Whakapakari
Strengthening student voice

Strong student voice means involving learners in shaping an education system that works well for them and is equitable for all. It works best when it is part of everyday culture – a way of 'being' rather than simply a thing to 'do'.

Growing and strengthening student voice is a core role for student networks. But we've learned that we can't do this on our own. We need help from providers and others so we can be well-informed about decision-making. We also welcome help with succession processes so new tauira – in all their diversity – can be ready and confident to serve as leaders and participate as partners.

We are committing to engaging and empowering tauira to partner with providers to reset the rhythm and value of student involvement in decision-making and in developing solutions that work for all.

"We need to get rid of the assumption that tauira need to be spoon-fed; what we need is to be developed."

"Typical meeting settings don't work for everyone: students with disabilities or chronic illnesses may prefer to engage online, or through email conversations. Tauira with parental responsibilities will want to work around time with tamariki. The only time left may be a small window mid to late evening, or before the breakfast rush."

"Tauira networks have reasonably high turnover which has the benefit of continual renewal, with fresh eyes and minds being brought to the table."

"Usually students have few opportunities to speak on behalf of other students and when they do, they're not very experienced"

Whakapakari: We'll know we're successful in strengthening student voice when tauira and providers:
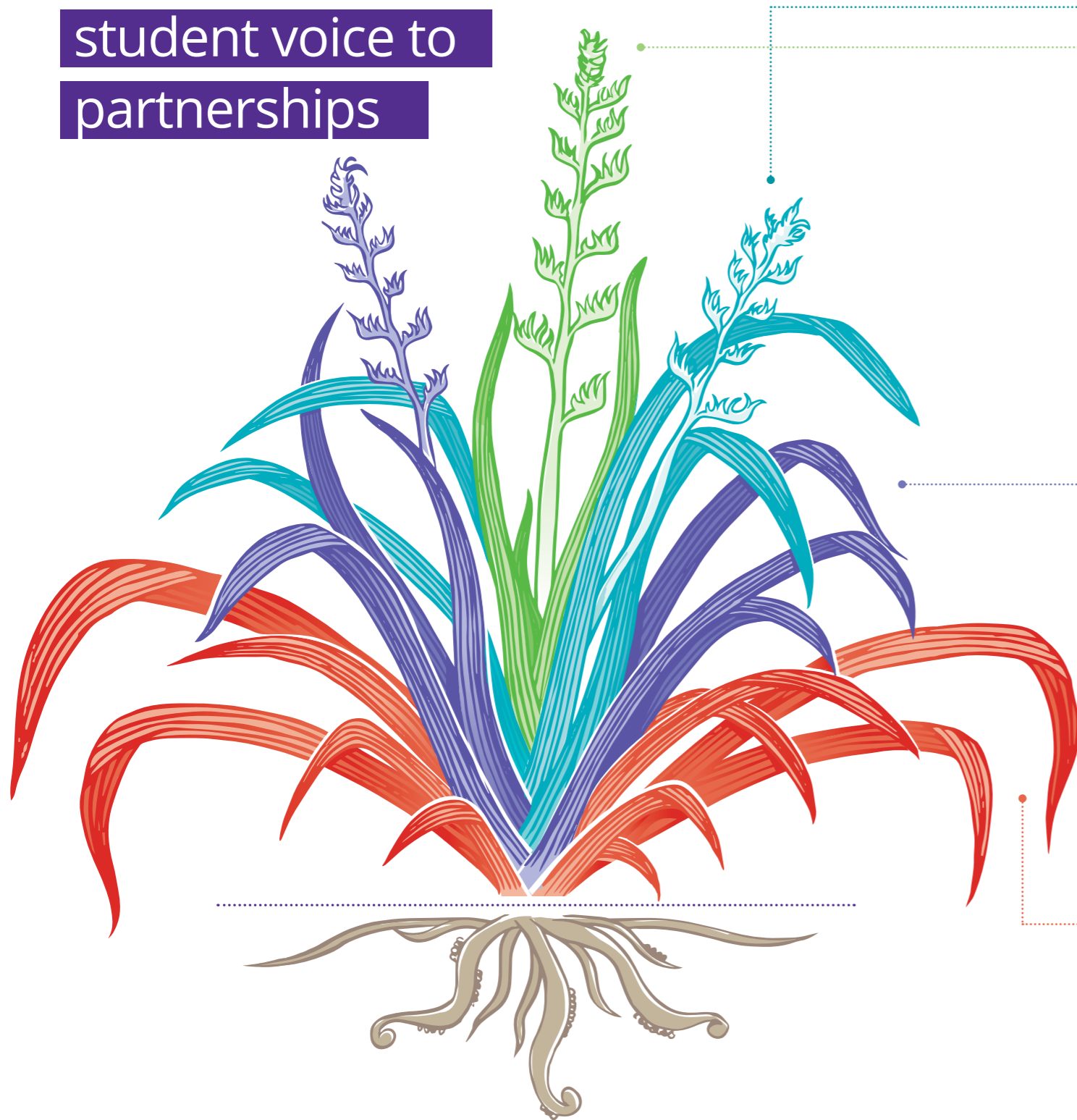
» **Develop ways of working that fit their learning environments**
» **Receive and pass on lessons from previous cohorts**
» **Make plans and offers to support student voice kaupapa**
» **Build capability and confidence to express student voice**

Some ways for tauira and providers to make **whakapakari** real are:

» Make time and space (over a meal is good) to reflect on the current state of student voice, what's working and what isn't.
» Ask how well are we protecting each other's rights under Te Tiriti?
» Develop welcome packs and make sure they get to every student.
» Support students to grow confident to have a say.
» Plan training to help tauira in standing committees, at course and faculty level.
» Promote awareness of formal structures for how tauira can participate in decision-making.
» Talk about ways to make all tauira, kaiako and kaimahi feel safe and included in interactions with each other.
» Break down jargon; communicate orally, through text and symbols, in languages relevant to tauira, in ways that are accessible to disabled learners.
» Provide guidance to take away administrative hurdles, such as room bookings, sharing and reimbursing costs.
» Student representatives are passionate, but they have competing priorities. As well as studying, they are juggling other life commitments. These include part time employment, family commitments, and full-time study on top of their student voice work.
» Promote awareness of the guides and mentors – on staff and in student networks – who can help strengthen student voice.

Whiria ngā rau

Progressing from student voice to partnerships

The Whiria Ngā Rau framework has four rau that tauira (students) and providers can use to build partnerships:

Whakapakari

Strengthening students' voices

» Build capability and confidence to express learner voice

» Develop ways of working that fit the learning environment

» Receive and pass on lessons from previous cohorts

» Make plans and offers to express student voice.

Whakawhanaungatanga

Building connections with each other

» Engage in ways that honour Te Tiriti

» Involve and hear diverse tauira in decision-making

» Share information

» Grow relationships and extend networks.

Akoranga

Learning with and from each other

» Work openly and transparently

» Know what is expected of each other and stay motivated to continue the relationship

» Learn to shape the relationship, measure progress, and reflect on improvements

» Maintain feedback loops and report regularly.

Mahitahi

Working together

» Give practical effect to Te Tiriti

» Develop ideas and solutions together

» Shape engagements together and build routines to embed student voice

» There are tuakana-teina relationships and roles can be reversed at any time.

Whiria = weave   *Rau = leaf*

TE MANA ĀKONGA
National Māori Tertiary Students' Association

NZUSA

TAUIRA PASIFIKA

National Disabled Students' Association

TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION