Digital Policy

Vision

Digital technologies[1] contribute to our personal, educational and professional development.

Values and Principles

- *Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi*: Use of digital technologies should protect taonga tuku iho[2], and uphold the mana and tino rangatiratanga of Māori, which includes protecting data and language sovereignty, tikanga Māori, mātauranga Māori, and collective ownership.

- *Ecological Wisdom*: The appropriate and innovative use of digital technologies should be used to significantly reduce use and waste of ecosystem resources, so nature has the capacity to replenish and absorb them.

- *Social Responsibility*: Digital technologies should be accessible to all, to support economic, social and political inclusion, rather than maintain privilege or worsen inequality.

- *Appropriate Decision-Making*: Digital technologies should enable equitable information-sharing, and promote accountability and well-informed public decision-making, including enhanced democratic processes.

- *Non-Violence*: Digital technologies should be ethically developed and applied, recognise the individual right to privacy, and treat personal data responsibly.

- *Solution-focus*: Digital technologies should facilitate local and indigenous solutions to local problems and sustainably increase productivity, innovation and efficiencies in our industries and businesses.

Summary

The Green Party supports equity in and access to digital tools and information, and recognises the potential that digital products and services have for innovation and connectivity. There are also security risks that need to be addressed to ensure that people and processes are safe from interference, personal data is kept private, and copyright law and consumer rights protections are fit for purpose in a digital world.

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[1]   In this policy, *digital technologies* is used to encompass all information and communications technologies, and includes hardware and software, products and services, online and offline.

[2]   *Taonga tuku iho* are the inherited treasures that have been handed down from previous generations in a continuation of mana, mātauranga and mauri. In this context, these taonga are displayed for future generations and created for continual usage, protection and mana of the uri (descendants) yet to come

Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

> "As a Party we strive to create a more connected, compassionate and equal Aotearoa, free from structural biases that discriminate against groups and individuals.

> "All people will be empowered to shape the systems that affect them through community engagement enabled by good evidence, co-design, and adequate resourcing."

Actions in this policy that work towards these goals include:

- Implement clear actions to monitor and address digital division, to ensure the benefits of digital services are experienced by all and access issues do not generate new economic, social or political inequalities. (1.1)
- Support legislation and government policies that ensure internet rights such as net neutrality, data access, and disconnection rights. (1.8)
- Ensure that all government databases that are eligible to be released into the public domain under the Official Information Act are made freely available in a format that enables the reuse, adaptation and analysis of the information. (1.11)
- Encourage initiatives that promote affordability, accessibility and network resilience in the provision of internet services. (2.1.)
- Enable public scrutiny of any digital system that is responsible for the safety of human life (e.g. transportation), or is responsible for crucial democratic processes (e.g. electronic voting). (2.8)
- Promote collaboration and provide opportunities for enhanced communication between the government, the digital sector and users on digital security issues. (2.10)

Connected Policies

Digital technology makes the storage and correlation of personal data much more prevalent than it has been in the past. This information should be collected, stored, and treated ethically, and access to this information by New Zealanders is paramount (see our Privacy and Security Services Policy). This policy is also connected to our Research, Science and Technology Policy.

Policy Positions

1.   Equity and Access

Issues

Our lives are increasingly conducted online; from entertainment, to business to engaging with Government departments. Increasingly there is important information that is primarily, if not solely, made available on the Internet. In Aotearoa New Zealand there is a digital divide between those who have access to the Internet and digital tools, and those who do not.

All levels of government have extensive and growing collections of publicly-owned information. Access fees, inappropriate use of copyright, and excessive use of proprietary formats create barriers that limit our ability to benefit from this knowledge.

Actions

1.1. Implement clear actions to monitor and address digital division, to ensure the benefits of digital services are experienced by all and access issues do not generate new economic, social or political inequalities.

1.2. Establish secure, publicly accessible digital services in areas with a significant digital divide, such as community technology hubs in schools, tertiary institutions, public libraries and other community centres, including free wireless internet access.

1.3. Support training opportunities for individuals, community groups and businesses to make best use of digital services.

1.4. Ensure that all government websites are accessible to people with disabilities through website standardisation.

1.5. Support the development of assistive technologies for disabled people using digital services provided by the Government.

1.6. Provide up-to-date information on government websites in both Te Reo Māori and English, and ensure all communities can access government information regardless of language or other barriers.

