

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS  
*of Global Connections  
and Diversity*



# SISTER CITIES CONFERENCE 2021

TE PAPA TONGAREWA  
WELLINGTON  
15 & 16 APRIL 2021

Delegate name:



Connecting people globally for peace and prosperity

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## Distinguished Speakers



**The Rt Hon Dame Patsy Reddy**

Governor-General of New Zealand

Dame Patsy is the 21<sup>st</sup> Governor-General of New Zealand.

Before becoming Governor-General, she had a career in law, business, and the public sector.

Her public sector roles included work on pay equity, and reviews of New Zealand Intelligence and Security. She has also acted as Chief Crown Negotiator of Treaty Settlements for Tauranga Moana and Te Toko Toru.

Dame Patsy's passion for the arts is reflected in her past governance roles at many of New Zealand's most important arts organisations including the New Zealand Film Commission, the New Zealand International Festival of the Arts, and the New Zealand Film Archive.



**Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan**

Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities

Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan is the Minister for the Community and Voluntary Sector, Minister for Diversity, Inclusion and Ethnic Communities, Minister for Youth, and Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment. She is the first person of Indian origin to become a Minister in New Zealand.

Born in India, she went to school in Singapore, and then moved to New Zealand to further her education. She has spent her work life advocating on behalf of people whose voices are often unheard – survivors of domestic violence, and migrant workers who have been exploited. She strongly believes that everyone has the right to live with dignity - that means equitable access to affordable housing, quality education and decent, secure work.

## President's Message



**Hiromi Morris**

President, Sister Cities New Zealand

**Tena koutou**

**Nau mai ki te hui a tau nei**

On behalf of the Board of Sister Cities New Zealand, a very warm welcome to all delegates and I am proud to celebrate the special 40th anniversary with you.

Air New Zealand took an initiative to establish our organisation in the early 1980s and they have been a major sponsor since. I appreciate everyone who has been engaged in the global connections and for their achievements.

I would like to thank our Patron, The Rt Hon

Dame Patsy Reddy, Governor-General of New Zealand for hosting our welcome reception and also our sponsors for their generous contributions.

Our activities have been understandably stalled since COVID-19 arrived and we keenly await the day when world travel is normalised but our other forms of connectivity are, of course, continuing.

I look forward to sharing our stories and discussing how we can further our global connections in a world where diversity is being increasingly celebrated.

I hope you will find the Conference rewarding and stimulating.

With my sincere appreciation to you all.

*Ha aha tem ea nui o te ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!  
What is the most important thing in the world? It's people! It's people! It's people!*

*- Maori Proverb*

## Venue: Icon Room, Te Papa Tongarewa, Wellington

Thursday 15 April		
Time	Session	Speaker
8:30am	Registrations open	
9:45am	Participants be seated inside Icon Room	
10:00am	Mihi – Māori Welcome by Te Papa Staff	
10:30am	Opening remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kura Moeahu, Kaumatua</li> <li>• Kara Puketapu-Dentice</li> </ul> Te Āti Awa Taranaki Whānui
11:00am	Session 1: Fostering diverse, globally-engaged communities  Presentation by Anusha Guler, Executive Director, Office of Ethnic Communities	Recorded messages from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ambassador Hamish Cooper, NZ Embassy to Japan</li> <li>• Ambassador Clare Fearnley, NZ Embassy to China</li> </ul> Speaking to the merits of Sister City relationships and the theme of global connections and diversity  Presentations by recorded video <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sister Cities International (USA)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carol Roberston Lopez, Chair, Board of Directors</li> <li>• Starr Walton Hurley, Country Representative for New Zealand</li> <li>• Tim Quigley, Chair Emeritus, Board of Directors</li> <li>• Kevin O'Donnell, Young Professional Representative, Board of Directors</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CPAFFC (China)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• President Lin Songtian</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CLAIR Japan local Government Centre (Japan)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OKAMOTO Tamotsu, Chairperson of the Board of Directors</li> <li>• TORITA Kohei, Executive Director</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

### Abbreviations:

CPAFFC - Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

CLAIR - Council of Local Authorities for International Relations

## Thursday 15 April

12:10pm	Lunch hosted by Embassy of Japan	HE Japanese Ambassador Mr ITO Koichi
1:10pm	Group discussion on the value of international connections and the benefits of culturally-engaged communities	
2:00pm	Report back	
2:45pm	Presentations: Significant anniversaries – 40 and 45 years in 2020 and 2021 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dunedin/Otaru Sister City established in 1980 by Mayor Aaron Hawkins</li> <li>• Napier/Tomakomai Sister City established in 1980 by Cr Ronda Chrystal</li> <li>• Nelson/Miyazu Sister City established in 1976 by Neville Hadfield, Chair, Nelson Miyazu Sister City Association</li> <li>• Gisborne/Palm Desert Sister City established in 1981 by Deputy Mayor Josh Wharehinga</li> <li>• Lower Hutt/Tempe Sister City established in 1981 by Paul Duffin, Chair, Hutt Sister City Foundation</li> </ul>	
3:30pm	Short break	
3:45pm	Transport to Government House	
4:30-6:00pm	Welcome Reception at Government House hosted by Her Excellency The Right Honourable Dame Patsy Reddy Governor-General of New Zealand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governor-General Patsy Reddy</li> <li>• Hon Priyanca Radhakrishnan, Minister for Diversity, Inclusion, and Ethnic Communities</li> <li>• Hiromi Morris, SCNZ President</li> </ul>
6:20pm	Back to Te Papa - free evening	

