

# Museums and regional development: towards positive impacts. A case study from New Zealand.

The Waitaki Whitestone Geopark – a work-in-progress

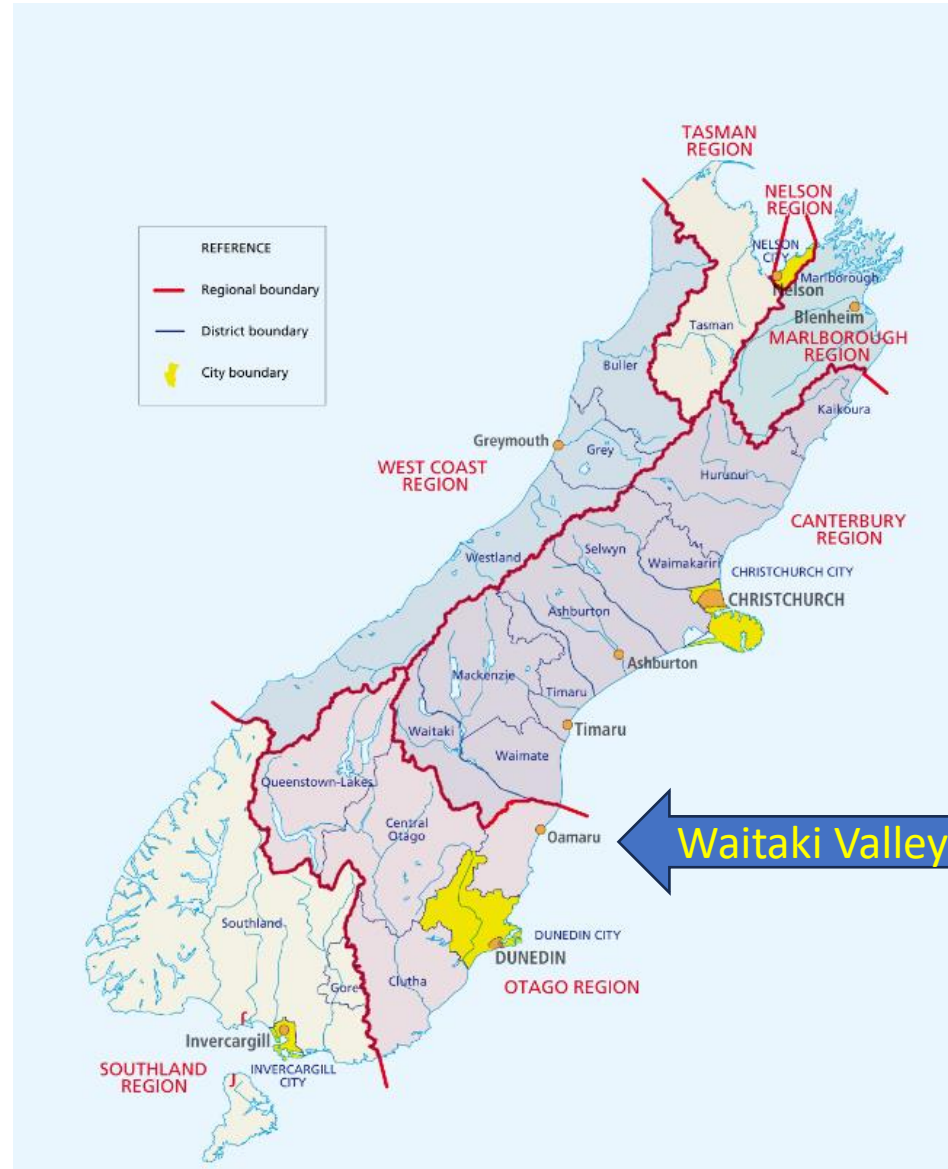


# Warm greetings from Aotearoa New Zealand

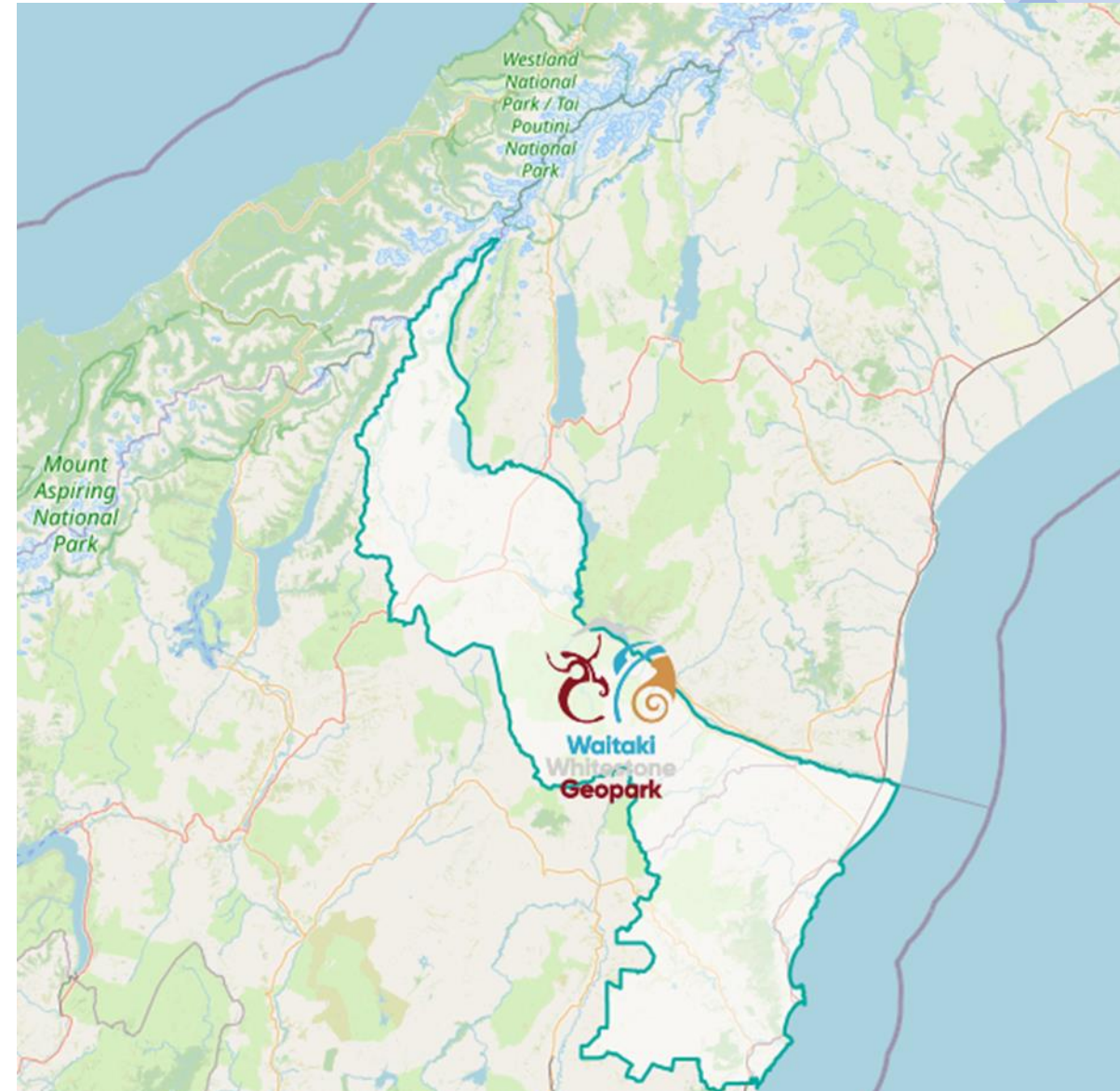
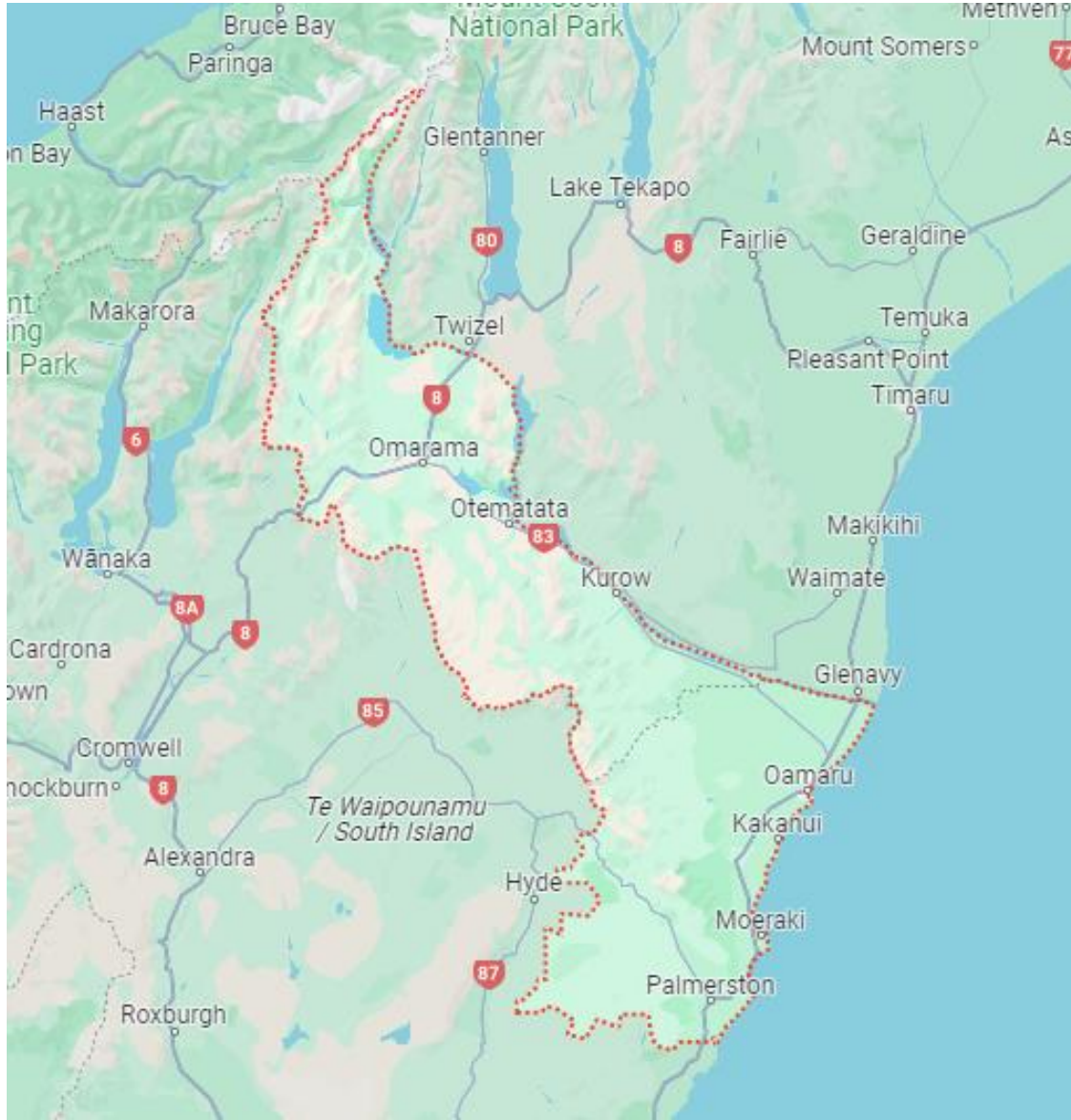
- A case study of a regional development project involving museums
- A “bottom-up” initiative
- A work-in-progress which illustrates the importance of relationships
- Relationships are **key resources**
- Building relationships takes TIME
- Impact assessment takes TIME, careful design and monitoring



