NELSON CITY EVENTS STRATEGY

Nelson City Council
te kaunihera o whakatū

INTRODUCTION

Nelson has a long history of nurturing unique creative endeavours that have grown into iconic events loved by many, such as the Masked Parade, World of WearableArts, and Adam Chamber Music Festival.

Events are important for community wellbeing, as they build feelings of belonging, identity and a sense of pride in our city as well as helping to grow awareness of our diverse community.

They are also an increasingly important economic contributor, growing the visitor market and helping make Nelson an attractive destination for new residents. They provide a valuable opportunity to showcase the unique and compelling identity of the region and the extraordinary city experience that Nelson is.

This Strategy is an expression of Council's commitment to developing the city's events offering and sets out a vision, objectives and criteria for publicly funded support.

OUR VISION IS...

Events that strengthen the region and its identity, stimulate a prosperous, vibrant and engaged community and deliver value at the right time.

OBJECTIVES

RICH EVENTS CALENDAR

A rich events calendar which maximises opportunities throughout the year

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Promotion of the wellbeing and cohesion of the local community

ECONOMIC VALUE

Measurable economic outcomes for Nelson City

SENSE OF IDENTITY

An events programme that attracts visitors to Nelson and gives the local community a sense of pride in being 'Nelsonian'

PARTNERSHIP

A healthy partnership between the events sector, the community and Nelson City Council

OUR PLACE

The ‘Our place’ branding has six themes:

- Spiritually & culturally steeped
- Naturally stunning
- Small town vibe, local charm
- Effortless & handy travel
- Indulge, unwind & adventure
- World-class talents & sectors

https://www.nelsontasman.nz/about-us/our-place/

BENEFITS

Community wellbeing is strengthened through an inclusive and diverse events offering that brings people together to enjoy a shared experience. The affirmation of Nelson’s distinct creative, cultural and recreational identity strengthens social bonds as feelings of connection and belonging are fostered and the region’s uniqueness is reinforced.

Community focused events are important because they celebrate our diverse local community and can help our residents discover new experiences and ideas and also support broader objectives such as healthy lifestyles and positive wellbeing. Residents also benefit from an improved level of facilities that use by events helps to fund.

Events can attract visitors to stay, eat, drink and shop in our city, boost the local economy and increase employment opportunities.

But they also have a role in showcasing Nelson through media coverage and positive word of mouth recommendations, as well as encouraging return visits. They are part of promoting an interesting and vibrant lifestyle which benefits residents and makes Nelson an appealing place to settle.

Council funding and promotion helps make events accessible to the community.

PARTNERSHIP

Ensuring Nelson continues to develop a diverse and successful events calendar is a partnership between event organisers from business, sporting and non-profit realms; the Council; the Nelson Regional Development Agency; and the wider community.

Council

Nelson City Council supports events through a mixture of direct delivery, funding, provision of venues, and a range of associated services e.g. resource and noise consents, publicity and traffic management plans.

