Gov Zero Aotearoa: creating a better & values based future together

An initiative instigated by Venture Centre that supports our diverse communities to engage, collaborate and accelerate the codesign and development, by citizens, of the digital foundations we urgently need to truly live well in Aotearoa NZ.

Exploratory Futures + Social Inclusion + Gov as a Platform

Why create Gov Zero Aotearoa?

We all rely upon, and are impacted by, the public sector every day. Whether directly, by interacting with the fragmented world of public services, or indirectly, through the decisions perpetuated through systems of government funding, policies, regulation, legislation, incentives and narratives. **Civil society has very little say, low influence and no real participation in the decisions or governance, or the systems that enable either, with public engagement having largely become limited to a continuous slew of communications activities (aka. "You're invited to make a submission").**

However, the NZ Government has a specific and binding responsibility to shared governance, both in its constitutional framework (particularly in Te Tiriti), and in the 2020 Public Service Act. **We, the people, believe; shared, participatory governance will be a highly beneficial in the transformation of Aotearoa NZ, to a modern, equitable, engaged democracy and civil society which sustains its citizens.**

To date most "change" efforts in our public sector have been limited to digitisation, digital services/apps, process automation or automated decision making. There is very little transformative, cultural or structural change and very little meaningful participation by the public. For all the "investment" in technology, we are seeing increasing adoption of automated, unexplainable and unaccountable systems, with a proliferation of inconsistent and often undignified services that create social exclusion. There is little digital infrastructure we can rely upon, have had a hand in designing and are able to change. There is now greater demand from communities for transformation of this status quo than ever before, but no strategy to undertake it.

Gov Zero Aotearoa is a civil society initiative to connect and welcome all people to take action — dream and build better futures, by building the digital civic-cultural-economic infrastructure that supports them, together.

In year one we intend to co-create visions of the optimistic futures we want to work towards, pessimistic futures we want to avoid, exemplars of what great public services and systems could look like, and digital civic-cultural-economic infrastructure to help democratise the opportunity that comes from living in a digital age – **all in alignment with the principles, protocols and practices of mātauranga Māori. We believe this public "innovation commons" will help fuel more, purposeful, high impact and innovative digital transformation of the governance of Aotearoa's common resources for decades to come.**

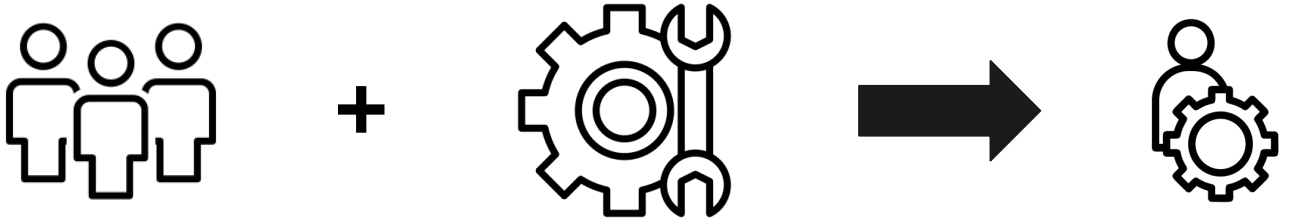
*We draw inspiration from the Gov Zero community in Taiwan, which has created the social and digital infrastructure to empower its citizens to tackle big problems in new ways, together, drawing on, incentivising, resourcing and rewarding the values, skills, vision, hopes and fears of all the individuals involved, across all communities and sectors. See Appendix for references.

Creating values based systemic transformation for a civil society in Aotearoa NZ

System **transformation** requires three key things: **vision, demand and partnerships**.

This programme plans to grow a **bold national vision**, increase the **demand for transformation**, and **strengthen the partnerships** we need to deliver.

Supporting the growth of...



People

With diverse voices and opinions, change-makers, all who are imagining co-creation of the possible.

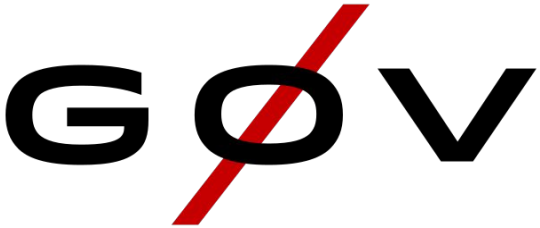
Tools

Which can transform how governance/governments function and enable a better tomorrow.

