NZ NAVIGATOR

FAQs

What is NZ Navigator?

NZ Navigator is a community development initiative that is based on a partnership between Platform Trust, The Bishop's Action Foundation and the Department of Internal Affairs and is now administered by the NZ Navigator Trust.

NZ Navigator is an on-line self-assessment tool to help community organisations review aspects of their organisational infrastructure and to identify priority areas for improvement.

The process of internal reflection that is involved in data gathering and the discussion about your results will help your organisation make decisions about how best to improve its effectiveness. Your results form a baseline record which can then be repeated at any stage to monitor the results of the improvements that you put in place. Being able to monitor change over time will help to strengthen and improve the performance of your organisation.

NZ Navigator is completely voluntary in that organisations self-assess their own organisational capability. There is no charge for using the tool.

NZ Navigator is community owned, managed and governed and is not in any way linked to contract funding.

What are the benefits of the NZ Navigator tool?

NZ Navigator is focused on the provision of better quality of services for users through the development of more effective and efficient organisations.

NZ Navigator Trust and the community partners behind NZ Navigator aim to do this by supporting and encouraging:

- Better communication among staff, trustees and volunteers.
- Increased staff motivation.
- Greater credibility and legitimacy with funders.
- Promotion of creativity and organisational learning.
- Enabling new perspectives and ways of working.
- Supporting a process of continuous quality improvement.

NZ Navigator offers a plain-English and targeted review of your organisation's capability and performance - all done by you. We do this by providing a tool that:

- Helps you identify your organisation's areas of strength and opportunity.
- Provides you with best practice information and appropriate resources to assist with organisational improvement.
- Generates a high-quality report for each assessment.
- Provides you with an accessible, self-administered way to evaluate your organisation's performance and improvement.

Anonymised, aggregated information reports will be used by NZ Navigator Trust and the Community Partners to develop a broad profile of community organisations at a local, regional and national planning and community development purposes.

How does the NZ Navigator tool work?

There are a number of steps to using NZ Navigator:

1. Create a user profile, providing brief demographic descriptors of your organisation and a contact person.
2. Once logged in, download a hard copy of the tool and read the NZ Navigator User Guide and other relevant documentation (privacy policy, terms of use, glossary).
3. Decide how you will gather the information about your organisation.
4. Gather the information (interviews, discussions, analysis of documents etc).
5. Log in to the NZ Navigator website, create a new assessment, and enter your results.
6. Complete all the assessment domains and download your personalised report. Results are immediate and visual, scores are calculated as information is entered and the report generated as soon as the full assessment is completed.
7. Look at your report, the spider graphs and results, to identify strengths and weaknesses and the overall result for your organisation.
8. See how your organisation scores in relation to other similar organisations (all anonymous).
9. Examine the suggested resources (linked to CommunityNet Aotearoa), including best practice in each area (NZ Navigator Domains).
10. Decide what areas you will focus on first for organisational improvement, and develop an improvement plan, including what resources you will need, and who will be responsible for particular areas - there is more information on this in your report.

How do you prepare your organisation?

To get the most out of the NZ Navigator self-assessment tool, work through the following

steps:

1. **Approach:** Identify who needs to be involved in the process, how representative they should be of the organisation, and how in-depth and detailed you want the process to be (eg, a small, self-selected group like the senior management team; a group of staff representing different perspectives within the organisation; or an all staff workshop/discussion).

2. **Timing:** Identify the best time to undertake the information gathering stage of the self-assessment (eg, as part of regular strategic planning; when planning organisational or operational change; to support a funding proposal; to ensure compliance with standards, etc)

3. **Build commitment and ownership among colleagues/stakeholders:** Make sure everyone involved understands what the NZ Navigator self-assessment tool is, why the organisation is doing it and what the organisation hopes to get out of it.

How can you benefit from using the NZ Navigator tool?

Your assessment can be undertaken in a time-frame that suits your organisation, you can save it and return to it at any time but it must be fully completed (all of the Domains) to access a report for that particular assessment.

Repeat assessments can be done at any stage. One of the NZ Navigator report options is a comparison between any two of your assessments, providing an easy way to measure improvements over time.

