Annual General Meeting 2026
Nominations for Te Pai Ora National Executive

There are three vacancies for positions on the Te Pai Ora SSPA National Executive: two tangata whenua positions and one tauiwi position.

Tangata whenua nominations

We have received three nominations for two tangata whenua positions and therefore an election is required. The election will be held by a vote at the AGM and voting can also be undertaken via email by those unable to attend the AGM. Only full, paid up members of Te Pai Ora SSPA are eligible to vote and there is one vote per member organisation.

- Ivy Harper, Early Start Project (Nominated by Victoria Newcombe, Presbyterian Support Services Upper South Island)
- Nathan Harrington, Te Kupenga Hauora - Ahuriri (Nominated by Sarah Paku, Kahungunu Exective)
- Geoff Milner, Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi Trust (Nominated by Marihi Langford, Tuhiata Mahi Ora Trust)

Tauiwi nominations

We have received five nominations for one tauiwi position and therefore an election is required. The election will be held by a vote at the AGM and voting can also be undertaken via email by those unable to attend the AGM. Only full, paid up members of Te Pai Ora SSPA are eligible to vote and there is one vote per member organisation.

- Dr Braden Clark, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ (Nominated by Tuhi Leef, Pillars)
- Neil Denney, The Friendship House Trust (Nominated by Elizabeth Walker, Te Whare Ruruhau o Meri)
- Maha Galal, Christchurch Resettlement Services (Nominated by Unni Mohanan, Christchurch Resettlement Services)
- Grenville Hendricks, Presbyterian Support Northern (Nominated by Victoria Newcombe, Presbyterian Support Services Upper South Island)
- Janelle Timmins, Mirror Services - Whakaata Tohu Tohu (Nominated by Nicole Devereux, Presbyterian Support Otago)

The nominee details on the following pages were provided by the nominees and are listed in alphabetical order by surname; tangata whenua nominees, then tauiwi nominees.

Current National Executive members:

- *Marihi Langford, Tuhiata Mahi Ora Trust, Kaitaia, Co-chair Tangata whenua member (retiring)*
- Tuhi Leef, Pillars Ka Pou Whakahou, Auckland. Treasurer, Tangata whenua member
- *Cindy Kawana, previously employed at Kia tua o Matariki,Tangata whenua member (retiring)*
- *Victoria Newcombe, Presbyterian Support Upper South Island, Christchurch. Co-Chair, Tauiwi member (retiring)*
- Carmen Batchelor, Otago Youth Wellness Trust, Dunedin, Tauiwi member
- Andrea McLeod, Anglican Trust for Women and Children, Tauiwi member

Tangata Whenua Nominees - for confirmation at AGM

Ivy Harper, Kaiwhakahaere Matua/Chief Executive, Early Start Project Ltd.



Tēnā koutou katoa, He uri o Ngāti Kahungunu ki Heretaunga me Waikato Tainui hoki. Ko Ivy Harper tōku ingoa. Currently, I am Kaiwhakahaere Matua of Early Start, supporting a dedicated team that works alongside whānau to give pēpi and tamariki a positive start in life. I bring executive leadership, governance, policy, and commissioning experience, alongside a strong commitment to whānau-centred approaches and the contribution of community-based social services.

As former Pouārahi of Te Pūtahitanga o Te Waipounamu, I led Whānau Ora commissioning across Te Waipounamu, working with iwi, rūnanga, partners (providers), and community organisations to invest in whānau aspirations. This experience strengthened my understanding of what becomes possible when whānau and their communities are trusted to develop their own solutions, and when funding arrangements recognise their strengths, relationships, and knowledge.

Having worked from both commissioning and service-provider perspectives, I understand the importance of sustainable funding, meaningful outcomes, and accountability that supports good practice without creating unnecessary burden. I also bring experience in organisational leadership, financial oversight, strategic planning, and navigating relationships with government and sector partners.

On the National Executive, I would contribute a grounded Te Waipounamu perspective, a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and practical experience connecting policy and funding decisions with the realities of delivery. I would advocate for the diverse voices of members, including Māori and smaller community organisations, to shape the decisions affecting their mahi.

My leadership is relational, thoughtful, and collaborative. I value listening, asking constructive questions, and finding shared ways forward. Above all, I would bring a focus on strengthening our sector so organisations and kaimahi are supported to do what they do best: work alongside whānau and communities in the pursuit of the aspirations of whānau.

