



# Generation Zero

## Our Activity and Performance

2023



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## Acknowledgement

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Quakers Aotearoa for their generous donations to support our mahi over the years. The contributions, along with donations from our supporter base, were mainly used to fund our National Administrator, who works 10-12 hours a week. The donations also fund our use of NationBuilder - which hosts our website, supporter database, donation page, and acts as an emailing platform too.

Below is our activity and performance report for 2023.

## Who we are

Generation Zero Incorporated (Generation Zero) is a registered New Zealand incorporated society. The organisation was incorporated on 3 August 2012 and our New Zealand Business Number (NZBN) is: 9429043318506.

Generation Zero was established in 2011 to create localised climate action and ensure that rangatahi have a voice in the climate movement. We felt that climate action was being side-lined in public and political spaces in Aotearoa, and that the people most affected by climate change, including rangatahi, were not being heard. Generation Zero has since shifted its focus to climate justice, following shifts in climate change conversations locally and worldwide.

We are a predominantly volunteer organisation of mostly young people passionate about advocating and promoting a zero carbon future that is resilient and equitable. We have regional teams in Tāmaki Makaurau, Te Whanganui-ā-tara, Ōtautahi, and Ōtepoti. In 2020, we appointed a governance board who are also volunteers. In 2021,



we changed the makeup of the governance board such that there would be two Co-Chairs (one must be tangata whenua) to balance the workload.

Our three paid part-time staff members include a National Administrator (contractor) and two Wellington Community Organisers (employees).

In 2023 we officially launched our [Future of GZ](#) document - where we reflected on who we are and where we want to be - after working on it for a few years and having multiple nation-wide kōrero.

## Membership Statement

We provide a space for people to grow, learn, and act towards a climate-just Aotearoa in a way that supports collective well-being, community building, creates hope and inspires action.

## Our mission for achieving climate justice in Aotearoa

### Advocacy

- Campaigning for and supporting climate justice as the foundation to all our advocacy
- Focusing on urban issues related to transport systems, housing, public policy and democratic participation.
- Championing mitigation, adaptation and resilience-building solutions that are informed by research, local knowledge and equitable decision-making.
- Reducing time, civic, financial, and knowledge barriers for communities and young people to advocate for climate justice at national and regional government.



## Leading from the back

- Prioritising the needs of frontline communities when determining what is equitable.
- Enabling rangatahi in Aotearoa to become climate justice leaders and assisting those already in leadership.
- Supporting ally organisations on kaupapa when and where they call for it.
- Resourcing and supporting tangata whenua, tangata moana and other frontline communities to lead climate change action.
- Being a force for our own change that ally organisations appreciate and value.

## Education

- Learning with our communities about climate change, colonisation and wellbeing in climate advocacy
- Amplifying the stories of communities who will be the most impacted by climate change.
- Connecting communities to accessible information about climate policies, proposed solutions and pathways to take action.
- Building and inspiring a collective vision of a more interconnected, climate-just future.

## Theory of Change

Colonisation, capitalism and neoliberalism are driving forces in Aotearoa's political system. The Crown, corporations, businesses and landowners have disproportionate power over government at central and local levels. This motivates a status-quo



response to climate change. Generation Zero seeks to devolve this power by mobilising rangatahi to engage in democracy and uplift their collective power to create institutional change for a climate-just future.

