

Festival of Adult Learning

Ahurei Ākonga



Regional Networks
and Event Organisers
Information Guide

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[Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga](#)

Introduction

Aims

The aims of the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga are to:

- Celebrate the efforts, achievements, and contributions of adult learners, educators and providers through both regional and national events
- Strengthen adult and community education and raise public awareness of the rich variety of learning opportunities for adults and their value
- Widen access to learning opportunities and encourage more people to seek advice and guidance about returning to learn
- Foster collaborative and cooperative networks and pathways among those who share an interest in adult learning
- Reflect upon and work towards removing barriers which prevent adults from participating fully in our society.

Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga **Engaging with your Community of Learning**

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is both a celebration of Adult and Community Education (ACE) learning and an opportunity to market its benefits to the wider community. In the past we have encouraged maximum visibility as the key to effective marketing during the festival.

Important audiences are:

- **The public** – learners of all races, ages, genders, and socioeconomic levels, including lapsed learners
- **Leaders (Government Ministers, policy makers, business leaders)** – to remind them of the size, diversity, and value of the ACE sector
- **Local Government representatives** – to demonstrate the positive impact of ACE on community participation
- **Media** – to highlight ACE success stories and convey what is unique about ACE
- **Māori** – to support and acknowledge the role of tangata whenua in ACE
- **Wider education sector** – emphasizing the role ACE plays in preparing learners for other tertiary opportunities.

Background

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga (formerly Adult Learners' Week/ He Tangata Mātauranga) is an occasion to raise the profile of adult learning in Aotearoa and to celebrate the wide range of learning opportunities available, as well as the impact that adult learning has on people's lives.

Over 65,000 adults are engaged in some form of learning every year. This is something to celebrate.

The dates for the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga generally incorporate International Literacy Day (September 8), which is celebrated in many countries around the world, and is supported by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is viewed by stakeholders as a platform to celebrate the accomplishments and triumphs of individuals who have engaged in Adult and Community Education (ACE). Additionally, it presents an avenue to inspire members of the larger community who have needs or aspirations that could be fulfilled through ACE.

In Aotearoa there are thousands of opportunities for adults to become involved with learning. Learning does not have to involve classrooms, enrolment, assignments, or qualifications. Participating in learning does not have to mean becoming a student. Adults can become involved as mentors, tutors, guides, or volunteers, or simply participate as equal members of a group.

As part of this week, every adult learning achievement is worth celebrating, whether it's teaching English to an immigrant at home, attending a library programme, or being part of a community support group, or enrolling in a private training institution or earning a university degree at age 65. In telling inspirational stories, people who thought learning was not for them are encouraged to see that there are endless possibilities.

Organisational Structure

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is coordinated by ACE Aotearoa with planning and activities overseen by the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga National Advisory Committee. At a national level planning, coordination and preparation of resources is undertaken by the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga project manager/media coordinator.

Local events may be organised through the volunteer Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga Regional Networks or by groups, organisations, or individuals with an interest in community education for adults.

Media

Good publicity is vital for the successful promotion of the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga to a wide audience. The communications strategy is organised on two levels – national and local, and seeks to promote adult learning through print, radio, television and digital coverage of events and activities throughout New Zealand.

The media coordinator manages communications at a national level and provides support for regional coordinators at a local level.

Working with your local media at a local level the objectives are:

- To get advance publicity for local events and activities during the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga
- To ensure coverage of events as they happen during the week.

Media Planning

Starting early is the key to getting good media coverage during the lead up to Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga. There will be a few opportunities for media coverage in the weeks prior to Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga especially using online tools like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram so nominating someone from your regional planning group to take responsibility for media will be important. Developing relationships with local media and a timeline of dates for press releases, photo opportunities, interview set up and other activities will also be helpful.

Getting Media Attention

- Establish a strong angle for stories you are pitching to the media. The angle is the hook that gets the reader, listener or viewer interested in the story
- Look for unusual, unexpected stories with a human interest or inspirational outcome
- A great photo will sell a story. Try and anticipate good photo opportunities
- Once you have made initial contact with local journalists, stay connected by phone and email. Let them know what is happening well in advance and always follow up with a phone call after sending information
- Try to get a high-profile local celebrity/writer/actor/politician involved as part of your celebrations
- Invite the media to everything in advance and make sure they have free tickets to paid events. Appoint someone to look after them at events, arrange photo opportunities, interviews etc
- Look for ways to tie in your press releases with current events or issues in the media e.g. aging baby boomers anticipating a long retirement, modern technology opening the world to older people, up-skilling/retraining due to job loss.