Tangata Whenua Nominees - for confirmation at AGM

Nathan Harrington, Chief Executive Officer, Te Kupenga Hauora - Ahuriri



My name is Nathan Harrington and I whakapapa to Rongomaiwahine, Ngai Tamanuhiri and Rongowhakaata, and I am standing for election as a Tāngata Whenua Board Member. I have the privilege of being the Chief Executive Officer of Te Kupenga Hauora - Ahuriri an iwi mandated health and social services provider based in Ahuriri (Napier). I have a vast and varied background with over 15 years' experience working in senior management roles in the Kaupapa Māori space.

Prior to this I spent 10 plus years working in the public sector at a range of organisations including the Department of Corrections, Oranga Tamariki and the Public Service Commission. I take great pleasure in leading Te Kupenga Hauora - Ahuriri and helping our whānau that we support to live the lives that they rightly deserve and empowering our staff to advocate on behalf of our whānau.

As well as working at Te Kupenga Hauora - Ahuriri I also hold several governance roles including being on the Board of FASD-CAN, Hawke's Bay Addiction Centre Trust and the Napier Homeless Society Trust and I am a member of the New Zealand Institute of Directors. My desire to become a Board Member of Te Pai Ora Aotearoa is to lobby on behalf of our member organisations, their staff and the whānau that we support and to ensure that our voices are heard.

Tangata Whenua Nominees - for confirmation at AGM



Geoff Milner, Chief Executive Officers, Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi Trust

I am an experienced Chief Executive with a background in strategic leadership, financial management, and governance across public, community, and NGO organisations. I am a member of Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand and the New Zealand Institute of Directors.

Over the past nine years, I have led Ngāti Hine Health Trust and Te Puawaitanga ki Ōtautahi Trust. My work has focused on strengthening organisational capability, supporting service innovation, and building trusted relationships with iwi, hapū, community groups, government agencies, and philanthropic partners. I have worked closely with a wide range of ministries and departments and have used these relationships to support better outcomes for the organisations and communities I serve.

I also bring practical governance experience, having served in Chair, Deputy Chair, Audit & Risk, and CE Employment Committee roles. This experience complements my executive background and gives me a balanced understanding of how boards and management can work effectively together.

Governance and Executive Roles Include: • Mahitahi Hauora PHO – Chair • Tairāwhiti District Health Board – Deputy Chair • Eastern and Central Community Trust – Chair • Ngāti Porou East Coast Rugby – Chief Executive• New Zealand Wool Board – Chief Financial Officer • Tairāwhiti Crown Health Enterprise (DHB) – Financial Controller. My qualifications include: MBA (Distinction), Massey University Bachelor of Business Studies, Massey University

I aim to contribute steady, practical governance, a strong understanding of community needs, and a commitment to improving outcomes in the social services sector.

Tauiwi Nominees - for confirmation at AGM

Dr Braden Clark, General Manager, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Trust NZ



Kia ora koutou, I am an experienced social services leader with a strong commitment to improving outcomes for whānau and strengthening the capability and sustainability of our sector. Through my leadership roles, I have developed expertise in governance, strategic planning, organisational performance, risk management, financial oversight, and service innovation. I am passionate about ensuring our sector remains responsive to the changing needs of communities while maintaining strong accountability and good practice.

As a member of the National Executive of Social Service Providers Aotearoa, I would bring a practical, solutions-focused perspective informed by day-to-day experience leading services and supporting frontline teams. I am particularly interested in strengthening collaboration across the sector, advocating for equitable and sustainable funding, and supporting organisations to navigate increasing regulatory, workforce, and community challenges. I believe effective sector leadership requires both strategic vision and a deep understanding of the realities faced by providers and the people they serve.

I would actively contribute to informed decision-making, constructive sector advocacy, and the development of initiatives that build capability, resilience, and collective impact. My goal would be to help ensure the voice of social service providers is heard and that together we can create a stronger social services sector through partnership and collaboration which results in better outcomes for individuals, whānau, and communities throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Tauiwi Nominees - for confirmation at AGM

Neil Denney, Chief Executive, The Friendship House Trust



I have spent more than 40 years working across the government and NGO sectors, supporting individuals, whānau, and communities in areas including family violence, mental health, disability, welfare, youth development, and community services. I currently serve as Chief Executive of Friendship House/ He Whare Tangata, a South Auckland community organisation that has provided social services for 50 years.

Throughout my career, I have been passionate about strengthening organisations, building collaborative relationships, and ensuring that services remain responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people we serve.

I bring experience in strategic leadership, governance, service development, change management, and cross-sector collaboration. I hold a Master of Social and Community Leadership and have a strong interest in social innovation, workforce development, and creating services that empower people to achieve their potential.