# South Island of New Zealand



# Waitaki District – NZ's first Geopark, recognized by UNESCO in 2023 as **Waitaki Whitestone Geopark**





**unesco**

Global Geoparks



**Waifaki  
Whitestone  
Geopark**

**unesco**

Global Geopark



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO  
Global  
Geoparks



**Croatia  
now has 2  
Geoparks**

**New  
Zealand is a  
beginner**



**Papuk Geopark**

**Vise Archipelago Geopark**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNtREAVKuco>



## **Kai Tahu – the first people to make the Waitaki river valley and the east coastline their home c. 800 years ago.**

- Most numerous and important Maori tribe (iwi) on the South Island
- Treaty of Waitangi 1840 – agreement between British Government and Maori chiefs
- 1975 & 1985 – Tribunal to settle claims against.
- Kai Tahu settlement with the Government in 1998 – financial redress
- Active investment in cultural recognition and revival, research and protection of local heritage sites and knowledge
- **Essential partner in any development in Waitaki District**



*The four elements of the new logo represent the most precious aspects of the Waitaki itself: Mauka Ahuru - Sheltering mountains; Tangata - People ; Wai – River and Sea; Whenua - Fossil-rich Limestone*

Designed by Kai Tahu, inspired by their rock paintings in their historic rock shelters in the Waitaki Valley

# Heritage resources contributing to the Waitaki Whitestone Geopark include:

## Geological resources – the impetus for the Geopark

- Land forms
- Rock formations
- Limestone
- **Fossil beds – marine and land animals**
- Historic quarries
- Historic goldmines

## Cultural & natural resources – deeply connected to the geology

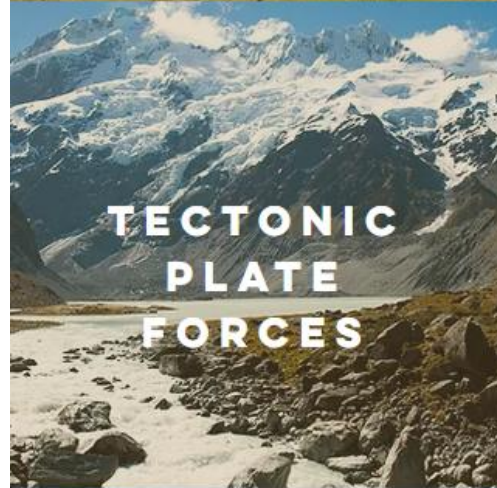
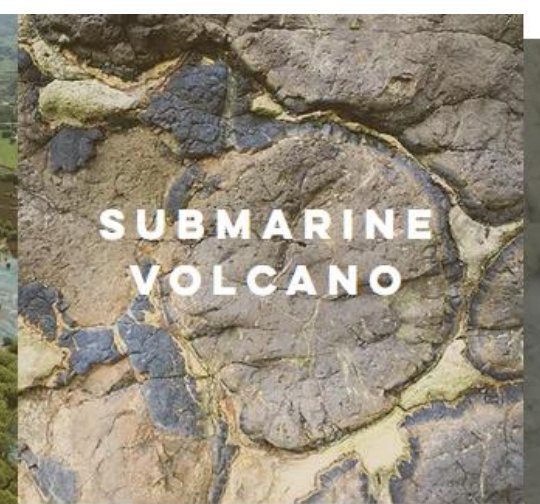
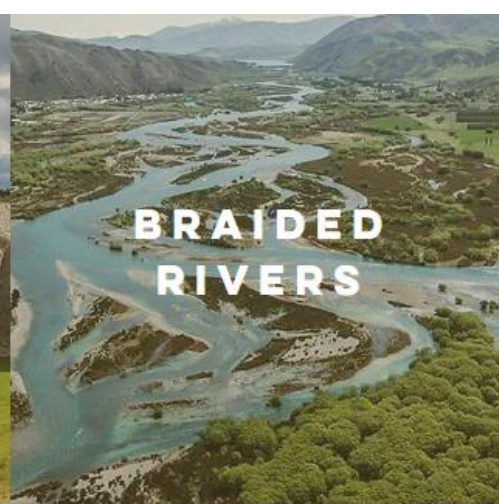
- Maori rock-shelters – first people to inhabit South Island
- Victorian Whitestone buildings
- Maori knowledge, art & traditions
- Museum, art gallery, heritage buildings, literary heritage
- European history, esp farming
- Geogastronomy

