



Community & Enterprise Leadership Foundation

Social Impact Report

Social Impact of the Elevate
Leadership Programme and the CELF Alumni
Community of Waikato leaders

June 2025

Prepared by



HUBER
SOCIAL

**Mā te whakarongo, ka mōhio, mā te
mōhio, ka mārama, mā te mārama, ka
matau, mā te matau, ka ora.**

Through listening, comes knowledge, through knowledge, comes understanding, through understanding, comes wisdom, through wisdom, comes wellbeing.

.....

Data used in this report was collected from across Waikato and Aotearoa New Zealand with an approach and ethical considerations aligned to the principles and requirements of both the New Zealand National Ethical Standards and Te Ara Tika Guidelines for Māori Research Ethics.

With their roots in Australia, Huber Social continue to acknowledge, wherever their work takes them, the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia. They acknowledge their continuing connection to land, waters, and community. They pay their respects to the people, the cultures, and the elders past, present and future.

This report was prepared and written by Huber Social on the lands of the Bidjigal peoples of the Dharug Nation, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, Australia, and in Kirikiriroa Hamilton and Pōneke Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand.



Executive Summary

This report presents the results of the social impact measurement for the Community & Enterprise Leadership Foundation (CEL) Elevate Leadership Programme. This initiative is designed to be a transformative journey, encouraging participants to explore and understand their own leadership, strengthen character, build professional and sustainable cross-sector relationships, promote knowledge sharing and collaboration, and facilitate the practical application of leadership skills. The report examines the impact on graduates and alumni members (CELfies), in both the short and long term, and highlights opportunities for maximisation of impact in the future. The social impact of CEL has been measured in terms of wellbeing; ensuring that programmes are assessed and guided by how effectively they deliver meaningful, positive outcomes for the communities they serve.

CEL is a charitable organisation established in 2014 to develop leaders who contribute to positive cultural, social, environmental, and economic outcomes for Waikato and Aotearoa New Zealand. Building strong leaders with broad-spanning leadership capabilities, skills, and cross-sector leadership networks is challenged by limited understanding of different leadership cultures and few opportunities for collaboration, often due to competitive dynamics, organisational silos, and lack of trust. Yet, such leadership capabilities and networks are vital for innovation, resilience, and sustainable growth, enabling knowledge sharing, crisis navigation, and adaptability. They also promote inclusivity and diversity by integrating varied perspectives, leading to equitable decisions, better resource use, and improved outcomes for all stakeholders.⁴⁻⁵

The executive summary, below and on the following page, provides a high-level overview of the report findings. The following sections then outline CEL's mission and vision and unpack key insights, concluding with a discussion of the measurement approach and methodology, which is also further explored in the accompanying Technical Report.

This report paints a picture of the efficacy of the Elevate Leadership Programme and of CEL's alumni networks. There are clear, immediate benefits of the programme, with graduates reporting statistically significantly higher outcomes relevant to their personal and professional development, community connection, and self-identity.

The long-term wellbeing benefits associated with the programme for a cohort of Waikato leaders appear modest, which may be attributed to participants already being established leaders at entry, the considerable time elapsed since programme completion for some, and the impact of subsequent life events and changing circumstances on their wellbeing. Nevertheless, findings indicate that positive outcomes from CEL persist over the long term, with several measures showing improvement among alumni five or more years after graduation. Additionally, many qualitative comments suggest that both the Elevate Leadership Programme experience and ongoing alumni engagement continue to support participants' development. Qualitative feedback from whānau, family members, and colleagues further reinforces a highly positive assessment of CEL and the Elevate Leadership Programme.

It is clear that CEL and the Elevate Leadership Programme contribute meaningfully to the development of their participants, with benefits extending beyond initial graduation and continuing to grow as participants remain active members of the alumni group. While some areas for improvement have been identified, the continuation of CEL's current activities is benefitting leaders across the Waikato, supporting those who envision a stronger region and those equipping to help realise that vision.



