

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Cultural Celebration

Raising the Māori capability of its staff is improving New Zealand Trade and Enterprise's (NZTE) ability to grow more Māori companies of international scale, develop more Māori commercial leaders and ultimately, by growing the Māori economy, ensure New Zealand's economic success.

New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, Te Taurapa Tūhono, is the Government's international business development agency, charged with growing companies for the benefit of New Zealand. It has about 580 staff based in 50 locations around the world, working across 24 time zones in 40 languages.

In 2013, the organisation made a strong push to improve its services for Māori companies, through the recruitment of people with specialist Māori commercial and cultural expertise (from one FTE to 10 FTEs in 2018) and by raising the Māori capability of all staff. As part of this, it launched NZTE's bespoke Māori cultural competency and business programme, Kia Kaha.

Kia Kaha is a two-day marae-based programme designed to help NZTE's people learn more about Māori culture, history, language, people and business.

"It's the first step on an important journey for everyone at NZTE - as we work together to strengthen our connection to Aotearoa, we become better representatives for this country, its people and its businesses," says Director Māori Strategy Tina Wilson.

Chief Executive Peter Chrisp says, "Our commitment to Māori has also been a vehicle for inclusion of all cultures. When people come to Kia Kaha, they are not just connecting with the Māori culture, but also with their own, and others' cultures."

Initially, the delivery of Kia Kaha was outsourced but by mid-2015, NZTE had built enough internal capability to deliver the programme; its Māori Business Group works with marae hosts to organise an average of four programmes annually. New joiners travel to New Zealand from all around the world to attend Kia Kaha and the organisation's two-day corporate induction in the same week.

As well as participating in a formal pōwhiri, learning songs, reciting their own mihimihi in te reo Māori and participating in the running of the marae, course attendees:

Video Link:

<https://vimeo.com/286802626>



- Learn more about New Zealand history, the Treaty of Waitangi and the Māori economy
- Better understand the different kinds of Māori customers NZTE works with and the unique challenges and opportunities they face
- Learn about investment by iwi and large Māori entities, and investment into Māori businesses
- Hear directly from Māori customers and undertake site visits to local Māori exporting companies
- Undertake a group activity using fictional scenarios based on actual Treaty settlements and how to achieve quadruple bottom lines (cultural, social, environmental and economic priorities) in a modern-day context
- Gain a better understanding of how everyone at NZTE can support the international growth of its Māori customers



Participants are supported by a Kia Kaha workbook, Te Kete app, a Te Kete Tikanga Māori booklet and other resources, and become Kia Kaha kaitiaki (guardians), charged with practising what they have learned and encouraging others to take part.

In the past four years, 590 international and domestic staff have participated in Kia Kaha across 20 noho marae; 61 per cent of NZTE's current staff have attended Kia Kaha and the organisation has set a target to increase this number to 70 per cent.

At least one member of NZTE's Lead Team attends every Kia Kaha, and new NZTE Board members also attend. Some of NZTE's key partners, including industry experts, people from the Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Export Credit Office and Callaghan Innovation, have also participated.

Since implementing Kia Kaha, NZTE has increased the number of Māori companies the organisation works with from 76 in 2015 to 204 in 2018. It has increased its delivery and impact for Māori companies by developing bespoke programmes such as its investment-readiness programme, Te Aukaha, and increased knowledge and awareness within the organisation on how to appropriately engage with Māori customers.

"Our international team has a higher understanding of Māori business and we are seeing this reflected in business growth conversations," says Director Investment NZ Inc Fiona Acheson.

The organisation has also felt ready to truly honour a Māori name. In 2016, the name Te Taurapa Tūhono was developed for NZTE. The organisation has developed an authentic rhythm around how it welcomes, celebrates, greets and farewells others with pōwhiri, haka and whaikōrero. A mōteatea (chant), waiata-a-ringa (action song) and haka have been composed for Te Taurapa Tūhono, creating a unified cultural identity.

Day-to-day examples of Kia Kaha's impact on staff include:

- NZTE's Filipino Trade Commissioner had the confidence to lead the haka when Jacinda Ardern undertook her first overseas mission as Prime Minister to the Philippines.
- NZTE's Private Secretary learned and performed a karanga at her church as part of the welcoming ceremony for a new minister.

Kia Kaha attendees evaluate the course, which regularly receives a 100 per cent satisfaction score from attendees. Some have described the experience as life-changing. Said one: "I can't think of anything that touched me on so many levels. It was an education like nothing I've experienced before - so joyful and uplifting and insightful."

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