



Strong foundations through effective involvement of people.

How can we help you?

Do you need to:

- Bring about change in a challenging situation?
- Pull people together to achieve a goal?
- Explore what others think to make something work really well?
- Achieve great results from your meetings and events?
- Foster new skills while getting the job done?
- Help others to understand what you are doing?
- Address a gap in skills or knowledge?

If you answer "Yes" to any of these questions, we can help you to:

- Find the best way to achieve your goals.
- Draw the best information from the right people and make sense of it with our facilitation and social research services.
- Communicate information and outcomes in a way that reaches your audience with our writing and editing services.
- Escape the hassle of behind-the-scenes organisation with our event coordination services.
- Administer and track your progress with our management services.

Who likes working with us?

Businesses and organisations that are passionate about their purpose and people benefit most from our services. Many of our clients are also committed to environmentally responsible business practice. Groundwork has a particular niche in resource management, sustainable agriculture and organics. The clients that we have worked with on these projects have frequently gained value from our technical knowledge and well-established relationships with scientists, farmers and growers, industry bodies and local government.

We're small but mighty! How this works for you.

Groundwork has a small core team. This keeps our overheads low and our fees competitive. BUT we have fantastic networks and strong systems so we can pull in the people we need, when we need them and get them up and running fast, to deliver big projects in a spectacularly cost-effective way.

Go on, contact us!

To discuss your needs, or for more information, contact:

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Facilitation and Sustainable Agriculture Extension

- Want to engage people in discussion and decision-making?
- Want people to feel safe to explore ideas and issues?

Groundwork's facilitation services create a supportive environment so ideas and issues can be raised, heard and explored in a constructive way, even when a group includes a wide range of personalities or roles. Our goal is to get participation from the whole group. You will get a higher level of support for any decision, idea or solution agreed upon through a well facilitated process and any follow-up action has a higher chance of success.

Clients have used our facilitation services to:

- Support organisational growth by formulating a shared vision, values and objectives
- Improve organisational or team performance by sharing views on issues and solutions
- Consult stakeholders on a plan, change or issue
- Gather ideas to help progress a strategy or project
- Support learning for effective action

Groundwork works closely with clients to design a process which reflects the needs of the organisation, the project and participants.

Key projects

Grow Organic Dairy (ODPG): Mar 2009 to Jun 2009

The Organic Dairy and Pastoral Group wanted to work with top organic dairy farmers and Massey University scientists to uncover and document tacit knowledge that would help further the growth of the organic dairy industry. Annie Perkins, in a research leader role, designed and led the experiential learning process through the intensive early stages of the project. Groundwork organised and facilitated on-farm workshops and processed information from them to generate a valuable bank of practical information for those involved in organic dairy production or considering converting to organic methods. Annie Perkins acted as the ODPG's Northern Region coordinator, providing support for all extension activity in the region.

Learning from Leaders – NZFEA Trust: Feb 2002 to June 2006

NZ Farm Environment Award Trust wanted to share the tools and knowledge learned from farmers entering the awards (BFEA) with a wider audience of farmers and rural professionals nationwide. Groundwork project managed two SFF-funded (over \$1.5 million) projects and led five years of extension work supporting farmers learning from farmers about sustainable farming. (NZFEA Trust 2001-2006). See www.maf.govt.nz/sff/about-projects/search/04-037/index.htm for more detail.

Groundwork designed, organised and facilitated a series of on-farm workshops which enabled people to learn about sustainable farm business management options, from the farmers who developed and used them. Groundwork coordinated and facilitated a two-day national workshop bringing together over 30 people, including top environmentally-performing farmers, key scientists, leaders from Federated Farmers and the Dairy Environment Leadership Group, NZFEA Trust members and Ballance Farm Environment Awards judges.

OANZ Organic Advisory Programme Nov 2008 to June 2009

Annie Perkins served as the Northern Region Coordinator for the Organic Advisory Programme, working across the industry to strengthen the network of service providers and growers. She organised and supported delivery of extension services.

Contact Energy: current

Contact Energy needed an independent facilitator to help hear and resolve submitters concerns about a proposed wind farm before a Ministerial Board of Inquiry reconsiders the proposal in mid-2010. Groundwork is helping by coordinating meetings between Contact Energy and submitters, designing and running a facilitation process for each meeting, taking and circulating notes and helping to develop documents required for the project.

