

NZME

Positive Inclusion

NZME's commitment to earning the Rainbow Tick late last year is paying off across the organisation.

New Zealand Media and Entertainment (NZME) has a portfolio of more than 80 media brands across radio, digital, e-commerce and print. The company employs 1,800 people with a further 500 contractors and casuals.

Achieving the Rainbow Tick gave NZME the tools to help it become an innovative and inclusive organisation that specifically welcomes sexual and gender diversity.

The Rainbow Tick is awarded to organisations that are making their workplace a safe environment for everyone, regardless of sexual orientation. Rainbow groups encompass people in the LGBTTI+ community who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, takatāpui and intersex.

The process began with an audit of where NZME stood in terms of the LGBTTI+ community. Focus groups were run and benchmarks set. From there NZME provided extensive training for staff.

As well as training, another key benefit of the journey has been the development of policies underneath the umbrella of the company's Diversity Policy. For example, removing bias in the recruitment process using a recruitment software called Weirdly. The software diminishes all bias and shortlists based on fit, not age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity etc.

NZME also now has policies in place for transitioning genders - the core teams are trained and use preferred names, titles and pronouns. When collecting data for gender NZME use the options male, female and optional.

All policies are made available both internally on the staff intranet and some are also included externally on the company's website.

When the company was awarded the Rainbow Tick in late 2017 the main celebration was held in the Auckland Central office which houses approximately 800 of its staff. It included performances from local entertainers from the LBTTQI community, glitter cannons, music, dancing and a pink carpet. NZME was the first media company in New Zealand to receive the Rainbow Tick.

NZME tries to spread support where it can.

"Being in the media industry, we are aware that we have the power to influence audiences," says Recruitment and Employer Brand Lead Kylie Telford.



“We consider it is imperative to take a stance which supports the wider Rainbow community and do good with our influence.”

In line with that, NZME radio station ZM, which more than half a million Kiwis tune into, was a key sponsor for the Pride Festival in both 2017 and 2018.

The sponsorship was the brainchild of the Senior Leadership Team from across the business who sat down as a group and came up with ideas on how to support the Pride Parade.

Staff support of the project, and energy has grown. In the first year of the Pride Parade there were a core group of organisers, who roped in a lot of external help from their communities outside of NZME, but this year more staff, both from inside and outside the LGBTQI community, turned up on the day to support. More staff also volunteered to be involved in the production of the parade.

NZME sponsors and promotes the Big Gay Out. The company had a broadcast container and rooftop viewing platform, complete with entertainment, photo booth and giveaways. A contra arrangement is in place to ensure the event is able to utilise the company’s mainstream advertising platforms and brands for promotion.

NZME and specifically ZM has also spread awareness for World Aids Day for the New Zealand Aids Foundation, calling on drag queen Miss Ribena to help the cause.

Staff feedback supports the differences being made.

“As a member of the Rainbow community, the fact that NZME as an organisation passionately supports the Pride Festival as a whole and the Pride Parade specifically showcases our commitment to all members of the LGBTQI+ community and fills me personally with genuine, excuse the pun, pride. In today’s climate where corporations can portray an inclusive environment for PR or as lip-service, I believe that NZME’s holistic involvement in and around the festival benefits all Rainbow employees within the company allowing them to see the company as working towards a future of true inclusion.” Willis Fowler Partnership Executive NZME, Auckland

“I have never encountered an organisation with such appetite for inclusion and diversity. Initially at NZME, it felt like a select few making a token gesture towards this area of employee wellness, but now it feels like something that is fully embedded in our organisation. To be part of an organisation that cares so passionately for all its people is something to be proud of for all our staff. The opportunities we have to participate and express ourselves through the various initiatives offered are awesome, as is the even bigger opportunity to suggest and drive further issues that are important to us. As someone outside the Rainbow community, that is something of an ally for a number of reasons, I'm proud of what NZME has achieved.” Kylie Telford, Recruitment & Employer Brand Lead NZME, Auckland



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