Geologist Professor Ewen Fordyce recognized first important fossils in 1970s & 1980s



The range of geological features and finds encompassed within the Geopark

- Dramatic land forms
- Natural beauty
- Impressive views
- Scenic hiking and mountain biking





## Vanished World Visitor Centre and trail:

- Established by local volunteers (many farmers) in 2000
- Displays, teaching sessions
- Guided walks
- Limited resources





United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO  
Global  
Geoparks



**unesco**  
Global Geoparks



### **AMBITIONS – The Waitaki Valley to become NZ's first Geopark:**

- Meet UNESCO requirements for recognition
- Protect & enhance the natural & cultural environment
- Build social identity, community pride & local champions for Geopark
- Encourage visitor awareness, engagement & advocacy
- Benefit current businesses & attract new residents and businesses to invest in an economically sustainable Geopark



# A big ambition – the original team cannot do this alone!

Who else can become interested??? How might their interests connect?

What organisations and groups can play active roles?? How do their values align?

How can they contribute?

# Stakeholders, supporters, funders, potential partners? Levels of interest & engagement

- Local Government
- Iwi Maori – Kai Tahu – local sub-tribe
- University Geology department
- Government Geology Agency
- Local residents
- Museum
- Art Gallery
- Heritage New Zealand
- Penguin colony managers
- Department of Conservation
- Schools & colleges
- Visitors
- Hospitality businesses
- Tourism businesses
- Landowners
- Farmers
- Cycle hire
- Artists & crafts people
- Restaurants & cafes



# Relationships now Networks, not Hierarchies

Relationships become a **form of capital** to create:

- A strong sense of belonging and shared purpose
- A well-developed capacity to co-operate

Museums now need to recognize that they operate within an interconnected ecosystem in their local and wider communities.

Knowledge & information & networks are now important goods in today's economy, and museums can bring **all** these to any potential collaborations and/or partnerships, once a good relationship has been developed.

Building relationships takes **time** to get to know each other and build trust and confidence. They need to be nurtured and will change over time.

Museum relationships are values-based and mission-related. Museums are often engaged in several networks.

Shared values and synergies, mutual objectives and similar agendas are essential for successful collaborations and partnerships.

**Managing relationships** is an important aspect of contemporary museum practice

## Relationships may be considered similar to a planetary system:

- Some will be more closely involved at some times
- At other times different groups will be on the outer edge, as supporters and advocates
- Some will have a constant and predictable engagement, once the relationship is well established.
- Others will be leading partners for some aspects.

The planets will sometimes align perfectly for a project





**In 2017 international geologists recognized an eighth continent called Zealandia**

**The Geopark will highlight this important new aspect of New Zealand's geology**

# Waitaki Museum & Archive

is proudly part of the



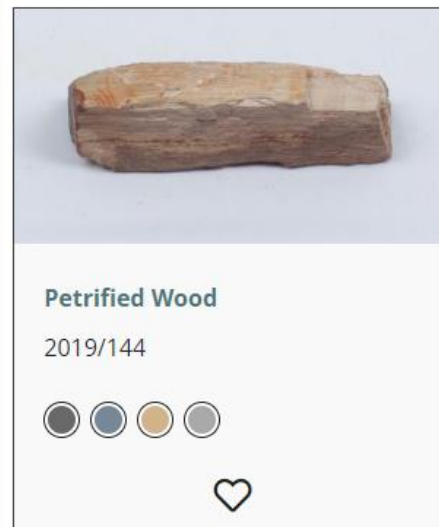
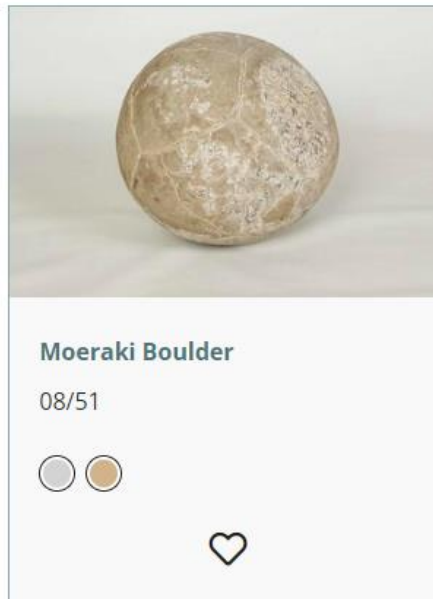
# Waitaki Whitestone Geopark



The museum's resources include knowledge and collections **but also** its many community relationships, partners, collaborators and supporters – a network!



# Waitaki Museum – examples from geology collections



The Museum has already prepared a new exhibition on the Waitaki River and has offered to become the “hub” for the Geopark, due to its location in central Oamaru – the main town.



## BALLAD OF THE WAITAKI

Sometimes roaring, sometimes wandering, the Waitaki is always present. It runs through our district as it runs through our past. Massive, beautiful, old, it forged the land that we call our home and, in doing so, forged us.

This exhibition charts the flow of Waitaki's past over the last 120 years. Like any chart it is only a snapshot of our understanding, as time marches on, the course of our past changes just like that of the mighty Waitaki.

