The Canterbury Report

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ChristchurchNZ is the new agency established to leverage economic development across the city – to ignite excitement, connect change-makers and create confidence across Christchurch and Canterbury.

We are accountable for tourism, major events, business growth, economic insight and international education across the city and region.

The Canterbury Report is produced to share the latest research, trends and forecasts across a vast array of economic indicators and to show a snapshot of the innovative, creative and awe-inspiring ideas that are commercialised every day in our region.

Over the last six months the Christchurch and Canterbury economies have continued to outperform historical activity levels and remain in line with ChristchurchNZ forecasting.

We continue to see the anticipated easing of construction activity; however, the mantle is now firmly being taken up by the underlying economy and an increasing tourism market – our new norm.

Visitor numbers continue to grow and this quarter we have seen tourism spend per visitor exceed pre-earthquake levels for the very first time.

As we move into the summer months there is a real sense of energy in the city. We are now enjoying a renaissance in the central city as Christchurch’s reputation as a world-class travel destination continues to take shape with a growing street art scene and an increasing number of restaurants, hotels and international brands choosing to locate in our city.

November is traditionally the start of the festival season in Canterbury and this year is no exception. The premiere racing event in the country – New Zealand Cup and Show Week – is expected to attract around 200,000 attendees and generate approximately $30 million in revenue. The event also sees accommodation vendors at full capacity and food and beverage and transport operators experience one of their best weeks of the year – adding further economic benefit to the community.

This year alongside the fashion, racing and family events we also welcome the Rugby League World Cup to the city with two international games and potential exposure to 110 countries with broadcasting rights.

Next month we welcome back the Christchurch Adventure Park to our city amenity following the devastating Port Hills fires. During the eight weeks they were previously open, over 50,000 took to the slopes and we are delighted to welcome back such a strong city attraction.

Looking further ahead the World Buskers Festival has already achieved several sold-out events within their January schedule. We have a brilliant summer of cricket in the city with both the Barmy Army from England due and a contingent of West Indies supporters here for a series of one day internationals alongside the Under-19 Cricket World Cup.

December will see State Highway One to Picton reopen to all vehicles. This is welcome relief to the North Canterbury community and businesses adversely affected by last year’s Kaikoura earthquake and excellent timing for a prosperous summer season for the city and region.

Take care on the roads.

Joanna Norris
Chief Executive
ChristchurchNZ
The state of play

Key Economic Indicators

Christchurch and Canterbury’s economies continue to exhibit positive signs, despite stabilising growth rates due to the easing of rebuild and earthquake recovery activity. Construction activity has eased off to a sustained plateau, however international visitor numbers are up – as is international visitor spending – and economic activity remains at a very high level.

GDP

Economic activity in the region remains strong, although growth rates have cooled. The value of economic output in Christchurch reached $19.4 billion in the year to September 2017 (measured in 2010 prices) — Infometrics estimates. That represents 8.3 percent of New Zealand GDP, down slightly from 8.4 percent in the year to September 2016. Productivity for the whole of the Canterbury region reached $28.6 billion in the year to September 2017. This equates to 12.3 percent of national output, down from 12.4 percent in the year to September 2016.

Strong GDP growth in recent years has been largely a result of the rebuild, although construction has now reached a plateau and is no longer considered a significant driver of growth. GDP growth in the year to September 2017 was 1 percent for Christchurch and 1.3 percent for Canterbury. The national economy remains buoyant, growing 2.5 percent in the same period.

Retail Trade

Retail sales in Canterbury are beginning to stabilise following a fall after a period of very strong growth — which could be attributed to spending on construction materials for earthquake repairs and migrant workers setting up their households.

In the year to June 2017, retail spending in Canterbury increased by 2.4 percent on the previous year, and has been below the New Zealand growth rate (6.4 percent) for over a year.

RESIDENTIAL RENT

The housing market is continuing to adjust as the residential rebuild winds down. This can be seen through the decline of rents on an annual basis over the past two years. This rate of decline is easing suggesting that rents are stabilising.
Christchurch and Canterbury have experienced an easing of rental costs due to an increase in the supply of housing and steady demand. Private sector mean weekly rents in Christchurch were $354 in September 2017, 6.6 percent lower than September 2016. Mean rents in Canterbury were $355 in September 2017, down from $370 in September 2016.

New Zealand rents grew 4.2 percent over the past year, reaching $425 per week in September 2017. Despite the increase, it remains well below house price growth, suggesting that residential property investors in other regions are focused on capital gain rather than yield.

INTERNATIONAL ARRIVALS

Christchurch visitor arrivals numbered 37,904 in the month of September 2017 and were up 5.74 percent from year ending September 2017. Christchurch visitor arrivals by country of residence showed, between year ending August 2016 and 2017, visitor arrivals changed most significantly for Canada (up 17.6 percent), China (up 10.68 percent) and Japan (down 12.02 percent).