Friday 16 April		
Time	Session	Speaker
8.00am	Registrations open	
8:30am	Welcome and opening remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome – Wellington Mayor Andy Foster</li> <li>• Opening remarks – Susan Freeman-Greene, Chief Executive, Local Government New Zealand</li> </ul>
9:00am	<p>Session 2: What does it mean to have a strategic approach to Sister Cities?</p> <p>Local authorities take various approaches to managing and maintaining their Sister City relationships and international relations' priorities. The Panel of this session will discuss their own city's strategic approach to this issue, including how Sister Cities are managed and maintained</p>	<p>Facilitator: Simon Draper, Executive Director, Asia NZ Foundation</p> <p>Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor Grant Smith, Palmerston North City Council and SCNZ Board Director</li> <li>• Cr Melanie Coker, Christchurch City Council</li> <li>• Matthew Bryson, Whakatāne District Sister Cities Committee member</li> </ul>
10:20am	Morning tea break	
10:40am	<p>Session 3: Investing in Relationships and Economic Development</p> <p>How to use established Sister City relationships as a platform for economic development and how can this be enhanced through regional and national collaboration?</p>	<p>Facilitator: John Christie, SCNZ Board Director</p> <p>Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neil Henry, Economic Development Manager, Marlborough District Council</li> <li>• Pam Ford, General Manager Economic Development, Auckland Unlimited</li> <li>• Kelvin Coe, Deputy Chair, Selwyn District Council Sister City Committee &amp; Graham Robertson, Chair Toraja Rural Development Charitable Trust</li> </ul>
12:00pm	Lunch break	

## Friday 16 April

Time	Session	Speaker
12:45pm	Session 4: Youth Engagement How young people – our future leaders – can be involved and engage in global connections and contribute to the community?	Facilitator: Jan Fitz-Gerald, SCNZ Board Director Panel: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taylor Marston, Doctoral student in Community Development and Public Policy</li> <li>• Elisha Hsiao, SCNZ Youth Advisor</li> <li>• Sarah Ma, Youth Ambassador - Palmerston North</li> <li>• Many Zhu, Leadership Network member, Asia New Zealand Foundation</li> </ul>
2:00pm	Group discussion (Participants choose a topic from Sessions 2-4)	
2:45pm	Report back with afternoon tea	
3:30pm	Presentation on 2022 Annual Conference	Marlborough Mayor John Leggett
3:40-4:30pm	AGM (members only)	
6:00pm	Gather at Te Papa foyer, Ground Floor	
6:15pm	Group photo taking, followed by pre-dinner drinks at Sign of Nation, 4 <sup>th</sup> Floor, Te Papa	
7:00pm	SCNZ Awards Dinner at Te Marae MC: Ray Wallace, SCNZ Vice President Awards presentations and winners announcement Entertainment: Chris Gallavin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bernard Duncan, SCNZ Board Director</li> <li>• John Strevens, Former SCNZ President</li> </ul>
	Closing remarks	Toni Grace, SCNZ Board Director
10:00pm	End	

## Key Conference Figures



### **Kura Moeahu**

**Kaumatua  
Te Āti Awa Taranaki Whānui**

Kura Moeahu is the chairman of Te Rūnanganui o Te Āti Awa, and has also been greatly involved in iwi governance as both a chair and board member on a number of boards.

Kura is well known and highly sort for his knowledge of Te Ao Māori and tikanga Māori having whakapapa ties to Te Āti Awa Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa.

Kura is dedicated to supporting rangatahi in their development.



### **Kara Puketapu-Dentice**

**Te Āti Awa Taranaki Whānui**

Kara has held various roles in the public service and private sector which have focused on improving outcomes for Māori. Kara is an environmental planner by qualification and has significant experience in strategy, policy, housing and governance.

In 2015 Kara was a fellow of the East West Centre in Hawaii where he participated in the Asia Pacific Leadership Programme and 2019 he was an inaugural participant of the Obama Foundation Asia Pacific Leadership forum hosted in Malaysia. Kara was appointed as the Director of Economy and Development at Hutt City Council where he is responsible for supporting, planning and enabling for growth in Hutt City.



### **HE Mr ITO Koichi**

**Ambassador of Japan to New Zealand**

Ambassador Ito arrived in Wellington in December 2020.

His previous post was the Consul General in Honolulu where he truly experienced multiethnic cultures through interacting with Native Hawaiians, Japanese, Chinese, Koreans and Haore (westerners). As a teenager, he lived for seven years in a town next to Osaka's Minoh City which has over two decades of the sister city relationship with Lower Hutt City. Ambassador Ito has been amazed by New Zealand's richness in cultural diversity. Being inspired by the close and heartwarming relationship between Japanese and New Zealanders, he is committed to promoting people-to-people exchanges even more.



### **Dr Chris Gallavin**

**Master of Ceremonies**

Dr Chris Gallavin is the Chief Executive Officer of the Sisters of Compassion Group; a large not-for-profit organisation working in advance of those in society living in need.

