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THE MARAE FRAMEWORK

MANA WHENUA
AND YOU



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The Marae Framework: Mana Whenua and You.

A researchers guide to engaging
with Māori and Te Tiriti.

He waka eke noa

*A canoe which we are all in, with no
exception*

A CALL TO ACTION AND BETTER RESEARCH - THE PURPOSES OF THE MARAE FRAMEWORK

This kaumatua-led project was designed to introduce a process to improve awareness of how to engage with Māori, build better relationships, and increase hapori benefits. It is written for both researchers wanting to create relationships and partnerships with 'Māori' and, vice versa, to allow for hapori to know what they should expect of good researchers who are approaching them. It advocates for a process that requires researchers to do their homework and establish and maintain long-term research relationships and partnerships with hapori. If followed correctly, it provides an avenue to facilitate engagement in research or programming with mana whenua, or other Māori entities, that is founded in true Te Tiriti relationship.

This framework is intended for those who want to increase their cultural proficiency and depth of relationship with Māori, and who are seeking greater impact from collaborative research that is carried out with Māori. This guide calls for individuals to move beyond transactional relationships to more transformative ones, while also acknowledging that the expectations and obligations required to do so are often poorly understood and, at worst, ignored by researchers. We have written this guide with the goal of improving awareness of this issue in the research sector. Our intention is that this framework can help lead to a better appreciation and greater confidence when engaging with Māori in research.

This work was funded and written by [Te Tira Whakamātaki](#) (TTW) and New Zealand's Biological Heritage National Science Challenge (NZBH). It employs two well-known Māori concepts as metaphors, the wharehau and the pōwhiri, for creating a framework that non-Māori researchers can conceptualise and use. It describes ways for considering how their research, now and in the future, could be imagined and designed to align with hapori expectations and create equitable outcomes. Additionally, it has been written so that it can be applied to other contexts and employed by different parts of the research sector (individual researchers through to research organisations and providers).


TIKA, PONO, AND AROHA - SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR THE FRAMEWORK

Mā wai rā e taurima te marae i waho nei? *Who will take responsibility on the marae now?*

Mā te tika *Through the correct way*


Mā te pono *Through truth and*

Me te aroha e. *Through love (it will be done).*



Fundamentally, the Marae Framework articulates some key attributes of success that the authors believe are critical in order to maximise positive outcomes for collaborative research ventures. However, at its heart lies the assumptions of tika, pono and aroha – values that the authors posit implicitly form the foundations of the Marae Framework, as it is through these that parties can genuinely achieve full and proper outcomes. Importantly though, values such as tika, pono and aroha cannot necessarily be learned but instead are inherent characteristics that often require a commitment to a higher purpose. Everybody involved in the process are endowed with these, as without a commitment to these fundamental values, the process outlined in the framework will never reach its full potential.

This guide utilises two widely recognised metaphors to walk readers through the framework. We chose to use metaphors because they are widely employed within Māori culture to articulate complexity and layer meaning in a way that is easier to ‘make sense of’. Further, metaphoric imaging is also a powerful form that can convey multiple interpretations and hidden meaning. We have also selected two attributes of Māori culture that are likely to be accompanied by a sense of familiarity to many; these are the pōwhiri (formal welcome process) and the whare (referring to the ancestral house). These sentinels of Māori culture are logical choices for the purpose of explaining how to build successful research relationships with Māori because they are both inherently central to the process of expressing intent, establishing and maintaining relationships, and sharing benefit.






In fact, the sequence of events normally associated with the rituals and processes involved when visiting a marae (preparation, welcome, moving into the whare, and the process of departure) all transpose nicely, and provide useful touch points for describing what carrying out Māori responsive research looks like, from the collective experience of the authors and as further elaborated on in the following sections.

However, it is important to note that these are generalisations of these metaphors and that different iwi, hapū and whānau will have varied understandings of these concepts. It is up to you, the reader, to do your homework and adapt this framework to the hapori and whenua you will be working with and on.