If elected to the National Executive, I would contribute a practical, future-focused perspective grounded in frontline experience and executive leadership. I am particularly interested in promoting a strong and sustainable social services sector, supporting workforce capability, encouraging innovation, and ensuring that the voices of community-based organisations continue to be heard at a national level.

I believe our sector is strongest when we work collaboratively, share knowledge generously, and advocate collectively for the wellbeing of the communities we serve. "Leadership is not about having all the answers; it is about creating the conditions for people and communities to thrive."

Tauiwi Nominees - for confirmation at AGM

Maha Galal, Senior Social Worker and Team Leader, Psychosocial & Mental Health Service, Christchurch Resettlement Services



I am Maha Galal, MNZM, and I am standing as a tauiwi member of the Te Pai Ora SSPA National Executive. Supporting people and standing up for my community has always been close to my heart. I believe people need to feel heard, respected and understood, especially when they are facing difficult times.

For more than 20 years, I have worked with children, whānau and families from refugee and migrant communities. I am currently a Senior Social Worker and Team Leader at Christchurch Resettlement Services, where I lead the Psychosocial and Mental Health Service.

In my work, I see every day how important it is for services to work together and provide support that is practical, culturally respectful and shaped around people's real needs. I have also held governance and community leadership roles, including Chair of 15 March Whānau Trust, and community representative on the March 15 Collective Impact Board. These experiences have taught me the importance of listening carefully, building trust and speaking up when communities need a stronger voice. I would bring frontline experience, leadership and a deep commitment to advocacy to the National Executive.

I want to help Te Pai Ora SSPA strengthen collaboration between providers and ensure that the voices of diverse communities are included in decisions that affect them. I would be honoured to serve and contribute to safe, inclusive and meaningful social services across New Zealand.

Tauiwi Nominees - for confirmation at AGM



Grenville Hendricks, General Manager Social Services, Presbyterian Support Northern

I am motivated to contribute to the National Executive because I believe a strong and connected social services sector is essential to the wellbeing of individuals, whānau and communities across Aotearoa.

Through my leadership of a broad portfolio of social services, I have seen both the extraordinary contribution community organisations make and the pressures they face. This has strengthened my commitment to ensuring the sector has a strong voice in the decisions that affect our services, workforce and communities. I would bring strategic leadership, governance experience and a practical understanding of service delivery, alongside a strong interest in prevention, early intervention, family violence, suicide prevention, social investment and sustainable commissioning.

Importantly, I would bring a willingness to listen, collaborate and advocate beyond the interests of my own organisation. I would value the opportunity to work alongside other sector leaders to strengthen relationships across the sector and with government, influence policy and commissioning, share learning and support a sustainable, innovative and responsive social services system.

My contribution would be grounded in a simple goal: helping ensure providers across Aotearoa are well positioned to make the greatest possible difference for the people and whānau we collectively serve.

Tauiwi Nominees - for confirmation at AGM



Janelle Timmins, Kaiaumangea - Strategic Lead, Whāngaia Ngā Pā Harakeke te Tai Tonga, Mirror Services - Whakaata Tohu Tohu

As a Tangata Tiriti candidate for the Te Pai Ora SSPA National Executive, I would bring a strong commitment to partnership, systems change, and the active responsibility of allyship within Aotearoa's social sector.Throughout my career, I have worked alongside iwi, hapū, Māori, Pacific, Rainbow and disability providers, communities, government agencies, and non-government organisations to address complex social challenges. These experiences have reinforced my belief that the most effective and sustainable solutions are those shaped by the communities they are designed to serve.

As Tangata Tiriti, I see my role not as speaking for Māori, but as using my influence, relationships, and understanding of systems to help create the conditions where Māori voices, aspirations, and leadership are present, heard, valued, and acted upon.

In my current role as Kaiāumangea Strategic Lead for Whāngaia Ngā Pā Harakeke Te Tai Tonga (Southern Te Waipounamu), I work across agencies and sectors to strengthen collective action that improves whānau wellbeing, safety, and long-term social outcomes. Previously, during 19 years with New Zealand Police, I held leadership roles focused on family harm, child protection, prevention, and integrated responses to community wellbeing.

I bring governance experience, strategic thinking, and the ability to build trusted relationships across diverse interests. I am not afraid to ask difficult questions, challenge established thinking respectfully, or advocate for perspectives that might otherwise go unheard. Grounded in curiosity, evidence, and lived realities, I would bring an independent yet collaborative voice to the National Executive, helping Te Pai Ora SSPA navigate complexity, influence system change, and champion a more equitable and Tiriti-aware future for Aotearoa and its diverse communities.