Land Use Futures Trust: Aug to Sept 2008

Facing challenges relating to nutrient management in Rotorua Lakes, the Land Use Futures Trust wanted to develop planning recommendations to help rural landowners reduce nutrient losses and guide the review of the Rotorua District Plan and the Regional Policy Statement. Groundwork developed and facilitated a process to help identify, clarify recommendations and presented them in a report which the Trust delivered to the Rotorua Lakes Strategy Group.

Regional Councils Land Managers' Group: May to Aug 2008

The LMG needed to learn about central government policies concerning climate change and identify where regional council work meets or integrates with those policy objectives. Groundwork helped them by facilitating a workshop and preparing a summary report for LMG representatives to present to council chief executives.

Meat and Wool NZ: 2007

Meat and Wool New Zealand was interested in merging its Beef Council and Sheep Council into a single national group representing all NZ sheep and beef farmers. Groundwork helped achieve this goal by facilitating the merger discussions, drawing out common interests but also exploring disparate views.

"They understand my business, and the industry we work in and I like their approach. I like the ideals and philosophy of the business; they strike a good balance between the environment, business and social requirements." Robert Carter, Sheep and Beef Council.

"The process developed by Annie and her team provided an open and transparent environment for all affected by the proposed integration. Meat & Wool New Zealand were very pleased with the outcome and level of support as a result of Groundwork facilitation" Richard Wakelin, General Manager Farm Services, Meat and Wool New Zealand.

Human Capability in Ag/Hort Group: 2002 to 2007

This group was established to help the Agriculture/Horticulture sector attract, retain and gain access to the people it needs on or near farms to succeed in the future. Groundwork ran the organisation's first national meeting in 2002, facilitated a CEO group meeting to establish support for the group and then ran the second national meeting in 2007 to identify national priorities for future focus.

"I have great respect for what Groundwork does and would recommend them to others. Groundwork works in a very cooperative and enabling way with an emphasis on robust preparation. They are very inclusive, which ensures whole workshop participation and they have good facilitation tools to work with. They take an intelligent and strategic approach and are good at looking at the big picture. The amount of work put in is very fair with respect to what you pay. On top of this they have a good understanding of how the agricultural sector works." Sue Pickering, Horticulture New Zealand.

Federated Farmers Waikato Executive Committee: May to Sept 2005

FFW required an assessment of its current position and determine what members and clients wanted from it in the future. Groundwork designed, facilitated and reported on two planning workshops involving FFW executive committee members and guests (including non-members and clients).

“Groundwork is fairly unique in comparison to other facilitators...I like the way they present the whole facilitative part...[it’s] very open and [you feel] involved in the process.” Peter Buckley, Federated Farmers.

Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust: Jan 2002 to Mar 2003

Groundwork played an integral role in the Trust’s establishment and initial development. Groundwork worked with trustees to clarify objectives and develop Trust functions and provided training and facilitation to support the Trust’s first year of large-scale community consultation.

“We’ve used and referred back to that work continuously since it was done four years ago. Whenever we’ve looked at another step forward we’ve gone back and checked over whatever people’s views were at the time and made sure we’ve stayed in line with those views—so the work’s been very valid right up until the present.” Jim Mylchreest, Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust.

MIRINZ: May 2005

MIRINZ needed to review a problematic project and see what lessons needed to be carried forward into subsequent projects. Groundwork designed the agenda for the programme, ran meetings and captured the resulting information in a summary report.

“Efficient, assertive without being threatening, open and honest, good communication.” Jan Thornborough, MIRINZ.

Environment Waikato: Nov to Dec 2004

EW’s Community and Economy programme team wanted a facilitator to assist with its work planning process. Groundwork facilitated two team meetings and provided a summary report.

“It was a really good piece of work for us. I liked that there was a complete service from facilitation through to notes generation. Quite tidy and complete.” Wendy Boyce, Environment Waikato.

Hamilton City Council and Hamilton Police: July 2004

HCC and Hamilton Police wanted to know whether stakeholders supported existing initiatives to improve safety in the CBD; what else could be done; and if or how stakeholders could be involved in any future activities. Groundwork designed, facilitated and reported on three focus group sessions involving council staff, police, business representatives, community groups and residents.

