

SHARED COMMUNITIES WHAKATŪ NELSON

— Arts, culture and heritage —

*Engagement with Nelson Migrant
and Former Refugee Communities*

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Report by Shared Communities Consortium
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Executive Summary

This report, commissioned by Shared Communities Consortium, aims to celebrate the diversity of Whakatū Nelson and build stronger connections between Whakatū Nelson's newcomer community and the host population. The Consortium members are Multicultural Nelson Tasman Incorporated, Arts Council Nelson, Community Partnerships (Nelson City Council Te Kaunihera o Whakatū) and Make/Shift Spaces Incorporated. The Shared Communities Consortium was initiated in November 2021 in Whakatū Nelson.

Whakatū Nelson is still largely viewed as a region lacking in cultural diversity even though 23.9% are overseas born, one of the highest percentages in New Zealand. A recent study found low social connection between newcomers and the host community. Local initiatives (Cultural Conversations) have already demonstrated success in bridging gaps between the migrant and host community through sharing of creative and traditional arts. This is borne out by the findings from the community engagement process that this report is based on. The Shared Communities project provides the opportunity to establish a three-year city-wide programme aimed at improving the sustainability and resilience of the arts, culture, and heritage within our migrant and former refugee communities and the local population.

This project is believed to be the first known city-wide approach of this kind to develop in Aotearoa. The four key pillars of our approach are:

- Community-Led – focus on removing barriers to access
- Make/Shift Spaces – dynamic activation of vacant spaces
- Diverse Consortium – covering different facets of the community with various access points
- City-Wide Approach – amplifying arts to increase community participation and engagement

The Shared Communities Consortium has scoped the work plan for research/strategy aimed at engagement with the migrant communities, working alongside migrant community leaders and engaging with migrant communities. The outcome of this project will be to remove barriers to enable migrant communities to celebrate their culture through creative mediums they themselves have identified through the research process.

The Consortium members share a passion for the value of connection and wellbeing through arts culture and heritage. The project has set out to access and reveal untapped resources to allow the wider community to experience them. Members have an insight into the possibilities from their unique place to see potential and build the connections to create this opportunity. The project has the potential to be meaningful. Learnings from the research will create opportunities to scale up delivery and produce a transformational city-wide three-year community arts programme.

The aim of the project falls into three main challenges and opportunities:

1. Shift the dynamic from current leaders in the space to newcomer-led arts, culture, and heritage programmes.
2. Shift to a structured multi-year programme-based approach, rather than current fragmented events focus.
3. Determine who are the key influencers who can help bring about the change for Whakatū Nelson's diverse migrant communities. Consortium partners can support this through the provision of space, community access and connection.

Research from 2018, "Meeting the Needs and Challenges of Migrants and Former Refugees in the Nelson and Tasman regions" was prepared for Multicultural Nelson Tasman by the Centre for Applied Cross-Cultural Research Victoria University of Wellington. Participants in that research viewed events as having two major purposes, firstly bringing newcomers together with the host community to break down cultural barriers (inclusion needs) as well as building capacity in the

migrant community (economic and employment needs). That research also found one in seven residents in the region would not feel comfortable with a neighbour who speaks English as a second language.

Methodology

There is a shared passion, learned first-hand, within the Consortium for the value of connection and wellbeing as a result of sharing through arts and culture. There is broad recognition of the untapped resources to allow the wider community to experience what migrant communities offer. Learnings from the research will enable scaling up delivery to produce a transformational city-wide three-year community arts programme. The Shared Communities Consortium will offer case studies and learnings for other cities and communities throughout Aotearoa.

The research-based approach used was a commitment to authentic engagement with the community. The goals were:

- Improve access and participation by removing barriers between the community's desire to express their cultures and the delivery of city-wide programmes.
- Support commercial opportunities through commissioning of work ie. Pop-up gallery spaces, craft markets.
- Increase sector sustainability and resilience – through diversifying creative expression to closer reflect our diverse Whakatū community.

The process

Fifteen one-on-one interviews were held, with most taking place in person, one by Zoom and one over the phone. Meetings took place in cafes, private homes, and some workplaces. Participants were from Chile, China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Ukraine, and staff from Multicultural Nelson Tasman. Vouchers were provided to participants to thank them for being involved in the project.

Thirty-one people took part in focus groups from Afghanistan, Belarus, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, India, Italy, Nepal, Philippines, Samoa, and Sri Lanka. Several focus groups involved only artists who were actively engaged in a variety of mediums. Some were leaders of their communities while others were informal representatives of their ethnic community. The focus groups were mostly held on weekends and in the evenings as many have work and family commitments during the week. These were held in rooms provided by community-based organisations familiar to the migrants and former refugees taking part. These included Multicultural Nelson Tasman, Victory Community Centre, Make/shift Spaces office, cafes and one in a private home. An interpreter was provided for several of the focus groups. Catering was provided for these events and a small gift provided to thank people for taking part.

Participant profile

Forty-six people took part in total with ages ranging from 17 to 66 years with 16 males and 30 females taking part. They had lived in Whakatū Nelson between two months to over thirty years. Participants were limited to those who lived in Whakatū Nelson, but some did live on the boundary between. Researchers were approached by people living in Tasman who wanted to take part, but the project was limited to Whakatū Nelson.

Most of the participants had connection with the arts and culture sector in Nelson with some being professional artists while others viewed art and cultural activities as an important part of their lives.

Interview Topics

A consistent interview format was used for interviews and focus groups (Appendix Two) with findings from each topic documented separately below.

1. *Arts and cultural activities communities are already involved in*
2. *What people enjoy about these activities*
3. *Things that make it difficult to participate in these activities*
4. *How art/performance/music or other cultural activities help to deal with trauma and a safe place for this to take place*
5. *Things that would make it easier to engage in arts and cultural activities in Whakatū Nelson*
6. *Special events or celebrations that groups would like to share with wider Whakatū Nelson community*
7. *How communities would like to showcase their groups to the wider community.*
8. *How connected do groups feel to the wider Whakatū Nelson community?*
9. *Final comment*

Need for additional research identified

There was great interest in this project to the extent that further consultation with former refugee communities was conducted afterward as a separate piece of work. Findings are presented on page 32 of this report. This required engaging cross-cultural workers and interpreters to help gather information from the four former refugee communities living in Whakatū Nelson. Some members of the Bhutanese and Colombian communities were included already in this research.

Recommendations

Te Tahua Whakamarohi i te Rāngai Ahurea – Cultural Sector Regeneration Fund is designed to support strategic, sector-led initiatives, that will have lasting benefits for arts, culture, and heritage in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The fund has five outcomes:

- A) Improve sustainability and resilience of the arts, culture, and heritage sectors
- B) Increase employment and skill development opportunities
- C) Improve safeguarding of Mātauranga Māori and support of Toi Māori
- D) Improve access and participation in arts, culture, and heritage sectors
- E) Increase the use of arts, culture, and heritage as a tool to improve wellbeing.

Below are the recommendations from our research presented in these five sections:

A. Improve sustainability and resilience of the arts, culture, and heritage sectors

1. Develop a set of trial programmes linked to spaces/providers as most communities really liked the idea of an opportunity of having a week to showcase their community to the wider Whakatū community.
2. Recruit a Cultural Navigator/Programme Lead specifically to assist migrant groups and individuals to access funding and other support to hold events and create artistic and cultural projects for, by and with migrant communities. They would mentor migrant organisations and individuals and advise them about how to apply for funding and be aware of accountability in accessing funding from i.e., Creative Communities Scheme, Tuku – Nelson City Council Heritage Festival grants, Whakatū Nelson Regional Development Events Fund, and others.

They would also provide education programmes for the existing art, culture, and heritage sectors to increase cultural competency and remove barriers. This will ensure that existing sectors have the capability to support capacity growth.

3. Provide short-term funding, possibly a subsidy, for facilities and venues for events to make it easier for migrant groups to hold events. This could also cover transport and koha.
4. Translate some application forms into other languages, for example, Spanish, and utilise grant forms that are already translated into other languages such as Creative Communities Scheme application guidelines (Arts Council Nelson).
5. Develop a Shared Communities Brand.

B. Increase employment and skill development opportunities

6. Encourage diverse representation in governance on local committees and boards of arts and cultural organisations.
7. Contract migrant creative content makers, artists, performers, and project workers to deliver programmes when available and provide mentors.
8. Encourage Nelson Regional Development Agency to promote and fund multicultural events and other welcoming services to support and retain skilled migrants in the region. This can support the wellbeing of the skilled migrant and especially the partner of a skilled migrant through the opportunity to be involved in arts and culture, helping them to connect with their local community as well as the host community.
9. Promote the Ministry of Social Development – Creative Careers Advice – Art/Work based at Nelson Chamber of Commerce (Stephen Broad Paul) programme, to mentor migrant artists and crafts people in conjunction with the Cultural Navigator position.
10. Establish multicultural market days quarterly.
11. Facilitate specialised arts and cultural development workshops with the assistance of an interpreter (if needed).
12. Local film industry. Research and investigate linking migrant film makers with Regional Economic Development Agency and Chamber of Commerce.

C. Improve access and participation in arts, culture, and heritage sectors

13. Investigate the facilitation of a Shared Communities Migrant Reference Group to meet bi - annually or quarterly with guidance from migrant communities about how this would work best.
14. Integrate findings of Shared Communities city-wide pilot study into Nelson Arts Strategy 2022.
15. Advocate, facilitate, fund and promote multicultural arts, cultural and heritage programmes with Nelson Public Libraries, Age Concern, Suter Art Gallery, Nelson Arts Festival, Nelson Fringe Festival, Nelson Provincial Museum, The Refinery ArtSpace, Make/Shift Spaces (vacant shops) Whakatū Marae and other appropriate venues.
16. Develop an affirmative action plan to deliver Shared Communities programmes/content in/by arts/cultural venues, institutions, providers like festivals in conjunction with The Suter Art Gallery, The Refinery ArtSpace, Nelson Centre of Musical Arts, Nelson Arts Festival, Nelson Fringe Festival, Tuku Annual Heritage Festival, Te Ramaroa - Light Festival, Whakatū Marae, Nelson Public Libraries.
17. Promote Nelson City Council's new Found Venue Directory of available venue spaces in Whakatū Nelson.
18. Promote Whakatū Nelson as a multicultural city through linking multicultural events with the regional calendar of events. Develop a regional calendar of multicultural events.
19. Utilise Multicultural Nelson Tasman Inc. as an umbrella organisation to receive funds on behalf of migrant groups, artists, musicians who are not eligible to receive public funds.

20. Promote and facilitate workshops around utilising interpretation services (Interpreting NZ) for arts and cultural providers of services and venues in Whakatū Nelson.
21. Establish a forum for progressive ideas for Whakatū Nelson to consider establishing a multicultural hub in the city including trialling this in a Make/Shift Space. This could include an online presence or coordination of sharing resources with communities around New Zealand such as costumes (Colombia), musical instruments (Korea).
22. Establish a learning space for the various language schools that already exist for different ethnic groups and encourage more of these to be set up. This would support multigenerational learning and the transfer of arts and cultural knowledge nurturing maintenance of traditions alongside language.
23. Advocate, broker philanthropic and sponsorship agreements with donors, employers, embassies who have a relationship or interest in respective multicultural communities.

