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In response to the impact Covid-19 has had on the Eastern Bay of Plenty's economy, Industrial Symbiosis Kawerau (ISK) has decided to refocus the function of its Workforce Development team.

Kawerau Pathways to Work (KPtW), an ISK initiative funded through the Provincial Growth Fund, works with Industry to identify opportunities to grow a skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of the Eastern Bay of Plenty developments. Their Cadetship programme has become unviable due to the current market uncertainty so has been put on hold to allow KPtW to take a broader approach to work readiness.

Prior to the COVID-19 lockdown, the Cadetship programme had eight Rangatahi who were working within industry and service organisations in Kawerau and the Eastern Bay. Of those eight, five youth are now employed in ongoing positions by the business they are with. The remainder have gained valuable work-based experience and skills, which are often a barrier to employment for young people.

This change of focus has also meant a review of staffing resources. A Cadetship Co-ordinator was contracted for a period of two years but with the programme being put on hold, this contract will cease a year earlier than expected.

"Covid-19 has impacted on business across the Eastern Bay and we reviewed our work to see how we can best assist with the economic recovery" said Jacob Kajavala, Deputy Chair of ISK. "With the support of our funder we are able to repurpose our resources to identify how employment levels have been affected, what new employment opportunities may arise from new projects, where the skill gaps are, what training will be required to take advantage of the opportunities and how this upskilling can be facilitated."

In conjunction with industry and businesses, the broadening of this focus will include close collaboration with partners such as ToiEDA, the Eastern Bay of Plenty Chamber of Commerce, local and central Government and the Tertiary Education Commission to allow a co-ordinated approach to get business up and running and people back into jobs. It will also include assistance to employers and business owners to support them through the recovery.

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For further information please contact

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