



Celebrating new ideas

2008 New Zealand Post Group
Local Government Excellence Awards

Project Submission Template

Name of Project

Safer Students Campaign

Name of entering council/s

Christchurch City Council

Category

Joined Up Local Government

1. The Rationale for the ‘Safer Students’ Campaign and Expected Benefits

In August 2007, a PhD student at Canterbury University wrote to the Christchurch Mayor, the Human Rights Commission, and several other organisations describing her experience of racial harassment in the city. This triggered a meeting of staff members from Christchurch City Council, the University of Canterbury, the Human Rights Commission, and the NZ Police (Canterbury Branch). Concern was expressed about a perceived increase in anecdotal reporting of incidents of racial/cultural harassment experienced by tertiary students, and led to an ongoing collaboration between staff members from the above institutions; later the group was joined by Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu, CPIT and Lincoln University.

The outcome to the project was that students would feel safe in Christchurch, with the percentage of students experiencing harassment seriously reduced.

Benefits from the project were expected to be students who felt welcome, safe, and thus able to study well. Having positive experiences of their years in New Zealand, they would become positive ambassadors for Christchurch in future years, and be more likely to stay or return.

The project team recognised that harassment was not primarily the issue of the student population, but the challenge for the welcoming or ‘host’ community of Christchurch. Some initiatives of the project targeted the students, however strong messages were also to be communicated to the wider city population.

2. Linkage to Council’s Strategic Directions

Christchurch City Council has set out **four Strategic Directions** that define its role in achieving Christchurch City’s Community Outcomes. Key connections between the Safer Students Campaign and the two Strategic Directions of Strong Communities and Prosperous Economy have been made below.

Strong Communities

Goals and Objectives

1. Help communities to meet their needs, by:
 - helping public, private and community agencies to work together to address key areas of social need.
2. Reduce injury and crime and increase perceptions of safety, by:
 - working with partners to reduce crime, help people avoid injury and improve perceptions of safety.
3. Celebrate and promote Christchurch’s identity, cultures and diversity, by:
 - supporting cultural groups and organisations.

Prosperous Economy

Goals And Objectives

1. Work in partnership with the business and education sectors to attract and train people with diverse skills that meet businesses’ needs, by:
 - promoting the city as an attractive place to live, learn and work.
 - supporting the development of trade and professional skills to meet current and future needs.
 - supporting the work of tertiary education providers.
2. Use Christchurch’s special qualities to enhance economic activity and attract skilled workers, by:
 - promoting the city as a visitor destination and as a place to learn and do business.

3. Project Planning

Key elements of the success of the ‘Safer Students Campaign’ project have been the focus on achievable goals (with evaluation at each step), and highly democratic collaboration and planning shared by all the individuals involved.

The first step was engaging in an early dialogue with the Christchurch Press, as the project team believed that articles about so-called ‘Chinese cheaters’ and the visit of a Muslim (reported as an ‘Extremist’ by The Press) were a precipitating factor in perceived escalating numbers of incidences.

The next step was the development of a research and marketing campaign by a University of Canterbury marketing intern placed at Christchurch City Council (CCC) (as a graded University of Canterbury academic project, funded by CCC). Based on focused discussions with international students, the intern reported:

- a perceived failure by the city’s institutions to provide clear statement of guidance over the issue of harassment, and
- students being confused about reporting processes, favouring a single, clear online reporting option.

In discussion with the project team, it was identified that partner organisations lacked rigorous data of racial harassment, as the Police do not collect data specific to racially motivated incidents. Plans were also made to fill this gap.

The third step was the development of a poster campaign that featured the hongi with welcome statements in different languages, thus attempting to address the first two findings with a positive message from the biggest city institutions. The posters also printed the website link www.ccc.govt.nz/migrants, which provides practical information for newcomers. At the launch of the posters, the eve of Race Relations Day, leaders from all partner institutions spoke, giving clear statements of welcome. Touch-screen computers were placed on the campuses of University of Canterbury and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) during May and June to evaluate the effectiveness of the poster campaign.

The final step is the development, marketing and launch of a new website, www.report-it.org.nz which provides online access for students and those who observe racially motivated incidents to report them (anonymously should they choose). By means of this website, rigorous data may be collected and analysed, and students have a means of reporting harassment, and if they wish, have their complaint acted on.