Waitaki Museum & Archive

11 March 2023 to 15 December 2024

# The Forrester Art Gallery in Oamaru - another whitestone Victorian building



## The Forrester Art Gallery can contribute:

- Its creative resources
- Its venue
- Its network of artists and craftspeople
- Its supporters & volunteers
- Its community relationships



**The home of New Zealand writer, Janet Frame, is developing a visitor centre to share more of her life in the Waitaki area.**

**It has its own networks with the literary community and broader arts scene**



Janet Frame, poet novelist,  
born and raised in Oamaru

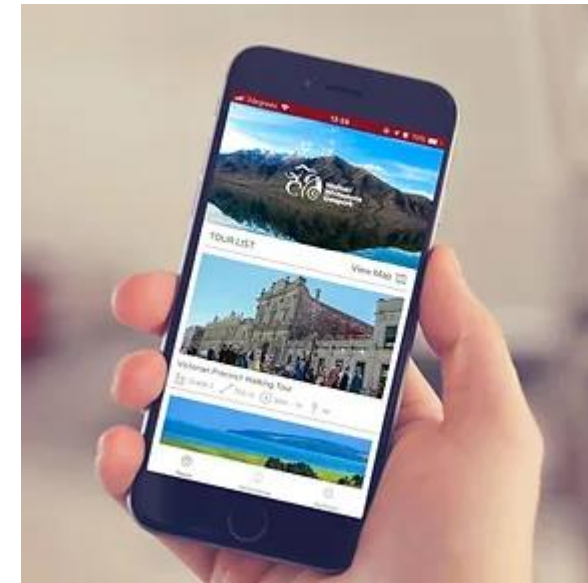
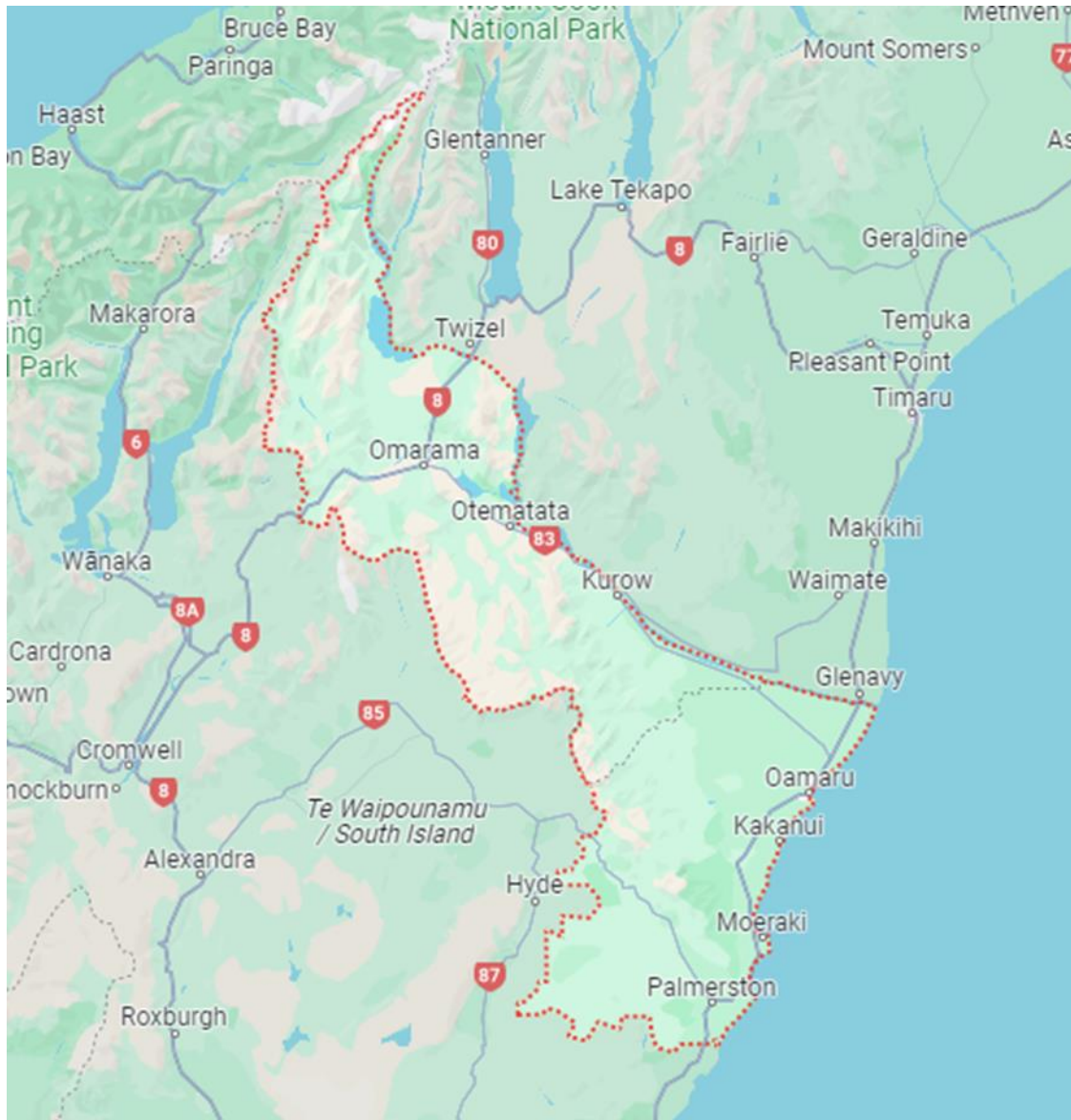
- Regionally and nationally significant literary heritage