Chris is also Adjunct Professor of Law and former Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Massey University. Before joining Massey Chris was the Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Canterbury. His areas of academic expertise are criminal justice, social justice and the future of higher education.

He is a recognised public commentator, public speaker and documentary film maker.

He is Chair of the board of the New Zealand Centre for Global Studies, a multidisciplinary think tank focused on resolving pressing issues of local and global concern.



## Key Conference Figures



### **Susan Freeman-Greene**

**Chief Executive, Local Government New Zealand**

Susan leads LGNZ after nearly six years as Chief Executive of Engineering New Zealand. This LGNZ role excites her as local government is at the heart of our communities, and she's clear that when local government is strong our communities thrive - and so does Aotearoa.

Susan has practised law and mediation in both New Zealand and the United Kingdom and sees them both informing her leadership style. She sees the harder-edged legal, compliance, analytical skills and softer-edged relationship, influencing and advocacy skills as two sides of the leadership coin.

Outside work you can find her walking on the townbelt, on a yoga mat, behind a book or spending time with friends and family.



### **John Strevens**

**Former SCNZ President**

John Strevens was educated at Auckland University where he majored in economics history and accountancy. He took an active interest in student politics and from 1960 to 1964 represented New Zealand at conferences in the Philippines, USA, Canada, Wales and New Zealand.

He became a councillor for Auckland City in 1973 and was Deputy Mayor from 1980 to 1986. He then became Chairman of the Council Committee responsible for promoting Auckland, which included responsibility for Sister Cities. During that period Auckland set up Sister City relationships with Guangzhou, Pusan and Brisbane.

He was President of Sister Cities New Zealand from 1998 to 2000.



### **Mayor Andy Foster**

**Wellington City Council**

Mayor Andy Foster is in his first term, after serving as a councillor since 1992.

Andy graduated Victoria University of Wellington with a Bachelor of Arts in History and Economic History and Bachelor of Commerce in Business Management, as well as a post graduate Teaching Diploma. His early career included secondary teaching, finance and investment, and economic and environmental research.

Andy is a Foundation Trustee and now Guardian of Karori Sanctuary (Zealandia) as well as a volunteer. He is currently a Director of Wellington International Airport Ltd and President of TRAFINZ. He also chairs the Karori Park Sports Club and the Karori Brooklyn Community Charitable Trust. Last year he established the Karori Kaitaki (Kaka) Environment Restoration Group.

Andy has lived in Wellington since childhood. He lives in Karori with wife Ann and their two children.

## Sister Cities New Zealand



### Hiromi Morris

#### President

Hiromi was born and raised in Japan. She visited New Zealand for the first time when she was a young student. It was an enlightening experience that subsequently led to her getting involved in supporting global connections through people-to-people exchanges since 1994 when Wellington/Sakai relationship was formed.

Hiromi became a SCNZ Board member in 2008 and has been President since 2012. She believes strongly in collaboration and working collectively with a wider range of organisations, embassies, communities, and schools. She is also enthusiastic to work with young people – our future leaders.

She is a food lover and enjoys tennis, yoga, reading, and movies.



### Toni Grace

#### Director

Toni is a director on the Board of Sister Cities New Zealand and is International Relations Manager at the Palmerston North City Council.

Previously, she was Senior Advisor for International Strategy at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and has worked at the British High Commission in Wellington. She is currently Vice-Chair of the Palmerston North Branch of the New Zealand Institute of International Affairs (NZIIA) and holds Master of Arts with distinction in Political Science, and an honours degree International Relations, from Victoria University of Wellington.

Toni is enjoying the grassroots involvement of Sister Cities and local international relations.



### Ray Wallace

#### Vice President

Having travelled extensively Ray believes strongly in the Sister Cities philosophy of extending friendship with other countries and celebrating cultural diversity.

Ray has had a 30-year career in Local Government as former Mayor of Lower Hutt and as a City Councillor. It was his strong sense of service to the community that spurred him to be a super active member of the community where he recently received an ONZM (Officer of New Zealand Order of Merit) for his community and local government work.

Ray efforts have strengthened relationships with Hutt's sister cities of Tempe, Minoh and Taizhou. He serves as Chair of the Hutt- Minoh Friendship Trust.



### Bernard Duncan

#### Director

Bernard is now semi-retired and works as a part time Trust Manager. He is married to Jane with three adult children and three grandchildren. His career has included farming the family sheep and crop farm and then setting up a financial planning business providing investment and estate planning advice.

Outside of work he has chaired the Christchurch China Sister City committee since 2010, been a secondary school Board of Trustee chairman from 2000 to 2011 and back in 1979 was the New Zealand president of the Young Farmers Club organisation.

In 1995 he was appointed as a JP and is a member of the Institute of Directors.

## Sister Cities New Zealand



### Jan Fitz-Gerald

#### Director

Jan has an extensive background in the education industry and particularly within international relations.

She is currently Founder and CEO of the Institute of Global Engagement New Zealand, an international education provider for educational study groups and youth leadership programs.

Jan is also founder and past CEO of Queenstown Resort College and previously with AUT University.

Jan and her team alongside the Qingdao Education Bureau in PR China were recipients of the SCNZ Best Youth Project Award in 2018 for the China New Zealand Youth Leadership Summit.