Executive Summary

Who we heard from:



Just over half identified as Male (51%)



Almost one fifth identified as Māori (19%), with more than three quarters New Zealand European (78%)



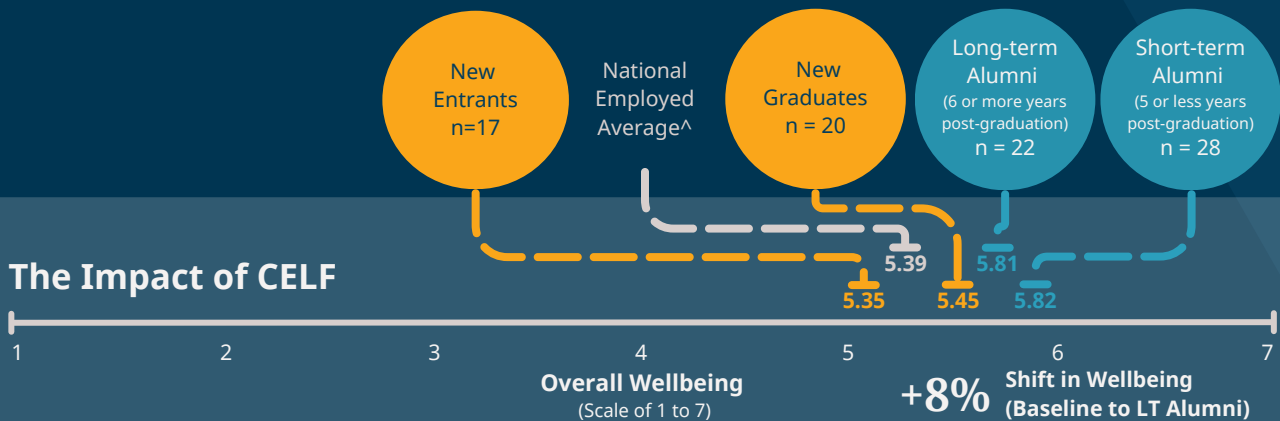
Most lived in Hamilton City (62%), Waipa (19%) and Waikato (12%)



Almost half identified as an 'Established Leader' (47%)



In addition to hearing from CELF members, this report displays findings from 43 Family Members, Whānau, and Colleagues of members



Strong Shifts on Key Outcomes Reported for New Graduates

Identity and Self-determination

- 20% Increase in **understanding of one's leadership style**
- 19% Increase in **belief and confidence in leadership abilities and flow on effects**
- 10% Increase in **identity as a leader**

Connection

- 20% Increase in **participation in community activities**
- 16% Increased **role in community structure (mentoring and supporting others)**
- 13% Increase in **community connection and sense of belonging**

Personal and Professional Development

- 16% Increase in **knowledge and understanding of cross-sector leadership**
- 13% Increase in **pursuit of productivity**
- 12% Increase in **understanding of one's strengths and challenges**

Community Insights broadly mirror self-assessment by CELFies



While the majority of insights from colleagues, family members and whānau mirror CELFies responses, for alumni who graduated 6+ years ago their community tended to rate their contributions and abilities higher than the alumni rated themselves, for graduates this was reversed, with the community rating lower than the graduates rated themselves on average.

Alumni who graduated 6 or more years ago have continued to develop

22%

Increase in physical health

12%

Increase in knowledge and understanding of cross-sector leadership

7%

Increase in knowledge of self

7%

Increase in intrinsic value of education



^Stats NZ. (2022). *Wellbeing Statistics: 2021*. <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/wellbeing-statistics-2021/>



About the Community & Enterprise Leadership Foundation

Strong leadership for a thriving Waikato

Two challenges to building strong leaders and leadership networks are the lack of understanding of leadership cultures within different sectors, and a lack of opportunities for collaboration among leaders across sectors. Without a foundation of trust and community, leaders may be hesitant to share knowledge or collaborate effectively, which can hinder the development of robust networks. Founded in 2014 to address these challenges, the Community & Enterprise Leadership Foundation (CEL F) is a charitable organisation based in Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand.

MISSION

To build leaders from all walks of life, who can reimagine a stronger Waikato from a social, environmental, cultural, and economic perspective. These leaders take charge of their lives while influencing others positively, resulting in a significant contribution to Waikato communities, society and New Zealand as whole.

