



# Te Kawa Mataaho

Public Service Commission

3 April 2026

9(2)(a) privacy

9(2)(a) privacy

## Official Information Request

**Our Ref: OIA 2026-0022**

I refer to your Official Information Act 1982 (OIA) request received on 10 February 2026 for:

- 1. The total budget allocated for the CARN Conference 2025, including a breakdown of costs by category.*
- 2. A list of all external contractors, consultants, or service providers engaged for the conference, along with the cost paid to each.*
- 3. Details of the procurement process used to select these contractors or service providers.*
- 4. Any internal communications or reports regarding the objectives and expected outcomes of the conference.*
- 5. Any evaluations or assessments conducted post-conference to determine its effectiveness and value.*

On 10 March 2026, the Commission notified you of an extension to the timeframe required for us to make our decision on your request, to 3 April 2026. This was because consultations needed to make a decision on your request were such that a proper response could not reasonably be made within the original time limit.

### Background

In the Public Service, Employee-Led Networks (ELNs) provide a mechanism for employee perspectives to contribute to high performing public service workplaces.

The Commission supports and constructively engages with ELNs by enabling relevant perspectives to be shared with senior leaders and considered in system-level discussions where appropriate.

ELNs are initiated and run by employees from agencies across the wider Public Sector, participation is voluntary, and they operate independently from the Commission. ELN members are subject to the Public Service Code of Conduct (the Code) and all obligations that apply to public servants.

### Information being released - Parts one and four

Listed in the table below and enclosed are the documents within scope of parts one and four of your request.

Item	Date	Document Description	Decision
1	6 January 2025	CARN Conference Brief 2025	Released in part
2	31 March 2025	<b>MEMORANDUM</b> to Carolyn Tremain, Executive Network Sponsor, CARN from co-Chairs of CARN and Appendix One – Budget	Released in part
3	15 August 2025	<b>INTERNAL EMAIL</b> relating to the purpose of the CARN Conference.	Released in part

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons, including deceased people.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the OIA.

### Information not held - Parts two and three

ELNs may request funding support from the Commission, and they may opt to use a Commission-contracted service provider to assist with conference administration, including budgeting and financial management.

CARN chose to manage the 2025 CARN Conference (the Conference) independently. Therefore, the Commission does not hold:

- *“A list of all external contractors, consultants, or service providers engaged for the conference, along with the cost paid to each.”*
- *“Details of the procurement process used to select these contractors or service providers.”*

I am therefore refusing these parts of your request under section 18(g)(i) of the OIA on the grounds the information requested is not held by the Commission and we have no reason to believe it is held by another agency.

### **Information does not exist - Part five**

The Commission has not undertaken any evaluations or assessments post-conference to determine its effectiveness and value. I am therefore refusing this part of your request under section 18(e) on the grounds the information requested does not exist.

If you wish to discuss this decision with us, please feel free to contact [Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz](mailto:Enquiries@publicservice.govt.nz).

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note that we intend to publish this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents on the Commission's website.

