

SPARK

DIGITAL EQUITY

COMMITMENT

Spark is committed to championing digital equity in Aotearoa. Our commitment starts with our purpose, to help **all of New Zealand win big in a digital world**. Digital equity is a key feature of our business strategy and sustainability framework, the sole focus of our charitable arm, the Spark Foundation, and it permeates our operations – from the products we create to how we do business. Every year Spark commits funding, and significant internal resources, to achieve its digital equity ambitions.

It is estimated that up to 1 in 5 New Zealanders may be experiencing digital exclusion in some way, and we understand approximately 200,000 households do not have access to the internet. The role of digital technology in New Zealand's transformation to a high-productivity, low-carbon economy brings the issue of digital equity into the spotlight. We are committed to creating a positive digital future where every Kiwi can prosper and a just and equitable transition on the way through.

Our digital equity efforts are guided by the Government's Digital Inclusion Blueprint, which identified four elements of digital inclusion – motivation, access, skills, and trust. We recognise we cannot solve this challenge alone, and we have developed meaningful partnerships across the community sector and industry to drive long-term change.



OUR PURPOSE

To help all of New Zealand win big in a digital world.

Āwhinatia ngā tangata katoa o Aotearoa, kia matomato te tipu i te ao matihiko.

- Our purpose is expressly inclusive. It encompasses all people, business, and communities, and our role in creating success for the country as a whole.

OUR BUSINESS STRATEGY

FY23 STRATEGY

Goal: Lift digital equity

Strategic pillar: A positive digital future for all of New Zealand

- Spark sets 3-year business strategies, with the current strategy completing in FY23.
- Lifting digital equity is one of six goals of the strategy and Spark's sustainability framework, A positive digital future for all of New Zealand, is a strategic pillar.

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK - A POSITIVE DIGITAL FUTURE FOR ALL OF NEW ZEALAND

Spark's sustainability framework has three focus areas:

1. Create a sustainable Spark
2. Economic recovery and transformation
3. Champion digital equity

Our core digital equity focus areas are:

- Extend the reach of Skinny Jump to benefit more households - 35,000 by June 2023
- Partner alongside the Spark Foundation to accelerate digital equity, including addressing key barriers - access, skills, trust and motivation
- Champion diversity and inclusion in our communities and business, achieving 40:40:20 gender representation across Spark by June 2023

SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCING AND OPERATIONALISATION

Spark commits significant internal resources to its digital equity objectives and progress is tracked at the highest levels.

Spark's sustainability framework is led by the Corporate Relations and Sustainability Director, who reports to Spark's CEO and is a member of the Leadership Squad.

Progress against Spark's sustainability framework is reported to the Leadership Squad and Board on a quarterly basis.

- Spark's Sustainability Lead reports to the Corporate Relations and Sustainability Director. The Sustainability Lead works across Spark and operates cross-functional squads to improve Spark's sustainability performance and integrate sustainability into the business.
- Spark funds the operations of Spark Foundation, which includes the Foundation's Lead and two team members. It also provides an annual grant to the Foundation to fund projects in the community.
- Spark funds the operations of the Skinny Jump squad, including three full time team members and additional 'flow to work' resource as needed.
- Spark has an Agile operating model, and its business strategy is executed through a Quarterly Business Review (QBR) process. In FY22 digital equity was added as a standing item on the QBR, ensuring it is resourced appropriately.

SPARK FOUNDATION

[Spark Foundation](#) was established in 2011 and has a sole focus on digital equity.

The Foundation is a charitable trust with a Board of Trustees, including independent community representatives and members of the Spark team.

The Foundation's vision is that no New Zealander is left behind in a digital world, and its mission is to accelerate towards digital equity. It does this by focussing on three strategic pillars, with community partnerships supporting each.

The Foundation is a founding member of the [Digital Equity Coalition for Aotearoa \(DECA\)](#).



OUR PRODUCTS

We recognise that being able to access the digital world is a critical first step in addressing digital equity.

We are committed to offering a range of products to cater to this need – including not-for-profit broadband for people not currently connected, free devices for those in need, and low-cost broadband and mobile plans.

Our aspiration is to embed accessible design principles into future product builds, to further enhance accessibility for all New Zealanders.

OUR NETWORK

Spark's long-term investment in mobile infrastructure has enabled us to provide wireless broadband products that support digital equity objectives.

We recognise that regional and rural communities can also experience digital exclusion, due to the challenging nature of providing economic services in remote areas of New Zealand – and we are committed to working in partnership with Government and industry to bridge this gap.

OUR CUSTOMERS

New Zealand is a nation of small-medium businesses (SME), and we are committed to supporting our SME community and our customers to embrace digitisation and the benefits it can bring.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Spark is committed to building a diverse and inclusive culture, where all our people feel they belong.

