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Sister Cities, Museums, and Culturally Diverse Communities:

*A pathway to strengthening inclusive community engagement by local government
and museums for Asian New Zealanders.*

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Abstract

Sister cities are long-term, community-driven international partnerships between local governments. They promote opportunities for meaningful community engagement through cultural exchanges, economic activities, and resource sharing. Communities in Aotearoa New Zealand are increasingly becoming culturally diverse and complex, and populations such as Asian migrants and Asian New Zealanders are rapidly growing. The strategic goals of museums, particularly those linked to local governments, include actively connecting and engaging with their culturally diverse communities.

This thesis examines two case studies with established sister city relationships and community-focused museums linked with local governments. Sister city activities between Porirua City and Lower Hutt City in New Zealand and counterparts Nishio City and Minoh City in Japan have brought unique opportunities for citizens of these cities. Cultural institutions Pātaka Art + Museum and The Dowse Art Museum have legacies of public programming and exhibitions for the community. By analysing archival documentation, interviews with key participants, and maintaining a critical socio-cultural approach through forms of narrative inquiry, this research aims to better understand the potential of sister cities for the community and the heritage sector. In this context, a counter-narrative reveals the growth and increasing relevance of responding to the cultural diversity in New Zealand communities including Asian New Zealanders.

Within the two case studies, evidence shows that sister cities are existing community-based resources that encourage unique community activities to flourish. Part of the early sister city movement in New Zealand in the 1990s, they were pathways for local governments and museums to utilise for meaningful community engagement through cultural, educational, and economic activities. These were strengthened by collaboration between committed leaders in local government, cultural institutions, and community organisations. Furthermore, people-to-people connections and trust-building were essential for cultural and economic community outcomes to flow.

This thesis argues that these outcomes are shared objectives that strengthen community engagement, and sister cities could be effectively utilised by local governments and affiliated community-focused museums to support culturally diverse communities. Currently, however, New Zealand museums and local governments do not fully utilise the potential of sister cities despite their commitment to these communities.

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Abbreviations

The Dowse – The Dowse Art Museum

GCNZ – Global Cities New Zealand

HAS – Hutt Art Society

HCC – Hutt City Council

HMHFT – Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust

ICOM – International Council of Museums

JET – Japan Exchange Teaching Programme

MAA – Minoh Art Association

MINTEX – Minoh Teaching Exchange Programme

NGO – Non-Government Organisation

NZIER – New Zealand Institute of Economic Research

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Pātaka – Pātaka Art + Museum

PCC – Porirua City Council

SCNZ Inc. – Sister Cities New Zealand Incorporated

SCR – Sister city relationship

Te Papa – Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa

Reader's note

The exhibition titles in this thesis are faithfully reproduced. Where the word 'Māori' appears without a macron on the 'ā', these are the original exhibition titles.

On the romanisation of the Japanese language: following the subnational government's preferred usage, "Minoh" is used instead of the direct romanisation into Latin script "Minō" or "Minoo".

Chapter One

Introduction

Sister city relationships (SCRs) are international partnerships that have deep roots in New Zealand, connecting cities globally through local government and communities. More formalised than friendly cities and also known as twin cities, SCRs often have multiple connections with community groups, education, and cultural institutions. Media and local government have cast various lights on SCRs. Benefits cited for communities including cultural exchange, business opportunities, resource sharing, and sports exchange. In contrast, SCRs can be perceived as junkets taken by local government officials and politicking between national governments. However, many SCRs in New Zealand continue to thrive, seen through sister city activities that bring commerce, culture, and resources to communities.

In a globalising world, communities are becoming increasingly diverse and complex. Cultural diversity is an increasingly prominent aspect of New Zealand communities (Smits, 2019; Spoonley, 2015a). Ethnicities such as Asians and Pasifika continue to grow, making up significant portions of local communities (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a, 2020). This includes migrant populations as well as New Zealanders that identify with more than one cultural group such as Asian New Zealanders.

In response, community-focused strategic goals continue to drive New Zealand local governments and cultural sectors today. Museums that emphasise public programming for local communities have strong mission statements that recognise their obligations to the Treaty of Waitangi as well as the cultural diversity in their communities. With society becoming increasingly culturally diverse and complex, museums continually face the challenge of engaging with their communities in meaningful and sustainable ways. Connections with local and international artists, institutions, and local governments have diversified public programming for some museums.

Research Purpose and Question

The purpose of this research is to explore the potential role of SCRs in New Zealand museums by investigating sister cities and museums through community engagement, involvement, and connections as well as the influences on SCRs and museums from the early 1990s to the present day. Sister cities are long-term partnerships that connect communities locally and internationally, and community outcomes are seen in cultural, educational, and business activities. For community-focused museums, public programming through events and exhibitions aim to actively engage various audiences and communities. Both sister cities and museums, particularly those affiliated

with local government, work with, and rely on, their communities. However, these communities are fluid and continually changing.

My research addresses these areas through the New Zealand perspective, focusing on the changing cultural diversity of communities which include Asia and Asian New Zealanders. Due to migration and domestic growth in Asian populations, this cultural group is New Zealand's fastest growing ethnic group and is projected to continue expanding exponentially (Butcher, 2008; Smits, 2019; Spoonley, 2020; Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). As an emerging area of research, this topic will become more relevant as Asian New Zealand communities continue to grow (Hill, 2010; Lowe, 2013; Ng, 2017; Sheehan et al., 2018; Smits, 2019; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004; Voci & Leckie, 2011). As New Zealand communities are becoming increasingly connected and culturally diverse, this thesis questions the potential role SCRs could have in local government and affiliated community-focused museums.

Methodology

This thesis is a qualitative study that uses comparative case studies, archival materials, demographic data, and interviews, combined with forms of narrative inquiry and museum theory. Following Creswell (2014), this research design was selected to reveal a picture of SCR development and their relationships with local governments, museums, and communities. Case studies were chosen to illustrate two strong SCRs and their relationships with communities, local government, and museums. Archival documentation establishes historical context to the case studies while interviews with key individuals involved in SCRs, museums or local governments provide insight into the complexities of these relationships. In both case studies, demographic data reveals changes in cultural diversity in communities over this period.

Qualitative research involves the study of activities, relationships, and perspectives of participants in their natural settings, providing an approach to context and interpretation of practices and behaviours (Creswell, 2014; Flick, 2007; Given, 2008a; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Neuman, 1997). The interpretivist and social ecological paradigms proposed by Flick (2006) and Given (2008a, 2008d) were used as frameworks, enabling consideration of the complex interplay between people, organisations, community, and wider society. Babino and Stewart's framework (2020) suggests that using multiple theoretical lenses aid in expanding understanding socio-cultural complexities because differing perspectives "can be in dialogue with one another in order to address real-world issues" (p.118). The application of this conceptual framework can reveal multiple perspectives and layers of context.

Semi-structured interviews, analysis of participants' conversations, and their involvement in events aided in revealing the influences on community engagement throughout development of SCRs and museum public programming with local governments and community groups over time (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Neuman, 1997). By adopting an interpretative and narrative approach, knowledge from and through direct contact with key members involved in these relationships allowed insight to be gained within a selected time frame (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Given, 2008b, 2008d; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Neuman, 1997).

Two socio-cultural approaches were employed: narrative inquiry through critical analysis and counter-narrative (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Given, 2008b). As part of a narrative inquiry, the dynamic framework Narrative-Orientated Inquiry (NOI) was used (Hiles et al., 2009). This emphasised an inclusive and transparent approach to processing interview data through critical analysis and considering the research question throughout (Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Hiles et al., 2009). Analysing the narratives provided by research participants involved in SCRs, museums or local government gave insights into the core themes of community, people-to-people connections, and trust relations during different periods of time.

A counter-narrative approach was also taken to analyse interview materials, demographic trends, and associated academic literature (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b, 2021). This approach challenges existing "master" narratives by looking beyond them to uncover and challenge the assumptions behind dominant narratives.

Counter-narratives were also identified as the narratives of marginalised groups assimilated through creating a shared culture and language (Given, 2008b). This includes my position as an Asian New Zealander. As an "insider", my perspective remains that cultural identity and meaningful community engagement are areas of relevance for many Asian New Zealanders today. Several research participants, particularly those closely involved in SCRs, gave eloquent accounts as committed "insiders" and advocates.

Analyses of census data empirically supported these counter-narratives (see Chapter Two). This is explicated in the academic literature and studies undertaken by non-government organisations (NGOs). In contrast, however, counter-narratives occasionally received "push backs" from the media. These too have been analysed in Chapter Three and Four.

Museum theory remains integral for guiding this research during data collection, analysis, and discussion (Given, 2008d). The "new museology", a novel approach to museum practice, began

in the late 1980s. It challenged the museum's role as the cultural authority, reflecting on its role in wider social and political processes. This enabled museums to become more inclusive and accessible by placing visitors at the centre of experience creation (Freedman, 2000; Kreamer, 1992; Vergo, 1989; Witcomb, 2003). Therefore, I considered the community role of museums in society within the new museology and interpret primary sources including archives and interviews from this perspective.

This study provided cross-case qualitative analyses of two case studies focused on Porirua City and Nishio City, and Lower Hutt City and Minoh City. Porirua and Lower Hutt are two of the four cities in Wellington's metropolitan area. Factors such as the population composition and representation of the local community, funder requirements for the institutions affecting activities, and relevant key events, individuals or organisations that have key roles in SCRs were also considered (Given, 2008a; Mills et al., 2010; Tight, 2017). The case studies aimed to illustrate drivers behind sister city activities and their relationships with two separate council-linked museums.

These museums share similar attributes. Both museums are primarily art institutions with responsibilities for small local history collections, governed by local authorities that established SCRs in the early 1990s. Both Pātaka Art + Museum (Porirua) and The Dowse Art Museum (Lower Hutt) have culturally diverse communities with Asian populations growing exponentially. This method of comparative case study approach was selected to identify variations in emergent themes and discussions, and suggest future research directions (Mills et al., 2010; Tight, 2017; Yin, 2009).

This research drew from archival material that provided knowledge of the internal structures of the selected museums and the relationships with their local authorities (Given, 2008d; Yin, 2009). To provide context, it was appropriate to use historical research to understand the way New Zealand museums operate historically and presently within the context of the selected case studies (Mills et al., 2010). As Yin (2009) states, it must be noted that heavy use of archival data can be subject to shortcomings and biases, and therefore this research aimed to balance archival materials with interviews.

Eight semi-structured, individual, face-to-face interviews and one email interview were conducted. The latter was necessary due to the restrictions imposed by COVID-19. Potential respondents were selected based on archival material that had identified key participants and organisations involved in the key formative years of the SCRs as well as members currently in relevant key positions. This includes Porirua City Council (PCC), Hutt City Council (HCC), Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust (HMHFT), Sister Cities New Zealand Incorporated (SCNZ Inc.) operating as

Global Cities New Zealand (GCNZ), Hutt Art Society (HAS), Pātaka Art + Museum and The Dowse Art Museum (Appendix B). Participants were encouraged to share their insights and experiences freely (Given, 2008a; Oishi, 2003). These provided crucial insights into the processes at museums, local government, and non-profit organisations.

Five key respondents across both case studies were unavailable to be interviewed. This created gaps in the research particularly from the museum perspective which archival research attempts to fill. However, the narratives provided by research participants active in SCRs, museums or local governments during various time periods reveals and highlights changes or consistencies in attitudes and viewpoints regarding SCRs. By providing a comparative case study approach, the data provides insight of the complexities of museum activity, governments, and international partnerships within a New Zealand context.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles of autonomy and avoidance of harm were considered, and interviews were conducted after the appropriate forms for consent, confidentiality and transcript release were signed by interviewees (Massey University, 2017, Section 1; see Appendix A). All interviewees were informed of their right to withdraw from the research within a reasonable timeframe (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Creswell, 2014; Given, 2008c; Massey University, 2018, Section 2; Oishi, 2003). This research followed all the Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching and Evaluation involving Human Participants (2017) at Massey University and was considered low risk (Ethics Notification Number 4000024847).

Partial anonymity was offered to ensure that participant interests and confidentiality were fully considered while maintaining data integrity and transparency (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018; Coghlan & Brydon-Miller, 2014; Given, 2008a; Kaiser, 2009). No participants indicated a preference for partial anonymity.

As this research is set within Aotearoa New Zealand and involves Māori participants and cultural organisations, the research complied with obligations and principles of the Treaty of Waitangi; whakapapa, tika, manaakitanga, and mana (Massey University, 2017, Section 1). This included considering collective welfare, consultation, transparency, and undertaking the research in a culturally appropriate manner.

My research focuses on Asian New Zealanders as one facet of the nation's culturally diverse communities. As an Asian New Zealander myself, effort has been made to consider potential biases to research development. "Insider" and "outsider" statuses have been acknowledged to have

considerable effects on research processes (Given, 2008c). While insider researchers may have awareness of cultural or community sensibilities that can strengthen interviewee trust and rapport, they must also be aware and reflective about this impact (Given, 2008c). However, this research did not select interview participants with the goal of interviewing their experiences from their perspectives on Asia and Asian New Zealanders. Instead, interviews drew from each participant's individual experience on the development of SCRs with local governments, museums, and communities to understand the impact of political and community influences.

Thesis Scope and Rationale

This research touches on topics such as new museology, biculturalism and cultural diversity, and globalisation, drawing these together through the common link of the community. New museology has shaped the way community-focused museums in New Zealand engage their audiences. Biculturalism and cultural diversity in New Zealand are complex and many New Zealanders, including myself, have strong roots and ties to more than one culture or identity. Cultural diversity in communities is a key aspect of New Zealand's society. The globalisation of communities and interpersonal connections are remarkable features of New Zealand society, having been recognised through cultural events, museum exhibitions, and school exchanges throughout the decades.

Given the presence of sister city-related museum exhibitions in New Zealand (Ainge Roy, 2011; Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2007a, 2007b; Gibb, 2010; Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, 2006), the original aim of this thesis was to investigate the development of sister city activities in museums. As research progressed, it was clear that there are various influences that affect sister city activities at local and subnational government levels. Despite the presence of SCRs in some New Zealand museums, there were inconsistent engagement with these relationships and communities. I discovered that the narratives of research participants revealed integral shifts in community outcomes for SCR, local government, and museums. Interestingly, there were varied perceptions of the purpose of SCRs and visions of communities within museums. In response, the emergence of these research findings combined with empirical data reshaped the direction of my research purpose and question.

During the peak of sister city activities in New Zealand in the early 1990s, museum public programming was moving strongly towards a community focus. This is particularly true of museums affiliated with local government where influences include the alignment of strategic goals and funding pressures. However, the common link between the sister city movement and the museums' public direction is the community. Yet empirical evidence shows that these communities are

continuing to change, becoming more culturally diverse over time. This provided a catalyst to examine sister cities and museum public programming through the community lens.

While there are extensive influences that impact SCRs and museum public programming, this thesis investigates crucial aspects of this relationship by exploring the community link between sister cities, museums, and local governments in New Zealand. This recognises that this community link is acknowledged to be of considerable social value for sister cities and local government (Hogan, 2019; McMillan, 1995; de Villiers et al., 2007). Museums' connection to communities is analysed in relation to changes in museology over the past few decades, while the concept of cultural diversity is employed to examine the local and international facets of community.

While international studies such as those conducted by Ang (2005) investigate multiculturalism in the museum, research on multiculturalism within inclusive and community-centred public programming in New Zealand remains underdeveloped. Consequently, there is a need to look closer at the way New Zealand museums engage with their culturally diverse and growing communities. Asian populations in New Zealand are becoming an increasingly significant part of many communities. Many Asian ethnic groups have deep historical roots in New Zealand, such as Chinese communities (Smits, 2019; "Xīn xī lán", 2022). The 1996 census found that approximately 3.8% of New Zealand's population identified as Asian (Statistics New Zealand, 1996). In comparison, the 2018 census found that New Zealand populations identifying as Asian rose from 9.2% in 2006 to 15.1% in 2018, with an increase from 8.4% to 12.9% in the Wellington region (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a, 2018b). As an Asian New Zealander and globally connected citizen myself, selecting this community group for my research allowed me to explore aspects of cultural diversity and communities in the museum to which I felt personal connections. Although the topic of multiculturalism is complex and exceeds this thesis's scope, focusing on cultural diversity and Asian New Zealand communities brings a tangible and applicable aspect to this research.

Besides the topic of cultural diversity, globalisation is an underlying theme in this thesis. Local governments, communities, and individuals are becoming increasingly globally connected. Opportunities provided by national and local government, schools and community groups have allowed individuals to connect with other cultures and communities. These include activities such as school exchanges, resource sharing between businesses, sporting exchanges and competitions, and museum exhibitions and exchanges. The globalisation of communities in New Zealand is one aspect that grounds this research and is an increasingly prominent part of the way communities are changing.

A significant influence on my research is the “insider view” provided by my personal background as an Asian New Zealander with Chinese heritage. I am an individual with mixed cultural backgrounds, born in New Zealand with a strong New Zealand and Chinese identity and experiences living overseas in Asia. As a globally connected citizen, I have had opportunities to take advantage of the many global programmes offered through local governments and schools, bringing back international perspectives from my personal experiences living and working with other cultures. I was able to learn more about my own identity and heritage as a Chinese New Zealander living in a globally connected, multicultural country. As a member of a culturally diverse and complex community in New Zealand, I see a strong connection between museums and sister cities engaging with their communities. If society and communities are becoming increasingly global and complex, then museums must reflect this in their public programming so they can continue relating to their audiences. This includes connecting with the global citizen that has experienced other cultures outside of their own cultural background. As New Zealand’s cultural diversity continues to rapidly shift, this aspect becomes more urgent.

The case studies were selected with these influences in mind. Japanese sister cities were chosen due to the existing strong diplomatic ties with 2022 marking the 70th year of bilateral ties and the sheer number of sister city links with New Zealand with the highest number of sister city links between Japan and New Zealand (Duncan, 2021; Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2022). Selecting a country with strong diplomatic and sister city links with New Zealand aids in addressing the ambiguity of the on-going value and effect of sister cities to New Zealand’s communities. The Wellington region has three SCRs with Japan: Wellington-Sakai, Porirua-Nishio and Lower Hutt-Minoh. My research will examine the Porirua-Nishio and Lower Hutt-Minoh links. When investigating how museums engage and include their communities in their public programming, Porirua’s Pātaka Art + Museum and Lower Hutt’s The Dowse Art Museum are robust cases studies as they are both community focused institutions linked with local government. Their communities are also culturally diverse with growing Asian communities. In the 2018 census, 15.2% in Lower Hutt’s population and 8.7% in Porirua’s identify as Asian (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). In 2021, it was found that 23% of Lower Hutt’s population speak more than one language and 26% were born overseas, emphasising the cultural diversity of the local community (HCC, 2021a). The relevance of the topics highlighted in this Chapter are clear in the chosen case studies.

Sister city relationships are distinctive, long-term international partnerships that connect local governments and communities through fostering cross-cultural understanding and goodwill. They promote opportunities for meaningful community engagement and flourish when dedicated leaders in local government, cultural institutions or community groups collaborate to encourage

cultural exchange, economic activities, and resource sharing. For these community outcomes to flow, developing people-to-people community connections to establish and strengthen trust and friendship between cities is essential. However, sister city relationships falter when these principles are compromised.

This thesis argues that these community outcomes are shared objectives that strengthen community engagement, and sister cities could be effectively utilised by aligning local governments and community-focused museums to support culturally diverse communities. However, communities are rapidly shifting in cultural complexity, and museums do not fully utilise the potential of sister cities despite their commitment to these communities.

Chapter Summaries

There are six chapters in this thesis. Following this Introduction, Chapter Two provides context into the way museums moved towards the public in their programming as well as the sister city movement in New Zealand. Within the museum, influences on public programming are explored through the relationship between local government, museums, and the ratepayers that fund them. A literature review gives insight into these topics including the role of museums in society, the community museum, and its public programming. The review also addresses biculturalism and cultural diversity, looking at its roots in New Zealand society as well as Asia and Asian peoples in New Zealand. This literature review is lightly etched. It aims to indicate broad trends and observations featured in the literature and therefore cannot be comprehensive.

Relevant to the case studies, census statistics for ethnicity are examined in the Wellington region, Porirua, and Lower Hutt. Finally, Chapter Two examines the way SCRs developed between Japan and New Zealand, its role as resources for communities, the support roles of local governments and community groups, and the influence of SCR perceptions by public media. Opportunities through sister cities capitalised by museums are also introduced, including reciprocal exhibitions, showcasing local artists that are affiliated with local sister city links, and repatriation.

Chapters Three and Four present detailed case studies. The comparative case study approach enables analysis and synthesis of the similarities, differences, and patterns across two or more cases that share a common focus or goal (Mills et al., 2010; Tight, 2017). The specific features of each case are described in depth. The case studies are two of the cities within the Wellington metropolitan region of New Zealand: Porirua which surrounds Porirua Harbour in the north-west of Wellington City, and Lower Hutt on the north-eastern shores of Wellington Harbour.

Census data show that Asian populations are steadily rising nationally, including the Lower Hutt and Porirua area (Statistics New Zealand, 1996, 2013a, 2013b, 2018b). This signals the increasing relevance of international relationships with Japanese SCRs with the communities in Porirua and Lower Hutt. Both chapters explore past and existing community engagement alongside the influences that shape sister city and museum activities respectively. Additionally, the case studies reveal the importance of the community role in all relationships.

Chapter Three describes and analyses the establishment and growth of the SCR with Nishio and Porirua City Council from its inception in 1993. Early partnership projects include a Japanese garden, Kaizen, built in the centre of Pātaka in 1998 (O'Connor, 1998; PCC, 1994b, 1995). It remains there today. Community relationships that grew from the SCR include educational and economic activities, supported by passionate leaders and volunteers.

Pātaka is a community facility of PCC, established since 1998. A small selection of sister city related exhibitions was displayed at the Museum, showcasing the blossoming SCR. A recent PCC report iterates that their key vision statement is to respond to the diversity in their communities as well as their local and international audiences. This includes continuing support for their international relationships throughout the Asia-Pacific region (PCC, 2019).

This case study highlights the possibilities of a community-focused museum working alongside local government and utilising existing international links in their public programming. It identifies the impact that SCRs with Japan have had on Porirua's communities and Pātaka, and analyses reasons and consequences of the diminution of this SCR following the loss of the community connection.

Chapter Four applies a similar approach for The Dowse Art Museum, Lower Hutt, and Minoh in Japan. Forming a sister city agreement in 1995, the SCR agreed to promote educational exchange, cultural understanding and artworks, joint efforts to address government and local issues, and encourage tourism (HCC, 1995). This Chapter explores the SCR's strength through its involvement with local communities and organisations such as the Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust (HMHFT, n.d.-a, 2017; Hutt Sister City Foundation, 2002). The sustainability of sister city links to the community remained strong due to passionate mayoral leadership and interpersonal connections from both Minoh and Lower Hutt ("Council rewards sister city's mayor", 2000; Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2021).

The Hutt Art Society in tandem with its counterpart in Minoh are responsible for leading exhibition and related sister city initiatives, rather than The Dowse. Nevertheless, key influences and

changes at The Dowse are discussed through the tenure of a former director, focusing on community engagement (HCC, 2018; McCredie, 1999; The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). During this decade, the Museum continued its legacy of pushing the boundaries of an art institution for its communities.

Although The Dowse and Hutt-Minoh SCR did not have a direct relationship in their activities, this case study emphasises the way both operated and developed for its communities. Metaphorically seen in the sister city gifts, the Chapter identifies the factors that influence sustainability and relevance of the international relationship and the art institution and analyses their relationships with Lower Hutt's communities.

The emerging themes and concepts from the case studies are discussed and analysed in Chapter Five, examining how SCRs such as the ones between Japan and New Zealand have been utilised or overlooked by museums in their path to sustainable and relevant community engagement. Through these two case studies, the influences that shape these SCRs and local government linked museums and the relevance to their local communities are identified and analysed. Influences on SCR and museum sustainability, and the importance of changing cultural diversity in communities are analysed in more depth. Within these contexts, the future potential of SCRs as existing and sustainable cultural resources for museums affiliated with local government is discussed.

This research concludes by answering the research question and goals regarding community engagement at the museum and through sister cities in an increasingly diverse and multicultural society. Reflections on the achievements and limitations of this research are also summarised. Suggestions for possibilities for SCRs, New Zealand museums and local governments, and future research in these areas are made.

Chapter Two

Communities, Cultural Diversity and Community-focused Museums

The purpose of this Chapter is to provide context to my research topics. These include the community-focused museum, community diversity, multiculturalism in New Zealand, and the sister city movement. The Chapter has three parts: a literature review, an overview of the related demographics applicable to my chosen case studies, and an outline of SCRs. My aim is to focus on current academic research, empirical data, and concepts related to SCRs that frame this thesis, exploring aspects of museums for the community, changes in cultural diversity in New Zealand, and the community outcomes and benefits facilitated by SCRs. By doing so, this Chapter creates a foundation for exploring and understanding the potential of community engagement through SCRs in museums, local government, and for culturally diverse communities.

Literature Review

The literature review contributes to the understanding of changing cultural diversity within communities by considering new museology, communities in the museum, and multiculturalism in New Zealand. First, I investigate communities through the theoretical framework of new museology and the role of museums in society. Exploring examples of inclusive public programming that engage with New Zealand's culturally diverse communities, I examine the concepts of communities through visitor studies at the museum. Finally, I consider academic literature regarding multiculturalism and cultural diversity, particularly the changing attitudes towards Asian and Asian New Zealand communities within New Zealand. Overall, the literature review highlights the importance of understanding changes in New Zealand's cultural communities in and beyond the museum.

