

Building Belonging – *Our Inclusion Strategy*

April 2026 to July 2029





Kia ora

Our mahi sits at the heart of Aotearoa New Zealand's housing system, shaping lives today and for generations to come. We are becoming a consistently high performing organisation that delivers with purpose, integrity and excellence.

A culture of belonging is central to this. We need to be a workplace where every one of us is seen, heard and can thrive — a place where we do our best work, grow and make a meaningful difference.

Our Inclusion Strategy, *Building Belonging*, sits alongside the Kāinga Ora strategy. It sets the foundations for how we'll build an inclusive organisation where diversity thrives, and everyone feels they belong. It is grounded in our values — Manaakitanga, Mahi Tahī and Whānake — and how we bring them to life in the way we work together.

Building Belonging was shaped by listening to our people and looking closely at our workforce data. That helped us to understand where we can make the biggest impact. I want to especially acknowledge our Employee-Led-Networks for their insights and support.

Inclusion is created by all of us. It's how we kōrero with each other, the decisions we make, and the behaviours we model every day. When we get this right, we see stronger collaboration, better customer outcomes, a high-performing workforce, and a culture where people choose to stay because they feel they belong.

As an Executive Team we are deeply committed to delivering on this kaupapa.

Thank you for the mahi you do every day, and for the role you play in shaping a workplace where everyone belongs. This is work we do together and the impact will be felt by our people, our customers and our communities across Aotearoa.

Ngā manaakitanga

Tracey Taylor
Chief Executive

Our aspiration: We are all seen, heard and thrive – we belong here

Drivers for change

- External factors are shaping our future workforce expectations. Our workforce will be increasingly diverse, requiring an EVP that meets differing values, needs and motivations.
- Our strategy is reliant on a culture that inspires and facilitates success. Ensuring our people are seen, heard and thrive (belonging) is fundamental to this.
- In honouring our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its principles we value te ao Māori and te reo Māori in our workplace, ensure Māori voices influence decisions, and create equitable opportunities for Māori to thrive.
- Our diverse customer facing workforce is a strength in connecting with the needs of our diverse and changing customer base. Diverse backgrounds in all areas and levels of our organisation will enable better customer outcomes.
- We still work in silos. We need to leverage our collective strengths, share ideas, listen and learn and work more collaboratively to deliver our strategic objectives.
- Our leaders will need the skills to engage and better harness the unique strengths of our increasingly diverse workforce.

Strategic response

- **We live it - we create the conditions for belonging**
We will create inclusive experiences across the employee lifecycle by ensuring our people systems, practices and policies are accessible, free from bias and discrimination and promote connection and collaboration to drive better outcomes.
- **We lead it - inclusive leadership sets the tone**
We will strengthen leadership capability and accountability so leaders model and influence inclusive behaviours, ensuring everyone can do their best work.
- **We all own it – everyone plays their part**
We will build a high performing work environment where every person actively contributes to inclusion, enabled by the capability to communicate, collaborate and challenge respectfully. Employee-Led Networks strengthen connection and influence positive change.

What success looks like

- Our people have a strong sense of connection to our purpose and values. They do not spend energy on whether they belong here, so they are freed up to deliver Kāinga Ora goals through meaningful, productive, and fulfilling work that makes a real impact.
- We attract and retain people with diverse experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives across Kāinga Ora. People choose us because we deliver an employee experience that reflects what matters most to them, creates belonging and enables them to thrive in service of our customers.
- We understand, value and harness our diverse skills, experiences, and backgrounds to drive organisational performance. Our teams collaborate seamlessly across functions, sharing ideas, learning from each other and using diverse perspectives to deliver outstanding results.
- Our people are confident and empowered to actively shape an inclusive culture – where being valued for who we are and having a voice is standard practice. Employee-Led Networks thrive and are recognised as critical contributors to our success.

We will create inclusive experiences across the employee lifecycle by ensuring our people systems, practices and policies are accessible, free from bias and discrimination and promote connection and collaboration.

Focus areas

Recruitment practices

- Develop a sourcing strategy supported by a strong Employee Value Proposition so Kāinga Ora attracts a diverse range of talent.
- Remove barriers in recruitment so all candidates have a fair opportunity to demonstrate merit, including lived experience, non-traditional education pathways, and transferable skills gained inside and outside the workplace.