D. Increase the use of arts, culture, and heritage as a tool to improve wellbeing

24. Acknowledge and support artists, performers, and craftspeople etc. and the role their art and creativity play to benefit individual wellbeing as well as that of the wider community.
25. Acknowledge the role of music, dance and celebrating together to uplift spirits and feelings of wellbeing in challenging times, especially through Covid.
26. Facilitate bringing wider sectors of former refugee and migrant groups together e.g., Latino, Asian, Eastern Asian, European to provide an opportunity to meet and celebrate together several times each year.
27. Acknowledge that people involved in arts and crafts have an important, non-linguistic way to connect with the wider community.
28. Increase the visibility of ethnic diversity in Whakatū Nelson.
29. Assess the need and facilitate specialised creative workshops to assist in the process of dealing with trauma including using available art therapy specialists.
30. Acknowledge and support migrant parents who have raised and educated their children in New Zealand but are still isolated and have limited English and integration into the wider community. Trial programmes utilising arts, culture and heritage as a vehicle to support social wellbeing e.g., practise English in sessions with locals using arts/culture as conversation starting points, for example in the library, Suter Art Gallery, Age Concern.
31. Engage migrants and former refugees in night classes for teaching arts and crafts and languages.

E. Improve safeguarding of Mātauranga Māori and support of Toi Māori

32. Connect with Whakatū Marae to facilitate welcoming events for migrants and former refugees moving to Whakatū Nelson.
33. To be determined and consulted upon.

Actions:-

1. Facilitate and set up a selected Reference Group to develop and implement the three-year city-wide pilot study/strategy. Identify the various partners that feed into this i.e. who does what and when? Develop plans and budget etc.
2. Register an expression of Interest with Ministry for Culture and Heritage **Te Tahua Whakamarohi i te Rāngai Ahurea – Cultural Sector Regeneration Fund** for a ground-breaking three-year community arts programme and deliver a city-wide approach.

3. Identify other agencies and funders who will also deliver programmes and capability to support this strategy.
4. Advise Tasman District Council Te Kaunihera o te tai o Aorere of identified need for events and other support in that region.

Findings from one-on-one interviews and focus groups

1. What arts and cultural activities are you involved in?

All communities were involved in a wide range of cultural activities including many celebrations and events. An overall recommendation was to develop a calendar of these so that there is more awareness between different groups and the wider Whakatū Nelson community about what is taking place in the city.

Groups were very resourceful in finding funding through charging for events, applying to Nelson City Council and Nelson Regional Development Agency for funding. In several instances they were supported by Multicultural Nelson Tasman but the process for support seemed to be very haphazard and stressful for volunteers who were also responsible for the actual organisation of the events. Many suggested that a cultural navigator to support and guide them through the process would make the process much easier.

The cost and availability of suitable venues was also frequently mentioned as a challenge for organisers. One person said *“Venues are the biggest problem – availability and cost. The group used to run a school on Saturdays at Maitai School but since Covid this is not possible. The venues need to be affordable and with easy access.”*

The cultural activities that groups are involved in are varied with the majority engaged with festivals and events to celebrate significant dates in the year such as New Year or Independence Day. Below is a summary of the activities mentioned:

Celebrations are held by Pakistani, Dutch, Vietnamese, Samoan, Filipino, Indonesian, Chinese, Chile, Mexican and Korean communities.

- **Chile:** Colombian Day and Latin American Independence Day
- **China:** Chinese New Year/Mid-Autumn festival/Dragon Boat festival at Old St. John's Church
- **Dutch:** King's birthday 27 April – mixed adult and child event with second hand market, children's games
- **Filipino:** Independence Day June 12
- **Indonesian:** Independence Day 17 August and Kartini Day – women's emancipation – 21 April
- **Korea:** Korean music, food, and games for children in February. Aligned with Chinese New Year.
- **Mexico:** Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) on the 1st or 2nd of November, held annually in Nelson for about 10 years firstly at the Free House then at Founders Park. Covid interrupted the festival for a couple of years and in 2021 was just a small celebration in the form of an altar held at Cultural Conversations.
- **Samoa:** Samoa Independence week and Samoan Language Week in June
- **Vietnamese:** Luna New Year – same time as Chinese New Year. 180 people attended 22 January 2022 as well as Mid-Autumn festival held in Old St. John's Church.

Festivals: **Race Unity Day** (now known as the Multicultural Festival) was the most frequently mentioned festival with Korean, Chinese, Indonesian, Filipino, South American, Vietnamese, and Japanese participants mentioning it as a significant event for their communities.

Other festivals mentioned included:

- **Japanese:**
 - New Year Mochi festival (Taikai) which is popular for kids. Also, Japanese women married to Kiwis want their partners and kids to experience Japanese culture
 - July – winter festival
 - Cherry Blossom festival at Miyazu where community does Japanese dancing and has stalls with Japanese food
 - BBQ Festival at Hope school
- **Dutch:**
 - St Nicholas held on 5 December
- **Chilean:**
 - Asian Market
 - Latin Market
 - Afro Cuban Festival with dance, drumming and singing
 - Colombia – Candles Night 8 December
 - Latin American Independence September
- **Chinese:**
 - Asian food fair
 - Easter
- **Filipino:**
 - Christmas celebration from 16-24 December with eating traditional food at midnight leading into Christmas day

Venues mentioned included:

- Cultural Conversations, Morrison Square
- The Free House, Collingwood Street
- Old St. John's Church, Hardy Street
- Songer Street Hall
- Saxton Field
- Trafalgar Centre

Spiritual rituals: Filipino, Indonesian, and Sri Lankan communities mentioned events held with religious significance including novenas, Ramadan, Diwali, and Christmas. Samoan church activities and Kava Ceremonies are important. Last year (2021) in lieu of being able to hold the Día de los Muertos Festival, the community set up an altar at Cultural Conversations.

Music: Filipino, Indonesian, Chile and Ukraine, the latter have the focus on fundraising through music and singing at the moment. One participant said, *“I sing in the Nelson men’s choir, I love it and it feels really special when we sing Samoan songs but makes me feel a bit sad that it’s only in the choir that I sing Samoan songs, I would like to be able to sing and share Samoan songs more readily.”*

Dance: Korean, Filipino, Indonesian, Chilean, Samoan.

Visual Arts: These included Indonesia, Chile, Ukraine, Peru including exhibition for Ukraine of art/paintings, drawing, carvings, ceramics, photography, artistic knitting in pictures and traditional clothing. The Filipino community had put together a PowerPoint for Tuku 22.

One person commented *“Arts and painting are not something that many Samoan people do; it is considered low priority as education and work are more important, it’s not a priority but we wouldn’t ignore it if it was more accessible. Younger people are more interested.”*

Storytelling: These included telling stories for classes at Chinese school and a Chilean person with a project pending for storytelling in different languages. A Samoan participant said in their culture it was not story telling but more speech making or oratory.

Movie production: Somalian, Filipino, Indonesian, and Chilean participants are engaged in movie and documentary production and making videos to provide information for their communities as well as documenting events that are taking place. There is a plan for Latin American Film Festival for Nelson Arts Festival screening outdoor short documentaries.

Textiles: In general, people tend to get traditional clothing from their home country as it is too expensive to produce it locally although local people in the Filipino community make costumes for local members.

- **Ukraine:** Older people know how to make traditional costumes – they used to do it and probably still could
- **Indonesia:** Are keen to revive the art of Batik – they can use local fabric for this
- **Vietnam:** members get traditional clothing from Vietnam
- **Samoa:** Have traditional clothing for dance and performing arts

Body adornment: Traditional tattooing has become increasingly popular with young Samoan people.

Cuisine: Participants from Ukraine, Philippines, Samoa, Peru, Pakistan, Indonesia, Colombia, and China all mentioned the significance of food for celebrations and to generate income. Filipinos run several catering businesses in Whakatū Nelson and have stalls at Nelson Market. Chinese community would like a venue for classes to teach culinary art as well as tea ceremony and its health benefits. One participant has had various Mexican food pop-ups around Nelson over the past 12 years, including all the food preparation for Día de los Muertos.

Performing Arts: Samoa: There are various dance groups, young people are involved with older people teaching, performing arts also includes speaking (oratory) which is about protocols and passing on the traditions to their children. Samoan speech competitions are also held for the youth.

Local crafts: These include decorations for events and celebrations for the Filipino community. Some of them also make earrings. Some of the mums with young children are interested in Filipino craft activities.

- Indonesian community can do body massage Ipijat and Lulur, body treatments similar to spa. They also sell imported bags.
- Local people from Mexico make many of the crafts for the Día de los Muertos Festival including piñata, sugar skulls and decorations.

- Ukrainian community would offer an introduction to traditional crafts, food, etc if the Whakatū Nelson community is interested.

Other: Groups were very resourceful in finding funding through charging for events, applying to Nelson City Council and Nelson Regional Development Agency for funding. In several instances they were supported by Multicultural Nelson Tasman, but the process for support seemed to be very haphazard and stressful for volunteers who were also the people organising the events.

- Chinese community also organises Tai chi group, Football, Basketball and Badminton. China week is sponsored by Nelson City Council and is held at Trafalgar Centre. The last few years have been scaled down because of lack of tourists. It used to include displays of Chinese art, language, and food as well as performances including people from Blenheim. *“Training for community leaders was held funded by DIA Covid wellbeing fund to teach the community about My Health app, IRD information, and short films – all this was done online.”*
- The Korean community did have an annual musical gathering with Korean War veterans planned in July at Suter Theatre. There are six surviving Korean war veterans, aged 82 to 90. Altogether there are about twelve people with family, and they need a comfortable, accessible venue. The Korean Ambassador comes to Whakatū Nelson for this and 2022 is 70th anniversary of Korean War. There is a book about the history. Unfortunately, this had to be cancelled this year because of visa issues for the Korean performers.
- Filipino community used to run events such as Culture Dinner and Show (pre Covid). This was also a fundraiser. Filipino participants said, *“Filipinos in Nelson love sports”*. They have regular local events and national annual sporting events sometimes held in Nelson including basketball, volleyball, badminton, bowling, table tennis and Zumba and they also compete in these at their national sports tournaments. Zumba is a regular weekly event held in Nelson and is well attended.
- Colombian Community
 - Traditional dance and making all of the dance costumes, this includes dresses, shoes, earrings, hair wraps
 - Recycling coffee sacks for supermarket bags
 - Invited by Nelson City Council to do a float for the Santa Parade, this has been built but the parade was cancelled due to Covid, the group building it are looking forward to being able to use it in the future. The float is in the form of a chiva, a traditional colourful, rustic bus.
 - Making traditional Colombian sweets from a specific part of Colombia – Afro Colombian, these would traditionally be sold from a vendor with a tray of sweets on her head, our participant said she would like to be able to sell sweets in this traditional way
 - Other Colombian food being sold at Nelson Market
 - Patchwork, handmade cloth dolls, painted wood craft
 - Beading
 - Sewing – a sewer of traditional dresses
 - Drawing and painting
 - Traditional Afro Colombian music – Marimba, Timbales, Maracas, this music is specific to the Pacific region of Colombia (Tumaco) and is used as an alternative for youth to connect to rather than gangs
 - Teaching traditional dance
 - Hair braiding – one participant mentioned Colombians are skilled in hair braiding which has cultural significance with the pattern of braiding reflecting the maps of when they were slaves
 - Traditional soaps

- Nail art
- Textile upholstery and running a repair café monthly
- Cuisine: One person said *“Food is very important to us as Colombians, food is the way we show love, food is everything for us. There are some good Colombian food producers in Nelson – Nadia has a food truck in town, Mery is selling food at the Nelson Market, Claudia makes traditional cheeses and yoghurt.”*
- **Afghani:** A conversation was held with two people from Afghanistan. They currently do not participate in any arts or cultural activities, life is currently about settling in, finding a job, navigating life. There are members of the Nelson Afghan community that have been in New Zealand longer, but they also are very focused on work and raising family. The kind of art or culture they indicated they might be interested in would be sewing and clothing especially traditional dress. A conversation with this community would be more beneficial in 6 months or a year when they are feeling more settled in New Zealand.
- **Pakistani:** Similar views were expressed by the Pakistani former refugee community who are very new to Nelson. A separate project is being undertaken to better understand the challenges and opportunities for former refugee communities to engage with arts and culture activities in Nelson using cross cultural workers and interpreters. This report will be available later this year.