The Elevate Leadership Programme

CEL F achieves its mission by bringing together leaders from business, community (for-purpose/non-profit), civic, and NGO organisations through its flagship Elevate Leadership Programme.

CEL F places a strong emphasis on creating a lasting network among its graduates. This alumni network fosters continuous collaboration, support, and the sharing of best practices, which amplifies the impact of the programme. By staying engaged and connected, alumni can implement the leadership skills and insights gained during the programme in their respective fields, leading to sustained community and organisational growth. This ongoing connection helps build a resilient leadership community that continually works towards the betterment of the Waikato region.



The Elevate Leadership Programme is an eight-week leadership development initiative delivered over the course of eight months, designed to develop and connect socially responsible leaders within the Waikato region of Aotearoa, New Zealand. This programme intentionally brings together leaders from cross-sector organisations - including business, community (for-purpose/non-profit), civic, and NGOs - to enhance their social impact and leadership capabilities. Participants are selected based on their potential to make significant contributions to both community and enterprise sectors. The programme offers a unique opportunity for leaders to gain new perspectives, build diverse connections, and develop strategies to positively influence their organisations and communities.



CEL Elevate Leadership Programme **Impact Model**

Impact Statement		Metric
CEL is committed to developing ethical and conscious leaders within organisations and communities to drive meaningful, systematic change in the region. By nurturing socially conscious business leaders who are connected to both enterprise and community, CEL supports individuals to maximize their wellbeing and be in the best position to fulfill their potential. Through building strong, connected leadership networks, CEL strives to shape a better future for the region.		Subjective Wellbeing
Outcomes CEL achieves this impact by providing leaders with the following necessary capabilities and opportunities, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identity and Self-determination - Understanding of ones personal and leadership identity, and their sense of self-determination.• Personal and Professional Development - One's pursuit of personal and professional development.• Organisational Development - The knowledge and skills to contribute to organisational growth.• Life skills - The knowledge and skills to be able to look after oneself independently and to maintain agency• Holistic Wellness - Knowledge and skills to improve and maintain one's physical, mental and emotional health.• Whānau Connection - Personal relationships.• Community Connection - Community relationships• Beyond the Impact Thesis - Factors that are important to the wellbeing of participants but are not currently within the scope of the Elevate Programme or the Alumni network activities	
Outputs The tangible results that CEL delivers through its activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Graduates of Elevate Leadership Programme• People who attend events• People who are engaged in mentorship programmes• People financially supported and sponsored to participant in the Elevate Leadership Programme• People awarded• Collaborative programmes• Job and career progression of participants	
Activities Actions taken or work performed to achieve outputs, outcomes and impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elevate Leadership Programme• Ongoing engagement and events• Support and mentorship• The ripple initiative• Leadership awards and recognition• Networking and collaboration	
Resources The resources put into the establishment and operation of the programme or service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funders (investors and philanthropists)• Donations• Skilled and versatile staff and team• Venue, meeting places, and faculty and office spaces• Partnerships with other organisations across sectors	



Key Findings New Graduates and Alumni of the CELF Elevate Leadership Programme





Key Findings: New Graduates

Findings show immediate positive outcomes for graduates - with particularly strong positive shifts across connection, identity and self-determination, and personal and professional development.

Comparisons of data collected from New Entrants to the programme (baseline) to data from New Graduates (shift) demonstrate that the Elevate Leadership Programme is effectively building leadership capabilities and strengthening community engagement.

Compared to their results at baseline, graduates reported increases in their levels of participation in community events (20%), their understanding of their own leadership style (20%), their confidence in their leadership abilities (19%), and their role as an active mentor and support to others (16%).



Participation in community activities

+20%

Connection



Understanding of one's leadership style

+20%

Identity and Self-determination



Belief and confidence in leadership abilities

+19%

Identity and Self-determination



Role in community structure (mentoring and supporting others)

+16%

Connection



Knowledge and understanding of cross-sector leadership

+16%

Personal and Professional Development



Pursuit of productivity development opportunities

+13%

Personal and Professional Development

The significant improvements in self-awareness, confidence, and mentoring suggest that the programme is meeting its core objectives and creating immediate, measurable impact in areas critical to long-term leadership development.⁶

With the programme taking place across a year it is likely that factors beyond may have influenced graduate development, however, most changes between the baseline and graduate groups are likely attributable to the programme as they reflect key areas that the programme addresses.