**There is strong potential for agritourism and promotion of locally produced food**



**Farming heritage sites explain and celebrate New Zealand's meat and dairy industries**





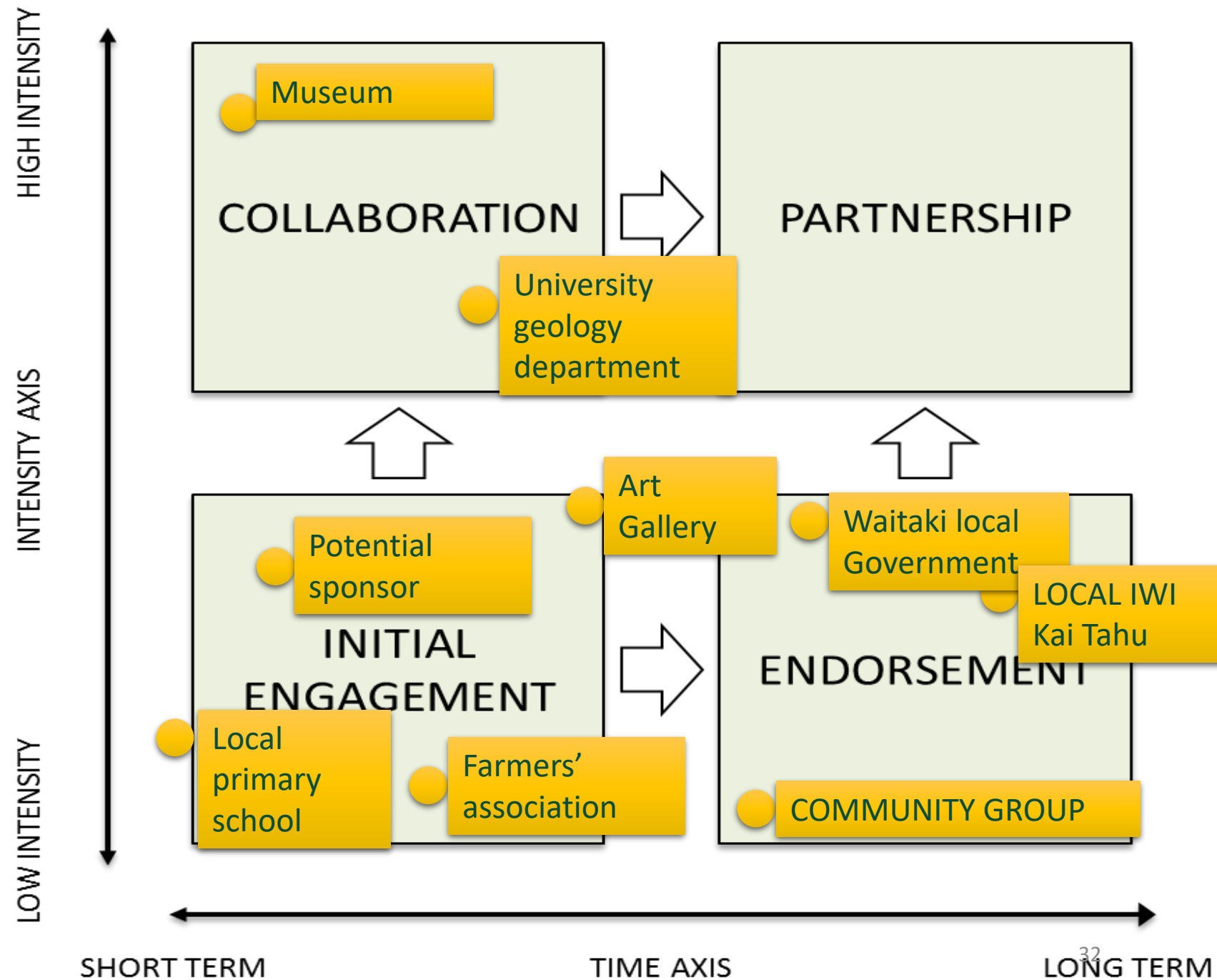
**A Geopark App already offers heritage routes for visitors to the region, bringing economic contributions to more remote areas, gaining community support**

# Stakeholders, supporters, funders, potential partners? Levels of interest & engagement

- Local Government
- Iwi Maori – Kai Tahu – local sub-tribe
- University Geology department
- Government Geology Agency
- Local residents
- Museum
- Art Gallery
- Heritage New Zealand
- Penguin colony managers
- Department of Conservation
- Schools & colleges
- Visitors
- Hospitality businesses
- Tourism businesses
- Landowners
- Farmers
- Cycle hire
- Artists & crafts people
- Restaurants & cafes



# Samuele di Stephano's THE RELATIONAL WIND ROSE MODEL (2023)



# Audience Impact Model developed by the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa



## The Audience Impact Model

Developed by the Audience Insights Team at Te Papa, led by Adrian with Samuele di Stefano

# What is A.I.M.?



AIM is a tool to measure the *value* of what Te Papa offers through the *impact* on its audiences, enabling Te Papa to identify what *success* looks like.

**AIM clearly communicates the audience impact that the Museums want an exhibition or programme to achieve and how it will be measured**

i.e. what audience impacts should we be designing for?

- What do we want people to feel?
- What do we want people to learn?
- Will they have connected to themselves and/or others?
- Are we looking for a knock-on action?