2. What people enjoy about these activities

- a) Connecting with people from my culture
- b) Connecting with wider Whakatū Nelson community
- c) Preserving our culture
- d) Financial reward

a) Connecting with people from my culture

Most people interviewed mentioned the importance of arts and cultural activities for connecting with each other and celebrating their common interests, saying *“It’s how people feel their identity – although dancing is harder as we get older.”* Others mentioned how it increases wellbeing and leads to solidarity, especially in difficult times. One person said, *“It is the joy of seeing other people resonate with my work and the impact it has on them.”*

People talked about meeting people through their art and especially through Cultural Conversations, with Tanya Nock offering support and advice and sometimes asking them to provide services, such as photography. Others connected through a governance role with their community and organising festivals and events.

One participant said *“I heard someone speaking Vietnamese in Pak’n Save – it was great to connect with them and that lead me to Multicultural Nelson Tasman. I met Mary from Multicultural Nelson Tasman there and she introduced me to Race Unity Day and helped connect me with Vietnamese living in Nelson.”*

Facebook pages in different languages are also an important way for many communities to stay in touch. Some meet through a common interest such as making Piñatas which bring Latino people together. Artwork is very special and features in Sri Lanka in historic and ancient sites and religious places. The art is used on walls with some similarity to traditional Māori art. Some Chinese people have tried traveling back to China, but very strict Covid requirements mean this is difficult, so they need to make the best of being here in Nelson.

One Mexican participant said, *“Day of the Dead is an annual event which people from my culture and other Latino people in Nelson have come to rely on as being able to celebrate our culture.”*

b) Connecting with wider Whakatū Nelson community

"We love to share our culture; we are proud of it and we love 'showing off' our own cultures."
(MYNTies Youth Group)

Many people found being part of their community activity was a good way to connect with the wider Whakatū Nelson community – *"It's challenging enough to meet locals – language makes it even more difficult."* Many said how important Multicultural Festival (previously Race Unity Day) is in engaging with the wider community as well as coming together with their own communities. Another said it was easier to connect through an event or exhibition, rather than relying on language to communicate. People talked about how art and cultural activities break down the barriers and stereotypes and are a way to link with the wider community without relying on language. One artist said, *"I love to showcase Pakistan community to local Kiwis."*

A member of the Dutch community said the bike riding event they held was a great way to connect with the wider community and promote bike riding and demonstrate how Dutch people enjoy riding bikes and the environmental benefits of it too. They said *"Nelson Mail came and took photos as well as the Nelson Weekly. Eight cities participated around New Zealand, coordinated by the Dutch Embassy and the Dutch ambassador attended. Two Nelson City Councillors also attended. There was a small amount of funding for a few things."*

The Indonesian community said they particularly like to connect with the wider community and an artist from Sri Lanka mentioned how Cultural Conversations had given her the chance to display her art saying, *"Another Sri Lankan told me about Cultural Conversations. Now I hear people like my art and I want to digitalise it to be able to do more."*

Many employers who want Filipino workers approach the Filipino community. *"There is lots of word-of-mouth connection – also if boats are in port with Filipino crew, the community helps them through events and the Filipino store in Montgomery Square is a good meeting place for people new to Nelson to meet. It's good for next generations, especially for children."*

A Mexican woman who came to Whakatū Nelson saw Piñata in Warehouse and Kmart and realised she could make something more robust and more environmental. She started to make them and gave some to her children's friends. People asked to buy them for kid's parties and Christmas. Soon there was so much demand that it made sense to sell them. After trialling different materials to see what was best, she started to sell them in March 2020, and continued through Covid. Her aim is to make seven per week though this is challenging with other commitments of work, study, and parenting. It was an important step in meeting lots of Latino community and establishing links with the Nelson community. Another Mexican participant said *"We value being able to share Mexican culture with the Nelson community. It gives us the chance to explain our culture to people, i.e., the importance to us of acknowledging and celebrating the important people in our lives who have passed on, it has been embraced by many people in the Nelson community."*

A Samoan participant said *"Our community likes connecting with other Pasifika people, particularly the Tongan community, and our connection with the Māori community is important to us. "If we share and work together, we can accomplish anything."* – Palepa O Rodrigues.

There are many examples of how art connects people with universal stories and how support from the wider community is important. It also demonstrates how it would be helpful to have advice on how to achieve goals. Covid has meant many usual activities and gatherings could not happen but hopefully events can be more frequent and with bigger numbers in the future, with people saying *"Activity is limited now because of difficult times. We usually like to invite the wider community to China Week,"* and *"We hold a Dutch dinner for our older people with Indonesian food, with between 50-60 people attending."*

One person commented *"I enjoy the volunteering and links to the Nelson community that I have had through Cultural Conversations, the Nelson Arts Festival and other cultural events – Day of the Dead celebration with Jesus Ruiz Lopez."*

The Samoan community is involved in Matariki Festival and the Kai Festival.

c) Preserving our culture

Art and crafts showcasing culture help to build connections in the community. Introducing Spanish songs and speaking Spanish to children keeps children aware of culture and retains language – families encourage this.

"We have a Dutch quiz for older people and traditional games for the children to learn."

"IndoNelson held a community event with around 40 people involved in organising it. Activities such as this involve so many voluntary hours as well as personal costs such as petrol to be part of the planning and actual event."

"We are working on coming up with stitching skills and stitching Pakistani dresses."

"We want wish to extend our arts and culture beyond Nelson to the rest of Aotearoa, for example if the Auckland Colombian or other communities in Auckland needed Colombian dancers or dresses then the Nelson community could provide. It would be good if online presence or coordination could help this to happen."

The Samoan community organises sports activities for all ages but especially for New Zealand born Samoans to learn the Samoan flavour of sport, kilikiti and volleyball. One participant said, *"We particularly want to teach our culture to our youth, we want to start a programme for youth to implement language, sports, dance, speeches and fa'asamoa (doing things the Samoan way)."*

A participant from Mexico said, *"Day of the Dead helps our community preserve our culture for ourselves and the younger generation."*

d) Financial reward

Several participants were frustrated by irregular income, firstly caused by Covid and more recently by weather interruptions to weekly markets. They would love a venue that was weatherproof for a monthly market to help balance out losses caused by weather or other disruptions. Many felt that involvement in their community activities took so much time without any financial reward. This often came on top of long hours of paid work. People have popular products such as piñata, art and jewellery but need help to produce and sell in a profitable way including online.

"We need a way to link with the right people, advice and resources."

"It is challenging to be a fully commercial artist."

"We try to fundraise, but Filipino workers are also very busy in health and aged care sectors, with the added pressure Covid creates on these sectors."

"It feels like there has been no investment in arts in this region for a long time, we need venues, materials, time (being paid)."

"We need proper pay for proper work done."

"Ukraine community is trying to fundraise for our people at home, but it is a small community – we have sold some work through Cultural Conversations."

"Money is not the motivator for our art, but we need to earn money and we want to raise money to fund other activities."

"Sometimes we ask for koha at our events, but we get about \$30. We have subs and apply for funding or raise money selling food. Usually, we get people to bring food and we share."

Other challenges

One person from Ukraine said *"We could offer information sessions on Ukraine, profiling Ukraine in current situation usually for our own wellbeing. We want people to know more about Ukraine. Get the correct information, not Russian propaganda. People are spreading false information, and this is an obstacle to people supporting Ukraine."*

A Korean woman said, *"Our motivation for holding events and celebrations is for the next generation to know what it is to be Korean."*

3. What are things that make it difficult for you to participate in arts and cultural activities?

- a) Finding a venue
- b) Funding
- c) Time
- d) Cost of materials
- e) Language
- f) Transport
- g) How to sell what we make
- h) Not understanding Government / Council regulations e.g., food preparation
- i) Not being able to access specialised equipment from outside New Zealand

One participant summarised their views as follows *"Running an event in Nelson is precarious for many reasons and difficult to navigate for anyone, I can't imagine how difficult it would be for anyone that doesn't have good language skills and a thorough grasp of NZ bureaucracy. We feel that for any multicultural events to be successful it would require someone with knowledge of all the components of setting up a festival, possibly a person independent from council, but if you use event management companies, they charge too much of a fee to make a community-based event viable."*

a) Finding a venue

Many people mentioned problems finding venues for events, screening films, displaying art and offering language schools. There was mention of the difficulties booking through Nelson City Council with Trafalgar Centre being cited by several as problematic. One person said *"We contacted Nelson City Council in January about the event in April. We tried to get permission to use a grassed area at Trafalgar Centre. It only arrived three weeks before the event. When we arrived, staff said we couldn't be there."*

Another said they used to use Maitai School to run three language classes where they needed internet, kitchen as well as classrooms. This is no longer available so the classes can't happen. One person suggested a Make/shift space would be wonderful, especially as they sell from home at the moment.

For some the cost of venues for events is a problem and the limit on numbers due to Covid have limited attendees so they can't sell as many tickets as they would like to. Having more people would make it more profitable.

Another said *"We would like to use Suter but cost of screening for Latin American festival is too expensive there. We want it to be a free event – charging would exclude the Colombian community."*

They would need transport to get there. *"Ideally there would be half the screenings in Suter and State Cinema."* They added *"Suter is a bit challenging to walk into – it is intimidating for many"*

people, but the State Cinema is more familiar. Once again, NMIT (Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology) is okay but does not reach everyone. It would be great to discuss with management at Suter. It costs around \$500 per night to run the movies and there is total funding for the film festival from \$2-3K.”

One participant commented “It is expensive to publicise events although there seems to be plenty of money to advertise festivals involving alcohol such as Marchfest and Cider Festival. Nelson City Council does offer some publicity as well as Cultural Conversations.”

Colombians interviewed said:

“We would like to find a venue for our festivals.”

“We would like to have a venue for hair braiding and teaching hair braiding.”

“We would like a venue for teaching dance.”

“We would like a monthly market venue.”

“We would like to find a venue for a Saturday school.”

Focus group participants commented as follows:

Samoan group:

“We have been successful in receiving funding from Rātā Foundation for kilikiti equipment, now we need a venue to play.”

“This is a real problem for us, we would love a venue we can call our own, a place to have regular meetings, teach dance and other things, somewhere we can store equipment, costumes, resources, and artifacts.”

“Also, we need a kilikiti ground, we are wanting to play kilikiti regularly, we need a ground with an artificial cricket pitch, we would love to compete against Marlborough.”

“We would love a cooking venue where we can teach our youth Samoan cooking.”

Other comments from participants:

“There’s a real lack of venue space, it’s always a “no” from Nelson City Council when I have asked for assistance, and you cannot expand your business here as there is no space for it. If this is the place you live you will die from it (trying to make a living from art) if you don’t have support from a group or council.”

“We need a space to hold art events, workshops, a place to work, a place for materials.”

“We need a space to store our musical instruments – gamelan and angklung. Nelson Centre of Musical Arts (NCMA) will store it but it’s a rental system. The Indonesian Embassy will pay to transport the gamelan here from Wellington once we have somewhere to store it. We would also like to be able to purchase an instrument called an angklung, for around \$2000. 100 pieces of angklung could be purchased and travelled to schools, retirement homes, festivals, it is easy to play and an amazing group music experience.”

“What’s happening with the old Briscoes building, who owns it? It would be a great venue for a festival.”