“It has reaffirmed my leadership style, emphasised the importance of knowing yourself in order to be a confident leader, and highlighted my strengths.”

- New Graduate



Key Findings:

New Graduates, continued

New Graduates' increased their knowledge and understanding of other sectors, and felt they were contributing more strongly to cross-sector collaboration.

Shifts were reported in a respondents perceived ability to find work in other sectors. Graduate agreement to the statement "I could easily find an employment opportunity suitable for me in another sector" increased by 12% from baseline.

Respondents were also asked about how their leadership contributed to collaboration across or between sectors. There was an 11% higher rate of agreement among graduates.

These findings, combined with an overall 16% increase in knowledge and understanding of cross-sector leadership, and a 12% increase in having a strong understanding of one's personal strengths and weaknesses, likely reflect the improved cross-sector skills and understanding that CEL F graduates and alumni quantitatively and qualitatively report.

In turn, such results are likely indicative of a leadership community that is better prepared to work in and across different sectors and industries, strengthening the leadership network of the Waikato as well as its capabilities.



Employment availability
of interest (within and
between industries)

+12%

Beyond the Impact Thesis



Sense of contribution to
inter-sector
collaboration within
organisation

+11%

Organisational Development





Key Findings:

Alumni

The following insights include responses from 50 respondents, representing 28% of all CELf Alumni. The data was analysed both as a whole and by two distinct groups: short-term alumni (those who graduated five or fewer years ago) and long-term alumni (those who graduated six or more years ago).

The impact of CELf continues to be evident among members of the Alumni community, with measurable gains observed in outcomes for those who are six or more years post-graduation.

A comparison between new graduates and long-term alumni (six or more years post-graduation) revealed positive shifts among alumni. These included a 22% improvement in physical health, a 12% increase in understanding cross-sector collaboration, and 7% gains in self-awareness of personal values and the importance of learning for personal growth. Interestingly, there were no significant improvements observed between new graduates and alumni who had graduated five or fewer years ago. This suggests that the impact of the Alumni Programme builds over time, with personal and professional development benefits typically taking several years to emerge.



Physical health

+22%

Holistic Wellness



Knowledge and understanding of cross-sectorial leadership

+12%

Personal and Professional Development

“I continue to appreciate and value that I was able to attend CELf ... including skills and confidence in my life and in my mahi in our community. I believe I am a better and more aware leader”

- Alumni, 6 or more years since graduation



Knowledge of self

+7%

Identity and Self-determination



Intrinsic value of education

+7%

Personal and Professional Development

“[CELf] allowed me to focus on my particular leadership style in the different contexts I sit in, which is unique for me, and impactful”

- Alumni, 5 or less years since graduation



Graduates Have a Strengthened Understanding of **Cross-Sector Collaboration & Personal Contribution**

Respondents were invited to provide open feedback regarding the impact of the Elevate Leadership Programme. The qualitative insights detailed below highlight that participants experienced benefits closely aligned with the programme's intended outcomes, particularly in the areas of personal and professional development, and identity and self-determination.



95%

Reported a change in their perspective on their role and responsibility towards the community

CELf impacts on participants' sense of personal contribution, including a greater understanding of the role they can play, how they can contribute their skills and a stronger awareness of the influence they can have in the community.

Almost all respondents (95%) reported a change in their perspective on their role and responsibility towards the community, sharing that the programme had strengthened their sense of responsibility to the community and their desire to give back.

Participants' reported a greater understanding of cross-sector collaboration, including its importance and the ways in which for-purpose and for-profit sectors can learn from each other and work together for the benefit of the community. This was the strongest theme in all qualitative analysis and is reflected again in the quantitative findings showing an increase in understanding of cross-sector leadership (see page 8-9).