Why Do It? The Value Proposition of the Marae Framework

The success of this guide relies on people seeing and understanding the value proposition that comes with aligning everyday research with the values, philosophies, and approaches outlined in the framework. It is about entering into the type of relationship that is conducive to the development of positive outcomes while acting on your responsibilities as an ethical researcher. If followed, this approach can:

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- Assist Māori in achieving their economic, cultural, environmental and scientific aspirations, while supporting their whakapapa, kaitiakitanga and manaakitanga commitments.
 - Contribute to affirmative action which is aiming to remove inherent power structures, cultural ignorance, and elements of institutional racism that currently exist within the science sector. These negative aspects of the science system act as barriers to the types of outcomes listed in the previous bullet point.
 - Create 'shared' expectations for research around operational aspects and benefit sharing.
 - Build pathways for two-way benefits, including enabling different worldviews which bring diversity of thought and new/different solutions to complex issues.
 - Future-proof research careers, making them fit-for-purpose especially when there is an intent to work with communities and a larger movement towards operating according to best practice.
 - Create a context to better understand and grow a greater awareness of a researchers or their organisations:
 - Te Tiriti obligations arising from legislative and/or policy requirements; and how to develop approaches to effectively discharge these obligations.
 - Vision Mātauranga science policy expectations for any VOTE SCIENCE funded research.
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There has been a growing expectation that science in New Zealand will be more responsive to and cognisant of Māori interests and aspirations. At the core of efforts to move the science system in this direction is the acknowledgement that collaboration and partnerships that have a basis in Te Tiriti and best practice models are more effective at achieving equitable outcomes (for example, see Vision Mātauranga science policy [2005]; The Impact of Science: Position paper [2017]; Te Pae Kahurangi Report [2020], Te Pūtahitanga; A Tiriti-led Science-Policy Approach for Aotearoa New Zealand [2021]). How this is realised within the scientific sector has been the cause of much discussion and debate but not a lot of progress (Te Pūtahitanga: A Tiriti-led Science-Policy Approach for Aotearoa New Zealand [2021]).



The Marae Framework – The Process of Approaching Hapori with Research

This section is written for researchers and hapori to follow. While it may be a familiar process for hapori (a pōwhiri), it may be new for some researchers. Therefore, to assist in following the process we are proposing, we have visualised it at key steps. The first diagram pictured below shows the start of good engagement with communities and is symbolic of the preparation you need to do before going to a hapori. It uses a pōwhiri as a general metaphor to help you think about the steps you need to take (and, of benefit, you will go through an actual pōwhiri as well in which you and your project will be put to the test). While the following text offers a detailed description of what you would need to do, readers are also encouraged to view [our short video](#) that also describes this process. We also recommend downloading [this process diagram](#) and [this summary visual](#) to have beside you as you are reading through our descriptions.

