

Tackling climate challenges through innovation and technology

Creative HQ

To reduce emissions and limit the disruption caused by a changing climate, we need new, better ways of doing things in the systems we rely on, like energy, transport and food. Creative HQ supports entrepreneurs to develop products, services and processes that will give Wellingtonians more options for living sustainably.

Creative HQ is an innovation hub that helps startups, established businesses, government agencies and corporations stoke new ideas and solve complex problems. The hub also connects initiatives with funding opportunities, helping founders and teams turn their ideas into real-world solutions.

In March 2024, Creative HQ secured funding through the Climate and Sustainability Fund to support the Aurora Climate Lab and its culminating event—the Wellington Clean Tech Summit.

The Aurora Climate Lab is a 12-week Wellington-based accelerator programme that supports people to progress climate tech ideas rapidly and pitch to investors. Holly Beals, senior innovation specialist at Creative HQ, says teams taking part work across different areas of climate action.

As part of their experience, startup founders are immersed in the uniqueness of Te Whanganui-a-Tara | Wellington region. Taranaki Whānui experts help participants understand the local environment and the innovative spirit of this place. Holly Beals says being a small city with big creative energy makes Wellington a perfect place to invent solutions for climate challenges.

There are more than 310 climate tech companies in Aotearoa. In the past two years, they have generated more than $291 million dollars in revenue. Wellington-based companies are working on forward-thinking solutions. As well as addressing climate change, Creative HQ's general manager of startups, Colm Kearney says businesses who come through the climate tech accelerator create new jobs and economic growth. In 2024, the accelerator also placed a strong focus on amplifying Māori innovation, with



Creative HQ continuing to expand hapori Māori involvement across its programmes.

Electric motorbikes, sustainable concrete, a marine turbine, and livestock feed made from insects that eat consumer food waste are just a few of the products created by Creative HQ alumni. As a group, graduates of the climate tech accelerator are making an impressive impact. Their work makes it easier for consumers, businesses of all sizes, and entire industries to make choices that are better for the planet.

"Climate tech is a mixture of hardware, software and process solutions. Some teams are focused on energy, some are in future food, some are in sustainability and emissions management. There's a huge range." *-Colm Kearney – Creative HQ*



Teams who participate in the accelerator programme have the chance to pitch to an audience of hundreds, including New Zealand-based and global investors, climate experts, students, and leaders from community, government and industry. The 2024 Clean Tech Summit attracted approximately 500 attendees and featured 35 speakers.

The event helps forge connections, linking new ideas with the people who can help them grow. It keeps attendees informed about emerging opportunities in New Zealand's economy and employment market, while complementing broader climate action areas such as renewable building energy and circular waste. By fostering a ripple effect of innovation and legacy and promoting inclusive climate solutions through the integration of te ao Māori, the event strengthens the foundation for long-term, community-driven climate impact.

Creative HQ is helping entrepreneurs respond swiftly to the climate crisis. Holly Beals says saving the planet makes sense, and more investors are taking an interest in funding climate tech because it makes good business sense too.

"If we are going to solve climate change, we need to be creating solutions that are economically viable, even profitable. And that is possible. And the teams in our programmes are proving that." -

Holly Beals – Creative HQ

"Because of our proximity to each other in Wellington, it's easier to come together around a problem. We can connect an ecosystem that includes central government, local government, regulatory authorities, startup founders and people even earlier in their idea development." *-Colm*

Kearney – Creative HQ

Your bold ideas can become real climate solutions. Get involved, share your vision, and help shape a city that's ready for the future.

To learn more visit **creativehq.co.nz**