

Trustee Opportunity

Community and Enterprise Leadership Foundation (CEL F)

Help Shape the Future of Leadership in the Waikato

For more than a decade, the Community and Enterprise Leadership Foundation (CEL F) has been growing leadership capability across business, community and civic sectors throughout the Waikato.

As we look towards 2035 and beyond, we believe one thing remains true:

Strong communities need strong leadership.

The challenges facing our region are becoming increasingly complex and interconnected. They require leaders who can work across sectors, build trust, navigate ambiguity, and bring people together around a common purpose.

CEL F exists to grow responsible leaders who create positive change and contribute to thriving communities and future generations. Today, we are evolving from a highly regarded leadership programme into a broader leadership ecosystem, extending our influence, impact and sustainability while remaining true to the values and experiences that make CEL F unique.

We are now seeking expressions of interest from experienced governors, trustees and strategic leaders who are interested in helping shape CEL F's next chapter.

About CEL F

CEL F was founded on a simple but powerful belief:

Leadership matters.

Leadership begins with leading oneself. It is grounded in purpose, curiosity, responsibility and action. It grows through connection, challenge and learning from others.

What makes CEL F distinctive is our ability to bring together leaders from across sectors who would not ordinarily share the same room, experiences or perspectives. Business leaders learn alongside community leaders. For-purpose organisations connect with commercial enterprises. Diverse perspectives challenge assumptions and expand thinking.

This cross-sector model has become one of CELF's defining strengths and remains central to our future.

Our purpose is:

To grow leadership capability for thriving communities and future generations.

Our values are reflected through:

- Whanaungatanga | Connection
- Manaakitanga | Respect, responsibility and reciprocity
- Mātauranga | Knowledge and understanding
- Rangatiratanga | Leadership
- Kotahitanga | Collaboration

These values continue to guide how CELF serves the Waikato and develops leaders committed to positive impact.

The Opportunity

The CELF Board of Trustees is responsible for the stewardship, governance and long-term sustainability of the organisation.

As a Trustee, you will join a committed Board responsible for:

- Safeguarding CELF's purpose, vision, values and reputation
- Providing strategic leadership and future direction
- Supporting organisational sustainability and resilience
- Ensuring effective governance and oversight
- Monitoring organisational performance and impact
- Supporting partnerships, stakeholder relationships and community connection
- Helping position CELF for its next decade of growth and influence

Trustees are expected to contribute independent thought, sound judgement and constructive challenge while working collectively in the best interests of CELF.

Who We Are Looking For

We welcome expressions of interest from experienced leaders and governors from across the Waikato and beyond.

You may come from:

- Business and commercial enterprises
- Community and not-for-profit organisations
- Iwi and Māori organisations
- Philanthropy and social investment
- Education and research
- Government and public sector agencies
- Professional services
- Technology and innovation sectors

Most importantly, you will bring:

- Strategic and future-focused thinking
- Sound judgement and integrity
- Strong relationship-building capability
- A commitment to leadership development and community wellbeing
- An ability to contribute positively within a governance environment
- Curiosity, courage and a willingness to challenge constructively
- A collaborative approach to collective decision-making
- Alignment with CELF's purpose and values

Previous governance experience is highly desirable, although emerging governors with significant leadership experience may also be considered.

Skills and Experience of Interest

As part of our succession planning, the Board is seeking to strengthen its collective capability.

While we encourage expressions of interest from people with a wide range of experiences, we would particularly welcome individuals with strengths in:

- Digital, technology and information systems
- Marketing, communications and brand strategy
- Te ao Māori, tikanga Māori and cultural leadership
- Strategic partnerships and stakeholder engagement
- Fundraising, philanthropy and sponsorship
- Organisational growth and transformation
- Financial sustainability and commercial acumen
- Governance, risk and organisational resilience

Importantly, these are areas of interest for the Board as a whole and not prerequisites for any individual applicant. We welcome diverse experiences, backgrounds and perspectives that can strengthen the collective capability of the Board.

Why This Governance Role Is Different

CEL F is not simply another charitable trust.

This opportunity offers the chance to contribute to a platform that sits at the intersection of leadership, enterprise, community and regional development.

Trustees have the opportunity to:

- Influence the future of leadership development in the Waikato
- Support emerging and established leaders across sectors
- Help strengthen collaboration between business, community and civic leadership
- Contribute to a thriving and connected regional leadership ecosystem
- Leave a leadership legacy that extends well beyond any individual programme or organisation

As CEL F looks towards 2035, we are increasingly focused on creating an enduring leadership movement that strengthens people, organisations, communities and future generations.

Time Commitment

- Approximately ten Board meetings per year
- Preparation and reading before meetings
- Participation in strategy sessions and governance workshops as required
- Attendance at key CEL F events and stakeholder engagements
- Occasional participation in Board working groups

The role is voluntary and unpaid. Trustee appointments are typically for a three-year term.

Expression of Interest Process

Interested candidates are invited to submit:

- A brief cover letter outlining their interest in the role
- A summary of relevant governance, leadership and professional experience
- A current CV or LinkedIn profile

We also welcome confidential conversations prior to submission.

Expressions of Interest Close: 12 November 2026

For further information contact:

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Leadership is one of the most powerful levers for shaping the future of a region.

At CELF, we believe the Waikato's future prosperity, resilience and wellbeing will be strengthened by leaders who are connected, responsible, courageous and committed to serving something greater than themselves.

If that resonates with you, and you would like to help shape the future of leadership in the Waikato, we would welcome your expression of interest.

Growing leadership capability for thriving communities and future generations.