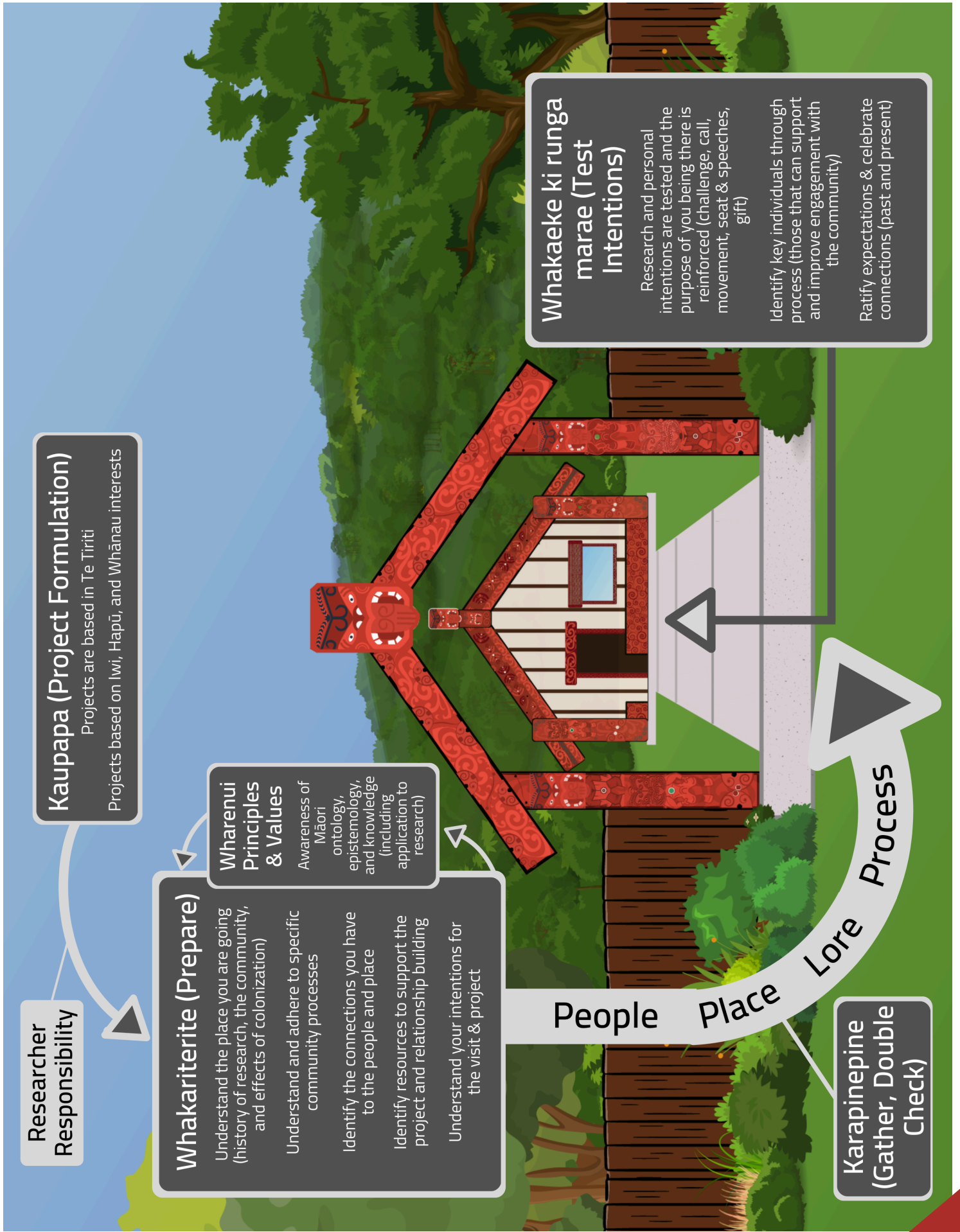




Diagram 1: The Beginning of the Pōwhiri (Engagement Process for Research)




As is shown above, there are several steps you should take before visiting the hapori you are hoping to partner with on a research project, and before being welcomed through a pōwhiri. As such, the framework begins as any project would begin – with an idea. This is at the top of the diagram and represents the ‘project formulation’ stage that any research project would normally undergo. Here, you (the researcher) are likely realising that you need or want to partner with Māori, in order to undertake the research and get the best possible outcome. At this stage, it’s important to explore your intentions – what do you really want to achieve by asking to be a partner with those at place? Are your intentions to bring genuine good and positive benefits to that hapori? Or do you need a Māori partner to get an application across the line? Hapori will easily see through bad intentions and it’s important to explore these and understand your position before approaching a potential partner. It’s also important to remember that all hapori are different, so while this framework provides a general approach to use as a starting point, you will need to ensure that you understand and account for local contexts. Fundamentally, to be able to do good research with Māori, your projects should be embedded in the [articles of Te Tiriti](#) and be informed by iwi, hapū, and whānau interests (as defined and stated by relevant iwi, hapū, and whānau).



It is your responsibility as the researcher to explore those intentions. It is also your responsibility to take the next step – whakariterite (preparation). In this, you should begin by expanding your understanding of the place and people you are intending to partner with. This would include understanding the history of research, both past and current, at that place. Note that it would be important to explore your own organisation's history with that hapori as well, as there could be existing relationships or tensions that you may or may not be aware of that would affect the acceptance of your team and project. You should also have a good grasp of the hapori itself to be able to portray your research in the right way (e.g., who lives there, what is the significance of the whenua to the people, who are those you should be talking to). Essential to this will be their lived experience of colonisation, whose effects and impacts, even today, will be reverberating within those communities. An empathy and understanding of these will be of immense benefit when conceptualizing what and how your research can be best positioned within those communities.


At this point you should also reach out to that hapori (perhaps to a person you may have an existing relationship with or another researcher who could help introduce you to people there) to better understand whether there are any unique aspects that hapori may have that need to be considered in your approach to them.



Taking this step will, at the very least, demonstrate to the hapori you are visiting that you are proactive in your enquiry and have respect for local processes and how things are done there.

Ultimately though, it will make you feel more comfortable and confident approaching them with a project. This could involve big things (e.g., ensuring you have the right people in the room; only speaking te reo Māori in the marae) to smaller things (e.g., taking a koha/gift to show appreciation for hosting). Either way, understanding local hapori processes will go a long way in ensuring a good grounding when starting the conversation and may eventually lead to a relationship.


Finally, as part of the whakariterite (preparation) it is important to understand what connections you may already have to that place. It's possible that, by doing a little bit of exploring, you may already know someone in the hapori who can help introduce you to a local person of standing and recognized authority. In turn, these individuals could assist you with process of approaching the hapori with your research idea. Relationships are paramount when it comes to this type of work, so it's worth exploring existing connections for you (it may also be necessary to have this connection to be welcomed onto the marae, but we will explore this a little bit later).



