

8 May 2014

InternetNZ
PO Box 11-881
Wellington

Kia ora

**Diversityworks Trust SignDNA (Sign Language Deaf National Archive)
REPORT BACK**

Enclosed please find relevant report back documentation for the grant of \$16,545+GST for the SignDNA (Sign Language Deaf National Archive) project.

I trust all is in order but please contact me via email — philip@diversitynz.com — or phone — 09 376 4830 — should you have any queries.

Once again, many thanks for supporting our work.

Kind regards



Philip Patston
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Diversityworks Trust Inc



Purpose of Funding:

In April 2013 InternetNZ granted \$16,545 as a contribution towards SignDNA (via Diversity-works Charitable Trust) for the following goals - **preservation, education, and developing a better understanding** between Deaf and hearing people - through the medium of an on-line archive (www.signdna.org).

Activities undertaken utilising funding:

InternetNZ's grant contributed towards the development of the online archive, which will be a user-friendly website containing countless videos containing New Zealand Sign Language (and older forms) and the Deaf community.

Objectives:

The SignDNA project has clear goals that were carefully developed and are supported by the Deaf Community Advisory Group that oversees the project on behalf of the NZ Deaf Community.

The immediate goal was one of preservation. Recordings of Deaf people and culture, including sign language, date back to the early 1940's. These recordings are on physical substrates that are now in serious danger of degradation. Deaf history is quite literally dissolving before our eyes. The SignDNA project is charged with the collection, digitisation, and storage of these artefacts in partnership with the NZ Film Archive with whom we have an excellent relationship.

The second goal was the establishment of an online tool for displaying and accessing the digital versions of these heritage films and videos. The archive will be carefully planned and expertly constructed, with an eye on the future development of the archive. Deafra-dio identified useful local templates from which to develop the archive, and work was done on drafting the archive functionality.

In order to make the archive useful and user friendly, the films have been carefully processed in order to allow meaningful searches for relevant material. Categories for searches have been drafted and approved by the Deaf Community Advisory Group.

Once established, there are more goals to aim for. It is believed that the archive will provide an excellent tool for educational purposes. This includes children, both Deaf and hearing, who for the first time will have actual Deaf cultural material to investigate and work with. Adults also will be able to use the archive to learn more about their own culture and history, or if they are not from the Deaf community, learn about this fascinating group via its historical archives.

The archive intends to provide a heritage tool for Deaf people to learn more about their own history and culture. Currently there is no single place that Deaf people can visit to learn about this. While Deaf people can visit museums, Marae, and virtual spaces (all with varying degrees of accessibility), there has never been a site developed focusing on the

culture of Deaf people in NZ. We believe this will assist in validating and strengthening their identity as a Deaf person.

The archive will also be used for research purposes, primarily sociolinguistic, but also purely historical. While NZSL was banned for a century from 1880, NZSL continued to be a community language that largely went underground in the eyes of wider society. The effect of this pressure on the language and culture was profound, and created rapid changes in use and meaning especially between 1960 to 2000. The archive is likely to provide an excellent resource for analysing this linguistic and social change.

Another indirect goal is for Deaf senior citizens to have a purpose for working with younger generations of Deaf youth, to assist in processing the films into the archive. We require both groups to work together, as the more senior members of the community will hold the knowledge about the contents of the films and videos, while the youths will have the knowledge and energy to interact with the archive to increase its material knowledge. We have noted very few genuine opportunities for this kind of meaningful interaction, and believe it will provide a great insight for younger Deaf people to learn and appreciate the lives of those who come before them, creating a vivid cultural opportunity.

What makes SignDNA unique is the extremely versatile search function; users are able to search for a video by the following: category, tag, name tag, place, and year. When viewing the video, users will be able to click on particular tags/name tags, and be taken to that particular scene of the video. Users who have created a profile will be able to log in and save their favourite videos into sets, which will be quite handy for researchers/lecturers/teachers working with particular videos at a time. They also will be able to save the video to start at a certain time - handy for the longer videos.

Methodology:

Diversityworks Charitable Trust oversaw all administration of the project, while Deafradio project managed the implementation.

Diversityworks Trust appointed Deafradio as project managers for the establishment of the SignDNA archive. Deafradio, with the support of the Deaf Community Advisory Group, has to date achieved the following:

- Assembled an advisory board, which has met twice so far, to advise on the progress of the project. There are plans to have further meetings to finalise the website before its launch.
- Promoted its intention to the NZ Deaf community and received over 400 donations of films and video
- Raised over \$10,000 from community donations to urgently convert the most at-risk films.
- Created branding, and delivered numerous Deaf community presentations, including at the recent national Deaf View 3 conference in Wellington.

Following the advice of the web developers, we've completed a series of interviews with the Deaf community, with their insight to their Internet usage providing guidance for the user optimisation of SignDNA. This has been critical in confirming how these potential users will "behave" when using SignDNA to access the archived videos. The same interviewees shared their insight into how SignDNA would be used as an educational tool, which generally aligned with our vision of SignDNA being an educational platform.

Project Deliverables:

Please also include plans for research dissemination and communication of results.

When the website is ready, we are planning to have an official launch, with our supporters, funders, Advisory Group members, and the Deaf community to be invited. Prior to the launch itself, we will do some promotion on social media & through networking to generate interest to the impending launch of the archive. Aligning with the launch we will do media releases to ensure that the general community is also aware of this such resource.

At the completion of the project, anyone will be able to visit, view, and interact with the archive.

Budget:

Website development	\$14,805.00
Internal administration, financial management, project direction	1,645.00
Total	\$16,545.00

Risk Management:

Nature of risk	Potential impact on project	Strategy to reduce risk	Residual Risk
Deaf Community reject the project	Affects material offered and support/success of funding applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve the Deaf Community via the Reference group. Present to the Deaf Community directly the aims and goals of the project 	Low
Support for the project is overwhelmingly positive and we are overloaded with material, creating delays in processing and frustration from donors and Community.	Could affect the provision of material in the medium term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly explain the Deaf Community the pace of the project Create regular landmarks and publicise these to show the project is progressing. 	Low
No funding is granted for the project	Severe affect on the progress of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive funding search Support from the Deaf Community via the Reference group Initial limited funding support from DEAFRADIO to achieve early milestones 	Medium

Other information:

The online archive, initially expected to be launched early 2014, has had its launch postponed to August 2014. This archival project has been significantly bigger than expected, and has involved a large number of volunteers and

Project Funded: SignDNA - Sign Language Deaf National Archive

Contact Person: Philip Patston

Contact Email address: philip@diversitynz.com

Contact Phone: 09 376 4830

Amount granted: \$16,545