A feature of the project planning has been the development of step-by-step actions, based on review and evaluation of the previous actions. This has allowed the project team to be constantly responsive to new data, with immediate feedback at each step from students. (See Friedman model below).



>> Race Relations Commissioner at Launch of Safer Students Campaign March 2008
Launch photographs courtesy of the University of Canterbury

4. Project Management

Rationale for the project (see 1. above).

Linkage to Council’s Strategic Directions (see 2. above).

Project Scope: International students living in Christchurch. The initial focus of this campaign is students studying at CPIT, Lincoln University and University of Canterbury. As harassment is happening on the streets as well as on campuses, the issue is recognised as city-wide.

Results, Partners, Indicators, Evaluation, Planning (see 7. below).

Budget: the campaign has run on a small budget of \$30,000, not including staff time from partner agencies.

Roles and Responsibilities have been shared amongst partner agencies (and see 9. below):

CCC: Communications and media, project team communications, website development, marketing, launch of website, project team input, finance, facilitating meetings.

University of Canterbury, CPIT, Lincoln University: Student liaison and feedback, student models, website text development, launch of poster campaign, project team input, finance, facilitating meetings.

Human Rights Commission: Website text development, processing and analysis of website data, media, support of NZ Diversity Action Plan, project team input, finance, minute-taking.

NZ Police: Website text development, project team input, finance.

Methodology: Action-reflection model.

Meetings: Face-to-face as required, and email communications.

5. Relationship Management and Communication with Stakeholders

A key feature of the Safer Students Campaign has been the regular meeting of staff from the seven institutions to workshop issues, sharing both responsibilities and institutional resources. This created a small network capable of facilitating access to the strong support and existing goodwill in the relevant institutional structures.



>> Members of the Safer Students Project Team, May 2008

Christchurch City Council, through its internal relationship management, has taken a significant role in marketing, media and communications, website development, and project management, through staff from the community development, marketing, communications and web teams.

The Relationship Manager (IM&CT Unit) and Public Affairs Manager (Community Services Group) have coordinated the work of Council's internal communications, webteam and marketing staff, while the Multi-cultural Community Adviser (Community Development Team) coordinated communications from Council externally to the collaborative partners project team.

The Council's Communications team was responsible for the communications plan, and for joint media releases, liaising with the relevant communications staff in each of the seven organisations.

Communications with a wider community stakeholder group have taken place through project team networks with organisations including student associations, ethnic minority community groups, Education Christchurch, Settlement Support Christchurch, Crime Prevention Coordinating Committee, Neighbourhood Support and the Intercultural Assembly.

6. Innovation and Originality

- The strong New Zealand images of welcome to Christchurch featuring international students from a range of ethnicities studying locally (see appendices).
- Six large local organisations, including two government agencies and three tertiary institutions working collaboratively with local government to reduce racial harassment and improve safety for students in the city.
- The first of its kind for New Zealand, a website that allows students (and others) to log complaints of racial harassment. Complaints are followed up by partner organisations, and data collected is also documented for future action. Reports may be made anonymously. The launch of this is 22 August 2008.

7. Evaluation Framework

Christchurch City Council, with the support of partner organisations, is using a model developed by Mark Friedman (www.raguide.org) for its evaluation framework.

RESULTS ACCOUNTABILITY

‘Safer Students’ Campaign

Mission: Christchurch is a safe place for tertiary students

Who are our ‘customers’?

Primary: International students from CPIT, University of Canterbury and Lincoln College

Secondary: International students studying at other institutions, migrant students, residents of Christchurch

Result we want in plain English:

That International students feel safe living in Christchurch.

They experience this result through:

- Being formally welcomed
- Having access to information about living in Christchurch
- Having access to information about how to report any incidents
- Making friends with other students including kiwi students
- Being free from any racial harassment

Key Indicators:

- Numbers (%) of students who report feeling safe
- Numbers (%) of students who know how to report racial harassment incidents
- Numbers (%) of students who experience no harassment
- Numbers (%) of students who see someone else being harassed
- Numbers (%) of students who report they were happy with help received from key agencies when they reported an incident

Secondary Indicators:

- Formal welcome ceremonies (e.g. University of Canterbury, CPIT, Lincoln University, Culture Galore)
- Numbers of students who report feeling welcome
- Numbers of responsive initiatives by partner agencies
- Presence of promotional ‘collateral’
- Numbers (%) of students who make friends with ‘kiwis’ on campuses and elsewhere
- Numbers (%) of students who see welcome posters
- Numbers (%) of students who are helped by the welcome posters
- Numbers of alcohol-free opportunities to make friends on campus
- Numbers (%) of students who are report racial harassment
- Increase in numbers (%) of students who are comfortable reporting racial harassment
- Numbers of complaints to Human Rights Commission
- Numbers of complaints to Police

Partners with a role to play:

University of Canterbury, CPIT, Human Rights Commission, Police, Ngai Tahu, Lincoln University and CCC (key partners).