The New Museology

New museology arose around changes in the social and political theory in the roles of museums, reshaping notions of power in curatorship, politics, and relationships with people and their communities (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; McCall & Gray, 2014; Stam, 1993). This discourse debates the value, sustainability, and relevance of museums for their audiences and communities. Shifting from temple and authority towards forum and discussion (Adams, 1999; Cameron, 1971; Weil, 1997), new museology creates a theoretical framework in which museum audiences and communities can be understood.

According to Weil (1997), Stam (1993), and Cameron (1971), the area of new museology goes beyond the traditional museum as it challenges the authoritative approach towards museum value, meaning, and interpretation. It focuses on the social, economic, and political roles of the

museum (Desvallées & Mairesse, 2010; Stam, 1993; Vergo, 1989). This emphasises concepts and considerations that include communication, education, management, and exhibition. The “new” museum increasingly focuses on the visitor, placing emphasising the representation of cultures and communities through exhibiting and collecting. Therefore, in the “new” museum, communities are the owner, co-curator, and audience (Anderson, 2012; Crooke, 2006, 2015; Davidson & Sibley, 2011; Karp, 1992; Kreamer, 1992). This has substantial implications for communities that are shifting in cultural diversity and complexity.

The contemporary museum often considers these concepts when engaging with audiences and communities through public programming. The International Council of Museums’ (2022) redefinition of the museum contains key words relevant to these ideas: “sustainability”, “access”, “diversity”, and “inclusivity”. Community-focused museums have become spaces for communities and individuals to express ideas and opinions while contributing positively to society (Koster, 2012). In turn, museums can shape the cultures, communities, and society around them through meaningful and inclusive public programming. Whether it be through collections exhibitions, art exhibitions or “new” technological media, museums can provide platforms for conversation and education about the cultures they exhibit (ICOM & OECD, 2019). This moves the role of the museum towards creating inclusive and open spaces for discussion, expression, and education.

The museum-community relationship can be complex. Regardless of focus on communities, museums are often the authors and producers of public programming (Janes, 2010; McCall & Gray, 2014; Merriman 2020). Kadoyama (2018) advocates for inclusive approaches to museum management through acknowledging the role of museum leadership in fostering and strengthening community relationships. Working collaboratively and authentically with communities encourages authentic and grassroot connections. However, this is still not consistently practiced in many community-focused museums, and more could be done in this area. For museums connected to or funded by local government in New Zealand and therefore accountable to the Local Government Act 2002, the responsibility to amplify community voices in a meaningful way is crucial.

Some literature argues that new museology has its constraints: a dichotomy in theory and praxis (McCall & Gray, 2014; Merriman, 2020; Shelton, 2013). Marketisation and politicisation of the museum, accessibility, economic shifts, digital roles, and addressing colonisation and environmental responsibilities continue to be challenging for the reflexive and “mindful” museum (Anderson, 2012; Janes, 2010; McCall & Gray, 2014; McCarthy, 2011; Merriman, 2020; Ross, 2004). Furthermore, the literature argues that reciprocal intersection of museum theory and practice, including critical and cultural theory, is needed as a way forward (Kletchka, 2018; Mason, 2006;

Shelton, 2013). These limitations in new museology highlight the ongoing challenges for the modern-day museum.

Community and Cultural Diversity in Museums

As museums continue to move towards the public and the community, institutions face the challenge of engaging with audiences in meaningful and inclusive ways. I briefly introduce selected literature focusing on museum communities and the museum visitor before discussing inclusive public programming in several New Zealand museums. Narrowing the scope, I use visitor studies to aid in defining the “community” in a museum context through the lens of culturally changing and diverse Asian communities in New Zealand.

The Museum Community and the Museum Visitor. In new museology, the definition of “community” is varied (Crooke, 2006; Karp, 1992; Kreamer, 1992). Karp (1992) describes the museum audience as passive entities while the community as an active agent: the museum audience may belong to one or simultaneously multiple communities. Crooke (2006) warns that defining the “community” through tangible characteristics such as location can disregard intangible aspects such as motivation, identities, and experience. Summarily, the relationship between the museum and its community and visitor is complex.

Visitor studies are a common way for museums to understand the motivations and experiences of their users and how to maintain relevance for their audience and communities. Visitor motivation and experience are key aspects that museums can measure to guide strategy and practice (Crooke, 2006; Davidson, 2015; Falk, 2010; Hooper-Greenhill, 2006; Karp, 1992). Falk (2010) argues that visitors who go to art museums fall into motivational categories related to self-identity. Within New Zealand, a report by Museums Aotearoa (2018) found that 33% of surveyed museum visitors felt their visit connected them with their heritage, cultural, social, or spiritual identity. However, identity may not definitively correlate to demographic categories such as ethnicity or gender as visitor motivation and experience naturally differs as non-permanent qualities (Falk, 2010). As Karp (1992) points out, individual experiences and identities are fluid and can be drawn from specific social events. Nonetheless, museums must also consider visitor statistics for demographics, ethnicity, and access as part of understanding the cultural diversity of their audience groups and communities.

Following the museum’s movement towards the public, visitor studies are prevalent in museum literature in New Zealand (Ang, 2005; Davidson & Sibley, 2011; Mason & McCarthy, 2006; McCredie, 1999; Museums Aotearoa, 2018). In New Zealand, the visitor studies research focuses on visitor motivation and their socio-economic profiles, and heritage tourism (Davidson & Sibley, 2011;

Legget 2009). However, there are limitations to defining museum visitors as a path to community engagement. Visitor studies cannot fully account for the non-museum visitor, and considerations must be made in balancing visitor and non-visitor studies (Bennett, 1994; Hooper-Greenhill, 2006; Mason & McCarthy, 2006). Additionally, there is little focus on multiculturalism or inclusive, community-centred public programming in New Zealand (Chuang & Hardy Bernal, 2008; Davidson & Sibley, 2011). This is an increasingly relevant area for museums as New Zealand's communities become more ethnically diverse (Smits, 2019; Spoonley, 2015a, 2015b).

Current Inclusive Public Programming in New Zealand. Before I turn to cultural diversity in a wider, national context, there is literature that addresses these topics within New Zealand museums. Reports by Museums Aotearoa (2018) found that museum visitors in New Zealand felt connections to their own heritage, linking them to their community or place they lived in. Additionally, museum visits played strong roles for recent returnees to New Zealand as well as new migrants as museums connected them to their local identity during integration or reintegration to their community. Te Papa Tongarewa is one museum with a history of visitor studies, exhibitions and projects that address these areas (Davidson & Sibley, 2011; Gibson & Kindon, 2013; Gibson & Mallon, 2010). However, more could be done in New Zealand museums.

A crucial aspect of inclusive public programming is the representation and engagement of growing Asian New Zealand communities that also have long cultural histories in New Zealand society (Ang, 2005; Chuang & Hardy Bernal, 2008; Smits, 2019; Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). A report published in 2008 examines different Asian cultural groups in Auckland and their perceptions, attitudes, and involvement in the arts sector (Ralph, 2008). Part of *Voices of Asian Aotearoa*, the *Chinese Languages in Aotearoa* project led by Te Papa seeks to amplify the voices of Chinese New Zealand communities to highlight the complex issues of cultural identity within these communities (Gassin, 2021). For Asian populations in New Zealand, this is an emerging area of museum practice.

Some museums in New Zealand have cultural policies for engaging with local communities. Certainly, this is the case for many museums affiliated with local governments due to the alignment of community strategic visions and goals (National Services Te Paerangi, 2007). However, Chuang and Hardy Bernal (2008) commented that museums approached inclusive public programmes in a 'tick-the-box' manner that lacked true engagement and inclusivity. Reflecting on the exhibition *Loli-Pop: New Zealand perspectives on Japanese street fashion* at the Auckland War Memorial Museum, they note that some museum staff viewed it as a "filler" or experimental despite its success in engaging with the Asian communities and drawing new audiences to the Museum (Chuang & Hardy Bernal, 2008). This example highlights the need for museum policies to support meaningful

community engagement and inclusivity while empowering museum staff to support and connect with communities in an insightful way.

Cultural Diversity in New Zealand

Cultural diversity is an area in academic literature that is well established in New Zealand. I introduce concepts of biculturalism and cultural diversity in the New Zealand context. Secondly, I look closer at the changes in cultural diversity in New Zealand focusing on Asian and Asian New Zealand communities. Self and cultural identity falls beyond the scope of my thesis. Finally, I introduce perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples in New Zealand, localising Asian populations in New Zealand society and creating foundations for this thesis.

Biculturalism and Cultural Diversity. Communities are not static: they are shifting, fluid and complex (Crooke, 2006; Smits, 2019; Spoonley, 2020). In response, public media has increasingly focused on diversity and multiculturalism (Robie, 2009). The New Zealand government historically promoted multiculturalism as a “social good” and key policy areas during national elections (Smits, 2019). Certainly, local governments still speak of multiculturalism as strong community assets (HCC, 2021b; PCC, 2021b). Nowadays, diversity, acceptance, and inclusion are part of government rhetoric as positive factors of immigration. However, anti-immigration has deep roots in New Zealand’s history, including anti-Chinese policies and public media coverage (Gendall et al., 2013; Spoonley, 2015b, 2020). I examine the basic concepts of multiculturalism in New Zealand to gain insight into this substantial and complex topic.

Due to immigration, biculturalism, and multiculturalism has shaped New Zealand’s national identity and branding alongside its complex relationship with indigenous communities (Smits, 2019). Therefore, the term “multiculturalism” came to encompass polyculturalism resulting from non-British immigration, separating from “biculturalism” which refers to indigenous Māori relations (Smits, 2019). Gosh (2015) notes the term “multiculturalism” itself is not singular. He shows that multiculturalism means different things to different groups within New Zealand. This uncertainty does not change the way shifting cultures have shaped cultural landscapes. In academic literature, multiculturalism is often discussed in terms of national identity and citizenship. Historical politics and waves of immigration have implications on these studies. Spoonley (2015a) sees biculturalism as a reflection and recognition of indigenous rights through the Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) and raises questions about how notions of citizenship and nationality can be addressed in a post-colonial society. The influences of the immigration of Pasifika and Asian peoples has challenged New Zealand society to adjust views of national identity and citizenship (Didham, 2017; Hill, 2010; Lowe, 2013; Nayar, 2013; Spoonley, 2015a). Such tensions remain unresolved today.

Literature finds that biculturalism and multiculturalism are uncomfortable fits for New Zealand politics in a culturally diversifying society (Hill, 2010; Lowe, 2013; Sheehan et al., 2018; Smits, 2019; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004; Voci & Leckie, 2011). Reconciling and reframing policies to acknowledge the Treaty and account for quickly changing cultural diversity presents deep challenges (Gosh, 2015; Hill, 2010; Mohi & Roberts, 2009; Nayar, 2013). Network Waitangi Otautahi describes a framework that builds on biculturalism through tangata tiriti (all peoples of New Zealand who have no Māori ancestry) and tangata whenua (people of the land) (Peet, 2009). In a subjective account, Ng (2017) asks if biculturalism could be reframed as a relationship between tangata whenua and tauwi (non-Māori people of New Zealand) following principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Rocha and Webber (2018) acknowledge these complexities through the concepts of manga tangatarua (mixed ethnic identities): people who stand with mana (pride/status) in two worlds. These studies highlight the relevance and urgency of this issue within discussions regarding New Zealand's increasing cultural diversity.

Asian Peoples in New Zealand. The cultural landscape in New Zealand is changing markedly (Statistics New Zealand, 2021). With Asian populations growing at exponential rates, studies indicate that Asian New Zealanders and Asian immigration are major features of population change (Butcher, 2008; Spoonley, 2015a). Spoonley (2020) examines these changes, outlining that these projections are due to net annual migration gains for Chinese and Indian communities. Driven by the massive growth in Auckland City, immigration has changed the fabric of New Zealand's ethnic structure. Spoonley argues that while Europeans may remain dominant for a time, many policies are no longer appropriate or adequate. Furthermore, Asian populations are projected to become a significant proportion of New Zealand's ethnic population (Statistics New Zealand, 2021).

Research shows that New Zealander's often view "Asian" peoples as migrants from dominant Asian countries, associating "Asia" with China and Japan (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2022; Gendall et al., 2013). Butcher (2008) recognises that this association excludes New Zealand-born Asian populations. Disassembling the broad label of "Asian", Ho (2015) finds that Asian populations are complex with a significant portion identifying with multiple ethnicities. Furthermore, Bedford and Ho's (2008) research shows trends towards higher levels of mixed ethnicity in these populations. In fact, "Asians" is a term inadequately used as a broad, all-encompassing term in New Zealand's public discourse as there is a great mix of diversity, cultures, and histories within these communities. This includes people with cultural roots in New Zealand or born in New Zealand and identify with other cultures (Spoonley, 2015a; "Xīn xī lán", 2022). Voci and Leckie (2011) point out that multiple Asian groups constitute the diversity of New Zealand, observing that labels such as Asian, India, and Chinese denote homogeneity while failing to recognise the heterogeneity of

multiple identities within nomenclatures. This tension results in migrant communities constantly negotiating their place within New Zealand. Local governments must disaggregate data that fall under the “Asian” umbrella category to better understand the experiences and needs of New Zealand’s Asian communities.

Changing Perceptions and Acceptance. In response to the increasing Asian populations in New Zealand, perceptions of Asia and Asian peoples are areas of research that are becoming more relevant. According to Butcher (2008), these perceptions show nuances that affect national perceptions of biculturalism and multiculturalism as well as self-identity for Asian New Zealanders. Summarising annual surveys taken by Asia New Zealand Foundation, Gendall, Spoonley and Butcher (2013) found that national perceptions of Asia were focused on economic benefits such as trade and tourism. In fact, New Zealanders were more positive about the economic impact of Asian immigration than its social impact. As New Zealand’s cultural diversity continues to change, the implications of these perceptions need to be explored.

Most literature finds that New Zealanders view Asia as important to the country’s economic future (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2022; Butcher et al., 2015; Gendall et al., 2013; Voci & Leckie, 2011). However, a key report by Asia New Zealand Foundation found that perceptions towards Asian immigration were generally negative due to political rhetoric, a trend that continued until 2011. Additionally, Māori attitudes towards these populations have continued to track negatively for economic, social, or cultural issues (Gendall et al., 2013). Other research also echoes these findings, commenting this may be reflections of the biculturalism discourse (Butcher, 2008; Butcher et al., 2015). Furthermore, recognition and reparation for the historic prejudices against early Chinese immigrants that led to measures such as the Chinese Poll Tax in 1881 are still being made as recent as 2023 (Tang, 2023; Vosslamber & Yong, 2022). With increasing immigration from Asia and rising numbers of Asian communities born in New Zealand, literature needs to address these dual facets to truly reflect the country’s changing cultural diversity.

There is contentious migrant history of non-acceptance with the first Chinese migrants and changing political influences that affect perceptions of inclusion and exclusion of Chinese communities in New Zealand society (Butcher, 2008). Voci and Leckie (2011) introduce historical, socioeconomic, religious, and social practices as contributions to negative perceptions of Asian communities for the non-Asian majority. Some research focuses on the negative effects public and print media have had on Asian migration, contributing to the way multiculturalism evolved in New Zealand (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2022; Gendall et al., 2013; Spoonley & Trlin, 2004; Voci & Leckie, 2011). Recent research by Asia New Zealand Foundation (2022) reveals there are mixed

views about whether enough is being done to building understanding of Asia or New Zealanders' acceptance of cultural diversity. As such, local governments face the growing need to include the voices of Asian New Zealanders while addressing the challenges that come with the national perceptions of these cultural communities.

Socio-demographics of the Wellington Region, Porirua City and Lower Hutt City

This section of Chapter Two provides context for this thesis's two case studies through empirical demographic data, establishing snapshots of the social landscape and cultural diversity of the two cities. Census statistics from 2006 to 2018 for the greater Wellington region creates an understanding of the larger environment Lower Hutt and Porirua. Focusing on key changes in community structure including ethnicity, cultural identity, and age groups, I create a background to the socio-demographics of each city. While demographics cannot describe societal nuances and shifts, this section provides tangible significance to the multicultural make-up that defines and contributes to the communities of each area.

New Zealand and the Greater Wellington Region

This research relies on census data to provide snapshots of changes in cultural diversity and ethnic communities in the Wellington region. Summaries of censuses from 2006 to 2018 have six main categories: European, Māori, Pacific peoples, Asian, and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (MELAA) and Other (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a). Statistics New Zealand recognise that ethnicity is self-perceived (Statistics New Zealand DataInfo+, 2021). Community consultation conducted in 2019 shows that the complexity of ethnic identity in New Zealand remains an ongoing process for statistical reports (Statistics New Zealand, 2020). While responses are taken at a detailed level, the reported hierarchical classification sits at level one meaning that "Asian" is the category often used in government statistics (Statistics New Zealand DataInfo+, 2021).

Nation-wide, Asian populations are increasing significantly. Statistics reveal the trends: the proportion of Asian peoples are projected to continue growing while European New Zealanders are projected to fall (Butcher, 2008; Smits, 2019; Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). According to the 2018 census, Auckland has the largest Asian population in New Zealand (Table 1). Adding to the complexity of this demographic, 23% of the Asian ethnic group are born in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand, 2018b). These national statistics are echoed in the Wellington region.

Table 1*Population for Asian and New Zealand Ethnic Groups by Regional Councils, 2018 Census*

Regional Council	Asian (%)	New Zealand population (%)
Auckland	62.6	33.4
Waikato	6.2	9.8
Wellington	9.3	10.8
Canterbury	9.4	12.8

Examining the cultural diversity in the Wellington region including Porirua and Lower Hutt, the largest percentage belong to the European group (Table 2). Notably, this is the only group to decrease during this period while the Asian group has increased the most across all ethnic groups. This trend follows the national statistics with Asian populations now measuring closely behind Māori populations (Statistics New Zealand, 2018a). To form a more detailed picture at a city level, I narrow the focus of these statistics to the locations of the selected case studies.

Table 2*Ethnic Groups for Populations in the Wellington Region, 2006-2018 Censuses*

	2006 (%)	2013 (%)	2018 (%)
European	69.8	77.0	74.6
Māori	12.8	13.0	14.3
Pacific peoples	8.0	8.0	8.4
Asian	8.4	10.5	12.9
MELAA	1.2	1.5	1.9
Other	10.9	1.8	1.4

Porirua City

Porirua, a relatively young city, was a predominantly working-class area that gentrified during the early 1990s and remains a community with a high number of youth and migrants (Mawer et al., 2017; PCC, 2021a). From the late 1990s, Porirua began to invest heavily in changing the infrastructure and economy of its city centre as part of a major rebranding of the city's image. These

changes provide context to the demographic shifts seen in the national censuses and Council reports.

Trends for Porirua’s cultural diversity follows the Wellington region. Distinctively, the second largest community identifies as Pasifika followed by Māori (Table 3). From 2006 to 2018, these statistics show little change. 26.3% of the population in 2018 are Pasifika, far ahead of the national percentage (Statistics New Zealand, 2018d). Compared to data from the Wellington region and national statistics, Porirua shows its uniqueness in cultural diversity with its strong Pasifika and Māori communities.

Table 3

Ethnic Groups for Populations in Porirua City, 2006-2018 Censuses

	2006 (%)	2013 (%)	2018 - Porirua (%)	2018 - National (%)
European	56.8	63.9	61.9	70.2
Māori	20.9	20.8	22.3	16.5
Pacific peoples	26.6	26.2	26.3	8.1
Asian	4.5	6.4	8.7	15.1
MELAA	0.5	0.7	1.4	1.5
Other	8.9	1.4	1.2	1.2

Outside of censuses, there is little robust data on Asian communities in Porirua. For example, according to a series of reports called *State of Our Communities* commissioned by the Salvation Army in 2017, Asian and MELAA people were approached. However, the number of those willing to be interviewed was disappointingly low, leading to a significant gap in the research (Tanielu & Johnson, 2017). However, the 2018 census identifies that Asian groups are continually growing in Porirua’s community (Table 3). This is the only group apart from MELAA and “other” ethnicity groups to show this continual trend. As of 2013, it is the fourth largest ethnic community in Porirua.

The 2017 *State of Our Communities* report shows a glimpse into community attitudes, concerns, and their sense of community in Porirua (Tanielu & Johnson, 2017). The research found that the people of Porirua have a sense of pride in their vibrant and culturally diverse communities, and hope for an expanding local economy. While the report’s sample of surveyed participants are small and skewed in ethnic diversity, this frames the sense of community in Porirua in recent years.

These statistics about communities signal rapidly changing diversity of the multicultural communities in Porirua City.

Lower Hutt City

Similar to Porirua, Lower Hutt has a culturally diverse community with a strong sense of arts and culture. With a long and remarkable history following colonial settlement and subsequent economic growth in the Wellington region, Lower Hutt's modern development was distinct due to increased government investment in economic revival from 1935 to 1949 (McGill, 1991). During this time, the city underwent numerous phases of growth followed by amalgamations that saw towns merge into the city's boundaries (O'Neil, 2018). By 2019, Lower Hutt's traditionally working-class suburbs were experiencing large increases in property values, reflecting the change in government social housing policy and the disestablishment of manufacturing jobs in the area during the 1990s (Tso, 2019). This provides background to the great cultural diversity reported in the national censuses and in Council reports.

The 2006 to 2018 censuses show that Lower Hutt has a high number of youth (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). Notably, a Hutt City Council annual report published in 2021 states that 23% of the population speak more than one language and 26% were born overseas (HCC, 2021a). This showcases the global connection and diversity of the local population.

Not unexpectedly, those of European ethnicity are dominant (Table 4). As the third largest population, Asian groups in Lower Hutt are remarkably high and slightly exceeds the national average in 2018 (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c). In a related report, the largest source of population growth was by the Asian population, a trend seen also in Wellington City (Jackson, 2012). Looking closer at the suburb of Petone, the most recent report *State of Our Communities* in 2022 show that both Asian and Māori groups are the second largest groups at 14% respectively (Ika, 2022). These changes in cultural diversity echo a larger nation-wide trend.

Table 4*Ethnic Groups for Populations in Lower Hutt City, 2006-2018 Censuses*

	2006 (%)	2013 (%)	2018 - Porirua (%)	2018 - National (%)
European	64.9	71	67.6	70.2
Māori	17.1	17.1	18.4	16.5
Pacific peoples	10.6	11.0	11.5	8.1
Asian	8.8	11.7	15.2	15.1
MELAA	1.1	1.1	1.6	1.5
Other	10.1	1.6	1.4	1.2

Although the 2022 *State of Our Communities* report focuses on suburbs, it provides a glimpse into community attitudes, concerns, and their sense of community in the area. The people of Petone show pride in their diversity and heritage, strongly identifying with the suburb as an area for families and communities. The report highlights community concerns around housing, traffic, and social infrastructure, reflecting the desire for a connected and thriving community (Ika, 2022). While the report’s sample of surveyed participants are predominately by European respondents, it frames the sense of community in a part of Lower Hutt in recent years.

Sister Cities

In this section, I describe global sister city concepts before narrowing the focus to the sister city movement within New Zealand. Sister cities encompass relationships between numerous countries, and this thesis primarily examines Asian sister city activities. Understanding the emergence, changes, and consistencies of the global sister city movement establish the drivers behind the sustainability and long-living sister city relationships (SCRs). Secondly, the idea of a “successful” sister city will be considered by examining established research and news media to understand the drivers of New Zealand SCRs. I introduce Global Cities New Zealand through an interview with a key member of the organisation, providing background to the community support for SCRs at a national scale. This frames the factors and influences discussed in the case studies. Finally, I explore Asian sister city activities in New Zealand museums with attention to community engagement. This connects the importance of communities in SCRs with the community-focused museum.

Introducing Sister Cities: Asia and New Zealand

SCRs are formalised with an agreement by counterpart city mayors or corresponding city officials of different countries with the intention that they are indefinite (Cremer et al., 2001). The root of the concepts behind the global sister city movement can be traced to its world peace-building intentions since 1956. While each relationship developed activities suited to the needs of each counterpart city, the goals were achieved through international communication, friendship, and cultural exchange (O'Toole, 2001). Over time, this changed to encapsulate education, cultural exchange, trade and economy, and tourism (Carruthers, 2006; Cross, 2010; Smith & Ballingall, 2003). These relationships are started by local governments but rely on grassroots and community involvement that are often unpaid volunteers (Cremer et al., 2001).

Sister cities also encourage international connections for local citizens and communities linked through sports, schools, and cultural organisations (Buis, 2009). Ultimately, these relationships promote forms of resource sharing through trust and partnership. SCRs have had a long history in New Zealand, playing strong economic, political, and cultural roles. For some, this has expanded to include towns and regions as part of fostering local to global relationships (Sister Cities New Zealand Incorporated, 2021). While platforms for SCRs have changed over time, it could be said that the core sister city concepts and other international links for the community have not changed.

In 1980, New Zealand had approximately 24 established sister city or friendship city relationships (Duncan, 2021). In 1995, this had increased to 128 affiliations globally with 44 of these SCRs in Asia (Cremer et al., 1996). Bilateral relations between New Zealand and Asia have historically been strong, highlighting the various economic, political, and cultural relationships (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2020; Ramasamy & Cremer, 1998). Central government politics and subsequent policies have often driven sister city motivations particularly for bilateral relations with Asia (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2020; Capie, 2019; Ramasamy & Cremer, 1998). Therefore, early reports and studies in New Zealand focus on economic rationale and drivers for Asia-linked SCRs (Cremer et al., 1996; Ramasamy & Cremer, 1998).