Yours sincerely



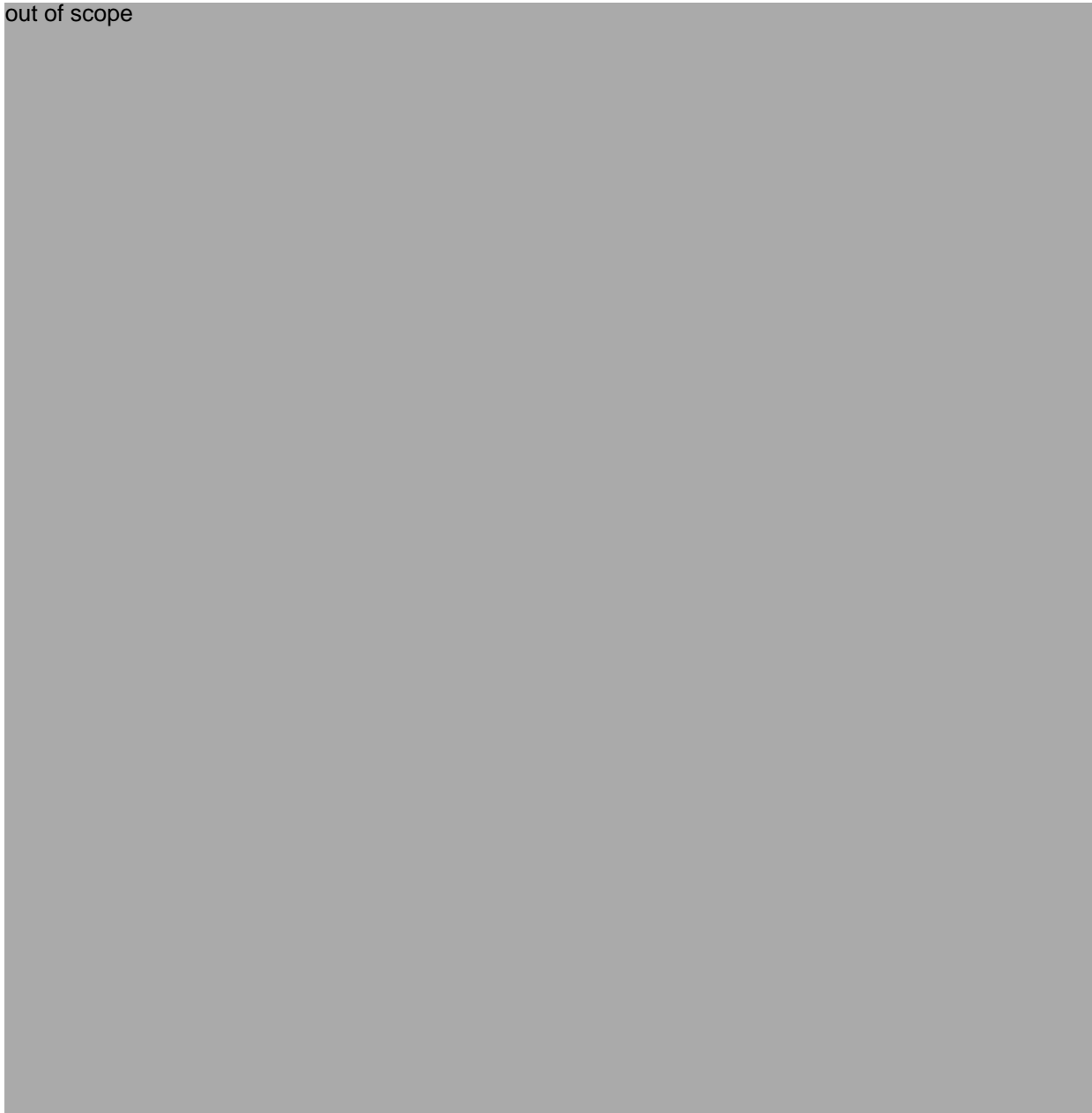
Nicky Dirks

**Manager - Ministerial and Executive Services**  
**Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission**

## Conference Brief 2025

<b>Company/Organisation:</b>	Cross Agency Rainbow Network (CARN)
<b>Contact Name:</b>	9(2)(a) privacy
<b>Contact Details (Tel. &amp; Email):</b>	9(2)(a) privacy
<b>Project Title:</b>	CARN Conference 2025
<b>Brief Date:</b>	6/01/2025

out of scope



### What is the objective of this conference?

#### Purpose of the conference:

To equip public sector decision makers with a better understanding of the experiences of our rainbow community, to help drive sustainable actions that meet the needs of our community and enhance our connections and understanding of how to connect.

#### Key themes:

1. Intersectionality – the parts that add up to make us unique
2. Connection – how we can find each other, and the strength in that
3. Engaging with minorities – how to be respectful and give others space

### Preferred Dates

Thursday 21st and Friday 22nd August (confirmed) OR  
Tuesday 19th and Wednesday 20th August

We are aware of central government fiscal restraints that are occurring and want to allow for both financial years to have the option for funding.

### Who is the primary audience for this conference?

There are two key audiences for this conference:

1. Senior decision makers within the public service i.e. Organisational Development, Human Resources and senior executives;
2. Rainbow community members working within the public service.

At this stage, we are limiting conference registrations to a maximum of 180 delegates made up of both audiences. We will allow for online option and hope to see more uptake there.

### Format of the Conference

- - 2 day conference
- - Ideally a classroom or cabaret set up, but theatre might also be possible dependent on final location
- - up to 180 max in person– mix of both public servants and senior leadership teams, CEs etc
- - 2 breakout spaces

**Memorandum**

Date: 31 March 2025

To: Carolyn Tremain – Executive Network Sponsor, Cross Agency Rainbow Network

From: Jen Wilde – co-Chair, Cross Agency Rainbow Network

Rāwiri Te Hurunui Haumaha-Herbert - co-Chair, Cross Agency Rainbow Network

Cc: Nico Haustein, CARN Conference Event Lead

Sophie Parker, CARN Conference Event Lead

***Subject: - Cross Agency Rainbow Network (CARN) Conference 2025. Seeking approval to proceed. Requesting necessary support.***


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**Summary**

The purpose of this memorandum is to seek your approval for the following:

- a. Proceed with planning and implementation of the CARN Conference 2025, set down for 21-22 August 2025.
- b. In your capacity as executive sponsor of CARN, act as guarantor for the finances of the conference<sup>1</sup>.

out of scope



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<sup>1</sup> Comprehensive financial planning for this conference is provided in Appendix 1

out of scope

**a. Planning and implementing CARN Conference 2025**

Since approval to proceed was received in December 2024, CARN Governance Member 9(2)(a) privacy has used their extensive events and conference planning experience and skill to begin planning and documenting the conference. 9(2)(a) privacy has recently left the public service and shared their expertise to support our two CARN Conference Event Leads, Nico Haustein and Sophie Parker to carry on the planning mahi.

We are beginning to receive abstracts from interested speakers who will speak to our theme of Kotahitanga overlaid with rainbow and intersectional lenses.