“Cultural Conversations is a great idea and there are 8 or 9 artists either working from there or have their work in there. The problem is it is only open when there are workshops or events; it needs to be open more regularly. The artists working from there are from Italy, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Chile, Peru, and Bhutan.”

b) Funding

"A better way to distribute funds would be to have a three-year umbrella organisation that you can apply to for funding, you register with that organisation then they have pots of money in varying amounts for different things you can apply to."

"There was some funding for the Heritage Festival, but it was so diluted it was barely anything in the end."

"If we have had support in the past, it's been through luck. The other issue is that once you become a commercial artist there is no support."

"Small groups can't get big funds, funding applications are very complex, and you often have to go to multiple funders as well as use volunteers to fund/hold a single event."

"If the hassle is bigger than the reward, why would you do it?"

"Once you have a business plan it's easier to get funds but getting to that point can be difficult."

"We have had some funding from the Pasifika Trust, but we often dip into our own pockets to fund events. It would be good to know where else we can apply for funding."

c) Time

Many participants are involved in activities with their communities as volunteers, with some doing 5-6 hours per week on top of paid work. Meetings often need to be held in the evenings because so many people are working. For one recent event in Nelson, there were 40 people volunteering time – *"People are busy with family, work and study"*. One person involved in the arts sector said *"Nelson is a growing region for young families from other parts of New Zealand wanting to buy a house and have a more relaxed lifestyle. Many of these people come with experience in arts and culture and their skills can be very useful for the region. Also, it is a wonderful way to meet people and feel connected with Nelson."*

One artist new to Nelson works full time and it takes eight hours to do a drawing saying "it's like meditation... now I am looking at digital production. It is hard to find time when working full time." Cultural Conversations is a great place to get support with this."

Another said, "Because of work we are often only free in the weekends or have shifting time schedules for work which makes regular recreational activities difficult, for example teaching dance."

"There are lots of opportunities in this town to volunteer, but this is not sustainable."

"Evening workshops are difficult for many people and tiring after long days at work and running a family."

"People are short on time; our parents struggle to bring kids to after school teaching events as they are busy working."

d) Cost of materials

Most people said they can access the materials they need locally, although Japanese clay and beads for jewellery making is not available. One person said she spends around \$3k of her own money for making activities, games. Some **** businesses donate money. Resources for language schools were mentioned as a problem.

"Our Colombian people love to recycle and reuse items for their arts projects, this can be a barrier around obtaining or being accountable for grant money as there is often no documentation or

receipts for things bought second hand, at flea markets or online resellers.” They also mentioned having difficulty finding fabrics for making dresses.

“The Colombian dancers require expensive costumes, specific dances require specific dress, for example performing a dance in the wrong dress would be like a haka being performed in the wrong traditional dress – having the correct fabric and money for sewers would be great.”

e) Language

Language is a barrier trying to get information and fill out forms. One person said, *“Written language is very difficult especially publicity for events written by someone with English as a second language - oral is okay, but written English is difficult.”*

Another person said *“An older **** man worked many years in Whakatū and when his wife died, he still did not speak English and was very lonely. English Language Partners are helping now.”*

One person said, *“The Chamber of Commerce offers support for new business ventures, but language barriers are a problem plus the long hours of work it would take in setting up a profitable art or craft business when they have long hours at work.”*

f) Transport

“This is something we have identified as being a difficulty for our Samoan community, our people live far and wide in the region, and it is hard to get people together.”

g) How to sell what we make

Participants mentioned that stalls at festivals are an important source of income, and that the Nelson Saturday market is a great outlet though more people sell online since Covid. Another mentioned it would be good to be able to buy better materials and that demand for what they make exceeds capacity to supply. *“With support maybe we could expand in the future. Where do we go for advice?”*

One person said *“The communities that I am in contact with both through Cultural Conversations and other ways need a lot of help networking and assistance to get their craft and art into galleries, they need information on who to contact/connect with, promotion, business cards etc.”*

h) Not understanding Government / Council regulations

Around a third of the participants said they would really like help with this for regulations such as food preparation saying *“We need someone at Nelson City Council to explain things. We need someone allocated to support/navigate systems.”* One person said, *“No one in Nelson City Council seems to know – Nelson Regional Development Agency has been helpful.”* Another comment was about how complicated the online applications are.

Another person trying to organise an event said *“We had to deal with two departments and there was confusion. We did a Road and Safety plan plus Health and Safety plan. It was a lot of work as volunteers and stressful not being able to get the right information in a timely way - especially after Covid.”*

Some participants wished that Nelson City Council would have someone that understands Spanish as they often feel misunderstood when they go there to ask for information.

One participant said *“The government regulations are very different to what we are used to. We used to sell food in Ecuador and the government regulations there are strict but here it is very*

different It would be helpful to have workshops to explain different government regulations. The knowledge of regulations would help, but the cost of licenses is also difficult for families to afford."

i) Not being able to access specialised equipment from outside New Zealand

Products that are difficult to find include Korean calligraphy cloth, ink brushes, traditional paper and Chinese costumes, fans, dragon race items. Tools for batik are not so expensive in Indonesia but the cost of transporting them to New Zealand is. Getting fabrics and souvenirs for events is also expensive. *"Indonesia is the closest geographical Asian neighbour to New Zealand, but it is so expensive to get things from there to New Zealand."*

One participant said, *"Resources can be difficult to get through the border, MPI, also transport costs of importing materials and GST on import items."*

"Obtaining (Samoan) resources can be difficult or costly, there are a number of resources we can access in Auckland, but cost is sometimes prohibitive – fabric for costumes, artifacts, suitable things for prizegiving's, sports equipment."

One participant would love to be able to access the traditional musical instruments he would use in Pacific Afro Colombian music. Another said that getting used to New Zealand food products for her traditional sweets has been challenging and she has struggled to get cane sugar.

Other:

Several people felt that the voice for arts and culture is not really heard. Some participants said, *"Nelson is such a cool place with all the cultures, and we can really see that at Race Unity Day"*. Several embassies helped fund national costumes, but others did not know where to go to get support. Some of the long-term residents felt that they kept their communities going with a high churn of people coming to work here but moving on. Sometimes there is pressure to be a leader in the community but there can be conflict around this. It would always be helpful to have someone to guide us in these situations and tell us where to go for help for things like designing a logo.

Some participants felt there was a negative stereotype towards Colombian people. They said they had experienced trying to do things or help with things and when the local people discovered they were Colombian there was an assumption they were untrustworthy. They also said they did not know where to go to ask for help when they are trying to set things up.

Someone else said *"Cultural Conversations is very good at social integration, getting people out of the house but we/they need to make the activities more sustainable and profitable."*

One person involved in running events summarised the areas that communities would need logistical support with as follows:

- Venue
- Bar
- Licenses
- Staffing
- Volunteers/volunteer management
- Waste and waste management
- Marketing/promotion
- Council signage for promotion
- Phantom Bill Stickers
- Media
- Social media

- Gazebos
- Hire catering equipment
- Sound equipment
- Lighting
- Health and safety
- Security
- Ticketing
- First aid
- Venue technician
- Eftpos/float/cash
- Weather

“We feel there could be regular monthly multicultural festival events in Nelson, but it would only work if the above support was provided and if some of the venues had better facilities. Founders has been a great venue for us but needs a lot of investment, decent lighting, outdoor staging, gazebos, beer taps to name a few things. We also feel that a mobile covered stage would be a great investment for Nelson events; it could be used at Founders or other venues for smaller festivals.

We have dipped into our own pockets every year we have held our event, it's always been risky and very stressful, and if it were to rain, we would have lost a lot of money. We have flown specialist music groups in at our own cost; if the event had been rained off, we would have lost thousands. Also, we have relied on whānau and friends as volunteers to help us set up and run our event year after year.

“Council underwriting of these community/whānau based events would be great.”

4. How art/performance/music or other cultural activities help to deal with trauma and a safe place for this to take place.

- **The importance of culture and music to lift people's spirits in difficult times.**
- **Challenges of Covid and isolation from family in home country.**
- **Finding a safe place to go to talk about how they are feeling – Cultural Conversations was mentioned as a supportive place to go.**

People talked a lot about their struggles through Covid and how hard it was to keep up with all the information changing all the time. They asked about where they can go to get support. This question was included to see what role, if any, art and performance and celebration of culture play in helping to deal with trauma. There was a high level of interest in this question with the words of participants speaking for themselves.

Comments from participants:

“I feel that arts help a lot in dealing with trauma, it helps people's confidence and feeling safe. It gives them something to do where they know what they are doing, when everything is taken from you, and you are always learning that is hard. By doing their craft or their art they can do something they are good at, and also if they have the chance to teach someone it is again an opportunity for feeling good about something they know... that is, they are teaching something rather than always learning.”

“Culture and music help to lift people's spirits, especially in difficult times like now.”

“Achieving in art is a way to make my life whole. I was treated differently as a child, gifted with art but people asked me “When are you going to get a real job”? I want to be a successful artist and heal the child.”

One person who is now involved in art in Nelson said *“My goal was always to come to Nelson and because of Covid I eventually was able to join my partner on a humanitarian flight. It all happened very fast – from outside the airport to being suddenly on the plane. No chance to really say goodbye to parents and others. Now I often feel homesick though it’s getting better. I miss my life in ***** and worry about my parents. Life is very chaotic for them with lots of Covid deaths. My art is very important for me.”*

“It is a tough life in Indonesia – in Jakarta, 25 million people work and 11 million of those commutes, from out of Jakarta for work. Performers on the street take people’s mind off their problems and this lifts their spirits. Maybe it would be good in New Zealand too. It is good for people’s wellbeing.”

“Arts and performance promote wellbeing of the community we need this in these times. For example, many people abused Chinese people in the street because of Covid. Chinese women whose business was affected by Covid put something on Facebook about her situation. She had so many negative comments. She was very upset. We found that Cultural Conversations is a good place to go to talk about things like this.”

“There are things happening in Holland which would be good to discuss here. There is a move for euthanasia to be extended to young people who want to die. One young person has presented theatre about her wish.”

“There is one person in Nelson who recently arrived from the war in Ukraine and three in Blenheim. They are very isolated, but an event might bring people together, create a common goal to improve wellbeing.”

“My art helps me to relax in a busy life – it is very satisfying, and it is a family business with children helping as well.”

“Film festival subject matter is so varied. One person had father/son issues which were dealt with in a film. It helped to heal, especially hearing it in his own language. Also being with the community and sharing the experience was so good, so we could talk about it together. A common experience....”

“I have had experiences in the past – my art helps me to “zone out”. It’s like meditation, not only trauma. It’s very relaxing.”

“I do art for health reasons and as an antidote to the digital world.”

“We wanted a better life for our children. I came to NZ to study English in Invercargill then studied at university. Both children are now studying at university, and we are on our own, still not very connected to wider community of Nelson. We do celebrate festivals with our community.”

Several young participants said, *“We heard from some Sri Lankans who watched us dance (Sri Lankan dancing) at the Nelson Arts Festival, they said watching the dancing transported them back to happier times in Sri Lanka and that this was a nice feeling and helps overcome trauma.”*

Safe Places to go to talk about trauma or concerns.

- Cultural Conversations was mentioned by several people as a safe place to go
- Aotearoa Latin American Community(ALAC) counsellor

5. What things would you like to change in Whakatū Nelson that would make you more able to engage in your arts and cultural activities?

- a) People we can go to for advice e.g., how to apply for funding
- b) Cost of venue
- c) Feeling more welcome to go to places for information e.g., library
- d) A place where we know people will help us even if we don't speak very good English
- e) Have information in our own language
- f) Financial Advice

a) People we can go to for advice e.g., how to apply for funding

Some participants said that sometimes when they are trying to set things up, they don't know where to go or who to ask for help.