CELf supports the development of self-aware and confident leaders. Respondents emphasised how the programme gave them greater understanding of their leadership identity and leadership style, and confidence in their leadership abilities, areas in which participants also reported significant increases in the quantitative data (see page 8-9). Respondents reported an impact on their personal development, including the clarity of their purpose and goals.

"I now feel a greater responsibility to advocate, mentor, and create opportunities for others while strengthening cross-sector partnerships that benefit our communities. I left this programme with a renewed commitment to leading boldly, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that leadership is always a vehicle for collective well-being and systemic change."

- Alumni, 5 or less years since graduation

"[CELf] broadened my understanding of different for profit and for purpose organisations and enabled the development of my strong collaborative relationships to support regional, community, organisational and individual growth."

- Alumni, 5 or more years since graduation



The CELf Model Supports Broader and More Diverse Connections, Alumni Report Benefits and Call for More

CELf is creating the opportunity for leaders to make connections of value, with participants reporting ongoing benefits of peer support, expansion of their networks across sectors, and knowledge sharing. Respondents were asked 'In what ways, if any, have the connections you have established through the Elevate Leadership Programme impacted your work?' Slightly more than three quarters of respondents (76%) agreed that connections established through the programme had impacted their work.

The most commonly reported benefit was **ongoing peer support** from their cohort, with respondents valuing their network of trusted relationships that provided support, advice, and a sounding board for ideas. Respondents also frequently noted that the connections they had made through the programme had led to **expansion of their networks** and relationship-building across both business and community.

Another common theme was that the diversity of connections made through the programme enabled **knowledge-sharing**, which impacted participant's work through a broadening of perspectives, learning from others' experiences and exposure to different ways of leading and problem-solving. Relatedly, some respondents mentioned that their **cross-sector understanding** had increased through the connections they had made.

In addition, several respondents shared that their connections had opened doors for tangible **work-related opportunities**, including gaining employment or board positions as a result of their connections with the CELf community.

Some respondents also expressed that although they had not yet seen tangible impacts, they were hopeful these connections would be valuable in future.

"These connections have not only broadened my thinking but also reinforced the power of collaborative leadership recognising that real change happens when we bridge sectors, share knowledge, and uplift each other's strengths."

- Alumni, 5 or less years since graduation

"I keep in regular contact with half of my cohort. We are like peer support for each other regardless of being in different industries. Our diversity is a strength. We still use our network together to create a bridge between our individual networks."

- Alumni, 6 or more years since graduation

An Opportunity: Support to maintain connections over time would be welcomed.

While many alumni reported keeping in contact with their cohort, several noted that it had been difficult to maintain connections and that these had unfortunately faded over time, suggesting a potential opportunity to further support alumni to keep their connections with the CELf community active.



Priority Needs: New Entrants to the Programme

Priority Needs are factors that has both a significant, predictive relationship with people's overall wellbeing (identified through statistical analysis) and is lowest-scoring for a measurement group. A positive change in a priority need is more likely to lead to an increase in overall wellbeing among the the CELf community. Analysis of the data from New Entrants to the Elevate Leadership Programme identified several priority needs. The following are the top three Priority Needs for New Entrants:



In general, my physical health is good

4.35

**Physical health
(Holistic Wellness)**



I have a clear understanding of the pathway to achieve my career goals

4.41

**Sense of career development
and trajectory (Personal and
Professional Development)**



I actively mentor and support others

4.71

**Role in community
structure - mentoring and
supporting others
(Connection)**

Promisingly, several Priority Needs identified for New Entrants saw higher scores from Graduates, including the three above. This indicates that the Elevate Leadership Programme is actively addressing the priority needs for its New Entrants. Additional priority needs identified for New Entrants included: financial confidence, pursuing productivity opportunities, and maintaining work-life balance.

The pursuit of productivity presents an ongoing challenge for Waikato leaders

The pursuit of productivity, captured by the statement "I actively seek opportunities to develop my productivity", emerged as a Priority Need among New Entrants, with a score of 4.82. Notably, even among long-term alumni, this score modestly increased to 5.14, making it the seventh lowest scoring factor for that group. This suggests that the drive to enhance productivity persists over time, yet remains relatively underdeveloped. For CELf, this highlights a strategic opportunity to provide targeted support and resources that help members cultivate productivity skills throughout their professional journey



The more that New Entrant respondents agreed they mentored and supported others, the lower the overall wellbeing score.

