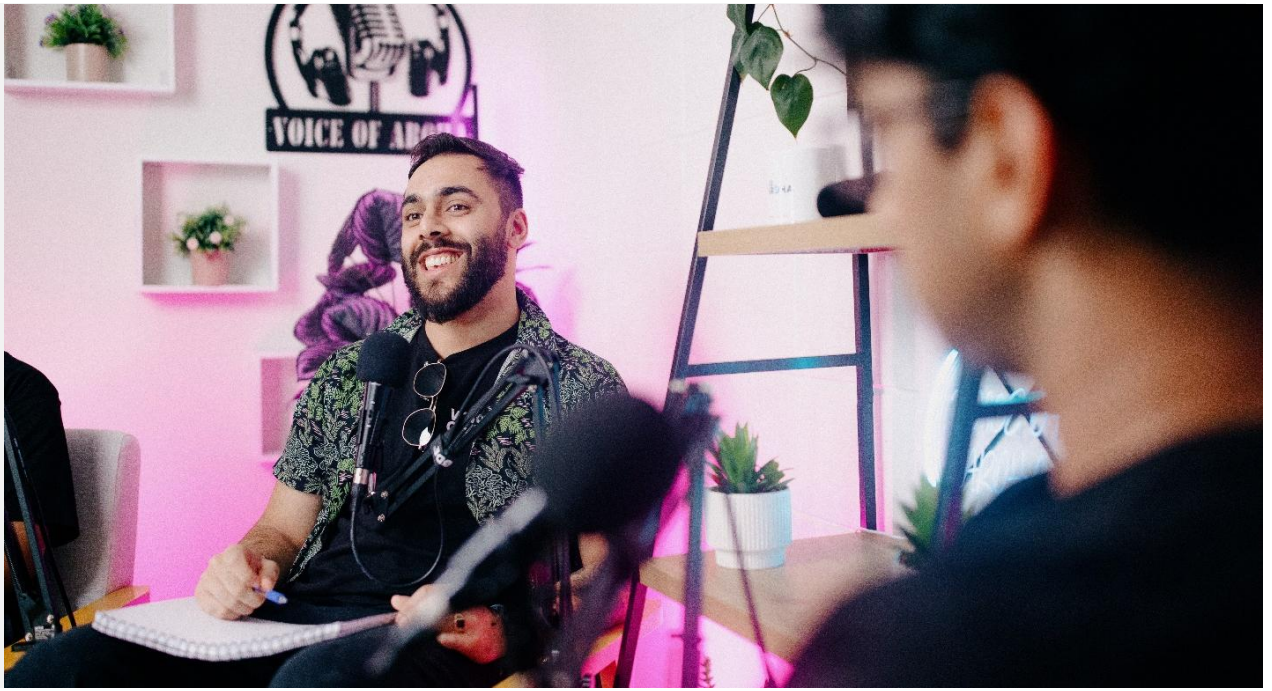


Amplifying diverse perspectives to shape better climate solutions

Voice of Aroha

More than 20% of people in the Wellington region moved here as migrants or refugees. Voice of Aroha helps make sure their perspectives, needs and ideas are part of the city's efforts to reduce emissions, prepare for change and plan for a better future.



To design solutions as a community, we need to understand the values, experiences and perspectives of people who call Wellington home. This belief drives Voice of Aroha to raise awareness about climate change, and share the needs and ideas of people from refugee and migrant backgrounds.

Voice of Aroha received funding in 2022 and in 2024 through the Climate and Sustainability Fund to empower climate action solutions by and for former refugee and migrant communities in Wellington. This funding has enabled the development of a rich library of podcasts and videos, alongside workshops, hui, and digital campaigns. These activities amplify the voices, stories, and knowledge of these communities—strengthening leadership, fostering climate resilience, and contributing to emissions reduction.

Voice of Aroha is a not-for-profit organisation that connects and celebrates diverse communities across the Wellington region. Run by people from refugee and migrant backgrounds, their work helps people share perspectives and experiences. The stories and information shared reflect the many ways refugees and migrants are more than the identities imposed on them as people who have moved here from other countries.

Voice of Aroha's small staff and a volunteer group of around 20 people use digital media and in-person events to spark conversation about important issues.

"If you bring everyone to the table, any decision, any policy will fit for everyone." *– Kodrean Eashae – Voice of Aroha*

Founder and CEO Kodrean Eashae says information flows both ways so the experiences, expertise and needs of communities can be considered in policies and plans, and so people in these communities have an opportunity to learn more about what's happening and why.

Most Voice of Aroha volunteers are in high school or tertiary study, with a strong desire to care for the people and places they love amid disruption caused by climate change. Setting future generations up to thrive is a priority for the group and the communities they engage with. Sharing information about climate change and how to take action is a key part of this work. They also highlight and share the ways people from refugee and migrant backgrounds can help Pōneke | Wellington navigate challenges and find solutions.

The group shapes activities to engage leaders and young people in climate action, and to empower community members to be part of solutions that fit



> "We have a lot of knowledge of resilience and how to face problems. We want to bring our cultures and knowledge into the space of climate to drive solutions." *– Kodrean Eashae – Voice of Aroha*

their needs and cultural contexts. Community climate training is helping people better understand the causes and impacts of climate change. Innovation programmes are an opportunity to develop and test ideas. A series of hui share information about city plans and gather feedback from community members. And a suite of shareable videos and podcasts helps important messages reach the right people.

A growing audience is taking inspiration from Voice of Aroha's stories. Their content spans the world of digital media, with around 75,000 views on YouTube and thousands of followers across social media and podcast platforms. Subjects range from mātauranga Māori expertise to climate science, recycling tips, emergency response, and community-led initiatives.

The centring of refugee and migrant perspectives in this work is attracting international attention, with Voice of Aroha being invited to global climate forums and regularly supporting climate action advocacy in the Asia-Pacific region.

Engaging people from refugee and migrant backgrounds in ways that uphold their values and respond to their needs is seeing some great results.

Community leaders are thinking more strategically about changes they can make. Young people are building their knowledge and getting involved in advisory groups. Increasing numbers of people are learning what they can do about climate change, and how it will help.

Kodrean Eashae says Voice of Aroha's climate action mahi sees the group acting as a bridge between local government planning and communities – helping each connect genuinely with the other.

> "We want people to know that yes, we can be part of our city. We can be part of decision making. We can contribute in the climate space." *– Kodrean Eashae – Voice of Aroha*

Your story matters. Share your culture, your climate journey, your vision. Through events and digital media, we build connection and change.

To learn more, visit **voiceofaroha.org.nz**