Systems

Which demonstrate models for how people and tools can deliver meaningful change to citizens of Aotearoa.

Launching Gov Zero Aotearoa



“Gov Zero” is a **community of open collaboration** between a diverse and passionate collective from across civil society.

We want great public services and policies that benefit us all, and we work together on practical ways to help serve and support all people and communities. We are currently creating our community intention, v.01, to reflect and represent the Aotearoa NZ context and cultures. Anyone can join, propose projects, collaborate with others, and act to create better futures for everyone.

Gov Zero Aotearoa is influenced by and acknowledges the inspiring efforts in Taiwan, where technologists, designers, story tellers, public servants, activists, companies and social organisations all collaborate on tackling the wicked problems facing society.

Initial problem statements & projects

1

How might we collectively work towards a better future for our children that is values based, grounded in history, humane and avoids unintentionally (re)creating inequitable systems?

1

A public commons of diverse narratives which articulate optimistic futures to work towards and pessimistic futures to mitigate

2

How might we measure, monitor and understand how socially inclusive (or not) public services are, to prioritise improvement

2

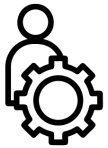
A social inclusivity assessment framework and reporting/dashboard for public services

3

How might we ensure all gov systems provide explainability of decisions (a requirement of OIA section 23) to ensure appealability and access to justice for all?

3

A public commons of legislation and regulation as code with high value use cases that immediately help the public



4

How might we achieve truly trustworthy, human/whānau-centric, welcoming and supportive government services in NZ that support all people to thrive?

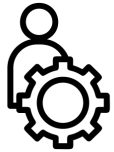
4

A Service Aotearoa demonstrator of human centric, trustworthy and supportive public services

Initial projects

g0v/Service Aotearoa demonstrator

Deliver an amazing demo g0v/Service Aotearoa experience that people would love. Would provide a means to showcase better gov services both directly, and through third parties. Could be a good opportunity to show what integration with a self-sovereign identity like Ahau could look like. Inspired by g0v efforts from Taiwan, where a community-led demo of great gov greatly accelerated transformation of government services with participatory models to better serve and empower citizens.



Community repository of legislation & regulation as code with use cases (RaC)

Establish a public commons of legislation and regulation as code, with three high impact use cases that deliver immediate value to the public whilst accelerating future opportunities through a reusable, extendable platform. The initiative will grow domestic capability, demand and provides open digital infrastructure to build upon by anyone. Use cases: social services legal eligibility checker (with CABNZ), Policy Difference Engine to contrast new policies (like social insurance), and a high veracity supply chain collab.

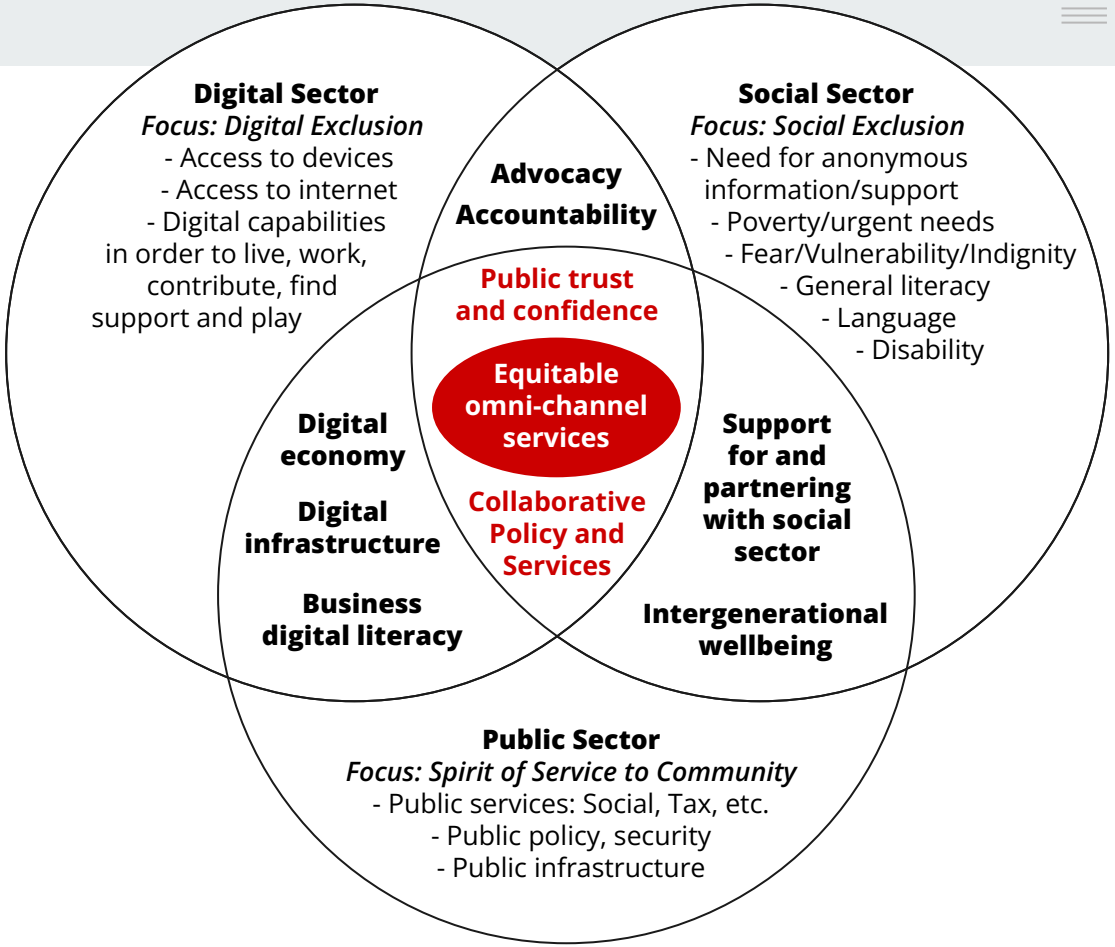
RaC & **Futures** will be reflected in the **Service Aotearoa** demonstrator

Optimistic & Pessimistic futures for our communities (OPFutures)

A variety of citizen assemblies and events will be conducted over the year with a large and diverse range of communities and partner organisations to develop 50 year optimistic and pessimistic futures that are stored in a public commons. This will help shift the public narrative and inform a range of strategic, practical, entrepreneurial, policy and delivery work across sectors, and to help bring people together around what could be, rather than what is and was.

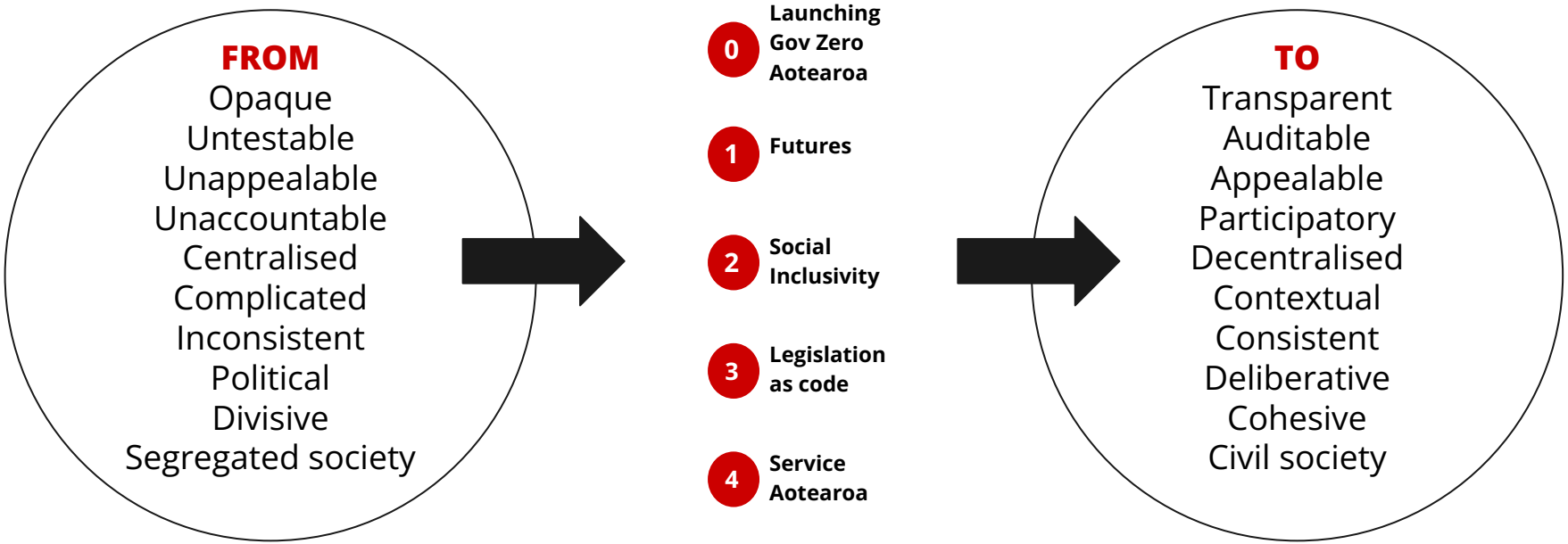
The intersection between digital, social & g0v

Inclusion isn't just about digital, we take a holistic approach to ensuring an equitable society. This program considers all aspects.



The intention of Gov Zero Aotearoa

By co-creating digital ‘civic-cultural-economic’ infrastructure we will go…



Our theory of change

The challenges we will be addressing	*Key audience*	*What is your entry point to reaching your audience?*	*What steps are needed to bring about change?*
A lack of community driven vision or future states to work towards, with no perceived alternative models. The inability to easily understand and access legal rights, eligibility & obligations from policies, regulations and legislation. A lack of civic digital infrastructure for communities to use. A lack of any sense of urgency or culture change to improve or transform public sector and serve civil society, Te Tiriti and elected members equally.	• Parliament (and Parties). • Media, news • Iwi, Hapu, leadership groups • Social and. disability sector, and their clients • Migrant/refugee groups & advocates • Investors, Tech sector • NZ Govt & Councils • InternetNZ	• Engagement with people through trusted organisations and networks • Events, showcases • Website, blog, newsletter, networking channels • Media reporting, (need a media or PR partner) • Partnerships with goal aligned orgs • Media, news • Funding engagement	A collective vision people can contribute to, shape and support. Initiatives that create pressure on departments current operations (like the "know your rights" service) Public interest created through stories, events, direct value from services Political engagement into 2023 election A coalition of willing
Assumptions - Depts continue BAU - Culture stagnation & staff disempowerment - Continued lack of public co-design - No substantial change in policy/practice	- By working openly, we will attract natural allies and participants - Our vision is shared or complementary to goals of other orgs.	- Working openly is key. - Media should be Interested, but need a partner.	- The problem is bigger Than any one problem statement, we are substantially trying to shift national consciousness.

	Measurable effect?	*Wider impact?*	*What is the long-term change we see as our goal?*
0 Launching Gov Zero Aotearoa	# and diversity of participants, # projects, funding, reporting.	Growth of civil society, inc public servants, actively working together.	An ambitious, community-values based and future oriented approach to policies and services. Established, meaningful and active participatory democracy. A requirement for explainability in all gov systems, with real time monitoring and ease of appealability. An integrated, holistic, dignified and humane experience with govt.
1 Futures	# futures, # reuse, citations, # recs adopted by gov, # subs informed by futures.	Shift in public narrative towards better futures, and in public expectation towards optimism.	
2 Social Inclusivity	% services measured as inclusive, # depts engaged, measurable change 12-24 months	Pressure on depts/gov to not just do the minimum but create holistic service.	
3 Legislation as code	5000 ppl use service, 5% increase in people applying for benefits, 3 x depts taking action	Improved public confidence, 100 ppl on RaC, depts put under pressure to explain.	
4 Service Aotearoa	# and diversity of users tested with, # contribs, # orgs, # refs/stories, and # depts that engage	Demonstration(s) of what is possible raises people's expectations & ambition for services.	
	- We can measure our own analytics and Projects, directly and with participating orgs. - We use OIA to get stats/data from govt.	- Vision - Urgency/imperative - Public engagement - Plausible alternatives - Greater expectations of public sector	

Our charitable purpose

The Gov Zero Aotearoa community and its first projects 1 to 4 will be beneficial to the community by;

0 Launching Gov Zero Aotearoa	providing a dignified and supported means for all New Zealanders to easily get involved in participatory democracy, including shaping policies, services, laws and alternatives. Gov Zero will provide a politically neutral community platform and virtual space for anyone to explore what "better" could look like, and find like minded people to get there together.
1 Futures	engaging broadly across the communities of New Zealand to understand and represent their hopes and fears for the future to the political and public sectors, to encourage new policies and services that meet the hopes and mitigate the fears.
2 Social Inclusivity	engaging and empowering people with complex challenges in their lives, including people with disabilities, injury, threat, fear, and digital or social exclusion, to participate in improving the social inclusiveness and suitability of public services and policies.
3 Legislation as code	providing community infrastructure for the community to rely on and build upon, such as public legislation and regulation as infrastructure to openly support anyone in the community to have the means to check government actions or decisions against the law, and to be empowered to seek an explanation under Section 23 of the OIA.
4 Service Aotearoa	establishing publicly available services to help New Zealanders understand their legal eligibility and entitlement to public services including benefits, tax credits, emergency support and other assistance. These services will be co-designed with Citizen Advice Bureau and Community Law to support people at their most vulnerable, and empower them to have greater access to social justice outcomes

Timeline for 2022

Establishment

Launch Gov Zero Aotearoa, create engagement strategies in consultation with Iwi. Initial teams established, problem statements/success defined for each project, backlogs created, discovery work commenced, public invitation to participate.

Participatory policy & supply chain RaC

MVP public tool (Policy Difference Engine) for anyone to engage with and test policy changes. MVP organics rules as code use case to support Veracity Lab work on high veracity supply chains

Optimistic & pessimistic futures for 2023

A showcase event of the optimistic and pessimistic futures gathered over the year, key journeys and requirements identified, with practical opportunities identified and recommendations for 2023.

Jan - Feb | Mar - Apr | May - Jun | Jul - Aug | Sep - Oct | Nov - Dec

Continuous engagement with NGOs & communities on 50 year futures (events, online)

Service concepts, RaC platform & eligibility MVPs

Early Service Aotearoa concepts for testing. MVP platform for legislation/regulation as code. MVP public tool for legal eligibility of gov services in partnership with CAB to deliver immediate value to people in need of help.

g0v/Service Aotearoa demonstrator

A mock Service Aotearoa demonstrator for the public to use and give feedback on., focused on a range of use cases that both address key pain points, while painting a more dignified and delightful potential future experience with government.

Programme showcase and celebration

The Accelerating Digital Aotearoa NZ team will invite all partners, participants and contributors to a wrap up event with a showcase of all deliverables, presentation of the reports, lessons learned, opportunities and challenges, and a chance for participants to discuss next steps.

Deliverables

Each project has specific deliverables to complete by the end of 2022, to contribute to a public commons that can be extended & built upon in 2023. Each deliverable is paired with a ongoing host to take it forward, governed by the community long term.

Legislation & regulation as code (RaC)

Public commons (platform) of openly available legislation and regulation as code that anyone can build upon (Digital Legal Systems Lab)

Public legal eligibility tool for government services (Digital Legal Systems Lab)

Policy Difference Engine (Digital Legal Systems Lab)

Organics RaC and high veracity decision making MVPs (Veracity Lab)

Service Aotearoa demonstration

National citizen circle for ongoing user research and testing for public good initiatives (Venture Centre)

g0v/Service Aotearoa mockup service with wireframes, UI, components and infrastructure (TBC)

Te Tiriti based framework for Digital Public Infrastructure (Veracity Lab)

Demonstration of government services interfacing with a self-sovereign system (Veracity Lab)

Optimistic & pessimistic futures

Public repository of at least 100 fifty year futures (Venture Centre)

Two virtual reality experiences that incorporate optimistic futures & pessimistic futures (Venture Centre)

A report with recs to achieve optimistic & mitigate pessimistic futures, and DPI Framework validation (Veracity Lab)

A public backlog of bugs and opportunities to improve quality of life in Aotearoa NZ (Venture Centre)

Measuring success

Each project will have success criteria and measures that both address the particular problema space, but also incentivise high impact and extendable outputs from each initiative.

Legislation & regulation as code (RaC)

RaC platform and products are being used by other organisations to build new value of avoid costs.

Public legal eligibility tool: 10,000 people use the service in NZ to determine their legal eligibility, and growth in people applying for benefits/services. High veracity decisions demonstrator: used as an example to inspire change, and invitation to help design and/or implement high veracity systems in a department.

High veracity organics supply chain: the RaC platform is used to improve compliance & consumer confidence.

Policy Difference Engine: 1,000 people interact with the system to understand policy implications, with some media coverage and public narrative about the genuine pros and cons of a Social Insurance scheme for NZ.

Service Aotearoa demonstration

Positive feedback and demand from a demographically representative pool of 1000+ end users.

Media reporting on opportunities for improving the quality of public services nationally.

Measurable reuse of the concepts, design work, service components/platforms and/or code by cross sector organisations to improve their services to the public.

Support for a functional demonstration for how public services could interface with self-sovereign systems (Iwi identity infrastructure, digital taonga, etc).

Optimistic & pessimistic futures

Over 100 fifty year futures (optimistic and pessimistic) are added to the public repository.

A cross sector collection of organisations, companies and institutes start using the futures to inform services, policies and products.

Greater public reporting on what could be, rather than what is.

Representative engagement from across sectors, communities and demographics in the work, across all projects.

Why Venture Centre?

Venture Centre is committed to creating the conditions for equality of opportunity to participate in increasing human flourishing and support the development of an emerging ‘Aroha Economy’ in Aotearoa, NZ. They achieve this through supporting community-led and entrepreneurial initiatives that drive increased digital capacity and support innovations which deliver public and community good.

Gov Zero’s first projects will lay foundations to help grow and support community-led capabilities, platforms and partnerships across communities, while contributing to the innovation commons in Aotearoa NZ. The strong alignment with Venture Centre goals and this programme provides a means of creating condition to grow future opportunities.

Partnerships

Gov Zero Aotearoa started with support and tight collaboration between several community orgs, namely: **Venture Centre, Veracity Lab, the Digital Legal Systems Lab, Citizens Advice Bureau, Openfisca, Ahau**

A huge thank you to our corporate partners and other supporters, a group which is growing every week: **Salsa Digital, TOMO, NZOSS**

We welcome participation from anyone: individuals from all sectors (including public servants), organisations, departments, communities, Councils. Basically anyone who cares about ensuring public good and civil society in the digital era.

Get involved

Venture Centre is proud to support this collaborative programme that brings together some of the best minds, experience, and expertise across Aotearoa. We are seeking your support and participation to accelerate digital for Aotearoa, and to improve the public demand for a better future for all. The project will largely rely on open source tools to ensure maximum reuse and extendability.

What we need to make this happen

$1M

Dedicated programme lead, engagement lead, admin, students, events, contributions for participating NGOs & subject matter experts, VR stories, user compensation for research, and a RaC platform team (DLS Lab).

Funding for/or Product Teams

Product teams to deliver MVPs for four RaC use cases (3-4 ppl ea) & Service Aotearoa demonstrator team (6-8): Each product team to have PO, design, tech/dev.

In kind

Cloud infrastructure, venues, promotion, subject matter expertise from partner orgs.

About us (so far!)

This programme is led by Pia Andrews, Jo Allum and Jonah Duckles, in close collaboration with Arama Mataira (Walk Together), Ben Tairea (Ahau), Markus Luczak-Roesch (Veracity Lab), Hamish Fraser & Tom Barraclough (Digital Legal Systems Lab), with other partners and supporters to serve as an Advisory Circle in discussion right now.

Pia Andrews

Jo Allum

Jonah Duckles

Arama Mataira

Ben Tairea

Markus Luczak-Roesch

Hamish Fraser

Tom Barraclough

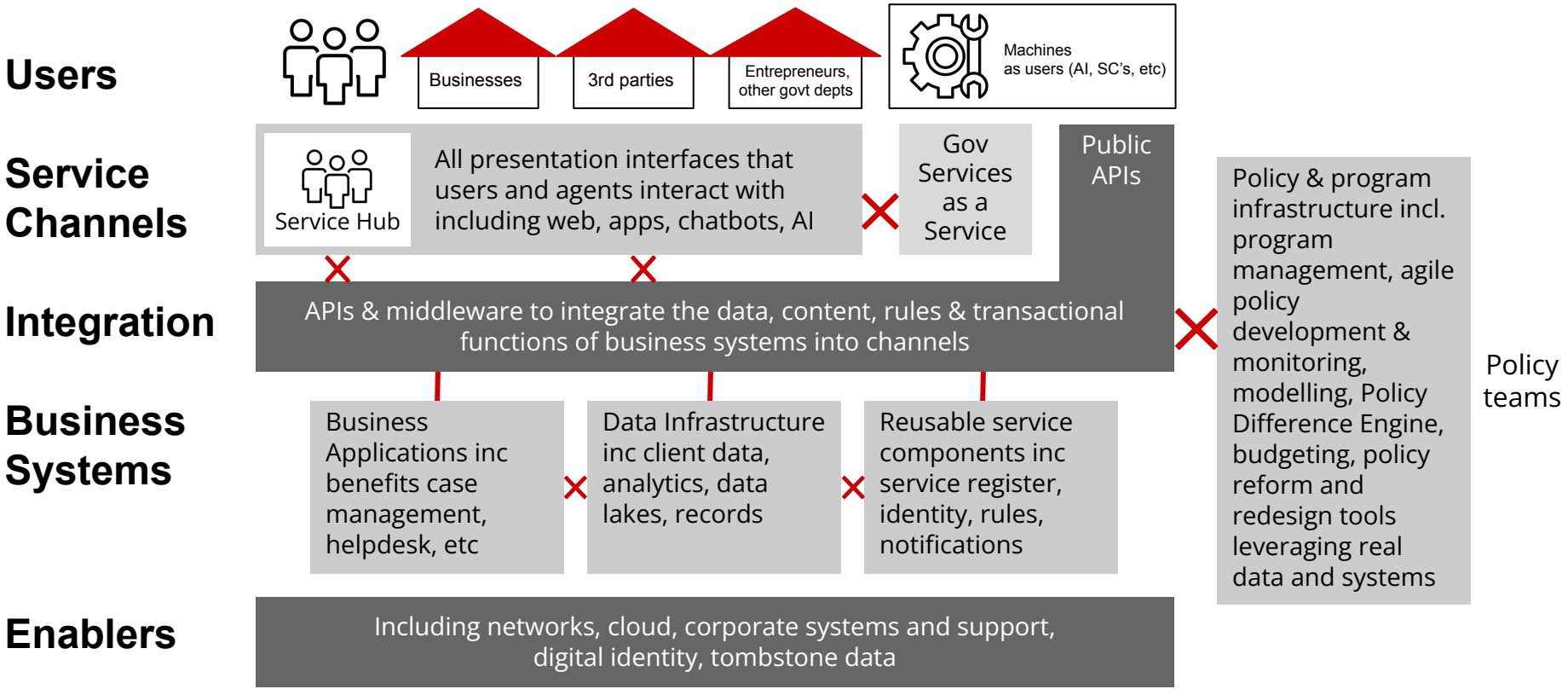
Next steps: Programme 2 coming in 2023

Building on the start made to lay Aotearoa's digital foundations; **the bold national vision**, **increased demand for transformation**, and **strengthened partnerships** from Programme 1; to scale **and deliver significant value in 2023.**

APPENDIX

1. A framework for Service Aotearoa
2. References: gov.tw (Gov Zero Taiwan)

Framework for **g0v/Service Aotearoa** to build upon



References: g0v.tw (Gov Zero Taiwan)

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