'Mentorship and Support of Others' showed a negative relationship with overall wellbeing for New Entrants. This may suggest that the responsibility of providing effective mentorship and support can place additional burden on those early in their leadership development. While this negative relationship persists among alumni 6+ years post-graduation, its strength diminishes, indicating potentially learnt strategies to manage the responsibilities and impact. Further research is recommended to understand the causes and explore ways to mitigate the effects of mentoring and supporting others across career stages.



Reflections of Whānau, Family, and Colleagues





Reflections of Whānau, Family, and Colleagues

Personal connections (whānau and family) and **professional connections** (colleagues) were also surveyed to understand how *they* felt the CELf Elevate Leadership Programme had impacted the participant that they know. Personal connections can provide unique insight into the more purpose and personal wellbeing-aligned aspects of CELf participants' lives, while professional connections are well placed to comment on externally observable changes in participants' leadership approaches.

Each response from a connection was linked with a specific CELf alumni or graduate. While response numbers from personal or professional connections were relatively high (43 total), those responses were only about a relatively low number of Programme participants. Personal connection responses related to three graduates and four alumni, while professional connection responses related to four graduates and six alumni. As such, while the insights below offer some useful information on the observable impact of CELf on participants, they are not necessarily generalisable to all participants. Results presented in this section are based on all responses in aggregate.

Ratings from Professional Connections were higher for long-term Alumni compared to new Graduates. For the most part, professional connections rate the leadership skills and contributions of long-term alumni more highly than the professional connections of graduates, and these differences are often statistically significant. However, graduates also tend to rate themselves more highly in certain areas than their colleagues and whānau, while long-term alumni are more conservative than their connections in some ratings (see the next page). This may reflect the fact that graduates have had less time to enact externally evident changes based on their CELf experience, in spite of feeling that their internal capabilities have improved. There were no significant differences observable between the perceptions of graduate personal connections and long-term alumni personal connections.

“He is extremely committed to see others participate in the course which demonstrates the value he put in the learnings. He is very aware of how others feel and is always considering their view”

- Personal Connection of an Alumni, 6 or more years since graduation

“[CELf] helped them to truly understand how their behaviours impacted others and how their behaviour could influence others. Just took their leadership skills to the next level, and those skills have continued to grow beyond the Elevate Leadership Programme.”

- Colleague of an Alumni, 6 or more years since graduation

“She has been empowered in her own vision and direction in both her professional and personal life. Her sense of leadership has grown. I think it has expanded her horizons and her desire to make a difference in others lives through setting and achieving goals that are important to her.”

- Personal Connection of New Graduate

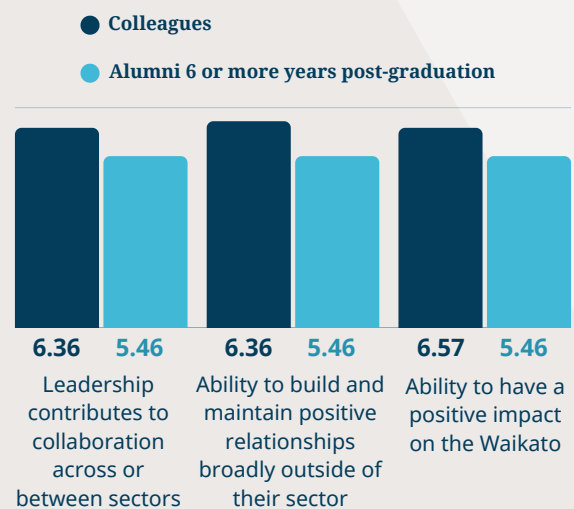


Patterns Emerged in Differences Between Self Reported and Ratings from Connections

Interesting patterns emerge when comparing the views of alumni 6+ years post graduation with the views of their professional connections, and then in the contrast of those with the views of graduates and their professional connections.

Long-term Alumni may be more conservative in estimating their own impact in these areas compared to how their colleagues assess them.