VISITOR SPENDING

Christchurch international visitor spending was up 9.75 percent to $56 million compared with September of the previous year, as per the latest data sourced from Statistics New Zealand. This growth mirrors the current trend of recovery in the visitor sector.
Timing is critical when promoting any city as a place to visit – and it feels like Christchurch is fast approaching that point.

Christchurch’s international appeal as a world-class travel destination is growing as the Central City takes shape with newly opened retail shops, hotels and restaurants.

Tourism New Zealand Director of Trade, PR and Major Events René de Monchy said timing is critical when promoting any city as a place to visit – and it feels like Christchurch is fast approaching that point.

The city has lost an estimated $1 billion in visitor income since the earthquakes and efforts continue to bring back pre-earthquake national market share by 2025.

“Of course, we have continued to market Christchurch – particularly as a gateway to the South Island – but to promote a destination it needs to be ready to deliver,” René, who regularly visits the city, said.

“It feels like the city has really turned a corner and momentum is building. As more of the critical infrastructure like hotels, the convention centre, retail, bars and restaurants are established, the ability to deliver on a great visitor experience is strengthened. In a couple more years the city is going to be magnificent.”

Tourism New Zealand promotes the city and wider South Island in a number of ways, including through targeted campaigns, social media and its international media programme.

“Our Indian Brand Ambassador Sidarth Malhotra was hosted to New Zealand in late 2016, with the Canterbury portion arranged through ChristchurchNZ. He has a social community of over 3 million followers on Instagram and 3.5 million on Twitter, and it was great for Christchurch to have access to that exposure,” René said.

A campaign to attract Australians to visit the South Island in autumn 2018 is underway. The $1.4 million campaign, being carried out in partnership with Christchurch International Airport, ChristchurchNZ and 14 regional tourism organisations plus key trade partners Flight Centre and Air New Zealand, is promoting five South Island touring routes.

“All of the touring routes start from Christchurch, which has numerous direct flights from Australia each week. We know visitors that come in through Christchurch stay longer and visit more regions.”

Statistics show Australian visitors stay for 12.5 days and visit 3.4 regions if they come via Christchurch. Those that fly to Queenstown will stay for nine days and visit 1.8 regions.

Australia is New Zealand’s largest inbound tourism market, making up almost half of all visitors to the country each year.

René is excited about the future of Christchurch and the marketing opportunities Tourism New Zealand will be able to develop and partner with to help increase visitor numbers even more.
New restaurants and bars are popping up all around the city.
Visitor feature

Numbers of Chinese visitors coming to Christchurch continue to rise, although figures for the rest of the country have plateaued.

Christchurch’s Chinese visitors on the rise

Statistics New Zealand figures show a 13.2 percent growth in Chinese visitor arrivals to the city for the year to June 2017, while the total arrivals into New Zealand were just 0.3 percent for the same period.

ChristchurchNZ General Manager of Tourism Marketing Rowan Worner said the figures painted a pleasing picture for Christchurch. A large percentage of the growth could be attributed to independent travellers, not just those coming for trade or business.

“This growth is fantastic for Christchurch and the wider Canterbury region. The increase is coming on the back of a stronger visitor proposition created by key partners, such as the airport, tourism providers and ChristchurchNZ, working together.

“These are high value Chinese visitors, that are staying longer and spending more because as a city and region we are meeting their needs with good flight connectivity and tourism activities.”

China is New Zealand’s second-largest international tourism market, with almost 400,000 visitors coming to New Zealand over the past year. The market is undergoing a shift towards Free Independent Travellers (FIT) as Chinese become more confident about organising their own trips and seek fresh, unique experiences.

Christchurch International Airport Ltd Chief Aeronautical and Commercial Officer Justin Watson said the partnership between Christchurch Airport and China Southern Airlines was helping boost tourism and trade for the South Island.

The Chinese airline will increase its direct service from Guangzhou to Christchurch over the upcoming summer season, going daily from December 1, 2017, to February 28, 2018. This will see two additional flights per week, on top of the current five already operating weekly – making it a daily service.

That means almost 12,000 extra international seats into and out of Christchurch over the peak summer season.

“The Dreamliner service is proving very popular and we look forward to continuing its growth to bring more visitors to the South Island, as well as connect South Island travellers to the rest of the world.”

Justin said it is not just Chinese taking advantage of the flights.

“We know visitors arriving here are coming from Europe through China, and South Islanders are taking up the opportunity to fly from here to Europe with only one stop.

“Statistics show that on average as many as 25 percent of the passengers on the China Southern service are from outside China, and are primarily New Zealanders, Europeans and Britons travelling the globe on Asia’s largest airline.”
Tapping into potential tourist markets

India and Taiwan have the potential to become important visitor markets for Christchurch, according to new research by ChristchurchNZ.

The research – which is based on tourist data activity from the recent International Visitor Survey conducted by the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment – looked at nine different traveller types based on activities they do while in New Zealand.