### John Christie

#### Director

John is a senior management executive with previous director, CEO, and project manager experience at several high-profile New Zealand organisations.

In his role as Director of Enterprise Dunedin, he is also a member of Dunedin City Council's executive leadership team. His governance experience includes roles with Otago Polytechnic, Knox and Salmond Colleges, Warbirds Over Wanaka, Diversity Works NZ, and New Zealand Chambers of Commerce.

John is the former Chief Executive of the Otago Chamber of Commerce, a role that he held for 20 years. He has been instrumental in the development of Dunedin's relationship internationally including its sister cities of Shanghai, Otaru, and Edinburgh.



### Mayor Grant Smith

#### Director

Grant Smith is the 29<sup>th</sup> Mayor of Palmerston North City and is proactive in supporting Sister Cities and global relationships. Palmerston North has Sister City relationships with Guiyang and Kunshan in China, Mihara in Japan, and Missoula in the USA. Grant has had an extensive business background in advertising and marketing, as well as managing multiple international sporting and cultural events, before becoming Mayor.

He has also served on the boards of Te Manawa Museum Trust, The Manawatu Rugby Union, The New Zealand Rugby Museum, Central Squash Association, and New Zealand Squash.

He has championed the international programme Palmerston North city runs, which supports key city sectors of Food Research, International Education, Defence, and Trade.



### Jean Chua

#### National Administrator (outgoing)



### Jess Skinner

#### National Administrator



### Caroline Pope

#### Designer & Editor

## Session 1 : Fostering diverse, globally-engaged communities



### **Anusha Guler**

**Executive Director, Office of Ethnic Communities**

Anusha Guler is the Executive Director, Office of Ethnic Communities at Te Tari Taiwhenua the Department of Internal Affairs. The Office of Ethnic Communities is government's principal advisor on ethnic diversity in New Zealand. Its work includes building relationships and partnerships, delivering advice and services to improve outcomes for New Zealand's ethnic

communities, and strengthening their inclusion and participation in the wider community.

Anusha Guler migrated to New Zealand from South Africa in 2002 and has held senior management positions in government agencies in both countries. Ms Guler joins the Department from Wellington City Council where she has worked since 2011, most recently as Chief of Staff providing strategic advice to the Mayor, Chief Executive and Executive Leadership Team. She holds a Master's degree in Public Administration from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa and a second Master's degree in Philosophy – Delhi University.

## Video Presentations



### **Ambassador Hamish Cooper**

NZ Embassy to Japan



### **OKAMOTO Tamotsu**

CLAIR Japan local Government Centre (Japan)



### **Ambassador Clare Fearnley**

NZ Embassy to China



### **TORITA Kohei**

CLAIR Japan local Government Centre (Japan)



### **Carol Robertson Lopez**

Sister Cities International



### **Mayor Aaron Hawkins**

Dunedin City Council



### **Starr Walton Hurley**

Sister Cities International



### **Cr Ronda Chrystal**

Napier City Council



### **Tim Quigley**

Sister Cities International



### **Neville Hadfield**

Nelson Miyazu Sister City Association



### **Kevin O'Donnell**

Sister Cities International



### **Deputy Mayor Josh Wharehinga**

Gisborne District Council



### **President Lin Songtian**

CPAFFC (China)



### **Paul Duffin**

Hutt Sister City Foundation



## Session 2 : What does it mean to have a strategic approach to Sister Cities?

Facilitator: Simon Draper, Executive Director, Asia NZ Foundation



### **Simon Draper**

**Executive Director, Asia NZ Foundation**

Simon Draper is an experienced diplomat with extensive international background in negotiation and relationship management.

He joined the Asia New Zealand Foundation in September 2015, coming from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) where he had worked in various roles since 1991. These roles included director United Nations, Human Rights and Commonwealth Division, which saw him driving New Zealand's successful campaign for a United Nations Security Council seat.

Since joining the Asia New Zealand Foundation, Simon has enhanced its international focus and created new opportunities for New Zealanders to experience Asia first-hand.



### **Dr Melanie Coker**

**Christchurch City Council**

Melanie is a Christchurch City Councillor, representing the Spreydon Ward, as well as the CCC representative on the Christchurch-Kurashiki Sister City Committee.

Melanie has a background in science, completing a PhD in biochemistry in 2010. Melanie also has business experience, founding an education company which she still owns and manages.

Melanie is passionate about empowering local communities, youth, and those from all walks of life.



### **Mayor Grant Smith**

**Palmerston North City Council**

\*Please see profile on page 11.



### **Matthew Bryson**

**Whakatāne District Sister Cities Committee member**

Matthew has been active in Whakatāne Sister Cities past the 10 years. His youthful enthusiasm for everything Japanese has helped guide the committee and provide opportunities for Japanese culture to be shared within the community.

Following his return as a JET programme recipient he immersed himself in the Japanese culture and started a taiko drumming group teaching local students how to drum. He took the group to Konoura, an area with over 200 years of drumming tradition to learn more of the art.

Matthew shares his knowledge with others, acting as a translator, offering unwavering support and hospitality to people when here. Changing times brings new challenges and strategies to keep the relationships active and interesting.