Looking at the sister city movement in New Zealand, Cremer et al. (2001) note that sister city affiliations have shifted from links with Australia to Japan and more recently to China. Links with Asia are evident in the number of active SCRs with Japan and China that continue today. The first SCR with Japan was formalised in 1973 between Christchurch and Kurashiki (Capie, 2019). This came at a time where the diplomatic relationship between the two countries was gathering momentum. From the 1980s, commercial and diplomatic ties expanded rapidly. During Japan's economic boom, imports, cultural links, and tourism contributed the drive behind diplomatic relationships (Capie,

2019). With Japan and New Zealand celebrating 70 years of bilateral relations in 2022, New Zealand is positioned to capitalise on the strength of this diplomatic relationship in many sectors (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2022). This can be seen utilised in many successful and thriving SCRs with Japan, often driven by community passion, local government support, and meaningful relationship building.

“Successful” Sister Cities in New Zealand

The success of New Zealand SCRs is usually measured by economic impact (Cremer et al., 1996; Cross, 2010; Hogan, 2019; Smith & Ballingall, 2003). This is a natural indication of performance used by national and local governments to measure profitability of maintaining SCRs that are often viewed as costly (Hogan, 2019). This can be seen in SCRs with Japan, where bilateral relations and increased inbound tourism were encouraged by central government politics (Capie, 2019). However, sister cities sparked by economic relations can thrive beyond a basic connection, showing the way these relationships can facilitate long-term connections. Cremer et al. (2001) notes that overemphasis on the cultural and intangible benefits or solely the economic and tangible benefits of the relationships are unlikely to promote successful SCRs. However, examining tangible and intangible outcomes along with drivers and influences on SCRs helps to form an understanding of a “successful” sister city in New Zealand.

Resources for Tangible and Intangible Benefits. It would be beyond the scope of this thesis to provide an exhaustive list of the tangible and intangible benefits of SCRs due to its variances and complexities. However, past academic literature shows that the benefits are plentiful. Looking to New Zealand SCRs, these international relationships gave opportunities for school exchanges, staff exchanges, council staff visits, reciprocal visits for local citizens, cultural events and celebrations, and exchanges of trade, research, and technology (Cremer et al., 2001). Some research argues that an integrated approach towards cultural and economic values for SCRs in New Zealand is needed to encourage long-term sustainability (Cremer et al., 1996, 2001; Cross, 2010; Hogan, 2019).

Support by Local Government and Community Organisations. SCRs are supported through strong local government leadership and maintained by local community organisations. New Zealand local governments are held accountable by the Local Government Act (2002) and play strong roles in creating platforms for sister city exchange, resource sharing and networking opportunities for communities. Although council structures may differ for sister city management, mayoral leadership strengthens trust in SCRs. This encourages a high-trust environment between international local governments that can facilitate economic opportunities for local businesses (Hogan, 2019). A report by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research points out that mayoral leadership through

delegations and face-to-face commitment strengthens these relationships even during changing political contexts (Hogan, 2019). Direct community involvement is key through the inclusion of local community groups for decision-making and collaboration. This also aids in facilitating relationship building during periods of staff and governance change over within local governments. However, these organisations are often volunteer roles.

To gain insight into the roles of organisations in SCR sustainability, it was natural to look to Sister Cities New Zealand Incorporated (SCNZ Inc.) as a national community organisation with strong roles in bridging resources and facilitating a support network for local governments and sister cities. I interviewed Hiromi Morris towards the end of her tenure as President of SCNZ Inc. to give context to the community role through a national organisation. Formalised in 1982 and now known by its operating name Global Cities New Zealand (GCNZ), the organisation was shaped by strong presidential leadership from mayors across the country (Duncan, 2021). Morris was the first member of the community to assume the role in 2012. She stepped down in 2022 and assumed the advisory role of Emeritus President, an unprecedented first for the organisation.

Morris was modest in her achievements that contributed to the sister city movement in New Zealand. She emphasised that while sister cities bring economic and cultural benefits for many sectors, they truly thrive through the community by bringing people from all cultures together:

If Council says: “what’s the economic benefits?” [...] They want to see more tangible [benefits]. It's very hard for us to promote because what we do is very intangible. “I give you \$5, give me a cup of coffee”. It doesn't work like that. (H. Morris, personal communication, December 2, 2021)

During her tenure, she recognised the need to respond to the growing diversity of New Zealand’s communities. Morris was comfortable acknowledging this as part of her own reflections as a Japanese woman with deep roots in New Zealand’s culture and society. In that way, she saw her leadership as a chance to focus on connecting and collaborating between councils, embassies, communities, and individuals through GCNZ. She aimed to bring together the changing community groups of New Zealand by creating and maintaining people-to-people links alongside citizen diplomacy and government policy to share resources and opportunities (H. Morris, personal communication, December 2, 2021).

After her role change, GCNZ still stands strong as a national community organisation connected with national and local government, community groups and individuals that support the New Zealand sister city movement. Regardless of the drive behind local government involvement in

SCRs, the organisation can provide a national scale approach to networking and information sharing, providing intangible benefits and support for sister city programmes across the country.

Perceptions: Influence of Public Media and the Ratepayer. Understanding the activeness of sister cities from both counterpart cities provides this thesis with context to the differences in perceived interest and support by local government or community groups in New Zealand. Notably, perceptions of sister cities in Japan and New Zealand differ greatly according to public media and some academic research.

Marston (2020) discovered that there was little expectation in Japan for SCRs to produce economic benefits as these international links were more closely associated with cultural or educational exchange. Economic development for Japanese sister city objectives is on a macro level while people-to-people exchanges, education and global understanding are emphasised (Cross, 2010). Furthermore, negative public opinion of spending on sister city activities in Japan are likely at low levels due to the lack of pressure for economic benefits (Marston, 2020).

This contrasts with aspects of New Zealand views where there is emphasis on economic benefits to be incorporated into sister city relations (Cremer et al., 1996, 2001). Additionally, there are growing perceptions that public funds spent on local government sister city activities such as council delegations are junkets (Boyack, 2015; Patterson, 2003; Watson, 2003). Cross (2010) identifies that focus on economic goals particularly with Asia places New Zealand SCR building at risk of short-term goals. Robust local government policies are needed to address council and community group involvement alongside clear communications of sister city activities and benefits for public media and community awareness. In New Zealand, local governments are held accountable by legislation such as the Local Government Act (2002) which outline local government's purpose as providing "democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities" (part 1, section 3). Alongside accountability to ratepayers and national politics, this has strong influences and implications on the sustainability of existing and new SCRs, including activities in the cultural sector such as council affiliated museums. However, it is also important to note that in all cases, people-to-people relationships and community involvement have been key to sister city sustainability.

There have been movements within New Zealand museum activities for local projects between their local governments and corresponding SCRs (Gibb, 2010, 2011; Maniam, 2011; Taupo District Council, 2014). A report prepared for the Otago Chamber of Commerce shows the benefit of events held at the Otago Museum in conjunction with Dunedin's sister cities from Japan and China for the local community (Maniam, 2011). However, public opinion about the benefit of SCRs remains

divided with many media reports criticising sister cities as a waste of tax-payer money (Boyack, 2015; Patterson, 2002; Watson, 2003). In contrast to past public opinion, there are voices from communities that speak of the benefit of SCRs, provided they meet public expectations (Henderson, 2012; McMillan, 1995).

Sister City Activities in New Zealand Museums

While sister city activities have spanned education, sports, economic and cultural sectors across New Zealand, these events and relationships are deeply rooted in the community. SCRs are international links that have created pathways to engage the museum audience and communities during international relationship development through the influence of local governments. In New Zealand, this has created unique including reciprocal exhibitions, repatriation, and other community projects (Cai, 2013; Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2007a; Lockwood, 2016; Ogawa, 2012). Although these activities are mostly short-term arrangements, the meaningful involvement of communities is clear.

When looking at exhibitions facilitated through New Zealand SCRs, I found that these are modest in number, and at times, scale. The exhibition of 20 paintings from Suzhou of China at Taupo Museum in 2014 is an example (Taupo District Council, 2014). Regardless, some existing strong sister cities have created meaningful cultural connections. Dunedin City has multiple Asian SCRs that have facilitated numerous exhibitions at the Otago Museum and the Dunedin Public Art Gallery (Dunedin City Council, 2022a, 2022b). *Chinese Splendour: 5000 years of Art* opened in 1999 at the Dunedin Public Art Gallery, displaying pieces from the Shanghai Museum (Hasler, 1999). In 2008, *Emperor's Dragon* exhibition brought Chinese material culture to Dunedin that has never left China before (Morris, 2010). This gesture of trust and friendship was echoed by the Otago Museum in 2011. *Te Ao Maori* travelled to the Shanghai Museum, bringing pounamu and other taonga to China in recognition of China's cultural connection with jade (Ainge Roy, 2011). These exhibitions were also organised at a community level. In 2017, 45 community works were exhibited at Shanghai's Yu Gallery following an invitation to a Dunedin Council delegation (Malthus et al., 2018). These exhibitions would not have happened if the SCR was not truly meaningful for the cities, its communities, and the museum staff (Ainge Roy, 2011; Gibb, 2011).

Dunedin's Japanese link with Otaru is also maintained through the community. *Kimono – A Japanese Story* was organised through the SCRs in 2005. Over 100 *kimono* and accessories belonging to Otaru communities were exhibited, celebrating the 25th anniversary of the thriving SCR ("Japanese kimono exhibition", 2005). Originally, the *kimono* were on loan to the Museum. However, the entire collection was subsequently gifted, making Otago Museum the caretakers of

the largest *kimono* collection in Australia and New Zealand (Morris, 2010). This gesture marked the strength of the SCR through the Otaru community. *Contemporary Traditions* celebrated the 30th anniversary focusing on Māori and Ainu artwork, an exhibition organised by Otago Museum and Otaru Museum that placed Ngāi Tahu and Japanese indigenous art together in 2010 (Gibb, 2010). These are a few key examples of the successful museum exhibitions that were organised due to strong SCRs. In all cases, the exhibitions were made possible due to long established community links. They showcase the potential of the museum's role in exhibiting unique cultural stories while also creating meaningful connections between all involved in the exhibition programming.

Beyond sister cities, other international links have also created unique opportunities for local art associations to exhibit their work internationally. The Wellington Potters Association have successfully planned reciprocal exhibitions in 2002 with the Sakai Potters Association, a relationship starting in 1998 that stemmed from a people-to-people, community connection (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2003). This was the start of an on-going relationship between Wellington and Sakai local potters. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic delaying exhibition plans, an exhibition displayed several works by Wellington Potters Association was held as part of the 2021 Sakai-Wellington Pottery Exchange Exhibition in Sakai City (Wellington Potters Association, 2021). Lower Hutt and their counterpart in Minoh, Japan, have a similar arrangement between their local community groups, the Hutt Art Society, and the Minoh Art Association. This will be examined further in Chapter Four.

Conclusion

This Chapter provides context into topics that have major implications for this thesis. This includes a literature review, empirical demographical data relevant to the case studies, and exploring SCRs. These sections combine to link theories, frameworks, and current academic research to illustrate concepts, trends, and relevancy in the community context.

The literature review outlines relevant topics that are extensive and complex, providing context within current literature and research. The rapidly changing cultural diversity within New Zealand, particularly for Asian communities, are highlighted as progressively urgent areas that must be addressed within new museology, community museums, biculturalism, and multiculturalism. On one hand, it is evident that the museum role in a shifting society needs further exploration, particularly within visitor studies. Understanding the community-focused museum in a diverse community is pertinent to this thesis. On the other hand, national identity, citizenship, post-colonisation, and globalisation are related topics that must also be addressed. It underlines the

importance of the great changes in New Zealand's social fabric. My research builds from these areas through examining Asian New Zealander communities, SCRs, and the community museum.

For the case studies, national censuses and surveys further highlight these themes, showing each case study's uniqueness within their communities. While growing population trends for specific ethnicities vary, all areas of the Wellington region are culturally diversifying with Asian groups increasing the fastest. Attitudes within both Porirua and Lower Hutt are positive with people identifying with their cities as culturally diverse and community orientated.

New Zealand SCRs are existing global community relationships that have commonalities with the themes outlined earlier in this Chapter. The opportunities provided by these links show insight into the ways sister cities benefit communities. Asian sister city links are particularly robust as resources for local government, community groups, and museums in New Zealand. Influenced by public media and ratepayer perceptions, these international links have grown deep roots in New Zealand's international relations.

Throughout all topics in this Chapter, the "community" takes central roles. Chapter Four and Five looks at the case studies, highlighting the considerations of multicultural communities in New Zealand and New Zealand museums.

Chapter Three

Case Study One: Porirua City, Nishio City, and Pātaka Art + Museum

Porirua's SCR with Nishio in Japan was initially so successful, it won the Merit award at the Air New Zealand Sister City National Awards in 1999 (PCC, 1999b). Supported by Porirua City Council (PCC) and a community organisation, Porirua International Association (PIA), the SCR promoted unique opportunities for cultural exchange, economic activities, and resource sharing in the community. As the SCR grew, Pātaka became a cultural and community venue in the city centre. A key physical feature of Pātaka is a Japanese garden built in collaboration with Nishio to commemorate the SCR. I focus on Porirua's community involvement in both the SCR and Museum. Drawing on Council documents and media publications, I deploy interviews with four key participants associated with Nishio, PCC, and Pātaka to assess how leadership and collaboration encouraged opportunities for the communities: Brian Cross (sister cities, PCC), Mayor Anita Baker (PCC), Reuben Friend (Pātaka), and Darcy Nicholas, QSO (sister cities, PCC, and Pātaka).

This case study has three main parts: the Porirua-Nishio SCR, Pātaka, and the SCR in recent years. The Chapter presents the SCR's vibrant relationships and community connections, and Pātaka's development. It aims to reveal that the SCR's early collaboration between PCC, Pātaka, and community groups allowed unique community activities to thrive. The preservation of these dynamics is important for its future potential during meaningful engagement with Porirua's communities.

Porirua City and Nishio City

Establishing the Porirua-Nishio link's cornerstones highlights sister city activities that brought cultural and economic benefits to Porirua's communities. Communications with Darcy Nicholas, an individual integral to both SCR and Pātaka from 1993 to 2012, add insight to these activities. By outlining PCC's support for these activities, my interview with Brian Cross emphasises the intentions and accomplishments of PCC through his administration work from 2000 to 2008. Finally, I explore the role of leadership at PCC, community organisations, and diplomatic missions such as the Embassy of Japan that had great impact on the SCR's development. This creates a picture of the friendships, connections, and people-to-people links that defined this thriving relationship for over twenty years.

Sister City Activities in the Community

The start of this long-term relationship had strong economic drivers. In 1989, discussions were held with Director Tanaka of Mitsubishi Motors and PCC regarding a Japanese SCR with Porirua

(PCC, 1992). Formally initiated by the Japan Travel Bureau and supported by Nishio Chamber of Commerce and Porirua Business Development Society, the Nishio SCR was established in 1993 (Bailey, 1993; PCC, 1992, 1994b, 1997). From the onset, the SCR was formalised for Porirua’s economic growth in mind.

There are parallels between the harbour cities that contributed to the suitability of a SCR (Figure 2, Figure 2). Situated in Aichi Prefecture, Nishio had a similar population size to Porirua and its main industry is the automobile trade with Mitsubishi Motors being a major automotive component manufacturer (PCC, 1998). This is mirrored by Porirua’s manufacturing roots with Todd Motors and Mitsubishi New Zealand (Mawer et al., 2017; Penman, 2005). Historically, Porirua relied on overseas trade and employment, and rebranding in the 1990s saw great infrastructure and economic developments (Penman, 2005). The city’s communities and social landscape were also changing rapidly (Mawer et al., 2017). These traits complemented each other and contributed towards discussions around forming a SCR. It capitalised on existing economic potential during a period of city restructuring. As discussed in Chapter Two, Porirua’s communities were becoming culturally complex, and the city’s international links were one part of its evolving economy and diversity.

Figure 1

Photograph of Porirua City and the Harbour (@PCC, n.d.).



Figure 2

Photograph of Nishio City. Reproduced by permission of the Nishio City Hall (N. Makino, personal communication, June 3, 2022).



At Nishio's signing ceremony, a wakahuia was presented to the Japanese counterpart and a traditional Japanese helmet was received in return as gestures of goodwill (PCC, 1994a). A pōhutukawa tree was also planted at the Nishio Sports Park, later reciprocated with 45 cherry trees planted in Whitby's Nishio Park (PCC, 1994a, 1999c, 2006). While the cherry trees continue to thrive today, the pōhutukawa tree unfortunately did not survive the harsh Nishio winter (PCC, 1999a).

Educational and Cultural Activities. Educational activities such as exchanges stemmed almost immediately from the relationship's formation, producing cultural and economic benefits for Porirua. Secondary school exchanges commencing in 1995 provided students with opportunities to connect and interact with other cultures (McMillan, 1995). Acknowledged by PCC, a subsequent rise in tourism from Nishio resulted in significant revenue for Porirua (McMillan, 1995; PCC, 1999b).

Cultural exchanges through other educational institutions also held great community value. Whitireia Community Polytechnic was expanding during this time, and the Whitireia Dance Company accompanied Council delegations to Nishio that sparked subsequent community activities (PCC, 1999b). In 1995, the Whitireia Performing Arts Class embarked on a month-long tour to Germany, Slovenia, and Nishio. They showcased Māori, Cook Island, and Samoan performances and workshops, educating international audiences in the cultural meaning and stories behind the dances. In response, three artists of the 18-member delegation from the Nishio International Exchange Association toured the polytechnic's workshops in 1996 (Barlow, 1996; see Figure 3). These exchanges introduced a part of Porirua's culture to their Japanese sister city while providing reciprocal cultural opportunities, facilitated by people-to-people relationships and friendships.

Figure 3

Katsuoyoshi Naito, Kazuhiko Kamiya and Koji Emoto visit Whitireia Community Polytechnic in 1996, Pictured with Student Kristelle Plimmer Trying on Artistic Eyewear (Barlow, 1996). Reproduced by permission of The Dominion Post.



Business and Economic Activities. Porirua's changing economy during the late 1980s to 1990s shaped many SCR activities. The closure of Todd Motors in 1998, a local factory which assembled Mitsubishi vehicles, was significant as the introduction of car import tariffs and subsequent reduced profitability of car assembly in New Zealand shifted Porirua's economy (Mawer, 2017; Penman, 2005). The SCR progressed alongside prominent discussions of economic development at a Council level. This was highlighted by the \$1.8 million purchasing of Marina Motor Lodge for Nishio business interests, an incredibly large sum at the time, and the exportation of Asaoka roses locally grown by a Nishio businessman who lived in Whitby (McMillan, 1995; PCC, 2006). Visitors from Nishio would often stay at the Lodge, and while the rose farm ultimately could not meet the demands from Japan, it won at the Porirua Business Development Awards (PCC, 1999c). Additionally, through the expertise of Nishio Mayor Tadahiko Honda, trials for growing green tea commenced. This was an exciting opportunity for Porirua to share in Nishio's expertise in green tea production ("Green tea trails", 1994). This period of the SCR was the most active due to these flurries of economic activities, sharing resources and building trust in the community.

People-to-people Links. These business relationships were only made possible through people-to-people connections. In my conversations about Porirua-Nishio's economic benefits, Darcy Nicholas, Kāhui Maunga, Te Ātiawa nui tonu, Ngāti Ruanui, Tangahoe, Tauranga Moana, and Ngāti Hauā, always stressed that these relationships were warm, personal, and long-living connections by emphasising the Marina Motor Lodge and the Asaoka rose farm (D. Nicholas, personal communication, October 25, 2021). Nishio businessman Inagaki Tekko had purchased the Lodge after taking a personal liking to it, arranging for the existing staff to continue operating there. He

often hosted Nicholas and occasionally the Porirua Mayor at his Nishio home during Council delegations. Paekākāriki's rose farm was owned by Haru Asaoka, who had one of the biggest rose farms in Japan as part of his family's Nishio rose export business. He shared these cultivation skills with Porirua's community while raising his family in the area (D. Nicholas, personal communication, October 25, 2021). During Mayor Jenny Brash's delegation to Nishio in 1999, Asaoka gave Brash the honour of cutting the first Nishio rose of the season (PCC, 1999a). Ultimately, these are just two of the many activities that were developed and sustained by personal friendships. While these business relationships are no longer operating, the personal connections formed from the SCR continue today.

Porirua City Council and Nishio

While the signed Nishio agreement was symbolic, strategic planning and regular reporting through PCC's Sister City Committee allowed SCR activities to gather momentum. I introduce the SCR's development through PCC's strategic policies and SCR management. As discussed in Chapter Two, sister city activities often drew contentious media attention. I consider how strategic planning grew to be increasingly important as PCC relied heavily on ratepayer funding.

Developing the Relationship. Signed on 15 December 1993 and now held by Pātaka, the document outlined the goodwill and friendship between cities in hopes of deepening understanding between countries (Appendix C). To accompany this document, a report with strategic outcomes formalised the agreement for exchanges between students, citizens, teachers, and Council staff while also laying foundations for cultural, sporting, and economic opportunities (PCC, 1994a). To meet these objectives, international activities were delegated to PCC's Sister City Committee, allowing for the smooth facilitation of sister city operations, programming, and budgeting. At the outset, the Committee worked dynamically alongside the PIA, a local community group, to support developing SCR activities. This formed PCC's strategic planning for their sister city programming, enabling clear policies for the delivery of various community activities.

As the SCR developed, activities expanded to encompass multiple sectors across Porirua. Soon, SCRs had become strongly relevant to PCC's principles and were recognised as a core value of the Strategic Plan of Diversity, Tolerance, Social Equity, and Social Cohesion (PCC, 2003). This follows the Local Government Act (2002) for enabling action on behalf of communities and promoting cultural well-being of communities. The inclusion necessitated the revision of strategic policies to better reflect PCC's ability to maintain their growing international links, and a two-committee governance structure was adopted in 2006 (PCC, 2006). This strategic direction was important as media coverage often drew public attention to Council delegations undertaken as excessive junket,

giving the perception that ratepayer money was wasted for little economic return (Henderson, 2012; Mochinaga, 2003; Patterson, 2003). It allowed for proactive and efficient future management of PCC's international links, recognising their cultural and economic impacts, and aiding in the sustainable facilitation of sister city activities for Porirua's communities.

Public Views and the Media. The benefits of SCRs and local government spending are ongoing dichotomies for most SCRs in New Zealand. Local news coverage was frequently one-sided and did not fully illustrate the balance of investment and returns by PCC. Contrary to negative media reporting, Porirua's international counterparts spent more on Council delegations overall. A PCC review found that Nishio delegations visited Porirua more frequently (PCC, 2006). In truth, many Council delegations were privately paid for by the individuals attending or by SCR counterparts (Bailey, 1994; McMillan 1995; Patterson, 2003). Additionally, significant proportions of annual SCR budgets were allocated to schools for cultural exchanges rather than Council delegations (Henderson, 2012; Mochinaga, 2003). This included grants that were available to community organisations, schools, and individuals, providing direct community investment and support through PCC's sister cities. However, this was not often clear in media coverage for Porirua. In contrast, Nishio's community expressed continued support for the relationship (Mochinaga, 2003). These types of media engagement strongly influence the advancement or regression of Porirua's international links, affecting the SCR's trust relations.

Facilitating the Relationship

Throughout the initial years, sister city activities were supported by a combination of three factors: local government, community groups, and diplomatic missions. I investigate the way local government facilitated sister city activities through strong leadership. This includes support by mayors and Council employees despite staffing changes. Furthermore, I consider PIA's role which propelled the relationship forward as a volunteer community organisation. Additionally, I explore the Embassy of Japan's involvement in formalising aspects of sister city activities. Ultimately, considering these three facets creates an understanding of how they combined to shape and support the Nishio SCR.

Porirua City Council. Many sister city activities were facilitated through leadership within PCC. Generally, SCRs can be strengthened by individuals in leadership positions such as the mayor, and supported by chief executive officers, international relations managers, and Council committees (Cremer et al., 1996). With his tenure from 1983 to 1998, Mayor John Burke was a key figure who led the Porirua-Nishio link as an advocate of the original sister city concepts. Burke, backed a supportive council, believed in its potential for economic and cultural development in Porirua

(McMillan, 1995). Burke also was president of SCNZ Inc. from 1996 to 1998 (Duncan, 2021). Notably, PCC's Sister City Committee was formed in 1993 with members consisting of the Mayor, the chief executive, two councillors, and representatives from the tangata whenua and other communities (PCC, 1998). Led by Burke, this marked the beginning of a strategic structure within PCC to manage and develop Porirua's SCRs.

Thereafter, leadership at PCC allowed various SCR projects to flourish. This included Mayor Jenny Brash from 1998 to 2010 who saw three new international links formed, and Darcy Nicholas's tenure as General Manager from 1993 to 2012 which also influenced Pātaka's development. Many Council reports show Nicholas' careful balance of encouraging tangible benefits such as business opportunities and intangible benefits such as cultural and educational exchange (PCC, 1998, 1999b, 1999c). For Nicholas, the sister city programme makes "the community explore and become more aware of its own uniqueness" as well as "the unique values of other cultures," providing a pathway to greater cultural understanding and mutual respect (D. Nicholas, personal communication, October 25, 2021). He also wrote about the friendships, relationships, and trust that the SCR encouraged across Porirua communities and Council. Due to his beliefs in celebrating diversity and cultural richness, Nicholas' leadership at both PCC and Pātaka influenced Porirua's cultural and economic development.