What the Media Will Need

- Key dates for events and activities being planned
- Quality information on the background to the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga
- Names and details of interesting local people who have agreed to be interviewed (make sure they are sufficiently confident to tell their story)
- Information about ACE in your area and the courses on offer
- Information about last year's winners, their contact details, and the awards they won; and information on this year's winners, their contact details, and awards
- Media releases to signal planned events. These should be brief, direct, and sufficiently enticing for a journalist to want to follow up
- A minder at events to identify key people for interview, arrange photo opportunities etc
- Notice of good photo opportunities.

The media are bombarded with vast amounts of information every day. It is processed quickly and much of it never gets used.. To get your message out into the community requires good planning and quality information presented in an eye-catching way. The personal approach works well if you are enthusiastic about your product and sell it with confidence. If you would like any further help do not hesitate to contact the media coordinator.



Suggested Media Release Layout

News Release

Date/Headline – *make it short and snappy:*

Adult Learners Celebrate Success

Introduction – *short, concise one sentence paragraph – this is your one opportunity to capture the journalist’s attention:*

When James Smith took the first steps on his adult learning journey, he never imagined that three years later, he would be sharing that journey at the launch of the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga.

Body text – *a couple of brief paragraphs – fleshing out the background to Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga – the awards and those who will be participating:*

James is one of thousands of New Zealanders who every year take part in learning activities in a variety of settings from community halls and private homes to marae and schools and who surprise themselves with their efforts.

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga, *<insert dates>* aims to celebrate the efforts of all adults involved in lifelong learning. It highlights the importance of adult learning as it creates pathways for people of all ages and backgrounds to fully participate in the life of their communities.

Over thirty-five regions, organisations, and individuals around New Zealand will be organising programmes of events to celebrate the week and awards will be presented for outstanding adult learners, exceptional adult educators and innovative education providers.

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is supported by UNESCO and is celebrated in many countries around the world. This year marks the *<twenty-first>* anniversary of the festival in Aotearoa.

Nomination forms are available on the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga website:
www.aceaotearoa.org.nz/events/festival-adult-learning

For further information please contact:

Your name and daytime and after-hours telephone numbers

** An updated media release will be available each year on the ACE Aotearoa website.*

Style Guide for Publicity Materials

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga Style Guide for Regional Festivals and Events

The Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is a national celebration of adult learning taking place in over thirty regions throughout Aotearoa. It is an important event on the ACE calendar.

The week is sponsored by the Tertiary Education Commission, ACE Aotearoa, and the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. Additional sponsors are also involved in supporting local activities in each region.

It is essential that all publicity and promotional activity associated with the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is professionally presented and that sponsors are appropriately acknowledged.

- The week must always be referred to as the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga or if abbreviated FALAA. Note the macron on the first Ā of Ākonga.
- Publicity materials like official programmes or fliers should acknowledge the national sponsors as well as regional ones. The core sponsor logos should always be placed ahead of, and larger than, local sponsor logos. Logos of the national sponsors are available from the media manager..
- It is a clever idea to include the website www.aceaotearoa.org.nz/events/festival-adult-learning wherever possible as it gives people a link to activities and information beyond your region.
- Accuracy is vital in all publicity materials. These materials are going out to the public and reflect the ACE sector. There is an expectation that we as educators will produce materials that are professionally written and accurate.

Publicity Materials

Posters will be available for download from the ACE Aotearoa website. Awards certificates will also be refreshed and available for download from the website.

Event Planning

While there are no longer restrictions on how many people can gather in one space due to the Covid-19 virus, there may be people in your community who feel vulnerable in large crowds. When planning your events, take into account the demographic you are appealing to and consider their safety. Exploring what you can do online will give you more options. Some regions have successfully run their whole festival through Facebook in previous years. Whatever you are planning consider issues such as:

- **Objectives:** What do you want to achieve through your event(s)?
- **Target Audience:** Which group(s) do you particularly want to reach? What are they interested in? Where do they go?
- **Research:** What have you done previously? How successful was it? How could it be improved? Will it be safe?
- **Format:** What type of event will best achieve your objectives? Will it reach your target audience?
- **Title:** Choose a title for the event which will inspire people's imagination
- **Evaluation:** How are you going to evaluate the success of the event?



Event Checklist

This is provided as a guide only and is not comprehensive!

Planning

	Consult as widely as possible. Every year we hope that groups who have not been involved in Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga before will be encouraged to participate
	Establish a small group with a range of skills to organise the event
	Establish dates and venues
	Determine budget and apply for funding
	Seek relevant approvals
	Invite key guests (e.g. local MP, Mayor, local identities).

Location and Venue

	Confirm the booking
	Draw up a floor plan, check it with venue or people who have done it before
	Organise equipment (e.g. tables, staging, sound, video/projector, lighting, displays, plants etc)
	Wheelchair access
	Signage
	Severe weather alternative, if appropriate
	Arrange a set-up time
	Security and insurance.

Programme

	Agree on programme
	Be realistic with timings
	Tell speakers/groups the time allocated for them and ensure expectations are clear, give them a copy of the programme
	Ask someone to MC the event
	Appoint another person to run it on the day – handle the hiccups, make decisions
	Organise a rehearsal if appropriate
	If numbers are limited, be explicit early on and use a booking/ticketing system.

Publicity *See Media section for further details*

Publicise your event with a flyer and/or poster
Do not overlook free publicity: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facebook pages, Instagram and Twitter• Community notices on radio, in paper and online• School newsletters (primary and secondary)• Library, school community notice boards• Notice pockets on buses• Flyers in local cafes, churches, doctors' rooms, etc.

Displays

Try to capture people's attention (balloons, music, activity etc)
Provide something to look at, be informed by (photos, signs, samples of work)
Freebies! Have something people can take away (contact sheets, course listings, pens, stickers, magnets etc)
If you have people on the stand, aim for friendly and chatty style
Some people just want to look, and will feel uncomfortable if approached
Make sure words/signs on display boards are large enough (enlarge onto A3 coloured paper/light card through photocopier bypass tray)
Display boards are expensive to hire. Try to borrow (schools, council, libraries, companies) – check insurance if you do.

Other

Identify helpers with name tags, stickers, t-shirts, caps etc
Child minding (at event and/or for helpers)
First aid
Name tags
Consider access and parking both for set up and attendees.

Awards

Awards and commendation certificates are a key part of the week's celebrations. The purpose of the awards is to recognise and celebrate the full variety of contributors to adult learning, including the learners, educators, and providers. The intention is to give a limited number of awards each year, but the number of local commendations given is at your discretion.

Awards Process

Each Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga regional network or organisation can tailor the awards process to meet its own specific objectives. Regional networks and organisations may wish to create a nomination form to formalise and promote the awards process widely or take a low-key approach selecting individuals for awards on a case by case basis and using their own criteria.

Refreshed awards certificates are available on the website. The name of the recipient/s will need to be written on the certificate/s.

Decide how the nominees will be advised of the results – at the presentation, or prior to it with the ceremony simply to present awards.

Draw up a timetable for the awards process, including:

- Nomination forms distributed/Awards publicised
- Nominations close
- Assessment group meets
- Names are written on certificates
- Awards are presented and winners publicised
- All nominees and nominators advised of the results.

Awards Publicity

- Publicise the awards widely through the ACE network, and to as many other groups as possible (e.g. Council community/social service networks, iwi, Playcentre, family budgeting, parenting trainers, Age Concern etc)
- Encourage your community newspaper to run a story on one of last year's winners to publicise this year's competition (see media section)
- Be prepared to chase people to ensure you get good nominations in!
- Use social media to get a wide reach.

Awards Assessment

Establish a group to assess the nominations considering:

- Diversity of gender, age, and ability
- Ethnicity and geographical location
- The wide range of environments adults learn in
- The partnerships in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Awards Presentation

The award presentation is a good opportunity to publicise the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga either as a stand-alone event, or as a focal point in another broader event.

Develop a press release around the awards, profiling one or two of the winners (with their permission). Ask someone appropriate to present the awards (Mayor, MP, local identity).



Sponsorship/Funding

Most of the funding for the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga comes from the Tertiary Education Commission. The New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO also sponsors the event.

ACE Aotearoa offers contestable festival funding for events. An application form is available on the ACE Aotearoa website.

You may have access to funding from local sources such as your local Council or businesses. For a business to offer sponsorship there must be some benefit for them. For example:

- Exposure of company name/logo through your event (and therefore favourable publicity)
- Continued or increased business from ACE providers
- Continued or increased business from adult learners
- It is often easier for a business to offer free or discounted goods or services than cash – and these can be just as valuable.

Be Prepared:

- Know the data relevant to this business (number of adult learners who are (potential) customers, approximate value of ACE providers business)
- Explain the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga is a national event with a proven record of accomplishment
- Highlight the international connections through UNESCO
- Talk about/show evidence of the success of previous events you have run.

When Approaching a Business:

- Find out who is the best person to talk to (manager, your sales rep, marketing/ sponsorship manager)
- Be clear and realistic about what you would like (but open to alternatives they suggest)
- Explain the benefits of the sponsorship to their business
- Often an initial phone call followed up in writing works well
- Jot down your points, and take a deep breath, before making the phone call!
- Talk about what you are seeking and, if they are interested, offer to put your request in writing
- Make sure that the sponsorship arrangement is put in writing so that everyone is clear what is being provided and what you are offering in return.

Remember, the worst that can happen is they say no!

Look After Your Sponsors:

- If you plan to use their logo, get them to check it is used correctly before printing
- Acknowledge them in your publicity and at the event
- Invite them to any relevant events and appoint someone to look after them
- Report back on the success of the event (e.g. xx people attended, xx number of brochures with your logo on were distributed)
- Highlight any media exposure
- Acknowledge their support with a certificate or letter of thanks
- The better you look after your sponsor, the more likely you are to develop an ongoing relationship and receive future sponsorship!

Grants

Investigate what grants may be available locally

- Talk to your local council, they may have or know of funds
- Check the Fundview and Generosity NZ database
- Community trusts
- Charity gaming trusts (pokie machines)
- The Public Trust and Guardian Trust administer many trusts.

Each trust will have specific criteria, application forms and closing dates. If in doubt over eligibility, contact the trust and discuss your application. Find out what grants they have given (and their size) in previous years. There is no point in making an application with no likelihood of success.

Follow application instructions carefully, ensure all requested documents are provided. If filling in a hard copy form, consider writing answers on a computer and cutting and gluing them to the form, then photocopying it to create a good copy!

Traditional trusts often only make grants once a year and may take a long time to process. You may need to make a note to apply in December (for example) for the following year. All grants have an accountability requirement, be sure these are complied with.

Reporting and Documenting Activities

It is important to document your activities so that we can build a national picture of the activities and publicity relating to the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga and to have a record to assist in planning locally and nationally for next year. Statistics such as the number of learners receiving awards during the festival are valuable to include in the Annual Report.

An evaluation will be sent to regional coordinators and event organisers to report back on the Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga.

- Please estimate how many people attended events in your region
- Please record how many learners, educators and providers received awards
- Please try and keep track of, or estimate, the number of volunteer hours put into Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga activities. The festival could not happen without the efforts of hundreds of volunteers, and we need to highlight this contribution to our funders and sponsors.
- Estimate the value of donated goods/services (photocopying, stationery etc)
- To assist in planning Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga in your region next year, please record:
 - what was done this year
 - ideas for improvements
 - contacts
 - costs
 - sponsors
 - funding etc.

Types of activities

Festival of Learning Ahurei Ākonga activities can be anything that offers members of the local community the chance to find out what you do and where you are. The simplest thing that an organisation can do is what they do every other week of the year, but during the week promote these activities as Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga events and invite members of the community to take part.

The week is also an opportunity to do something different because this will make it easier for your organisation to draw attention to itself. You could hold an open day, set up a display in a shopping centre, host a learning expo, present demonstrations or performances, hold a party.

Here are some examples of activities offered by organisations during previous Festival of Learning Ahurei Ākonga:

- Hold open days to allow members of the local community to come and explore learning institutions in a friendly casual atmosphere
- Hold sausage sizzles and family picnic days as a way of letting people get to know the learning organisation in a friendly pressure-free way
- Hold learning fairs and expos with stalls representing the activities and achievements of learning
- Organise for learning providers to visit workplaces, community centres, galleries etc. to offer sample learning experiences
- Organise exhibitions of student works and achievements charter a learning bus to take information about learning opportunities to remote areas
- Hold special days to target specific community groups, such as Seniors Online Day that invited older members of the community to take part in learning about computing
- Organise a walking tour of adult learning venues in a given area, encouraging participants to collect a stamp in a passport at each and then hand in the completed passport for a prize at the end (e.g. a cap or t-shirt)
- Offer free sample classes as a way of letting people find out for themselves how fulfilling learning can be
- Conduct a competition, offering something from a learning institution as a prize
- Organise events to feature and celebrate past adult learning achievers
- Offer practical sessions on how to teach others
- Organise a public debate on a hot learning topic.

Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga Project Plan

February-March

- Consultation process with Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga Advisory Group
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April

- Website updated outlining festival approach for current year
 - ACE Aotearoa database and event coordinators contacted via email with details of this year's festival approach
 - Regional Networks and Event Organisers Information Guide reviewed
 - Media release circulated for coordinator use with media
 - Festival collateral updated and available online
 - Funding application period open
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May-August

- Event coordinators consider and scope ideas for festival events
 - Coordinators submit applications for festival funding
 - Coordinators begin to publicise awards and plans for local festival events through the ACE website and to as many other groups as possible (e.g. - Council community/social service networks, iwi, Playcentre, family budgeting, parenting trainers, Age Concern etc)
 - Awards nominations assessed
 - Coordinators contact local media to give advance notice of festival and programme of events.
-

Festival of Adult Learning Ahurei Ākonga week

- Week of events kicks off
 - International Literacy Day
 - Photos to ACE Aotearoa Facebook page and website
 - Reporting
-

November

- Report to Advisory Group and funders.