"While it's great to have funding opportunities I think it would be more beneficial to have advice around selling their arts and crafts, contacts for galleries and marketing would be great. The artists need to put their stories on their work."

*"Money is a difficult thing for some in the ***** community to deal with, they have a lot of support, but sometimes some people are not good at budgeting. More support around budgeting and spending for events would be helpful, there needs to be transparency and clarity. There was an occasion when dancers performing at an event were promised payment, but then the dancers were either not paid as promised or were paid less than promised."*

"We need a person to work with communities to coordinate their events."

b) Cost of venue

Participants talked about the difficulty of finding a venue and found the cost of the venue was a barrier.

c) Feeling more welcome to go to places for information e.g., library

"We feel welcome at Citizens Advice Bureau, I-site, library but people don't know the answers"

"The library could be a good place for teenagers to go – we could learn to make things like batik and start to sell."

"It would be good to have a neutral lending facility for our traditional clothing/dance costumes and resources." (Colombian)

"Communication could be easier - it would be good to have more advertising of who can help and where to display art."

"The politicians are helpful and supportive, but we need staff in Nelson City Council to give us the actual information"

"I don't really feel welcome in places. I am articulate but it's still difficult to say what help I need."

"Akiko rents a place next to Multicultural Nelson Tasman – a pop up shop would be good."

d) A place where we know people will help us even if we don't speak very good English

"That would be very good – even if people can explain things slowly and carefully. The information is complicated."

"It would be great to have a cultural community centre, like the old Community Hub in Nelson"

e) Have information in our own language

"I like to learn languages, especially English. I listen to the lyrics from the Beatles."

"That would be great." (Indonesian)

"Yes please, and with a database of people to distribute information to in different languages, through Multicultural Nelson Tasman, community leaders and schools."

"People listen to me more here than in my home country."

Four people felt this was not necessary.

f) Financial Advice

Some participants said it was difficult to start a new business, they must use own income to start their business and as they are self-employed or on a low income this makes it impossible for them to get a loan. They have no track record with banks and no credit; they could pay a loan but can't get one. This creates a lot of stress.

Food selling businesses are volatile and a lot of work can go in for no profit, they often will only cover their costs. They are often feeling like giving up, they would like some financial support to enable them to keep going, or another suggestion was a regular monthly weatherproof market to help recoup sales.

One person said, *"We need some kind of support for music costs."*

Another commented *"We need underwriting of events due to weather and other issues."*

Other:

"Free transport, free material, free training for everyone."

"It was helpful to meet people through community and whānau but that takes time as well."

"I enjoy doing this interview – it is good to have someone talk to me about these things."

6. Special events or celebrations that groups would like to share with wider Whakatū Nelson community

- a) Specific events that the communities would like to share
- b) Events that are for the communities themselves

a) Specific events that the communities would like to share

Participants were asked if they would like to share any of their celebrations with the wider community. Many felt this would be a good idea and suggested that there be a calendar of local festivals, celebrations and other events which celebrated the ethnic diversity of Whakatū. One person mentioned *"We love to be with the wider community in places like the museum and the Suter as well as at the Nelson Arts Festival. Tanya at Cultural Conversations often tells us about what is going on – otherwise we wouldn't know."*

Specific events are:

- *"Race Unity Day (now Multicultural Festival) is a wonderful occasion for this, but we need more."*

- Indonesian Independence Day promoting their culture
- Lunar Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival – *“We would like special guests and friends of Vietnamese.”*
- Samoan Independence week in June – *“We have held it once through different schools in the region, we would like to share it wider, this year we did it through St Josephs, Victory Primary, Nayland College, Broadgreen Intermediate and Parklands School Motueka. Also, Independence Day celebration (a Saturday near 1 June) We hold events to raise money for our community to assist with household expenses, the money raised is for the families in our community, but the events we hold to raise the funds are for the whole community to attend, and to share in our culture.”*
- Combine the Dutch bike ride with Dutch movies that are both open to all.
- Plans are underway alongside Neighbourhood Support for neighbourhood events appealing particularly to Colombian community. Colombians prefer to gather in small groups – like five neighbourhood blocks rather than city-wide. This is more like life in Colombia and means people don’t have to travel out of their neighbourhood – this is also eco-friendly.
- Exhibition on Ukraine and sale of arts and crafts.
- Vietnamese Lunar Festival and Mid-Autumn festival where special guests and friends of local Vietnamese community could attend.
- Korean Day concert at Suter, Korean Day.
- China week - Library takes part in this.
- Latino celebration of the Day of the Dead on 1 November.
- *“Yes, we have a festival called Día de las Velitas – Little Candles Day, this is celebrated on the 7th of December we would like to share this with the Nelson community.”*
- *“Colombian Independence Day is celebrated on the 20th of July, in Nelson, we moved it to September when the weather is better, we would like to share this with the Nelson community and urgently need to find a venue for this year, please help.”*
- *“We would also like to have a family celebration where we share our food, activities and games with the Nelson community, we would like to do this at no cost to the Nelson community and could be done around Día de las Velitas.”*
- *“Other important dates for us are Easter and Christmas, these could be shared celebrations or family/Colombian community celebrations.”*

Focus group participants expressed the following:

“I would love to see more support of ceramics here; I came to Nelson because I heard it was a ceramics region, but I don’t see any recognition of that. I belong to Nelson Community Potters, it’s become very popular, the numbers now belonging to this organisation are huge, over 70 members, it’s become so big it is now not functional, there’s no president, there’s too much work to do to keep it running well by volunteers, people are busy. It’s become a big business, the building is old, old kilns, the classes are at capacity, long waiting lists, we could have twice the number of classes, and the daily issues are hard for volunteers to deal with. I would love to see more money, more promotion, investment, and respect to the Ceramics industry. Compare this to a visit I had to Craft Potters in Hope, they have older ladies there running it well, it’s a great venue, lunches, well organised.”

"A Nelson Ceramics Festival would be great, there is one happening in October by Nelson Arts Council, Kiln & Hot Clay, this is good, and more of this is needed."

"A Brazilian Festival like Cuba Dupa, the Mask Parade was great Samba, Capoeira etc. would be great to have something like that in the city centre."

"I think a city-wide Multicultural Festival, a festival over a week utilising empty venues all over the city, each ethnicity could have a space, there could be workshops, exhibitions, shows etc It could draw people to the region as well as for locals."

"A broader Indigenous people's festival e.g., expanding on Matariki, there are a number of migrants live here from other Indigenous communities e.g., Brazil"

"I would like to see documentary photography workshops for multicultural youth; there is a real lack of a multicultural voice in documentary photography."

"Street art documentary photography with a theme – e.g., protecting water across cultures."

"I dream of a Library Multicultural event, where top authors or books are showcased from a number of different countries, it would also be good to see the library boost their foreign language book sections."

"Batik making workshops, we need a venue for this, we have 23 Indonesian families living in Nelson, we could share these workshops with the wider community, and this also helps us pass on traditions to our Indonesian young people."

"I would like to see multicultural art and music going to retirement homes and schools."

"A regular multicultural food festival, people like to have a taste of culture, many people in Nelson have travelled or lived in different countries and sometimes they like to have a taste of that culture even if it is just an empanada and a few words of Spanish in the interaction of buying the empanada."

"Large events are very stressful to organise."

"The museum is always looking for ideas and could provide space for arts events."

b) Events that are for the communities themselves include:

- *"St Nicholas Day (Netherlands). There are 15 families with bilingual children and around 20 people aged 50+ who gather at Grape Escape monthly. 50-60 older Dutch people gather for a winter dinner – they would love the IndoNelson event but didn't know about it. They have a Facebook page and sometimes meet for coffee."*
- *"Korean Veterans Day."*
- *"Mexican Independence Day is not celebrated at present but would be good to do this on 15 September."*
- *"Latino community meets every fortnight at Founders Park for Salsa parties organised by a German guy. There are also events organised by Cultural Conversations, for example drumming. It's a great way to meet people. There is no comfort zone, we need to be creative to meet and enjoy others and connect with all the Colombians."*
- *"Ukrainians sometimes gather with Russian, Serbian, and Romanian communities. Pre-Covid, this community was part of Race Unity Day and the Eastern European Orthodox Church, but the organisation was liquidated during Covid. Process is underway to develop a new one."*

7. Participants were asked if they would be interested in showcasing their communities for a week. Responses are listed below. There was universal support for this idea.

Cambodia	<i>I would like to share the history of my country (Cambodia) there is some dark history, and I would encourage my dad to talk about it and I would translate, he might not want to do it though, I would also like to talk about Angkor Wat being the largest temple in the world.</i>
Colombia	<i>We would like a sharing type festival where we can share our food, our culture with the Nelson Whakatū community. It would be wonderful to have a project for each cultural region of Colombia as they are quite different, this would include dance, music, food. There are many Colombians here from the Pacific region, they would be great ambassadors for that area.</i>
Peru	<i>We could include music, art, cuisine, street food.</i>
Chile	<i>We would offer cuisine, crafts, dancing, visual arts, hair braiding.</i>
Mexico	<i>it would be great around Day of the Dead, 1 November.</i>
Indonesia	<i>We could include Batik making for children and promote and educate about culture, dance, music, products, and process of making. It would be good to have interactive music, like at Te Papa.</i>
Philippines	<i>Most people are working. We would like to, but would employers give us time off? Would be great if they would support us e.g., Alliance Meat works.</i>
Vietnam	<i>We find this idea interesting.</i>
Korea	<i>We could display costumes, art, calligraphy, Korean books, Korean war books.</i>
Japan	<i>We could show lots of things including puppet show, jewellery.</i>
Ukraine	<i>We are very keen. Suter would be an amazing place to have this.</i>
China	<i>It would be great for China week. The library already does this.</i>
Sri Lanka	<i>We could have music, dancing, art works, Sri Lankan tea and food.</i>
The Netherlands	<i>Our community would like it. We have lots of ornaments and could also showcase modern Holland. Engineering, host discussions about fighting water infiltration of land that is now an issue for Nelson and many other countries. And other topics like gas reserves going.</i>
Multicultural Nelson Tasman	<i>Great idea for host community and migrants and former refugees. A central location would be good.</i>
Multicultural Youth Nelson Tasman (MYNTies)	<i>This would be great, we would show our costumes and traditional dress, we would show and share food, our traditional arts, and crafts.</i>
Samoan	<i>We would love to do this, a summertime event would be great, we would showcase Samoan arts, artifacts, dance:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owned and borrowed artifacts • Performance arts, cultural dance group, teaching dance • Speeches • Kava ceremony
Mixed group	<i>A weeklong city-wide multicultural festival, in the central city.</i>

8. How connected do you feel to the wider Whakatū Nelson community?

- a) Feeling connected
- b) Multicultural Nelson Tasman
- c) Colombian community
- d) Other

a) Feeling connected

"I came here in 2018 – now I think I start to connect with people. My art is helping me to do this."

"We don't feel very connected. Sometimes we tend to isolate ourselves. It would be good if Nelson City Council would bring people together – have an event for meeting other communities."

"There is space for improvement. It's a question for all New Zealand now. How can everyone feel more connected?"

"It's difficult to meet locals – playing tennis helps."

"We would love more Nelson City Council representatives to attend our Samoan events or meetings"

b) Multicultural Nelson Tasman

"The ones who come to Multicultural Nelson Tasman tend to be more connected – but there is not much contact with Burmese and Pakistani. It would help to have an ethnic leaders' group."

