



POET

PERRY OUTDOOR EDUCATION

Impact Report

2020-2021

Chairperson's Report

The past year has presented the world with so many unexpected challenges, with Covid at the centre of many of these challenges.

Our POET schools, like us all, have been forced to operate in an environment of fear, constantly changing rules and guidelines, sudden adaptation of plans, social distancing, isolation and a new way of doing things including teaching and learning remotely online.

All of us at POET are proud of the way our schools have responded. They very quickly recognised that now more than ever getting out in nature with their peers is a vital tool for keeping our young people healthy. This year POET doubled the number of days of support we have provided our schools in terms of programme development, mentoring, training and logistical support. We have added two schools to our stable, have increased the number of camps, and increased professional development, all despite Covid restrictions.

Our schools have stepped up to the plate, reacting decisively when needed. Camps had to be rescheduled and occasionally shortened, but only one camp was cancelled due to Covid. That meant a lot more work for teachers and our POET staff too, but they never lost sight of the goal. They ensured these events happened so that our young people didn't miss out on even more than they already had this year.

Hats off to all of our schools, and to Karen, Donald, Brian and more recently Sophie for not rolling over for Covid.

We love your "can do" attitude!

This year has definitely not just been about putting out Covid fires. In October last year we farewelled Donald who left us to follow his passion for the environment, taking up a role as a community and iwi planner for DOC. Thank you Donald for all your hard work, your great ideas and your commitment to our youth.

We appointed Sophie Milne from a strong field of 50 applicants to replace Donald. Sophie has a strong academic and teaching background to go with her experience in and passion for outdoor education. She also brings a friendly, open manner which has been embraced by both staff and schools alike. Sophie started in January this year and is very quickly making an impact.

We have continued to strengthen and broaden relationships in our community. Brian has continued to teach the Year 12 Gateway class weekly at Wintec, while both he and Sophie have continued to upskill with Skills Active EOTC qualifications. Karen is taking part in an 8 month Community and Enterprise Leadership Foundation development programme.

Once again we hosted the New Zealand Mountain Film Festival in Hamilton. Despite Covid forcing a delay, we were thrilled to host



266 guests in September, raising funds to support our programmes and inspiring us all to get out there and active.

A highlight for POET this year has been our involvement with the Te Toki Voyaging Trust at Kawhia. Several of our schools have been lucky enough to experience time on the waka at Kawhia, learning traditional sailing and navigation skills and developing team work.

Yes, 2020 -21 has brought us many trials, but POET, and our POET schools have responded nimbly, and continued to positively influence the lives of over 1500 students this year through quality outdoor experiences. Thank you to Karen, Brian, Donald/ Sophie, and to my passionate and responsive Board; Craig, Mike, Emma, Vicky and Rob. No doubt 2021/22 will throw more challenges at us, but bring it on! We are ready!!

Marlene Julian

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marlene Julian'.

Chairperson POET



Our People

At POET, our people are key to our success and are committed to creating the best possible outcomes for students, schools, and communities alike.

As it was for everyone else, 2020 was a challenging year for our team. The highs and lows of preparing for camps and events only to have them postponed at the last minute and working with schools who themselves were under so much pressure was tough at times.

Our programme coordinator Donald Matheson started with us in April 2014 and left us to head to the Department of Conservation late in 2020. Whilst we were sad to see him leave, it was heartening to see how he had developed with us over the years and was able to move into an area he is passionate about. It did leave Brian flying solo in term 4 with 8 camps to pull together. He really stepped up to the plate and got on with what was needed.

Donald's successor Sophie Milne has hit the ground running and is being ably supported by Brian. Both Brian and Sophie have a strong interest in adventure therapy and it is exciting to see how this can be incorporated into POET programmes.

Our board has also had a change. We have been fortunate to have Rob Hamill as a Board Director since 2015. Rob has brought humour and diversity of thought to our organisation. Rob's on an overseas sailing adventure with his family and has regrettably had to tender his resignation.