ChristchurchNZ Senior Economist Peter Fieger said initial analysis had shown visitors that enjoy premium priced, outdoor related adventure activities are the group most likely to provide the strongest economic benefit to Christchurch.

Interestingly, the two visitor groups that scored the highest for these types of activities were Taiwan and India. These visitor’s have a higher likelihood of visiting Christchurch and spending more money.

“Visitors younger than 25 scored particularly highly in line with the adventure and thrill dimension of the typology. But there was also a subgroup in the age group 45-49, possibly due to parents starting to travel again when their children grow older.”

He said the activities carried out by the different traveller types could potentially be used for marketing and destination positioning purposes.

“While Australia and China are New Zealand’s largest international visitor markets, it is important to look at data driven analysis to regularly assess what other countries could have potential for marketing opportunities,” he said.

Currently, India is New Zealand’s 11th largest international tourism market, with visitor numbers from India growing consistently in recent years.

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Holiday Visitor Arrivals – New Zealand

Source: Statistics New Zealand
Tourism operators upskill for China

A group of Canterbury tourism operators are upskilling to capitalise on the booming Chinese visitor market.

Sixteen operators are taking part in the Upskill for China programme, run by ChristchurchNZ, which aims to help them increase their appeal to Chinese tourists.

Participating operators learn how to manage their own Chinese social media channel Weibo, have access to translation services, get one-on-one training to learn about Chinese customs and behaviour and take part in organised sales calls with Chinese Inbound Tour Operators in Auckland – as well as other marketing services.

ChristchurchNZ International Trade Marketing Manager Julia Hunt said the project is targeted at a selected group and was having good results.

“We want to help operators increase their appeal to Chinese visitors so they can grow the market, which is good for the individual businesses but also the wider region. The level of investment required to do the programme is minimal but the return potential is significant.”

This is the second year the programme has run and already there has been an impact for operators.

Hassle-free Tours – which runs day tours throughout Christchurch and Canterbury – has hired a Chinese staff member, who started her role as Sales Manager for China and South-East Asia in November.

“We’ve seen the potential in the China market for a while, but the time was right for us to start looking at it more. The programme is a good, helping hand into the market – to help us understand it more and get established,” Hassle-free Tours Managing Director Mark Gilbert said.

He said the new staff member would have a focus on growing the China market even more.

Ballooning Canterbury is another of the operators involved in the programme.

“We had noticed a lot more Chinese visitors booking with us, but it was quite challenging to try and develop the market further as we didn’t speak the language or even understand the culture very well,” said Ballooning Canterbury owner Michael Oakley.

“We have now met with Inbound Tour Operators that are focused on the independent Chinese traveller market and had the opportunity to tell them what we do. Getting into those networks has given us good leads to follow up on.”

The Hororata-based hot air ballooning company has also seen increasing numbers of referrals coming in through Weibo – a social media tool the Chinese use extensively.

“Although we aren’t putting all our eggs into one basket, the growth is pleasing,” Michael said.
Christchurch Airport, through its “South” programme is working with the world’s biggest online e-commerce company Alibaba to bring the Chinese payment platform Alipay to the Mainland. Businesses across the South Island can join up to the programme, which will allow them to accept Alipay and collectively promote to the hundreds of thousand Chinese that visit New Zealand annually.

The aim is to help small businesses achieve more value from visitors before, during and after they visit. A business can use Alipay to attract Chinese visitors to them. Then, once someone has used Alipay for a purchase, the business can continue to promote to them after they return home through Alibaba’s retail platforms, encouraging repeat business and potential for exports.

Christchurch International Airport Ltd Chief Aeronautical and Commercial Officer Justin Watson said the Chinese market pay for purchases differently to Kiwis, who rely mainly on credit and debit cards.

“We know that only a low proportion of Chinese use credit cards to pay for purchases. With increasing numbers of Chinese Fully Independent Travelers (FIT) coming to New Zealand, and their average spend growing dramatically, it makes strong commercial sense to enable payment through the platforms they know.

“In the past, only 10 percent of Chinese tourists were FIT but that has now grown to over 80 percent for visitors entering through Christchurch. This means their itineraries are more fluid, as not every activity is booked in advance of arriving. They can book and buy as they wish.”

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Christchurch businesses are on board with an initiative making it easier for Chinese visitors to pay for goods and services while holidaying in the city and region.

To find out more about the Alipay project visit south.co.nz/alipay
Christchurch is in a perfect position to start building its reputation as a film-friendly city. That’s the opinion of Clayton Tikao, who co-owns professional location scouts and location managers company Filmscouts and has been involved with the New Zealand film industry for nearly 20 years.

Christchurch: a future in film
Clayton moved to Christchurch five years ago — primarily to be closer to his Ngāi Tahu roots, although he also loves the locations available in Canterbury and sees great potential in the rebuilt Christchurch for filming productions — be it big budget features, television series, documentaries or television commercials.