To be able to have an effective conversation and make sure you are not over (or under) promising, you should have a good idea of what resources you have to support the project and all accompanying relationship building necessary to implement the project.


In summary, this stage is really about fully exploring and expressing your intentions for your organisation and/or project that you are hoping to bring into the hapori you are talking with. To better do this, it is important to frame these intentions within Māori ontology, epistemology, and knowledge (broad as well as specific applications to research).

Once you feel like you have prepared according to the steps described previously, it will then be time to physically visit the hapori you intend to work with. You will need to be formally welcomed into the hapori. This introduction needn't necessarily be a formal welcome onto the marae and it is highly likely that it will not take place there but possibly convened in a meeting room. Regardless of where this takes place, the formal pōwhiri (welcome) process provides a useful metaphor to describe how best to engage with your hapori of interest.



For example, the first step in a pōwhiri is the karapinepine, or to physically gather outside of the boundaries of the marae. Metaphorically in the research process, this is about double checking your preparation. In this, you should ensure that you have a good understanding of the people, place, lore, and processes of where you are visiting. This would serve as the last good opportunity to ensure that you truly are ready to be welcomed onto the marae, that you can demonstrate the benefit of your project in a way that is meaningful to those you are hoping to work with, and that you can respect the processes in place. However, a researcher can only really undertake this due diligence if they have an awareness or understanding of the hapori. This means that the key here is triangulation, meaning you should seek out people in your organisation who may be from that hapori, have a good knowledge and extensive networks with Māori communities or even approach people within that hapori. Again, early engagement is key. Although the New Zealand Science funding system doesn't normally resource this type of up-front engagement, it can still be achieved with a bit of effort and strategic thinking.


Once ready, the physical movement of the visiting group up onto the marae (te whakaeke ki runga i te marae) serves as another great metaphor for how your intentions will be explicitly and implicitly tested.



Traditionally, there were a series of process where visitors were challenged and probed to assess whether they came in peace or came with less honourable intentions. These same sentiments exist when meeting a hapori for the first time to get your research project going. Those you are meeting with will be able to determine whether you are there to make a positive contribution to the greater good of the people, hapori, environment etc., or whether your intent is more self-centred.

It is during this process where your preparations play a significant role in engendering a level of confidence that you have spent time trying to find out and understand them and their hapori. How you endear yourself to them very much depends on your own personal attributes like your ability to listen, ability to be humble, whether you can empathise with the hapori, your overall confidence in carrying yourself to a level indicating that you have at least tried to get to know the hapori you are visiting. During this calling process you will physically move to the steps of the wharenuī and within it, you will solidify the identification of key individuals and ratify the expectations for the project. You will also be able to celebrate any past or current connections you have to the hapori you discovered through your preparation.

At this stage that you will be at the steps of the wharenuī, preparing yourself to enter into conversation with those you are hoping to partner with. It's at this point that we can draw in another diagram to help you understand the general values and principles that you and the implementation of your project need to follow.



Understanding these values, as well as how they would apply to your specific project for the hapori you are visiting, will be key to doing good research at place.

These values help to protect the hapori you are working with and they also ensure that your research is meaningful and effective. It should be noted that while these values do stem from conversations and real-life examples we have had with hapori and kaumatua, they are a generalisation. This is why it is so important to make sure that you understand local context and how these values apply to your specific context rather than taking a ‘sledgehammer’ or ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. That said, there are five values that a given project should follow. To help you remember these, we have mapped them on to the wharenuī because, just as every part of the wharenuī works together to hold the structure up (physically and metaphorically), these five values are meant to work together to hold the structure of the project up too:

- Capacity building (placed on one amo [leg] of the wharenuī)
- Knowledge transfer (placed on the other amo of the wharenuī)
- Governance (placed on one of the maihi [arms] of the wharenuī)
- Equity and intellectual property (placed on the other maihi of the wharenuī)
- Impact (utu [reciprocity]; placed at the top of the wharenuī)

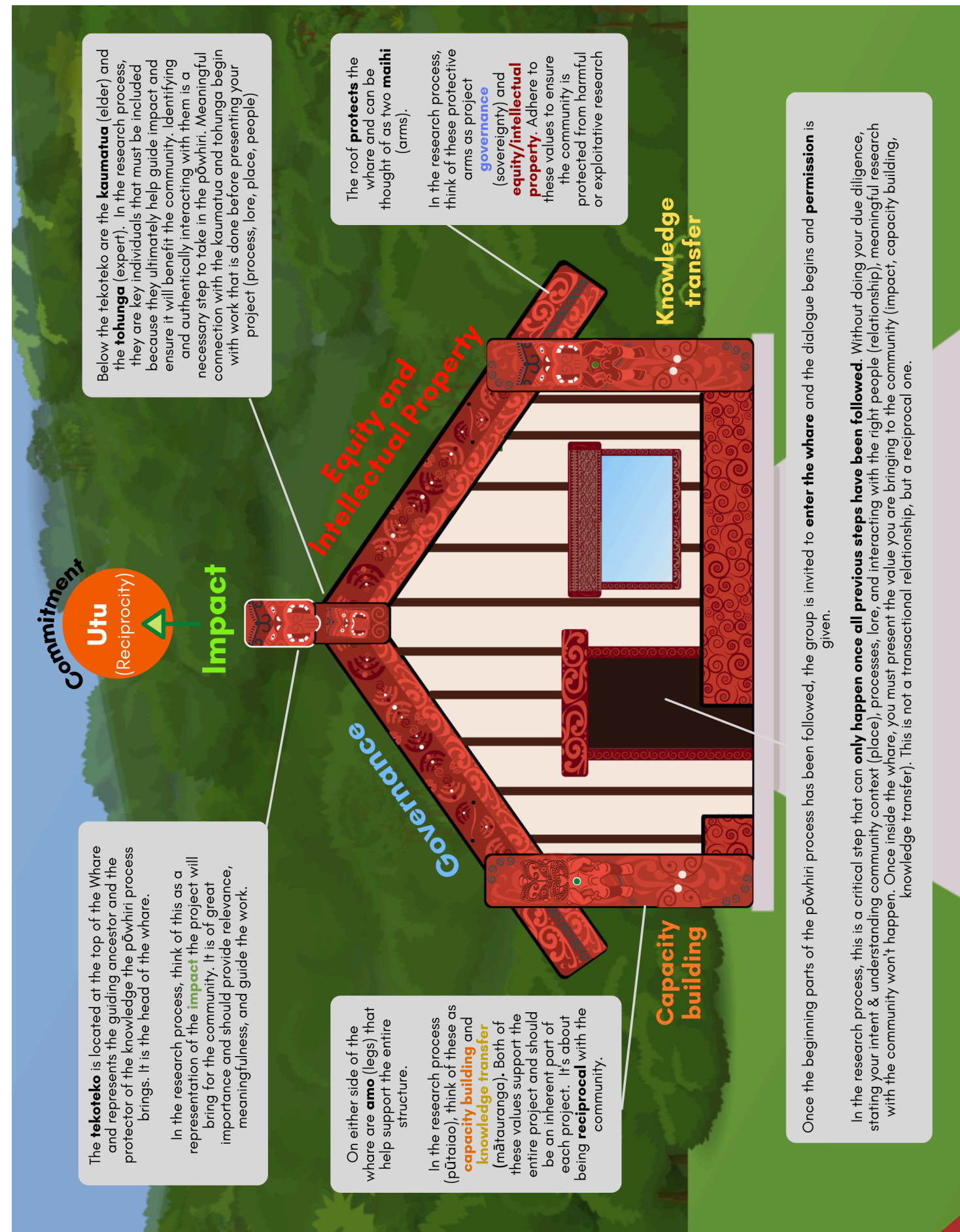




Diagram 2: Entering the Whare (Values and Commitment)



The first value to understand is impact. This is placed at the top of the wharenuī where the tekoteko is typically placed, as it represents the guiding ancestor and the protector of the knowledge the pōwhiri process brings. In every way, it is the head of the wharenuī. In the research process, think of the tekoteko as a representation of the impact the project will bring for the hapori. Impact is very important to consider as that should be the lead indicator of how meaningful and relevant the project could be for the hapori. Think of your project in these terms – what will the benefit be for this hapori? What good will it bring? What difference could it make?


Below the tekoteko are the kaumatua (elder) and the tohunga (expert). In the research process, they are key individuals that must be included because they ultimately help to steer impact and ensure it will benefit the hapori. Just as it is in the pōwhiri, identifying and authentically including them in the research design, implementation, and evaluation phases is a necessary step to take. Meaningful connections with the kaumatua and tohunga begin with work that is done before presenting your project. This means the preparation step we spoke about previously, including process, lore, place, people.

On either side of the wharenuī are the amo (legs) that help keep the entire structure standing. In the research process, think of these as capacity building and knowledge transfer (mātauranga).



Both values support the entire project and should be an inherent part of each project. It's about being reciprocal with the hapori and ensuring that you, the research team, does everything you can to help build skills and bring additional benefit for the hapori (noting here that you, as researchers, can act as the capacity increase as well). Knowledge transfer within and between parties is also a non-negotiable part of any research process and is a cornerstone to good research. This could look like building in processes to transfer knowledge from kaumatua to rangatahi or perhaps from you, the research team, to the wider hapori. The point here is that you are committing to be a contributing member of the hapori through this research project and to do otherwise would damage relationships.