## Session 3: Investing in Relationships and Economic Development

Facilitator: John Christie, SCNZ Board Director



### Neil Henry

**Economic Development  
Manager, Marlborough  
District Council**

Neil has managed the economic development team at Marlborough District Council since arriving in New Zealand in 2009. Prior to this Neil worked in local government in his native UK in three Councils in the East of England, and worked on Sister City and European projects with partners from France, Germany, Poland and Sweden.

Neil has led the development of Marlborough's sister region relationship with Ningxia, China from 2016, founded on economic ties between two wine producing regions. In 2018, the Marlborough-Ningxia relationship won an award in China for friendship city foreign exchanges and co-operation with China. An assessment of the Marlborough-Ningxia relationship identified a return of \$1.2 million for Marlborough businesses, with a 30:1 return on Council's investment in the relationship. Neil's presentation at the conference will focus on the Marlborough-Ningxia sister region.



### Kelvin Coe

**Deputy Chair, Selwyn District  
Sister City Committee**

Kelvin is a retired farmer with twenty one years experience as an elected member of the Selwyn District Council, nine years as Mayor.

Currently a member of the Selwyn Sister City Committee and Christchurch China Sister City Committee.



### Pam Ford

**General Manager Economic  
Development, Auckland  
Unlimited**

Pam leads the Economic Development division of Auckland Unlimited, the cultural and economic development agency. Pam has worked in local economic development since 2009 following almost a decade at NZTE. Following the San Francisco based 34<sup>th</sup> America's Cup, Pam was seconded to the New Zealand government on the West Coast, USA, for two years to attract international investors to New Zealand. Prior to this, Pam worked as an international marketing professional in private and not for profit sector.

Pam received the Economic Development New Zealand (EDNZ) Commendation for Distinguished Service Award in 2018 and since June 2019 has been the Chair of EDNZ, the body representing all New Zealand economic development agencies. Auckland joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network in 2017, and Pam co-chairs the Auckland City of Music



### Graham Robertson

**Chair, Toraja Rural  
Development Charitable Trust**

Graham Robertson is a Canterbury farmer and former president of New Zealand Federated Farmers. He has been involved in governance in science and agricultural co-operatives.

In recent years he has led a group of farmers who have been assisting with technology transfer and community development for coffee farmers in Toraja, South Suliwesi, Indonesia. As a result of this work a sister city has been established between South Toraja District and Selwyn District, the first such sister city relationship between Indonesia and New Zealand.





## Session 4: Youth Engagement

Facilitator: Jan Fitz-Gerald, SCNZ Board Director



### Taylor Marston

**Doctoral student in  
Community Development  
and Public Policy**

Taylor is an individual member of Sister Cities New Zealand and has been since 2017. As a doctoral student at Auckland University of Technology under the discipline of community development and public policy, Taylor conducts research on Sister City relationships within the New Zealand context. Prior to this, he spent three years researching Sister Cities in Japan, which concluded in a thesis which explored the activeness of Japanese local governments towards their Sister City relationships. Taylor has a passion for community building and is interested in the potential role of Sister Cities in helping to achieve this.



### Elisha Hsiao

**SCNZ Youth Advisor**

Elisha is a Product Manager at Volpara Health during the day, innovating software to assist with early cancer detection. She is also a member of the Asia NZ Foundation's Leadership Network and previously a recipient of the French Embassy's Hexagone Scholarship.

Originally from Taiwan, Elisha spent half her life in New Zealand and she has lived in France for six months during her university exchange. Elisha is a firm believer that fostering friendships around the world from a grassroots level is a great way to learn about other cultures. Sister Cities relationships are a way to achieve this.

Elisha organised and led the SCNZ's inaugural Youth Tour to 5 cities in China in 2018.



### Sarah Ma

**Youth Ambassador -  
Palmerston North**

Sarah is from Vietnam and came to New Zealand in 2017 to study at IPU New Zealand. In 2020, she graduated with a Bachelor of Contemporary International Studies, majoring in International Relations.

She joined the Palmy Global Ambassador Programme by Palmerston North City Council in 2018 and became a Youth Ambassador since then. Her experiences as a Youth Ambassador and a Branch Administrator of the NZIIA Palmerston North Branch, have given her many opportunities to learn a lot more about International Relations, youth engagement as well as the world around her.



### Many Zhu

**Leadership Network member,  
Asia New Zealand Foundation**

Born in Guangzhou and raised in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, Many Zhu's multilingual and multicultural upbringing guides her pursuit to help diverse people and places to connect and learn from each other. Over the years, the experiences she has gained as a Leadership Network Member of the Asia New Zealand Foundation and Arts Advisor for the United Nations Association of New Zealand Northern Region enables her professional passion for supporting creative students at the University of Auckland in using their artistic talents to engage with the global community as future leaders of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Lined area for notes, featuring horizontal ruling lines and a large, faint, stylized graphic of a person's head and shoulders in the background.

## 2022 Conference Presentation



### Mayor John Leggett

Marlborough District Council

John Leggett was elected mayor in October 2016 and is now into his second term. He previously served two terms as a councillor.

John chaired Council's Community & Finance Committee and served on Assets & Services, Regional Planning & Development, Audit & Risk and Regional Transport committees. He also sat on the working group reviewing Marlborough's resource management documents (the Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan).