*As described by Dr Samuele di Stefano, Audience Insights Team, 2022 at Victoria University of Wellington*

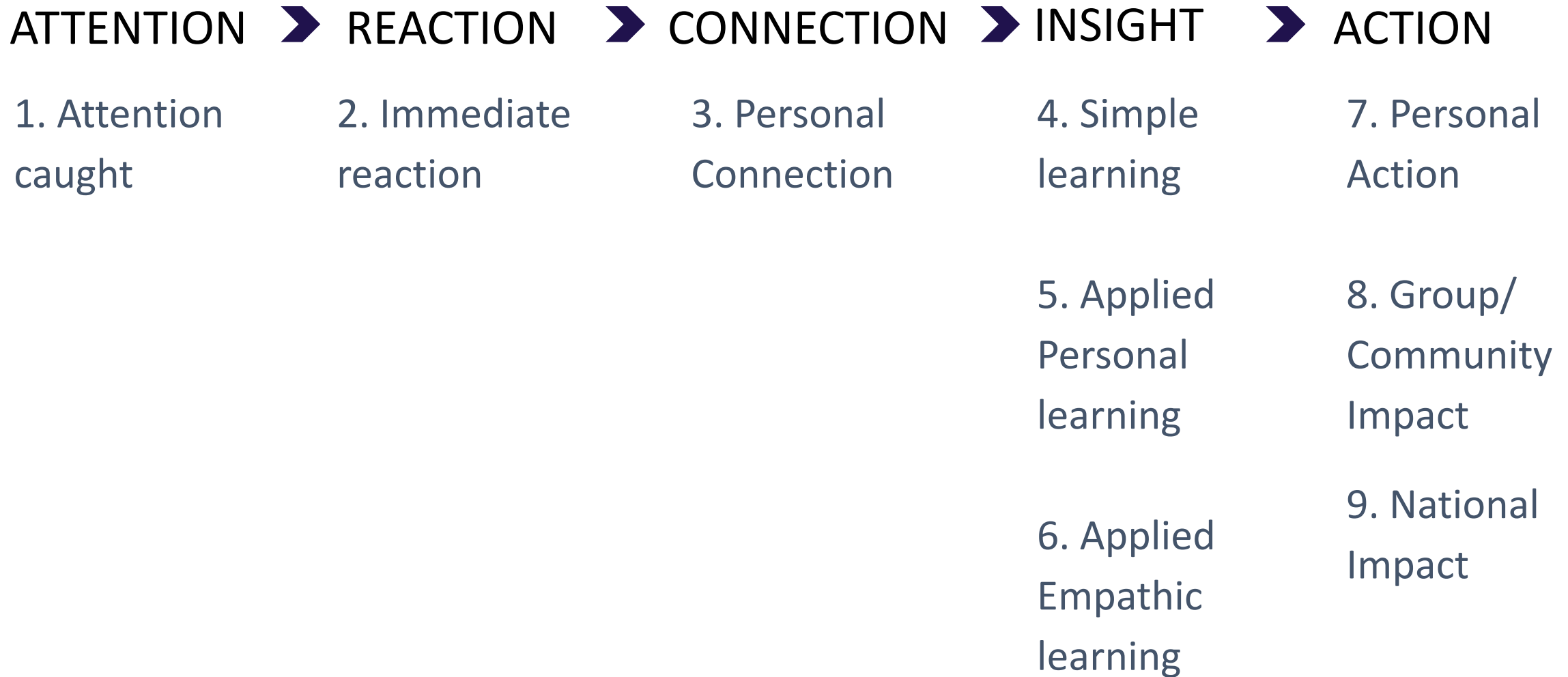


# Still a work-in-progress

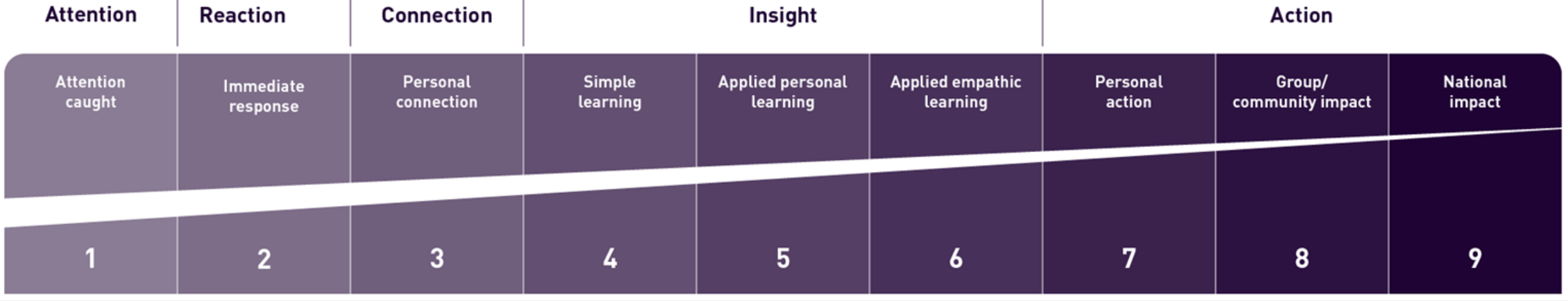
- Te Papa is our national museum – accountable to the New Zealand taxpayers.
- Its focus has moved from **outputs**, to **outcomes** and now to **impacts**.
- Its **Audience Insights** team initially focussed on visitor research, specifically for exhibitions – planning, design, visitor satisfaction, visitation data.
- Expanded to cover wider range of products – e.g. its online Collections, its educational activities, new developments, products, marketing etc. – from concept design stage and planning to implementation and evaluation and accountability reporting
- Careful design of different research techniques to understand different types of reach and impact
- A **spectrum of impactfulness** – from fleeting individual impacts to feeding into regional or national policy.