The roof, more specifically the maihi or the diagonal bargeboards, of the wharehau protects it and is thought often portrayed as two maihi (arms). In the research process, think of these protective arms as project governance (sovereignty) and equity and intellectual property. Adhere to these values to ensure the hapori is protected from harmful or exploitative research and, again, is non-negotiable. Each project should carefully consider how it will be co-governed and what that realistically looks like (with capacity considerations in mind).



It should also clearly spell out what equity means in this project (e.g., how resources will be shared and what outcomes will be sought) as well as how intellectual property will be protected throughout the process. It's not hard to see how these values are intimately tied together, but both are protective foundations that shelter a good research project.

Together, following these five values signifies that you are making a commitment of reciprocity (utu). This shows that you are there to bring benefit to the hapori first and foremost. You are being welcomed into the hapori as a guest and you must reciprocate that sentiment by using your skills to bring a positive impact. You are a part of that hapori and you now have a responsibility to contribute to it.

Once the beginning parts of the pōwhiri process have been followed, the group is invited to enter the wharenuī where the dialogue begins and permission to proceed with the project is given. In the research process, this is a critical step that can only happen once all previous steps have been followed. Without doing your due diligence, as we talked about earlier (stating your intent & understanding hapori context [place], processes, lore, and interacting with the right people [relationships]), meaningful research with the hapori won't happen.



Once inside the wharehenui, you must represent the value you are bringing to the hapori (impact, capacity building, knowledge transfer). To be clear, this is not a transactional relationship but a reciprocal one.

Within the beginning stages, there are some key topics to cover, namely: the ways in which the research project will be governed; how intellectual property is going to be protected; how the project will build capacity and transfer knowledge; and, ultimately, how the project will positively impact the hapori. Once these have been agreed upon then it is time to implement the project.

Following the pōwhiri and the commitment you made by going through that process, whakatangatawhenua happens. You are then welcome as a local but that also means that you are bound to the rules, expectations, and obligations that govern the people with no exceptions. To reinforce our earlier points, this also means committing to following the wharehenui metaphor values in your research and ensuring the research benefits the hapori. You are committing to utu (reciprocity).

