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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

## Finalists named for the 2018 National Pacific Business Trust Awards

Finalists have been named across six award categories for the 11<sup>th</sup> National Pacific Business Trust Awards, which will be staged on Friday 22 June 2018 at Eden Park.

Nominations were widely received over all six categories and it has been pleasing to see a growing number of Pacific businesses thriving. The finalists are:

### HATCHing Pacific Business

- Jitel Contracting
- Moana Research
- Recoveroom

### Pacific Business

- Devitise Marketing
- OPSEC Solutions
- Pacific Biofert

### Pacific Impact

- Cook Island Development Agency New Zealand (CIDANZ)
- Connect Global
- Kokiti Workshops (formerly Meraki Workshops)
- Pacific Biofert

### Pacific Innovation

- Culturalhubb
- Lot Eight
- The Food Company NZ
- Vaka Interactiv

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## Pacific Social Enterprise

- Aotearoa Tongan Health Workers Association (ATHWA) trading name “Akihehuo”
- KidsCoin
- Moana Research

## Pacific Woman in Business

- Arti Chand, Crengle Shreves & Ratner
- Brittany Teei, KidsCoin
- Rachel Lewis, Devitise Marketing

Visit [www.pacificbusinessawards2018.co.nz](http://www.pacificbusinessawards2018.co.nz) to purchase tickets or find out more.

**ENDS**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Visit: [www.pacificbusinessawards2018.co.nz](http://www.pacificbusinessawards2018.co.nz)

## ABOUT PACIFIC BUSINESS TRUST

The Pacific Business Trust provides economic development services to Pacific business owners and entrepreneurs in New Zealand and was established in 1985. The Trust is focused on fostering Pacific business innovation and enabling Pacific communities to build sustainable businesses which can operate and compete with the best businesses and organisations globally.

[www.pacificbusiness.co.nz](http://www.pacificbusiness.co.nz)

## ABOUT PACIFIC BUSINESS AWARDS

The National Pacific Business Trust Awards provide a unique platform to celebrate Pacific business success, focus on growth and sustainability of Pacific enterprises and recognise innovation. They celebrate the growing number of Pacific entrepreneurs and established businesses that contribute positively to the health of the NZ economy. Run by the Pacific Business Trust, the awards have been staged ten times since 1993.

[www.pacificbusinessawards2018.co.nz](http://www.pacificbusinessawards2018.co.nz)

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## ABOUT THE FINALISTS

### **Aotearoa Tongan Health Workers Association (ATHWA) - “Akihehuo”**

Akihehuo is a Tongan health and social services provider addressing health and social issues of the Tongan community in Aotearoa. Akihehuo believes in delivering services in the Tongan language, drawing on Tongan values and culture. Based in Otahuhu, the organisation delivers core services including a Whanau Ora service funded by Pasifika Futures. Formed by a voluntary network of Tongan Health professionals in the 90s, the network has grown to become an incorporated society and now employs eight full-time staff. [www.athwa.org.nz](http://www.athwa.org.nz)

### **CIDANZ**

Cook Islands Development Agency of New Zealand (CIDANZ) is a community-led development agency fostering cooperative start-ups and collective thinking. CIDANZ facilitates social, cultural and economic development by working with individuals and families in Pacific communities to participate in enterprise initiatives that generate financial wellbeing. CIDANZ works with 24 local start-up business families, with a model for driving regional and national sustainable development. It provides a collective of five social enterprise start-up programmes (ONEBasket, ONEHeritage, ONETrades, ONEBody, and oneMARKET) that enable self-reliance through enterprise ownership that helps people express their cultural knowledge and skills through the products and services they make with passion and pride. [www.cidanz.co.nz](http://www.cidanz.co.nz)

### **Connect Global**

Connect Global is a 100% NZ-owned and operated leading outsourced contact centre founded in 2003 by Serena and Siuai Fiso. The company focuses on servicing the customer service need for New Zealand and Australian corporates, utility companies and NGOs, through a mix of inbound, outbound and omni channel activity. Founders and Directors Serena and Siuai have created a vision for the empowerment of Māori and Pacific communities by creating a profitable and viable business model, which creates wealth, encourages education and employment as well as business opportunities locally, nationally and internationally. Connect Global’s mission is to bring about change and transformation that makes a difference in the lives of their people and the communities they live in. [www.connectglobal.co.nz](http://www.connectglobal.co.nz)

### **Culturalhubb**

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Culturalhubb is a company producing culturally relevant educational resources, games and toys, aimed at keeping languages and cultures alive for our children and to inspire them to reach their full potential. Based in Auckland, Culturalhubb was launched by Eipo Junior Tutagalevao, a father of four, after struggling to find culturally-relevant educational tools and resources for his own kids. They carry a unique and wide range of Pasifika/Maori learning resource kits of toys and games, carefully selected to ensure they offer the necessary resources to support fun learning and ever changing needs demanded by the teaching, home and any learning environment.

