

Please note: both authors will be presenting

The hongī welcome campaign – collaborating to maximise goodwill in Christchurch

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15 months ago in Christchurch, concern about a perceived increase in anecdotal reporting of incidents of racial/cultural harassment in public places triggered an ongoing collaboration between staff members from the above institutions. To date this collaboration has produced 3 related but distinct initiatives – an early dialogue with the Christchurch Press (the city's large daily newspaper), a Welcome poster campaign, and the development of anonymous online reporting. The presentation will outline the collaborative process involved, briefly cover the main outcomes, and future directions.

Individual staff members from CCC, UC, HRC, NZP (and later Ngāi Tahu and CPIT) met regularly to workshop issues, sharing responsibilities and institutional resources. Key elements contributing to the success of this collaboration were the focus on achievable goals, and similar commitment to highly democratic collaboration shared by all the individuals involved. This created a small network capable of facilitating access to the strong support and existing goodwill in the relevant institutional structures.

Significant outcomes of this collaboration include the development of a research and marketing campaign by a UC intern at CCC (as a graded UC academic project, funded by CCC), which in turn led to the hongī welcome poster campaign and the development of a reporting form. The intern's report suggested a culture of harassment in public places. UC international students perceived a failure, by city institutions, to provide clear statements of guidance over this issue. Students were also confused about reporting processes, and favoured a single, clear online reporting option. The poster campaign features the hongī with welcome statements in different languages, so attempting to address the first two findings with a positive message from the biggest city institutions. An online reporting website is currently under development, as is a phased ongoing rollout of the poster campaign, supported by ongoing research.