"I don't feel very connected except for Multicultural Nelson Tasman, and I have only just met up with them."

c) Colombian community

"We want to help Nelson people understand that we are different, that we dress different, that we are loud and colourful people, we don't want to be judged for that and we don't want to have to change, we would like to be accepted for that."

"My Spanish teacher at school asks me to take the class sometimes as my Spanish is better than hers."

d) Other

"I feel like I wouldn't really be heard. Past experiences talking with Nelson Regional Development Agency, Nelson City Council to form film office, bring productions here and train people. This would help to retain people and young families."

"Could our (Samoan) events be added to the Nelson City Council events calendar?"

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?

- a) Latino
- b) Asian
- c) European
- d) Samoan
- e) Other

a) Latino

"We are worried that our Spanish language is being lost, our children at school are encouraged to speak English to us so that our English improves but we worry that by doing that our children will lose their Spanish, we would love an extracurricular Spanish school for language and culture, for example a Saturday school."

"We would like Nelson City Council to have more understanding about Colombian culture; we have formed a trust called Colombian Community Trust Board. We would like this to be used for applications for funding for events, in the past we have found there have been duplicate applications for funding for the same event, we hope this trust will give better clarity and understanding for Nelson City Council."

"We have heard that we can't have Piñata at events due to health & safety, we want to be able to have Piñata."

"We have a young Colombian man in our community who has qualifications and experience at dealing with youth and he would love to be able to work with the Colombian youth to help retain Colombian traditions and keep them from being in trouble and retaining Colombian values. Some of his experience involves teaching youth traditional music."

"We would like to have a Spanish speaking school."

There is a gap in services from when people go to Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT), then finish and they are left to themselves without enough practical experience. There is a need for support in workplaces – people go to work and don't speak to anyone, especially men."

"Colombians experience more racism than other groups" – Nelson community needs to be educated about diversity".

"People like to be entertained – move about and have interaction. There is so much funding for Caucasian, rich white people with alcohol. We need to profile other communities so that they feel the wider Nelson community is not just friendly but that they are really accepted and valued."

"It would be good to have a meeting place for Latino community that is not based around alcohol and that is a place for locals to meet them as well."

One person felt not really connected (referrals made to Arts Council Nelson, Multicultural Nelson Tasman, and Aotearoa Latin American Community (ALAC)).

b) Asian

"It would be good to meet other communities e.g., Korean, Japanese, Vietnamese."

"Matariki is a chance to celebrate other countries as well as Māori like at Victory."

"Celebration of national day should be part of an employment contract, equivalent to Matariki. President of Filipino society is also a Head Nurse. Incredible pressure currently with Covid."

"Living cost is very high so most families have both parents working. There is not a lot of time for cultural events even though they are very important for meeting up with their own community as well as the wider community. Regular programming of music and other events would help."

"We would like to connect more with the wider community, but language is a barrier even though we have been in Nelson a long time. We are busy with work during the week, but a one-on-one tutor would really help."

"Oldest Vietnamese person in Nelson has been here 30 years. Previously one of the boat people who came to Nelson. Vietnamese have intergenerational homes and do not use rest homes for their elderly."

"I would like to do voluntary work, but I can't find the right thing."

"We (Korean community) used money we raised to buy 20kg bags of rice for 25 local families. Rice became very expensive during Covid."

c) European

"Need for services to help older people transition from their own home to a retirement village. It is a complex situation and people who have settled here with no family need support to make this decision. "What furniture to keep? Maybe they can't drive. Maybe they need help with IT."

"Would like to start a children's programme "Free to Be" where children experience learning in the outdoors, maybe one day per week."

"We want to have contacts in Tasman (Hungarian, Korean, Sri Lankan)."

"There are graves of Ukrainians, Russians, ANZACs from WW1 in war cemetery in Nelson. This is a common heritage connection for people. Generations of Ukraine/Russian people living in Nelson. Wounded ANZAC of Russia, Ukraine went as volunteers. Some came to convalesce in Nelson. TELL THE STORY! Cemetery records in Nelson City Council. Rosalina, Ukrainian Serbian knows about it."

"Football is a great way to mix cultures."

"Football tournament was good for bringing different cultures together."

"Cost of Suter is prohibitive – needs a community rate."

d) Samoan

"We are very keen to hold a Kilikiti festival that's for the whole Nelson community; this isn't just about the sport but the full package of entertainment, food, and music. It would also be an opportunity for outside providers to connect with the Samoan community." (The researcher thought this participant meant an opportunity for health and other providers to have stalls at this event.)

"We would love to have a night festival like Matariki but for Samoan culture and we feel like there's an opportunity to run an event like that a few times a year in Nelson showcasing different ethnicities (maybe a summer night festival for the Samoan community)."

"We value being a part of the Nelson Kai Festival at Whakatū Marae and would like to be able to showcase more of our culture at that event."

e) Other

Comments from one participant:

"It is important for young people to be attracted here – to have the opportunities. Also, to attract those who grew up here and go away overseas or to study to come back and live in Nelson. The region hasn't really anticipated this with big emphasis on tourism but ignoring other possibilities for the region. Tourism might never fully recover as an industry, but the beautiful environment and lifestyle of Nelson can attract other sectors. Nelson Tasman and Marlborough (Te Tau Ihu) is the only region in NZ that does not have a film office. The region has not anticipated or planned for future. Nelson city is quite stagnated in arts and culture and there is not enough to retain young people.

Things like the Fringe Festival and Arts Festival in Wellington draw a lot of young people. Here those festivals are not marketed to young people. There are not the spaces for emerging creativity.

Promotion of Top of South film festival and things like that are just by word of mouth. It is hard to connect with other people and meet people in Nelson. These events would be great opportunities to do this but how do young people hear about them? Many people in Nelson make docs, but how do we connect, find out about other people doing these things?

I try to connect, meet people – I have only just heard about Cultural Conversations after nearly 5 years in Nelson. The region is growing in a different way, but Nelson City Council and Nelson Regional Development Agency are not meeting the demands of young families. They need to do more to retain young families.

If I could do my work here and not have to travel, I would always want to be here. It is so difficult to get the people with the right skills and to get the right equipment to film tourism here – instead companies come in from other parts of New Zealand. Post-Covid, let's do something different. The location is so great, and location scouts would choose to film here if there was more infrastructure. We need to develop talents here.

We need to encourage Nelson Regional Development Agency to invest in creativity. Look at Queenstown, Christchurch where film office is set up by Councils. Filming in Nelson could potentially be much cheaper than other places. We have Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT) with postproduction facilities and Film/photography courses. There is not enough attention to arts and culture in regional strategy. I didn't even know it was being done. It feels like we are not heard in wider community. Recognising this could enhance the whole region if the influence of art and culture on the whole community was acknowledged. There is no Art Hub – we need an arts strategy.

Sports have club rooms, dedicated teams of staff in Nelson City Council. On the other hand, the Arts festival is run from a small room in Fashion Island. The art sector needs a place to go. There are opportunities like Ministry of Education wanting videos made for art and history curriculum for a national campaign. It could be filmed here but it is so hard to find people for production. It is so expensive to fly in people and provide accommodation, flights, etc. We need to develop organisations like Lumiere, so we have the skills and equipment available locally.

There is the chance to go into schools with traditional storytelling, come and be part of this community. Why not engage local performers, music has the spaces. People don't know about this. Maybe there could be a feasibility study on viability of film production in the region. This would need support from Nelson City Council and Nelson Regional Development Agency. Television series like "Under the Vines" and "One Lane Bridge" filmed in Queenstown brings around \$30m to that region. It needs a person to find possible locations – invest in a person, connect with NZ on Air.

We have brought people from Auckland to film for Tourism NZ and Air NZ in Nelson. It is frustrating trying to find people with the right skills, pay for accommodation, travel, etc."

Focus group participants comments:

There was a level of cynicism around repeated consultation; one person commented that this type of consultation had happened every three years over the last decade or so and that nothing ever happened. "Can't we use what we already have rather than trying to reinvent things?"

This group had many questions, these are:

- *Is this project to provide income for local artists or is it to enhance the region?*
- *Is it to promote what we have or to bring in artists from outside?*
- *Is it to promote Nelson/Tasman being a multicultural place as a tourist attraction?*
- *How do we involve both commercial and recreational artists?*
- *There is no relationship between council and a commercial artist, can this be improved?*

- *There is a large chunk of the population that can't afford any participation in the arts, how can we include them?*

Other comments or ideas:

- *"It would be good to have a contact person for networking and funding, some help for funding applications would be good, they are so complex."*
- *"Can a person be funded to develop programmes?"*
- *"The Arts Council currently fills that role, but I feel like it's a secret, we need something not so bureaucratic."*
- *"Tanya at Cultural Conversations has been helpful."*
- *"This is a small population for commercial artists to sell locally."*
- *"Would be good to see more meeting of two worlds between professional artists and recreational artists, can be inspiring for 'hobby' artists to see professionals at work."*
- *"I was drawn to Nelson because it's considered 'arty' but arriving here it's been a shock to see how behind it is, there are actually very few commercial artists here."*
- *"Community Artworks is slowly being ground down."*

Some of the artists commented that they wouldn't consider their art to be ethnic art – it's just art, they acknowledge that their culture is part of who they are but that their art is not 'multicultural' per se.

Conclusion

This project was only possible with the cooperation and collaboration of many sectors of the Whakatū Nelson community. It provided a rare and extensive opportunity for the arts sector, migrants and former refugees, community organisations, local government, and central government to gather this information. The interviews and focus groups give insights into the joy that arts and culture bring to the lives of migrants and former refugees as well as the challenges they face to navigate complex processes finding venues, accessing funding, complying with council and government regulations all of which are complex for anyone, let alone for people with limited English and experience in this field.

There are many recommendations and already agencies have combined resources and support for some of these to be addressed. Findings of this report will inform other strategies and consultation that is planned or already in process in the region. There is high level of engagement and goodwill to provide the support for arts and culture to connect with and reflect the ethnic diversity of the region and embrace the opportunities that this provides for both the newcomers and host community. The report brings together two worlds that have had minimal interaction in the past. Cultural Conversations has made inroads into this domain over the last few years with minimal financial support and resources. It has helped to highlight the need for advice, money and guidance for artists and communities wanting to engage in arts, culture, celebrations, and festivals. Many agencies through this process have shown interest and support in the preliminary findings and the potential to be integrated into other strategies for the city including Nelson City Council Nelson City Council Te Kaunihera o Whakatū Arts Strategy.

In the very final days of compiling this report, Whakatū Nelson experienced disastrous flooding and landslips. Participants had already expressed in this report how arts and culture are so important for their wellbeing and uplifting their spirits in the face of everyday challenges alongside major ones like Covid. Now all of Whakatū Nelson and these communities face another huge challenge. It is fortunate that the consultation happened in a time when it was possible to bring

people together with limited direct impact of the pandemic and natural disaster. It was a window of opportunity that many are happy and relieved could be successfully concluded.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all the participants in the interviews and focus groups for giving their time and insight into the joy that arts and culture bring to their lives as well as the challenges they face in participating in the sector. The findings reflect their honesty and trust in sharing their experiences and the depth of knowledge they have of what it is really like to pursue their passion for art and culture in this city.

The report was only possible with the invaluable guidance and support of the Shared Communities Consortium members. Special thanks to Anne Rush, General Manager of Make/Shift Spaces Inc. for her generous and enthusiastic support for this project. As mentioned above, Covid and now a natural disaster has impacted on Whakatū Nelson during the development of the report. Support from Consortium members, Nelson Tasman Settlement Forum and many other agencies has ensured the project could be successfully completed.