1.7. Provide free wireless internet access on public transport in metropolitan centres.

1.8. Support legislation and government policies that ensure internet rights such as net neutrality, data access, and disconnection rights.

1.9. Ensure regulation of online content is consistent with maintaining the human rights of all members of society.

1.10. Remove the requirement for people to be physically present in Aotearoa New Zealand to renew or replace government-issued documentation.

1.11. Ensure that all government databases that are eligible to be released into the public domain under the Official Information Act are made freely available in a format that enables the reuse, adaptation and analysis of the information.

1.12. Ensure that information held in Government databases that cannot be made available due to privacy or commercial sensitivity is made available in anonymised aggregate form.

2. Digital Resilience and Innovation

Issues

The digital products and services sector has the potential to innovate, connect and help transform the ways we live and work. However, digital technologies evolve at a rapid pace and present risks of abuse and unintended consequences to people, society and ecosystems. The Green Party recognises that security risks to Aotearoa New Zealand are not sufficiently addressed. There is not enough regulation of vendors to protect the public interest, and the failure of digital systems has sometimes jeopardised human safety and the integrity of crucial democratic processes.

Actions

2.1. Encourage initiatives that promote affordability, accessibility and network resilience in the provision of internet services.

2.2. Work with industry to support the incubation of Aotearoa New Zealand's creative edge and ingenuity in software development – especially where this addresses our most urgent issues or builds on successful industries or recent experience, including:

2.2.1. Creating a digital apprenticeship scheme and supporting tertiary providers to provide up-to-date digital education;

2.2.2. Developing digital clusters and supporting promising digital innovators to learn from key digital clusters overseas;

2.2.3. Enhancing the availability of venture and seed capital for local, commercial software companies;

2.2.4. Developing industry programmes that are attractive to new graduates; and

2.2.5. Promoting positive solutions to deceptive and malicious behaviours online.

2.3. Ensure that possible harms are researched prior to the widespread introduction of new digital technologies and services.

2.4. Encourage the appropriate and innovative use of digital services, particularly telecommuting, virtual mobility and better design, to reduce resource use.

2.5. Develop copyright law that applies to digital works, is responsive to the realities of digitalisation, upholds the tino rangatiratanga of tangata whenua over Māori intellectual property, and holds the public interest in information flow in mind.

A. Digital Infrastructure, Risk and Security

2.6. Require Government agencies procuring digital products and services to:

2.6.1. Report digital expenditure going to overseas and domestic digital companies;

2.6.2. Use a procurement system that enables domestic providers to bid for the work and prioritise local procurement where possible; and.

2.6.3. Use Free and Open-Source Software where practical and use open standards for documents and databases.

2.7. Ensure that digital infrastructure and systems are:

2.7.1. Developed and maintained by companies operating solely under Aotearoa New Zealand laws; and

2.7.2. Reviewed for security issues on an ongoing basis.

2.8. Enable public scrutiny of any digital system that is responsible for the safety of human life (e.g. transportation), or is responsible for crucial democratic processes (e.g. electronic voting).

2.9. Support the development of a system of professional registration for people working on safety-critical applications.

2.10. Promote collaboration and provide opportunities for enhanced communication between the government, the digital sector and users on digital security issues.

2.11. Require digital product vendors to promptly disclose security breaches and address security weaknesses.

2.12. Prevent public services from being used as a marketing platform for the digital products and services that they purchase.

2.13. Ensure that the introduction of new digital systems into workplaces is accompanied by suitable training and that suitable workplace support is provided to ensure a smooth transition and minimise risks to health and safety.

3. Digital Systems and Education

Issues

In many educational facilities digital services are still not sourced or used appropriately to support high-quality education. When students do not have ready access to digital services, learners can't fully develop their research skills, get timely access to knowledge resources, experience innovative styles of learning, or develop their technological literacy, or explore their creativity.

Actions

3.1. Support the balanced use of digital systems in education, as a means of enhancing access and fostering technological literacy, critically evaluating and using technology, and providing hands-on experience for students interested in gaining technology-focused employment.

3.2. Encourage the development of educational digital services.

3.3. Support the ongoing development of digital distance learning while maintaining face-to-face contact with instructors, tutors, and students.

3.4. Ensure that digital systems in schools are supported by clear user guidelines to maintain teacher and student health.

3.5. Ensure that the Ministry of Education takes a proactive role in digital system procurement to provide quality, open-source, learner-focused digital products and services that work best for learners and their communities.