Other supportive organisations: Education Christchurch, Students Associations, University of Canterbury Students Association, Intercultural Assembly, Refugee & New Migrant Forum, Office of Ethnic Affairs, Settlement Support, Refugee & Migrant Centre, Ethnic Council, Neighbourhood Support, Crime Prevention Coordinating Committee, Connecting Communities programme, ethnic minority community groups.

Action Plan and Budget:

For regular updating and review.

8. Successful Results

Data Development and Key Indicators (as at June 2008)

- Numbers (%) of students who report feeling safe – 86%.
- Numbers (%) of students who know how to report racial harassment incidents - 82%.
- Numbers (%) of students who experience no harassment- 51%.
- Numbers (%) of students who see someone else being harassed- 48%.
- Numbers (%) of students who report they were happy with help received from key agencies when they reported an incident- 75% happy with help from agencies, and family and friends.

Other data:

- 16% students surveyed had visited the website www.ccc.govt.nz/migrants that gives information in 9 languages about living in Christchurch.
- More than three quarters (76.1%) of international students had seen the Welcome to Christchurch poster.



>> Neil Barns, CEO of CPIT, Rakihiia Tau, Upoko of Ngai Tuahuriri and Canterbury District Commander Superintendent Dave Cliff at the Safer Students Launch

Some stories behind the results and data (as at June 2008) including Unexpected Results

- When the first stage of the campaign was launched with the Welcome to Christchurch posters, University of Canterbury staff noticed students responded very positively to the new hongis images, even posting them on their cell phones and computers.
- The models whose faces appear on the posters have become unofficial ambassadors for the campaign, being readily recognised on campus, and often asked to explain the campaign and the hongis symbol. University of Canterbury staff report that all feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.
- As far as the project team can tell, no one has defaced any of the images that have appeared all around the city. Budget set aside for poster and adshel replacement was not drawn on.
- The police are looking at our data collection as a potential model for their own reporting systems.

One story: A female Indian student studying at University of Canterbury was hit by an object from close range thrown by a passenger in a car driving through the University of Canterbury Students Association car park.

The object left a nasty bruise on her hip, and she was really shaken and upset. One of her friends had heard that the University advisers wanted to know about these incidents, and persuaded the student to contact them. Staff liaised with Community Police and University of Canterbury security, isolated the relevant security camera footage, identified the car license plate, and traced the offender. The offender was mortified, insisting there was no racist element to the incident, claimed he was simply 'letting off steam' after an exam, and asked to make a personal apology to the student. (July 08)

9. Joined up Local Government

The project enables the council to achieve something the council could not do on its own.

City Council's role in this project has been the enabling of resources (marketing, communications, web development, coordination) to address a city-wide issue. The City's Mayor and Deputy Mayor have also provided leadership in their statements of support for this campaign. However, the Council has needed all partners and their strategic relationships.

The University of Canterbury and CPIT (and latterly Lincoln University) have provided the on-the-ground immediate feedback from students every step of the way, including initial focus group work, appropriate wording for communications, provision of photographic models, and access to students for the touch-screen survey. The University of Canterbury marketing intern placed at, and funded by Christchurch City Council provided resources to this project that would have been otherwise unavailable at the critical time.

The Human Rights Commission (including the Race Relations Commissioner) has provided assistance with needed publicity and media uptake, such as promoting 'Safer Students' as part of the NZ Diversity Action Programme. An invitation was given by the Race Relations Commissioner to project staff to speak at the Connecting Diverse Communities Good Practice Forum in Wellington in May 2008 to an audience of practitioners from across Government and the Community Sector. The Human Rights Commission are taking the lead in receiving and documenting the information gathered from the website.