A preferred location has been identified as Bowen House which will accommodate 150 physical attendees and will have the option to also have an online presence. We have identified a secondary location of National Library of New Zealand. While National Library would provide adequate conference facilities, and seating for 30 more physical attendees, it comes with a significant cost. When making the decision on venue, as well as other providers, we have ensured that we can still stage a quality conference that fits within the current climate.

Preferred providers for other logistics of the conference have been engaged with and access to Event Air has been arranged via Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission (PSC).

**Recommendation**

We recommend your approval to proceed with confirming suppliers and beginning planning the CARN Conference 2025 in earnest. This approval will also encompass the running of the conference event itself.

**Approved/Not approved**

**b. Financial guarantor for CARN Conference 2025**

CARN leadership recommends that you act as the financial guarantor for the upcoming CARN Conference 2025, scheduled to be held on 21 and 22 August 2025 at Bowen House.

**Background:**

This conference provides a unique platform for networking, knowledge sharing, and showcasing the Public Service’s commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

Our initial plan included the use of the National Library as a venue. However, considering the current climate and our position within the Public Service, we have chosen to shift towards a more cost-effective approach, utilising Bowen House as a key component of this strategy. This ensures we are meeting our obligations as good stewards of public resources.

**Rationale:**

1. **Reputation and Visibility:** Having you acting as financial guarantor for the conference makes sense given your role as Executive Sponsor of CARN and as the person who approved us to begin planning this conference.
2. **Networking Opportunities:** The conference will provide unparalleled networking opportunities with members and key organisations that support our shared kaupapa.
3. **Supporting Priorities:** Supporting such events underscores our commitment to Public Service development by contributing to the professional development of our rainbow public servants which aligns to the Rainbow 4 Point plan.

**Financial Considerations:**

The estimated budget for the conference is \$70,000. This incorporates projected [in-person] ticket revenue of \$52,050. The remainder of our budget would be sourced from sponsorships from Government agencies and any online participant sales. The projected budget does include a \$10,000 contingency fund. As the financial guarantor, you (through MBIE) would be responsible for covering any shortfall in funding. However, based on previous conferences, we anticipate a high level of participation and sponsorship, minimizing the financial risk. Further breakdown of the draft budget is supplied in appendix one.

**Recommendation:**

Given the strategic benefits and alignment with our goals, we strongly recommend that you consider acting as the financial guarantor for CARN Conference 2025. Your support will be instrumental in ensuring the success of this prestigious event.

**Approved/Not Approved**

Executive  
Network Sponsor  
CARN

**Approved / Declined**

MBIE Chief  
Executive:

  
Carolyn Tremain

Date: 3 April 2025

**Appendix One**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>Quoted (so far)</b>	<b>Actual (so far)</b>
<i>Bowen House (venue)</i>	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	TBC – confirm with Bowen House manager
<i>AV Tech (additional)</i>	\$5,000	\$5,000	TBC	TBC – confirm with Bowen House manager
<i>Photographer</i>	\$5,000	\$5,000	TBC	
<i>Misc printing</i>	\$500	\$250	TBC	Potentially funded through PSC Tui Raumata budget
<i>Website</i>	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	\$28.50 (domain name)
<i>Event App</i>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000*	\$0 (provided through PSC subscription)
<i>Speaker costs</i>	\$5,000	\$5,000	TBC	
<i>Pōwhiri (+)</i>	\$5,000	\$5,000	TBC	
<i>Conference Packs</i>	\$2,500	\$2,500	TBC	
<i>Catering</i>	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$19,920 (180 pax)	New quote needed
<i>Collateral</i>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>\$69,750</b>	<b>\$49,920</b>	<b>\$10,028.50</b>
<i>Ticket revenue</i>	+\$52,050	+\$52,050	+\$52,050	TBC
<i>150 pax</i>				
<i>Sponsorship</i>	+\$17,950	+\$17,950	+\$17,950	TBC

**From:** [Phoebe Lockett](#)  
**To:** [Tofilau Iris Webster](#)  
**Subject:** Out of scope CARN Conference  
**Date:** Friday, 15 August 2025 12:28:32 pm  
**Attachments:** out of scope  
[image001.jpg](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Hey Tofilau

out of scope

- **Here's a high level overview of the purpose:**

The 2025 biennial CARN conference marks the fourth event hosted by this employee-led network. Approximately 165 participants have registered to date. The conference will explore leadership, equity, and systems change, drawing on lived experience, research, and cross-agency collaboration. This year's theme is Kotahitanga – Unity and Collective Strength, and the programme reflects the power of coming together across agencies to uplift and celebrate rainbow communities. The includes a range of speakers, interactive workshops, and opportunities to connect, learn and build public service capability.

While the programme is tailored for a public sector audience with the majority of speakers and attendees being public servants, registrations were also open to those outside the public sector. Not all speakers are from government agencies, allowing for sharing perspectives and gaining insights across different sectors and jurisdictions. This approach also supports the goal of building capability across the public sector and speaks to their theme of Kotahitanga – Unity and Collective Strength.

All attendees are aware they are representing their organisations and are expected to engage respectfully, with Manaakitanga, and uphold the public service principles.

out of scope