## Key Members

### Board

**Co-Chair:** Moana O'Neil (she/her)

**Co-Chair:** Michael Turnbull (he/him) -> Scott McSorley (he/him)

**Treasurer:** Akika Takada (she/her)

### Representatives:

**National Campaign:** Scott McSorley (he/him) -> Vacant

**Tāmaki Makaurau:** Olivia Yates (she/her)

**Te Whanganui-a-Tara:** Erica Finnie (she/her)

**Ōtautahi:** Zain Kader (he/him) -> Vacant

**Ōtepoti:** Finn Campbell (he/him)

### Convenors

**Tāmaki Makaurau:** Yasmin Kidd (she/her)

**Te Whanganui-a-Tara:** Does not have convenors

**Ōtautahi:** Roman Shmakov (he/him)

**Ōtepoti:** Inactive



## Paid Staff

**National Administrator:** Bella Gould (she/her)

**Community Organisers:** Annalies Veldmeijer (they/them) and Janine Kaminski (she/her)

## What we do

Generation Zero advocates and promotes a zero carbon future in many ways. There are two key measures that demonstrate our impact on mobilising New Zealanders to engage with decision-making and campaign for intergenerational climate justice.

Generation Zero has been consciously, deliberately and incrementally stepping away from a submission-focussed mobilisation actions and more towards organising long-term climate justice organisation. The conscious and deliberate decision to move from mobilisation to organisation will mean that Generation Zero will be less reactive to policies and decisions that have been made for youth and the planet. Rather, we will be more proactive in influencing and co-creating the societal, legal and economic shifts that we need to achieve climate justice.

In the short term, we have supported the following submissions on relevant plans and actively engaged with the public through the following campaigns:

### Submissions

- Submissions on Auckland Council's 2023 Budget
- Submissions on Christchurch City Council Annual Plan 2023/24 and Plan Change 14, and various other smaller transport infrastructure projects
- Submission on Environment Canterbury Annual Plan 2023/24



- Wellington District Plan

## Campaigns

- The main campaign of 2023 was in response to the 2023 General Elections where we ran a series of campaigns and events in Tāmaki Makaurau, Te Whanganui-a-Tara, and Ōtautahi. The aim of this campaign was to share young people's hope for a climate-just and resilient future in an election where it feels like our hope has been taken from us. We did this through a variety of activities such as an election gig in Wellington, writing an op-ed, making Reels and Tiktoks, putting up billstickers, and hosting multiple political panels and debates.
- We spoke at the Future is Rail Conference in Wellington in June 2023 in support for the national inter-regional passenger rail network restoration campaign

## National

### Autumnfest

On the weekend of 26th to 28th April, our members from across the regions got together at Ōtaki for our annual hui. The main purpose of the hui is to strategise and plan for our next campaign. We also took this opportunity to upskill and connect with members from other regions and our newly elected board. It was great to finally meet most members in-person after Zooming and collaborating online over the year. Our old board members were also present to say their farewells and pass on invaluable knowledge. It was a great weekend of connecting, building relationships, and getting to know each other more in-depth.



## **Disability Justice**

This year our organisation's accessibility commitment was launched and added to our induction pack. We feel that we have grown and learnt from the mahi of our members who consistently advocate for disability justice and through the disability advocacy groups we have connected with. From their advocacy and mahi, we have upskilled our accessibility knowledge and included accessibility points and considerations in all our asks. Centering accessibility means we have the best chance of being an inclusive city, and can tackle ableism.

## **General Election Campaign**

### **Training**

In August we organised a training with Aaron Packard who helped us piece together our messaging for the election campaign. Aaron was recommended to help curate our media over the election to get the most engagement from voters. He has worked extensively with 350 and worked alongside GZ from back in the day. Some main examples of the work Aaron did was help us with our core messaging document which we used to ground ourselves in the campaign. Some feedback we received from this training was that it helped steer the direction of the campaign and understand what our ideal outcomes for this campaign were (hopeful messaging).

Both paid community organisers attended Action Station's training "Triple the Vote" on the 7 Sep. This training provided helpful insight and kōrero on the election outlook and what we can do to implement proven methods for increasing the vote count. Additionally, both staff attended 350's training on "political conversations", which focused on holding counsellors accountable during debates and interviews. As we ran four different election debates/forums, this training was particularly helpful in preparation for these events. Both trainings helped build our relationships with other



organisations, which resulted in more empowering conversations and external support for members.