The tool is complemented by a comprehensive set of online resources, contained in your assessment report, that you can utilise for organisational improvement.

The assessment process requires that your organisation is self-reflective and open about its strengths and weaknesses. It is important that you consider a wide-range of perspectives during your information-gathering phase. This will help mitigate bias and create a more balanced view of your organisation. By involving more people in the assessment process you can also foster ownership of the results and increase the likelihood that your improvement plan will be implemented by all stakeholders.

What are the NZ Navigator Domains?

The nine core domains correspond to the core functions found in most organisations, and represent the most important elements against which an organisation can assess itself:

Direction - Why are you here? Where are you going? Governance - The work of the governing group Leadership - Areas and qualities of leadership People - Staff, volunteers and the workplace culture Administration - Systems, processes, policies and procedures Finance - Managing your money and assets Communication - Connecting with others Evaluation - Ensuring you make a difference Relationships - Collaboration, partnerships and working effectively with others

How do we analyse and use the results of our assessment?

Once a self-assessment has been completed, examine the report thoroughly and take stock of the findings.

How do we develop an improvement plan?

A template with space for you to plan is included in the PDF version of the NZ Navigator assessment report.

Now that you're aware of your strengths and weaknesses, the next step in the journey is planning to build on them for success.

Before you start building, you might like to consider the following: * What (if anything) surprised you about the results of your self-assessment? * What areas do you think are your organisation's strengths? * What are the changes that you think would help improve your organisation? * How will you know that the changes you are making are working in the way you had hoped?

There are two stages to developing an improvement plan:

1. **Prioritising capacity-building needs** – which areas should you focus on first? Take into account a number of factors, including the need to: * strengthen the areas critical to the success of the organisation * address serious capacity deficits * identify where a capacity deficit creates a problem in meeting important internal and external stakeholder requirements * consider where any individual improvement would have positive effects on other related areas * consider where improvement in capacity could be achieved quickly for maximum benefit * consider the resource implications of making any changes * avoid over-committing the organisation by taking on too many improvements at once * consider any other change processes that are being undertaken and look for the potential for synergy.

2. **Planning the strategic approach**: Once your improvement focus areas have been agreed on, discuss and agree on practical, realistic steps to address the issues. When examining these options consider what can be done internally, what can be done in partnership with other organisations, and what requires external help.

Writing the improvement plan

You can now put some of your great ideas down on paper, then move on to more specific goals in the next step.

Have a look back over your results:

- What are your priorities for improvement? What action can you take?
- What area are you aiming to improve over the next 12 months? Do you have a particular goal in mind?
- What specific actions can you take to achieve your goal(s)?
- What information will you use to keep checking that you are on track?

- How often will you check progress?
- What resources do you need in order to be successful?

Keep it simple and to the point. For each improvement focus area (domain): * Note the assessment score for this domain and a description of what you are aiming for. * Include a brief description of the proposed intervention or activity and details of how you will carry it out. * Propose a timeframe for this activity. * Note any additional resource requirements (financial, tools, external specialists). * Describe who is responsible for delivering the activity. * Identify how progress will be monitored, by whom.

Do you know about using the very simple Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) cycle for improvement? If you don't, then you might want to go to Mind Tools to find out more about how to use this approach.

You might also want to make some notes to remind yourself about the things that are not already covered by the action plan template. This may come in handy when you come to explain the results of Navigator to your staff, colleagues or Board members.

What are the online resources?

The online resources included in your assessment report are linked from CommunityNet Aotearoa, an online database of New Zealand resources for community organisations which is also overseen by the NZ Navigator Trust.

The NZ Navigator Trust has responsibility for the development and maintenance of CommunityNet Aotearoa.

We use a live, secure data link to the CommunityNet Aotearoa database so all resources are as current and as relevant as possible.

Contact

Questions, comments and requests should be submitted via email to info@nznavigator.org.nz.

NZ Navigator initiative partners

NZ Navigator is managed by the NZ Navigator Trust. The tool was originally developed by a community partnership:

- Platform Trust
- The Bishop's Action Foundation
- Department of Internal Affairs

Software developer

- Rabid Technologies Limited