



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	Welcome Professor Jan Evans-Freeman, Pro-Vice-Chancellor Sustainability, University of Canterbury and President, Engineering New Zealand
9.40am – 10.30am	Bringing fire trucks to the world Martin Simpson General Manager, Fraser Engineering Group
10.30am – 11.20am	Topic TBC Matt Ensor Director, Kia Ora AI
11.20am – 11.40am	Morning tea
11.40am – 12.10pm	Designing for focus: Acoustic intelligence in the modern workplace Richard Nagle General Manager – UC Division and Chaz Nielsen, Account Executive, New Era Technology
12.10pm – 12.15pm	Stretch break
12.15pm – 1.05pm	Panel discussion: What engineering grads and cadets wished their managers knew to support them Harry Bajwa Graduate Engineer – Infrastructure, KiwiRail Ashan Wanasinghe Transmission Line Engineer, Beca Speaker TBC HEB Construction Speaker TBC Downer Kewen Kueh Future Networks Engineering Manager, Powerco
1.05pm – 1.45pm	Lunch
1.45pm – 2.40pm	Panel discussion: What future employees want from work Speaker TBC Victoria University of Wellington Kaye Johnson HOD Careers and Transition, Wellington Girls' College Hamish Davidson HOD Careers and Transition, Wellington College Chris Nightingale Mechanical Engineering Student, Weltec
2.40pm – 2.45pm	Stretch break
2.45pm – 3.15pm	TBC
3.15pm – 3.35pm	Coffee break
3.35pm – 4.30pm	Panel discussion: How continued professional development has shaped my leadership journey Tryone Newson Chief Executive Officer, Ngāti Awa Group Holdings Ltd Daniel Patten General Manager Engineering – New Zealand & Pacific Islands, McConnell Dowell Simone Eldridge Executive Advisor, Group Response Director and Technical Director – Environmental Engineering, Tonkin + Taylor Clement Fernando Managing Director, GDC Group Anna Bridgman New Zealand Operations Leader, Water, Stantec
4.30pm – 4.35pm	Stretch break
4.35pm – 5.30pm	Elevating Human High Performance Jason Hewett 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 MC
9.40am – 10.30am	Working with five generations in the workplace Prof. Jarrod Haar Deans Chair and Professor of Management and Maori Business, Massey University
10.30am – 10.50am	Morning tea
10.50am – 11.30am	Topic TBC Jenny Turner Founder and Director, Human Fabric
11.30am – 12.25pm	Workshop activity Jenny Turner Founder and Director, Human Fabric
12.25pm – 12.30pm	Messages
12.30pm – 1.10pm	Lunch
1.10pm – 2.10pm	Panel discussion: Getting the best out of your team during and after a disaster BROUGHT TO YOU BY MAS Darren de Klerk Deputy Group Manager & Director of Infrastructure, Hastings District Council John Papesch Senior Civil Engineer, Director, Haigh Workman Ltd Nick Brown Head of Intelligence, Healthy Waters and Flood Resilience, Resilience and Infrastructure, Auckland Council Chris Speed Director, Dunning Thornton Consultants Ltd Tony Gallagher Project Director Transport Rebuild East Coast (TREC), Fulton Hogan Rhonda Hill Principal Bridge and Civil Structures Engineer, WSP
2.10pm – 2.15pm	Messages
2.15pm – 2.20pm	Stretch break
2.20pm – 3.15pm	Panel discussion: How organisations are using AI in their workflows Matt Ensor Director, Kia ora AI Speaker TBC Naylor Love Holger Zipfel Managing Director, MTL Prof. Dale Carnegie Professor of Engineering, School of Engineering and Computer Science, Victoria University of Wellington
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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