About Ryan and Rienhoff and Associates

Brigid Ryan (Ryan and Rienhoff and Associates) completed the interviews and compiled the report, assisted by Karen Darling who conducted the focus groups. Brigid has extensive experience in research and project management for central and local government around New Zealand with a particular focus on the migrant and former refugee sector. The key to this research is engaging in community conversations and consultation to get a clear idea of the needs of groups who often have not had the opportunity to convey these to the wider community.

Karen Darling was previously National Manager of New Zealand Newcomers Network developing a network of over 35 community groups nationwide, providing social connection to newcomers, migrants, and refugees.

Supplementary Research: Shared Communities Consultation with Former Refugees

The need for a separate process of consultation with former refugees became apparent during the initial project. Make/Shift Spaces Incorporated funded this additional piece of work to respond to the unique needs of former refugees to participate. Cross-cultural workers and interpreters along with a very experienced facilitator worked alongside participants to gather the information below. This specialised approach provided the project with valuable information.

Introduction

This research uses the same consistent interview format (appendix two) with findings from each topic documented separately.

There were parallels between the findings in the first part of the research and this research. These include:

- The importance of cultural festivals to be held, important for the wellbeing of the communities represented, on an emotional and spiritual level.
- There was a real generosity in the desire to share their cultural events with the wider Whakatū Nelson community. This was as a sense of pride in sharing their culture but also a want to connect and to let the Whakatū Nelson community know they are here, and to promote an understanding of their culture.
- Frustration at costs and barriers preventing or inhibiting the importation of cultural items, clothing, fabric, artifacts, and other items important to their culture.
- Lack of a consistent venue to use regularly for cultural events, meetings, rehearsals, teaching, and for storage of equipment and culturally significant items.
- The need for better access for information around organising events, someone they can go to that can assist with funding applications and logistics.
- A desire to connect and share their festivals and cultural items with their communities in other parts of Aotearoa.

Methodology

Focus groups were held in person during August and September 2022. 21 people took part in the different focus groups, and they involved community members from former refugee backgrounds. The communities taking part in the focus groups were from Chin State in Western Myanmar, Karenni/Kayah State in Eastern Myanmar, and Bhutanese/Nepali former refugees. The Chin communities that are included in this report originate from nine different tribal ethnic groups – Hakha, Thantlang, Falam, Matupi, Kanpetlet, Mindat, and Paletwa.

In July 2022 a large group of former refugees were introduced to the research project at a parenting seminar at Victory Community Centre, and interest in participating was shown by a number of former refugee communities, this was then followed up with one-on-one meetings with the cross-cultural workers. Subsequent to those meetings the cross-cultural workers gathered together members of their community to engage in the research. The meetings took place at the Victory Community Centre and in one case in a private home. They were held in evenings and on weekends to fit in around people's busy lives. Kai was provided and a small gift given to thank them for their time.

The participants were community leaders and people from their community involved in art and cultural activities. They were a varying mix of ages with great interest from some of the younger community leaders. Most of the participants live in the Victory area and many of the participants had been resident in New Zealand for over 10 years. We had a good gender balance with roughly 50/50 male/female representation.

Whakatū Nelson is one of ten refugee settlement areas in New Zealand with a population of approximately 1600 former refugees living in the city. The other settlement areas are the Auckland region, Waikato, Manawatū, the Wellington region, Blenheim, Nelson, Christchurch, Timaru, Dunedin, and Invercargill.

Recommendations

- 1) All the groups expressed how helpful it would be to have a point of contact or a person they could ask for advice and assistance in setting up events or activities. Funding an independent person in the community that could support and advise community members how and where to go for this kind of assistance.
- 2) Establishing an event fund for groups to apply to for their festivals and celebrations.
- 3) Setting up a venue or cultural centre that communities could belong to and access when they need meeting space, practice space, or space for events.
- 4) Establishing a kōrero with Central Government agencies around support for documentation for the importation of cultural items especially those that would be difficult to get through Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).
- 5) A fund to assist communities to import more items such as musical instruments, costumes, and other important cultural artifacts from their countries of origin. Additionally, some thought should be given to storage facilities for some of these items, potentially connected to a cultural centre.
- 6) Adding cultural festivals and celebrations to a regional events database and events listing.

Findings from the focus groups

1. What Arts or Cultural activities are you involved in?

Music and Dance: Most communities are already very active in music and traditional dancing. Many have also held regular traditional festivals or celebrations over the past 10 years although these have been impacted in recent times and there is a real keenness to be able to resume these. As well as holding their own festivals and events, these communities have actively participated in wider Nelson festivals and events through traditional music and dancing, these festivals have included:

- Multicultural Festival (formerly Race Unity Day)
- Nelson Arts Festival
- Noodle Festival

Costumes and traditional dress are an important part of the music and dance. Accessing the correct fabrics, dance costumes and adornments for the specific different dances are very important.

“Our different dances require a variety of costumes and adornments, then needing different sizes means it’s a lot we need.”

“Singing and dancing is done in front of the houses of other members of our community, and they give us money, this is for fundraising and is for fun, it could be extended to be done with the wider community if there was an understanding of what it was all about.”

For some communities a fashion show of traditional clothing is an important part of their cultural celebrations.

Safe storage, documentation, and tracking of costumes and body adornment was considered possibly helpful as these items can take up a lot of space, and are currently stored in various community members homes, however there would be concern about the correct storage, and the safety of these items if this were to happen.

Traditional musical instruments are important. They are difficult to get, the cost of the instruments is high and then the issue of importation difficulties, which includes importation costs and then problems associated with MPI documentation when importing these items into New Zealand. Sometimes the MPI difficulties also apply when importing jewellery or body adornments - such as porcupine quill headwear; or other significant cultural items - such as kukri – a knifelike artifact, which symbolizes leadership and kingship.

“We play traditional musical instruments, we don’t have the actual instruments here, but we use items similar that we can find, the different instruments are like a gong, a flute, and a drum.”

Celebrations: There are a number of significant celebrations that these communities currently already celebrate or wish to celebrate. In Whakatū Nelson these are:

- **Chin:** Chin National Day February 20th
- **Bhutan/Nepali:** Nepali New Year, Women’s Festival – Teej, Literary Festivals – Bhanu Jayanti and Laxmi Prasad Jayanti
- **Karenni/Kayah:** Deeku Traditional Festival 25 September, Kay Htoe Boe Festival April/May, Karenni National Day 21 June

Textiles: Bhutan/Nepal: Weaving is seen as an important cultural activity and something they would like to be able to do here. They do have weavers in the community, but they don’t have a loom, they would be very interested in resuming weaving if a loom could be sourced. This would be something they would like to teach the younger members of their community and the wider Nelson community if there was an opportunity for that. *“We would love to be able to pass this skill on to our children.”*

Traditional Clothing/Costumes: Chin: They generally source their costumes ready made from Myanmar, the fabrics are specific to particular regions and tribal areas, as are the other part of their costumes which include beautiful beading, customised jewellery, beaded belts, and porcupine headwear adornment.

Bhutan/Nepal: The fabrics used in Bhutan/Nepali costumes are rich and complex, some of the fabrics could be made here if they had a loom. These include Dhaka fabric used for traditional costumes and Dhaka topi – traditional hat. Their costumes in general are very expensive to source (from Myanmar), some would traditionally be adorned with gold or silver, more usually now those items would be gold or silver-plated.

Karenni/Kayah: There is a weaver in the community making traditional fabrics which are then made into scarves, bags and other clothing items, otherwise clothing and fabrics are imported from Myanmar, and are expensive to import.

“Traditional dress is important to us, to wear at festivals and other events, for dancing and just wearing.”

All of these communities would love to have more of their costumes and adornments.

Crafts: Bhutan/Nepal: The making of traditional furniture is a craft and a skill that this community would like to be able to do, the furniture is made from bamboo, and they haven't been able to source appropriate materials here to make them.

Visual Arts: Bhutan/Nepal: *“We have a wonderful painter in our community, he sells his paintings through Cultural Conversations, he takes commissions for his work, he loves to share his passion for art and would like to hold an online painting competition within his community.”*

Movie production: Bhutan/Nepal: This community has been involved in the making of a short film about the issues their community faces in New Zealand, it is due to be launched in September 2022. It is a very important film tackling the issues of mental health and isolation.

Other:

- **Chin:** Traditional wrestling is an important sport for this community *“This is something really important to us, all the community is involved in it”*. It is a tradition for men to compete in a 'last man standing' competition, it's big all around the world they have national and international competitions in it. In Nelson they compete during Chin National Day.
- **Karenni/Kayah:** Volleyball and soccer are both very popular sports; they have a sports day the day before their Deeku Festival which everyone participates in either by playing or by supporting and cheering. It is very competitive played by different age groups and there are competitions and prizes.

2. What are things that make it difficult for you to participate in arts and cultural activities?

The main difficulties for these groups were the costs of materials, finding a venue and accessing costumes or artifact's from outside New Zealand.

“We buy our costumes from Myanmar, usually ready made over there though there is a member of the Chin community in Wellington that can make costumes for us if we buy the fabric and import it from Myanmar. Each costume can cost up to \$200.”

a) Cost of materials

Chin: In addition to the cost of costumes accessing other traditional materials is costly, things like knives, bows and arrows, musical instruments, and jewellery.

b) Finding a venue

All these communities expressed that finding a venue was often difficult. They appreciated the space they have at Victory Community Centre/School but that it wasn't always available, they would love to have a dedicated space they could use all the time. For sports tournaments they appreciated the support from FC Nelson who make Guppy Park available free of charge and also Nelson City Council who have allowed them to use the sports grounds for free, they would love to be able to use Trafalgar Park if this was ever available over their sports tournament weekends (Labour weekend and some summer dates).

Bhutan/Nepal: *“Venues to hold our wedding ceremonies are expensive.”*

Chin: They would love a small piece of land on a hill or mountain close to Nelson where they could build a small prayer house.

“Our Chin culture and Christianity are so closely intertwined; they could never be separated. In Chin State every mountain has a prayer house, our Chin women’s group would love a small piece of land where we can build a prayer house, if we could build this prayer house somewhere close to Nelson, we would love that. A place to pray, to take our kids to be more involved in our culture and our faith. This would help greatly with the stress our community is going through. This is my dream.” – Sue Leya

Karenni/Kayah: They usually practice their music and dancing in private homes, which is an issue for lack of space, and also not wanting to upset their neighbours with noise. A venue they could use freely and regularly would be great.

They would love to have a space to celebrate their Kay Htoe Boe Festival. An outdoor space would be required where they can erect a pole, which is like a totem pole or pou. This pole is the centre of the festival, traditionally this would be a tall tree that is felled, painted white and decorated with symbols, it needs to then be erected in an outdoor space and is used to dance around and ask for blessings.

c) How to sell what we make

The Bhutanese/Nepali community are interested in weaving and traditional bamboo furniture making, if they were able to make these traditional crafts, they would be interested in knowing how to sell it.

d) Not being able to access specialised equipment from outside New Zealand

All of these communities would like to be able to access items from their countries more easily, the main issues being cost, and clearance at the border through MPI.

“We have had problems getting some of our artifacts and traditional materials through MPI, if there could be some recognition at the border of the importance of these things to us, and perhaps some guidance on how to import them into New Zealand. The types of things we are talking about are knives, bows and arrows, musical instruments made from wood and animal products, also costume adornments like porcupine quills.”

3. If you have experienced trauma in the past is there any way that art/performance/music or other activity could help deal with trauma?

All of these communities said that particularly the older members of their community love to see the younger people performing dance, music and maintaining their language, it helps their overall wellbeing and helps them feel more settled and at home here. Also, generally participation for all in traditional arts and cultural activities made people feel more at home. It was also considered valuable in preserving language and culture.

“Preserving our culture does help with overcoming homesickness or a longing for our country.”