“People shooting overseas TV commercials love working in modern cities. It’s a bit too early for that at the moment in Christchurch, but you can see good streets developing with modern outlooks and buildings.

“We want to work with local councils and authorities to make the city and region as film-friendly as possible.”

Clayton said filming is “very piece-meal in Canterbury” at present, with about one film a year, and it would be good to see this increase. The film industry was worth $3.3 billion in gross revenue nationally in 2016, with only three percent of that coming to the South Island.

“As more businesses start to move back into the central city there will be cheaper office spaces available for film companies, as well as warehouses to film in.”

Clayton has recently been working with a Chinese film crew at Flock Hill, in Canterbury, with more than 400 cast and crew on site.

He says it is a huge, logistical task to have that number of people on location, requiring a lot of organising at a fast pace.

“It’s like project management on steroids; it’s short and fast. Often the time between finding a location and actually shooting is only two or three months. Everything needs to be consented, which takes a lot of work with council planning departments.

“We want councils to understand the benefits of having filming in New Zealand, such as the positive impact on tourism when film crews view this as a good place to come. We want them to find it attractive and come back.”

Large scale films Clayton has worked on include Peter Jackson’s The Hobbit, children’s movie Pete’s Dragon and Disney production A Wrinkle in Time. He was also the South Island location manager for Pork Pie, the remake of the 1981 Kiwi classic Goodbye Pork Pie, while from June to September 2017 he was in Fiji for filming Adrift — an American movie about a young woman who sails into the eye of a hurricane to save the man she loves.

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Water potential untapped

Christchurch’s pristine drinking water is a potentially underutilised resource for attracting residents, businesses and visitors to the city.
Recent ChristchurchNZ research on the Value of Christchurch Water investigated the quality and compared the cost of the city’s water supply to other Australasian cities, with pleasing results. Christchurch has high quality water sourced from over 50 confined aquifers deep underground and low water charges for both residential and commercial users.

Water goes through a process of natural purification through the filtration effect of different layers of earth and is of incredibly high quality at source in Canterbury.

ChristchurchNZ Senior Adviser of Infrastructure and Policy Nick Bryan says the research was carried out to understand the socio-economic value of the often-underappreciated drinking water supply and to get people thinking about protecting this natural resource.

“The research also considered how urban-based businesses use water and whether the city, and individual businesses, could leverage the purity of our water supply and its cost-effectiveness to market the city and add value to the products made here utilising it.”

The research found that there is a significant variation in water charges for residential and commercial users between cities in New Zealand and Australia. Christchurch had the lowest cost of water for residential users when benchmarked against other Australasian cities and the third lowest cost of water for commercial users.

“Benchmarking of an average size Christchurch business showed that they would be paying over 11 times more for their water if they were in Wellington. There is the potential for significant cost savings for businesses that use water in their production processes if they set up here.”

A small number of industrial businesses surveyed for the research source their own water from private water bores on-site. It was found that this gave significant savings on operational costs for some. The high quality of water at source mean many businesses do not need to treat the bore water before it enters their processes, also helping reduce production costs for many.

Nick says the study also spoke to food and beverage companies about the importance of the Christchurch freshwater supply to them.

“Twenty-four percent of food and beverage company respondents are already using the pureness of the city’s water as part of their product marketing. Overall 52 percent said they could use water quality as a promotional tool to add value to their products.”

The research has been provided for consideration to stakeholders including Environment Canterbury (ECan) which coordinates the Christchurch West Melton Zone Committee. This joint committee of Christchurch City Council, Selwyn District Council and ECan is coming up with recommendations for councils and others around freshwater management.
Building a smart city

Christchurch technology businesses are working with the Christchurch City Council as part of its Smart Cities programme in a bid to make life easier for residents.
The Smart Cities Programme explores new technology and approaches to help make the city a smarter place for people to live, work and play. New technology includes sensors, a city app, predictive analytics, augmented reality capabilities, and more engaging visualisations of data. Several trials are under way.

Smart Cities Programme Manager Teresa McCallum said the innovations allow collection of real-time data to enable better planning and decision making, attract international talent to the city, and create business opportunities.

“Christchurch is uniquely positioned to take advantage of the opportunity that Smart Cities initiatives bring. The city is the ideal size to be an innovation lab and the Council is willing to adapt legislation, by-laws, and policies where possible.”

Teresa said innovative approaches such as crowd-sourced funding and data collection, community-led budgeting, public and private partnerships, and greater use of trials are also creating opportunities in Christchurch.

“We are only just scratching the surface of these opportunities and are committed to partnering with multiple organisations and the local community to make Christchurch one of the most open and connected cities in the world.”

Smart Cities trials include:

- **Sensibel**: Smart Cities Christchurch is working with Fabriko — part of the global FabLab network — to develop a solution that captures how cyclists experience the transport network and highlight trouble spots.