Investing in the Future

In 2016, the POET Head Start Scholarships were introduced, to support students attending schools in which the Perry Outdoor Education programme is run.

The POET Head Start Scholarships were first launched in 2016 to give a hand up to students as they move into tertiary study; since then 35 students from schools across the Waikato in which POET operates have been awarded scholarships to study subjects ranging from nursing to civil engineering.

In 2020, 8 students from POET schools were awarded POET Head Start Scholarships:

- Kasey Bennett – Paeroa College
- Jahmin Tengu – Huntly College
- Jade Thomas – Matamata College
- Ashley Karl – Morrinsville College
- Shontelle Wilson – Forest View High
- Kalaya Willis – Melville High School
- Tayla Bentley – Morrinsville College
- Angel Wilson – Te Kauwhata College





Student Voice

School camp can be a pretty daunting experience for a wide eyed and nervous year 9 student. Earlier this year, we talked to the Ngaruawahia High School head Girl, Aomi Irani about her experiences on camp.

Let's face it, school camp can be a pretty daunting experience for a wide eyed and nervous year 9 student. There are so many firsts on camp – their first time camping, staying out in nature, cooking meals, being away from family (and technology!), trying new things and challenging themselves. Phew!

'Outside your comfort zone' becomes a bit of a permanent state in the beginning, but with these firsts always comes some impressive growth and development. Our POET team are lucky enough to see some students return to camp year on year until they graduate from School, giving a pretty neat window into the development of these young people through their high school years.

One of those students who has returned each year and has gained confidence from challenging herself and trying new things, is Ngaruawahia High School head Girl, Aomi Irani.

At her first POET camp in year 9, Aomi admits to being straight-up "terrified". She didn't know how to swim at that point, and took a pretty strong disliking to physical activity, so it's safe to say just the thought of school camp was pretty confronting. Flash forward 5 years and Aomi has challenged her fears (and admits to actually enjoying it!), she's become a POET Leader, is now Head Girl, and is making some big plans for her future.

In fact, having been with us to places like Te Aroha, Lake Karapiro, Taupiri, the Hakarimatas, and Pirongia, we reckon she's a bit of an expert on all things school camp these days.

Before she heads off to start her new journey we asked her a few questions about her experiences on school camp and her time with POET.



What we're your biggest lessons you learned on school camp?

"So many lessons! Here's a couple of my biggest ones:

- Give it a go – It really helped boost my self-esteem and the result of knowing that you were afraid of something, but you overcame, it feels great.
- Be yourself – Everyone there is just as anxious as you. I have noticed that some people act rebellious and some act very reserved, so just be yourself and you will attract a lot of friends
- What you value – Being a leader at camp really gave me skills like relationship building and responsibility but it also taught me what I value because of the time management I had to do. It is a challenge to see what you would use your time doing throughout the few days, what skills you gain, and finding your strengths and weaknesses."

Tell us about one thought-provoking moment on camp.


"What I remember vividly was in my first camp. I was really scared of water because I didn't know how to swim. But because I wanted to give things a go, I jumped in the water for the activity with the help of a leader and I accomplished what had to be done."

What was your personal favorite activity on school camp?

"I really loved paddling on the Waikato Te Awa from Taupiri Maunga to Turangawaewae Marae. It was painful since it was my first time paddling so far, but the experience was unimaginable because of the views, animals and perspectives that I saw. But for me personally, I liked leading the camp."

What do you feel you learned about yourself on school camp?

"I learned that I can connect with so many different personalities just by being me."

A group of students are hiking along a dirt path in a lush, green forest. The path is covered with fallen leaves and branches. In the foreground, two students are seen from behind. The student on the left has curly hair and is wearing a blue backpack and a light-colored t-shirt. The student on the right is wearing a black hoodie, black shorts, and a black Puma backpack. They are walking towards a group of other students further down the path. The forest is dense with tall trees and vibrant green foliage, with sunlight filtering through the leaves.

“I was able to feel more connected to my Puna Ako group when I saw how hard everyone was working and the fun everyone was having.”