‘On and Off’ ramps: Refine our onboarding experience to ensure new starters gain an immediate connection to our purpose, values, people and mahi. Reinforce processes to maintain connection and belonging with those temporarily away/returning to our workforce.

Talent strategy: Identify opportunities for targeted talent pipelines and succession plans to improve diverse representation in people leadership and senior-level individual contributor roles.

Development: Define clear and accessible career pathways that facilitate equitable opportunities for growth and advancement.

Office experience: Develop a reasonable accommodations policy that ensures consideration of diverse needs in workplace design.

Outcomes

- ✓ We have the best people working at Kāinga Ora regardless of differences. Our diverse workforce means we better understand customers, partners and agencies.
- ✓ Everyone has a fulfilling career at Kāinga Ora. Learning and career opportunities are accessible to all, and biases do not block opportunities.
- ✓ Our environment enables Māori career aspirations and ensures Māori kaimahi are influential at all levels of the organisation.
- ✓ We increase diverse representation in leadership and senior-level individual contributor roles, while retaining diversity in our customer-facing roles.
- ✓ Our workplaces are inclusive by design, enabling everyone to participate fully and do their best work.

We will strengthen leadership capability and accountability so leaders model and influence inclusive behaviours, ensuring everyone can do their best work.

Focus areas

Inclusive leadership learning:

- Provide leaders with targeted unconscious bias and cultural responsiveness learning to build understanding and skills e.g. to support our rainbow people.
- Build listening, empathy, and courageous vulnerability skills into our leadership development programme.
- Provide resources to support people leaders to enable rainbow, neurodiverse and disabled employees to thrive. This includes enabling neurodiverse people leaders.

Inclusion metrics:

- Integrate inclusion metrics and objectives into senior leaders’ performance and development plans.
- Empower leaders with the right people/engagement data to elevate inclusion as an ongoing leadership conversation.

Recruitment: Incorporate inclusive leadership capabilities into the recruitment process for senior leaders.

Flexible working: People leaders ensure flexible working policy and application is embedded across the organisation through role modelling and regular conversations with their teams.

Outcomes

- ✓ Our aspiration: Leaders understand what inclusive behaviour looks like and lead across the continuum - leveraging differences, acting decisively to address exclusionary or discriminatory behaviours and making fair and unbiased decisions.
- ✓ Every member of a team feels safe, welcome and celebrated for their uniqueness. This leads to innovation and high performance.
- ✓ Leadership accountability results in inclusion being seen as a strategic priority, not just a ‘nice-to-have’.
- ✓ Flexible working practices are consistently applied.

We will build a work environment where every person actively contributes to inclusion, enabled by the capability to communicate, collaborate and challenge respectfully. Employee-Led Networks will be empowered to strengthen connection and influence positive change.

Focus areas

Ō Tātou Uara - Our Values: Reconnect our people with our values and how they show up in our changing context. Provide tools to help them re-connect their personal values to Manaakitanga, Mahi Tahi, and Whanake.

Capability: make available a suite of tools, resources and learning to:

- Build self awareness and understanding of different working styles and communication preferences.
- Grow cultural responsiveness capability across Kāinga Ora.
- Develop the interpersonal skills for collaboration, and to confidently recognise and respond to non-inclusive behaviours.

Communications: Deliver a transparent communications strategy that reinforces the business case for inclusiveness and facilitates sharing and celebrating best practice where it has created better outcomes for our people, customers, partners and agencies.

Employee-Led Networks: Reset ELN's, ensuring the governance, skills and resources are in place to continue to run effectively and with impact as we continually transform.

Outcomes

- ✓ Values-based behaviour and decisions is our default. Our people understand they own the values and have developed a deeper connection to them through alignment with their personal values.
- ✓ Inclusion is embedded in the way we work. Our people are responsible for being deliberate about inclusive experiences for others.
- ✓ Our people understand the value of diversity by seeing how it strengthens performance which ultimately, benefits our customers.
- ✓ Our Employee-Led Networks are employee owned and have a meaningful impact through fostering a sense of community and belonging for our people, strengthening connection across our organisation and providing insights and understanding to leadership.