Ngāi Tahu has provided invaluable support from Tangata whenua.

"Ngāi Tahu is proud to be involved with the Safer Students campaign. Manaakitanga is a core value within the Ngāi Tahu culture, in its simplest terms it means looking after and supporting our manuhere (guests), a duty that we take seriously as tangata whenua because our mana (integrity) is upheld through the act of manaaki."

The New Zealand Police (Canterbury Branch), particularly through the work of the Asian Liaison Officer, have likewise provided specialist input in the areas of reporting and documentation, and the District Commander has backed the campaign with strong statements of support, one of our key project goals. The following statement is appearing on the home page of www.report-it.org.nz:

"Police in Canterbury will not tolerate any forms of race based harassment of other unlawful behaviour that makes people feel unsafe or unwelcome in our community. We are your police and your safety is our concern."

(Canterbury Police District Commander Superintendent Dave Cliff).

Evidence of buy in, and mutual benefits and ongoing commitment from all parties

Budget

All partner organisations contributed to the cost of the campaign.

Press Releases and Public Statements of Support

Statements by partner organisations, including those in senior governance or management roles, demonstrate their significant commitment to the project. Examples have been highlighted in blue, above, and in excerpts from Press Releases below.

New campaign to celebrate Race Relations Day (Excerpts from the Press Release 14 March 2008)

Six Canterbury agencies have joined forces in a campaign to welcome the city's international student and migrant population, to be launched on Monday, March 17, the eve of Race Relations Day.

The organisations are Christchurch City Council, University of Canterbury, Te Runanga o Ngai Tahu, the Human Rights Commission, NZ Police and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT).

Canterbury is attracting an increasing number of overseas students and welcomes growing numbers of migrants choosing to reside in the city.

“There are more than 165 ethnic minorities living in Christchurch. They make a significant contribution to our community economically, socially and culturally – we need to open our eyes and understand the benefits that cultural diversity has to offer us all” says Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Kaiwhakahaere Mark Solomon.

To celebrate this diversity, Joris de Bres, Race Relations Commissioner, Rakihia Tau the Upoko of Ngai Tuahuriri, the University of Canterbury Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Mayor Christchurch City and CEO Neil Barns of CPIT will all be attending the launch on Monday at the University of Canterbury.

The Race Relations Commissioner Joris de Bres said: *“New Zealand is a culturally diverse nation. The importance of good communications and understanding between all communities cannot be understated.”*

...

Deputy Mayor Norm Withers says: *“We are really grateful that international students come to Christchurch, bringing with them innovative ideas, new and rich networks from around the world and creating opportunities for new friendships.”*

...

Professor Scott Davidson, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Services and International) says with students and staff from many different countries, Canterbury University has a long tradition of welcoming people of diverse cultures onto campus.

“As a good civic citizen, we are delighted to be able to make a positive contribution to ensuring that Christchurch is a city which welcomes newcomers of all ethnicities and cultures,” he says.

Also contributing his support, CPIT CEO Neil Barns says international students and migrants add a wealth of experience and perspective to the city.

“It is our aim to make our inner city campus a place where international students and migrants can feel at home, and use the experience of education to build relevant connections with our community.”

Survey shows students feel safe living in Christchurch (Press Release 3 July 2008)

A survey of international students' perception of how they can seek help against harassment has shown the large majority feel safe living in Christchurch.

Survey touch-screens were put in place for two weeks each at the University of Canterbury (UC) and Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) during May and June.

The onscreen questionnaire was answered by 260 students. Despite around half of the respondents saying they had experienced having hurtful things said to them because of their ethnicity, 86 per cent said they felt safe living in Christchurch.

The project is part of an ongoing joint initiative by the Christchurch City Council, University of Canterbury, CPIT, Ngai Tahu, the Police and the Human Rights Commission.

Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker said the survey showed Christchurch was not the racist city it was often portrayed as.

"We are not unusual in that we are still learning to embrace the different ethnicities that we have, but I think the great majority of Christchurch and Canterbury people understand and appreciate what different cultures bring to the city and the province.

"It's always those vocal few who will hassle our newcomers, but thankfully in the long term scheme of things our new residents understand this is a pretty good place to live.

"What we as residents have to do is sort out those vocal few with the mindless prejudice, and say to them that their attitudes are not acceptable."

...

Acknowledgement to all Partner Agencies:

