

11 January 2021

To whom this may concern

RE: letter of support to the Marlborough Youth Trust



COMET Auckland is a charitable education trust based in Auckland with a national reach. Our vision is to drive systems change that will lead to more equitable, effective and sustainable skills and education outcomes for all young people in Auckland and across New Zealand.

We have been working with Marlborough REAP and the Marlborough Youth Trust for more than 3 years, supporting them to deliver the Youth Employability Programme: the Licence to Work (YEP). This programme supports young people to build the confidence, skills and networks they need to thrive in life, learning and work.

The Marlborough Youth Trust have been exemplary partners. The Trust demonstrates a strong commitment to being youth focused and strongly cognisant of the challenges and needs of young people. Additionally, I have observed their commitment to being strengths based, focusing on the skills, strengths and attributes of young people. The management team has a strong commitment to professional and high-quality services and as such invest strongly in the professional development of their teams. I have frequently invited leaders from other regions in NZ to speak with Jo Lane and her team on how they have set up YEP and how they achieve such excellent outcomes with their young people.

I have observed the Trust's great use of social media to profile events, resources and opportunities for young people and to profile young people's successes. I am confident that their commitment to building positive narratives about young people contributes to the strong relationships and networks they have in the local and business communities of Marlborough. I can also attest to the Trust's strong focus and commitment to diversity and inclusivity in their staffing, programmes and resources and their awareness and efforts to work bi-culturally.

We are very supportive of MYT's intention to continue to support youth with MYSPACE being available for them and their families and to increase the hours the space is open – to include later hours and the weekend. This ensures working families can also access the space. We are aware that MYT does a great job in connecting visitors to relevant and valuable programmes, events, pastoral care, budgeting, mental health support, sport, education, employment, business enterprise, and support groups. Increased funding would enable MYT to employ additional qualified youth workers to cover these additional hours.

In our experience it is essential for the wellbeing and employability of young people that they are able to access services, supports and resources they need in spaces and places in which they feel comfortable and in times that suit their lifestyles and commitments. This is an invaluable service for the young people of Marlborough. We fully support their application for funding.

Ngā mihi,

Shirley Johnson  
Director – Youth Employability