During his time at PCC, Nicholas received the Creative Wellington award in 2005 and the Queen's Service Order for services to museums in 2010 among other accolades (O'Neil, 2012). While these commendations acknowledged his impact during these years, they do not fully exemplify his passion, warmth, and dedication to Porirua. Nicholas spent much of his time, often at his own expense, visiting friends made from the SCR at their Nishio homes (D. Nicholas, personal communication, June 23, 2021). He gifted two of his own artworks to Nishio which are still displayed in their city hall besides another Porirua artwork (Figure 4; N. Makino, personal communication, June 3, 2022). He also gained much inspiration from the Japanese city and brought back innovative ideas to implement Porirua's rebranding. Reports by Nicholas to PCC often noted the economic and cultural benefits of SCRs, aiming to create strong strategic frameworks. He always recognised that there was potential risk in economic record-keeping being misinterpreted by SCR counterparts as the primary driver for PCC (PCC, 1999c).

Figure 4

An Artwork Painted and Gifted by Darcy Nicholas in 2009 (- rising moon - rising sun / 母なる大地一月の出一日の出) Still Hang in the Foyers of Nishio City Hall Today. Reproduced with permission of Nishio City Hall (N. Makino, personal communication, June 3, 2022).



During the peak of Nishio's activities in Porirua, PCC's chief executive and international relations co-ordinator supported SCR operations. However, the full-time international relations co-ordinator role eventually shifted to a contract basis in 2002, a position originally filled by Brian Cross from 2000. The intention was to relieve PCC of a full-time employee while gaining the capacity to broker other opportunities besides SCRs (B. Cross, personal communication, October 19, 2021). When I interviewed Cross, his passion for his work with PCC, SCRs, and local communities was evident. He spoke about his role facilitating multiple community activities through collaborating with the PIA. He also worked with Porirua's secondary schools, arranging sporting and cultural exchange opportunities with Nishio. He considered his time spent at PCC working with SCRs among his most rewarding experiences. As he put it, "the biggest thing I look back on with satisfaction is working with the lower decile schools to give these kids the opportunities that they would have not otherwise had" (B. Cross, personal communication, October 19, 2021). Concurring with Nicholas, Cross showed that Porirua's communities would not have had these opportunities without PCC and local communities supporting the SCR.

Leadership from Nishio counterparts were also key in the flourishing SCR's activities in the community. Mayor Honda was recommended to receive the Civic Award in 2002. However, as he was ineligible under the criteria as a non-resident of Porirua, the creation of a special award was

recommended by PCC (PCC, 2002). Like Mayor Brash, Mayor Honda's dedication to the SCR strengthened the friendship and trust between the cities, allowing community activities and economic development to flow.

Porirua International Association. SCRs bring great benefits to communities and local community groups have had strong roles at regional and national scales (Hogan, 2019). A community-led organisation of volunteers formed in 1996 to support the Porirua-Nishio agreement, originally operating as the Porirua Nishio Association. Restructured in 2001, it widened its strategic focus to all of Porirua's links (Porirua Nishio Association, 2001). Part of the PIA's effectiveness was due to people-to-people connections between individuals at a community level and its engagement with Council.

...even in Darcy's time in the 1990s, it was very much done hand-in-hand with the Porirua Nishio Association. The Council called the shots, but they were very mindful of the community contribution and community's help... It was very dynamic [...] [and] buoyant. (B. Cross, personal communication, October 19, 2021)

Initially, PIA consisted primarily of volunteers and local councillors that were passionate about Porirua's international links (Porirua Nishio Association, 1998). At its peak, the PIA worked closely with PCC to develop sister city activities at an operational and community level. They also provided formal and informal communications and were hosts for home-stay programmes which was reciprocated by Nishio families (D. Nicholas, personal communication, October 25, 2021). However, this meant that they relied heavily on PCC funding and the passion and commitment of each member.

Diplomatic Missions. Diplomatic missions with SCRs can have dual purposes: for political strategy at global and national levels, and for supporting local communities through international links. For Porirua and Nishio, the Embassy of Japan played symbolic and diplomatic roles for cultural activities and coordinating international exhibitions. The Embassy supported the SCR through the Ambassador attending official events and celebrations often held at Pātaka (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, n.d.). Their involvement and presence elevated sister city activities with a diplomatic facet and increased positive public media exposure.

Outside of Porirua's SCRs, former Pātaka Art + Museum director, Reuben Friend (2015 to 2021), found that working with the Taipei economic cultural office during an exhibition for the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts was a fruitful relationship, possibly owing to Taiwan's strong policies on building economic ties through art and culture (R. Friend, personal communication, December 3,

2021). As Friend explained, diplomatic relationships can benefit exhibition programming through contacting networks, freighting logistics, and other practicalities. However, without strong drivers from governments and for Council-linked museums reliant on ratepayers, the facilitative role of embassies can have lesser impacts. This emphasises the need for alignment between Council and museum strategic policies, as highlighted during Nicholas's tenure at PCC.

Pātaka Art + Museum, Sister Cities, and the Community

Once known as Pātaka Museum of Arts and Culture, Pātaka Art + Museum (Pātaka) is a cultural hub and community venue in the heart of Porirua. First, I examine Pātaka's transitions through the influence of directorship and curatorship, highlighting its development as a community-focused institution. While the Kaizen garden is the most evident feature of the Nishio relationship, I consider the presence and absence of Porirua's SCRs at the Museum through introducing community and art exhibitions organised during the link's peak. Then, I outline Pātaka's relationship with PCC to establish the aligned strategic directions for Porirua communities. Focusing on sister city exhibitions, exhibitions for Asian communities, and the way this has shifted in recent years. Finally, I investigate Pātaka's public programming. Reuben Friend's interview provides insight into Pātaka's expanded focus on exhibiting contemporary Māori and Pacific arts projects locally and internationally.

Leadership During Pātaka's Development

Founded in 1980, Porirua Museum transitioned from a local history museum to an art gallery with strong community initiatives by merging with Page 90 Artspace Gallery in 1990 (Pātaka Art + Museum, n.d.). Shortly after, the Porirua Library was amalgamated, marking the beginning of a cultural hub in Porirua's centre. With the expansion of the museum buildings, specialised garden, education centre, and meeting rooms in 1997, Pātaka officially reopened in September 1998. Under the direction of Nicholas in an expanded role as General Manager and Helen Kedgley as Pātaka's first director, Pātaka solidified its role as the city's cultural destination.

Darcy Nicholas was instrumental in Pātaka's development (see Appendix D). His role was a unique arrangement as it encompassed both Pātaka and PCC, and programmes were organised alongside two senior curators who reported directly to him: Helen Kedgley (contemporary arts) and Bob Maysmor (history). As a prolific artist, painter, sculptor, and jeweller, Nicholas paved the way for Porirua to become a globally focused city as part of its rebranding (O'Neil, 2012). Nicholas wanted to highlight the cultural, sporting, and creative talents of local people during his tenure, bringing international and culturally diverse exhibitions and events to Pātaka (D. Nicholas, personal communication, October 25, 2021). Many of his projects were inspired by global sources, such as Pātaka's central spine being modelled on Carnaby Street in London, and the nearby Porirua markets

inspired by the Santa Fe craft industry (O'Neil, 2012). Nicholas used ideas based on his visits to Japan, searching for a concept for Pātaka that was different to any other New Zealand museum (D. Nicholas, personal communication, June 23, 2021). Pātaka's design with the central spine, adjacent galleries for community exhibitions, café, and garden creates a welcoming and distinct space for visitors.

With his tenure stretching nearly two decades, Nicholas shaped much of Pātaka's strategic direction and reputation in Porirua and beyond. He also established personal relationships with individuals and organisations locally and internationally, leading to long term projects that boosted Porirua's cultural scene and economy. As Brian Cross observed during his tenure at PCC, the Council's and Pātaka's working relationship with the PIA through Nicholas's leadership was a dynamic force. As he said, "there weren't a lot of them [art exchanges], but there were always ideas tossed around the museum, cultural exchanges that directly impacted council facilities... Darcy was always ahead of that" (personal communication, October 19, 2021). Nicholas's tenure was underscored by his passion for connecting the city internationally, and his personal relationships encouraged the city's SCRs to endure.

Helen Kedgley was appointed as Pātaka's first museum director following Nicholas's resignation in 2012. An artist herself and with a long history of curation at Page 90 Art Gallery and Pātaka, Kedgley's directorship focused on coordinating international and local exhibitions while showcasing local artists and talents (Creative New Zealand, 2012; Dekker, 2013). Through her curated exhibitions and connections across art communities, Kedgley's influences placed the museum on a prominent community stage.

With her departure, Pātaka welcomed Reuben Friend, Ngāti Maniapoto, as their new director. Friend is an artist with experience as an art gallery curator of Māori and Pacific arts and as an exhibition manager (PCC, 2015). His leadership focused on responding to Porirua's diverse communities and artists along with their local and international audiences, placing Pātaka and Porirua on an international stage.

Pātaka, the Kaizen Garden, and Nishio

Gardens can be physical manifestations of international relationships (Cui, 2013; Nelson City Council, n.d.). This certainly is the case for Pātaka, as Kaizen has become a perpetually and visually appealing feature in the Museum's physical space (O'Connor, 1998; PCC, 1997). All four interviewees for this case study spoke warmly of the garden. However, Kaizen faced criticism during its planning phase. Councillors were concerned that the garden would not represent Porirua's cultural identity

and therefore felt its placement at Pātaka was inappropriate (“\$25,000 Japanese garden planned”, 1997).

Kaizen also has cultural purposes, representing a permanent marker for the Nishio SCR. Its central location is a connector between cafe and galleries, and it acts as a communicator of its original purpose for all visitors. Reflecting this, a specific style of Japanese garden, *karesansui*, was chosen by Nishio and Porirua to symbolise their similar natural environments with dry materials such as rocks, gravel, and trees representing mountains, water, and nature (McGeorge, 2001; see Figure 5). With information about Kaizen readily available at Pātaka, it facilitates cultural understanding of the city’s Japanese relationship (PCC, 1997).

Figure 5

Photographs of Kaizen Garden. Reproduced with permission of Pātaka Art + Museum.



There is an enduring relationship between Nishio gardeners and the Porirua community, started by Nishio landscapers who paid their own airfare to New Zealand to build the garden in collaboration with Porirua (McGeorge, 2001). From 1998, Nishio gardeners periodically visit to maintain Kaizen with reciprocal specialist training (PCC, 2018a). During the most recent trip in 2018, Porirua’s public were invited to meet the gardeners and specialised tools were gifted to PCC (PCC, 2018b). The delegation was joined by the son and grandson of gardeners who planted the cherry trees in Whitby’s Nishio garden in 1998 (“Whitby’s cherry trees orchard”, 2018). All exchanges are independent of PCC’s budgets, making these exchanges remarkably sustainable for Porirua (Henderson, 2012; PCC, 2018a). This special community connection, sustained by community friendships, makes Pātaka a visible focal point for these long-standing international relationships (Figure 6).

Figure 6

Porirua Council Staff Gifted Specialist Gardening Tools by the Nishio Gardeners During Their Visit to the Kaizen Garden at Pātaka Art + Museum in 2018 (©PCC, 2018b).



Pātaka and Porirua City Council

Historically, Pātaka has worked closely with local government, aligning its strategic intent with PCC’s Long Term Plans. While Pātaka’s governance structure has changed, its connection remains strong as a branch of PCC’s Community and Cultural Services (PCC, 2019, 2021a). Its vision statements clearly reflect PCC’s strategic priorities, focusing on delivering exhibitions that feature local, national, and international artists, and improving accessibility for Porirua’s communities. Furthermore, policies focus on developing relationships to promote the city and leading environmental awareness through exhibition delivery (PCC, 2019). This greatly influences Pātaka’s current activities.

As a regional museum, Pātaka must offset costs while continuing to improve community accessibility. Therefore, wider outcomes involve maintaining facilities and expanding its exhibition programming (PCC, 2019). These drivers are naturally curtailed by sustainability around economic revenue generation as Pātaka is largely funded through PCC which is reliant on ratepayer funding. Public programming therefore aligns closely with Council strategic visions, focusing strongly on water and the environment, spanning across the Pacific thematically. Regarding Porirua’s international links, Pātaka facilitated a minor number of exhibitions through individual and organisational connections. Reuben Friend’s leadership pushed exhibition programming towards collaborations with overseas institutions, increasing the international presence of Pātaka and Porirua itself.

Leadership and Public Programming for Communities

Here, I investigate Pātaka’s public programming for the community through the presence of Porirua’s international links at Pātaka, including sister city exhibitions which have had a historic presence. As discussed in Chapter Two, Porirua’s Asian communities are continuing to grow, and I outline a selection of significant exhibitions related to Asia. Finally, I explore Reuben Friend’s vision for communities and leadership during his time as director. This moves the case study towards the present day when Porirua’s SCRs have slowly become less active.

Sister City Exhibitions and Gifts. Sister city exhibitions were presented in Porirua in 1995, just two years after establishing the SCR. Initiated by the Kapiti Camera Club, 35 photographs were selected for display at Page 90 Artspace Gallery. This exhibition, *A Day in the Life of Porirua*, was then shown at the World Festival in Nishio the following year (Lovell, 2012). Following Pātaka’s opening in 1998, a modest number of sister city exhibitions were organised through community links. In 2000, Pātaka held an exhibition by Nishio artist Mitsuru Toriyama which was exhibited in the Blue Pacific Gallery, a space that showcases community artists (“Scenes from an Asian city”, 2000). Most of these works were subsequently purchased by Pātaka (Figure 7; Figure 8). While there is some accession information, there are few details about the artworks themselves (L. Kellaway, personal communication, May 27, 2022). They have not been exhibited again. In 2003, a photograph exhibition by Geoff Marshall of the Kapiti Camera Club was held at Pātaka, bringing images of Nishio to Porirua (Lovell, 2012). These exhibitions were facilitated directly through the SCR. Although COVID-19 had presented difficulties in co-ordinating exhibitions from international sources, Pātaka continued to collaborate with other institutions. However, further exhibitions for Porirua’s international links have not been programmed.

Figure 7

Unaccessioned Sister City Gifts from Nishio Stored in Pātaka’s Collection Storeroom (Artworks of the Nishio City Hall and Other Items of Material Culture Such as Figurines, Traditional Wooden Umbrellas and Temple Bells). Reproduced with permission of Pātaka Art + Museum.



Note. These were moved to Pātaka following PCC building’s earthquake strengthening in 2018 alongside Aboriginal art presumed to be from the SCR with Blacktown, Australia (L. Kellaway, personal communication, May 27, 2022).

Figure 8

Artworks Painted by Toriyama. From Top Left to Bottom Right: A Lane in Castletown (PM2000.32), Inariyama Tea Plantation (PM2000.33), Chuyaku-mon and Ushitora-yagura (PM2000.34) and The Feudal Lord Procession (PM2017.59). Reproduced with permission of Pātaka Art + Museum.



Note. The first three painting were purchased from Toriyama on August 23, 2000, for \$125 each. The last painting currently has no known acquisition documents (L. Kellaway, personal communication, May 27, 2022).

The only material cultural from Porirua’s international links is the Kaizen garden. Other gifts from Nishio, Yangzhou, and Blacktown are stored at Pātaka (L. Kellaway, personal communication, May 27, 2022; see Figure 9). These are nearly all unaccessioned. However, a few mayoral gifts are displayed in PCC’s offices (A. Baker, personal communication, October 29, 2021). During celebrations held in 2023 marking Pātaka’s 25 years in Porirua, two sister city gifts from Nishio were displayed on an activity table commemorating the Kaizen garden (Figure 10).

Figure 9

A Key, Representing a Great Buddha Statue, Presented to Mayor Jenny Brash in 2010 During the Opening of the Bamiyan Exhibition at Pātaka Art + Museum (Maysmor, 2010). It was Once Displayed in the Foyer of the Museum. Reproduced with permission of Pātaka Art + Museum.



Figure 10

Two Sister City Gifts Displayed at an Activity Table at Pātaka. Reproduced with permission of Pātaka Art + Museum.



Exhibitions and Asia. During Nicholas’s tenure, PCC had a close working relationship with the Japanese Ambassador and Embassy which led to a modest number of Japanese cultural exhibitions (D. Nicholas, personal communication, October 25, 2021). In 2007, *Painting for Joy: New*

Japanese Painting in the 1990s, an exhibition of contemporary art from renowned Japanese artists, came to Pātaka as part of a world-wide tour (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2007c). Opened by Ambassador Masaki Saito, this exhibition was coordinated with the aid of the Embassy and the Japan Foundation.

Under Helen Kedgley's leadership, *Imagine Asia: New Zealand artists respond to contemporary Asia* was exhibited in 2015, co-ordinated by the Asia New Zealand Foundation. The 18 New Zealand artists including some of Asian descent had participated in their residency programmes in China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, and Taiwan. This exhibition gave New Zealand artists the opportunity to explore their cultural identity through intercultural engagement, uniting contemporary Asian, Māori, and Pacific New Zealand artists through the descriptor of "Asia-Pacific" (Creative New Zealand, 2015; Ng, 2015). It also became the base for another exhibition held in late 2015 at Te Tuhi, a contemporary art gallery in Auckland (Te Tuhi, 2015).

Exhibitions and events celebrating cultural diversity at Pātaka have brought communities together. Pātaka partnered with the Migrating Kitchen Trust to co-host a one-off exhibition in 2007. It expanded to cover countries such as Japan, Afghanistan, Tonga, China, and Russia (Dando, 2009). The *Migrating Kitchen* aimed to promote public education programmes by partnering with cultural communities to highlight their stories (The Migrating Kitchen Trust, n.d.). This was an initiative resourced and supported by various cultural community groups. Sharing recipes, videos, crafts, films, and music, these events at Pātaka were popular, drawing many visitors (Dando, 2009). The exhibition programmes celebrated the cultural diversity of New Zealand through community participation and engagement.

Towards an International Stage. Pātaka is unique as it can collaborate with major international programmes despite restrictions as a regional museum. Following Friend's appointment as director, exhibitions were often facilitated collaboratively between institutions to increase Pātaka's international presence. Friend's leadership and focus included artists and indigenous communities which aligned well with PCC's strategic policies. He recognised that international projects contribute brand value to the museum and the city (R. Friend, personal communication, December 3, 2021).

Alongside curators from Australia and Canada, Friend co-curated the 2021 exhibition *Naadohpii: To Draw Water* at the Winnipeg Art Gallery that connected artworks between indigenous cultures through their relationships to water (Winnipeg Art Gallery, 2021). The exhibition was shown at Pātaka in 2003 and again in late 2023. Friend also co-curated an exhibition for the Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts in Taiwan that focused again on water and the environment, called *Pan* as a

shortened title for Pan-Austro-Nesia (Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, 2021). This exhibition featured the New Zealand-Sāmoan-Japanese artist Yuki Kihara's sculptural landscape paintings, *Sāmoa no uta, A Song About Sāmoa* (Figure 11), which premiered at Pātaka in late 2020 (Pātaka Art + Museum, n.d.). Both exhibitions created opportunities for museum communities to connect to indigenous cultures through a common theme. Additionally, these exhibitions align with PCC's strategic vision: water wellness, supporting a culturally diverse community, and economic sustainability.

Figure 11

Installation View of Yuki Kihara's "A Song About Sāmoa, 2019", Exhibited at Pātaka Art + Museum in December 2020.



With Pātaka's relationship with PCC, international relationships such as SCRs could facilitate reciprocal exhibition programming. However, Friend found that institution-to-institution links are often more beneficial for public programming than PCC's international links, particularly when there is alignment in institutional size, capability, and interest. This is more evident when there is a lack of direct government support. While Friend had key connections with Blacktown Gallery (Australia) in Porirua's other SCR, exhibitions of the same scale were difficult to arrange due to the limitations of the smaller counterpart institution. Alternatively, exhibitions were successfully arranged with Sydney's Campbelltown Arts Centre and the Maritime Museum through direct institutional links (R. Friend, personal communication, December 3, 2021). For Friend, SCRs did not directly contribute to international exhibition programming. While he expressed his personal interest in creating artistic exchanges in Nishio if budget and public appetite aligned, Friend also said:

Nishio City [and the Kaizen garden] was part of that legacy when there was that industrial boom... but since things have been shifted overseas... They don't have the same immediate outcomes like they used to have, where we'd be wanting to do business with centres of trade... Those kinds of SCRs, I think they held more value [then] than they do now. (personal communication, December 3, 2021)

This reflects a time where sister city activities have ceased: PCC priorities have shifted, and Pātaka stayed primarily as a venue role for Porirua's SCRs. It remains to be seen how it will continue its public programming for an increasingly diverse local community, particularly regarding opportunities from its existing international links.

The Sister City Relationship in Recent Years

Although the Nishio SCR had great initial momentum, its activeness waned after 2010. I identify factors that have contributed to these changes, particularly shifts in local government, community groups, and leadership. While Porirua's demographics were explored in Chapter Two, I comment on current local government responses to the changing communities by outlining current drivers at PCC and Pātaka that may also have affected sister city activities. Mayor Anita Baker's interview provides insight into PCC's current strategic vision in response to Porirua's growing cultural diversity.

Nishio maintained strong connections with Porirua, showing signs of goodwill and political support in difficult times. Donating \$4,500 to Porirua in response to the 2011 Christchurch earthquake, this sincere gesture followed Japan's Great East Tohoku Earthquake in the same year (PCC, 2011). However, with constraints caused by Covid-19 in 2020 and changes in staffing at both local authorities, many ongoing activities such as school exchanges ceased. The long-established visits by the Nishio gardeners have also paused since 2018 for the same reasons. Following multiple mayoral elections from 2010 (see Appendix D), the focus on Porirua's SCRs began to change discernibly. This signalled shifts in attitudes towards engaging Porirua's growing cultural diversity through its international links.

Activities with Nishio began to slow in momentum, partly due to a corruption scandal that erupted in 2009 involving Nishio Mayor Koki Nakamura (Dallas, 2009). Many sister city activities supported by PCC halted during Mayor Brash's tenure. However, the eventual loss of Council leaders and staff with people-to-people connections developed through SCRs led to an overall reduction in PCC's role. Without maintaining connections with Nishio, the decline of sister city activities subsequently affected budgetary allocations and Council structuring (Henderson 2012; PCC, 2006). The Sister Cities Committee, reformed as the International Committee, was soon dissolved.

Currently no international relations manager role at PCC exists. Despite these changes, Nishio maintains occasional contact directly with Mayor Anita Baker:

It's sort of having the conversation and actually waking it up again, because I feel like everything's asleep... But we don't see people relating to those [the Kaizen garden and Whitby's Nishio garden]. We see the tree and we see the garden, we don't think, "oh, people come here and tend those from another country." So, I don't think we tell their story very well, either. (A. Baker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

Mayor Baker spoke positively of reviving connections with SCRs, provided there is strategic intent and action (A. Baker, personal communication, October 29, 2021). This is similar to Friend's comments that "the agreement may have had more support at a time when there was more money in the economy for those kinds of projects and more public appetite for councillors to be spending money on those types of projects" (R. Friend, personal communication, December 3, 2021). However, there are no formal discussion between the cities for moving the SCR forward.

Porirua's SCRs have always been integrally supported by volunteer community groups. PIA's dissolution meant that direct connections between PCC to the relevant communities slowly severed. In its final phase, three of four members also worked at the Council, and it folded naturally into PCC's day-to-day operations (B. Cross, personal communication, October 19, 2021). While the diminution of the SCR was not unexpected, it created an absence of local group connections within and outside the arts and education sector on a community level. The individuals involved with the SCRs were passionate volunteers with personal connections. It highlights the importance for SCRs to have community involvement at a grassroots level that is supported by local government. For Porirua, the role of maintaining existing connections that aids facilitation of international and cultural activities have now shifted to key individuals within PCC, and cultural and educational institutions.

The impact of COVID-19 is felt in all areas of Porirua. After community consultation for the 2021 Long Term Plan, budgeting focuses remain primarily on key infrastructure developments (PCC, 2021b). International relations and tourism now play lesser roles in PCC's strategic planning, including new investments in the cultural sector. Comments from local communities expressing support for cultural developments remarked that they are currently "nice to haves" rather than necessities, and therefore not a current priority for PCC (PCC, 2021b). Mayor Baker continues to support Porirua's culturally diverse communities despite budget limitations, connecting ideas from local communities to existing resources, spaces, and funding paths (A. Baker, personal

communication, October 29, 2021). This includes annual events that celebrate community diversity such as the Diwali Festival. Despite these endeavours, these shifts in PCC have strong implications on Porirua's international relationships.

Conclusion

This case study highlights activities and events that were made possible by interpersonal connections and collaboration between committed leaders in local government, community groups, and cultural institutions. This was predominantly due to both sister cities and museum establishing their community role and links when the city was rebranding, creating shared opportunities for mutual support in their early years. Porirua and Nishio capitalised on existing economic and cultural strengths, such as Mitsubishi Motors, gardening expertise, and cultural tourism. During the peak of sister city activities in both Porirua and Pātaka, local government, community groups, diplomatic missions, and leadership functioned together to bring opportunities to Porirua's communities. This included education and cultural exchanges that were not available before and business relationships strengthened by trust through people-to-people links. The synergy during this period was tangible.

While key individuals involved with the relationship have moved on to other projects, interviews with participants involved in PCC, SCRs, and Pātaka provided insight into the past and current influences behind the Porirua-Nishio SCR. Akin to Whitby's cherry trees and Nishio's pōhutukawa tree, the SCR flourished in a supportive and collaborative environment, yet declined when this environment became unsuitable. Although some interviewees supported SCRs as part of community engagement, others have turned their attention elsewhere. However, for each interviewee, passion and dedication for Porirua's communities were evident in their shared community experiences as well as their visions for the city, its museum, or SCRs.