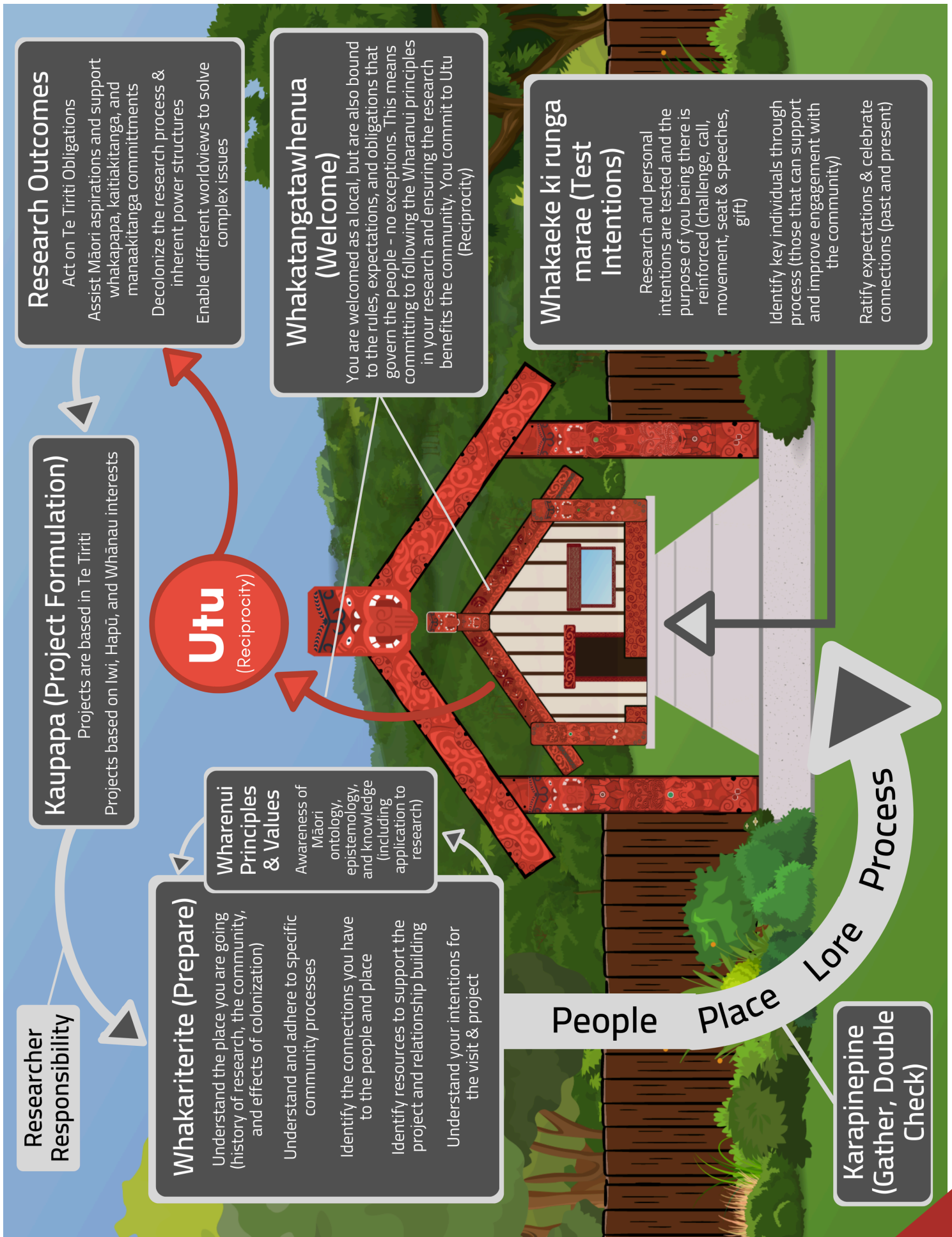




Diagram 3: The Marae Framework



Through this commitment, you will be able to (generally) work towards several mutually beneficial outcomes. These include:

- Being able to act on your personal and organizational Te Tiriti obligations
- Being able to use your skills to assist Māori aspirations and support whakapapa, kaitiakitanga, and manaakitanga without overstepping power
- Helping to decolonize the typical research process and inherent power structures between researchers and Māori communities.
- Expand and enable different and complimentary worldviews to solve complex issues (including professional development for your own career)

It is at this point that that you must continue building relationships with the hapori as your project progresses. The process we just described should be thought of as an introduction to a long-term relationship. Without ongoing effort and maintenance, that relationship may fall apart. However, if that relationship is nurtured, there is a good chance it will turn into more relationships and research projects with that hapori. In the above diagram, this is where the process repeats. As future projects and ideas come forth, you may follow the same basic process to ensure that they go smoothly.



Although you may not need to do as much preparation for the second, third, or fourth projects, the values remain the same. Ensure that you follow and implement the governance, intellectual property, capacity building, and knowledge transfer values whilst bringing impact to the hapori and your relationships (and projects) will flourish.

Where to From Here? A Summary of Steps

By using the pōwhiri and whare metaphors, it is easier to see how engagement with hapori truly boils down to the intentions you have, the processes you follow, and the way you interact with people (tika, pono, aroha). The diagram below summarises the process we just spoke of and can be downloaded [here](#). It shows that research is a process that requires the creation and ongoing nurturing of relationships.

Importantly, following this framework can help researchers decolonise research while simultaneously improving the lives of everyone living in Aotearoa New Zealand. Change starts with little steps and, if you are willing to do your homework and engage with Māori in this way, you will soon find yourself challenging the status quo, changing systems, and bringing others along with you. We hope that this framework showed an implementation pathway for researchers and hapori alike and that relationships can become even stronger through the values and principles laid out in this document.

