



SISTER CITIES

NEW ZEALAND

Connecting people globally for peace and prosperity

NEWSLETTER

Special Edition - September 2021

Members' Update from the 40th Anniversary Conference and AGM

By Ray Wallace, SCNZ Vice-President

40th Anniversary

The 40th Anniversary Conference held earlier this year in Wellington was a great opportunity to celebrate the success of Sister Cities New Zealand.

As delegates we were able to hear from members about many of their successful relationships and how they have achieved that success. We were given the background to many successful stories of our members who are celebrating 40 years or more of Sister City Relationship.

The Success to Date

The common theme coming through from the conference was it expanded people's understanding and knowledge of other cultures.

It revealed to us the many differences and the many similarities we all have as global citizens. Many of the young people who have been on successful sister city exchanges have said it has been "life changing" and opened their eyes to worldwide possibilities of work and study.

Clearly our 40th Year Anniversary Conference showcased how much has been achieved and to be proud of. It was also a special conference to acknowledge the many volunteer hours put into the success of these programmes. Local Government partners are extremely important; however, we should never underestimate the value of the work of volunteers in the success of these programmes.



Another key area for discussion at the Conference and AGM was taking Sister Cities New Zealand forward into the future and how we achieve that. The Board and members went through and confirmed a new Strategic Plan and Strategic direction spearheaded by Board member Toni Grace.

The Strategy Going Forward

The draft new strategic plan and direction was sent to all members for consideration and a special meeting held in Wellington at the end of last year to finalise the plans for consideration at the AGM.

That plan and direction built on the success of the past and recognized that with a fast-changing world that SCNZ had to adapt to those changes to stay at the forefront of International Relations and connections as well as staying relevant as an organisation.

At the Annual General Meeting there was a lot of open, frank, and honest discussion by members around how we stay true to our vision "Globally connected cities and communities for a more peaceful, sustainable and prosperous future". There was also a good deal of discussion how we stay a strong organisation and how to attract new and younger members.

Operating Name

It was agreed by majority vote that our organization going forward will trade as Global Cities New Zealand to give a more of a global perspective and as many young people identify as global citizens, the name Global Cities New Zealand would be a new, and dynamic name that would more likely attract new members, particularly young members.

While the concerns of those opposed to the trading name change were acknowledged it was agreed we would all move forward together, and a report would come back in 12-18 months on the success of such a change.

There is no expectation that any current local sister city group would need to change their name. They will now simply be members of Global Cities New Zealand.

The Board has agreed to have all branding, stationery

and printed material be transitioned over to Global Cities New Zealand with a small reference to it being the trading name of SCNZ.

Using technology and in this Covid-19 environment it is the right time to be reaching out to your Global City partners to show support and solidarity as we, as a human race, fight together to get on top of this worldwide pandemic.

Now is a good opportunity to strengthen global relations,

it's a good time to reach out to those partners where relationships may have dwindled. Communication and staying in touch just to say "we care about" goes a very long way.

Hiro, myself, and your Board look forward to hearing and seeing more of the amazing success stories in our upcoming newsletters, as we all rise to the challenge.

Kia Kaha

Looking to the future of Global Cities New Zealand

By Toni Grace, SCNZ Director

The new operating name, Global Cities New Zealand, is part of a wider refreshed strategic direction for our organisation. This was adopted by the AGM in May 2021, summing up months of consultative engagement with members.

With the 40th anniversary of SCNZ and a challenging global environment, the Board recognised in 2020 that it was timely to review the strategic direction of Sister Cities New Zealand.

To ensure that this was an informed and collaborative exercise, the Board held a series of information gathering and consultation exercises from June 2020-March 2021, including:

- a two-part member survey from June-July 2020
- a free strategic forum for members in November 2020, with options for in-person and virtual participation, and
- a final draft strategy consultation review during February-March 2021.

It was an engaging and thought-provoking process. Throughout the November forum in particular, members and stakeholders were able to join discussions on a revised organisational direction and strategy including our vision, mission, value proposition, key objectives, indicators, capabilities and stakeholders.

The strategic review helped to clarify core principles and objectives, so that the Board and membership can align future business plans and activities with agreed priorities.

The conversations revealed a desire to modernise and adapt the organisation's direction and priorities, especially in the context of Covid-19. We also identified that SCNZ needed to be clearer on its core mission and value

proposition in an increasingly crowded field of globally-focussed organisations, so that we can continue to provide value to members and attract external funding.

While our core principles remain the same, some of our objectives have shifted to reflect the broader ways that cities, regions and communities connect around the world.

Members emphasised that Sister City connections remain an essential pillar of our work, but that these are not the only way that cities, regions and districts are now engaging across the world and with their own communities. These include city forums, strategic partnerships, business alliances and global citizenship initiatives, especially for youth. Challenges around sustainability and inclusivity were a common theme. We also need to be able to support more creative ways of online engagement and the opportunities and challenges that this presents.

Four key objectives and work streams of Global Cities New Zealand:

1. **Strong global partnerships** – including Sister Cities and other global/digital partnerships
2. **Active citizen diplomacy** – including community-led and youth activities
3. **Enhanced capability and exchange** – including conferences, forums and member resources
4. **Organisational performance** – including strategy implementation, fundraising and advocacy

The Board is now focussed on bringing this new vision and activity plan into effect, and we welcome ongoing views and ideas from members about how continue with the fundamental mission and work of our organisation to bring cities, communities and citizens together.

GCNZ Vision:

Globally connected cities and communities for a more peaceful, sustainable and prosperous future

Members ask for more reflection of Māori and Iwi in name and promotions

By Ray Wallace, SCNZ Vice-President

There was a good deal of positive discussion at the AGM about the need as an organisation to reflect the culture of New Zealand with changes of the trading name.

Requests that there also be a reflection of Aotearoa's Māori culture in the name and promotion.

Members were supportive of a Māori translation to accompany Global Cities New Zealand and wording that reflects the organization's aims and objectives.

The board are working on this with a small group of members and if you wish to be involved please contact Vice President Ray Wallace by emailing raywallace2020@gmail.com.



OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES

Objectives

Outcomes

1) Strong Global Partnerships

Our cities and regions are well positioned to foster local-global relationships and opportunities (including sister cities) for mutual cultural, economic and social benefits.

2) Active citizen diplomacy

New Zealanders understand the value of local-global city partnerships and how they can be actively involved. Citizens and communities are empowered to *Think Global, Act Local*.

3) Capability & exchange

Our cities and regions are capable and confident to share knowledge, perspectives and best-practice with the world, and each other. We deliver value-driven forums and resources.

4) Organisational performance

GCNZ is sustainably resourced and operated, with a strong voice and reputation. Members feel that collective resources are resulting in collective benefits and advocacy.

KEY ACTIVITY STREAMS 2021-22

1) Strong Global Partnerships

Digital toolkit

Global partnership stocktake

Research & analysis

2) Active citizen diplomacy

Youth strategy & activities

Communications & promotion

Community resources toolkit

3) Capability & exchange

SCNZ Conferences

Regional forums

Member resource library

4) Organisational performance

Implement strategy

Fundraising & advocacy

Operational needs assessment