Encounter histories and lived experiences will influence how Pacific peoples engage with the Future of Work.

Considerations for the Future of Work



Agencies must find ways to gain trust where this has been eroded by previous experiences in the system.



Agencies partnering with place-based organisations may help to build trust with local communities.



Communications campaigns about the Future of Work that use trusted and locally respected people will likely have more 'cut through' with Pacific peoples in South Auckland.

Converting Insights into Action

These insights provide important information for policy makers, designers and deliverers involved in shaping the Future of Work in Aotearoa New Zealand. In conclusion, the insights tell us that to create the conditions for Pacific peoples to actively participate in the future labour market we must:

1. Understand that career decision-making may not be made by an individual but by the collective. Engaging Pacific families as part of employment and training journeys and making the benefits to families explicit, will encourage Pacific peoples to pursue careers in new and emergent industries.
2. Create pathways that lead from current realities to what the Future of Work will look like. This will support Pacific peoples to visualise something tangible and plan accordingly.
3. Work across sectors to help support Pacific families meet their immediate needs and shift from survival mode into stability.
4. Look at how we are communicating the Future of Work for Pacific communities. Work towards normalising the conversation, including the use of technology so that it becomes part of the community narrative and Pacific peoples view this as something in which they are included.
5. Be intentional about digital inclusion for Pacific communities so that the gap in access to connectivity and devices, and digital literacy does not widen.



This report is part of a Matangi Fou series of working documents that informed development of the published report **“Pacific Peoples and the Future of Work”**.

- 1. Insights Report**
- 2. Pacific Young Entrepreneurs Storybook**
- 3. Insights for Business Leaders**
- 4. Current Reality Report**
- 5. Ecosystems Report**
- 6. Our Future Now Report**
- 7. Personas and Pathways Report**

These reports can be downloaded from: www.matangifou.nz



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