## **Members and wellbeing**

Throughout this election campaign, members showed an increased amount of engagement and leadership, as exemplified by their proactive involvement in nationwide organising, thoughtful messaging, and strategic advocacy efforts. Because of past experiences, member well-being was at the forefront of our minds as we wanted to ensure members were being supported to the best of our abilities. One way we did this was by creating a circular buddy system created by one of our members. This buddy system was nationwide and meant that everyone working on the election campaign had someone checking in on them regularly, and vice versa. Additionally, having weekly national meetings allowed members to check in on their capacity and provide extra support and insight on how each region is operating.

## **Events**

In Pōneke, we organised four events dedicated to supporting diverse voices in activism and advocacy. We worked alongside Voice of Aroha (VoA) and the Victoria University of Wellington Student Association (VUWSA) to create two election debates hosted at Victoria University. The first debate was centred around the Rongotai electorate and had candidates Julie-Anne Genter, Fleur Fitzsimons, Karuna Muthu and Bruce Welsh. The second debate was between Wellington Central electorates Ibrahim Omer, Scott Sheeran, Tamatha Paul, Natalia Albert, and Taylor Arneil. In both debates hosted, the Green Party nominees Julie-Anne Genter and Tamatha Paul, won in their electorate.

On the 28th of September, we collaborated with Renters United to host an Electorate Panel at the Central Baptist Church. The purpose of this event was for Renters United and Generation Zero to question National, Labour, the Greens and The Opportunities



Party on what they think is the biggest issue facing New Zealand. For the Green party, we had candidates such as Tam and Julie Anne Genter who were big on housing and urban infrastructure, which linked to the Renters United kaupapa and GZ's push for housing densification.

One of our most notable achievements during our election campaign was the 'Rock the Vote' gig, attended by over 250 people. The purpose of this event was to emphasise our hopeful messaging and provide an outlet for young people to come together and be surrounded by community during a time when our futures felt uncertain. We applied our learnings from Action Station's "Triple the Vote" training to this gig, where we discussed the kaupapa behind vote tripling and why it's so important during this election.

Our team at Tāmaki Makaurau also organised a debate around this election being a climate election hosted at the University of Auckland. Damian Sycamore for TOP, Michael Wood for Labour, Ricardo Menendez March for Green, and Simon Watts for National were candidates who joined the debate and our members had built relationships with since.

### **Social Media**

Social and digital media is a key way we engage with young people and to get them to engage in activism and advocacy for the government. We filmed and made 10 videos for Tiktok and Instagram Reels. These videos were fun to make and boosted our account to non-followers audience.

### **Traditional media**

On the 2nd of October Generation Zero released an op-ed called "How hope can counter the half-baked promises" written by Rosa Shaw. This op-ed was written with the help of Marnie Prickett who gave us some insight into writing strong op-eds that bring



attention to issue-specific demands for this election. The op-ed received an endorsement from Frances Truesdale who called attention to the lack of climate change discussions during this election cycle.

## **Billstickers**

A highlight from our campaign was our billstickers, designed by Kara Glasgow Keene, an independent digital creator who we've worked with in the past to create event posters. When looking at how we utilised graphic design as compared to previous campaigns, such as the Local Body Elections (which Kara also did design work for), we had a better understanding of the process and how to get the best outcome for us as an organisation and for the designer. As a result, we had 42 billstickers posted around Ōtautahi, 58 in Tāmaki Makaurau, and 69 around Pōneke. A big shout-out to Phantom Billstickers for offering these to us for a massive discount, which meant we were able to have a much bigger reach than we initially intended.

## **Website**

We modified our website to match the launch of our election campaign and added a word cloud section for people to add their hopes. To achieve this we hired For Purpose, who helped design and develop the website. This change had visible results, as 5035 people clicked onto our website during the campaign period.