As a technology company, which has traditionally skewed male, we have focused on gender diversity for many years. We have a FY23 target of 40:40:20 gender representation and have made significant progress – with a 50/50 split on our Leadership Squad and 35% of our workforce now female. We are committed to extending this progress to ethnic diversity in the coming years.

SECURITY AND PRIVACY

We recognise that a lack of trust in the digital world is a significant barrier to digital equity, and we are committed to supporting our customers to participate safely by putting cybersecurity, customer safety, and privacy at the heart of everything we do.

We are also investing in the development of emerging digital trust technology through [MATTR](#), which utilises decentralised identity and verifiable data to restore trust in digital interactions.

SPARK FOUNDATION

Digital Access

- Skinny Jump (see right)
- Recycle a Device (see right)

Digital skills and pathways

- Porirua Access Connectivity Education (PACE).
- [Pūhoro STEM Academy](#) – a Kaupapa Māori program.
- Hihiko Te Rawa Auahau – innovation hubs embedded into 30 Māori communities across the Bay of Plenty.
- [Take2](#) – breaking the cycle of crime with technology by teaching incarcerated individuals coding skills.
- [Digital Future Aotearoa](#) – skills programmes including Code Club and Electric Garden.

Digital wellbeing

- Te Iwi Matihiko, from the [Digital Natives Academy](#) – a values-based digital wellbeing programme.
- [The Light Project](#) – supporting communities to navigate the challenges of online pornography.

OUR PRODUCTS

[Skinny Jump](#)

- A subsidised, no-contract wireless broadband service for people who find cost a barrier to getting connected.
- Provided through a network of over 300 community partners.
- A modem and 15GB of data per month are provided for free, then \$5 for 30GB.
- With our partner Ciena we are providing Jump at no cost to low decile schools students.

[Recycle a Device \(RAD\)](#)

- A partnership between Spark Foundation, Spark-owned Entelar, and Remojo Tech.
- RAD securely wipes second-hand laptops, teaches high school students to refurbish them, and then gets them into the hands of those who need them.

[Affordable broadband and mobile plans](#)

- Spark's low-cost provider, Skinny, offers [mobile plans](#) for as little as \$5 for seven days, and [broadband](#) from as low as \$35 a month.

OUR NETWORK

[Spark mobile investment](#)

- In FY22 Spark will invest \$125 million in its mobile network, including \$35 million to accelerate our 5G rollout.
- As we roll out 5G we will also upgrade 4G capacity in areas of high Skinny Jump demand.

[Emerging technologies](#)

- Spark is investing behind emerging technologies, such as 5G and IoT, which will improve our way of life and deliver sustainability benefits.

[Rural Connectivity Group](#)

- A joint venture between Spark, Vodafone and 2degrees, contracted by Government to deliver 4G to rural areas.
- RCG has built more than 260 sites to date.

[Marae Digital Connectivity Programme](#)

- Spark is working as a partner on the Marae Digital Connectivity Programme – which has connected 445 marae to date.

OUR CUSTOMERS

[Digital Boost Alliance](#)

- An alliance of organisations focused on motivating SMEs to lift their use of digital technologies.
- Operated by TUANZ and MBIE.
- Spark CEO Jolie Hodson is Chair of the Governance Board and Spark commits a range of services and free products as part of its involvement.

[Spark Lab](#)

- The Spark Lab website and events helps SMEs go digital by providing access to tools and advice from experts.

[Spark Business Hubs](#)

- Spark operates a network of 24 regional hubs that support SME business customers with digital tools and services.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

[Employment pathways](#)

- Our partnerships across secondary and tertiary education help us create employment pathways that build diversity.
- Our Talent Marketplace identifies internal talent pathways.

[Te Korowai Tupu](#)

- Our Māori Strategy informs how we develop strong connections with Māori, and builds our understanding of Te Ao Māori.

[Spark's Blue Heart Kaupapa](#)

- Blue Heart is a visible icon of our heart-led approach to diversity and inclusion and sets the standard of behaviour and the values we stand for.

[Ethnic diversity](#)

- We work alongside partners such as Diversity Works, Champions for Change, Global Women, and the Sustainable Business Council, to drive economy-wide change.
- We are improving our ethnicity data to enable evidence-based interventions and support.

SECURITY AND PRIVACY

[Cybersecurity](#)

- Our Chief Information Security Officer leads our cybersecurity strategy and reports to our Technology Director.
- Our Spark Security Operations Centre uses best-practice frameworks, including ISO27001 and NIST CSF.
- Our Information Security Risk Management Committee (ISRMC) consists of senior leaders and external stakeholders.

[Customer safety](#)

- We [protect our customers from scams](#) by monitoring unusual activity, and blocking offending numbers.
- We provide access to Netsafe [safety information](#) and free basic [NetShield](#) filtering.

[Data privacy](#)

- Our privacy values are customer centricity, fairness, transparency, autonomy, and simplicity.
- [Spark's Privacy Policy](#), website, and [Transparency Reports](#) detail how we handle customer information.