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Media release

New programme launched to advance tourism sustainability

A new online programme to enable tourism businesses has been launched by the tourism industry's leading representative body.

Tourism Industry Aotearoa said the programme, which it plans to call Akiaki – Advancing Tourism, was a response to a clear call from tourism operators to continue to build their capability, particularly around sustainability.

Speaking at the industry's biggest annual business event TRENZ today, TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram said it was crucial that tourism in Aotearoa New Zealand developed "by design".

"Bouncing back to 2019' is not part of our vernacular. Rather we are focused on purposefully creating a resilient and sustainable industry that delivers for the country, our people, our environment and the visitor," she said.

Equipping tourism businesses is a key goal of *Tourism 2050: A Blueprint for Impact*, a 30-year industry strategy launched by TIA late last year.

There are 1900 tourism businesses signed up to the Tourism Sustainability Commitment (TSC), created by TIA in 2017.

A recent survey of TSC signatories showed 92% were committed to advancing sustainability in their business, and there was a clear desire for online capability building tools to help further progress their sustainability initiatives.

Akiaki builds on the 12-week courses which TIA has been running with Regional Tourism Organisations to take the TSC from commitment to action, by supporting tourism operators and their staff to develop comprehensive sustainability plans for their business.

"Akiaki encapsulates the concepts of encouragement and courage. These are values essential for navigating the challenges of the future and leading the way in sustainable tourism globally," Ms Ingram says.

"By making it easier for businesses to upskill, we are designing tourism for the future and taking the Blueprint from a document in a drawer - to the real world."

Akiaki is available for all TIA members, with modules to be rolled out from the middle of this year.

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About Akiaki

The Akiaki programme will take a holistic approach to sustainable and regenerative tourism, following the 12 commitments of TIA's Tourism Sustainability Commitment (TSC).

It is based on the TSC's four pou - Ōhanga (Economic), Manuhiri (Visitor), Hapori (Community), and Te Taiao (Environment).

Each module will consist of video presentations, interactive activities, case studies, and reflection on how to integrate the content into a business.

The learning hub has been made possible with funding from Te Pūkenga, and delivered in partnership with Grow Tourism. The name Akiaki was developed with Anzac Tasker of The Guardians.

For more information, please contact:

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism Industry Aotearoa is New Zealand tourism's peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of New Zealand's large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1200 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA is deeply involved in discussions on recovery and what the future of tourism in New Zealand will look like.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's **Tourism Sustainability Commitment** which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy
- TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and the Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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