## **Tāmaki Makaurau**

The Tāmaki Makaurau team had a reduction in size at the beginning of 2023 with people leaving due to changing capacity, the cyclone, moving overseas, and general disappointment in the 2022 local election results. The team size did not rebuild much throughout the year but the team managed to get in a few passionate members who then went on to do amazing work despite their low numbers.



## Surface Light Rail

After preliminary election results showed that National - whose transport spokesperson had said that they would scrap Auckland Light Rail - had won a majority, the team started working on the Surface Light Rail campaign in an attempt to ask the new government to opt for the more budget friendly surface option over the underground option. Momentum is being built and the campaign has gained wide, cross spectrum support.

## Te Whanganui-ā-tara

In February, one of our community organisers - Janine increased her contracted hours to 15 hours per week instead of 10 hours. This was a provision that has helped to increase wellbeing in the role, ability to take ownership over whole projects, and to reflect the workload of both organisers. Members have appreciated our organisers' empathetic approach to creating space for communication about feelings and stressors. This has meant that we are able to allow members to show up as they can, and to curate workstreams that suit the skills and capacity at the time.

In March 2023, the organisers paid a fond farewell to Sustainability Trust as a home base for our mahi, and moved to work at 2/57 Willis street, a co-working space with a kaupapa of creating community and sharing space. We expect this to have a big impact on our well being and hopefully continue to expand our community relationships.

## Art Competition

Since May 2022, members began designing an Art Competition entitled 'What if we just made art, not the Climate Crisis?'. This was a pilot proactive campaign that encouraged people in Te Whanganui-ā-tara to envision what a climate safe future



looks like for them, and to envisage the hope and changes we want to see in our whenua, whanau and community. We believe that fostering hope and practising imagination is a key to creating a climate safe future, and we have seen this reflected from the communities we have engaged within this competition.

We received 81 submissions from tamariki and young people from around the Wellington region, with a large cohort from the Hutt Valley. Our members worked really hard to respond and coordinate with the artists, the judges, and our exhibition venue to pull off an incredibly successful exhibition launch. We had 85 people in attendance, with a variety of the Wellington community, local councillors, children, academics, journalists and artists attending.

## **Let's Get Wellington Moving**

In February, our members spoke at a council meeting for LGWM, where there was push-back to climate action. Members highlighted the importance of investing in transport at this time as the climate crisis is literally at our door. We fielded questions from councillors and stood up for investment in making our city climate ready.

In June this year - along with Different Spokes Pōneke, Rainbow Wellington, Cycle Wellington, and InsideOut - we made a submission to the three plans put forward by Wellington City Council.

## **Ōtautahi**

The Christchurch team has grown this year with a number of students and young professionals joining the regional team. We have run multiple public awareness and civil education campaigns in 2023 around policy and infrastructure projects in the Greater Christchurch area.



We ran a campaign on the Christchurch City Council Plan Change 14 process encouraging people to engage in the plan to increase medium and high density residential development around public transport routes to make Christchurch a more liveable, accessible city. We also were able to organise a campaign in one week with other allied groups in Christchurch to save the Park Terrace Cycleway which was built to allow for safer access for pedestrians and cyclists around the Canterbury Museum and Hagley park. The council decided to keep the Park Terrace Cycleway. We also ran a campaign to allow people to quickly submit on the Christchurch City Council Annual Plan to ensure that climate change is at the forefront of council priorities. Later we focused on local efforts on our general election campaign by putting up billstickers, advertisements on Locky Docks and writing articles in The Press. Throughout the year we have developed and maintained a strong working relationship with Christchurch City and Canterbury Regional Council staff on issues of cycleways, public transport, climate change and civil education.

Internally, during 2023 we have focused on educating and upskilling our members to become effective youth advocates. We have taken the time to organise and plan out our next projects for 2024.

## Ōtepoti

The Ōtepoti team is still struggling to rebuild the membership. Finn the board rep is looking to build up a new group this year and make new connections with the other regions.

