

## TOP REGIONAL INSIGHTS



Image: Whanganui & Partners

**Whanganui & Partners is releasing the Talent Connect app, which connects talented locals with Whanganui businesses.** Exclusive to the Whanganui Region, the app is designed to connect people based on the skills businesses need and talent has to offer. Talent Connect is available from the App Store and Google Play.

**There was regional representation from Ruapehu at Go with Tourism's Workforce Wānanga, in November 2021.** Since this two day online wānanga, the first of two Action Plans has been finalised that collates the essence of the four main solutions developed at the Wānanga. These 'actionables' will address some of the challenges currently facing the tourism industry.

**With continued apprehensiveness around vaccinations, Tupoho has had iwi health representatives speak with concerned staff at Silver Fern Farm plants.** Tupoho's plan is to extend this service to other plants. The timing of this support coincides with frequent questions being asked of Tupoho related to how many people in the labour market have lost their jobs due to non-vaccination in the rohe.

## TRENDS AT A GLANCE



**23.9% of workers are employed in the public sector** in Manawatū-Whanganui. Nationally, only Wellington has a larger share of total employment being in the public sector.



**55,908 people living in Manawatū and Palmerston North are employed** (on average) in the 12 months ending September 2021.



**17% increase in domestic visitor spend** in Manawatū-Whanganui between September 2020 and September 2021.

(Data from Public Service Commission 'Workforce Data' released 7 December 2021 | Infometrics Quarterly Economic Monitor | Whanganui & Partners Economic Dashboard)

## TOP LABOUR MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

- CEDA's (Central Economic Development Agency) significant national marketing campaign to attract talent to the infrastructure and construction sector [has gone live.](#)** In an effort to help combat the current skills shortage, this digital-led campaign highlights job opportunities in the Manawatū and Palmerston North Districts.
- Up to 80 new jobs will be created by the new Countdown supermarket that is set to be opened at the end of April in Awapuni, Palmerston North.** This Countdown is intended to be part of a retail complex with up to 21 commercial/retail spaces.
- Despite labour shortages in the Health Sector, Ashhurst are set to get their own health centre, staffed by at least one GP and nurse practitioner.** This will be the first time a medical practice has been open in the Palmerston North village of Ashhurst since 2006. The health centre will allow the growing population of Ashhurst locals to have a healthcare option outside of travelling into the city.

## TOP LABOUR MARKET CHALLENGES

- Unions are concerned that employers are drafting risk assessment processes and outcomes for work site vaccination mandates without consulting employees.** Allowing workers to have a voice could strengthen the risk assessments and potentially have a positive impact on employee relations.
- Manawatū teenagers are citing their age as being a barrier to getting part-time, permanent employment.** Some teenagers are overcoming this by seeking work experience through Facebook instead of conventional recruitment channels. However, it indicates that, despite labour shortages, talent may be overlooked due to age and/or traditional recruitment processes.
- Housing constraints as a barrier to entering the Manawatū/Palmerston North labour market continue,** with the September 2021 quarter reporting a 37%pa increase in house values.
- Employers at meat processing facilities continue to struggle to find workers,** making it difficult to run full shifts or get product through as they would normally.

## REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLAN

The Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Skills Leadership Group (RSLG) is working on developing the Regional Workforce Plan (RWP), to be published in June 2022. As part of this, the RSLG is looking to engage with regional stakeholders and partners on the labour market and skills needs within the **Health and School Transitions** sectors.

The RSLG is cognisant that the Manawatū-Whanganui region is far reaching, covering Ruapehu, Whanganui, Rangitīkei, Manawatū, Tararua, Horowhenua and Palmerston North City. Accordingly, the RSLG will be focusing on representing the voice of all parts of the region in the RWP.

The work of the Manawatū-Whanganui RSLG and their RWP will build upon existing regional strategies, Accelerate-25 and Te Pae Tawhiti.

## OUR FOCUS FOR THE NEXT 2 MONTHS:

- Stakeholder engagement around barriers to skills attainment and development within the Health and School Transitions sectors.
- Understanding of training opportunities in demand currently, and predicted to be in demand in the future within the region.
- Drafting of the Regional Workforce Plan.