



## Background

The Future of Work Conference came from a desire to showcase what the workplace of tomorrow looks like for Marlborough's young people - and to inspire them to become part of the region's future. Collectively Graeme Dingle Foundation Marlborough and Marlborough District Council have pulled resources and worked in partnership to research & organise this one day event for local senior college students.

The aim of the conference was two-fold. To help local young people to understand:

1. the opportunities and challenges to expect in the workforce of tomorrow; and
2. career prospects and opportunities that are right here in Marlborough.

The purpose of the conference was not only to strengthen and develop our local talent and ensuring they are well placed to prosper in tomorrow's workforce, but to also recognise that Marlborough business is at the cutting edge of many industries, and some of their workforce shortage solution could lie within our local youth resource.

## Key people

In addition to the partnership between Graeme Dingle Foundation and Marlborough District Council other key people/organisations were important:

- Marlborough Girls College, Rai Valley Area School, Marlborough Boys College and Queen Charlotte Colleges were all supportive of the project and helped to promote to their students and gave permission for students to be released from school for the day. In addition Rai Valley and QCC provided transport for their students to attend.
- Marlborough Chamber of Commerce – provided support with the registration process.
- Marlborough Businesses. Businesses were enthusiastic and got in behind the conference through supporting several of the workshops as well providing interactive stations & displays. All full list of the businesses can be found in the Conference programme.

- Speakers – 3 keynote speakers from Nelson, Wellington & Auckland were joined by 3 ‘Local Story’ presenters. Former Marlborough college students shared their pathways.
- Sponsorship – we are grateful to Employment Support Marlborough Trust and the Redwood Trust for providing financial input
- The team of Young People who supported the conference. They took up a range of roles including planning & preparation, photography & videography, MC, Karakia & conference support roles.

## Conference programme

The day comprised of the following format:

- Registrations
- Opening Karakia & welcome speech from Mayor Leggett
- Key note speakers – 3 presentations
- Morning tea
- Workshops – 4 workshops running for 30 minutes each. Students rotated in groups of 35 to attend all of the workshops.
- Lunch & Interactive Stations. Students were able to look around the 19 different stations and displays, ask questions and get more detailed information from people in these industries/workplaces.
- Local Stories – 3 presentations
- Karakia & conference closed

## FEEDBACK - Youth

**This evaluation of the feedback forms is based on 108 evaluation forms being completed from the 141 attendees on the day.**

**Ratings based on a score out of 10. How valuable were:**

Keynote speakers – 7.7

Workshop sessions – 7.8

Interactive Stations – 8.5

Local stories – 8.1

**Did the conference change your thinking about employment opportunities in Marlborough?**

Yes – 91%

No – 9%

(Not all answered this question)

## Highlights from feedback

### Key themes taken away by participants:

Give everything a go/ get amongst it/ get involved/ask questions	Try out jobs, shadow people to see if it is what you really want to do
How to write CVs & cover letters	That there isn't just one way to do something/ lots of different paths
Local stories	Interactive stations
I will do today what others won't, so I can do tomorrow what others can't	Career paths aren't a straight line/don't be afraid of change
Build relationships with others	Soft skills matter
You don't need to have everything figured out	Starting a business is exciting / entrepreneurship

## Ideas for Improvement

### What students would like to see more of:

- Interactive workshops – more hands on, group work & a break between long workshop session
- More variety of jobs/careers/businesses – examples given : arts & music, design, emergency services, sustainable businesses, nursing, vet & fashion
- Local stories
- Information on study pathways and how they link to employment
- Trades for females & female leaders
- Opportunities outside of the conference
- More interactive stations

### Attendees feel the conference would be better with:

- Less sitting & listening to presentations – shorter presentations preferred & more crowd involvement
- Less time during interactive stations/lunch/morning tea
- Increased number of breaks, but short
- Greater variety and more interaction overall.

## **FEEDBACK – Business & speakers**

## Highlights from feedback

- Format of the day worked well & was well organised
- Presenters appeared to connect really well and joined in with other aspects of the conference
- The interface between the students & businesses was good, following on from the workshops to the lunch slot was excellent.
- Students appeared really engaged and interacted well.
- Enjoyed the local story session – great that students get to see future of Marlborough and what they're doing now.

## **Ideas for Improvement**

- Introduce Industry days for next year following the conference
- Have more workshops and less key note speakers. Reconsider the length of sessions and breaks
- Create an opportunity for networking post lunch session for the employers

## **FEEDBACK – Community comments**

A tertiary training provider commented - a number of students came to ask specifically around courses in different sectors, referring to learning at the FoW conference and wanted to find out more around education options.

Parent - "My son attended the Work Conference today and came back buzzing. He really enjoyed the day and got a lot out of it. I just wanted to say thanks so much for making this available for our kids, and at no cost! We feel really lucky to have the opportunity for our son to attend a wonderful event such as this."

Suggestion made to include teaching staff with an opportunity to engage with businesses/industries and upskill their knowledge of employment options for students.

## **Budget**

The major costs for the event were covered by funding from Council, Employment Support Marlborough and Redwood Trust. The budget was tight so costs were kept to a minimum many hours provided in a volunteer capacity.

<b>Income:</b>	<b>Actual</b>
MDC	\$4,000.00
ESM	\$2,000.00
Redwood Trust	\$2,000.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$8,000.00</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Venue	\$1,750.00
Equipment/Tech	\$295.00
Travel - Rai students	\$74.40
Lanyards, folders, pens, pads	\$384.13
Food	\$2,232.56
Speaker - travel	\$624.78
Speakers Costs	\$514.91
Co-ordination - staff time	\$2,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$93.98
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,969.76</b>

## Where to From Here

With the feedback provided from all participants the following points have been agreed:

- This needs to be an annual event however the budget will need to be increased to secure and grow the conference.
- Structure of the day including some changes:
  - just one keynote speaker.
  - more interactive workshops, increase the number of them and opportunities to practise what is learned e.g. role play interview situations etc.
  - keep local stories and ensure these are young people.
  - Local employer/business interactive stations - reduce timeframe to 1 hour and expand to include other business.
- Expand to include Year 11 to attend as well as Year 12 & 13 students. Possible look at an opportunity for Year 9 & 10 students to visit the interactive stations before or after lunch session.
- Look at expanding to ASB Theatre as well as Conference centre to allow for more workshops & capacity of numbers.
- Retain the same branding & process of promoting through schools and social media.
- Explore “Industry Days’ which would be an add on to the conference day.
- Consult with partners including colleges and local business about possible expansion of the the conference as mentioned above.
- Explore possible funding partners.

## Summary

It is clear from the feedback from all involved that the inaugural Future of Work Conference has exceed expectations and achieved its intended goal of connecting our young people with local employment opportunities.

For this type of event to continue into the future and expand to include more youth and local business funding needs to be secured to underwrite this work.

The need to engage young people locally for their future employment options has also been identified through the S+C Labour and Skills work and an investment in this will see positive outcomes in this area.