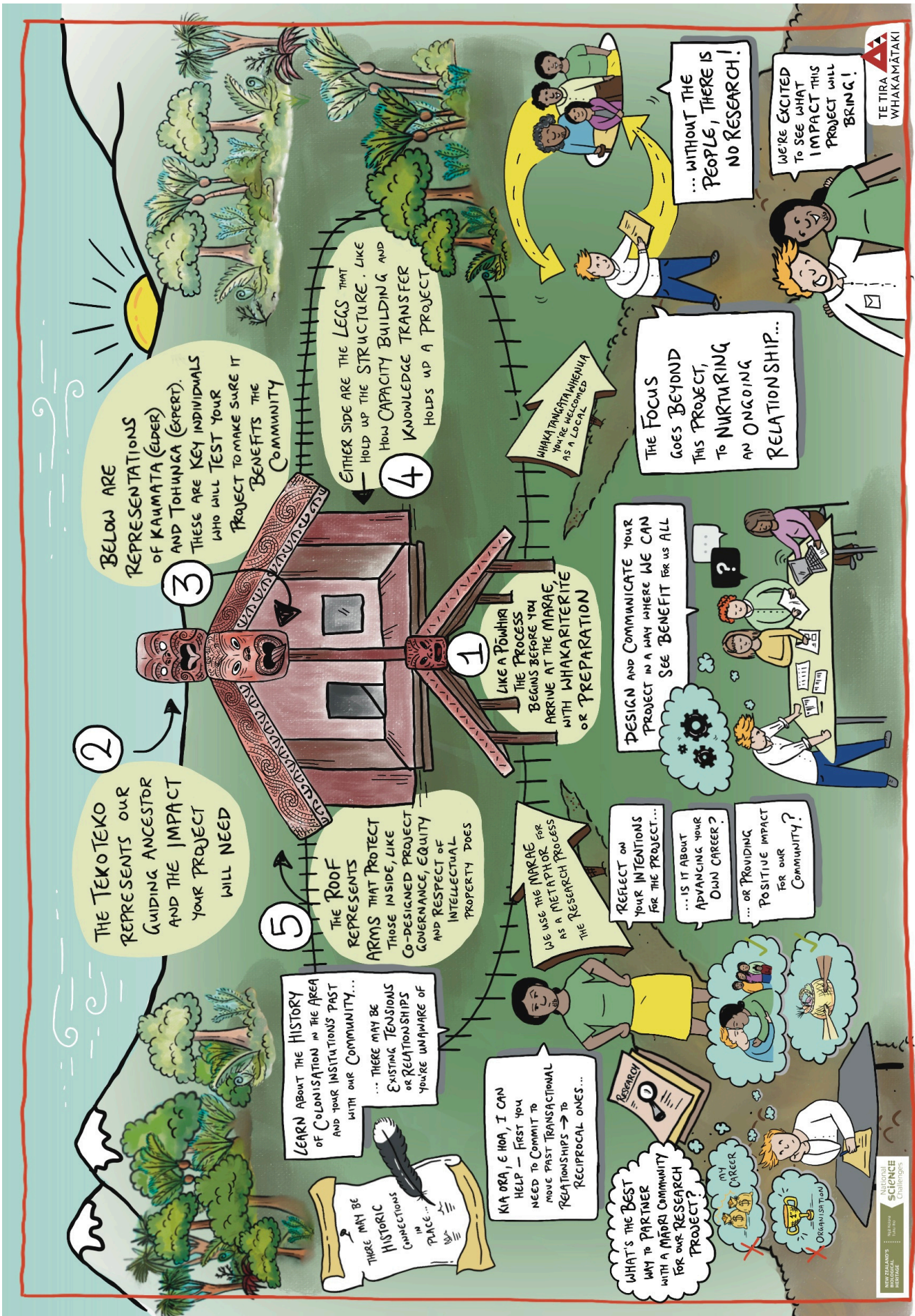


Diagram 4: The Marae Framework (infographic)

Additional Resources to View

We acknowledge that a lot of good work has already been done in this space and, to ensure that we are complimenting existing work, we recommend that you view the following resources and case studies alongside this Framework:

General Guides:

- [Building Relationships for Effective Engagement with Māori](#)
 - *Te Puni Kōkiri*
- [Engagement Framework](#) and [Guidelines for engaging with Māori](#)
 - *Te Arawhiti – the Office for Māori Crown Relations*
- [Principles and guidelines for engagement with Māori](#)
 - *Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research*
- [Engaging with Māori Te Tūhonotanga ki te Hunga Māori](#)
 - *Bay of Plenty Regional Council*
- [Engaging with Māori](#)
 - Environmental Protection Authority
- [Māori Engagement Framework](#)
 - *Waikato Regional Council*
- [Lessons for successful mana whenua engagement: tips for people who don't know where to start](#)
 - *Auckland Council*
- [Te Ara Tika: Guidelines for Māori Research](#) Ethics
 - *University of Auckland*
- [Māori Maps](#)
 - *Explore Marae and Maps*
- [Find Iwi by local authority](#)
 - *Te Puni Kōkiri*

Data Sovereignty Guides:

- [Reframing Data as a Taonga: A Māori Data Sovereignty Framework](#)
 - *Te Tira Whakamātaki*
- [Te Mana Raraugna](#)
 - *Māori Data Sovereignty Network*
- [Māori data governance model](#)
 - *University of Waikato*
- [Te Atawhai o Te Ao Māori Data Sovereignty Report](#)
- [Mana Raraunga Data Sovereignty](#)
 - *Te Apārangi (Royal Society)*