[www.culturalhubb.com](http://www.culturalhubb.com)

### **Devitise Marketing**

Devitise Marketing is a marketing agency providing a one-stop shop for all marketing needs, including consultancy, branding and design, development, e-commerce, search engine optimisation (SEO), search engine marketing (SEM), social media, content marketing and video. Devitise believes SME business & Startups can leverage off online marketing and be successful competing with larger established enterprises. They do this by helping businesses to create, manage, grow and protect their online presence and authority. The company has grown its customer base with local and international customers. Starting out with just one person, Devitise now employs nine full time employees and operates in New Zealand and Australia. [www.devitise.co.nz](http://www.devitise.co.nz)

### **Jitel Contracting**

Jitel Contracting was setup to meet the demand for owner-operator fibre technicians in New Zealand. Jitel is subcontracted to Chorus, working on the ultra-fast broadband project nationally. Starting out with one van and one labourer, Jitel Contracting has grown to employ 4 staff, who are based in Nelson, New Zealand. The organisation is sustaining growth by training staff to become fully qualified technicians, with the plan that qualified staff go on to train new technicians. Although a relatively young business, Jitel has good growth potential and has received promising industry feedback since launching.

### **KidsCoin**

KidsCoin is a social enterprise using tech for social good through the creation of an online community economy that harnesses the value of education. KidsCoin places value on whole curriculum learning and not just on the financial learning, and uses a cross-curricula approach to teach students and whanau financial capability. The KidsCoin model is based on students earning

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digital money through a variety of curriculum aligned lessons - including Pasifika languages - and at the end of the term, students are able to purchase real life goods and services from their local but wider community through sponsors and partners. This encourages community networking as the students and families must engage with the local businesses in order to redeem their goods or services. KidsCoin is also working with NGOs to deliver their community programmes, ranging from financial capability to young parents to financial management for people on WINZ or older people. [www.kidscoin.co.nz](http://www.kidscoin.co.nz)

## Lot Eight

Lot Eight is a business based in Martinborough, Wairarapa, producing extra virgin and fragrant olives oils and are pioneers in their field. Established more than 20 years ago, they took a risk entering an industry that was new to New Zealand, but felt since NZ was importing olive oil, locally produced oils would be well received. Lot Eight applies the right focus and care to produce high quality products, with a customer base that includes speciality stores, supermarkets, private lodges, embassies and award-winning restaurants. They have worked collaboratively with food services to develop new and innovative products, which are now distributed directly to customers across the country and overseas. Lot Eight is an innovator in the olive industry, producing unique cold-pressed fragrant oils that set standards for taste in both the food service and retail markets. These fragrant oils are unique blends of ingredients meeting the requirements of chefs and food lovers. As an example, in 2015 Lot Eight released the world's first cold pressed Yuzu olive oil, which was overwhelmingly well received and has allowed Lot Eight to be recognised as an innovative company with the interest of their customers at the forefront of their R&D. [www.loteight.co.nz](http://www.loteight.co.nz)

## Kokiti Workshops (formerly Meraki Workshops)

Kokiti is a social enterprise that offers Pasifika art and wellbeing-focused workshops to children of all ethnicities between the ages of 5 to 14 years old. Working within schools, Kokiti offers workshop sessions in visual arts, dance, drama and cultural values. The business was started by four young Pasifika women who bonded over the issue their wider community was facing, where Pasifika knowledge, skills and values were not being passed on within the home. In response they created a sustainable innovative workshop model, delivering workshops and, in turn, giving the next generation the tools to keep alive key parts of Pasifika cultures. Kokiti is also part of the Hatch Youth 2018 cohort.

## Moana Research

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Moana Research is a consultancy group of passionate researchers and clinicians committed to making the early years the best start in life for children. The organisation is focused on evidence-based solutions through research and workforce training, enabling families to have access to essential services and resources during pregnancy and in the first five years of life. Moana's purpose is to help families and communities thrive and, through its work, they are better engaged in leading their own wellness journey. Moana works with Early Childhood Education stakeholders and community groups to gather and apply evidence, and works in partnership with other agencies and providers to support the work they do to improve the wellbeing of children in the early years.

[www.moanaresearch.co.nz](http://www.moanaresearch.co.nz)

## OPSEC Solutions

OPSEC Solutions provides personal safety and emotional support for workers and citizens vulnerable to threats, abuse, conflict or violence. This includes consultation, training and protection for those who need to: manage difficult or hostile customers; respond safely to a robbery, disengage safely from a violent crisis or, react safely during an earthquake, tsunami or other natural disasters. OPSEC's authentic approach builds trust, personal resilience and team confidence to deal with difficult and emotional moments of conflict or violence. The organisation helps clients to preserve their confidentiality, confidence, safety, and security, offering positive authentic solutions to conflict, threats, perceived threats and crisis. [www.opsec.co.nz](http://www.opsec.co.nz)