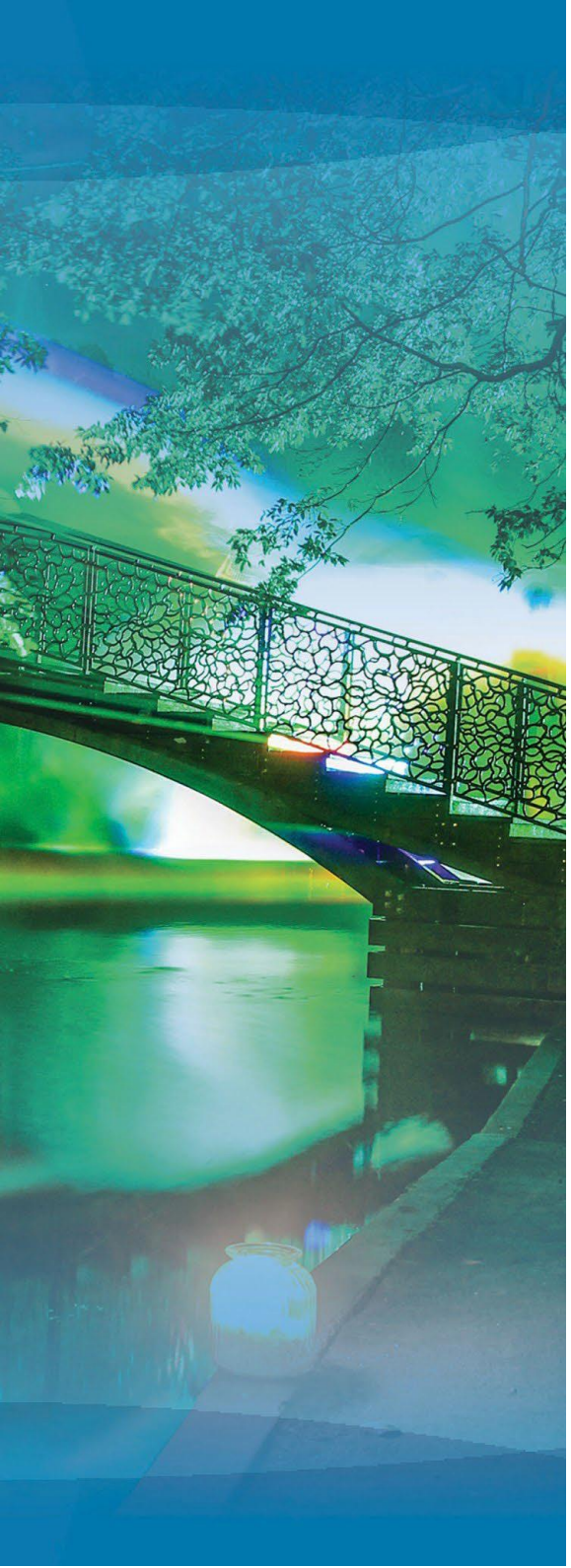
Nelson Regional Development Agency

The Nelson Regional Development Agency is the first point of contact for event organisers and the administrative body for the economic component of the Nelson Events Fund.
It coordinates and manages communication around the Nelson events calendar (including Its On).

The agency also provides events marketing tools and assistance on a cost recovery basis to events. Where appropriate it will integrate events support with its consumer marketing programmes and seek opportunities for events to leverage Nelson Regional Development Agency's industry partnerships.

Local Event Industry

Nelson has a well-established community of events organisers and technicians who work in both professional and voluntary capacities to deliver events for Nelson. A clear strategy for events and the ability to collaborate closely with Council and the Nelson Regional Development Agency will support their essential contribution to the Nelson events calendar.



EVENTS FRAMEWORK

An Events Development Committee, comprising two officers from Nelson City Council and two from the Nelson Regional Development Agency will oversee the implementation of this Strategy and manage the economic component of the Nelson Events Fund. The community component is managed in-house by Council staff. Delegated authority for allocating events funding by the Committee will be set by Council.

Guidelines for the assessment of applications to the Nelson Events Fund will also be set by Council.

The Events Development Committee report to Council once a year on implementation of the Strategy including event funding and event evaluation, as well as opportunities to improve the clarity and value of Council services to events.

The Nelson Regional Development Agency will establish a customer facing regional event coordination and development role which will provide a single contact point responsible for all economic and community event enquiries, applications, event coordination, development and marketing.

The Nelson Regional Development Agency will work closely with event organisers to leverage public sector assets, relationships and tools to improve regional events marketing. The Events Development Committee may direct that portions of Council funding for a particular event be allocated to or guided by the Nelson Regional Development Agency to achieve a more integrated marketing outcome.

NELSON EVENTS FUND

Council will resource a Nelson Events Fund with two components, one to support events that foster community wellbeing and social outcomes, the other to support events that grow Nelson's economy.

While there are separate funding streams for each it is recognised that most events bring benefits in both these areas and many of our most valuable economic events began and continue to be successful because they connect with our local residents through building community pride, learning and relationships.

The Nelson Events Fund aims to support and develop events that contribute economic and community wellbeing benefits to Nelson, build social capital and cohesion, increase visitors during shoulder and off peak seasons and enhance the city and regional profile nationally and internationally. The Fund aims to support the Nelson Events Strategy by optimising the use of public sector resources to stimulate a rich and coordinated Nelson City events programme.