While long-term alumni and their colleagues are largely aligned in their views of the alumni's leadership skills and contributions, colleagues rate long-term alumni *more highly* in certain areas than the alumni rate themselves. In particular, colleagues statistically significantly rate long-term alumni higher for their ability to have a positive impact on the Waikato, their contribution to collaboration across or between sectors, and, their ability to build and maintain positive connections outside of their sector.

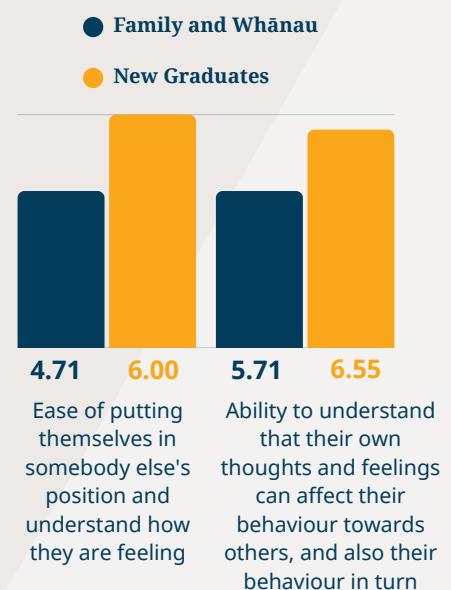


However, New Graduates may be likely to slightly overestimate their impact in these areas relative to the impact their colleagues observe. The opposite is true when comparing the views of New Graduates with their colleagues. While they are again largely aligned in their views of the graduate's leadership skills and abilities, graduates rate themselves statistically significantly more highly in their contribution to organisational culture and in their understanding of how their thoughts and feelings impact others. Colleagues still rate graduates overall *positively* for these factors, just less positively than the graduates rate themselves.

Personal connections rated the empathy-related interpersonal skills lower than the graduates themselves.

While there is little difference in perceptions between the whānau and family regardless of the time post-graduation, the views of whānau do differ from the views of the graduates or alumni themselves.

Long-term alumni are again more conservative in some assessments, while graduates assess themselves more positively in some areas. Whānau and family rated the clarity of sense of purpose of long-term alumni more highly than those alumni rate themselves, and whānau likewise rate graduate awareness of personal values more highly than the graduates do. Graduates also appear to overestimate their interpersonal skills relative to whānau and family, a group who are likely well-placed to comment on this aspect of graduates' lives and capabilities.



* All scores on this page are averages for the group on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree ('1') to Strongly Agree ('7').



Colleagues, Family and Whānau Observed Enhanced Leadership & Confidence

Feedback on how the Elevate Leadership Programme has influenced participants' personal or professional growth with responses were almost universally positive, and many praising the programme and/or the participant themselves. Of the total responses to this question 14 knew the participant personally and 21 professionally; while 14 responses related to graduates and 21 to alumni. Therefore, findings reflect a somewhat stronger emphasis on work-based observations and longer-term impacts.

The most common theme was an observation that the programme had **strengthened participants' leadership capabilities**. Some respondents noted that the programme had enabled participants who already had strong leadership qualities to take their leadership to the next level. Others noted specific areas in which they had noticed leadership growth, for example in leadership skills, mindsets and clarity in leadership style.

Respondents also frequently reported a noticeable **improvement in participants' confidence in themselves and their abilities**, both personally and professionally.

“[The participant] came into the programme with many leadership qualities inherent but not polished. The programme helped him unlock those characteristics that has elevated him into an exceptional leader.”

- Colleague of an Alumni, 6 or more years since graduation (not pictured)

“Improved his leadership skills and confidence in himself and his abilities.”

- Personal Connection of an Alumni, 5 or less years since graduation (not pictured)

There were several other themes mentioned by multiple respondents, including:

- Participants had **broadened their perspectives**, with an expanded world view and breadth of thought.
- Participants had shown a greater commitment to **encouraging and supporting others**.
- Participants had greater clarity in their **purpose and direction**.