## Pacific Biofert

Pacific Biofert is an agricultural business supplying fertiliser products for the agricultural and horticultural sectors in New Zealand. The organisation was established more than 30 years ago and operates a full supply chain, from sourcing raw material to processing and value add, to delivery at the customer's door. An international operation of the business exports technology overseas as well. The company is a pioneer in organic production in NZ and has been "continuously certified" within the organic sector since 1987 by Biogro NZ. They have developed an internationally-patented process and range of products that utilise natural resources to create highly available and cost-effective soil and plant foods. Within the landscape of the New Zealand fertiliser market, Pacific Biofert's point of difference in this highly-monopolised market is as an agile, customer-focused supplier. As a family owned and operated business, the organisation places primary importance on getting to know its customers, understanding their needs and delivering holistic solutions that meet these. [www.biofert.co.nz](http://www.biofert.co.nz)

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## Recoveroom

Recoveroom is a sport technology company specialising in the innovative recovery aspect of sport by providing alternative solutions to physical rehab and sports recovery. Recognising the need for people to stay on the move, Recoveroom is the future of physical recovery, promoting an active recovery (rather than the status quo of recovery that involves a resting phase where you either take days off or rest up altogether). Recoveroom's own line of sports compression technology "Space Bootz" offer an innovative solution to recovery, as well as business sustainability in that more than one client can be serviced at one time by the same staff member (in comparison to a traditional massage therapist, who is limited to their own physical ability and consistency in their work due to fatigue). The business also has future growth potential with its three-dimensional business involving retail, service and consumable beverage elements. [www.facebook.com/Recoveroom](https://www.facebook.com/Recoveroom)

## The Food Company NZ

Based in Hamilton, Waikato, The Food Company provides a convenient food and service delivery option, creating the gift of convenience and time for people and families who do not have the time to cook. Fresh, well-portioned, and ready to eat, The Food Company combines expert nutrition with vibrant flavour to deliver kiwi home style cuisine. The company utilises fresh food WOOL COOL packaging technology that is 100% biodegradable. This ensures there is no need for using poly bins and food can remain fresh in the fridge and unfrozen. While a relatively new business, the Food Company employs seven full time staff and has demonstrated an impressive track record of growth since launching. [www.thefoodcompany.co.nz](http://www.thefoodcompany.co.nz)

## Vaka Interactiv

Vaka Interactiv is a creative tech start-up focused on developing the future of innovative story-telling technology. It is currently developing its Interactive Digital Portraits product that brings digitised canvas paintings to life. The business has participated in the 2017 Mahuki Accelerator programme through Te Papa Tongarewa and is also working in partnership at Experience – a top-tier design agency in Wellington. The company has had huge interest from organisations here in New Zealand and globally including with many museums including the National Maritime Museum of NZ and Te Toki Voyaging Trust. Vaka Interactiv's digital portraiture has made a great impact in the cultural and heritage sector, including generating the ability to create ethno-cultural empathy when museum visitors interact with interactive portraits. Ethno-cultural empathy is an experience where one can see and understand another culture from the culture's perspective. As a Pacific and Māori-run tech

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start-up, Vaka Interactiv is also making impact through an example of leadership, being co-founded by both Pacific and Māori entrepreneurs. [www.vakainteractiv.com](http://www.vakainteractiv.com)

## Executives

### Arti Chand, Crengle Shreves & Ratner

Arti Chand is a Fijian-Indian partner at Law Firm Crengle Shreves & Ratner (CSR). After setting up her own business AC Tax Law in 2015, she joined CSR as a partner in early 2018 while AC Tax Law remains a distinct brand and is a division of CSR. The partnership allows Arti to service her clients more broadly, offering commercial law services in addition to specialist tax advice. Arti is a believer in giving back to the Pacific and wider community, and regularly takes up opportunities to do public speaking, get involved in the community and the legal profession. Arti's commitment to community combined with her business acumen makes her a capable and strong stand out Pacific woman in business. [www.actaxlaw.nz](http://www.actaxlaw.nz)

### Rachel Lewis, Devitise Marketing

Samoan Rachel Lewis started her marketing consultancy business Devitise Marketing more than six years ago. What was initially a one-person operation, the business has grown to employ nine full time staff and provides a one stop shop for all marketing needs such as consultancy, branding and design, development, e-commerce, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), Search Engine Marketing (SEM), Social Media, content marketing and video. Rachel believes her success stems from her leadership style to be true to why she is in business, focusing on consistently delivering results to customers. [www.devitise.com](http://www.devitise.com)

### Brittany Teei, KidsCoin

Cook Islander Brittany Teei is the founder of KidsCoin, a social enterprise using tech for social good through the creation of an online community economy that harnesses the value of education. She is one of a small number of young Pasifika woman working in the tech industry, and the KidsCoin business continues to grow exponentially under her leadership. Brittany believes in the KidsCoin approach of a 'whole village raising a child' and describes herself as a confident Pasifika woman in business. [www.kidscoin.co.nz](http://www.kidscoin.co.nz)

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