- Year 9 Student, Huntly College

Teacher Voice



Report prepared by Michael Mayne, Fairfield College TIC Outdoor Education

2020 was the first time we had planned and implemented a year 10 camp at Fairfield College for several years. We had an idea of what it might look like but to engage and capture our students' interests, we needed to manage several variables to make sure we could successfully give our students a camp they would enjoy and take away some personal positives.

The 3 B's is a motto at Fairfield College that we encourage our students to always try and live by. They are the foundation of many of our conversations about how to treat others and how to conduct ourselves. Within the camp we felt it was another opportunity to encourage the 3 B's as these would ultimately dictate whether we had a positive camping experience or not.

We were very conscious of the fact, that for many, this was potentially their first camping experience, first time in a tent, or even potentially the first time of travelling outside of Hamilton. So, it was important we observed each other's actions and made sure our own reflected that of a positive member of the camp community.

The first "B" we consistently wanted to see was the students Being Responsible during camp. Whether it was picking up rubbish after themselves, or others, it was important that we left the environment with a little recognition of our presence as possible. Students were responsible for working in their groups to make their own meals, clean their own dishes and make sure their jobs were completed.

"A sense of community was evidentially felt as the students raised to the challenge and made this campsite their 'home'.

There were special students that went the extra mile and did more than others in the clean up without any solicitation and that was great to see. Students also needed to be responsible around the activities. Putting others first, including the teachers who would have the responsibility to act if something did go wrong, the students discussed and recognised their responsibility to the group to not put themselves in known danger and to keep an eye out on each other.

Being Respectful was something we did not really have to manage at all.

"The level at which our students operated with their peers, staff and camp owners was a pleasure to see."

Being respectful is something we believe should always be present. In this camping situation it was vital it was there. Living in close quarters to each other, cooking meals with each other, completing challenging task...it is a recipe for high-tension and it's a great environment for the students to test their respectfulness.

