

12 Bellfield Road
Papakura, Auckland
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M: 027 498-6380
E: RichE@xtra.co.nz

Board Member, Volunteering New Zealand

Kia ora Volunteering New Zealand,

Please accept my expression of interest for the vacancy on the Board of Volunteering New Zealand. This looks to be a very interesting and exciting opportunity, one where I can bring past business, volunteering and not for profit experiences to, whilst also continuing to develop my own governance skills.

The whakatauki “He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata” (It’s the people, it’s the people, it’s the people) captures what I hope to achieve in all my work and volunteering. I strive to create inclusive Teams, where we are able to collectively achieve in our roles, support each other and have deep respect for our stakeholders and colleagues. Being there for my teams underpins who I am and the way I work.

I have a passion for growing the capabilities of people through volunteering and education, which I have been progressing over the years through a number of pathways. I have been a Board member and volunteer with Volunteering Auckland for 9 years, much of which has been as Chair / Co-Chair. I’ve helped lead the organisation through the turbulent times of COVID-19 and its impacts on so many volunteer organisations that we serve. And I have a continued interest in how we continue to grow the volunteer sector in Aotearoa, to get the best for our communities and the people within them, through Government and Local Council advocacy.

My volunteering experiences have been focussed in the education sector, where I’ve been volunteering as a mentor for 14 years with [First Foundation](#), helping students transition from High School through to the end of University. Plus as a volunteer with the [Springboard Trust](#), where I have supported the development of strategic capabilities and plans with School Principals and their leadership teams, setting students up for future success.

I have Board of Trustee experience beyond Volunteering Auckland. I was the Board Chair and Trustee at the First Foundation for 6 years, leading a significant turn-around of the charity’s capabilities. This included uplifting the scholarship programme from 50 to 80 scholarships a year. And I am the Board Chair for [Make-A-Wish Pacific Islands](#), where we had been working hard to re-establish the delivery of lifetime wishes to seriously ill children in the Pacific region, sadly without success and are in the process of closing the charity.

As CEO at the Neurological Foundation, I’ve supported the Council (Board) through a significant business overhaul in a sector I’d never worked in previously. This has included a complete refresh of the Foundation’s governance frameworks, policies, financial & investment management and business strategy. During my time I’ve led the re-building of the whole operating team, plus supported the appointment of a complete change of Council members. We also collaborate with the members of the [Neurological Alliance](#), an entity bringing together 19 charities working for better outcomes for those living with neurological conditions, for which I’ve also performed the role of organisational secretariat for 5 years.

As a person, I am naturally inquisitive about what people want to achieve; how things work and re-learning to help us get better. This helps me to understand the needs of my Teams, my Stakeholders and those we serve.

I hope my 43 years of working and volunteering experiences can add value to shaping the future of Volunteering NZ and the direction it takes. I look forward to the opportunity to talk to you more about the role on the Board.

Yours sincerely



Rich Easton