- **Pip Levelsense devices**: Design and innovation company inFact is developing sensors that are attached to the inside of public rubbish bins, alerting contractors that bins need to be emptied. This technology will bring environmental and financial efficiencies by cutting fuel and plastic costs, and optimising the number and location of bins. Complaints about overflowing bins will be a thing of the past.

- **Earthquake Response Visualiser**: Sense3 is developing an interpolated heat map using GNS’ peak ground force acceleration data, which will allow Council to see which buildings have experienced forces likely to cause damage and/or liquefaction, warranting a priority response.

- **Mobility parking trial**: The Smart Cities Christchurch programme has partnered with the Council’s Parking Enforcement team, CCS Disability Action, Thundermaps, and inFact to develop a mobility parking solution which will allow crowd-sourced identification of mobility parks.

Users can also send alerts via the app when a car is parked in a mobility parking space without the mobility card displayed. Bluetooth tiles attached to the mobility parking cards will match with newly installed carpark sensors to solve the problem of mobility parking card abuse.

For more information on the Christchurch Smart Cities programme, visit ccc.govt.nz/smartcities

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Moving to a Canterbury lifestyle block while continuing to work for a well-known multi-national has been an easy adjustment for Gabe Rijpma.

Gabe, who runs Microsoft’s healthcare business across Asia, originally came to Christchurch as an eight-year-old after immigrating from Holland with his family but left in his twenties for work. However, the lure to return proved strong and he eventually moved back to Canterbury two years ago with his wife and two boys.

“It was about the future we wanted for our children. Here they are near their extended family networks and I can see them convincing us to get a pet lamb and chickens soon,” he said.

“I’m also very optimistic and bullish about the future of Christchurch. It’s a beautiful city that is connected and easy to get around.”

It was a decision that some friends and colleagues questioned; wondering how he would manage the demands of his fast-paced work from a lifestyle block in Ohoka after 12 years of living in Singapore. The family at first considered moving to Auckland but decided to come for “one look” in Canterbury and changed their minds.

The move to the Mainland has been almost seamless.

“My role involves a lot of international travel but the connections from Christchurch International Airport are really good, with daily flights direct to Singapore, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Travel to China and Hong Kong is also relatively easy. In Auckland there still would have been a considerable commute and travel time to get to the airport.”

The three-hour time zone difference with the West Coast of the United States also makes communication easy, as does having been successful in getting fibre optics installed to the family’s home.

“It was when dad spoke to me about the government’s roll out of ultra-fast broadband coming to Rangiora that I really started to think I could do my job from here. While fibre only came to our road, not our house, I was able to work with the Rangiora District Council, 2Degrees and Chorus and pay to get it installed when other infrastructure work was being carried out,” Gabe said.

Internet connectivity was vital for Gabe, as well as his wife Bridget Hope who runs her own business Magpie Style from North Canterbury after working for some of the world’s leading fashion magazines.

As a private sector expert, Gabe is a New Zealand Trade and Enterprise Beach Head Advisor offering perspectives and insights to help NZTE customers shape the direction of their business. He has been impressed by Christchurch’s vibrant tech community, from the entrepreneurs involved in start-ups through to the large internationals such as Trimble, Change Healthcare and Telogis.
Telling the tech story

Christchurch’s creative, connected and world-class tech sector is boosting its profile to potential investors, employees, experts and influencers.

ChristchurchNZ and industry leaders have developed a key narrative to help the sector tell its story in the best possible way. A dedicated website – techstory.co.nz – provides a toolkit and messaging for businesses to use when promoting their products and services.

ChristchurchNZ Strategic Tech Leader Helen Shorthouse says Christchurch companies are known for coming up with creative solutions for niche markets.

“There’s a lot for the city’s tech ecosystem to be proud of. We have companies that are selling their creative products and services to global players – from Disney and Nike, to Lady Gaga and Ford Motors – who buy from Christchurch companies because they want the best in the world.”

She said the technology sector is the third biggest export earner nationally and is experiencing the fastest growth, yet is often invisible to local New Zealanders.

“A lot of what they produce is exported, but also many tech services aren’t visible in the same way as physical products. Many of our tech companies’ leaders are also pretty humble.”

If current growth rates continue, the tech sector is predicted to become the country’s biggest export earner by 2020. The boom is being felt in Christchurch, with a GDP contribution of $2.4 billion and $1 billion in exports last year.

The city’s love for tech was highlighted by the sellout audience of 650 that attended this year’s Canterbury Tech Summit held at Wigram Air Force Museum. This year’s theme “Grow” covered four key topics: artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and bitcoin, hi-tech export and strategy and leadership.

Canterbury Tech Summit conference manager Nina Lamb said the summit is the largest of its kind held in New Zealand and explored trends, opportunities and major shifts that are looming – including how artificial intelligence will force major changes in society.

“Our tech community is thriving and the summit always attracts high calibre local and international speakers, including local companies succeeding on the world stage.”