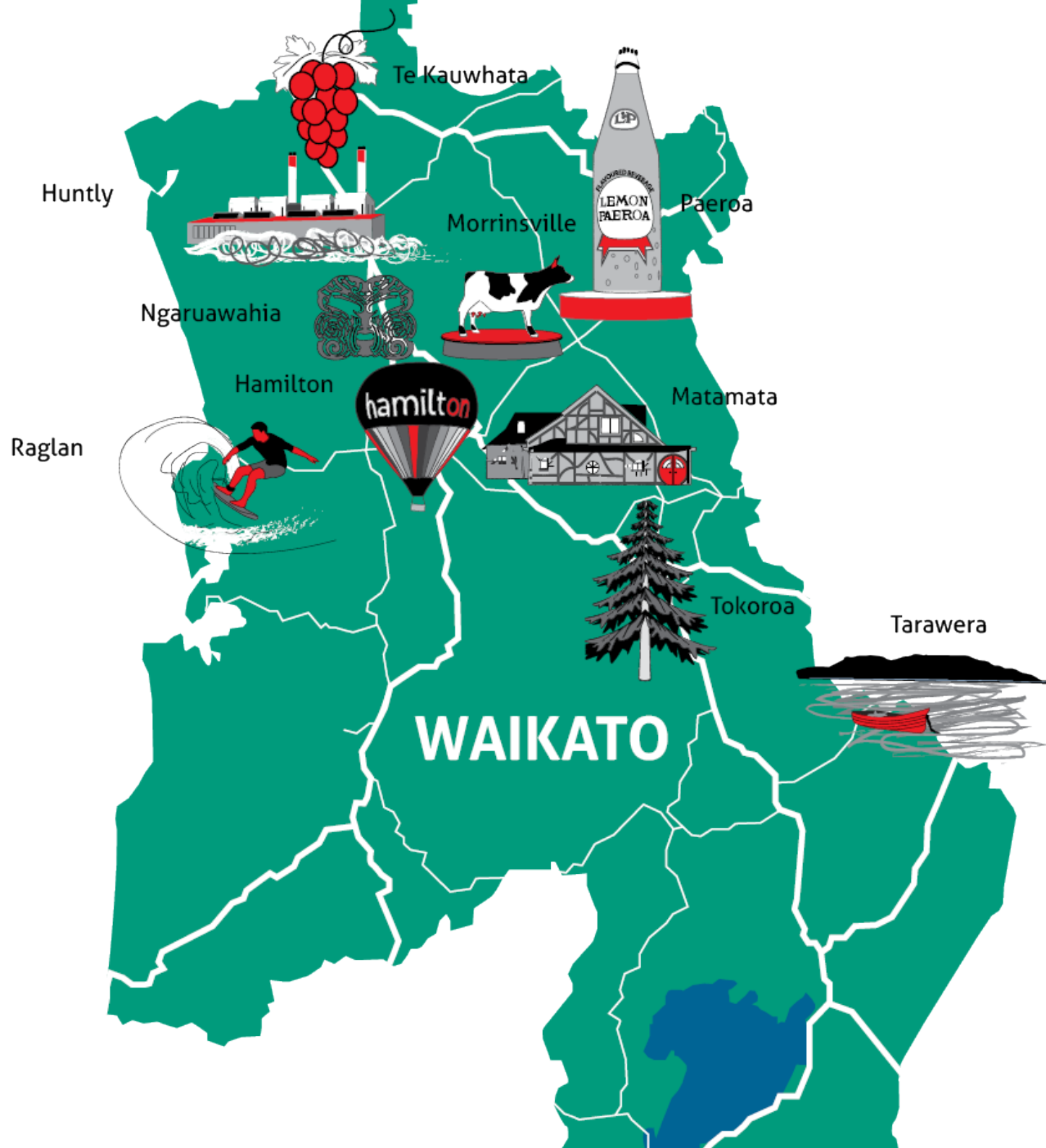
And finally, Being the Best You Can Be, is something we encourage the students to be to get the most out of any situation. Whether the student feels they can achieve the outcome, or whether they are going to feel vulnerable, it is important they learn that regardless, they try and be the best they can be in that situation. This camp included a range of challenges that we felt captured the whole groups skills. So, no matter what, we knew there would be a role for any student at some point in the activities. It was important in the planning that the students got a sense of success and being an active participant. It could be as big as constructing the raft, or as small as making a burger for themselves or the group. In any situation the students would be engaged, and if they ever felt they could not complete the challenge, then they would be the best they could be for the group.


Where We Work

The benefits of outdoor education aren't accessible to all, so POET exists to address this problem and ensure all students in our partner schools have access to meaningful outdoor education opportunities.

We work with low decile secondary schools across the Waikato region. During the last year we partnered with 12 schools, with a further school to be added in 2021:

- Te Kauwhata College
- Huntly College
- Ngaruawahia High
- Melville High
- Forest View High
- Raglan Area School
- Morrinsville Collge
- Matamata College
- Paeroa College
- Fairfield College
- Hamilton Junior High
- Tarawera High





“This camp was such an eye opener to the real world that awaits us. I was nervous about the year ahead, however, I now feel comfortable as I have a great group of friends and teachers that will help me meet my goals.”

- Forest View High School, Year 13 Student

Cultural Connections

POET camps give rangatahi an opportunity to connect to the mauri of the natural and cultural worlds. In a recent camp, Paeroa College Year 13's had some great experiences connecting to the people and the place of Kawhia.

We started camp with a powhiri onto Maketu marae, and then took a journey from the harbor to the hot water beach. Our local guides taught us the tikanga of this area and showed us the Pohutukawa tree the Tainui waka was tied up to, as well as its final resting place.

Students formed deep connections to the environment through swimming at the beaches, paddling and fishing in the harbor, and their hikoi from harbor to coastline. They also made great connections with the people through shared sunrise karakia each morning with the locals, and by running a well-organized afternoon play session at the local primary school.

