



Aimee Tyson, Hamilton & Waikato Tourism; Kate Blakeley, Institute of Internal Auditors; Kathryn Maloney, New Zealand Aged Care Association; Melissa Williams, Claudelands



Warren Harvey, Energy Events Centre Rotorua; Susan Mott, Franchise Association of New Zealand; Lynley Martin, Skyline Rotorua

A recent conference aimed at education and professional development for leaders in the association sector covered everything from using and accessing the power of coalitions, through to getting online learning methods right (first time round), organisational transformation through leadership and good strategy, and building a more diverse membership.

These were just some of the topics discussed at LINC in Blenheim late September. LINC – Leadership, Insights and Networking Conference – is the largest gathering of association executives in New Zealand and is hosted by AuSAE (The Australasian Society of Association Executives).

Attendees were also invited to attend a two-day excursion prior to the conference hosted by Business Events Marlborough which included scenic cruises and wine tasting at some of the region’s finest wineries. The conference itself was held at the Marlborough Events Centre.

Brett Jeffery, general manager AuSAE New Zealand says the conference showed the power of associations in New Zealand.

“CEOs, event managers and other employees of associations from all sectors within New Zealand, were all in the

same room sharing a commonality and experiencing insights and educational sessions that they can take back to their respective associations.

“Blenheim showed the association sector that the Marlborough region was an impressive location to hold a conference.”

Wendy Desiles, business development manager for Business Events Marlborough was pleased that so many delegates decided to make the most of their trip by taking the opportunity of doing the excursions, or by staying on after the conference ended, many bringing their partners too.

“A large group of attendees enjoyed a cruise in the Marlborough Sounds on Saturday to Furneaux Lodge and they loved the scenery and wildlife including dolphins and seals,” she says. “On Sunday many delegates enjoyed visits to several

wineries for tastings and lunch and a tour of the Omaka Aviation Heritage Centre. The chocolate tasting was popular too. I was thrilled to see everyone’s reactions as they discovered the amazing experiences we have on offer in Marlborough.

“It is easy to underestimate what is on offer in a smaller region,” says Desiles. “I think many attendees were surprised to find that Blenheim has a purpose built events centre alongside a modern theatre, which combined can offer plenary sessions for up to 700 delegates along with breakout spaces and venues for functions as well as plenty of exhibition space. I had a lot of positive feedback, and many people also commented on Marlborough’s excellent venues for off-site functions.”

The 2023 LINC event will take place in the Waikato from the 10-12 September.



Family group wine tasting at Hunter’s Winery



Dane Botherway, Coast Group; Rachel Barker, Plastics New Zealand



Michelle Geale, Scenic Hotel Group, Nick Hill, Building Officials Institute of New Zealand



Wendy Desiles, Business Events Marlborough; Stephen Williams, Forest & Bird Protection Society, Catherine Bygate, Marlborough Civic Theatre Trust