

## **2022 Waka Ama New Zealand Elected Board Member Nominee Information**

Irene Cooper– Nominated by Ocean Blue Sports Club

### **Nominee Profile**

I would like to submit my expression of interest to the New Zealand Waka Ama Board. My name is Irene Cooper and I have been paddler for over 15 years. My paddling journey started in Australia for a club based in Redcliffe, Brisbane. I continued the journey from a more social setting into more competitive when I moved and lived in Singapore. I am from the beautiful Northland in Panguru and of Te Rarawa decent. My whānau are direct descendants to Dame Whina Cooper and I am blessed to have taken part in the production of the recently featured movie ‘Whina’.

In my professional career, I am a Supply Chain professional, with more than 20 years of experience within an array of Management roles, across various industries, ranging from food, and technology to more recently in the health and wellness sector. I currently work for The Conqueror Virtual Challenges. The core business delivers fitness challenge applications to a fast-growing community globally across all social platforms. My role as head of the Supply Chain is to ensure our customers are delivered best-in-class service whilst controlling quality, process and cost.

I have a long tenure of working experience abroad most recently residing in Singapore and Asia Pacific for 5 years and have spent 18 years in Australia in varying senior leadership management positions. My geographical footprint has organically increased adaptability, and resilience when working under pressure.

I am a strategic thinker with global tactical experience, coupled with a proactive attitude, best describes my skill set. I have a “people first” orientation, with emphasis on collaboration and driving team effort to deliver objectives and goals. By embracing the mutual benefits of all creative cultures and styles, I have been able to build strong influential relationships that contribute to the success of the overall business plan.

I have a solid understanding of business from the strategic planning to importance of financial compliance and reporting. My key areas of responsibility are the full suite of end-to-end Supply Chain applications, providing quality product/services, influencing the cashflow cycle, and moving relationships into partnerships.

### **Reason for Nomination: (completed by Member Club / Region)**

Irene Cooper is an integral part of the Ocean Blue club. She has shown support by way of helping our rangatahi and other members on event days and contributed to the growth by bringing back and introducing new members to Ocean Blue. She has the right skill set to add value to the Waka Ama NZ Board and the future of Waka Ama.

### **Nominee statement: Why you wish to be a Board member of Nga Kaihoe o Aotearoa (Waka Ama New Zealand)?**

I believe the depth of experience in business understanding financials and setting direction coupled with underwriting processes are areas which I can add value to governance, and I would enjoy participating and sharing my views to improve and grow the sport. Building upon ideas and challenging status quo are some of the attributes I think can bring to a team which in my career have bought opportunity and lasting partnerships.

**Please identify below the key skills from the Board Skills Matrix (below) which you believe you will bring to the role, and provide evidence of those skills in the space below:**

Whole of Board Skills Matrix (for reference)

Leadership	Financial literacy and analytical ability	Outcomes focused
Marketing & Communications	Inter-personal communication skills	Ethical, open, honest, trustworthy, high levels of integrity
Ability to understand and relate to stakeholders	Ability to work as a team player	Business acumen
The Sport of Waka Ama knowledge	Strong local and national community connection, credibility and networks	Ability to establish quality relationships
A knowledge of Tikanga Māori, Te Reo Māori and the Values of Waka Ama NZ	Knowledge and application of Te Tiriti o Waitangi in governance	Commitment to diversity and inclusion
Strategic Thinking	Knowledge of legal issues relating to business or the not for profit sector	Good understanding of the principles of Governance and Management

**Achievements:**

Outcome Focused:

- Delivered organizational transformation change across the Asia, Australia, USA, Europe and NZ purchasing and supply chain team improving process and system efficiency.

Financial Literacy

- Implemented and consistently sustained a Sales and Operations process which delivers visibility to the budget and solution to manage market change.
- Traded a cash constrained business into a new buyer through management of cash cycle and effective communication with trading partners

Leadership:

- Built and stabilised team in aggressive growth market with upskilling and aligning the business vision to team objectives. Recognising effort and rewarding dedication.

Ability to establish quality relationships

- Developed and embedded a partnership with a supplier (Allied Faxi) which delivered a savings of 750k annual save.

### Marketing and communications

- Created a business and brand trading as Train like a King with Tupuria King involving customer communication for all training programs and marketing to deliver brand awareness.

### Strategic Thinking

- Implemented growth structure plans across Asia in Supply Chain to support commercial business deliverables against budget. Centralizing Customer Support and building skills and capability

### **Please identify how you would apply the Values of Waka Ama New Zealand at a governance level:**

Ensuring all processes and policies current and new are aligned with inclusivity and are culturally respectful.

Demonstrating through collective discussion and healthy challenge my passionate views on the Waka Ama strategic plans and pillars of success.