The Nelson Events Fund recognises that events have a lifecycle and that the support required during the early stages of development may be different to that required for a mature event. It also recognises that even highly successful events may reach a point where interest and relevance diminish and ratepayer funding needs to transfer to other emerging events.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following are the principles against which events will be assessed for funding from the Nelson Events Fund.

1 STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Events should align with the 'Our place' branding and, where aiming to deliver economic value, should have relevance for our identified target markets (see Appendix 1).

Events should also align with relevant Council policy.

2 DELIVERY AGAINST STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

Delivery of the strategy's objectives needs to be clearly demonstrated in economic and/or community wellbeing terms. For economic benefit a desirable return on investment will be assessed on a case by case basis.

Note: *Council has a return on investment target for the Economic Events component of the Fund in line with a national approach and which also recognises the scale of the Nelson district. This is set at 20:1.*

3 SEASONALITY

Events primarily delivering economic benefit should increase the number of visitors attracted to Nelson during the 'off season' period from 1 April to 30 November. Community events can receive support during any period but preference will be given to those that add vitality and interest to the city during the 'off season'. It is expected that community events timed during Nelson's high season will have larger audiences available and more opportunities to be self-sufficient, thus ratepayer support is less necessary.

4 CAPACITY TO DELIVER OUTCOMES

The strength of the event organiser's application will be assessed, including evidence of relevant skills, capability to deliver and other sources of public funding. The application should include a multi-year strategy which shows an understanding of the stages of event development and set these against relevant Key Performance Indicators for each stage. The application should show a pathway to sustainability and an exit point at which Nelson Events Fund support will no longer be required.

5 CONTEXT FOR SUPPORT

There is a limited pool of public funding to support events and the Events Development Committee must be mindful of the impact of funding decisions on other potentially significant event applications and the need to retain sufficient flexibility to respond to emerging events. Thus it may not always be possible to support event applications, even if they are a good fit with these principles.

Applications for the Nelson Events Fund should be submitted to the Nelson Regional Development Agency using the template available at www.nrda.co.nz.

BUSINESS EVENTS SALES AND MARKETING PROGRAMME

Business events are a highly valued and high yielding contributor to the Nelson events calendar which provide an important range of shoulder season activity. The Business Events sales and marketing programme exists to support and grow the value of the region's business events and assist in securing events for the region.

The programme is focused on raising awareness, targeted lead generation and facilitating lead conversion with our partners and on generating outcomes in the following key activity areas:

- Business to business events including conventions and conferences from the domestic association and corporate sector with a secondary focus on Australian associations and corporates.
- Events that fit within the regional identity platforms and Nelson's sectoral areas of regional business events competitive advantage.
- Event size, timing and fit with Nelson's venues including availability; utilisation of council venues.
- Work with local partners to build their capability and capacity to compete for business event markets.

APPENDIX 1

NELSON'S TARGET MARKETS

Economic benefits of events to Nelson are driven by the ability of the event to attract visitors into the city who would not have otherwise been there. Ticket sales to locals are important for the commercial viability of the event for the organiser (and for residents' wellbeing), but spending by locals does not bring additional activity to Nelson. There are three core principles of the target market identified for Nelson:

1. **Enhancing the low season** – There is an opportunity for events growth from April to November. Targeting events through the middle of the year could draw in visitor revenue during seasonal ebbs, with less risk of encroaching on existing events or crowding out other visitor activity.

2. **Focus on the drive market and key cities connected by air** – The most important target market for event organisers is the drive market (e.g. locals, Canterbury, and Marlborough). Visitors from Canterbury represent one quarter of domestic travellers to Nelson and there are almost 700,000 people in Canterbury. Auckland and Wellington will also be key markets for some events and can be quickly reached by air (at least 10 daily flights from each). There may be times where it is reasonable for an event to target some visitors from Australia.

3. **Visitor preferences aligned to arts/culture, sport, food/beverage** – Nelson's existing events calendar is heavily weighted towards arts and culture, as well as sporting events – this aligns well to consumer preferences, but there may be unmet demand for food and beverage events. Further development of food and beverage events that connect visitors to the provenance of the cuisine could align with other economic development initiatives already happening.

Nelson City Council
te kaunihera o whakatū

Civic House, 110 Trafalgar St, Nelson
PO Box 645, Nelson, 7040
enquiry@ncc.govt.nz
03 546 0200

nelson.govt.nz