Planning is already underway for next year’s event.
A Christchurch tech company is using virtual reality to take students’ medical training to the next level.

James Hayes, Virtual Medical Coaching founder

“There is a huge amount of scope to develop training software for all different industries.”
Virtual Medical Coaching, founded by James Hayes, develops virtual reality software for training students, along with adaptive e-coaching software for individual learning. Medical students use virtual reality to experience treating patients first-hand in a medical setting. Their results are recorded and can be analysed to see where they need more practice.

The software was initially created for teaching radiographers in a world-first, but approaches have since been made to the company by other areas in the health sector and trials are underway for nursing and midwifery among others.

“There is a huge amount of scope to develop training software for all different industries,” James, who has a background in medical imaging and teaching, said.

“Students can experience a whole range of medical situations, in a safe environment, to help them learn. For example, using the software a trainee midwife can be present at a birth that progresses without complications or difficulties can be introduced to see if they pick up on them and how they react.”

James grew up in Dublin, Ireland, and moved to the United Kingdom for his undergraduate degree in medical imaging. He then went travelling and eventually ended up in New Zealand, where he worked in medical imaging for a decade before moving into teaching at Ara Institute of Canterbury.

“Working closely with radiography students showed me gaps in their educational needs and the way we were teaching. At around the same time I was introduced to virtual reality and the concept for Virtual Medical Coaching was formed.

“The idea is not just to replace physical simulation but to make it at least 10 times better by incorporating a strong learning component behind the virtual reality platform.”

James said the business focus now was to look at marketing the product nationally and internationally, with discussions underway with education providers in Auckland, Australia and Europe. While similar technology is now being created overseas, he is confident what the business does is the best in the world.

“I’ve had large multinational companies approach us because they cannot recreate the same product, to the same standard.”

Virtual Medical Coaching was one of 10 businesses that took part in the 2017 Hi-Growth Launch Programme, which is run annually by ChristchurchNZ. The programme is designed to grow and develop businesses with the potential to scale-up, through workshops and practical hands-on mentoring from some of New Zealand’s most successful business people and entrepreneurs.

Registrations for the 2018 Hi-Growth Launch Programme open on 4 December 2017 and close 9 February 2018. There is no cost involved but places are limited, with a competitive application process. For more information and to register, please visit higrowthlaunch.com
The Christchurch lean scene

Over 100 Christchurch business people are snapping up opportunities to see best practice Lean workplaces in action and sharing their own learnings from using the lean productivity approach.

“One of the strengths of the Lean network is that it is industry led.”

The Christchurch Lean Network was created in early 2017, with the local business community wanting to learn more about how to improve workflow, reduce waste, introduce a culture of a continuous improvement and, ultimately, increase productivity and profitability. Founding members included Implementing Management Solutions, Simply Lean Business Solutions, ChristchurchNZ, Ravensdown, Dynamic Controls and Spunlite Poles.

Many of the businesses involved in the network had already started on a Lean journey in their workplace, but were looking for ways to maintain the momentum and build on the benefits of continuous improvement culture – to drive efficiencies across the company’s value chain.

Ravensdown’s Matt Carran, who is on the Christchurch Lean Network committee, believes implementing continuous improvement thinking and techniques will help Christchurch businesses improve and compete on a national and international level.

ChristchurchNZ Client Manager for Manufacturing, John Hamilton, said there had been three workplace tours held this year, with more planned for 2018, along with some Lean workshops.

“We’ve been impressed by how many businesses are willing to open up their shop floors, share their experiences – both good and bad – and grow the awareness, knowledge and use of Lean practices in Christchurch,” he said.

Regular members of the network include business owners, managers and key staff, from large multinational companies through to small local manufacturers.

Schick Civil Construction Ltd Continuous Improvement Manager Troy McGillicuddy said the network provides a chance to meet with like-minded individuals and businesses that are willing to challenge how they operate.

“It allows me to see what others are doing and achieving and inspires me to stay focused.”

Spunlite Poles Production Supervisor Alex Walker said the company joined the network to keep in touch with lean activity in the city.

“We will get insight into how other companies adapt lean methods to suit their own needs.”

G-Tech New Zealand Account Manager – New Business James Van der Kroon loves the logic of Lean.

“You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to benefit from its principles and it covers a multitude of industries, so most aspects are relatable in some way when observing how other businesses operate their principles.”

Membership to the Christchurch Lean Network is free and informal. It is open to any business involved or interested in lean or continuous improvement. To join register at meetup.com/Christchurch-Lean-Network

What is Lean?

Lean methodologies are commonly used in productivity improvement programmes. Lean processes drive efficiencies across a company’s value chain from production planning to finished goods and from orders to delivery. Businesses attempting to reduce waste, improve workflow and gain improvements in productivity can gain both process and cultural benefits from adopting Lean practices.
Regular members of the network include business owners, managers and key staff, from large multinational companies through to small local manufacturers.
International Education continues to play an important part in the city’s economy, with the sector experiencing strong growth in the last two years. There has been an eight percent increase in student numbers from 2015 to 2016 to reach 11,428 and work is continuing to grow Christchurch’s market share to pre-quake levels.