He is currently a director of Council's property holding company, MDC Holdings and chairs the Environment Committee and Te Ao Māori Sub Committee.

A lawyer for more than three decades, John is a partner at local firm Wisheart Macnab & Partners.

His family moved to Blenheim in 1966 and he and his two brothers were schooled in Marlborough.

Sport is a big part of John's life, and he plays tennis regularly. He also enjoys a daily walk along the Taylor River Reserve in Blenheim with his two dogs.

With partner Anne Best, John enjoys watching a rugby match or a movie, and spending time enjoying Tōtaranui – Queen Charlotte Sound.

*Save the Date*



**SISTER CITIES  
CONFERENCE**

**2022**

**BLENHIM • 7 & 8 APRIL**





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Te Kāhui Kaunihera ō Aotearoa.

15-17 July, Waiharakeke Blenheim

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[lgnz2021.co.nz](https://lgnz2021.co.nz)





# Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono

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Te Whītau Tūhono

# Wellington's international sister and friendly cities

## 2021 Milestones:

### **Beijing, China (2006)**

Wellington and Beijing will celebrate 15 years of sister city relations

### **Tianjin, China (2011)**

Wellington and Tianjin will celebrate 10 years of friendly city relations

### **Canberra, Australia (2016)**

Wellington and Canberra will celebrate 5 years of sister city relations

### **Hania, Greece (1984)**

The 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Crete and Wellington Hania sister city celebration in Wellington

## Other cities:

**Harrogate**, England (1953)

**Sydney**, Australia (1983)

**Xiamen**, China (1987)

**Sakai**, Japan (1994)

**Canakkale**, Turkey (2014)

**Seoul**, South Korea (2016)

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**Wellington** City Council  
Me Heke Ki Pōneke





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wmg2021

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Note: Entry for some events may not yet be available.

The Organising Committee of the World Masters Games 2021 Kansai

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# A Forty Year History

Researched and written by Bernard Duncan,  
Board Director of Sister Cities New Zealand

**APRIL 2021**

## Original Logo



Let's think back to the year 1980. The Rt Hon Robert Muldoon is Prime Minister of New Zealand and Sir Keith Holyoake is Governor-General. Already there are about twenty-four Sister City or Friendship relationships in place between New Zealand towns and cities and communities around the world.

International Travel has been ramping up and many New Zealanders are getting their first taste of relatively easy long-distance travel. It is now realistic to visit those far-flung relationships in say North America and Europe. It means boarding an Air New Zealand DC10 (the one with three engines!) and taking three to five flights, hopping from Auckland to Hawaii to Los Angeles to New York and on to London. This improved air travel is enhancing existing Sister City relationships and making more of them possible.

Looking further back the very first relationships New Zealand set up came after the First World War through French and Belgian links formed by returning soldiers. The real surge in Sister City links, however, came in the wake of the Second World War with US President Eisenhower in 1956 making the call to establish 'People-to-People' programmes between cities and towns across the world. This was an investment in citizen diplomacy and a way to give world peace a better chance.

These early links often had an old world or English language connection being mostly focussed on the UK, the USA and Australia. Then in the late 1970's New Zealand started to focus on Asia with two links established to cities in Japan followed in 1981



by our first link to a city in China. These three relationships were the start of massive growth over the next twenty-five years. Links were invariably initiated by city and district councils, but many community groups were also involved, including service clubs like Rotary and the Returned Services Association and occasionally schools setting up exchange programmes.

The Inaugural seminar for a possible national Sister City organisation took place in Wellington on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1980. It was chaired by the Wellington Mayor, Mr Michael Fowler, and thirty people attended representing some of the existing twenty-four relationships, but others were from Air NZ, NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as it was then and Sister Cities International (SCI) based in Washington DC.

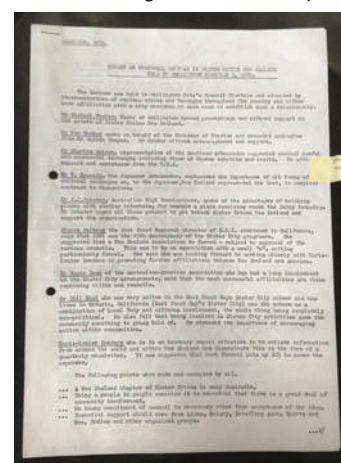
By the end of the meeting it was agreed that:

- A New Zealand branch of Sister Cities be formed,
- A secretariat be set up,
- That the membership fee be \$25 annually,
- That efforts be made to encourage a network of Sister Cities throughout New Zealand and around the world.

This agreement suggested that the new entity was a branch of SCI. This reflected SCI representatives providing a lot of help to the new organisation. The meeting set up a leadership group chaired by William East and with Marie-Louise Sanders (now Blockley) appointed as the first administrator.

Air New Zealand played a large part in the launching of the new organisation, particularly Bill Davies, who was a senior executive in charge of Special Interest Tours for the airline, and passionate about the value of the Sister Cities movement. Air New Zealand assisted with the cost of flights and hotel accommodation for office holders. They provided office facilities for the new organisation and played

## Inaugural Seminar Report



a big part in the establishment of the Sister Cities NZ Award program in the late 1990's which still operates today with some assistance from them. One year this support included flying Sister City NZ representatives to the USA to attend the annual Sister Cities International conference in Portland, Oregon PLUS a Maori Concert party! Needless to say, they were a major hit at that conference!