A highlight of the camp was sailing on the Hinemoana, a replica of a traditional double-hulled voyaging waka. Students got to help navigate, trim the sails, and steer on a replica of what some of their Tupuna would have sailed on when they originally arrived at Kawhia harbor on the Tainui waka.





Sustainability

POET camps contribute towards the New Zealand Curriculum's vision for Education for Sustainability: "To secure a sustainable social, cultural, economic, and environmental future for our country"

Just 40 minutes out of Kawerau is Lake Okataina, a secluded lake with calm, clear water, surrounded by a huge range of native flora and fauna, and many walking tracks ready to be explored. For several students from the local school, Tarawera High School, POET's year 9 camp is the first time they have experienced this natural gem.

By making our camps local, we are not only giving youth the opportunity to explore the wonders of their own back yard but strengthening their connections to their community and to the land itself. It is also more economically sustainable for the school than a camp further afield and encourages students to be environmentally sustainable through their connection with and care for the land. This connection was also clear on Tarawera High School's year 10 camp, where students were given the opportunity to have a solo experience – spending time alone in the bush to reflect and appreciate the natural environment.

"The concept behind the solo is powerful" – Tarawera High School teacher.

Our camps are also socially sustainable, encouraging a sense of community between the students and their teachers through shared outdoor experiences. For example, at Forest View High School's year 13 camp to Papamoa, students walked up Mount Maunganui together carrying flags with their values on them and were responsible for planning and creating meals together. A student commented

"Before this camp, I felt detached from my Year level and school. I was thinking about leaving schools. This camp has made me stay and connected me with my Year 13 mates again. I feel like I'm going to have a good year now."

Another of our schools, Huntly College's year 13 camp ends with a waka journey from Ngaruawahia to Huntly. This was an incredible bonding experience for the students, as one student comments:

"When I think about the school identity and culture, I specifically want to talk about the waka home. It was my first ever time being on a waka and I enjoyed it very much. Being able to see the river be connected to us in a whaanau was very pleasing and lovely. I would love to do it all again."

POET is always looking for ways to make our camps more sustainable and to develop actively involved citizen who contribute to the well-being of New Zealand, in line with the Ministry of Education's Education for Sustainability vision.





267 PEOPLE

a record attendance
at our NZMFF
fundraiser



3 Fewer school camps

90% CAMPS

were able to be
rescheduled to an
alternative date

8 SUPS

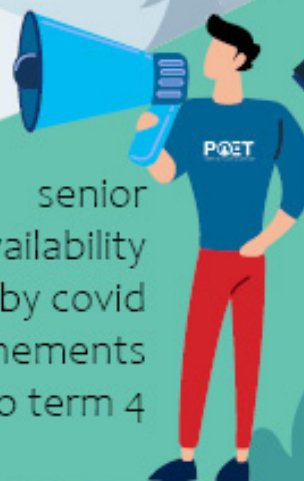
Stand up paddles boards
have been a welcome
addition to programmes



A Snapshot

94

fewer senior
student leaders




senior
student availability
compromised by covid
camp postponements
to term 4



70 TENTS

enabling large
numbers of
students to be
accommodated

A group of students, mostly seen from behind, are walking along a path in a forest. The trees are tall and thin, with sunlight filtering through the leaves, creating a bokeh effect of bright yellow and green circles. The students are wearing backpacks and casual clothing. The overall atmosphere is peaceful and natural.

“Since I’m not a big talker this made me more talkative around my peers and staff and do more teamwork and problem solving with other people.”

- Huntly College, Year 9 Student

Our Numbers

Funding makes us function, both strategically and operationally so we believe it's really important to spend wisely. We respect the trust our supporters have in us and we endeavour to maintain the highest standards of transparency and accountability.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Income		
Grants & Sponsorship Received	485,659	437,333
Sundry Income	229,632	213,449
Interest Received	410	470
	715,701	651,252
Expenses		
	3,957	6,820
Bike Fleet	14,879	13,541
Depreciation	44,163	34,117
Overheads	230,840	233,707
School Partnership Contributions	206,009	215,465
Staff	8,238	12,711
	508,086	516,361
Net Surplus for the Year	207,615	134,891

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	2020 \$	2019 \$
Equity	522,946	315,331
Current Liabilities	331,155	320,933
Total Equity and Liabilities	854,101	636,264
Current Assets	811,200	601,296
Non-Current Assets	42,901	34,968
Total Assets	854,101	636,264

A full set of audited financial statements are available on request.