Question: **Can this model be adjusted to the work of museums and their partnerships involved in regional development?**

# The 5 step model – a structure for story telling



*As described by Dr Samuele di Stefano, Audience Insights Team, 2022 at Victoria University of Wellington*



The core number of initial interactions you will have with your audience. This is the minimum requirement for entering the spectrum, and is the core measurement you will base your next levels on, so is fundamental to planning for and understanding later stages.

Examples include: Attendance numbers, page views, link clicks.

The immediate, simple reaction of the audience. May convey sentiment or emotion, but not really demonstrate “meaning”, understanding or interpretation. While this level may appear shallow, it is the part of the path to learning, and is a good measure of those who may not want to/be able to engage in a more active way. This reaction is often part of the experience, though not always; for example a comment on social media how they enjoyed an earlier visit to an exhibition still counts as an immediate reaction.

Examples include: Likes, Retweets, Favourites, votes, emoji reactions, simple comments such as “this is great!”, “love your work!”

Audience feels a connection between the content / experience and themselves. Evidence (comments, observed reactions etc) include \*how\* the experience is relevant.

Examples include: “I remember when...”, “My parents had...”, “That’s like when...”, “I was looking for info on my interest on...”, “This is one of my favourite...” or even “ I love cats so...”

The learning of new, simple, facts. Evidence should include more than remembering something learnt, but actually describing the new understanding.

Examples include: “I learnt a caldera is a type of volcano that forms a lake rather than a cone”, “I found out what kind of spider was in my bath”, “I learnt there is acid in most paper, and oil and salt on our fingers, that can be damaging to...”, “I didn’t know that bees relied so much on this plant”, “I see how this artist was affected by the war”

Audience is able to apply the learning from the experience to make *small* future changes in their daily lives or decision making, or aid in existing research or creativity. These actions are more likely to affect existing actions, rather than create new actions. Compare to (7), Personal action.

Examples include: “I will consider local language and customs in my work email greetings”, “I feel more confident in my voting about issue x because...”, “I think about how I my bias affected my thoughts on x, i can see a bit more now” “I’m using this in my university research”, “I’m going to check my the fish I buy from now on for sustainable fishing methods”

Audience is able to apply new learning to how they think about others. Audience feels more understanding/empathy when considering others, and is able to confidently discuss new ideas and opposing views.

Examples include: “I will consider how group x is portrayed in the media from now on”, “I will think about how my actions at work impact ...”, “I now considers these factors when buying x”, “I had a constructive conversation with x about the subject”

\*New\* or newly informed, real actions undertaken as a result of the new learning or experience. Creating something new, or undertaking a new action that has impact on them personally, or to their friends or family, with the Te Papa experience or service having significant influence on the new action. These actions are deliberate, considered (not reactive) and show new time investment. They are generally \*after\* the experience, possibly even some days, weeks or months. The action could be one-off, or on going. Compare to (5), Applied personal learning.

\*New\* or newly informed actions that affect a group or community as a result of the learning or experience. It might be one person who has started an action that affects a community, or a community working together. The group or community could be in any country, dispersed, or virtual. The action could be one-off, or ongoing.

Examples include: A wikipedia editing group formed around a particular project, a local museum is trained in digitisation that increases access to local collections, a teacher creating a teaching resource using the collections, weaver sets up a regular workshop for locals, a tramping club includes plant identification tools in their regular kit.

\*New\* or newly action informed that is applied at a national level, or affect change that has national reach. The action could be one-off, or ongoing. The nation in question could the “home” nation, or another.

Examples include: Research that informs national policy, the increased awareness and celebration of Matariki (Māori new year) as a national event, changes/additions made to the national education curriculum.

*As summarised by Dr Samuele di Stefano, Audience Insights Team, 2022, at Victoria University of Wellington*



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



UNESCO  
Global  
Geoparks



**unesco**  
Global Geoparks



### AMBITIONS – The Waitaki Valley to become NZ's first Geopark:

- Meet UNESCO requirements for recognition
- Protect & enhance the natural & cultural environment
- Build social identity, community pride & local champions for Geopark
- Encourage visitor awareness, engagement & advocacy
- Benefit current businesses & attract new residents and businesses to invest in an economically sustainable Geopark



# Concluding remarks

## Museum involvement in regional development

- Museums are an important contributor to regional development through their close community relationships
- Museums' many diverse relationships will change over time - dynamic
- Relationships need constant monitoring and nurturing
- Successful collaborations are usually **based on** shared values, motivations, realistic expectations, and effort.
- Museums can leverage their relationships to create synergies, share value, and increase participation.
- **Assessing impacts** is more than just counting visitors and their spending and can be far-reaching and long-term

Thank you for  
your attention

Come to  
New Zealand's  
Geopark soon!

Jane Legget PhD FMA



Young Geopark volunteers inspired to  
protect their local environment in a  
community beach clean.

[jane.legget@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jane.legget@xtra.co.nz)