Many of the comments from family and colleagues reflected the qualitative feedback shared by participants themselves, particularly around their leadership style, confidence, sense of purpose, and broadened perspectives (see pages 11-12). This suggests that these changes that participants are experiencing through the programme are not only internal, but also being meaningfully recognised by those around them.





What's Next: Suggestions for the Future of CEL F

Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide suggestions for new programme offerings from CEL F, and any additional feedback or comments. Of the feedback given, 60% of responses were solely positive or did not offer any suggestions for improvement, with many expressing gratitude for the impact that CEL F has had on their lives and aspects that they had found valuable.

Of the suggestions for improvement, the most common request was to offer follow-up courses for alumni.

“A refresher course for Alumni, a few alumni that I have talked to have said they would love to do it again...”

- New Graduate

“Would like to see a CEL F alumni course providing some refreshers of the original course and giving more opportunity to expand networks between cohorts.”

- Alumni, 5 or less years since graduation

“Short course refreshers of new topics the Elevate programme is offering to later cohorts.

The programme will keep growing and innovating and I'd like to keep benefiting from that...”

- Alumni, 6 or more years since graduation

Many other suggestions were also provided; more than can be summarised here, as the majority were distinct ideas mentioned only once by individuals. However, there were several ideas suggested by more than one respondent. These included:

- **Offering short courses:** suggestions included courses on current topics or challenges, and a course focusing on purpose.
- **Involvement of past participants in the programme:** for example, inviting them to give talks or contribute to challenges.
- **A structured mentorship programme:** for example, a peer mentorship programme or a programme where past participants, senior leaders and subject matter experts can provide guidance to participants.
- **More programme content about Indigenous leadership and culture, and opportunities to connect with Māori leaders.**

“I would like to see more bi-cultural understanding. Te Tiriti and Te Ao Māori aspects woven into the programme. More indigenous speakers and material. It's still very westernised and I believe it's a great opportunity for the business participants to get more bi-cultural perspectives.”

- Alumni, 5 or less years since graduation



Measurement Approach





Measurement Approach

The Community & Enterprise Leadership Foundation (CELF) has partnered with Huber Social to measure the impact of the Elevate Leadership Programme. This report includes findings based on all data collected between 12 September 2024 and 11 May 2025.

The measurement system was built through a co-design process, where Huber Social and CELF identified the capabilities their programme sought to build in leaders and the opportunities it hoped to provide.

To determine the impact of the Elevate Leadership Programme, Huber Social measured the differences or 'shift' in subjective wellbeing (impact) through surveys of new entrants (baseline; as a comparison group), new graduates (graduates), and 'CELFies' (programme alumni). Alumni were categorised into two individual groups, short-term (1-4 years post-programme) and long-term (5-9 years post-programme). In addition to subjective wellbeing, surveys measured factors of personal capabilities and access to opportunities in particular areas (outcomes). Recognising that self-assessment provides only one perspective, surveys were also distributed to colleagues, whānau, and family members to capture how others have observed changes in the participants' behaviour, offering insight into the personal and professional growth achieved through the programme.

Analysis is based on 17 baseline responses, 20 graduates, 28 short-term alumni, 22 long-term alumni, and 43 whānau, family, or colleagues. Data was analysed to identify statistically significant changes in capabilities and opportunities that have the strongest relationship with changes in wellbeing. For details of the measurement methodology, including contribution, please refer to the technical report.

Huber Social

Huber Social holds wellbeing as the measure of success for social impact, with extensive experience measuring the wellbeing of people across the public, private, and social sectors in more than 10 countries.

Huber Social is committed to scientific, cultural, and ethical integrity. To ensure measurement projects 'do no harm', all projects are subject to independent review by the Huber Social Ethical Review Board, which is the first and only nationally registered Australian Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) focused on assessing social impact measurement projects.

As part of this commitment to the integrity of measurement, Huber Social led the drafting of the ['Handbook for Measuring and Valuing Social Impact'](#), for Standards Australia, along with our partners Oxford University Blavatnik School of Government and contributors from across Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, and Singapore. Huber Social is also a member of the UN SDG Impact Assurance Advisory Committee and the UN Private Sector Mechanism of the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation for Sustainable Development.





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info@hubersocial.com.au
www.hubersocial.com.au