“The older members of our community feel proud and blessed when they see young people participating in our traditional cultural activities and this helps them to feel better about living here.”

“Older people feel more at home to see the younger people involved in dance, preserving culture, maintaining language and preserving language through music.”

“Performing music, particularly singing of traditional songs helps the wellbeing of the older people.”

“We have been feeling ‘Covid Trauma’ by not being able to hold our community events the past 2-3 years.”

4. Are there any special events or celebrations that you would:

a) Like to share with the wider community

- **Nepali New Year**
“Early April usually, celebrated on a weekend, at this festival we would picnic, play games, exchange New Year greetings, also have songs, dances, and speeches.”
- **Women’s Festival – Teej**
Annual lunar festival celebrated two days after the new moon end of August, it’s a festival of fasting and praying during the day and feasting at night. Women wear red saris and pray for longevity and the wellbeing of their husbands. Unmarried women pray for a good husband. Specific songs are sung. *“We would love to share this festival with the wider Nelson community.”*
- **Bhutanese/Nepali Literary Festival 13 July**
Celebrates the life of celebrated Nepali poet Bhanubhakta Acharya, the festival to celebrate this day is called Bhanu Jayanti and celebrates his contribution to the Nepali language. Hearing readings, explaining to the younger generation who he is and why he’s important, and a quiz to celebrate it for the young people.
- **Laxmi Prasad Jayanti**
A festival to celebrate an important literary figure, this falls on Diwali Day, which is his birthday celebration.
- **Chin National Day**
Everyone in the community, children, teens, youth and adults, this day celebrates Chin National Day 20 February, in Nelson. It’s celebrated with traditional dancing and music, also a fashion show and Chin traditional wrestling, it’s a very important celebration for Chin people.
- **Karenni: Kay Htoe Boe Festival**
This celebrates the end of the year to give thanks and to look forward and ask for blessings for the New Year to come. It is held in late April/early May. The festival centres on a pole like a totem pole or pou, the community dances around the pole. Traditionally this would be a tall tree that is felled, painted white and decorated with symbols, it needs to then be erected in an outdoor space and is used to dance around and ask for blessings. Karenni believe that they need to have this festival in order for their crops to be successful, once the celebration has been completed, they can plant their crops. They would like to build this in Nelson to enable them to celebrate this festival. Ideally this would be a permanent structure that they can use annually for this festival, but it could be moveable and brought out once a year for the festival.
There is one in Melbourne https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRmEoQOF_zQ

b) Have for your community only

- **Karenni National Day**
“This is a very important day in our culture, next year we will be celebrating 147 years (of sovereignty), the day is 21 June, for practical reasons we celebrate on a weekend closest

to that date. This is a Remembrance Day, important for reminding our youth what we have been through, our Karenni National Leaders talk, we have speeches, we wear our traditional clothing, it's an important date for keeping our culture and reminding the younger generation of our history."

5. If you had a space for a week to showcase your community, what would you do?

Some groups were keen, but others were worried about the safety of their taonga.

"We would love to show our furniture and do weaving in the space so people could watch."

"Yes, we would be interested but probably only if it was over a weekend. We would do some music and/or dance."

"We wouldn't really want to do this; most people don't have time to do this, and we would be worried about the safety and security of our costumes and artifacts as they are valuable and precious to us. Irreplaceable in many cases."

6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

"This is the first time we have been asked about this kind of thing, we are grateful to be asked."

Bhutan/Nepali Community:

- **My Dance Cup USA:** This is a talent quest/reality show held in the United States for communities resettled out of Bhutan/Nepal. It's hugely popular with Nepali speaking people outside Nepal and with former Bhutan refugees, it has traditionally been held in the USA and Nepal, and season 5 is going to be worldwide. There could be a NZ entrant as they will be able to perform for this competition in Australia, it would be great if they could get some funding to support one of their young people to enter.
- **Marriage ceremonies:** Our marriage ceremonies are very different to New Zealand marriage ceremonies, they include many religious rites, mantras, and prayers. Participants said that venues for these are expensive.

From the Karenni community:

- **Language and Culture School:** *"We would like to be able to set up a language and culture school for our young people, probably on a Saturday. We still have people in our community that can read and write our language, we would like to encourage our kids to speak their language as they mostly now just speak English at home. We would love to be able to teach the alphabet and to help them learn their language through singing and other activities, this is also about culture and identity. Now if someone asks our young people where they are from it is difficult to for them to answer, a language/culture school would help this."*

Appendices

Appendix One: The Shared Communities Consortium Team Members

Multicultural Nelson Tasman Incorporated – Anna Fyfe-Rahal, Manager

<https://www.multiculturalnt.co.nz/>

A non-government organisation which supports migrants, former refugees, and people from minority ethnicities in the Nelson/Tasman region with their settlement process. Their connection to community and cultural competence provides reach and understanding of our community's diverse needs. Their facilitation of the Nelson Tasman Settlement Forum provides further reach into governmental organisations operating within the former refugee and migrant space.

Arts Council Nelson – Lloyd Harwood, Community Arts Manager

<http://www.acn.org.nz/>

A community organisation and resource centre that supports projects and activities that stimulate and strengthen arts, culture and heritage in Whakatū Nelson and increases participation and opportunities. ACN is committed to improving access for the newcomer community. Arts Council Nelson administers Creative Communities Scheme (CCS).

Make/Shift Spaces Incorporated – Anne Rush MNZM, General Manager and Coordinator of the Shared Communities Consortium, Claire Watson, Administrator

<https://makeshiftspaces.nz/>

A not-for-profit organisation that is part of a global movement to reuse, re-invigorate and re-present unused spaces in our city - vacant shops, building sites, and walls. Make/Shift Spaces provides a city-wide reach within the artistic and creative community and focuses on storytelling that has resonance to Whakatū Nelson. Their placemaking initiatives involve engagement with a variety of people, agencies, and communities, including property owners who see the value in utilising their properties, making them desirable prospects for future tenants.

Nelson City Council Te Kaunihera o Whakatū – Community Services Group and Strategy and Communications Group. Bill Huppler, Welcoming Communities Coordinator, Sarina Barron – Manager Nelson Public Libraries

We have had communication and assistance from Paul Prestidge – Community Contracts Advisor, Andrew White – Group Manager Community Services and Nicky McDonald – Group Manager Strategy and Communications on this Shared Communities research.

Nelson City Council's mission is to shape an exceptional place to live, work and play. The long-term plan (2021-2031) highlights wellbeing as the key focus. Community outcomes include:

- Our communities have opportunities to celebrate and explore their heritage, identity and creativity
- Our communities have access to a range of social, educational and recreational facilities and activities
- Our Council provides leadership and fosters partnerships, a regional perspective, and community engagement
- Our communities are healthy, safe, inclusive and resilient

Nelson City Council Te Kaunihera o Whakatū were successful in an application to join Immigration New Zealand's Te Waharoa Ki Ngā Hapori Welcoming Communities Programme in 2021 and recently recruited Bill Huppler to deliver the outcomes aimed at making Whakatū more welcoming for former refugees, migrants, and international students.

The Welcoming Communities Coordinator sits within the Community Partnership team at Nelson City Council Te Kaunihera o Whakatū. The Community Partnership team's focus is on their

identified “Communities of Greatest Need” and include members of the community vulnerable to poverty, housing vulnerability, lack of access to employment, education and training and social isolation, together with a focus on the general community wellbeing. As Nelson’s former refugee and migrant population are overrepresented within these groups, this initiative aligns greatly.

The Shared Communities Consortium was initiated in November 2021 in Whakatū Nelson.
Contact: sharedcommunities.whakatu@gmail.com

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for One-One Interviews and Focus Groups

Shared Communities: Te Urungi – Ministry of Culture and Heritage

Arts and Culture in Whakatū: Conversations with Nelson migrant and former refugee community members (2022) conducted by Ryan & Rienhoff Associates

Content / Trigger Warning: This questionnaire asks how art/performance/music or other activity could help to process past trauma, please only answer this question if you are comfortable to do so.

Name:							
What age group are you?							
Under 20	20 – 25	26 – 35	36 – 45	46 – 55	56 – 65	66 – 75	Over 75
What ethnicity are you?							
Māori Pasifika Bhutanese / Nepali Myanmar				Colombian / Other South American: NZ / European Other:			
How long have you lived in Nelson?							
Less than a year		Between 1-3 years		3 – 5 years		5+ years	
What arts of cultural activities are you involved in?							
Music: Dance: Visual arts: Storytelling: Celebrations: Movie production: Spiritual rituals: Festivals: Textiles: Cuisine: Making clothing: Making jewellery:							

<p>Body adornment:</p> <p>Costumes:</p> <p>Crafts:</p> <p>Other:</p>
<p>What do you enjoy about these arts and cultural activities?</p> <p>Connecting with people from my culture:</p> <p>Connecting with wider Nelson community:</p> <p>Preserving our culture:</p> <p>Sharing of knowledge:</p> <p>Financial reward:</p> <p>Creative experience:</p> <p>Creative expression:</p> <p>Personal satisfaction:</p> <p>Other:</p>
<p>What are things that make it difficult for you to participate in arts and cultural activities?</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Cost of materials:</p> <p>Finding a venue:</p> <p>Language:</p> <p>Transport:</p> <p>How to sell what we make:</p> <p>Not understanding Government / Council regulations e.g. food preparation:</p> <p>Not being able to access specialised equipment from outside NZ:</p>

Other:
If you have experience trauma in the past, is there any way that art/performance/music or other activity could help to deal with trauma?
Where might feel like a safe place for this?
What things would you like to change in Nelson that would make you more able to engage in your arts and cultural activities?
<p>People we can go to for advice e.g. how to apply for funding:</p> <p>Feeling more welcome to go to places for information e.g. library:</p> <p>A place where we know people will help us even if we don't speak very good English:</p> <p>Have information in our own language:</p> <p>Other:</p>
Are there any special events or celebrations that you would: <i>(Record dates for these events if possible)</i>
<p>Like to share with the wider community?</p> <p>Have for your community only?</p> <p>These are private family events</p> <p>Other:</p>

If you had a space for a week to showcase your community, what would you do?
How connected do you feel to the wider Nelson community?
Is there anything else you would like to add?

The cover design was commissioned by the Shared Communities Consortium. It has been inspired by the patterns found in traditional fabrics or representative cultural objects from different migrant communities. It symbolises the union of different cultures through the interweaving of patterns. It is intended to honour these cultures with respect. Some of the sources of inspiration were:

Sri Lanka

Inspired by Sri Lankan masks.



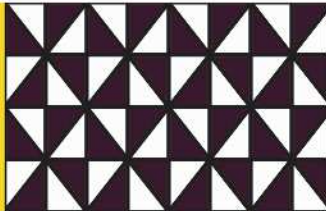
South Africa

Inspired by Ndebele house painting.



Tonga

Inspired by Tongan Ngatu design.



Samoa

Inspired by Samoan Siapo patterns.



Mexico

Inspired by Jalapa embroidery.



Colombia

Inspired by Wayuu Mochila bags.



Pakistan

Inspired by Kashi Tiles of Sindh.



About the artist:



The cover design was created by **Santalma** (*Karolina Serrano*) who is originally from Colombia. She grew up having more than 60 painters in her extended family. She has exhibited her artwork in Europe, South America, and New Zealand.

Her art reflects the colours, biodiversity, and joyful nature of the people of her native land while also celebrating the beauty of women from different cultural backgrounds.

Santalma enjoys carrying with pride the colours that remind her of where she comes from, but also she delights in discovering new colours in the places she has lived and visited.

To know more about the artist:

 @santalmaart

 santalmaart

 santalma.art@gmail.com