



# Thrive 2026

Engineering the Future: Innovation,  
Inclusion and Resilience

18-19 FEBRUARY 2026 | JAMES COOK HOTEL, WELLINGTON



Engineering  
New Zealand  
Te Ao Rangahau



## DAY 1: WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY

8.30am – 9.30am	Registration and welcome coffee
9.30am – 9.40am	<b>Welcome</b> Professor Jan Evans-Freeman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability, <a href="#">University of Canterbury</a> and President, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a> MC – Tania Williams, General Manager, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a>
9.40am – 10.30am	<b>Bringing fire trucks to the world</b> <b>Martin Simpson</b> General Manager, <a href="#">Fraser Engineering Group</a>
10.30am – 11.20am	<b>How AI will re-engineer engineering</b> <b>Matt Ensor</b> Director, <a href="#">Kia Ora AI</a>
11.20am – 11.40am	Morning tea
11.40am – 12.10pm	<b>Designing for focus: Acoustic intelligence in the modern workplace</b> <b>Richard Nagle</b> General Manager – UC Division and Chaz Nielsen, Account Executive, <a href="#">New Era Technology</a>
12.10pm – 12.15pm	Stretch break
12.15pm – 1.05pm	<b>Panel discussion: What engineering grads and cadets wished their managers knew to support them</b> Chaired by Chris Myatt, Training Partnership Manager, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a> <div> <div> <b>Billy Peoples</b>            Engineering Graduate – Electrical, <a href="#">KiwiRail</a>  <b>Jehan Hendry</b>            Senior Environmental Engineer,  <a href="#">Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd</a>  <b>Ashan Wanasinghe</b>            Transmission Line Engineer, <a href="#">Beca</a> </div> <div> <b>Kewen Kueh</b>            Future Networks Engineering Manager, <a href="#">Powerco</a>  <b>Joel Madsen</b>            Graduate Engineer, <a href="#">HEB Construction</a>  <b>Azriel Lipsham</b>            Civil Engineering Cadet, <a href="#">Downer</a> </div> </div>
1.05pm – 1.45pm	Lunch   BROUGHT TO YOU BY <a href="#">PATHWAYS®</a>
1.45pm – 2.40pm	<b>Panel discussion: What future employees want from work</b> Chaired by Richard Templer, Chief Executive, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a> <div> <div> <b>Rachel Butler-Peck</b>            Dean Year 13 &amp; Team Leader Careers, <a href="#">Kuranui College</a>  <b>Nitya Chatla</b>            Software Engineering Student, <a href="#">Victoria University</a>  <b>Millie Douglas</b>            Senior Career Consultant, <a href="#">Victoria University</a> </div> <div> <b>Hamish Davidson</b>            HOD Careers and Transition, <a href="#">Wellington College</a>  <b>Chris Nightingale</b>            Mechanical Engineering Student, <a href="#">Weltec</a> </div> </div>
2.40pm – 2.45pm	Stretch break
2.45pm – 3.15pm	<b>TBC</b>
3.15pm – 3.35pm	Coffee break
3.35pm – 4.30pm	<b>Panel discussion: How continued professional development has shaped my leadership journey</b> Chaired by Richard Templer, Chief Executive, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a> <div> <div> <b>Tyrone Newson</b>            Head of Development, Auckland Urban Development Office, <a href="#">Auckland Council</a>  <b>Daniel Patten</b>            General Manager Engineering – New Zealand &amp; Pacific Islands, <a href="#">McConnell Dowell</a>  <b>Simonne Eldridge</b>            Executive Advisor, Group Response Director and Technical Director – Environmental Engineering,  <a href="#">Tonkin + Taylor</a> </div> <div> <b>Clement Fernando</b>            Managing Director, <a href="#">GDC Group</a>  <b>Anna Bridgman</b>            New Zealand Operations Leader, Water, <a href="#">Stantec</a>  <b>Professor Jan Evans-Freeman</b>            Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability, <a href="#">University of Canterbury</a> and President, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a> </div> </div>
4.30pm – 4.35pm	Stretch break
4.35pm – 5.30pm	<b>Elevating Human High Performance</b> <b>Jason Hewett</b> Executive Coach, PEP Worldwide
5.30pm – 5.35pm	Messages
5.35pm – 7.05pm	Networking drinks

## DAY 2: THURSDAY 19 FEBRUARY

7.00am – 9.15am	Networking breakfast
8.30am – 9.30am	Registration and welcome coffee
9.30am – 9.40am	Welcome – Professor Jan Evans-Freeman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability, <a href="#">University of Canterbury</a> and President, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a> MC – Richard Templer, Chief Executive, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a>
9.40am – 10.30am	<b>Working with five generations in the workplace</b> <b>Prof. Jarrod Haar</b> Deans Chair and Professor of Management and Maori Business, <a href="#">Massey University</a>
10.30am – 10.50am	Morning tea
10.50am – 11.30am	<b>Great minds don't think alike – risks, opportunities, and practical actions to harness neurodiversity in engineering</b> <b>Jenny Turner</b> Neurodiversity and Leadership Consultant and Founder/Director, <a href="#">Human Fabric</a>
11.30am – 12.25pm	<b>Workshop: The Fabric of Me – Asking Better Questions to Help Teams Thrive</b> <b>Jenny Turner</b> Neurodiversity and Leadership Consultant and Founder/Director, <a href="#">Human Fabric</a>
12.25pm – 12.30pm	Messages
12.30pm – 1.10pm	Lunch   BROUGHT TO YOU BY <a href="#">PATHWAYS®</a>
1.10pm – 2.10pm	<b>Panel discussion: Getting the best out of your team during and after a disaster</b> BROUGHT TO YOU BY MAS Chaired by Tania Williams, General Manager, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a>  <b>Darren de Klerk</b> Deputy Group Manager & Director of Infrastructure, <a href="#">Hastings District Council</a> <b>John Papesch</b> Senior Civil Engineer, Director, <a href="#">Haigh Workman Ltd</a> <b>Nick Brown</b> Head of Intelligence, Healthy Waters and Flood Resilience, Resilience and Infrastructure, <a href="#">Auckland Council</a>  <b>Chris Speed</b> Director, <a href="#">Dunning Thornton Consultants Ltd</a> <b>Tony Gallagher</b> Project Director Transport Rebuild East Coast (TREC), <a href="#">Fulton Hogan</a> <b>Rhonda Hill</b> Principal Bridge and Civil Structures Engineer, <a href="#">WSP</a>
2.10pm – 2.15pm	Messages
2.15pm – 2.20pm	Stretch break
2.20pm – 3.15pm	<b>Panel discussion: How organisations are using AI in their workflows</b> Chaired by Tania Williams, General Manager, <a href="#">Engineering New Zealand</a>  <b>Matt Ensor</b> Director, <a href="#">Kia ora AI</a> <b>Speaker TBC</b> <a href="#">Naylor Love</a> <b>Holger Zipfel</b> Managing Director, <a href="#">MTL</a> <b>Prof. Dale Carnegie</b> Professor of Engineering, School of Engineering and Computer Science, <a href="#">Victoria University of Wellington</a>
3.15pm – 3.30pm	Closing thoughts
3.30pm	End

This programme is correct at the time of distribution and is subject to change.

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