Carrying On Through Covid



So what do you do when faced with the possibility of a covid cancel for your main fundraiser? With our Board's support we decided that we would step up and work out how we could run a safe event at level 2, in a responsible way, whilst adhering to all restrictions. We wanted to share some of our tips for organising an event that can help you to be flexible and adaptable when faced with a similar challenge:

Have a Solid Plan

We worked closely with our venue, Metro Hoyts Hamilton and together we created a plan that ensured the event could be carried out safely, responsibly and could be approved by Hoyts management in Australia.

Pre-record Sponsor Messages

We are fortunate to have a very supportive main event sponsor – Lodge Hamilton, and along with our other supporters we wanted to acknowledge them on the evening. In previous years, one of our Trustees has stood at the front of the theatre and spoken prior to the films starting; with staggered start times and numerous movie theatres used for the event this year it was simply not practical. We were relieved that we had already arranged for PlayCreative to film a welcome video, including a message from Lodge Hamilton and the logos of our sponsors – it was simply played before the movies started, easy!

Pre-plan spot prizes

Everyone loves a prize! Each year a number of our generous sponsors and supporters donate spot prizes for our event. At our last event we used a raffle system to draw out ticket numbers live on the evening. This year we added numbers to the back of selected programmes that corresponded to a pre-numbered prize on a table in the cinema foyer – so no communication or extra contact was required to award or collect prizes.

Online Ticketing Platform

We used Eventbrite for all of our ticketing for the event – it enabled us to collect the contact details of everyone attending the event, allowing for communication and contact tracing. It's a very user-friendly platform that easily enables

To support our work we run an annual fundraiser – the NZ Mountain Film Festival. However, Covid threw us a curve-ball in 2020 and despite lots of planning and optimism, at the last moment we were faced with cancelling.

re-allocation of tickets and automatic refunds. No physical tickets are necessary – this enables a contactless option for people arriving at the event as you can scan the tickets in using your phone.

Solid Communication Channels

We kept everyone updated via our facebook page, instagram and direct email (the database from Eventbrite was invaluable for this). We also found it's essential to have a main contact that people can get in touch with if they have any questions, requests or concerns.

Stagger Entry Times

We wanted to make sure that people could enjoy themselves so we asked for attendees to indicate if they were part of a group or were bringing kids so we could give as many people as possible their preferred start time from the three on offer. This meant that people who had bought tickets separately were able to attend together where possible. Staggered start times enabled us to strictly control the numbers for each session and have full contact tracing records for all. The venue was closed to the public – doors were opened for a particular time slot, closed to the next time slot to enable foyer to be cleared and surfaces cleaned prior to the arrival of the next group.

Spare Masks on Hand

We communicated with all our attendees that masks should be worn and nearly everyone arrived already wearing one – but we had masks on hand just in case for anyone who forgot!

Give Refunds

We reiterated the full refund option for anyone who didn't like rules, anyone who was anxious about Covid or just couldn't make it to the new date – it's important to be supportive of those who wish or do not wish to attend the event. That said we were overwhelmed by support from the public – we refunded a handful of tickets but sold more for the new night.

It took a bit of organising, but there is nothing about the event that was so hard as to make it impossible. We need to look at how we adjust our actions so we can make things happen and not default to can't or won't – we hope these tips help you make your event happen too!



Our Sponsors & Supporters

The Perry Outdoor Education Trust is grateful to have the community's support as we couldn't carry out the work we do without the generosity of our sponsors, our grantors, and business and non-profit partners. To show our appreciation, please see below those organisations who offer tremendous financial support.





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www.poet.org.nz