Over the next two years, Marie-Louise Sanders, future President Brian Crawshaw, and Bill Davies worked as a triumvirate, tirelessly travelling the country to promote the new organisation to existing relationships and to actively encourage the setting up of new ones. Marie-Louise, in particular, was involved in setting up a number of exchanges with links to cities in the USA including with secondary schools, the police, librarians, accountants, quilting groups and art exchanges.

While much energy was being put into new links others worked on a constitution for the new organisation, including developing a Constitution, a Mission Statement, and overall Objectives and Goals to guide activity. The outcome of this work was presented at a second conference in Taupo in 1982.

Thirty-five people were present representing ten links from around the country with representatives from Australia and the USA including the President of Sister Cities International. It was agreed to set up an Incorporated Society called Sister Cities New Zealand. A Board of Directors of eight was appointed with William East appointed as the first President of SCNZ. It was agreed that the value of the new organisation lay in providing a co-ordination and communication role between the relationships around the country as well as assisting councils wanting to set up new relationships. The role youth could play in the organisation and in international exchange generally was seen as a major priority.

The problems facing the new organisation were similar to those faced today. The first was how the new organisation could be funded on a sustainable basis. In those early years it was the energy of those highly enthusiastic volunteers who made up the Board which ensured the survival and ongoing development of Sister Cities NZ. Existing or former mayors holding the office of President were a great help to the new organisation given the resources, influence, connections and administration aid they brought to the role. As the number of relationships grew, so its membership grew. As time went



Marie-Louise Blockley



Jeremy Dwyer

by the organisation came to be funded by a scaled annual subscription along with whatever surplus was available from each years' annual conference.

The second challenge was a debate about whether sister city links should be a precursor to a commercial benefit to local business interests. Councils in and around Auckland saw this as an imperative while others, particularly in the regions, felt that building friendship and international connections between communities was the primary objective. Most councils were happy that sister city activity added cultural diversity to their cities with opportunities for students and other citizens to travel to or host people from diverse parts of the world they wouldn't normally have contact with.

By 1983 the number of relationships had reached fifty-one, this growth being mostly with the UK and the USA. The 1980's and 1990's then saw rapid growth in the number of links with Japan, reaching thirty-three relationships by 1996. This was followed by China where nine links in 1996 became thirty-six by 2014. This increase reflected New Zealand's growing trade ties firstly with Japan and then with China. Demand from each side wanting to learn more about the other was also a factor. Easier travel to Asia via New Zealand's growing number of flight connections and cheaper air fares also helped.

By the early 1990's SCNZ had grown in confidence and stature in the role it could play in helping New Zealand communities develop international connections. When Sister Cities International proposed that there should be a World Forum, SCNZ made a bid to host and was selected. This event was held in Christchurch in 1992. Over one hundred people attended with big delegations coming from Japan and China.

The main event on the SCNZ calendar has always been the annual conference with thirty-nine being held so far. These events are an opportunity for members to hear from international sister city speakers, to learn about other programmes or exchanges and a chance for councils new to the movement to talk to the experts about what might work best for them. Councils around NZ are canvassed for their interest in running the event and, in conjunction with the Board, an outline of how the programme might look is developed. The availability of local sponsorship is also important. By the 2000's attendance at conferences had grown to around 200





people making them an attractive event for councils wanting to showcase their region.

The early 2000's saw Sister Cities NZ evolving and maturing as an organisation. The former Mayor of Hastings, Jeremy Dwyer was appointed as President in the year 2000 and left an indelible mark on the organisation. Firstly, Jeremy led the development of a new Business Plan to guide the organisation through to 2010 with the banner; "The New Century: A New Vitality". He then negotiated an employment grant and sponsorship with New Zealand Trade and Enterprise. This allowed the employment of a part-time administrator, to be based in Hastings, the development of a website, and for Sister Cities NZ to become a better resource base for its members. Today Local Government NZ generously makes office space available to us at their Wellington offices.

Sister Cities NZ today is far removed from the fledgling organisation of the early 1980's.

- New Zealand today has 159 links spread across 24 countries: 44 with Japan, 38 with China, 24 with Australia and 20 with the USA.
- Our board now fully represents the constituencies that make up the Sister City movement. These being elected Mayors and Councillors, Council staff who assist with the management of Sister City links and community volunteer committees who fully reflect the 'people to people' engagement which is at the heart of the Sister Cities movement.
- We fortunate to be able to collaborate with a wide range of partners to foster international connection and where our objectives are aligned. Some of these include, Air New Zealand, NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, the Office of Ethnic Communities, CLAIR of Japan, CPAFFC of China, Sister Cities Australia, Sister Cities International, Asia New Zealand Foundation, Local Government New Zealand and many of the Embassies of those countries where we have Sister City Links.
- We work hard to have a youth focus to our activities, providing young people the opportunity to visit other countries and to discover new cultures.
- We showcase the organisation and promote International connection through our website and make full use of social media.
- We hold a programme of Regional Forums in different locations around New Zealand each year to assist local people with their Sister City activities.

