

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Stakeholder Engagement Advisor

Reports to:	Head of Engagement and Sponsorships
Division:	International, Engagement and partnerships Office
Tenure:	Continuing
Location:	Hamilton
Date:	September 2026

Vision

Ko te tangata

A research-intensive university providing a globally connected, innovative and inclusive student experience in an environment characterised by a commitment to diversity, respect for Indigenous knowledge, and high levels of community engagement.

Values

Ko te mana o Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato ka herea ki tō tātou:

- Tū ngātahi me te Māori
- Mahi pono
- Whakanui i ngā huarahi hou
- Whakarewa i te hiringa i te mahara

The University of Waikato places a high value on:

- Partnership with Māori
- Acting with integrity
- Celebrating diversity
- Promoting creativity

1. GENERAL

The University of Waikato is a globally connected university with strong regional, national and international relationships with campuses in Hamilton and Tauranga. We are committed to building strong and enduring relationships that enhance the University's reputation, reach and impact across New Zealand and internationally.

The International and Engagement Office leads and supports a broad portfolio of activity that strengthens the University's connections, profile and global reach. This includes international recruitment, global and domestic engagement, sponsorship, transnational education, overseas

experiences and global rankings. Within the Office, the Engagement team works across the University and with a diverse range of external partners to develop meaningful relationships, strategic partnerships and sponsorship opportunities that strengthen Waikato's profile, connect us with our communities and create value for the University and our partners.

2. POSITION PURPOSE

The Stakeholder Engagement Advisor supports the University's strategic engagement with external stakeholders, with particular responsibility for managing and strengthening a portfolio of sponsorship partnerships, alongside broader domestic engagement, rankings engagement and industry collaboration. The role works across the University to build and maintain strong external relationships, identify opportunities to enhance the value of partnerships, and support a coordinated approach to engagement that strengthens the University's reputation, profile and impact.

A key focus of the role is developing and maintaining relationships with external stakeholders that support the University's strategic priorities, including engagement that contributes to its reputation and performance in the World University Rankings. The Stakeholder Engagement Advisor also supports the effective delivery of sponsorship partnerships, working with internal and external stakeholders to ensure relationships are well managed and opportunities for mutual value are identified and realised.

This role combines relationship and partnership management, stakeholder engagement and coordination. It requires sound judgement, strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively across organisational boundaries. Targeted stakeholder communications and engagement materials form a significant part of the role where they support effective relationship management

3. FUNCTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Internal:

- Assistant Vice-Chancellor, International, Engagement and Partnerships
- Head of Engagement and Sponsorships
- International Engagement Office team members
- Academic leaders including Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deans/Heads of School and other divisional leadership
- Academic staff
- Marketing and Communications teams
- Vice-Chancellor's Office staff
- Staff, students and members of the University community

External:

- Industry leaders and employers
- Community stakeholders
- Sponsorship stakeholders
- Partner organisations

4. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Stakeholder and Partnership Management

- Develop and nurture strong, trusted relationships with key external stakeholders, partners and sponsors, encouraging active and ongoing engagement with the University.
- Manage a portfolio of stakeholders and sponsorship partners, maintaining regular contact, understanding partner priorities and ensuring agreed commitments are effectively managed.

- Identify and progress opportunities to strengthen relationships, enhance the value of partnerships and create mutual benefit for the University and its partners.
- Facilitate connections between external partners and relevant areas of the University, identifying opportunities for collaboration and supporting these through to delivery.
- Contribute to the development and delivery of regional engagement activity, particularly across the Waikato and Bay of Plenty.
- Represent the University at relevant external events, meetings and engagement activities.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and deliver targeted engagement approaches and activities for external stakeholders and partners, tailored to the relationship, audience and desired outcomes.
- Lead the planning and delivery of relevant stakeholder events and engagement activities that strengthen relationships and contribute to the University's visibility, collaboration and reputation.
- Maintain high-quality written and verbal engagement with stakeholders and partners, ensuring communication is timely, professional and appropriate to the relationship.
- Develop clear, compelling and audience-appropriate content, key messages, briefings and other materials to support stakeholder and partner engagement.
- Translate University priorities, achievements and areas of impact into relevant and engaging information for different stakeholder audiences.
- Identify opportunities to showcase partnerships, engagement activity and outcomes through relevant University channels, working with Communications and Marketing teams as appropriate.
- Contribute to internal communications that support domestic and international engagement priorities, including the development and coordination of content for relevant International and Engagement Office channels.

Rankings and Reputation Engagement

- Support targeted engagement with industry, employer and other external stakeholders to strengthen awareness of the University's academic strengths, impact and graduate success, contributing to its reputation and performance in global university rankings.
- Develop and maintain relationships with stakeholders relevant to the University's rankings and reputation objectives, encouraging ongoing engagement and advocacy.
- Coordinate rankings and reputation-related engagement activity across the International and Engagement Office and with relevant teams across the University to support a cohesive and timely approach.
- Develop targeted stakeholder materials and communications that support rankings and reputation objectives, drawing on centrally produced content and adapting this for relevant audiences.
- Identify opportunities through existing stakeholder and partner relationships to increase awareness and visibility of the University's strengths, impact and international profile.
- Contribute to broader international reputation initiatives and projects as required, providing coordination, stakeholder engagement and delivery support in line with University priorities.

