

20 May 2021

IMA grouping	Canterbury & West Coast
RTOs covered	ChristchurchNZ, Venture Timaru, Hurunui Tourism, Development West Coast, Destination Kaikōura, Mackenzie Tourism
Reporting period	Commencement date to 20 May 2021

Summary report of five key achievements from the IMA grouping during the reporting period

1. The REF for the region supported the delivery of 11 events during the period from February – May. These events combined attracted over 8,000 visitors to the region and were attended by approximately 100,000 people. Highlights included Bandquet Hanmer Springs - a new event to be held in the region, which scored a 98% Net Promoter Score from surveyed event attendees, and the South Island Secondary Schools Mountain Biking competition, held at Mt Hutt Bike Park, with approximately 85% of participants coming from outside of the region to compete.
2. Funding rounds have been held in Christchurch, West Coast and Ashburton, with close to 50 applications received in total. Each of these regions established a funding round process, or utilised existing process and criteria, specific to suit the needs of the region. Outcomes from the various funding rounds are still being finalised but will support events that will be delivered in the next financial year, with a high focus on events that will attract visitors from outside for the region. Future funding rounds are also planned to be held in the Waimakariri district and the Mackenzie region. A new application process has been developed for the Kaikōura region, with no set date parameters for applications. One application has already been received and around six other event organisers have expressed interest so far in applying for funding.
3. Development of an Event Strategy is a priority for several regions and progress is underway to achieve this. The regional event strategy for the West Coast aims to enable Destination West Coast to prioritise key events that suit a wider regional strategy as well as complement the wider West Coast region. With support from the REF, Selwyn district have completed an initial scope for an event strategy and Destination Kaikōura have revised the 2016 event strategy rigorously. This will continue to be updated to guide the thinking for the region.
4. To help with capability building and development, initiatives are planned for several locations across the region. In the Ashburton district, training is planned to provide local event organisers the opportunity to upskill in digital media, audience reach and mentoring. In the Waimakariri district, a Capability Building Programme will be run with event organisers, focusing on how to build new events, attract sponsorship and build financial sustainability. In the Mackenzie region, an open workshop was held with the community, to unpack what a Matariki Festival could look like for the region, and the key values such a festival should uphold. Destination Kaikōura will host a dedicated event workshop in June to help upskill event organisers, providing practical advice to further develop their events.
5. The REF has enabled additional resource to support planning, development of processes and additional projects to be progressed. This includes a perception research project on the West Coast, to enable a better understanding of travel motivations to the West Coast for events. This will also support the business events strategy development as well as event feasibility and development in the region. A new process for event specific funding has been developed in the Kaikōura region as well as increased engagement with event organisers to seek new and develop existing events. Assessment panels and working groups have been established in several locations across the region to ensure credible decision making is in place to support event investments.