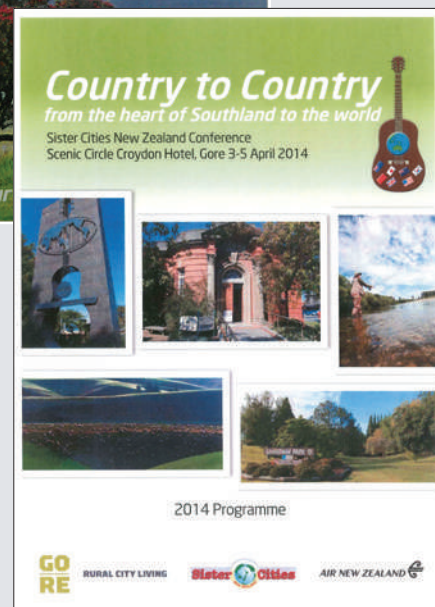
The survival of Sister Cities NZ to allow us to celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary is a milestone we can all be proud of. It reflects the enthusiasm and drive of our members volunteering their time over those forty years because they were committed to providing citizens with the opportunity of meaningful international connection.

This is particularly true of those thirteen individuals, often former Mayors, who have accepted the role of President of Sister Cities NZ, from William East, the Inaugural President in 1980 to Hiromi Morris our President today, the first non-New Zealand national in the role, not connected to Local Government and our longest serving President by some margin.

The efforts of those thirteen and their Board colleagues are the reason we are here today.

## Sister Cities New Zealand Presidents

1980 – 1984	<b>William East</b> Inaugural President (Wellington) (Dec'd)
1984 – 1987	<b>Sir John Kennedy-Good</b> (Former Mayor Lower Hutt) (Dec'd)
1987 – 1989	<b>Sir Barry Curtis</b> (Former Mayor Manukau)
1989 – 1993	<b>Brian Crawshaw</b> (Former Mayor Gisborne) (Dec'd)
1993 – 1996	<b>Lorraine Brill</b> (Former Mayor Whakatāne) (Dec'd)
1996 – 1998	<b>John Burke</b> (Former Mayor Porirua)
1998 – 2000	<b>John Strevens</b> (Former Deputy Mayor Auckland)
2000 – 2005	<b>Jeremy Dwyer</b> (Former Mayor Hastings) (Dec'd)
2005 – 2006	<b>Dave Adamson</b> (International Affairs Co-ordinator - Christchurch)
2006 – 2010	<b>Peter Tennant</b> (Former Mayor New Plymouth)
2010 – 2012	<b>Bill Woods</b> (Former Mayor Selwyn)
May – Nov 2012	<b>Kevin Watkins</b> (Councillor Hastings)
2012 – present	<b>Hiromi Morris</b> (Wellington, longest serving President!)



REPORT ON INAUGURAL SEMINAR OF SISTER CITIES NEW ZEALAND  
HELD IN WELLINGTON NOVEMBER 3, 1980.

The Seminar was held in Wellington City's Council Chambers and attended by representatives of various cities and boroughs throughout the country who either have affiliation with a city overseas or were keen to establish such a relationship.

Mr Michael Fowler, Mayor of Wellington opened proceedings and offered support in the growth of Sister Cities New Zealand.

Mr Ken Comber spoke on behalf of the Minister of Tourism and recorded apologies from Mr Warren Cooper. Mr Comber offered encouragement and support.

Mr Charles Salmon, representative of the American Ambassador suggested several useful and successful exchanges including those of Museum exhibits and crafts. He offered support and assistance from the U.S.A.

Mr T. Oyamada, the Japanese Ambassador, emphasised the importance of all forms of cultural exchanges as, to the Japanese, New Zealand represented the West, in complete contrast to themselves.

Mr J.J. Webster, Australian High Commissioner, spoke of the advantages of matching places with similar interests, for example a place revolving round the Dairy Industry. Mr Webster urged all those present to get behind Sister Cities New Zealand and support the organization.

Sharon Helberg the West Coast Regional Director of S.C.I. stationed in California, said that 1981 was the 25th Anniversary of the Sister City programme. She suggested that a New Zealand Association be formed - subject to approval of the various councils. This was to be an association with a small "a", nothing particularly formal. She said she was looking forward to working closely with Ms Louise Sanders in promoting further affiliations between New Zealand and America.

Mr Roger Dean of the Australian-American Association who has had a long involvement in the Sister City arrangements, said that the most successful affiliations are those combining cities and councils.

Mr Bill East who was very active in the East Coast Bays Sister City scheme and now lives in Ontario, California (East Coast Bay's Sister City) saw the scheme as a combination of Local Body and citizens involvement, the whole thing being completely non-political. He also felt that being involved in Sister City activities gave community something to grasp hold of. He stressed the importance of encouraging action within communities.

Marie-Louise Sanders who is in an honorary unpaid situation is to collate information from around the world and within New Zealand and disseminate this in the form of a quarterly newsletter. It was suggested that each Council puts up \$25 to cover expenses.

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The following points were made and accepted by all.

- ... A New Zealand chapter of Sister Cities is very desirable.
- ... Being a people to people exercise it is essential that there is a great deal of community involvement.
- ... No heavy commitment of council is necessary other than acceptance of the idea.
- ... Essential support should come from Lions, Rotary, Retailers Assn. Sports and Rec. Bodies and other organized groups.