“Annie spent quite a bit of time with me making sure she understood the project well, making sure I understood what she could do to support the project. We talked about and worked through a plan which was outcome based.” Aylene McKenzie, HCC.

South Waikato District Council: Apr to May 2004

SWDC required a neutral, non-council facilitator to help consult with the public on its Long Term Community Council Plan. Groundwork ran two focus groups (on social and cultural issues), then compiled and presented the findings back to a full Council meeting.

“Efficient, thorough, professional, good communication...Annie really put some thought into the issues that were examined.” Sue Arthur, formerly South Waikato District Council.

Event management

Let us help you get the results you want from your workshops, training days, strategic planning sessions or focus groups. Groundwork can help you design an event that will meet your objectives and take care of 'behind-the-scenes' elements to make your event run smoothly including:

- Strategies for getting people to your event
- Venue and equipment hire
- Catering and refreshments
- Travel and accommodation bookings
- Preparation and distribution of event related materials
- Liaising between attendees, organisers, venue managers etc to keep the event on track
- Budget estimates and tracking and event reporting
- Support on the day – registrations, photography, displays/decorations, note taking
- Advice on 'green' event design

Key projects

Organic Dairy and Pastoral Group: Mar to Jun 2009

As part of the Grow Organic Dairy project, Groundwork coordinated logistics for nine farming couples and five Massey University scientists to visit nine farms throughout the Waikato and Taranaki region for an intensive information gathering and experiential learning process. Groundwork also facilitated and coordinated two workshops and helped organise two governance group meetings.

OANZ Organic Advisory Programme Nov 2008 to Jun 2009

The Groundwork team coordinated a number of OAP and ODPG workshops including a series of Financial Performance seminars held in five New Zealand regions; an Alternative Grazing Management seminar in the Waikato region; a Biodynamics Field Day in Waihi and two Soil Fertility Workshops

OANZ needed to promote itself and its resources at a regional Organic Expo. Groundwork designed an eye-catching site using OANZ flyers, posters and banners, organised supplies, resources and travel for the day and managed the site from set up to clean up. Groundwork liaised with attendees, providing them with information and network contacts relevant to their area of interest in organics and their particular industry.

Network for Women in Dairying: Apr 2006

The Network wanted help to develop and deliver a series of seminars for women in dairying. Groundwork provided programme design and event coordination services, using its sector knowledge and networks to formulate seminar topics, secure speakers and help develop promotional and presentation material.

"Understanding, very personable, timely, not bogged down by the big corporate stuff and [they have] a genuine understanding of adult education. They've been great to work with and I look forward to working with them in the future." Lynda Clark, Network for Women in Dairying.

NZ Farm Environment Award Trust: Feb 2002 to Jun 2006

NZFETA Trust wanted to share the tools and knowledge gained from the Ballance Farm Environment Awards (BFETA) with a wider audience of farmers and rural professionals nationwide. Groundwork designed, organised and facilitated a series of on-farm workshops which enabled people to learn about sustainable farm business management options, from the farmers who developed and used them. See www.maf.govt.nz/sff/about-projects/search/04-037/index.htm for more detail.

Project management

Do you want to be sure your project will meet your goals, budget and deadlines?

Groundwork can help you structure your project timeline, focus your team resources effectively, establish milestones, design and implement effective communication processes and gather feedback at key progress points or in a “lessons learned” debrief session. We can also provide advice on budget estimates, tracking and reporting, or take this sometimes onerous task off your hands with our proven systems. Groundwork can provide the following services to ensure your project runs efficiently and meets deadlines:

- Determine the objective and specific desired outcomes from the client
- Determine the tools and resources required to meet the objectives
- Identify factors that could influence or limit the project
- Structure and monitor a project timeline
- Actively manage communication channels between client and project team
- Help with formal reporting
- Develop and implement project documentation
- Manage project closure

Key projects

New Zealand Association of Resource Management: Jan 2009

NZARM wanted to shift its secretarial management from a voluntary position to a more formal arrangement supported by stronger administrative systems. Groundwork convinced NZARM that, as a team, we could deliver the required services as or more effectively than an individual appointee. Our skilled staff invoice memberships, maintain and update NZARM's membership database and provide accounting and financial reporting services.