Porirua's SCR with Nishio grew quickly with cultural, educational, and business opportunities blossoming. While media often represented sister city activities negatively, PCC's strategic governance aided in structuring the way these links were utilised. Collaboration between local government, community groups, and diplomatic missions were key to its success. The relationship relied on committed leaders such as mayors, council staff, and community volunteers. They brought opportunities forward for communities through a mix of Council support and funding, and meaningful community connections and friendships. School exchanges that led to economic outcomes through tourism and the maintenance of the Japanese gardens were results of these partnerships.

Pātaka also grew concurrently with Porirua's SCR due to leadership, directorship, and curatorship. This was unique as individuals often had shared roles at Pātaka, PCC or PIA, influencing

Pātaka's development into a community-focused cultural hub. Nishio had a strong presence at the institution in its early years due to these individuals collaborating between Council, Museum, and community groups. The Kaizen garden is a permanent reminder of the warmth and sincerity of the SCR, and while sister city exhibitions were few, they always came from the community.

Through integral influences and visions from individuals in leadership roles, Pātaka also welcomed global exhibitions through international and community connections. This influence shaped and guided its exhibitions and public programming for its communities. Many early exhibitions related to Asia were coordinated through external institutions, community groups, diplomatic missions, and cultural organisations combined with personal connections between museum directors, curators, and Council. While this case study's examples are not conclusive, it provides insight to the impact these global cultural exhibitions would have had for local artists and communities. Pātaka's relationship with PCC shaped early strategic vision and policies, and its public programming reflected different parts of Porirua's multicultural communities. This persists today. More recently, Pātaka continues to focus on the cultural diversity of its communities by strengthening its international presence in the Pacific Rim, focusing on indigenous communities and artists.

This case study finds that there has been little sister city activity in Porirua after 2010. Once flourishing in the community, many factors that supported the SCR have since shifted and the SCR is no longer utilised by PCC or Pātaka during community engagement. As Porirua's cultural diversity continues to grow, the potential of these existing and once thriving international links becomes more relevant. This case study demonstrates how a SCR and community museum grew together in their early years. The next chapter shows how a SCR thrived separately from an established community-focused museum.

Chapter Four

Case Study Two: Lower Hutt City, Minoh City, and The Dowse Art Museum

Supported by Hutt City Council (HCC), Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust (HMHFT), and community groups, sister cities have brought Lower Hutt's communities together through collaborative and international cultural opportunities. The Dowse and Hutt Art Society (HAS) have engaged communities in Lower Hutt's arts sector (The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). Focusing on community involvement, this Chapter examines two topics: Lower Hutt's SCR with Minoh and The Dowse. I highlight HAS's community art exchange with Minoh. Employing Council archives and media publications, I also utilise interviews with key members involved in Minoh, HCC, and The Dowse: Tim Walker (The Dowse), Councillor Brady Dyer (HCC), David Balm (HAS, sister cities), and former Mayor Ray Wallace, ONZM (HCC, sister cities) (see also Appendix B).

This case study has three sections: community-led Minoh sister city activities supported by HCC, sister city gifts as reflections of the Hutt-Minoh link, and The Dowse director Tim Walker's shaping of exhibition programming for its communities. This Chapter aims to reveal Lower Hutt's unique SCR with Minoh through its long-lasting connections made through communities, Council, and cultural institutions. It shows that people-to-people connections are essential to establishing trust and friendships that facilitate cultural and economic outcomes. These relationships have immense potential for engaging Lower Hutt's culturally diverse communities.

The Hutt-Minoh Link

Lower Hutt formed its SCR with Minoh, Japan in 1995 by referencing Porirua-Nishio's successful link (HCC, 1995; see Appendix E). The Hutt-Minoh link enabled various activities in the education, art, and sports sectors. Introducing the SCR, I describe select community-led sister city activities that have created enduring relationships and encouraged other community activities to flourish. Focusing on an international community art exchange, I introduce HAS's relationship with Minoh. With interviewee insight, I also consider the role of local government in SCR activities through mayoral leadership, community organisations, and people-to-people connections. Additionally, I outline recent shifts in HCC's focus towards the SCR. My aim in exploring these relationships is to reveal distinct community sister city activities and relationships, and the way leadership, local government support, and people-to-people connections facilitate these activities.

Sister City Activities in the Community

Before the SCR was formalised, educational exchanges were an enduring feature of activities between the cities (Minoh City, n.d.-a). This included cultural exchanges that brought New Zealand

culture and performing arts to its Japanese counterparts. Schools in Lower Hutt, Tui Glen School and Wainuiomata High School's Kapa Haka groups performed in Minoh on separate occasions, with the former awarded the runner up for "Best School Cultural Awareness Project" (Goss-Wallace, 2016b; Lamb, 2015b; Minoh City, n.d.-a; Minoo Now!, 2018b). The success of these connections encouraged other links outside the SCR at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels (HCC, 2017b), including Wainuiomata High School and Iizuka High School of Fukuoka City in 2016 ("Sister school scholarship", 2018). Additionally, the Osaka University of Foreign Studies at the Minoh Campus connected with Victoria University of Wellington through an inter-faculty agreement ("Driving force", 2000; Osaka University, n.d.; Victoria University of Wellington, n.d.). These connections highlight the unique opportunities for new community relationships and cultural exchanges encouraged by the SCR's existing friendships, and trust relations.

Complementing national interest, Minoh's SCR has enabled unique opportunities for rugby exchanges since 2008 (Edwards, 2015; HCC, 2015b; HMHFT, 2015; Japan New Zealand Centre, 2008). Additionally, exchanges have developed independent of the SCR, exemplified by Wainuiomata High School's rugby club visiting Hachinohe City in 2019 (Kataoka, 2019). These relationships have flourished due to existing friendships and trust built from other sister city activities. For these rugby exchanges, its national-scale impacts and sustainability due to direct community involvement has brought significant revenue to Lower Hutt (HCC, 2017b).

Strong community links were also established using digital technology to facilitate citizen-to-citizen connections. From 2014, HCC's "Live Skype Windows" sessions allowed citizens from counterpart cities to talk in real time (HCC, 2017b; "Japanese and NZ students", 2014; Minoh City, n.d.-a; Minoo Now!, 2016b). These brought Lower Hutt and Minoh together virtually despite COVID-19 travel restrictions, providing opportunities to maintain existing friendships. Ray Wallace, Mayor from 2010 to 2019, attests to the meaningful connections:

...while we think and see [Japan] as a very modern country, New Zealand probably has better technology in our homes than our Japanese friends. So having Skype and Zoom at home is nothing to us, whereas in Japan, they like to congregate and meet together as groups and have a Zoom session. (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 18, 2021)

Schools also virtually connect with their sister school. Epuni Primary School, Tui Glen School, and Saints Peter and Paul School established links with Todoromi No Mori Gakuen, Saito No Oka Gakuen, and Minoh Assumption School respectively (HCC, 2014; Minoh City, n.d.-b). Many of these connections have become friendships between locals, students, and teachers, encouraging long term cultural outcomes through unique digital opportunities.

Exchanging Community Art. Independent of HCC and supported by HMHFT, HAS established well-received reciprocal art exchanges with Minoh in 2017 (Balm, 2016; Goss-Wallace, 2016a). These community-to-community arrangements were initiated with introductions made by Wallace in 2015, who commented that art plays a critical part in bringing people from different cultural backgrounds together (HCC, 2017a). David Balm, former President of HAS, presented me with an album of photographs from his visit to Minoh where HAS artists met with artists from the Minoh Art Association (MAA). The photographs demonstrated the warmth and partnership between the artists despite language or cultural barriers (Figure 12). Balm explained how art at HAS gave a place to artists of all calibres and specialities to exhibit, learn, and share knowledge (personal communication, November 25, 2021).

Figure 12

Photographs of David Balm (Hutt Art Society, President) and Minoru Kugo (Minoh Art Association, President) in Front of Kugo’s Statue Sculpted for the Inauguration of Minoh City (left) and Shuku Ishii (Minoh Art Association, Vice-President) With a Painting of a Kotuku by David Balm Presented October 4, 2015 (right). Reproduced by permission of D. Balm (personal communication, October 17, 2023).



Balm established a strong friendship with Minoru Kugo, President of the MAA (D. Balm, personal communication, November 25, 2021). Kugo’s subsequent visit to HAS’s galleries was a catalyst to the planning of the reciprocal art exchange. Without this personal connection, the exchange would have been unlikely:

That was the catalyst - this personal interaction is very, very important. It was one of the reasons that we went over there... you can't just do that in isolation. It just doesn't work. You've got to look them in the eye and let them see you and then that really generates itself. It's like a friendship. (D. Balm, personal communication, November 25, 2021)

After reciprocal visits for the SCR's 20th anniversary, MAA launched the exchange's first exhibition in 2016 (Goss-Wallace, 2016a; Minoo Now!, 2016a), which proved popular (Balm, 2016). A first for Lower Hutt's art community, around 25 artworks were exchanged.

The following year, HAS launched their month-long exhibition themed "culture" with the contribution of Minoh artists. Held at the Odlin Gallery, the exhibition titled *Different Body, Same Mind* displayed Minoh artworks and was a success both for HCC and community artists (Hutt Art Society, 2017). As Balm said (personal communication, November 25, 2021), "the nice thing about art is that it transcends culture, it transcends language. That makes it very easy for cultural exchange." When speaking about HAS's role for communities, Balm emphasises that the Gallery's art touches on different disciplines and is therefore a place for a cross-pollination of ideas:

...we run the whole gamut from people just starting their art or wanting to improve, right through to people who are semi-professional... Although you can see a difference because the professionals tend to be a bit slicker... The professional stuff doesn't stand out. You don't walk in and say, "wow yeah, it's just that much better." The funny thing is, going back to Minoh again, when we put their pieces in our exhibitions, it didn't stand out either. It's much of a muchness as far as quality is concerned. (D. Balm, personal communication, November 25, 2021)

People-to-people relationships formed between HAS and MAA were the backbone to the exchange's success. Balm commented that these exhibitions became very personal to the contributing artists. The ownership of the exhibition pieces reflected the trust between artists: artists were firstly offered the counterpart art pieces before they were gifted to the respective sister city. It removed the need to value each piece and streamlined processes (D. Balm, personal communication, November 26, 2021). For the small community associations, this was the most comfortable and practical arrangement. One such piece highlighted by Balm was *Haruka*. Sculpted by Kugo following his first visit to Lower Hutt where he purchased a woollen hat and scarf in the shape of a merino sheep's head for his granddaughter Haruko, it is a warm and personal gift to HAS (Figure 13).

Figure 13

Photograph of “Haruka” (2017), a Sculpture of Kugo’s Granddaughter Wearing the Scarf and Hat Purchased in New Zealand. Part of the Hutt Art Permanent Collection. Reproduced by permission of D. Balm (personal communication, October 23, 2023).



Following the 2017 exhibition, some artworks were gifted to HCC for display (D. Balm, personal communication, November 26, 2021). After incumbent Mayor Barry’s arrival at HCC offices, all pieces have been donated back to Lower Hutt through Wallace’s efforts. They remain on display in the Minoh House alongside Minoh’s mayoral gifts (see Appendix G). The counterpart gifts and artwork are on permanent display at the Multicultural Centre at Minoh’s city offices with some artworks exhibited again by the Association in 2018 (Minoo Now!, 2018a). As Wallace explains, there was an understanding at the time of the exchange that the artwork would always be on display for citizens (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021).

The success of the Hutt-Minoh art exchanges relied on committed leaders who cultivated friendships and trust and arranged the logistics for exhibitions. Subsequent friendships between artists facilitated cultural exchange. Although COVID-19 has affected HAS’s annual exhibitions including the Minoh art exchange, interpersonal relationships with MAA remain strong. Through Balm and Kugo, discussions for future exchanges continue (D. Balm, personal communication, November 26, 2021). The maintenance of friendships and trust between HAS and MAA will be essential for future opportunities for similar community art exchanges.

Local Government and Minoh

From the beginning, community groups were integral in SCR discussions at HCC. Focusing on this aspect, I consider the role of mayoral leadership within HCC for its SCRs. My interview with Ray Wallace focuses on his involvement as Mayor for nine years and Chair of HMHFT for eleven years. I then introduce the relationship between community groups and Council through the Minoh House and HMHFT. After I illustrate selected sister city activities facilitated through HCC and maintained by people-to-people connections, I lastly outline shifts in HCC involvement with its SCRs. My interview with Councillor Dyer provides insight into HCC's current strategic focuses and his role as Chair of HMHFT since 2019.

Mayoral Leadership. Lower Hutt's mayors have been integral to SCRs. This was written into the SCR agreements, ensuring that formalised mayoral involvement would continue as part of Council policy (HCC, 1995), and direct contributions to the SCR would be made through HCC and community organisations like HMHFT.

Outside of these formalised roles, successive mayors were driven by their beliefs that international links would have positive outcomes for Lower Hutt's communities (see Appendix F). Sir John Kennedy-Good formalised the city's first SCR in 1981 and was also president of SCNZ Inc. during his mayoral tenure (Duncan, 2021). Subsequent Mayor Glen Evans continued to advocate for the international links. This direction persisted with Mayor John Terris who became the driving force in subsequent SCRs, formalising the Minoh link initiated by Evans. Terris was initially not convinced that an additional SCR would be beneficial for Lower Hutt. However, his opinion changed in recognition of the flourishing people-to-people connections and the unique opportunities produced for tourism, arts, and education ("Terris sees benefits", 1996). This belief continued with Mayor David Ogden who led delegations to Japan and advocated for new community SCR activities (Edwards, 2009; Vibrant Hutt, 2020). Following Ogden, Mayor Ray Wallace, who was also present at the signing of the Minoh SCR, facilitated an increase of sister city activities in both countries over the next decade. For Wallace, mayor from 2010 to 2019, tangible rewards such as economic benefits were secondary:

Even [in] strong [sister city] relationships, it's important to keep that people-to-people [connection]— if you don't have that, the relationship, the friendship and the trust built up, [then] the economic benefits won't come either. That's secondary. It's building that strong relationship, building the trust. (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021)

I interviewed Wallace at his residential office, and although he showed me gifts from his time as Mayor, he preferred to tell the stories behind the connections and memories made. The

Foreign Minister's Commendation Award was presented to Wallace in 2021, and the New Zealand Order of Merit was awarded in 2020 (Embassy of Japan in New Zealand, 2021; Government House, 2021). These accolades showcase the impact of Wallace's dedication to Lower Hutt's communities and international partners. Through his leadership, the SCR continued to bloom. School exchanges, rugby competitions, and festival events that celebrated these links were products of HCC's support for its SCRs.

The relationships that have remained strong in the sister cities movement have come from the grassroots - from the communities, from people-to-people connections. It hasn't actually been the Councils or the governments that have continued to make those strong. They have played a support role, but in regard to Minoh and Tempe in Arizona, it's been the locals, the people that have been part of the organisations... (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021)

During his nine years as Mayor, marking twenty-four years at HCC, Wallace's emphasis on people-to-people relationships and the community shaped activities that are on-going today. The SCR's success was partially due to reciprocal delegations, he saw these events as important to establishing and maintaining personal connections (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021). Similar to Balm when speaking of the Minoh art exchange, Wallace maintained that even as technology and virtual communications advances, there is no true replacement for in-person relationship building. His leadership ensured HCC supported SCRs through an integral facilitation role, including connecting local government and communities while providing financial support through international relations policies. Tangible benefits resulted:

None of our relationships were ever set up to look at the economic benefits... It was culture, celebrating our differences, celebrating each other's culture, [that] was the key component. And from that came international student opportunities... teacher exchange and business exchange. Those economic benefits flow from it, but that was not the reason why they were originally established. (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021)

After eight years as vice-president of SCNZ Inc., Wallace stepped down from this role in 2023 (Global Cities New Zealand, n.d.).

The success of Lower Hutt's SCRs was also driven by Minoh. The formation and early vitality of the SCR were influenced by Mayor Takashi Hashimoto from 1993 to 2000 (Edwards, 2010). Council was unanimous in awarding Hashimoto with the Civic Honours Award in 2000 ("Driving force for Japan", 2000), in recognition of the commitment and impact he had on the city's cultural

tapestry through the SCR (“Council rewards sister city’s mayor”, 2000). He was the first and only non-resident to receive this local award.

Hutt Minoh Friendship House & Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust. First acquired by HCC in 1945, the historic Norbury House was restored and renamed following the Hutt-Minoh SCR agreement (“Restored historic house”, 1999; HCC, 2020b, 2020c). A generous arrangement, it was primarily funded by Minoh and the Japanese government following campaigning from Mayor Terris (“Friendship sealed”, 1999; HCC, 2020b, 2020c). Minoh’s communities fundraised for the restoration alongside Lower Hutt schools and community groups, and a totara tree was planted in 1999 by Mayor Hashimoto and the Wellington Tenth Trust (“Friendship House opening”, 1999; HCC, 1997; R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021). Now known as the Minoh House, it is a distinct epicentre of Japanese cultural activities (HCC, 2015a; McLennan, 2016). It is the only tangible public facility that is a direct, physical representation of Lower Hutt’s SCRs (Figure 14).

Figure 14

Photographs of The Hutt Minoh Friendship House and the Memorial Plaque Dedicated to Former Mayor Hashimoto Mounted on a Carving by Artist and Carver Bryce Manukonga who Carved the Pouwhenua Standing in Minoh City’s Government Offices.



The facilitation role of HMHFT is integral to the SCR. Established in 2004 and now a registered charity, HMHFT supports the SCR through cultural awareness programmes, activities, and events, mirroring its counterpart the Minoh-Hutt Friendship Club (Charities Services, n.d.; “Furthering Minoh/Hutt friendship”, 2007; HMHFT, n.d.-a). It also manages the House. Lower Hutt’s mayors were traditionally appointed as Chair of HMHFT during their tenure to create a direct link between HCC, the House, and communities (Figure 15; HCC, 2017b). However, Councillor Dyer’s position as Chair from 2021 marks a recent shift in HMHFT’s management (HMHFT, n.d.-b).

Figure 15

Photographs of the First Floor of the Hutt Minoh Friendship House Which is Open to the Public. It Showcases the Sister City Agreement, Sister Rotary Club Agreement and Sister City Gifts from the Minoh-Hutt Link.



With changes in mayoral leadership, HMHFT has faced operational changes. Narrowing its focus to the Hutt-Minoh SCR in 2020, it no longer funds projects outside of the area (HMHFT, n.d.-b). Once partially funded, it is now fully reliant on direct funding applications to HCC (B. Dyer, personal communication, November 18, 2021; HCC, 2020c). Therefore, cultural groups that use the venue now effectively rent it from HCC rather than from the Trust.

These management shifts have not changed the focus of the Trust and Minoh House. As Councillor Dyer explained, friendships with Minoh and events that celebrate Japanese culture continue to strengthen (personal communication, November 18, 2021). However, future SCR activities organised by Lower Hutt's community groups will be influenced by HCC's needs to ensure the House and Trust remain profitable.

The Council and Sister City Activities. Supported directly by HCC, local government staff exchanges began in 1997 with Chinami Hasegawa (Minoh), Kristine Scherp (HCC) in 1998 and Yoichi Furui (Minoh) (Furui, n.d.; HCC, 1999). There is little archival documentation about these exchanges and according to Minoh City Hall, they ceased after 1999 (Minoh City, n.d.-a). A related exchange occurred in 2018 with Yu Kawamura of Rokunohe Town interning through the Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR). Kawamura worked at HCC, participating in the Hutt Japan Day festival and the Sister Cities New Zealand Korero (*sic*) 2017 project (HMHFT, 2018). These staffing exchanges held great value for both local authorities as they could share governance resources at direct community levels. However, there was little visibility of these exchanges in public media.

Teacher exchanges started by local government have deep roots in the Hutt-Minoh relationship, including an assistant English teaching exchange once exclusive to the SCR that eventually merged with the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (JET), and the independent Minoh Teacher Exchange Programme (MINTEX) established directly between sister cities in 2015 (HCC, 2017b, 2020b; HMFHT, n.d.-a). In succession, Lower Hutt locals were placed in Minoh on JET through the Embassy of Japan, and these enduring connections have been acknowledged to be exceptional in New Zealand (Doole, 2021; “Sister Cities NZ”, 2009). Signed by Mayor Wallace on the SCR’s 20th anniversary, MINTEX relies on HCC financial support (Gibson, 2017; HMFHT, 2020b). Many who took part in JET or MINTEX continue to contribute to Lower Hutt’s cultural fabric through the HMFHT, local schools, and community activities (HMFHT, n.d.-a), highlighting how diplomatic and local government collaboration can bring unique cultural outcomes to the community.

Centralised sister city activities coordinated by HCC includes the biennial “Hutt Japan Day” festivities (Wenman, 2019). Held on the grounds of and inside The Dowse since 2017, these events have music performances and interactive cultural activities (HMFHT, n.d.-b, 2017). The festivals were hosted under the agreement that it will alternate with the biennial Japan Festival held by Wellington City Council (HMFHT, n.d.-a). It encourages engagement through cultural diversity, education, and conversation, bringing together people connected with Japan, locals, and visitors. It is a tangible and accessible cultural event in central Lower Hutt.

Shifting Strategic Focuses of the Council. With the election of Mayor Campbell Barry in 2019, strategic focus shifted away from the SCRs. HCC reoriented spending by reducing existing budgets that align less closely to their current Long Term Plan and reinvesting funding to key development areas (“Lower Hutt’s new mayor”, 2019). Despite previous reductions, HCC further decreased the International Co-operating Cities budget from \$45,000 to \$5,000 (HCC, 2010, 2020a). Formerly a 0.15FTE role, the international relations manager role which supported programmes such as MINTEX was removed in 2021 (HCC, 2017b). Concerning these changes in budgets, Wallace said, “that’s going to put huge amount of pressure on volunteers... Good volunteers - despite every effort - if they’re struggling, then the relationship will falter” (personal communication, December 8, 2021).

HCC’s strategic priorities currently focus on environmental stability, infrastructure, leisure and wellbeing, and urban growth (HCC, 2021b). Councillor Dyer acknowledged this shift in the current Council’s budget reprioritisation, focusing more on “core infrastructure, pipes in the ground, roading, and bare basic Council facilities”:

When the new Council was elected and the new Mayor, the focus for Lower Hutt really did change and went back to basics... rather than some “nice to have” things that previous Council had done... The SCRs definitely did weaken a little bit... At the end of the day, every dollar we spend as ratepayers’ money... That’s a call of “Well, it’s less money on SCRs and spending more money on pipes in the ground”. (B. Dyer, personal communication, November 18, 2021)

HCC, which was once a key facilitator of cultural and economic activities for its SCRs, now has a reduced role.

This shift was also reflected in Lower Hutt’s SCR with Tempe City through the coordination of a kowhai tree planting to celebrate the relationship’s 40th anniversary in 2021. Without direct involvement by HCC, this was initiated by the community group Hutt Sister City Foundation and subsequently coordinated with the Embassy of the United States of America (H. Morris, personal communication, December 2, 2021; U.S. Mission New Zealand, 2021). The role of community groups in SCRs are critical during shifts in local government priorities. As discussed in Chapter Two, trust and relationship building are key parts of maintaining SCRs. In this example, the absence of local government in existing SCRs led to opportunities taken by diplomatic missions to support, facilitate, or maintain international relations.

The Role of Sister City Gifts

Gifts often have symbolic roles through representing the goodwill and the meaningful relationships formed from SCRs. I highlight two types of sister city gift-giving for Lower Hutt and Minoh: between communities or individuals and between local governments. The former can act as resource sharing, leading to new community connections and friendships. The latter can symbolise goodwill and future relationship building between local governments. The display and storage of these gifts reflect shifting local government attitudes towards SCRs.

Gift-giving between Hutt-Minoh communities has sparked long-term relationships that developed beyond the original SCR. In 2001, Minoh families donated personal kendo armour to the newly formed Hutt Kendo Club, subsequently sparking nation-wide connections including national teams who visited Minoh in 2015 and 2018 (Edwards, 2001; Lytollis, 2018; Minoh City, n.d.-a; Minoo Now!, 2015). The Hutt City Rural Fire Authority received two Nissan fire trucks in 1997 (Schouten, 1997). Modified to New Zealand conditions, they were then gifted to the Bushfire Force of Wainuiomata in 1999, leading to a three-month exchange for Minoh assistant fire director Teruo Mikami (“Firefighter waiting for fire”, 1999; “New presentation for familiar fire truck”, 1999). This initial gift-giving proved to have long-term connections for the Wellington region. Porirua’s Plimmerton

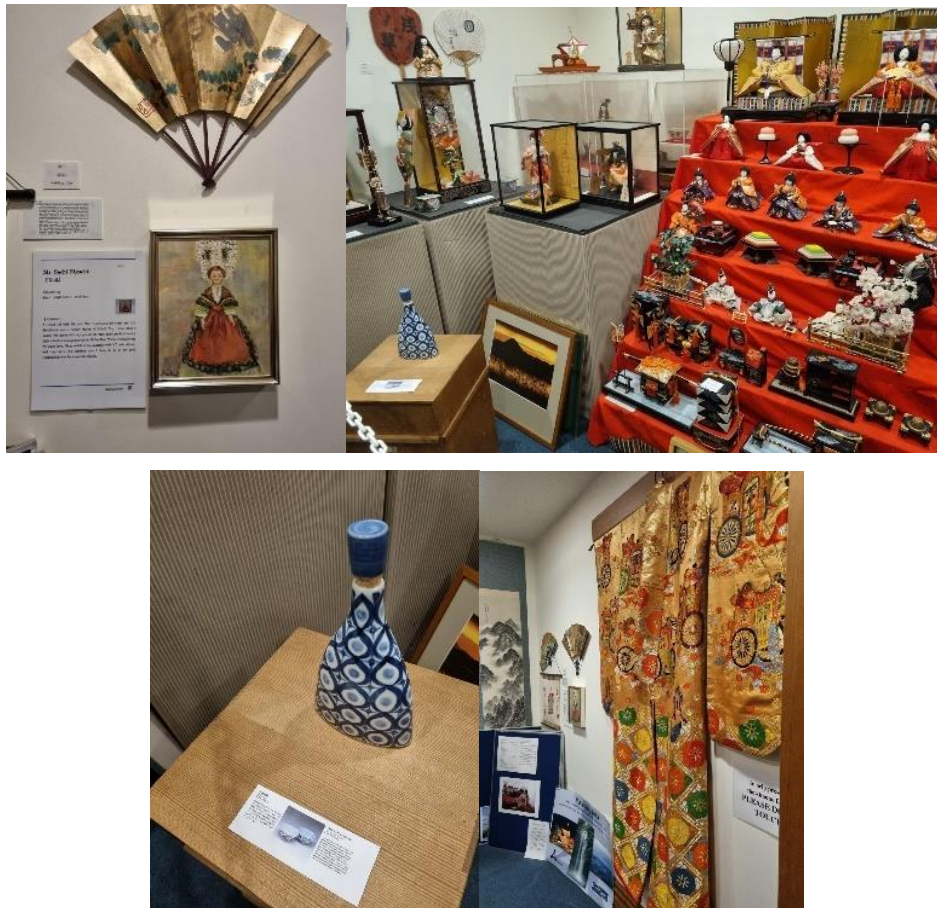
Volunteer Fire Brigade visited a Minoh fire brigade in 2012, organised directly by a Tui Glen School teacher (Dando, 2014). Notably, the Brigade had joint training exchanges in 2012 and 2014 with Porirua's sister city Nishio (Lamb, 2015a; Minoh City, n.d.-a). These existing connections developed from an occasion of gifting that provided valuable and previously inaccessible community resources.

