



Senior New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Interpreter

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About Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People

Our Purpose

Whaikaha - Ministry of Disabled People is underpinned by Aotearoa New Zealand’s commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities along with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. In addition, the vision and principles of Enabling Good Lives and Whānau Ora are foundational to how the Ministry does its work.

Whaikaha focuses on listening to and partnering with disabled people, tāngata whaikaha Māori, Pacific disabled people, their families and communities so that their experiences can inform changes to the policies and practices which govern the disability sector. The goal is to enable disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori to make their own decisions

on the supports that will enable them to live their own good life, enhancing their mana and self-determination.

Whaikaha will provide strong and focused leadership of the disability system across government through:

- Driving better outcomes for all disabled people
- Leading and coordinating cross-government strategic disability policy
- Working to deliver and transform disability support services, and;
- Progressing work on the broader transformation of the wider disability system

Accessibility

We believe in a diverse and inclusive Ministry which reflects the communities that we serve. We care about the wellbeing and success of our people and provide a supportive and inclusive working environment where people can thrive and be who they are. We are committed to understanding and making available reasonable accommodations and accessibility for our people.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

We have a firm commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which means we are committed to giving effect to Te Tiriti through building kāwanatanga, rangatiratanga and ōritetanga. Whaikaha works to partner with and give effect to the voice of Māori, tāngata whaikaha me o rātou whānau. Whaikaha works to support tāngata whaikaha Māori, whānau, hapū, Iwi and communities to enable their good life and aspirations.

Your place in Whaikaha

The Senior NZSL Interpreter position reports to DCE, Corporate Services in the Corporate Services Business Group.

The Corporate Services Business Group is an enabling function for Whaikaha. The teams within Corporate Services provide core functional expertise that enables Whaikaha to operate safely and effectively as an Agency.

About the role

The Whaikaha Senior NZSL interpreter manages and provides high quality, confidential NZSL interpretation of all three official languages of NZ across a wide range of complex communication settings, including:

- Internal conversations, meetings, and events

- NZSL Board meetings
- Meetings, events, and workshops with external individuals, groups, or organisations
- Community engagement
- Recorded or live speeches and announcements (for example with the Minister or Chief Executive)

This level of NZSL communication provision ensures staff working at Whaikaha can fully participate during planned meetings and events, and provides for ad hoc conversations between staff to facilitate effective working relationships and accurate exchange of information. It also ensures Ministry engagement with external stakeholders and agencies is NZSL accessible.

Active interpreting work will be balanced with project work. This work will involve information gathering, discussion, developing written advice, and contributing to system improvements and papers for the NZSL Board and others.

The Whaikaha senior staff interpreter will demonstrate responsibility for the interpreting profession by upholding the interpreter Code of Ethics and working with the highest levels of confidence, integrity, and sensitivity in a range of complex communication settings.

How you will contribute

Interpreting between English and NZSL

- Represent Whaikaha credibly and professionally to work individually or alongside other interpreters to provide high quality, confidential communication support between Deaf and hearing people in a variety of face to face and online contexts and using appropriate modes of interpretation.
- Manage formal and informal interpretation requests and conversations to a maximum of 25 hours per week. Booking and reviewing of additional interpretation requests.
- Obtain and read, and ask questions about, the context and material about a meeting or event to prepare for a successful communication outcome.
- Collaborate and work professionally and effectively with other sign language interpreters to ensure a successful communication outcome.
- Continue to upgrade their language and transfer skills and their contextual and Deaf culture knowledge and understanding.

- Keep up to date with the technological advances pertinent to their practice to continue to provide quality service.

NZSL Interpreter development projects

- Collaborate with internal employees and external stakeholders to discuss and synthesize issues impacting the NZSL Interpreter workforce and NZSL community.
- Research, develop and summarise information leading to advice and recommended courses of action for Whaikaha and the NZSL Board.
- Think, plan and contribute strategically to Whaikaha system and process improvements regarding the use of interpreters. Feedback to interpreters if required on interpretation.
- Effectively managing of interpreting and project workload by using flexibility, prioritization and problem solving, where appropriate.
- Inform and contribute to the development of strategy and policy work for the group.
- Maintain up to date knowledge of the Deaf and disability sector and understand the issues affecting Deaf and disabled people.
- Take a lead on projects as and when required.

Communication

- Analyse information from a variety of resources from document, presentation, or discussion, to be able to have an understanding and knowledge of subject to be conveyed.
- Identify communication risks in or after a communication event and act and or seek support to minimise the impact of the risks identified.
- Understand the audience that is attending meetings and make recommendations to wider team as appropriate.
- Interpret delivery of communication that completely and impartially renders the meaning and intention of the source within the parameters and requirements of the target language and culture and is in keeping with the purpose specified.
- Support the translation of information sent to Whaikaha by Deaf people in video format, such as job application cover 'letters' in video format.

Relationship Management

- Build and maintain collaborative and positive relationships across Whaikaha.
- Establish and maintain sound working relationships with key contacts at relevant government departments and agencies, the disability community, non-government organisations, interest groups and other key stakeholders.
- Work proactively with partners in ways that are most likely to deliver tangible benefits for Deaf, disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori.
- Recognise and value the voice of the Deaf and disability community. Work collaboratively with community groups, disabled people, tāngata Whaikaha Māori, whānau and providers reflecting their concerns and aspirations.
- Partner with key stakeholders to ensure the work programme reflects the Crown's relationship with Māori and improves outcomes and equity and reflects our Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations.
- Represent Whaikaha credibly and professionally in relationships established as part of work undertaken.
- Be able to obtain relevant information from stakeholders sometimes under urgency and in an environment of competing demands, in a supportive fashion.
- Observe impartiality in all professional contacts, remaining unbiased throughout the communication exchanged between the participants

Risk Management

- Identify any organisational risks and take action and or seek support to minimise their impact.
- Keep your manager informed of any risk issues that may impact on the success of Whaikaha.

Embedding accessibility

- Embed a culture of genuine accessibility within teams where people work actively to identify and remove barriers and recognise individual strengths and needs.

Embedding te ao Māori

- Embed Te Ao Māori (te reo Māori, tikanga, kawa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi) into the way we do things at Whaikaha.
- Continuously build more experience, knowledge, skills and capabilities to confidently engage with whānau, hapū and iwi.

Contribute to our team - Whaikaha team player

- Champion and contribute to a safe, respectful and accessible workplace culture. Embrace your role as a good Whaikaha team player by showing genuine care for each other, our mahi and the disabled community we serve.
- Take personal responsibility for the wellbeing, health and safety of yourself and others. Follow safe working practices, report all incidents, hazards, and near misses, and familiarise yourself with how to respond in case of an emergency.
- Stay informed about emergency management and business continuity plans relevant to your business unit and team. Understanding these plans will help you respond appropriately in critical situations.
- Familiarise yourself and comply with all Whaikaha policies, procedures, and guidelines.
- Perform other duties as may be reasonably required from time to time.

What you will bring

We are committed to building and maintaining a diverse, inclusive and accessible workplace. While this section contains guidance as to the potential requirements for the role, it is not determinative or a complete list. We value the unique skills, strengths, perspectives and experiences that a diverse range of people may bring and will work with our people to make any reasonable accommodations needed to ensure they have a work arrangement suited to their specific needs.

To undertake this role successfully the incumbent will:

- Be a disabled person, or have lived experience whānau, or be able to establish credibility and trust with the disability community, as well as having empathy and a deep understanding of the unique and diverse experiences of disabled people.

- Have the ability to work in a tripartite relationship with disabled people and tāngata whaikaha Māori.
- Be willing to travel for work from time to time.

Qualifications, experience and knowledge

- NZSL Interpreting qualification from AUT or equivalent and be a member of Sign Language Interpreters Association of New Zealand (SLIANZ)
- Deep understanding of Deaf culture, and translating the nuance, emotion and intent behind the message of both hearing and deaf staff.
- Significant practice experience interpreting for a wide range of government settings and have a familiarity with the government sector.
- Maintain strict confidentiality, in line with SLIANZ's Code of Ethics and Health and Safety Guidelines
- Successful experience of using a range of formal and informal register and vocabulary in both NZSL and English and possess excellent articulation and communication skills.
- Ability to establish and maintain positive and effective relationships with employees and stakeholders.
- Proven experience working collaboratively to deliver projects in agreed timeframes.
- Ability to produce written information using plain English.
- Proven analytical skills that support best practice, issues management and opportunity identification.
- Excellent communication skills in NZSL, and written and spoken English.
- Successful experience and knowledge in working in complex communication settings.
- Proven ability in critical thinking, prioritizing and problem solving.
- Confidently navigate a range of scenarios using ethical decision making to ensure the best outcome for both Deaf and hearing clients.
- Demonstrate responsibility for the interpreting profession by upholding the interpreter Code of Ethics
- Ability to be flexible in management of a diverse range of interpreting scenarios

- Experience influencing and engaging with stakeholders, this may include lived experience example
- Understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Who you will be working with

Internal

- Executive Leadership Team
- Group and Team Managers
- NZSL team
- Whaikaha kaimahi

External

- NZSL interpreting colleagues
- New Zealand Sign Language Board
- Sign Language Interpreters Association New Zealand (SLIANZ)
- NZSL Community
- Ministry of Social Development
- Partners and stakeholder organisations in the Deaf and disability sectors
- Other government agencies

Delegations

The following delegations apply to this position:

- HR – N/A
- Financial –N/A

Working in the Public Service

Ka mahitahi mātou o te ratonga tūmatanui kia hei painga mō ngā tāngata o Aotearoa i āianei, ā, hei ngā rā ki tua hoki. He kawenga tino whaitake tā mātou hei tautoko i te Karauna i runga i āna hononga ki a ngāi Māori i raro i te Tiriti o Waitangi. Ka tautoko mātou i te kāwanatanga manapori. Ka whakakotahingia mātou e te wairua whakarato ki ō mātou hāpori, ā, e arahina ana mātou e ngā mātāpono me ngā tikanga matua o te ratonga tūmatanui i roto i ā mātou mahi.

In the public service we work collectively to make a meaningful difference for New Zealanders now and in the future. We have an important role in supporting the Crown in its relationships with Māori under the Treaty of

Waitangi. We support democratic government. We are unified by a spirit of service to our communities and guided by the core principles and values of the public service in our work.

Position Description Updated: July 2024