“Our organisation - the New Zealand Association of Resource Management - has been working with Groundwork for the past year bringing our secretariat and financial systems together. Groundwork has proved to be very efficient and has a range of competent staff to help. The staff are always prompt and polite with responses and our books now look much better than under our old regime. I would definitely recommend Groundwork to similar organisations that need such services.” Ross Abercrombie, Treasurer, NZARM

Organics Aotearoa New Zealand: Mar to Jun 2009

Groundwork administered OANZ's Smart Start Programme which supports new entrants into the organic sector by teaming them up with appropriate consultant mentors. Groundwork collected and managed the vast amount of information associated with the programme and ensured the timely completion of each Smart Start consultancy by confirming each client had received a final report from their mentor, ensuring invoices had been processed and working through any issues that clients had with the programme.

NZ Farm Environment Award Trust: Jul 2004 to June 2007

Groundwork managed the Trust's \$1.2 million experiential learning project, 'Learning from Leaders'. This involved setting up and running systems to track progress against targets and budget, reporting to SFF and to the project's management team, as well as managing the day-to-day activities associated with the project. 'Learning from Leaders' had seven official project partners with many more organisations providing support for local events. Accounting for in-kind support from these partners was an important aspect of the project management.

"Annie and the team at Groundwork have managed this project very well...Annie has been particularly good at keeping me, as SFF project advisor, up to date with how the project has been progressing and with any changes in direction to the original milestones. Groundwork has set up strong accounting systems that can be used to track the in-kind as well as cash in-goings/ out-goings. The financial reports have always been available and transparent. Through the experience gained over the past 2 years, they now have a good understanding of the real costs of running different events." Helen Percy, Acting Fund Manager, Sustainable Farming Fund

Writing, editing and communications

- Need to know what communication tools best fit your purpose, budget and audience?
- Have some research which needs become a report?
- Want to turn those workshop notes into something useful?
- Or do you simply need a final, fresh eye to look over that document you've been sitting on?

Groundwork's creative and practical approach to communication gets the best out of your research, workshop or meeting. You can also use our facilitation and event management services to gather your source information in an effective and inclusive way. We can:

- Provide advice on how to reach your intended audience
- Write for a technical or specialist audience
- Edit technical information into plain English for a general audience and any print or electronic medium
- Structure and write technical manuals
- Conduct background research via interviews, focus groups or workshops
- Coordinate desktop publishing, graphic design, web design, e-zine set up, digital and offset print work

Key projects

NZ Farm Environment Award Trust: Feb 2002 to June 2006

NZFEA Trust wanted to showcase sustainable farm practice in an accessible yet scientifically robust way. Groundwork combined its facilitation and communications skills to gather input from farmers, scientists, local government, industry groups and other stakeholders for six Trust publications. In a follow-up project for the Trust, Groundwork produced a range of materials including a publication, Q&A sheets from on farm workshops, an electronic newsletter, a series of tip sheets and copy for the project's SFF web page. View these resources at www.maf.govt.nz/sff/about-projects/search/04-037/index.htm.

"[Groundwork] made good use of the Sustainable Farming Fund website, using it to link to the publications, reports of events and the LfL email newsletter. We refer other project groups to their section on the website as an example of how this medium can be used to pass on the message to a wider audience." Helen Percy, Acting Fund Manager, Sustainable Farming Fund

National Land Monitoring Forum (NLMF): June to October 2009

The NLMF needed to produce a manual to help standardise local government approaches to soil and land monitoring. The core chapters had been developed by several different authors. Groundwork compiled, edited and formatted the material into a consistent, easy-to-read document suitable for publishing and printing from an on-line source.

Environment Waikato: June to Nov 2008

EW's Integrated Catchment Management Team needed to summarise progress on projects examining on-farm nutrient management issues in two Upper Waikato catchments. The reports would be used to inform councillors about the project's outcomes and demonstrate the value of being involved in the project to other farmers in the catchments. Groundwork drew together the relevant information and developed reports which were technically sound while still being accessible to a general audience.