Sister city gifts between local government counterparts are physical symbols of goodwill and relationship building (Hogan, 2019). Lower Hutt's gifts from Minoh once on display for visitors to the HCC offices were, however, removed following the inauguration of Mayor Barry in 2019. This also includes Minoh's artworks gifted by HAS following their exhibition in 2017 (D. Balm, personal communication, November 26, 2021; see Appendix G). They now reside at the Minoh House (Figure 16), and its permanent display honours the relationships and agreement between counterpart cities:

The understanding was that the artwork...would always be on show and available for the citizens of that city. So, for it to be in a council archives and storage facility that was, [in] my view, not fulfilling the commitment given by the cities on both sides... that is very much an individual preference of each mayor... I just felt that that wasn't an appropriate place...given the background on the love and the history that it had. (R. Wallace, personal communication, December 8, 2021)

Figure 16

Photographs of Oil Painting “Doll” (Sachi Higuchi), the Exhibition Room with Minoh Mayoral Gifts and Artworks from the Minoh Art Association, a Ceramic Sake Flask (Takeshi Yamashita), and a Kimono. These Artworks and Gifts are Currently on Display at the Hutt Minoh Friendship House.



Conversely, many of the gifts given by Lower Hutt to Minoh continue to stand prominently in the Minoh city halls for visitors to see. This includes the sister city display at the Multicultural Centre (Figure 17; Figure 18). In 1999, HCC gifted a totara pouwhenua to commemorate the SCR’s vitality on its fourth-year anniversary (Figure 19). Carved by artist Bryce Manukonga, Te Ātiawa, this traditional Māori carving still stands in Minoh’s Maple Hall with a placard in Japanese, English and te reo Māori (HMHFT, 2020a; Minoh City, n.d.-b, 2022b).

Figure 17

A Permanent Display Corner in the Multicultural Centre in Minoh (Books About New Zealand, Children's Books by New Zealand Author Margaret Mahey, Pamphlets for Lower Hutt Schools, Photographs of Exchange Visits Taken by Lower Hutt and Minoh Citizens, and Other Memorabilia Gifted By Lower Hutt). Reproduced by permission of Minoh City Hall.



Figure 18

The Hutt Art Society's Artworks on Permanent Display on the Second Floor of the Multicultural Centre at the Minoh City Offices, Open to the Public. Reproduced by permission of Minoh City Hall.



Figure 19

Photograph of the Pouwhenua Carved by Bryce Manukonga. This Tall Carving Stands in the Heart of the Maple Hall of the Minoh City Offices. Reproduced by permission of Minoh City Hall.



The Dowse Art Museum and the Community

From contemporary to craft art, gallery to creative hub, The Dowse's colourful history brought visual art to different communities (The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). With its long relationship with HCC and succession of directors with strong visions, The Dowse has challenged the way art is exhibited by pushing conventional boundaries. I briefly investigate the way directorship shaped The Dowse through exhibiting for the communities. Here I interview Tim Walker who was director from 1998 to 2008 during the peak of sister city activities (Appendix D). Narrowing this focus, I then consider The Dowse's rebranding during and after Walker's tenure. Last, I outline the involvement of HCC with The Dowse, focusing on the SCRs. This case study highlights the different ways The Dowse has responded, engaged, and challenged its audiences and communities through exhibitions and visual art, providing context to its minimal involvement with the city's vibrant SCRs.

Shaping The Dowse Through Directorship

The Dowse has a legacy of fine and craft art. Its public programming has engaged its communities and audiences through visual art. When speaking of the exhibitions and rebranding of The Dowse during his tenure, Tim Walker maintained these were outputs of a core and strategic community-focused intention:

Because the craft museum, when you looked at it, there weren't enough people [in the wider Wellington region], who would come to The Dowse often enough to actually make us successful. So, it was far too niche... we had a reputation and a legacy role to play in relationship to the craft and community – it had to be both. (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

Walker arrived at The Dowse in the aftermath of the Price Waterhouse review commissioned by HCC in response to increased criticism of the Museum and its perceived lack of community involvement (Harlow, 2006; Schouten, 1998). While some visitors found it difficult to connect to the art, labelling it as pretentious or incomprehensible, others wanted The Dowse to retain its craft focus (Schouten, 1998). Following Council talks about closing The Dowse with the idea that residents could go to Wellington City instead, Walker was hired as director to increase visitor numbers and revenue (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021). This was during a period that placed pressure on ratepayer-funded cultural institutions for accountability and performance.

Unique to previous directors, Walker had the mandate from HCC to lead change for The Dowse (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021). He went into the job interview with three words: community, creativity and commercial (commercially positive), and a “craft plus” model stemming from his experiences at Te Papa Tongarewa (personal communication, October 29, 2021). Walker saw that The Dowse could be shaped to be inclusive of and relevant to the communities, and he placed high emphasis on diversity and the power of creativity (The Big Idea Editor, 2020). This meant that Walker saw the need to bring HCC and Museum staff together so The Dowse could move forward (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021). With Walker’s leadership, The Dowse entered a new phase of exhibiting for the community:

As we look at the way that the community changes... Why would we narrow down our product offer to a very narrow kind of group? If we play into the very traditional contemporary art space, we are really giving [to] people who already go to the City Gallery, Te Papa, Porirua, and the Adam Art Gallery, [it’s] just another course. But where is the food for everyone else? (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

Hip hop and graffiti art exhibitions started at the beginning of Walker’s tenure in 1999. One of the most publicised exhibitions was *Respect - Hip Hop Aotearoa*, which allowed Lower Hutt’s hip hop community to be involved in the art sector previously inaccessible to them (Figure 20). The Dowse’s audiences had shifted alongside definitions of art, craft, and design, and this event “pushed buttons and celebrated underrepresented groups within the community” (The Dowse Art Museum,

n.d.). Walker spoke of his passion for exhibitions designed not just to meet Council and performance expectations but relevant to local communities through partnership, collaboration, and conversation (personal communication, October 29, 2021). In 2003, the exhibition toured nationally over a two-year period at nine venues, although previously no other venue was interested in hosting the project (“Arts leader”, 2009).

Figure 20

A Photograph of the “RESPECT: hip hop Aotearoa” Exhibition, Outside The Dowse in 2001 (The Dowse Art Museum, 2001). Reproduced with permission of The Dowse Art Museum.



In 2000, Walker highlighted another exhibition sparked by an unprecedented campaign: *Dob in an Artist*. *The Dowse* asked local citizens to “dob in” the names and addresses of local creative people (Philpott, 2000). Later that year, *The Dowse* opened *Home Fire*, an exhibition that showcased local artists from all levels of skill and disciplines, including nationally renowned artists and those only known on the street they lived on. The works had an incredible range, with several works from Avalon Studios and others from prison and mental health facilities (Philpott, 2000). This generated great interest for visitors and participants alike (National Services Te Paerangi, 2001; Philpott, 2000). In reflection, Walker said:

It was like taking a genuine and generous interest in the lives of the community [that’s] funding you. It really was basically shifting the perception of *The Dowse* amongst local people to being a place that actually was keenly interested in them. (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

This was one of the ways Walker worked to make lasting relationships and connections with the local community and artists while still bringing *The Dowse* forward as a leading cultural and art institution.

Walker's vision was unhindered by the fact that these exhibitions were often viewed as radical. He questioned the capacity, responsibility, and role that HCC and The Dowse should have for its audiences and communities.

Does a public institution have a responsibility to understand the diversity of its audience, of its communities - the changing nature of that diversity in terms of intersectionality, gender diversity, ethnicity and so forth? And if not, then what publicly funded entity within a city council is going to do that? (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

Local community groups such as the Rotary Club of Hutt City were welcoming of his direction, saying that Walker was not afraid to challenge audiences by moving The Dowse into new and unexplored areas ("Arts leader", 2009). Meanwhile, Walker believed the community has a right to exhibitions that were relevant to them, and council-linked museums like The Dowse have community roles by giving audiences chances to connect, express, and explore.

Walker's focus on engaging new communities and audiences was not singular. Contemporary and fine art still had its place at the institution. The Dowse continued to nurture strong relationships to bring contemporary and fine art to Lower Hutt (Harlow, 2006). As Harlow (2006) summarises, the philosophy behind The Dowse and the attitude from its director and staff shaped the institution's identity, rather than the materials of the artwork used in its exhibitions.

TheNewDowse

Walker's rebranding of The Dowse included a new logo, colour scheme, and renaming as *TheNewDowse* (Figure 21). The bright colours used, the logo chosen, and the new name were selected to reflect how The Dowse was becoming a creative hub that "embraced diversity as a powerful niche" (Dekker, 2007; The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). Partly influenced by processes at Te Papa Tongarewa, physical building renovations, expanded public programming, and astute understanding of the local community where he was a long-time resident, demonstrated Walker's passion to transform the institution into a meeting place of art for all communities (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021).

Figure 21

Photograph of TheNewDowse With its Bright Signage, Logo Above the Entrance of the Left of the Building (The Dowse Art Museum, ca. 2007). Reproduced with permission of The Dowse Art Museum.



The rebranding's strategic aim echoed the broadening identity and role of the institution outside of the "art museum" persona (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021). This was a significant undertaking with HCC approving \$1.969 million for the redevelopment, engaging renowned architect Ian Athfield ("Arts leader", 2009; HCC, 2005; The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). The community-inclusive redesign included the sustainable *RainScreen* building feature and was successful drawing high visitor numbers ("Arts leader", 2009; "Empowered by creativity", 2007). Walker emphasised that he saw TheNewDowse as an output behind the institution's journey: a brand that tells a story rather than simple a museum logo (personal communication, October 29, 2021). However, these changes were not kept for long following Walker's departure:

The facade of... TheNewDowse when it opened with its big, pink, flash - its bright orange and purple and so forth... Whereas as soon as I left, they changed the cadmium yellow to a pale blue and they got rid of the logo. So now it looks like to me, like a very kind of Soviet... it's one of these buildings that does this to you: if you don't feel particularly comfortable going into a cultural institution, it invokes all of the areas of what/who it belongs to and what it's for. And when you go inside, it tends to reinforce that. (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

After Walker, Cam McCracken's directorship saw the institution return to "The Dowse Art Museum" in 2012 (Figure 22), indicating a focus on its national reputation as a leader in contemporary art (Benson, 2012; Hunt, 2012). McCracken personally never saw "TheNewDowse" fitting the institution. The shift back to "The Dowse Art Museum" had mixed reviews with the local community (Hunt, 2012; McLeod, 2014; Trevelyan, 2014). The Dowse's public programming continues to bring contemporary art and visual art to Lower Hutt (HCC, 2021a; The Dowse Art

Museum, n.d.). However, with its prolific history in pushing boundaries for its communities, it remains to be seen how The Dowse will continue engagement with its rapidly shifting communities.

Figure 22

In Contrast to TheNewDowse, the Institution's Latest Renovations as The Dowse Art Museum.



The Dowse and Sister Cities

During Walker's tenure, the young SCR with Minoh showed signs of great growth and relationship building. However, the potential to connect the sister city community to The Dowse through public programming was not utilised. "Hutt Japan Day" held in 2017 and 2019, and the 25th anniversary celebration hosted by The Dowse in 2020 were strictly venue-based roles (HMHFT, 2017, 2020a). During the interview, I asked Walker about whether SCRs were part of his vision in expanding exhibitions for the communities:

I think they need to move from being symbolic and rhetorical – like a garden here and a garden there – to: how could they be a real conduit for connective conversation, for us at The Dowse to (through Minoh), get into the creative economy, to be leaders in design, and potentially lead us in The Dowse to an exhibition or an exchange. But, there was never an operation like that. (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

Conversations were pursued through HCC during Walker's tenure. Though he was supportive of the potential, Walker said "At that stage, it was very much like a ceremonial, symbolic relationship... We definitely pursued conversations with Asia New Zealand... through them to the Japanese Embassy and so forth. But there was no real connection between Minoh and that" (personal communication, October 29, 2021).

Filling this gap, HAS established the reciprocal art exhibition exchange with the MAA (Balm, 2016; Wenman, 2017). As emphasised by Balm's interview, the personal community connection was

integral to the Hutt-Minoh art exchange's success. It highlights the way community resources can rely on people-to-people connections for creating activities or exhibitions that engage communities.

Conclusion

The Hutt-Minoh SCR brought various cultural, economic, and resource-sharing opportunities to local communities, including teachers, students, local government workers, sports groups, and artists. It thrived due to committed leaders in HCC and community groups that strengthened trust between counterpart cities. Moreover, people-to-people connections at the heart of the international relationship were driving forces behind activities in the community. However, changes in leadership and investment from HCC indicate shifts in the support network that has sustained the SCR over the years. The Dowse, despite its strong community engagement and commitment, has little involvement with the SCR.

Lower Hutt's SCR with Minoh quickly grew from education exchanges to community-led activities. School-to-school links, mayoral leadership, HCC support, HAS, and HMHFT were part of these dynamics, leading to new relationships that remain due to the strength of the community connection. In all SCR activities, the development of trust and friendship allowed opportunities for community engagement to flow. It brought revenue, cultural education, and resource sharing to the communities. However, recent shifts at HCC including staffing changes and funding reallocations may have negative effects on the trust and friendships fostered, putting pressure on volunteers and the future outcomes of these vibrant activities at risk.

I highlighted sister city gifts in two ways: their role in the SCR and as physical reflections of shifting attitudes in local government compared to its international counterpart. Some gifts have sparked new relationships in the community while others are cultural symbols of the goodwill behind the SCRs. The movement of the gifts from HCC offices to the Minoh House signalled shifts in local government attitudes away from the SCR's original aims. While the House continues to have a central role in Lower Hutt's SCRs, HCC's strategic focus has moved away from its international links.

The Dowse has brought various art forms to its communities, including contemporary, craft, and fine arts. Tim Walker's tenure marked a new period. Its rebranding, renovations, and introduction of new art forms such as graffiti were part of a pathway to meaningful engagement with the city's diverse and unique communities. While this was successful, The Dowse's restored name reflects its reputation as a leading contemporary art institution in New Zealand. The Dowse has only had a venue role with the city's flourishing SCR. This case study reveals that the Minoh SCR was never utilised by The Dowse on this pathway.

Both SCR and The Dowse meaningfully engaged with different communities in unique ways. On one hand, the SCR had great impacts on community activities in multiple sectors. Subsequent community relationships grew and flourished outside its SCR origins. On the other hand, The Dowse has a prolific history as an art institution, engaging diverse communities and audiences through novel and often controversial exhibitions. The community outreach is apparent: whereas The Dowse tested the boundaries of meaningful community engagement at the art museum through visual art, SCRs created new community relationships and connections in unexpected ways through community collaboration. HAS, focusing on community and cultural art, capitalised on the SCR's flourishing relationships. It brought exchange and resource-sharing through friendship, trust, and art. Evidence shows that the potential of utilising existing SCRs for the Lower Hutt's art museum remains undeveloped.

Communities have central roles for many New Zealand sister cities and museums. For this case study, communities have shaped both Museum and SCR with engagement through cross-cultural exchange, committed leadership, and long-term friendships. However, these communities are continuing to become more complex and diverse, seen in the cultural diversity of Lower Hutt described in Chapter Two and by different audiences engaged by the Museum and SCR in this case study. In Chapter Five, I draw together these concepts and themes highlighted by the case studies and examine the potential of SCRs as resources for community cultural exchange within the community-focused museum.

Chapter Five

Discussion and Analysis

The community - you have to believe they have a right to something that's relevant and in return for the paying rates. Otherwise... what can happen... is that there is an assumption by people in the sector, that local people... should pay an amount of money each year to fund an institution to basically deliver national ecosystem development opportunities for artists. And why is that? Why would that be so? Why would local ratepayers be expected to fund a network of organisations who are entirely focused on something that has almost nothing to do with them? That's the thing that I think is suppression. (T. Walker, personal communication, October 29, 2021)

The above statement made by Tim Walker highlights a core part of this research's argument. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the nature of sister cities, the outcomes they bring to communities, and the principles that allow these outcomes to flow. These outcomes are shared objectives for sister cities, local governments, and community focused museums, and therefore could be utilised by museums affiliated with local governments to support and its rapidly shifting, culturally diverse communities. This is examined by analysing preceding chapters and key subject areas which correspond with two primary research questions: Why are SCRs important to local government, communities, and museums? How can SCRs be utilised by local government, the community, and museums to support and strengthen culturally diverse communities?

This Chapter is structured in three interdependent parts corresponding with key primary research topics: demographics as indicators of cultural diversity including New Zealand's growing Asian populations, sister cities, and community-focused museums. Sister cities are long-term partnerships that connect local governments and communities. My research examines the dynamics and influences on sister city activities that effectively bring cultural and economic outcomes to communities. For community-focused museums, public programming through events and exhibitions aim to meaningfully engage audiences and communities. Communities are rapidly changing, becoming increasingly complex and culturally diverse. Asian populations in the communities, including Asian New Zealanders and Asian migrants, are growing rapidly.

This research examines these three primary topics, the central focus of this thesis. It also questions how SCRs could be utilised by museums, particularly museums affiliated with local governments, to support and strengthen meaningful engagement with these culturally diverse communities.

I will examine this perspective by analysing topics in Chapter Two alongside two case studies developed in Chapters Three and Four. The case studies highlight the factors that influence various cultural, educational, and economic sister city activities as well as the development of community-focused, regional museum. Underlying both case studies, changes in demographics indicate how cultural diversity is shifting in these communities.

In this Chapter, I highlight the significance of the changing cultural diversity in Porirua and Lower Hutt for both local government and their museums. I then consider the role of sister city activities for communities and the factors that allow SCRs to facilitate economic and cultural outcomes. These have implications for the way international links can be utilised for the heritage sector. Lastly, I discuss museums and their relationship with local government, and the presence or absences of SCRs in these cultural institutions.

The Chapter's purpose is to ascertain how and why sister cities can be effectively utilised by museums linked to local government in a rapidly shifting, culturally diverse New Zealand. It aims to show that while local governments and museums continue to focus on their communities, demographics have shifted. This "demographic disruption" (Spoonley, 2020) forecasts growth with impacts on urban conurbations and regions: the former will experience population growth, and the latter, decline. This Chapter, therefore, turns to the future potential of sister cities for museums as a pathway to meaningfully engage with and support their culturally diverse communities.

Communities and Cultural Diversity

ICOM's new definition of museums include the terms "community", "accessible and inclusive", and "diversity and sustainability" (ICOM, 2022). The definition suggests museums face pressure to create opportunities for meaningful cultural community engagement through inclusive public programming. I discuss how the concepts of cultural diversity in New Zealand have influenced community-focused museums before examining how growing Asian populations present opportunities for museums aligned with local government. Through this section, I aim to underline the urgency and importance of local government and their museums responding to these shifts in their communities through public programming.

Cultural Diversity in the Community

Cultural diversity is an increasingly prominent aspect of New Zealand society that local governments highlight in community-focused strategic policies. This follows the Local Government Act 2002 in recognising the diversity of New Zealand communities. The Act enables local government to have a role in promoting community well-being and therefore promoting local accountability for decisions made on behalf of their communities (Local Government Act 2002, part

1 section 3). As discussed in Chapter Two, biculturalism and changes in the cultural diversity of New Zealand, including increasing Asian migration, are significant to New Zealand's identity. Furthermore, national perceptions of Asian immigrants and Asian New Zealanders vary, indicating dissonance between attitudes towards Asian immigration and central and local government policies that focus on inclusive and culturally diverse strategies (Asia New Zealand Foundation, 2022; Butcher, 2008; Gendall et al., 2013). These aspects provide context for the case studies, as Porirua and Lower Hutt's Asian communities continue to grow.

Outlined in Chapter Two, meaningful community consultation by local governments and museums aid in facilitating community engagement. Rising awareness for the need to disassemble homogeneity within ethnic groups and give voices to New Zealand's diverse community groups highlight the importance of addressing cultural diversity within the heritage sector (Xīn xī lán, 2022). Initiatives such as Te Papa Tongarewa's *Voices of Asian Aotearoa* emphasise the complexity of cultural identity within Asian communities and are an important part in recognising and engaging this growing part of New Zealand's cultural diversity (Gassin, 2021). However, these initiatives have only begun to gain momentum in New Zealand museums. This thesis finds that Asian populations are increasing across New Zealand, shifting the cultural make-up of communities including those in Lower Hutt and Porirua. Therefore, public programming in community-focused museums must also shift to reflect these changes.

Demographic Shifts

Communities are not static: New Zealand's cultural diversity has shifted, becoming increasingly complex. Both Porirua and Lower Hutt have shown steady increases in Asian populations over the last two decades while European populations have remained relatively stable (Statistics New Zealand, 2018c, 2018d). Additionally, high percentages of these populations speak more than one language or are born overseas (HCC, 2021a; Mawer et al., 2017; PCC, 2021a). In response, PCC and HCC have spotlighted the cultural diversity of their communities in annual reports and Long Term Plans (HCC, 2021b; PCC, 2021b). If these trends continue, then local governments have a responsibility to respond to these changes through meaningfully engaging with these communities. By extension, community-focused museums that are linked to local governments also have this responsibility.

This data suggests a counter-narrative to the political and bicultural narrative of Asian populations in New Zealand. The authoritative narratives often emphasise a discourse that Asian populations in New Zealand are recent migrants or are a statistically minor part of New Zealand's cultural diversity (Butcher, 2008; Butcher et al., 2015; Gendall et al., 2013). However, the continuing

trends in demographic shifts for Asian New Zealanders challenge this narrative with increasing urgency.

As my research focuses on international links with Japan, Chapters Three and Four reveal that there is a missing facet to local government statistics: Council annual reports have no breakdown in socio-demographic statistics for the term “Asian” (HCC, 2021a; PCC, 2021a). While this may be a reflection on the frameworks for national reporting of population demographics statistics as mentioned in Chapter Two (Statistics New Zealand, 2020; Statistics New Zealand DataInfo+, 2021), it signifies a lack of clarity regarding the complexity of the cities’ cultural diversity. Chapter Two indicates the category “Asian” inadequately reflects New Zealand’s complex, ethnically diverse society. As local governments and museums often have aligned strategic goals, this thesis argues that recognising strong shifts in cultural diversity and understanding the complexity of these communities are integral to meaningful community engagement. Breaking down this “umbrella” term must be done by both local government and museums. This specialist area of discussion, related to visitor studies and new museology, would benefit from further research by museums to better understand culturally diverse communities and aid in meaningful and grassroots engagement.

Sister Cities

The case studies reveal the unique opportunities capitalised by local governments, museums, and community groups through various sister city activities. This includes economic activities, cultural exchange, and resource sharing. First, I consider the distinctive features of the Porirua-Nishio and Hutt-Minoh links that have generated cultural and economic outcomes for communities. Then, I examine the factors that contribute to the synergies of SCRs, including leadership, collaboration, and interpersonal connections. I further discuss implications for SCRs when these factors are not met, reflected in the example of each case study’s sister city gifts. This section aims to reveal the influences that facilitate sister city activities that bring great value to their communities.

Successful Sister City Activities for the Community

My research establishes that SCRs provide opportunities such as economic activities, resource sharing, and cultural exchange for communities and local governments that would not have been available otherwise. These cultural and economic outcomes are important for local government as they are quantifiable in terms of numbers and variety, creating a positive feedback loop for supporting SCRs. Notably, these opportunities are distinctly different in both case studies. Both successful SCRs have taken strategic approaches by tapping into economic and cultural potentials through actively promoting the industries and sectors they are regionally best known for.

