



'25 PARTICIPANT INFORMATION PACK'

WHAT TO EXPECT:

The Pick '25 is a free, value-packed ten-week 'Business Accelerator' programme for start-up entrepreneurs – yes those of you with an innovative idea committed to making it a reality.

Anyone in Te Taitokerau Northland is invited to participate. Attendance is a mix of in-person (which we highly recommend you take advantage of), online or in your own time, via YouTube.

Every Wednesday, from 23 April to 18 June, there's a workshop where we roll up our sleeves and work on different aspects of your business idea. There is 'homework' at the end of each workshop, which can be used to build your business plan/pitch deck at the end of week eight.

Every Friday at lunchtime, there's an online only, 'Ask Me Anything' session. Guest specialists will share insights into their business journey. You'll be able to ask them *anything* about their area of expertise. These commence May 2 and conclude June 13.

At the end of Week Eight, you will be required to submit a business plan/pitch deck for the competition part of the programme. It is usually made up of the homework you've completed throughout the programme, but you can choose to submit something else. **The Pick entries need to be submitted by 5pm, 22 June 2025.**

Five finalists are selected from the entries.

In the final two weeks, the five finalists receive extra coaching and support to hone their pitch. And yes, all non-finalists are welcome to join the lessons, as observers. This means, whether you're a finalist or not, you can experience, and learn from, the extra coaching.

Pitch Night is 10 July (exciting!). Five finalists will pitch to a panel of experts, who will provide feedback and ultimately choose our winner/s.

Everyone who joined **The Pick '25** will be invited to attend as audience members and join the networking and celebrations.

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE PICK

The Pick provides an amazing platform to learn, grow and hone your business idea. What you get out of it, will come down to what you put into it. Like many journeys of exploration and expansion, it's likely to get a little challenging at times. Hang in there – a little discomfort is quite normal, in fact, it's a good sign! It's about stepping outside your comfort zone, opening your mind and seizing the enriching opportunities on offer. You have nothing to lose, no matter the outcome.

Be encouraged to attend the sessions in person – it's great networking, an important aspect of good business. Ask questions and open your mind to a field of possibilities. We recommend you plan to put aside at least five hours a week (three for sessions and the rest for cultivating your idea).





MODULE OVERVIEW *

All modules run from 11am to 1pm on a Wednesday (in person, online, YouTube).

'Ask Me Anything' Sessions – will run every Friday, starting 2 May, excluding Matariki weekend. Please see the end of this programme for details.

WEEK ONE – WELCOME & ENTREPRENEURSHIP 101

Wednesday 23 April

9:30am Mihiwhakatau with **Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau**

Morning tea

11am to 1pm **Entrepreneurship 101 & You the Entrepreneur**

- What exactly is entrepreneurship?
- Vision, Values and walking the talk
- Te Ao Māori Framework
- Being clear on your why
- What attributes and skills do you bring to the table
- Overcoming the bumps and curves along the journey

WEEK TWO – CONCEPTION – BREATHING LIFE INTO YOUR IDEA

Wednesday 30 April

- Why do you want to develop this idea/concept?
- What problem are you solving?
- What exactly do you want to create?
- How will it add value (for your customer)?
- What does success look and feel like?

Week Three – Your Customers & Value Proposition

Wednesday 7 May

- Getting your first customer, and keeping them!
- Your unique selling points
- Business values
- Storytelling

Week Four – Minimum Viable Product – Build & Test

Wednesday 14 May

- Is this a good concept and will it generate value?
- What is the user experience?
- What is the product and its functionality?
- Simply, will it sell?



WEEK FIVE – MARKETING, BRANDING & SALES

Wednesday 21 May

- Market segmentation/channels
- Product distribution and placement
- What's the image you are trying to convey?
- What's your messaging? (Good communication)
- Growing awareness of cultural appropriation
- Effective sales techniques

WEEK SIX – MONEY TALK – THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD FINANCE

Wednesday 28 May

- Cashflow forecasting
- What to know when approaching your bank
- Costing models
- Raising capital
- Understanding the value of Koha

WEEK SEVEN – LEGAL & INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IP)

Wednesday 11 June

- Know the law
- Compliance
- What is IP and how do you protect yours?
- Cultural IP – names and designs

WEEK EIGHT – TOOLS – DIGITAL, SYSTEMS, AI

Wednesday 18 June

- Business models/structures
- Making the most of the digital world, including AI
- What does a good system look like
- Business foundations & great team dynamics
- Bringing in the experts (specialists, contractors, etc)

*At the end of Week Eight, you are required to submit an entry (business plan) for the competition part of the programme. Entries must be received by 5pm, **Sunday 22 June.***

**** Bonus networking event with Whāriki Te Tai Tokerau ****

Week 9 – Finalising your Plan to Pitch! (for Finalists) (Wed 25 June)

- Finishing touches to your business plan/proposition

Week 10 – Final Pitch Prep for Finalists

Wednesday 2 July

- Preparing to blow the judges socks off



The Pick 2025 – Pitch Night!

Thursday 10 July, 5pm to 8pm

Follow-up

Finalists will be supported for the next three months, to assist with implementation.

'ASK ME ANYTHING' SESSIONS

Spend an hour picking the brains of specialist professionals, Fridays, 12.30pm to 1.30pm.

May 2 – Tips on developing a robust concept

May 9 – Secrets to Start-up Success

May 16 - Cultural Competency Framework

May 23 – Catching the attention of your target market

May 30 – Angel Funding

June 13 – Fine-tuning your Business Plan

* This programme is an overview only. Further details to come. Subject to change.

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE

What do I do if I have questions or need extra support?

Please contact Tania, Project Lead, at kiaora@thepick.co.nz. She will do her best to help you. During the programme, there will be a Kaiawhina in the workshops, who will also be available, when extra support is needed.

Also be encouraged to ask a potential mentor, seek feedback from people you respect and/or make the most of online resources, there's plenty of information on the web.

Are the workshops accessible for different access needs?

Yes. Please make sure you let us know if you have any special access requirements, as soon as possible, so that we can do our best to accommodate you.

Is The Pick welcoming to people of all walks of life?

Yes, absolutely! We value diversity and will provide a safe and welcoming space. If you have any concerns or questions, please reach out to Tania, kiaora@thepick.co.nz.

What's a Pitch Deck?

It's a presentation deck you use to pitch your idea to an 'audience' – in this case – our judges. Search 'what is a pitch deck' and you'll get some good examples.



What if I don't want to enter the competition?

Firstly, don't be discouraged by this – it's a fun part of the process. If you have any concerns, please raise this with the Project Lead, Tania.

Can I enter The Pick more than once?

Yes, several people have entered in multiple years and this is encouraged. The Pick is designed to help you develop your idea into a business, the only rules are that you are in Te Tai Tokerau Northland and that the idea is your own, or that of your employer. (See Terms & Conditions).

Can I enter The Pick if I'm already a business?

Yes! We encourage this. The Pick is a fantastic way for organisations to work on R&D and NPD. Previous winners have used The Pick for exactly that.

Can I appeal, if I don't agree with the judges' decisions?

No. The judges' decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into.

What if I want to make a complaint?

We're not sure! It's never happened before. We will provide a complaints procedure so that people feel safe and able to raise any concerns they may have.

Have another question?

Please email Tania, The Pick Project Lead' at kiaora@thepick.co.nz.