A Korean reality television show filmed in Christchurch has been broadcast to millions.

Two well-known South Korean actors — Jaehye and In-kwon Kim — visited Christchurch in September with their children to film a TVN Korean show called Shake up the classroom. The programme follows famous actors and their children as they visit schools in other countries to experience education and lifestyle abroad.

Jaehye visited Christchurch with his seven-year-old son Raon, while In-kwon was accompanied by his two daughters Jayoung, 11, and Minkyung, nine.

New Zealand was chosen as a film location for the reality television show, due to its recent ranking as number one in the world for ‘educating for the future’ by the London-based Economist Intelligence Unit. Halswell Primary School where the filming took place, has also been nationally recognised for their adoption of the modern learning environment at the Prime Minister’s Education Excellence Awards.

ChristchurchNZ International Education Programme Manager Bree Loverich said ChristchurchNZ and Christchurch Educated had hosted the families and crew, while they attended Halswell Primary School to shoot eight episodes of the show. The programme began airing in Korea in October.

“The actors and their families got to experience first-hand the difference in culture between Korea and New Zealand. This was also a great opportunity to showcase Christchurch’s future focused education system, as well as the wonderful lifestyle our city offers to visitors and residents. Having this programme broadcast potentially throughout Asia is a real coup.”

In September, New Zealand’s education system was placed top of the world in “educating for the future”, based on a new ranking by the London-based Economist Intelligence Unit.

“The Korean’s wanted to experience the 21st century skills education offered in New Zealand and were very keen to show Halswell School’s modern teaching and learning approach to Korean families,” Bree said.

The actors that visited are famous in Korea and China, and there is a possibility the episodes will be translated into Chinese. Korean television is also very popular in Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Turkey and other Asian countries.

“Although the show’s purpose is not specifically to promote our International Education sector, it is a fantastic bonus for us. The Korean and Chinese markets are important for international education, as well as to our visitor market in general. The interest this will generate about
Christchurch and the wider region is invaluable,” Bree said.

China is Canterbury’s largest international student market, while Korea comes in fourth. Both countries also contribute strongly to the region’s visitor economy, with 46,560 Chinese and 19,664 South Korean visitors for the year ending July 2017.

New Zealand was chosen as a film location due to its recent ranking as number one in the world for ‘educating for the future’.

The Korean celebrities and their children with students from Halswell Primary School
High school students from Christchurch and China’s Sichuan Province worked together to tackle real-life global issues at a youth summit held earlier this year.

The Innovation and Technology Youth Summit brought together the students to solve a ‘global grand challenge’ using innovative technology.

ChristchurchNZ Programme Manager Bree Loverich said the Summit was an opportunity for students to experience different cultures, approaches to teamwork and how to apply their skills to real-life problems.

“It was a fantastic opportunity for all the students involved to put some of their study into practice. Not only did they learn from each other but they had the support of the best in the business along the way – including local tech entrepreneurs, Ministry of Awesome experts, academics and teachers.”

Twenty-six students from Sichuan Province visited Christchurch for the Summit, welcomed by Avonside Girls’ and Shirley Boys’ High Schools who hosted them during the mornings of the five-day summit. The students also participated in the Summit Programme in the afternoons, held at EPIC Innovation Hub.

Fifteen-year-old Chinese student He Dijian, from No. 25 Primary and Junior High School Group of Panzhihua City, really enjoyed working together with Kiwi students.

“It’s amazing how we can create something new and cool together. The people running the programme and the speakers have made it real and achievable.”

Avonside Girls’ High School’s Franceska Hickey, Teacher of the Gifted and Talented Programme, was impressed by how the students from China and New Zealand gelled so well.

“Despite having language challenges, they found a way to communicate what were quite abstract ideas. I also saw a lot of smiles, laughter and friendships made over the five days.”

The Summit was sponsored by ChristchurchNZ and supported by Christchurch Educated in partnership with Ministry of Awesome.
International students help at community-led garden

A multi-cultural group of international students put on their gardening gloves recently to help at Christchurch’s first urban food hub.

The planting day at Ōtākaro Orchard, located in the heart of the Avon River Precinct between the Town Hall and Margaret Mahy Playground, saw 25 students spend the day working on the community project.

ChristchurchNZ Student Experience Coordinator Izzie Guo said the event was arranged as part of a programme to make international students feel welcome to the city and give back to it.

“We organise at least two community-focused events every year, as well as two cultural experiences, for students. Having this one at Ōtākaro Orchard was a great way to get international students into the Central City and for them to engage and make a difference to the community.

“Volunteering also provides students with valuable employability skills, cultural competency about New Zealand and confidence needed to realise global opportunities.”