In Porirua, PCC was able to capitalise on the city rebranding following the late 1980s. It was a period of change as Pātaka was amalgamating with Page 91 Artspace Gallery and Porirua Library, and Todd Motors's closure contributed to the city's shifting economic dynamics. The Porirua-Nishio link's activities were exciting new opportunities for Porirua's communities that PCC could support as part of their community strategic vision. Schools shared culture through exchanges, PCC staffing exchanges directly shared international resources, the Nishio gardeners regularly maintained Pātaka's Kaizen garden at their own expense, and business relationships such as the green tea project and motor lodge were explored with Porirua's economy in mind. The timing of the SCR's initial growth was likely optimal, allowing cultural and economic benefits to flourish for the community.

Similarly, Lower Hutt's SCR launched with cultural and education activities that yielded significant cultural and economic outcomes. HCC staffing exchanges, rugby and kendo exchanges, and virtual video links at both schools and in the community facilitated economic and cultural value for different communities. The biennial Hutt Japan Day festivities encourage cultural diversity, education, and conversation in an engaging way for communities. Enduringly, the Hutt-Minoh reciprocal art exchange brought community art to the city while providing opportunities for local art to be exhibited abroad. These activities continually renewed and built on existing trust between community groups, allowing new community activities to establish outside of the SCR.

The value of SCRs is often measured by economic success. Certainly, there is value in noting economic outcomes as they are tangible outputs of investment and return that local governments can measure. Recognised in academic literature such as Cremer et al. (1996) and Cross (2010), these economic values were regularly reported by Lower Hutt and Porirua's respective councils. The Japanese SCRs brought revenue and business to the cities that were inaccessible or unavailable before. However, my research confirms a counter-narrative that is seen in the contrasting views and experiences provided by interviewees. The interviewees commented on SCR involvement and values during different time periods, and those active during the peak of sister city activities spoke highly of intangible and cultural benefits promoted by the SCRs. It was emphasised that though economic benefits flowed, these were always secondary drivers to SCR's cultural and social objectives.

As emphasised by Darcy Nicholas, Ray Wallace, and Hiromi Morris, sister cities were not formed for the sole purpose of economic benefits (de Villiers et al., 2007; Duncan, 2021; Hogan, 2019). Recent research emphasises significant cultural and educational impacts of SCRs for local governments and their communities (Fan et al., 2019; Maniam, 2011; Ogawa, 2012; O'Toole, 2001; de Villiers et al., 2007). Cultural and educational benefits can continue during periods when local

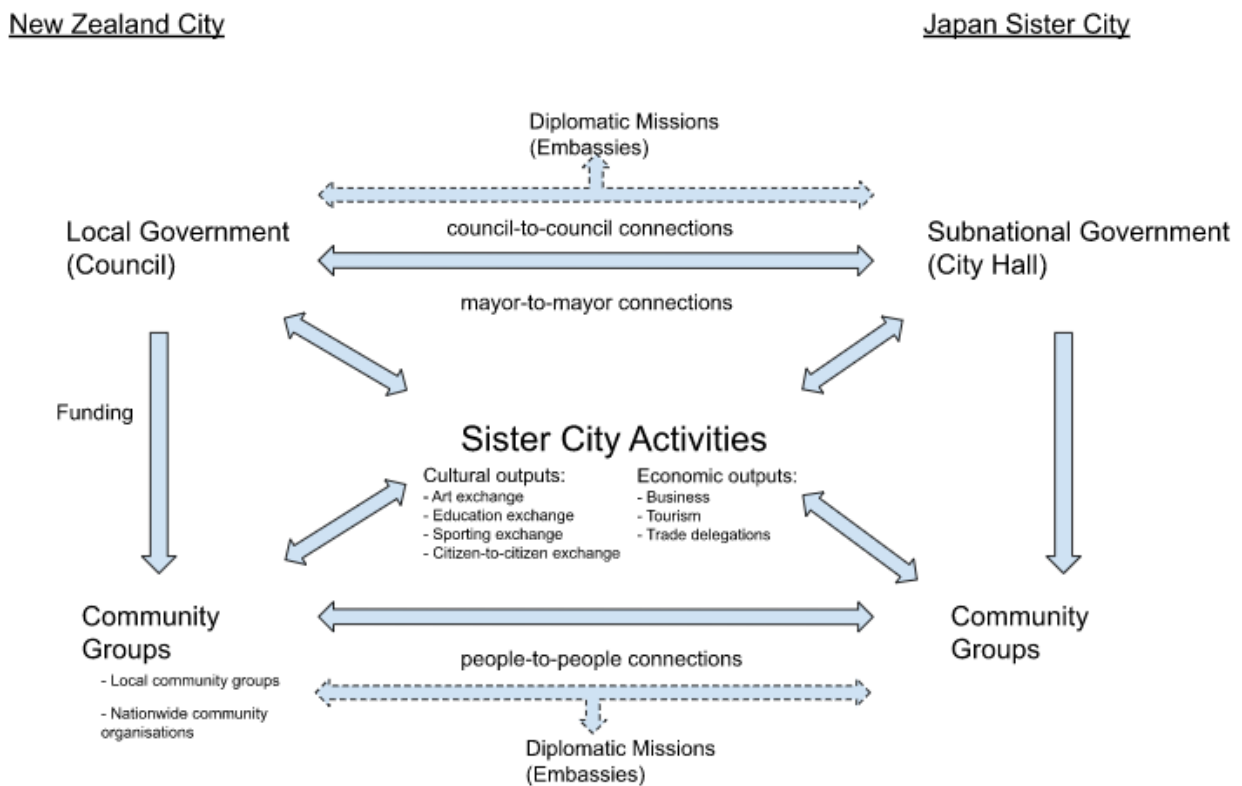
government support or community group involvement in SCRs are absent and subsequent economic revenue reduced. As shown by the Lower Hutt case study, these non-tangible benefits can grow beyond its sister city origins due to strong community connections and interpersonal links. In both case studies, cultural, art and sporting exchanges were all forms of valuable gift sharing that built trust between local governments, business owners, and community groups.

The People-to-people Connection: Leadership and Community Groups

Sister cities thrive when they are supported by a strong collaborative network between local government, community organisations, and cultural institutions. As observed in the case studies, when these aspects of SCRs work together, there is a synergy that energises these community relationships and increases sister city activities in various sectors (Figure 23). This in turn creates positive feedback for the local governments and community groups invested in the SCRs as it rejuvenates the existing relationships and justifies the SCR's presence in the community. The tangible aspect of this synergy is shown in the success of sister city activities across educational, cultural, and business sectors. While national organisations with committed leaders such as GCNZ and diplomatic missions have supportive roles, it is certainly the people-to-people relationships between Council members, community organisations' volunteers, and key leaders in the community that provide the grassroots to encourage cultural exchange and support sister city sustainability.

Figure 23

Flowchart of the Relationships and Links That Sustain Sister City Relationships Across Local Government and for the Community.



Political and people-to-people relationships at local government levels have a strong influence on SCR development and sustainability. As discussed in Chapter Two, there is evidence that there is significance in Japanese culture for mayoral leadership and involvement that creates trust and prestige in relations (Cremer et al., 1996; de Villiers et al., 2007; Hogan 2019). The case studies show that the personal connections maintained by mayors and other leaders also have strong effects on cultural and economic outcomes of SCRs. For both Porirua and Lower Hutt, counterpart mayors were strong leaders in the sister city movement during their SCRs most active years. Unique to Porirua, Darcy Nicholas’s role at both PCC and Pātaka encouraged the growth of sister city activities across multiple sectors, bringing political weight to discussions and relationship building. Significantly, Nicholas’s community connections and friendships sparked multiple business, educational, and cultural links in Porirua. These political and interpersonal connections reduced overall cost for sister city relations while increasing assurance and trust between counterparts, allowing sister city activities to flourish for the communities. Committed leadership, the people-to-people connections, and friendships therefore are key to utilising sister cities and facilitating community outcomes.

The case studies show that community connections and collaboration are essential in maintaining SCR's and falter when these principles are not met. However, sister city activities can continue in the local community despite strain on volunteer or community resources due to established friendships and interpersonal relationships. For Porirua, the loss of the community connection through the demise of PIA and absence of collaboration due to staffing changes at PCC have led to a decline in the SCR's community presence. Nonetheless, the Porirua-Nishio link has a degree of flexibility due to existing people-to-people relationships and friendships, as seen in the exchanges with Nishio gardeners. Lower Hutt's SCR nurtured long-term community relationships. Self-sustaining community activities sparked by the link continue to thrive without direct HCC support. Notably, both Nishio and Minoh show a willingness to continue engagement with their New Zealand sister city partners. The Japanese counterparts' continual strong investment signal endurance behind established SCR's that can be utilised by New Zealand's local governments.

Sister City Gifts and Communicating Sister Cities Values and Outcomes

The reality of how support for and perceptions of SCR's can shift is reflected symbolically in the gifts exchanged between the international cities. Gift giving establishes goodwill and trust over time (Hogan, 2019). Additionally, both case studies illustrate how gifting shares resources between communities. However, for the former, there is a strong contrast in how the counterpart cities for each case study display and store their respective gifts. In Minoh, the displays are colourful and conspicuous for citizens to see. In Lower Hutt, the move to the Minoh House places the gifts in comparative obscurity. The gifts given by Porirua are still displayed inside Nishio's offices. For the Nishio gifts, smaller pieces are placed around the offices of the PCC building such as the mayor's office while the larger pieces are held in Pātaka's collection storerooms, not visible for locals to see. The contrast in the way these gifts are stored reflect shifts in local government attitudes towards SCR's, signalling changes in perceptions and values of these community outcomes. Importantly, the obscurity of these gifts in both cities can contribute to a lack of visibility, education, and awareness of SCR's in the local community over time, creating challenges communicating the value of SCR's and its outcomes to the communities it supports.

Leadership has strong roles in local government investment in SCR's. Nicholas and Wallace were leaders in local government who saw potential community value of SCR's beyond economic investment and return. This was reflected in the interpersonal, community, and cultural connections maintained throughout their tenures. After shifts in SCR investment by PCC and HCC, leaders such as Mayor Baker and Councillor Brady highlight that local government priorities and value systems have changed. As discussed in Chapter Two, media coverage of sister city activities and sister city perceptions can influence local government attitudes and subsequently investment in SCR's. Physical

constructions such as the Kaizen garden and the Minoh House and events such as education exchanges and Hutt Japan Day are visible educators of the purpose of each SCR, and these aspects were perceived positively by all interviewees. However, communication of the purpose of SCRs for the community beyond economic values to leaders in local government as well as awareness of SCRs to communities are essential to future SCR investment.

There is potential for local government in utilising these long-term SCRs to support and strengthen meaningful community engagement. However, recent shifts in local government investment and community group involvement reflected in the storage of sister city gifts will have long term impacts on sister city counterparts. The dissolution of the PIA has severed the community link between Nishio and PCC, while governance of HMHFT indicates a shift in HCC involvement through its community organisation. In both case studies, there is a loss of interpersonal connections that built trust and friendships over the past three decades which facilitated community outcomes. This in part will make any future rejuvenation of both international links by local governments more challenging, confounding the potential of effectively utilising SCRs for engaging with and supporting its culturally diverse communities.

Museums for Communities

Museums linked with local government often have aligned strategic visions for their communities and are accountable to and therefore influenced by local government policies (National Services Te Paerangi, 2007). This can equally benefit and restrict public programming. Both case studies show that museums are tools for community engagement and education depending on how potential resources are utilised. I focus on the factors that shaped Pātaka's development and community visions through its relationship with PCC and institution-to-institution links, The Dowse during Tim Walker's tenure, and the role of museum branding. By considering inclusive public programming as tools for cultural education, I discuss how directorship and curatorship influenced public programming at the two institutions. Finally, I examine the presence or absence of sister cities at the museum through the case studies, revealing the different ways the SCRs were utilised in the heritage sector. Understanding the influences and drivers behind community-focused museums and sister cities at the museum aids in analysing how museums could more effectively engage with their culturally diverse communities.

Museums and Local Government

As mentioned in Chapter Two, museums with formal relationships with local governments have aligned vision statements and strategic planning. These institutions have strong working relationships with local government in terms of accountability and reporting (National Services Te

Paerangi, 2007). The strength of this governance structure includes relieving funding pressures as institutions can rely less on sourcing external funding for its operations. This can have a strong impact on small, regional museums that do not have the larger resources that metropolitan museums have, as seen with Pātaka. Provided that local governments have the capacity and policies to support their associated museums, the relationship is reciprocal in terms of providing for the local communities which fund them. This is certainly the case for both Pātaka and The Dowse. However, this is particularly an impactful relationship following the passing of the Local Government Act in 2002 as these museums are held accountable to the ratepayer.

Pātaka's relationship with PCC has facilitated strong community links through the institution's venue and public programming. There are strengths to this type of relationship. Most notably, Nicholas's unique role as general manager created resourcing and exhibition opportunities for the small institution. In its earlier years, this included utilising growing links with sister cities to engage its audiences and communities, contributing to its early reputation as a museum of art, education, cultural diversity, and creativity. Recently, Pātaka has developed its international branding and reputation with international collaborative exhibitions through Friend's leadership. For Pātaka, the close relationship and functioning of the Museum with PCC has relieved greater funding pressures while the alignment of policies regarding environment, and community well-being and outcomes have suited their public programming. However, Pātaka's community focus, similar to PCC, no longer includes its SCR links.

Institution-to-institution relationships can open doors to reciprocal exchanges for artists and exhibitions. This is a strong resource for the development of public programming for smaller museums. Through Friend's directorship, international collaborations have situated Pātaka on a global stage by giving the institution the ability to collaborate on international projects. This also benefited the museum by providing new opportunities for local artists to exhibit abroad, allowing culture sharing across institutions at an international scale. However, it was difficult for Pātaka to bring back international exhibitions due to resourcing constraints, indicating reciprocal exhibitions are only feasible when museums have capacity to facilitate them. In this way, these types of institutional relationships have limitations dependent on the resources and capacities of the museums. Therefore, museums must utilise existing as well as new relationships, resources, and connections to effectively expand their public programming outreach for their communities.

The Dowse has a distinct history with HCC and public media. The media spotlight on collecting practices and exhibition programming has had a national influence on art museum practices over the last 50 years, pushing the boundaries for community engagement and connection

(Harlow, 2006; McCredie, 1999; The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). While this often added to frictions between Council and Museum, the visions by museum directors such as Tim Walker paved new ways of public programming that subsequently developed its reputation for bringing visual art to Lower Hutt. Walker, as a director, believed in supporting artists and community groups through creating strong partnerships and collaborative exhibitions. *Respect - Hip Hop Aotearoa* was just one breakthrough exhibition that forged new relationships with a community that was previously under-acknowledged in the art museum sphere (Harlow, 2006; The Dowse Art Museum, n.d.). His tenure highlights that collaborative relationships with local community groups and individuals such as artists are resources that are crucial in developing inclusive public programming.

As Friend commented, branding has a strong influence on museums. Walker's vision of TheNewDowse as a "craft plus model" emphasises his intention for the institution's branding to reflect its focus on Lower Hutt's communities. The subsequent restructuring and renaming back to The Dowse indicate a shift in the image the branding promotes. From the outset, Pātaka's architecture including the Kaizen garden and community galleries were designed with the community in mind. Nicholas's influence during the renovations brought global ideas to complement the city's visions at the time. The Kaizen garden is an unique example of the Museum's changing role, as it was once part of the flurry of active engagement in sister city activities at Pātaka and within Porirua. Although with the Nishio gardener's visits paused and the garden is now a symbolic venue for passive cultural education, Pātaka's promotion of the garden remains part of its brand as a cultural and community hub of Porirua. Both museums continue to focus on their communities, but the way they engage their communities have shifted over the years.

The case studies suggest that the direction of public programming alongside community links and involvement is strongly dependent on curatorship, directorship, and local government relationships. Evidence shows that strong leadership in these roles will continue to have a significant influence on the development of museums.

Public Programming With Communities

Community inclusive museums must be reflexive in the way they engage with evolving communities to remain relevant and sustainable. In the new museology discourse, the role of public programming focuses on the museum communities. ICOM and OECD both acknowledge that public programming for communities generates opportunities for audiences to connect, creating an open space for discussion, cultural diversity and inclusion, and education (ICOM & OECD, 2019; see also Chapter Two). Visitor research in New Zealand museums plays a part in identifying and understanding these communities and audiences. However, more research could be done on the

museum “non-visitor” through the lens of cultural diversity in New Zealand. As the case studies in my research indicate, the way museums programme their exhibitions and related events can be meaningful for the organisations and communities involved through education, cultural exchange, and conversation.

Public programming can be a tool for cultural diversity and education. Recognised in museum literature, a museum’s role in society includes education, cultural awareness and self-identity, and knowledge sharing (Ang, 2005; Falk, 2010; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; Karp, 1992). A culturally diverse approach to public programming provides opportunities for communities to identify and connect with the exhibitions, creating open spaces for conversation and learning about other cultures (Ang, 2005). At Pātaka, exhibitions such as *Imagine Asia: New Zealand artists respond to contemporary Asia* (2015) and *The Migrating Kitchen* (2007-2023) were meaningful ways for communities to share culture and art through the Museum. The latter was a series of culturally diverse events that were community resourced and supported by people-to-people connections, similar to the influences and drivers of sister city activities identified in my research. The Blue Creek Gallery remains as a space for showcasing community artists, opening the exhibition floor directly for the local art sector. Although art and culture has consistently been the focus of Pātaka’s public programming as tools for education and community engagement, it is influenced strongly by its directors and its relationship with PCC.

Directorship and curatorship have strong impacts on the direction and roles of exhibition programming and community engagement (Kadoyama, 2018). For The Dowse, directors such as Walker believed that exhibitions could be a pathway for education, discussion, and discovery. He saw The Dowse’s potential to be shaped into an art institution for the local communities, and these directions aligned well with the HCC’s community drivers. Pātaka’s leaders also facilitated a range of cultural, art, and community exhibitions programming with a community vision aligned with PCC. Each director’s interpretation of “community” differed from cultural, local, and artist communities, as seen in the focus of exhibitions programmed. Although the types of exhibitions and engagement opportunities have varied over time, Pātaka’s reputation as a cultural and community hub remains strong. While each director and leader’s visions of community were different, their dedication brought novel and meaningful exhibitions to their institutions.

Sister Cities at the Museum

Sister cities and museums have a significant common link: the community. However, my research reveals that community-focused museums and SCRs engage with their communities in different ways. This is dependent on existing local government policies that support sister city

activities and community-orientated strategic drivers that align closely with museum public programming. Though modest in scope, Pātaka had the unique opportunity to include the early development of its SCR in its public programming and building renewal through the collaborative Kaizen garden. The meaningful relationship between Kaizen and the Nishio gardeners mark it as a unique sister city activity that facilitates resource sharing and cultural exchange for the local communities and Council staff. The synergy and partnership of museum leadership, the Mayor, and the community group PIA allowed this physical symbol to provide long-term cultural education and exchange for the community.

Pātaka also facilitated a small number of related exhibitions. *A Day in the Life of Porirua* and a subsequent exhibition in 2003 were organised due to a reciprocal connection between the Kapiti Camera Club and communities in Nishio. This showcases how these links within the community, once established, can remain strong over time. Exhibitions such as *Bamiyan, The Heart of Afghanistan* (2010) and Mitsuru Toriyama's watercolours exhibition (2000) at the Blue Pacific Gallery space aligned with the Council's vision for community engagement, drawing from existing sister cities as a pathway and resource to exhibit for Porirua's growing international audience. These relied on interpersonal relationships and friendships between cities and individuals. However, the decline in exhibitions that utilise sister cities reflect shifting policies at PCC and subsequently the Museum. For Porirua, these community and people-to-people links with Nishio have been severed, making future opportunities for Pātaka and the SCR more difficult.

The Dowse, however, never had an active role in their city's sister city link with Minoh. During Walker's tenure, there were two thriving SCRs that were active in the local community, yet its role in the art sector through The Dowse was limited. While discussions and intentions for The Dowse have occurred throughout the development of Minoh's relationship, the art sector was largely unaffected by the active international link due to the absence of people-to-people and direct institutional links. As Walker stipulated, while discussions were held, there was no conduit for real conversation between the SCR and The Dowse to bring exhibitions to the community. The HAS ultimately filled this niche and brought cultural art to Lower Hutt while also sending local art abroad to their community counterparts. While people-to-people connections and friendships developed through community organisations created this opportunity, The Dowse's focus on bringing visual art to the community occurred separately. Significantly, HCC's core international relations policies did not align closely to the Museum's public programming. Subsequently, while cultural exchange thrived across educational, business, and citizen-to-citizen levels, the potential in the art museum sector was largely overlooked.

The Hutt-Minoh art exchange showcases the potential of strong community involvement and people-to-people relationships that created trust and goodwill. Notably, the friendship between Balm and Kugo was the core driver that streamlined exhibition logistics that would have been difficult for the small, volunteer institution, even with Council support. For Lower Hutt, HAS and The Dowse sit within different niches of art exhibiting and do not compete for the same space in the local community. The Society's core functions focus on supporting artists and craftsman of different disciplines, specialties, and calibres. Therefore, HAS was able to exhibit various art forms with the city's international counterparts while also providing opportunities for local artists. The success of the Minoh-Hutt art exhibition emphasises the powerful impact of community involvement and people-to-people connections through the art sector. The exchange also highlights how SCRs could be a pathway to new opportunities for the museum audience as community resources with an international outreach. This returns to the question of how museums, including art museums, can exhibit in an inclusive way for a culturally diverse community.

The research participants' narratives demonstrate the multiple layers of perspectives regarding SCRs in the context of communities. Some participants have different positions and viewpoints about the role of SCRs in local government or museums. Notably, those involved with SCRs in the early 1990s spoke positively of SCR outcomes for and relevance to communities. However, their experiences and narratives collectively provided insight into key themes that are mutual between SCRs, local government, and museums, including their shared community objectives. This counter-narrative to the rhetoric that SCRs have become irrelevant to local government or affiliated museums provides a new perspective for utilising SCRs for communities in the museum space. Crucially, it draws attention to the critical issue of continuing meaningful engagement with culturally diversity communities that are significantly changing.

Conclusion

My research reveals that there is potential for SCRs in the museum space. The common link between sister cities and museums is the community, and the outcomes facilitated by SCRs are shared objectives between local government and affiliated museums. However, despite focus on communities, museums do not fully utilise the potential of existing SCRs in their public programming. As shown by Pātaka in Porirua and The Dowse in Lower Hutt, consistent community engagement through SCRs is a missed opportunity. Yet, sister city activities flourish when dedicated leaders in local government, cultural institutions or community groups collaborate to support sister cities. For cultural and economic outcomes to flow, people-to-people connections in the community must be maintained to strengthen trust and friendship between cities. SCRs falter when these

principles are compromised, relying on committed volunteers and community groups to continue trust relations. My research argues that museums and sister cities together could connect culturally diverse communities locally and internationally through public programming, cultural exchange, and education.

The Porirua and Nishio case study draws attention to the synergy and potential of SCRs in the community-focused museum. As shown by Darcy Nicholas and Brian Cross, when PCC, PIA, and Pātaka worked in collaboration, sister city activities brought great economic and cultural outcomes to the communities. This period of activities strengthened and maintained people-to-people links and community connections between committed leaderships and community groups. It allowed trust and friendships to support an environment that encouraged sister city activities to quickly grow. Notably, the SCR capitalised on existing economic opportunities during Porirua's city rebranding. The early role of Todd Motors and Mitsubishi Motors along with the renovations at Pātaka were optimal for SCR activities to be integrated by PCC. Through a combination of these factors, the Porirua-Nishio link was able to flourish in multiple sectors of Porirua for the communities.

This makes Porirua's shift in recent years more evident for its SCR. The Kaizen garden remains a symbol and reminder of the warmth and friendships made through the SCR. However, without dedicated leaders and collaboration between local government, museum, and community groups, the dynamics that once supported the SCR has collapsed. The loss of cultural, educational, and economic outputs from the established Nishio relationship is a sign that PCC and Pātaka have turned their attention elsewhere for their communities. Kaizen garden has become a passive symbol of the city's international relationships. However, the lack of SCR outcomes contributes to a negative feedback loop, comparable to the positive feedback loop when the SCR was at its peak activity.

The Lower Hutt case study illustrates different aspects of SCRs for the communities as the relationship grew without direct involvement with The Dowse. Through HMHFT and the unique Minoh House, HCC was able to directly support its SCR and facilitate activities in the cultural and education sectors. The community link is remarkably strong with existing friendships and community connections encouraging other community activities to grow independent of its SCR roots. The Dowse also continued its legacy of community engagement during this time, bringing new visual arts to Lower Hutt during Walker's tenure. The Hutt-Minoh art exchange through HAS and MAA was made possible due to high trust and friendships, removing logistical barriers for the small community organisations. This brought cultural and community art to Lower Hutt, a different niche to The

Dowse's visions. Similar to Porirua, changes in HCC investment and community connections will have likely have a negative influence on the sustainability of the Hutt-Minoh link.

Underlying the dynamics and shifts in the Minoh and Nishio SCRs, the cultural diversity in the local communities of Porirua and Lower Hutt is rapidly shifting. As shown in the censuses and local government reports, Asian populations are growing at steady rates and are becoming prominent cultural groups within communities. Academic literature has acknowledged that this trend is seen on a national scale, complicating New Zealand's biculturalism and cultural diversity discussions. This will have significant impact on meaningful community engagement by local governments and cultural institutions such as museums. Therefore, local government linked museums increasingly need to engage with their shifting communities and audiences in different ways. Studies that examine museum "non-visitors" and audience exclusion through ethnic groups in communities could be prioritised as a tool for both local government and museums to identify and aid in this pathway.

