



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**15 February 2018**

### **Call for registrations for World Indigenous Business forum in Rotorua**

Māori business leaders are encouraged to sign up for the 9th annual World Indigenous Business Forum as Rotorua gears up to host the international event.

“WIBF 2018 is a shining opportunity for Māori to showcase our business and trade success to the Indigenous world” says Richard Jefferies, Chair of Te Ohu Whai Ao Trust, the organisation co-ordinating the forum.

“Enterprising Māori will be among the 1000 business leaders from around the globe who are coming to our door. The forum will be bustling with opportunities for partnerships, insights and experience from across the world. Let’s make the most of that.” says Mr Jefferies.

This is the first time Aotearoa has hosted the event which takes place in October 2018. The forum has a proven track record of connecting Indigenous businesses for the long term. The Aotearoa programme will feature Māori industry fieldtrips, cultural interactions and world-class Indigenous speakers.

Mayor of Rotorua, Steve Chadwick, says there’s no better place than Rotorua.

“This district has been founded on Te Arawatanga (Te Arawa culture) which is unique to the Bay of Plenty. This point of difference is central to our lifestyle and significantly contributes to the local economy,” she says.

“The forum is a firm reminder of the Rotorua Lakes Council and Te Tatau o Te Arawa partnership, which strives to enhance Rotorua and support its people.”

Kaumātua and business leader, Monty Morrison has been involved from the start. He attended the 2017 forum in Chile to accept the mauri of hosting rights for 2018.

“I have seen first-hand what goes in at this event. It’s impressive. Ngāti Whakaue and Te Arawa look forward to sharing our culture and home later this year. Piki mai kake mai.”

The first forum was held in New York City in 2010 by the Indigenous Leadership Development Institute in Canada. President and Chief Executive Officer Rosa Walker says Rotorua has what it takes to stand alongside some of the world’s biggest host cities.

“Rotorua is the perfect city to host the World Indigenous Business Forum as it has a significant presence of Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses. We believe many

formidable partnerships will be created at all levels across the forum,” says Ms Walker.

The anticipated 1000 delegates will include people from Taiwan, Canada, United States of America, Namibia, Nigeria, Guatemala, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Chile, Norway, the Pacific, Colombia and more.

The event is taking place with the support of Te Puni Kōkiri, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Te Tatau o Te Arawa, Pukeroa Oruawhata Trust, Rotorua Lakes Council, Tourism NZ, and Destination Rotorua Marketing.

To register and for more information on the World Indigenous Business Forum visit [www.wibf.ca/registration](http://www.wibf.ca/registration)

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**Notes for editors/background**

The 9th annual World Indigenous Business Forum takes place from 9 to 11 October 2018 in Rotorua.

The Te Ohu Whai Ao Charitable Trust’s purpose is to advance Māori business interests nationally and internationally supporting Indigenous-to-Indigenous trade and development.

The World Indigenous Business Forum began in 2010 and has been hosted in America, Australia, Namibia, Guatemala, Canada and Chile.