

Community Response Research FAQs

What are the aims of your research?

We are a national network who support community and environmental resilience. Many of our hubs acted as emergency response centres during the Auckland Anniversary Weekend Floods and Cyclone Gabrielle. We want to recognise the importance of the mahi that individuals and citizen-led community organisations carried out, and understand how and why they filled gaps left by the official response. We want this collective experience to inform Government, TAs and Civil Defence on how to better support community responders, and how to build more resilient and empowered communities for the future events we know are coming.

We have already filled out a lot of surveys about our experience. What makes yours any different?

We recognise that affected communities have already been inundated by researchers. Our research is different because we are from the community sector, and this research is not funded by Government. Our independence means we can take a critical look at the official response, and ensure the voice of the locally-led community sector is heard. We will truly involve communities by co-designing our recommendations during focus groups. It is also not a purely academic exercise. Environment Hubs Aotearoa will use the findings in our ongoing advocacy work, pushing for positive change in our communities.

Will filling out this survey benefit my community?

We will be taking our findings directly to Ministers, Government agencies and funders, and using them in our advocacy work. At EHA, we argue for the recognition of empowered citizens and community organisations as vital infrastructure, and for them to be supported accordingly. It is our hope that giving an independent voice to the experience of communities will help ensure they are better resourced and supported before and during disasters.

Our community has suffered trauma. How will you conduct this research sensitively?

This is something we take very seriously, and we are taking precautions to avoid re-traumatising people. Our research has been reviewed and approved by the Human Ethics Committee of Massey University, and the survey has been carefully designed to avoid distressing imagery, language and questions, and all questions are optional. Participation in the research is completely voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time for any reason. During focus groups and interviews, we will be collaborating with local mental health services to refer participants if they require follow-up support.

What happens to my data if I participate?

We do not ask for any identifying information, except for email addresses if participants want to be contacted for focus groups, interviews, or a summary of findings. All survey data used in reports will be kept anonymous and free of potentially identifying information. Stories shared in focus groups and interviews will only be used with permission of those individuals, and they can review a copy before it is used. Data will be stored securely and all digital and physical copies deleted after 3 years. You can revoke your participation and remove your data at any time by emailing jen@environmenthubs.nz

What about data sovereignty and ownership?

We recognise the importance of data sovereignty, and we will not share or use anybody's personal information or stories without consultation and permission. Due to the sensitive nature of the data we are collecting, community ownership of the data is not possible. However, we will actively share our research findings with the community. Individuals can also request a copy of their own data at any time, or revoke their participation. We will work with participants to ensure that any stories, quotes or case studies are accurate, and that if they are happy to be named, that they be credited in our reporting accordingly.

How can I take part in a focus group or interview?

We will identify potential participants for focus groups and interviews through our survey. If you have indicated in your survey answers that you want to be included in these, we will be in touch once the survey closes with further details. Focus groups and interviews will run in Hawke's Bay, Tairāwhiti and Auckland later in 2024. If you would like to be considered for a focus group or interview and did not already indicate this in our survey, please email jen@environmenthubs.nz

How can I find out more?

You can find out more and read project updates at:

<https://www.environmenthubs.nz/community-resilience-research>

You can get in touch with the research team at any time by emailing jen@environmenthubs.nz, or calling Dr Karen Hytten on 06 951 6089 and leaving a message.