Through the case studies, this Chapter shows that sister cities can be effectively utilised by local government and community focused museums to support community engagement as established community resources with cultural, educational, and economic outcomes. However, collaboration and interpersonal relationships between dedicated leaders in local government, museums, and community groups are key. Statistics show that Asian populations in communities are rapidly growing, and these trends are forecasted to continue. Evidence suggests that community focused museums and local government have obligations to engage with these communities inclusively and meaningfully. Subsequently, these significant shifts in cultural diversity have urgent implications on community engagement by museums and local government.

This research finds that, despite shifts in attitudes and perceptions, SCRs and their community outcomes continue to be relevant to local government, museums, and culturally diverse communities. As the cultural structure of communities continue to shift, public programming in community-focused museums must also change. SCRs could be utilised as a potential pathway and provide the complexity that local governments and affiliated museums seek when engaging with their culturally diverse communities. This must be done through collaboration by community groups, local government, and museums.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

This research examines the potential of SCRs within local government and affiliated museums for communities that are culturally diverse. Through two case studies, it identified various community activities and subsequent cultural, social, and economic outcomes facilitated by the SCRs and investigated the presence and absence of sister cities in community-focused museums, local governments, and communities. Furthermore, it investigated how sister cities are linked to and affected by shifts in local government, museums, and the community.

This thesis investigates the importance of SCRs to local government, culturally diverse communities, and museums, and asks how these long-term international partnerships can be utilised to support and strengthen engagement with communities that are becoming more culturally diverse. My research found that community outcomes facilitated by SCRs are shared goals and objectives between local governments, museums, and community organisation. This is important as it strengthens community engagement. Therefore, sister cities could be effectively utilised by local government and aligned community-focused museums to support culturally diverse communities. This can be achieved through committed leaders who collaborate to maintain interpersonal community relationships, and build trust and friendships between local government, cultural institutions, and community organisations locally and internationally.

My research found that those involved with SCRs from the 1990s supported these grassroots community relationships and activities through meaningful people-to-people connections. This includes many of the research participants. However, as individuals move on with time, current leaders in local government and cultural institutions for communities such as museums must persist in nurturing and amplifying these voices to continue facilitating SCR community outcomes. Engaging youth, migrants, and diverse cultural groups and communicating the purpose of SCRs are pathways local government and museums could explore through sister cities.

Shifts in commitment to SCRs by local government and museums significantly affect cultural and economic community outcomes facilitated by established sister cities. When dedicated leaders in local government, museums, and community organisations collaborate to support SCRs, these outcomes flow. However, this synergy is disrupted or nullified when supporting factors such as interpersonal relationships and trust are not consistently maintained, creating a negative feedback loop that creates future barriers for utilising these SCRs. Both aspects were identified in Porirua and

Lower Hutt over the last three decades, reflected in changes in sister city activities, the presence and absence of SCRs in the local museums Pātaka and The Dowse respectively, and the shifts in local government leadership and investment in its international partnerships.

Consistent utilisation of existing sister cities by community-focused museums to support and strengthen engagement with communities are missed opportunities in both case studies. While there have been a modest number of sister city events and exhibitions at the two museums, these were short-term opportunities. For Lower Hutt, the successful reciprocal art exchange between the Hutt Art Society and the Minoh Art Association occurred in the absence of the museum. This was a people-to-people connection supported by local government but driven by the community. For Porirua, the loss of the community link and lack of local government support led to SCRs having a symbolic role in the city. More could be done by community-focused museums affiliated with local governments with existing SCRs that bring significant community outcomes.

This research focused on a critical socio-cultural approach through forms of narrative inquiry to better understand the potential of sister cities for museums and communities. The case studies provide snapshots into two periods of time: the early 1990s when sister city activities are at its peak and more recently when a diminishment in sister city activity and commitment is evident. The political and social influence during these periods of time would have had influences on local government policies and museum programming. While a socio-political analysis was not the core focus, this thesis opens the discussion for local governments and museums to collaborate, identify, and explore sister cities as pre-existing pathways.

This thesis also found that the cultural diversity in New Zealand communities is continually shifting. Reflected in the case studies, Asian populations have been rapidly growing, changing the cultural make-up in the communities that local government and community focused museums engage with. These trends are forecasted to continue. However, the umbrella term “Asian,” often used in local government reports, emphasises the need for disaggregating this ethnic group to create more nuanced meaningful community engagement. The urgency and relevance of actively responding to shifting cultural diversity in New Zealand communities are highlighted in this research. Sister cities are a community resource that could be explored in this area.

When effectively utilising sister cities for local government and affiliated museums, despite great benefits and value, developing collaborative partnerships with community organisations and international institutions requires time, commitment, and resources. However, the cultural, economic, and educational outcomes encouraged and supported by SCRs are often meaningful, connecting communities locally and internationally. Once trust relations and community connections

are established, these outcomes can occur naturally. It is compelling that when SCRs are supported by collaboration between community organisations, cultural institutions, and local government through strong leadership, people-to-people connections, and friendships, they become a resource that can facilitate meaningful cultural exchange, resource sharing, and community engagement. They can also encourage other community activities to flourish outside its sister city origins, showing how sister cities have the potential to bring long-term benefits for and relationships with communities.

Even when these factors are not fully met, sister city relationships can remain active in a community provided communication, friendships, and people-to-people relationships that maintain trust relations are preserved. However, perceptions of SCRs and its benefits are influenced by public media reporting and changes in local government investment. Community perceptions of sister cities have ebbed and flowed, influenced by public media and local government accountability on ratepayer spending. Although the economic benefits of sister cities should be considered in the long-term maintenance of these international relationships, emphasis on the intangible, social benefits should be part of local government frameworks and policies. This could effectively communicate the community outcomes provided by SCRS to cultural institutions and communities.

Nevertheless, the sister city movement in New Zealand has shown to be evolving from local community and government exchanges within cities, extending to regions, towns, and larger community groups. At a time when cultural diversity in New Zealand is continuing to rapidly shift, sister cities could be utilised more effectively by organisations and institutions that aim to engage with these communities. Museums face additional mandates for their public programming following the implementation of the Local Government Act (2002), placing pressure on museums to provide and measure “public good” outcomes for the ratepayers that fund them. Therefore, councils and museums in regions such as Auckland and Wellington find themselves in a position where they need to address the complexities of the cultural diversity within their communities.

The cultural diversity of New Zealand communities is continuing to change, and Asian populations are an increasingly significant part of these demographic changes with rapid growth in areas such as Auckland and Wellington. Additionally, while some cultural groups such as Chinese New Zealand communities have deep historic roots, more recent migration has brought other Asian cultures to New Zealand. Local governments have a responsibility to not only represent most populations in their city but also minority voices (Local Government Act, 2002). They also face the increasing need to include Asian New Zealanders in policies and community engagement while addressing the challenges that come with national perceptions of these communities. Breaking

down cultural barriers and disaggregating broad ethnic terms such as “Asian” could create pathways for meaningful engagement with these communities. Furthermore, disseminating changes in demographics and census data identifies shifts in cultural diversity, education, and cultural exchange. This includes better understanding the experiences and needs of the many different Asian communities in New Zealand. Ultimately, this improves understanding the complexities of cultural diversity and promotes social cohesion.

Community focused museums, particularly those linked with local government, aim to actively engage with their communities. However, these communities are becoming more culturally diverse, connected, and complex. There is a history of utilising international partnerships such as SCRs in New Zealand museums, bringing diverse exhibitions that educate, connect, and engage different audiences and communities. Looking towards Asia as the focus of this research, opportunities for museums such as repatriation of cultural materials and international exhibitions have been facilitated by existing sister city links through the community at cultural institutions such as Te Papa, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, Otago Museum, and Pātaka. However, my research finds that more could be done to address the current rapid changes in New Zealand’s cultural diversity. There is a potential for maintaining long-term associations between Asian sister cities and museums through local government to engage a wider and culturally diverse audiences.

This thesis has focused on a specific geographical area of sister cities when reflecting on the current significant changes in New Zealand’s Asian populations. While this research is limited by looking only at Japanese sister cities over a certain period, it highlights the need to break down “Asian” as an ethnicity as part of meaningful community engagement and representation. Further research into other cultural community groups within these communities such as Chinese New Zealanders and Asian sister cities such as those with China or Korea would create a more complete picture on these topics.

It is also important to note that political influences have effects on the development of sister cities and museums linked to local government in New Zealand. Future research in this area including topics such as soft power and cultural diplomacy would be beneficial for understanding the shifts in attitudes towards sister cities and the complexities of the museum role in international relations. This includes diplomatic missions such as embassies that hold key roles alongside city-to-city sister relationships. These could create tangible pathways for museums, local government, and sister cities to collaborate for the community, clarifying how museums could effectively access different sister cities as resources for inclusive and culturally diverse public programming.

Recent studies examining the changes in the way New Zealand museums address biculturalism, multiculturalism, and cultural diversity remains relatively young. Multiculturalism and national identity within the Asian New Zealand community context is an area that is well researched (Robie, 2009; Spoonley, 2015a, 2015b). Further research into multiculturalism and self-identity in New Zealand museums would provide insight into this area of museum literature. That said, this thesis, albeit modest in scale, is the first consideration of the role of sister cities, museums, and local government in New Zealand.

The initial aims of my research were to examine the role sister cities have in New Zealand society and community focused museums. Understanding the principles that make sister cities successful and the community outcomes they encourage are central to understanding why sister cities may not have had consistent roles in local government and cultural institutions. In a globalising world, if museums are committed to their culturally diversity communities, they need to offer more sustenance for growing and culturally diverse groups. This research sets the stage for sister cities as community driven, established resources that could be channelled through the community and local government connection. They are existing platforms and pathways for museums to explore when strengthening existing connections and relevance to their changing communities. In a world where politics continue to have strong influences on media and societal perceptions of other countries, cross cultural exchange and people-to-people connections are needed more than ever.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Information Sheet – Master template



Master of Arts (Museum Studies) Research Thesis

INFORMATION SHEET

My name is Karyn Lo and I am conducting a research thesis for the completion the Master of Arts in Museum Studies at Massey University, New Zealand. I will be conducting this research under the supervision of Dr Susan Abasa, Museum Studies Programme Coordinator.

Project Description

Originally a concept created to increase international understanding and foster world peace, sister cities have become widely established in New Zealand. These relationships have grown from grassroots international agreements to cultural partnerships that have large-scale effects in the local education, cultural activities, and professional sectors. However, research regarding these international relationships and their role within local museum activities remains relatively young.

This research focuses on the roles sister cities with Japan have played within the Wellington region, its effects on the museums and local communities, and the future potential of these relationships. To develop an understanding of these roles, the way these relationships between sister cities, local authorities and museums have evolved will be a key focus. Aspects such as cultural partnerships, the opportunities created and explored by museums and local authorities, and cultural diplomacy within museums can be explored. My research will focus on Lower Hutt City and Minoh City of Japan, and Porirua City and Nishio City of Japan as case studies.

I would like to invite you to participate in my research that will examine these ideas. Your input and experiences would give valuable insights into the topics outlined above for this project.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

Primary research regarding Lower Hutt City and Minoh City of Japan has revealed connections between Hutt City Council, Hutt Sister City Foundation, Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust, Sister Cities New Zealand and the Dowse Art Museum. As a key member in past and current developments of the sister city relationship in the area, I would like to invite you to participate in my research.

This research will also examine the relationship between Porirua City and Nishio City of Japan, including the connections with Porirua City Council and Pātaka Art + Museum.

OR



Primary research regarding Porirua City and Nishio City of Japan has revealed connections between Porirua City Council, Sister Cities New Zealand and the Pātaka Art + Museum. As a key member in past and current developments of the sister city relationship in the area, I would like to invite you to participate in my research.

This research will also examine the relationship between Lower Hutt City and Minoh City of Japan, including the connections with Hutt City Council, Hutt Sister City Foundation, Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust, and the Dowse Art Museum.

Project Procedures

This project will collect information from various key members and organisations outlined above. Being able to talk with these key members will allow me to gain insights into the various developments, experiences, and relationships between sister cities with Japan, local governments, and museums.

If you agree, I would like to ask you to participate in an individual interview at a time that suits you. The interview will take approximately **40 minutes** in person. The interview will also be sound recorded, with your permission, for the singular use of this research. While I have some basic questions prepared that focus on your views and experiences, the interview will be in the form of an open conversation. I would like to focus on your thoughts and views of sister city relationships in your area, and your experiences with these relationships.

In the event that COVID-19 may affect the interview process, virtual interviews will be conducted over Zoom when appropriate. In this case, precautions will be taken to mitigate technological issues such as connection quality and security of audio recordings.

Upon completing the interview, I will prepare a transcript of the interview and send it to you to review along with an *Authority for the Release of Transcripts Form*. After you review the transcript and with your consent, the reviewed transcript will be used by myself to assist in the writing of my research. If I have not heard from you after **14 days** of sending you the transcripts, I will assume you have consented to the transcript contents and I will proceed with my research.

Data Management

All information provided by you during the interview will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of this project. Audio recordings and transcripts for each participant will be kept on separate electronic files and will be individually password-protected. If relevant, recordings will not be kept on Zoom following the interview and will be kept separately on a protected device such as a USB. Any hard copies of these files will be kept in locked cabinets during my research. Additionally, copies of the signed consent forms and transcription will be electronically submitted to my supervisor along with the completion of my thesis. Following the successful examination of the thesis, all transcripts and recordings will be deleted.

Your Rights

Your input is highly valued, and all aspects of confidentiality will be observed. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation to participate in my research. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study prior to **December 28, 2021**;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Due to the nature of the research, full anonymity cannot be fully provided. However, if you choose, care will be taken to provide partial anonymity for all information provided by you. I will be happy to discuss this with you prior to your participation to my research.

If you are interested in participating in this project, please sign and return the attached *Participant Consent Form* by **October 17, 2021**. Shortly afterwards, I will be in contact with you regarding a suggested interview time.

Project Contacts

If you have any further questions about the research or your role within this project, please contact me using the details below. Please know that you can contact me at any time during the project if you have any questions or concerns. You are also welcome to contact my supervisor for the research, Dr Susan Abasa (S.F.Abasa@massey.ac.nz).

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 4000024847. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Gerald Harrison, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 06 356 9099 x 83570, email humanethicsouthb@massey.ac.nz

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

Karyn Lo

Interview Participant Consent Form – Virtual/In-person



Master of Arts (Museum Studies) Research Thesis

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet attached. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study prior to December 28, 2021.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.
2. I wish/do not wish to have my recording and transcription returned to me.
3. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature:

Date:

Interview Consent Form – Email



Master of Arts (Museum Studies) Research Thesis

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM - INDIVIDUAL

I have read and I understand the Information Sheet attached. I have had the details of the study explained to me, any questions I had have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I have been given sufficient time to consider whether to participate in this study and I understand participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study prior to November 28, 2021.

1. I agree/do not agree to the interview being conducted with a specifically prepared questionnaire.
2. I agree/do not agree to a follow up interview being sounded recorded if needed.
3. I wish/do not wish to have my recording and transcription returned to me.
4. I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Declaration by Participant:

I _____ hereby consent to take part in this study.

Signature:

Date:

School of People, Environment and Planning
Private Bag 11 222, Palmerston North, New Zealand
06 356 9099 | <http://pep.massey.ac.nz>

Transcript Release Form



Master of Arts (Museum Studies) Research Thesis

AUTHORITY FOR THE RELEASE OF TRANSCRIPT

I confirm that I have had the opportunity to read and amend the transcript of the interview conducted with me.

I agree that the edited transcript and extracts from this may be used in reports and publications arising from the research.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Full Name - printed _____

Appendix B

Interviews

All interviews and communications were conducted by the author.

Name	Role	Interview Date	Location	Approximate Length
CROSS, Brian	Sister City Coordinator, Porirua City Council (2000-2008) Sister City Coordinator, Hutt City Council (2003-2005) Administrator, Sister Cities New Zealand (2004-2008)	October 19, 2021	Virtual	57 mins
NICHOLAS, Darcy	General Manager, Cultural Services, Porirua City Council (1993-1998) General Manager, Community Services, Porirua City Council (1998-2012)	July – November, 2021	Email	N/A
WALKER, Tim	Director, The Dowse Art Museum (1998-2008)	October 29, 2021	Virtual	48 mins
BAKER, Anita	Mayor, Porirua City Council (2019-Present)	October 29, 2021	Porirua City Council building	30 mins
DYER, Brady	Councillor, Hutt City Council (2019-Present) Chair, Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust (2021-Present)	November 18, 2021	Virtual	43 mins
BALM, David	President, Hutt Art Society (2010-2020)	November 26, 2021	Hutt Art Centre studio	46 mins
MORRIS, Hiromi	President, Global Cities New Zealand (2012-2022) Emeritus President, Global Cities New Zealand (2022-Present)	December 2, 2021	Local Government New Zealand offices	50 mins
FRIEND, Reuben	Director, Pātaka Art + Museum, (2015-2021)	December 3, 2021	Virtual	58 mins
WALLACE, Ray	Mayor, Hutt City Council (2010-2019) Chair, Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust (2010-2021) Vice President, Global Cities New Zealand (2015-2023)	December 8, 2021	Interviewee's home	40 mins

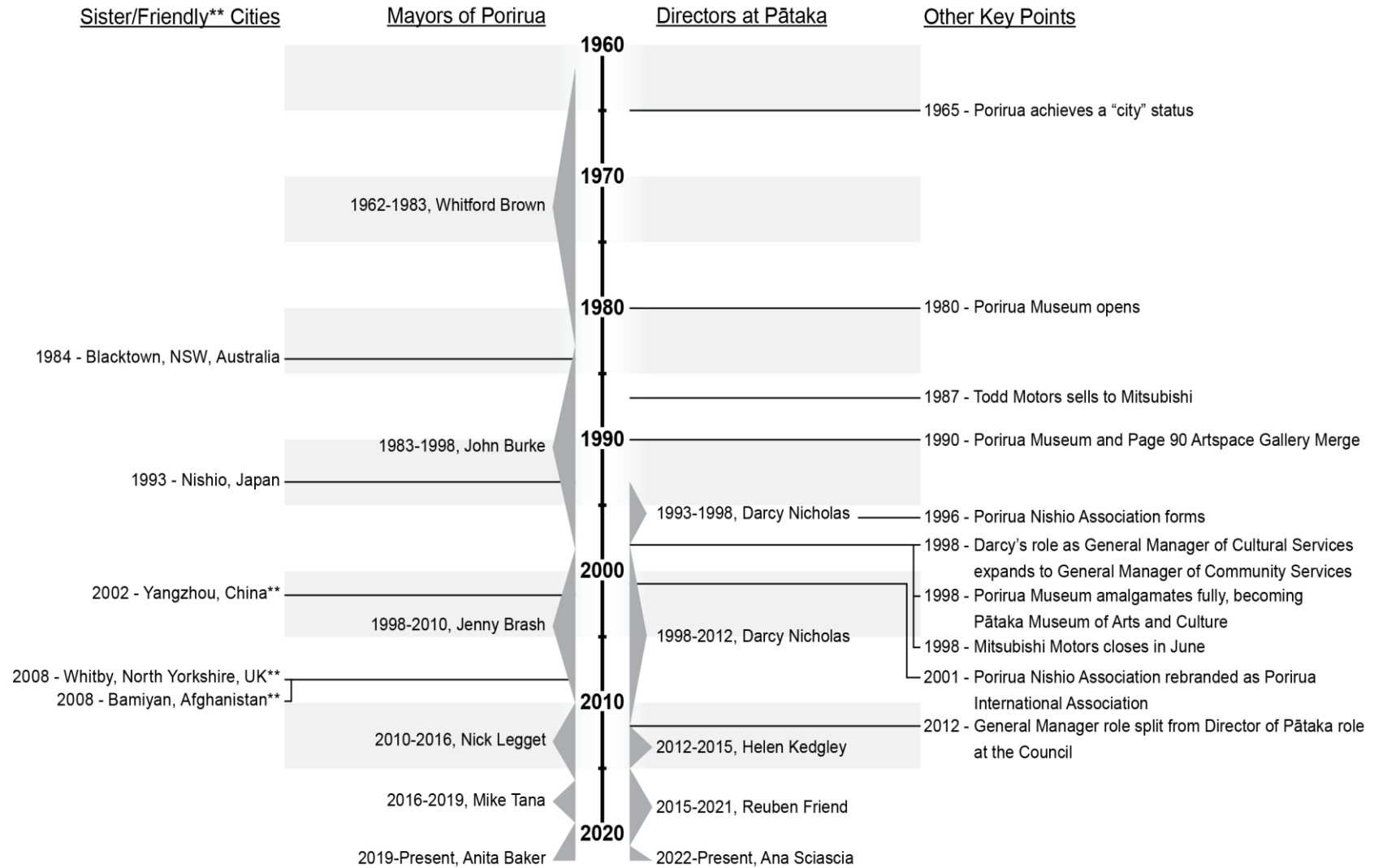
Appendix C

Sister City Agreement Document – Porirua and Nishio



Appendix D

Porirua Case Study Timeline



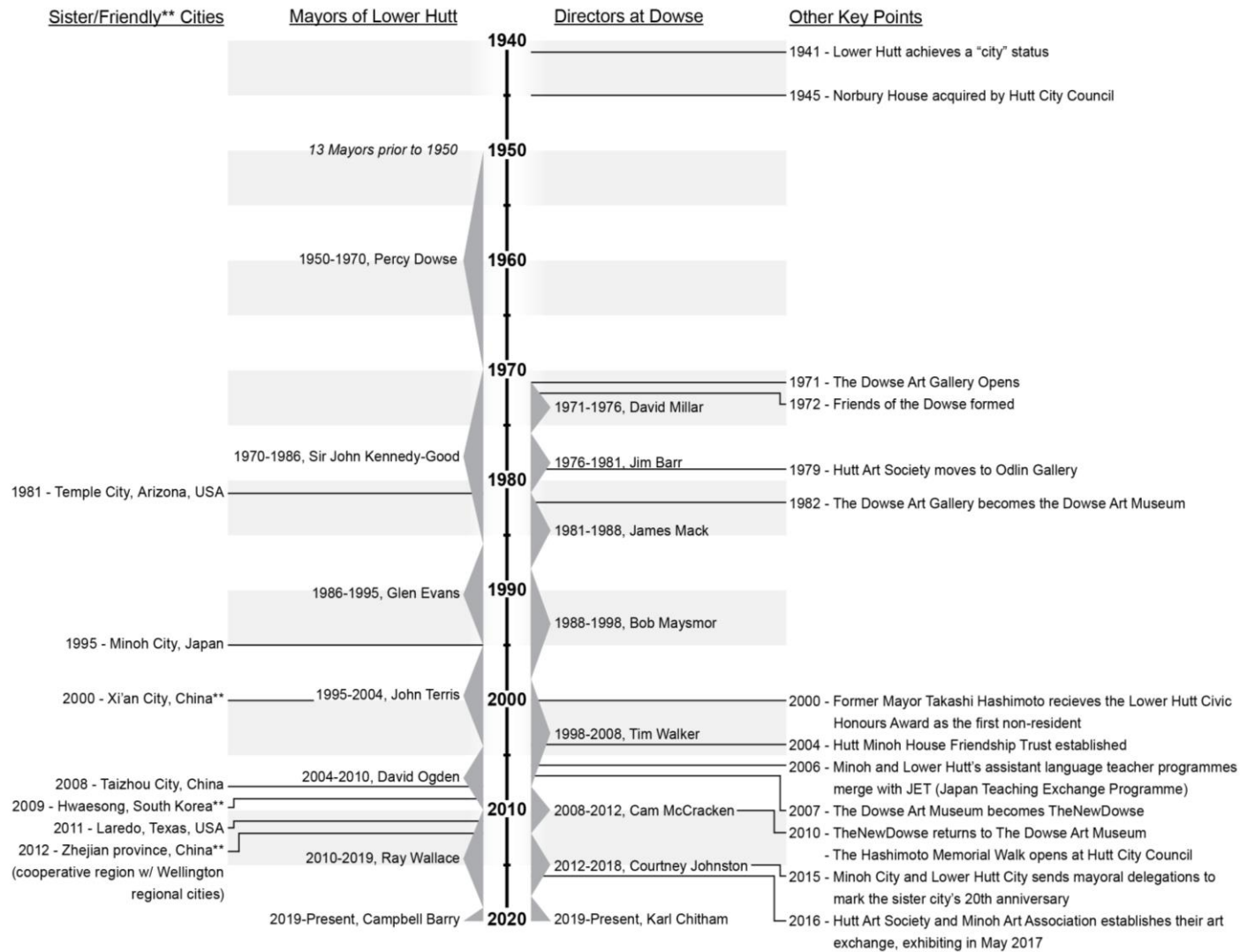
Appendix E

Sister City Agreement Document – Lower Hutt and Minoh



Appendix F

Lower Hutt Case Study Timeline



Appendix G

Proposed List of Gifts of Minoh Artworks to Hutt City Council, 18 June 2017

Artist	Name of Artwork	Media	Dimensions
Mr Mitsuhiro Takata	Ryoan-ji Temple	acrylic painting	440x320
Ms Sachi Higuchi	Doll	oil painting	320x220
Mr Sadayuki Fujimoto	Niou (Guardian King of Temple Gate)	watercolour	410x320
Mr Sumio Matsushita	Landscape	oil painting	310x320
Mr Yasuhiro Nishikawa	The Daybreak	photograph	560x470
Mr Kenji Yoshioka	Dome time	photograph	440x360
Mr Takeshi Yamashita	Sake Flask	ceramic	–
Ms Miwako Satou	Spring Night	calligraphy	300x240
Ms Kazuko Takayama	Fine tempered Steel	calligraphy	680x700

Provided by Hutt City Council Archives, June 21, 2021