

Chief Executive Position Description

Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce

Employment	Permanent
Location	Nelson City
Hours	Full time; flexibility for events, stakeholder meetings and some evening or other out-of-hours commitments
Accountable to	Board of Directors; the Chair is the primary governance liaison between Board meetings
Team	Six staff overall. Direct reports are Chamber employees as set out in the Board-approved organisational structure.

Purpose of the role

Lead the Chamber's strategy, relationships, operations and public voice. The Chief Executive (CE) is accountable for building trusted connections across the Nelson Tasman business community, delivering strong member value, leading a high-performing team and ensuring the Chamber's organisational and financial sustainability, while supporting effective Board governance.

Strategic context

The CE delivers the Board-approved Strategic Plan and works in accordance with the Chamber's current values and policies. The current Strategic Plan identifies Connect, Support, Lead and Future Proof as its pillars. The current Board-approved Strategic Plan and agreed KPIs provide the measurable priorities for this role and should be read alongside this position description.

Key accountabilities

Members and business relationships

- Be a visible, approachable and trusted presence across Nelson Tasman. Engage directly and regularly with members, listen to businesses of different sizes and sectors, and use their needs and feedback to shape the Chamber's priorities.
- Strengthen member acquisition, engagement, retention and value. Build productive relationships with sponsors, councils, central government, iwi and Māori business, NZCCI, media and regional partners.
- Lead the Chamber's marketing, communications and digital channels, including brand, website, newsletters and social media, and ensure member data and CRM systems support engagement and retention.

Advocacy and regional leadership

- Lead constructive, evidence-based advocacy that reflects members' interests, Board direction and the long-term prosperity of the region. Represent the Chamber publicly as its principal spokesperson on member, policy and operational matters.
- Convene business and regional leaders, contribute to policy and economic discussions, and maintain the Chamber's credibility and independent voice across Nelson Tasman and nationally.

Strategy and Board accountability

- Work with the Board to review strategy and convert it into annual plans, budgets, priorities and reported outcomes. Give the Board sound advice and constructive challenge.
- Report accurately and in time for Board decisions. Explain performance against agreed KPIs, material financial or operational variances, emerging risks and significant opportunities; escalate urgent or material issues promptly through the Chair between meetings.
- Support the Board's governance processes, including Board and committee papers, the AGM, annual reporting to members, Board elections and compliance with the constitution and the Incorporated Societies Act 2022

People leadership and organisational resilience

- Lead, develop and performance-manage a capable, inclusive team. Set clear expectations, delegate appropriately, support professional development and plan for succession in key roles.
- Reduce key-person dependency through documented processes, knowledge sharing, appropriate systems and clear coverage of essential functions. Maintain safe, respectful and resilient operations, including secure, fit-for-purpose technology, cyber security and compliance with the Privacy Act 2020 for member and event data.

Programmes and delivery

- Oversee events, training, member services, contracted programmes and major projects, with clear ownership, quality standards, resourcing and evaluation.
- Ensure commitments are within strategy and capacity and achieve agreed participation, member-value, impact and financial outcomes.

Commercial and financial leadership

- Develop sustainable new income through membership, sponsorship, partnerships, programmes and appropriate commercial opportunities; assess pricing, risk, capacity and long-term value.
- Lead budgeting, forecasting, cash flow, reserves and financial controls. Oversee audit, insurance, contractual and statutory obligations, and give the Board clear financial reports with explanations of material variances.

Governance and delegated authority

The CE reports to and is accountable to the Board. The Chair provides the primary governance liaison between Board meetings; management of staff and normal operational decisions remain with the CE. The CE may make commitments within the Board-approved strategy, budget, policies and delegated authorities, and may delegate tasks while retaining overall accountability. Decisions reserved to the Board, matters outside delegation, material unbudgeted commitments and significant strategic changes require Board approval before commitment. The CE must disclose and manage conflicts of interest under Chamber policy and obtain approval for external appointments or commitments where required by that policy or the Board.

Key relationships

Internal: Chair, Board, committees and Chamber team.

External: current and prospective members, sponsors and funders, Nelson City Council, Tasman District Council, central government and elected representatives, NZCCI and other Chambers, NRDA, iwi and Māori business, NMIT, media, suppliers and other regional partners.

Person specification

- Substantial executive or general management experience with accountability for strategy, people, finances, operations and results; experience working effectively with a governance board.
- Exceptional relationship-building and communication skills; able to listen to members, influence a wide range of stakeholders, advocate publicly and manage sensitive issues with judgement and diplomacy.
- Commercial thinking and financial fluency, with a record of developing sustainable revenue and making prudent decisions about risk and resources.
- A confident and inclusive leader who develops people, delegates well, offers constructive challenge and can move between regional leadership and the practical work of a small organisation.
- High integrity, resilience and political awareness.
- Knowledge of Nelson Tasman, or the ability to gain it and establish trust quickly.
- Understanding of te ao Māori and Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the ability to engage confidently with iwi and Māori business.
- Membership, business, economic development or community sector experience is an advantage.

Success and review

Performance is assessed against the current Board-approved Strategic Plan, its agreed KPIs and the annual business plan. This includes member value and engagement, the Chamber's influence and relationships, programme outcomes, team capability and resilience, sound governance reporting, and financial sustainability. Objectives and targets are reviewed through the Board's normal planning and CE performance processes without requiring this position description to be rewritten.

General obligations

Act in accordance with the Chamber's constitution, values, policies and lawful Board directions; safeguard confidential information and the Chamber's reputation; meet health, safety and wellbeing obligations; and undertake other reasonable duties consistent with the seniority of the role.