Environment Waikato: Sept 2008

EW wanted help with a Health and Wellbeing Assessment report, which explored social and cultural issues related to changes required to improve air quality (and therefore public health) in Tokoroa. Groundwork edited the 86-page document for consistency and readability, produced an executive summary and a community summary, which captured the project background, assessment findings and recommendations in a short, plain-English document.

Social research and stakeholder surveys

Want to strike gold with your qualitative research?

Groundwork has a strong background in social research, particularly for the scientific and agricultural communities. We have experience in the design, execution and analysis of surveys and the facilitation of focus groups to draw out the information you need to know.

Let us project manage your survey so that you get the best results for your money!

Key projects

OANZ Organic Dairy and Pastoral Group: Mar to Jun 2009

ODPG required a research leader to uncover the tacit knowledge of some of the top organic dairy farmers in NZ for its Grow Organic Dairy project. As well as coordinating and facilitating on-farm workshops for this experiential research exercise, Groundwork handled all the data collection and preliminary analysis. This involved developing a profile of each researcher/farmer and analysis of their farm performance and work practices. Transcribing and organising information from audio recordings of each on-farm session was a key part of the process.

Pastoral Greenhouse Gas Research Consortium/DairyNZ: Mar to Aug 2008

The PGGRC and Dairy NZ wanted to collect information from New Zealand scientists and professionals specialising in the minimisation of methane and nitrous oxide gas emissions from farms. Groundwork helped the client develop the survey, conducted it and produced a report which discussed and prioritised components, models, systems and technologies that are in use or could be used.

Dairy InSight and ATR Solutions: 2004 to 2006

Dairy InSight required an assessment of employment issues and needs in the dairy sector and to find a way to address them. Groundwork designed and led a qualitative research process involving 13 workshops with dairy farmers and farm workers around New Zealand and worked closely with ATR Solutions to suggest steps forward. Subsequently Groundwork provided three training workshops to help employers use a new employment health assessment resource which was developed as part of the project.

“Groundwork provides an environment whereby different views can be canvassed and brought together to find a common direction...[Its services are] professional, relaxed, persistent, inclusive, independent and credible.” Shaun Wilson, ATR Solutions.

Hamilton City Council and Environment Waikato: Apr to May 2004

HCC and EW wanted to develop a waste recycling service which would be used by city businesses. Groundwork's assistance enabled them sound out ideas via a series of focus groups.

“Annie knows our networks, our target audience...she understands the business that we're in, so she can pitch our work right.” Tegan McIntyre, Hamilton City Council.

Training

Do we have a skill that you would like to develop in your team?

Learn our trade secrets! Groundwork can help you build capacity in areas such as facilitation, consultation, participatory learning, effective writing and communications planning.

Basically if we do it, we can train you in it!

Key projects

OANZ Organic Advisory Programme Nov 2008 to June 2009

Annie Perkins of Groundwork facilitated three training workshops for the Experiential Science Programme of OANZ. This programme supported leader in organics with delivery methods for facilitating learning and communication. Results were presented to the 2009 Organics Conference and the abstract and interviews with dairy farmer, Mike Moss, who participated in this work, are on the website <http://leadership.rsnz.org/collections/31>.

MAF Sustainable Farming Fund: 2007

MAF SFF wanted to encourage its project teams to communicate more effectively about their progress and outcomes. Impressed with our performance in the NZFEA Trust's 'Learning from Leaders' project, MAF SFF invited Groundwork to develop and deliver a training workshop on effective communications strategy for MAF SFF projects. See www.maf.govt.nz/sff/apply/2007-workshop-resources/communication-guide-by-groundwork.pdf for the written guide.

Human Rights Commission: May to July 2003

HRC needed to consult extensively and consistently with the public to develop a national human rights action plan for New Zealand. Groundwork helped HRC get input from over 5,000 people nationwide by training 15 Human Rights Commission staff in participatory appraisal consultation methods and supporting them during the consultation process. Groundwork also facilitated consultation with people in rural Waikato.

Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust: Jan 2002 to Mar 2003

MEIT wanted its plan for a pest-free reserve around Mt Maungatautari to meet the needs of a wide range of stakeholders. As a charitable trust with limited finances, it had to find a way to consult efficiently, effectively and cheaply. By training a crew of keen volunteers in facilitation techniques, Groundwork helped the Trust minimise costs and complete a massive community consultation exercise in relatively short timeframe.