Monitoring, Planning and Reporting

- Maintain accurate and up-to-date CRM records of stakeholder and partnership activity, engagement and outcomes.
- Monitor progress across stakeholder and sponsorship relationships, ensuring appropriate follow-up and identifying emerging opportunities or issues.
- Prepare high-quality reports, briefings and written updates for the Head of Engagement and Sponsorship and other relevant internal stakeholders.
- Use stakeholder information, feedback and engagement insights to inform relationship development, engagement planning and future activity.
- Contribute to the development and monitoring of engagement plans and priorities.
- Ensure stakeholder documentation and correspondence is of a consistently high professional standard.

Team Contribution

- Work collaboratively and flexibly across the International and Engagement Office, contributing to shared priorities and activities in a dynamic environment.
- Build effective working relationships across the University to support a coordinated approach to external engagement.
- Contribute to a culture of excellent service, collaboration and high performance.
- Participate in maintaining a safe and healthy work environment for self and others and contribute to relevant hazard management programmes.
- Undertake other duties as required that are consistent with the level and scope of the position.

NOTE: Staff have an annual Objectives, Development and Reflection (ODR) meeting with their manager.

5. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The Stakeholder Engagement Advisor will be performing satisfactorily when:

- External relationships with stakeholders and partners are actively maintained and strengthened, leading to increased visibility and engagement outcomes.
- Stakeholder engagement and communications are strategic, timely and are of a consistently high written standard.
- University partnership and sponsorship activities are professionally represented and communicated.
- Stakeholder engagement supports institutional reputation, rankings performance, and community trust.
- CRM systems and engagement records are used effectively to track and report on relationship outcomes and rankings-related activity.
- Contributions to communication channels owned by the Communications and Marketing teams are provided at a high written standard and demonstrate alignment with institutional strategic priorities.
- The University's engagement policies, brand and communication protocols and processes, and compliance standards, are adhered to across all activities.
- Excellent relationships are built and maintained with academic and professional colleagues of all levels in the University.
- Safe and healthy work practices that comply with University policies, procedures, relevant work standards and statutory obligations are followed.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Essential

- A bachelor's degree in a relevant discipline such as business, management or communications.

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Demonstrated experience independently managing and developing a portfolio of external stakeholder, partner or sponsor relationships.
- Demonstrated ability to build trusted relationships with external stakeholders, understand their priorities and identify opportunities for collaboration and mutual value.
- Demonstrated ability to produce high-quality, compelling and audience-appropriate written communications and engagement materials for senior and external stakeholders.
- Proven ability to translate complex organisational information, priorities and achievements into clear, persuasive and engaging content for a range of external audiences.
- Experience developing and delivering targeted stakeholder engagement approaches, including tailoring key messages and communications to different audiences and relationship objectives.
- Demonstrated experience coordinating engagement, partnership or related strategic activity across multiple internal and external stakeholders.
- Strong interpersonal and influencing skills, with the ability to establish credibility and work effectively with senior internal and external stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to exercise sound judgement, initiative and discretion when managing stakeholder relationships and representing an organisation externally.
- Strong organisational and coordination skills, with the ability to manage multiple relationships, activities and priorities concurrently and ensure effective follow-through.
- Experience using CRM or similar systems to manage stakeholder relationships, activity and engagement information.
- Current full driver licence.

Desirable

- Experience managing sponsorship partnerships or other external partnership arrangements.
- Experience within a tertiary education, public sector or similarly complex organisational environment.
- Experience contributing to institutional reputation, rankings or other reputation-focused engagement initiatives.
- Experience coordinating engagement or reputation activity across multiple organisational areas.
- Understanding of the role of stakeholder engagement, advocacy and external relationships in strengthening organisational reputation.
- Experience working with Communications and Marketing teams to support external stakeholder engagement and reputation objectives.

PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Genuine commitment to the mission, values and work of the University of Waikato.
- Highly developed communication, interpersonal and influencing skills, with the ability to engage confidently and professionally with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.
- An excellent communicator, with a high standard of written communication and the ability to adapt style and approach for different audiences and purposes.

- Professional, credible and confident in representing the University externally.
- High level of intercultural competence and the ability to work effectively across different cultural and organisational contexts.
- Highly self-motivated, proactive and comfortable taking responsibility for progressing relationships and opportunities.
- Highly organised, with strong attention to detail and the ability to prioritise, coordinate and deliver across competing demands.
- Collaborative and able to work effectively across organisational boundaries, bringing people together to progress shared objectives.
- Exercises sound judgement, tact and discretion and respects confidentiality.
- Curious and opportunity-focused, with an interest in identifying new ways to strengthen the University's relationships, reputation and impact.
- Commitment to equal opportunity and to the University's partnership with Māori as intended by Te Tiriti o Waitangi.