Sixteen-year-old Romy Sauer, who is from Germany and studying at Papanui High School, wanted to do something useful to give back to a “great city with amazing people”.

“I hope to come back in a few years and see people enjoying the edible garden the volunteers are creating,” she said.

Christchurch Educated International Student Association vice president Yue Fang, from Shanghai, said they were keen for students to experience genuine kiwi culture and see all Christchurch has to offer.

“It’s a fast-growing city with new, exciting things happening around all the time.”

There are three parts to the Ōtākaro Orchard project, with the Edible Park – featuring a food forest, multiple herb and vegetable beds showcasing a variety of growing techniques, space for educational workshops and an amphitheatre for public gatherings and events – the first stage to get underway. A Local Food Information Centre and Café and a Dome, which will serve as an indoor food production and classroom space, are also planned.

I hope to come back in a few years and see people enjoying the edible garden the volunteers are creating.
Construction is underway on the Christchurch Convention Centre with the first concrete being poured for the foundation earlier this month.

"This is a welcome step in Christchurch’s regeneration. The design of the Convention Centre will make it a standout feature in the central city,” Ōtakaro Limited Chief Executive Albert Brantley said.

Construction of the Convention Centre will require around 19,000m³ of concrete, 4400 tonnes of structural steel and 42,000 façade panels.

Work will initially focus on the construction of the plenary hall, on the northern side of the site.

“The Convention Centre will be a world class venue and a cornerstone of the revitalised central city. With its 2000-person capacity, it will bring events to Christchurch that we have never been able to host in the past. It will also be able to simultaneously host two 600-person events, which the previous facility couldn’t do,” Mr Brantley said.

The Convention Centre includes a 1400-delegate auditorium, a 3600m² exhibition hall and 1600m² of meeting rooms that will overlook Victoria Square.

ChristchurchNZ Convention Bureau Manager Caroline Blanchfield said Sydney, Cairns, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide have recently upgraded or plan to expand their convention centre because it is a growing industry.

“There is significant demand for a premium facility of this type and the South Island’s stunning scenery will mean Christchurch is an attractive option for international events,” Caroline said.

“We have calculated that the lack of a suitable conference venue is currently costing the local economy more than $90m each year in direct economic investment.”

Construction of the Convention Centre is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2020 and available for smaller regional events from the middle of that year.
The Convention Centre will be a world class venue and a cornerstone of the revitalised central city.

The concrete pour of the foundations taking place under a stunning Christchurch sunset.

An artist impression of the Christchurch Convention Centre.
Lantern Christchurch: lighting the way to 2022

Plans are underway to grow the popular Christchurch Lantern Festival to showcase the city and strengthen travel and trade links with China.

The Christchurch Lantern Festival has been a firm favourite with locals and visitors since its inception in 2005. Each year the event has grown in size and popularity and now boasts over 60,000 attendees, 400 lanterns, 200 volunteers and over 40 food and craft stalls.

Now ChristchurchNZ, Christchurch City Council and the Asia New Zealand Foundation are working together to expand the festival so it becomes a flagship event for the city. A plan has been developed through to 2022 to manage the festival and build on the economic, business, trade and visitor opportunities.

ChristchurchNZ General Manager of Attraction, Linda Falwasser, said the long-term plan for the festival fits in with building a portfolio of major events for the city and developing key strategic partnerships.

“The event is our opportunity to showcase the relationship we have with China, it is our biggest market for export growth and an increasing source of foreign investment, and student and visitor attraction for New Zealand.

“This year we hosted the inaugural South Island Lantern Business Forum during the festival. The forum attracted over 150 business and political leaders and featured international speakers including Alibaba’s Director of Business Development. Over the next five years we will look to grow these networking and business opportunities to make it easier for businesses to connect and trade with China,” she said.

Other examples of the strategic growth plans include expanding the offering for international students, setting up an arts and education programme and bringing the location of the festival into the heart of the city connecting with Otākaro Avon River, Worcester Boulevard, The Square and ultimately, Victoria Square.

“By 2022 we want this to be a truly international event, creating and building strong partnerships between business, education, visitor and art communities in Christchurch, the South Island and China,” said Linda.

Be there!
Christchurch Lantern Festival
10 and 11 March 2018
Avon River Precinct in the Central City

Securing the right events for Christchurch

Throughout 2017 ChristchurchNZ – with input from local, national and international stakeholders – has developed a city-wide Major Events Strategy to guide what major events will bring the best mix of benefits to the city.

Goals of the strategy are to:

- Enhance Christchurch’s profile through the major events portfolio
- Deliver significant economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits for the city
- Grow and diversify funding for major events
- Make Christchurch an events-friendly city

The strategy is currently with Christchurch City Council for approval and is expected to be available on christchurchnz.org.nz in early 2018.
One of the displays from this year’s Chinese Lantern Festival.