



News release
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Embracing New Zealand's Māori culture at MEETINGS 2018

New Zealand's Māori cultural values will be a key focus of [MEETINGS 2018](#), the country's leading business events exhibition opening this week in Auckland.

Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) Chief Executive Sue Sullivan says New Zealand's Māori culture gives business event organisers a unique point of difference in a competitive international environment.

"Our culture sets Aotearoa New Zealand apart on the world stage. Our venue designers, our artists, our leaders, and our hosts are embracing Māori culture at many levels in their business event thinking.

"Māori culture is more than something we do, it is who we are, from the way we greet our visitors, to the time and care we take in hosting them," she says.

The three core values of Māori culture Kaitiakitanga – the guardianship and protection of our natural, built and cultural resources, Manaakitanga – showing respect, warm hospitality, generosity and care for others, and Whanaungatanga – a relationship through shared experiences and working together, giving people a sense of belonging.

"These values underpin what we do, give visitors a deeper connection to New Zealand and a greater understanding of our capabilities and our culture," Sue Sullivan says.

Before MEETINGS 2018 opens on Wednesday 30 May, CINZ Māori culture advisor Ngahihi o-te-ra Bidois will bless the exhibition space at ASB Showgrounds, and the stands and food served to guests with traditional karakia (prayers). He will do the same at the event's conclusion on 31 May and wish safe travels for all visitors.

As the Kaiārahi Māori, or Māori guide, for the New Zealand Story programme, Karl Wixon is responsible for the infusion, inclusion and development of Māori culture, character and content into the New Zealand Story programme. At MEETINGS 2018 he will be presenting a Masterclass for Professional Conference Organisers (PCO), to guide them to a deeper understanding of Māori culture, and showing what can be done to integrate Māori values into events in a meaningful way.

"Karl will help participants navigate through aspects of incorporating Māori culture into their business events, and guide them to articulate our unique Kiwi identity," she says.

The MEETINGS PCO Masterclass is sponsored by Claudelands in Hamilton, where Māori culture is highlighted throughout the building design which gives a unique opportunity for the venue to help bring that story to life throughout conferences and events.

In total, 19 regions of New Zealand are represented at MEETINGS 2018, all of them have something different to offer on a cultural level, with stories, people and places specific to their local region. Wharewaka and Wellington Venues are demonstrating the significance culture plays in bringing central Wellington to life, for example.

This year Northland returns to MEETINGS with exhibitors including Foot Prints Waipoua, The Heads at Omapere – new secluded villas supported by Copthorne Hotel and Resort Hokianga, and the Waitangi Treaty Grounds. They will be sharing their stories and looking to build on relationships to grow and strengthen their business within the Te Tai Tokerau region.

New Zealand's Minister of Tourism, Hon. Kelvin Davis who will be speaking MEETINGS, is also Minister for Crown/Māori Relations, and local MP for the Te Tai Tokerau region.

ENDS

Note to editors: RELATED MEDIA EVENTS – MEETINGS 2018

Wednesday 30 May 10.00am – 10.45am

Paul Retimanu from Wellington Functions and Karl Wixon of New Zealand Story will be presenting their insights into Māori culture for business events.

Thursday 31 May 10.30am

Hon. Kelvin Davis, Minister of Tourism will address media and industry leaders.

Follow [CINZ MEETINGS 2018](#) on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) using hashtags #meetings18 and #cinz

Background Information

- [CINZ MEETINGS 2018](#) is New Zealand's largest business tourism trade exhibition.
- Auckland is host city, and the event takes place at ASB Showgrounds from 30-31 May.
- Conventions & Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) owns and manages the event, which has been run annually since 1997.
- MEETINGS is New Zealand's leading platform for connecting influential domestic, Australian and international buyers with key regions, meeting facilities, accommodation, off-site venues and activities.
- Air New Zealand is Principal Sponsor for CINZ MEETINGS 2018, renewing its ongoing commitment to the sector and to the hosted buyer and media programmes.
- Other major sponsors include ASB Showgrounds, Peek Exhibition, Centium Software and Auckland Convention Bureau.
- The 2018 event will showcase over 190 exhibitors from 19 regions across New Zealand to more than 500 New Zealand, Australian and international buyers. Exhibitors include venues, theming companies, hotels, AV companies, regional bureaux, attractions and activities.
- More than 220 qualified hosted buyers will attend, including over 90 hosted buyers and media from Australia, 30 from international markets, 120 hosted buyers and media from

- around New Zealand. As well, more than 300 day buyers are set to attend.
- Tourism New Zealand and Air New Zealand are bringing influential buyers and media from China, South East Asia, North America and Argentina. TNZ is also hosting 16 New Zealand association buyers.
 - Convention Delegate Survey results from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) for the year to December 2017 show multi-day convention delegates stayed an estimated 1,080,000 visitor nights in New Zealand and they spent an estimated \$506 million. International delegates' per night spend is almost double the average spend per night for all international visitors.

For further information and images, please contact:

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