

# Robin Hood Foundation on target

The Robin Hood Foundation is set to announce its first partnership between a business member and a non-profit organisation.

"It's under wraps just for now but an announcement will be made very soon," says energetic Non-Profit Director Pleasance Hansen who was appointed to the position earlier this year.

Essentially the Robin Hood Foundation finds corporate businesses with funds and non-profit organisations who need funds then brokers partnerships between them.

Ms Hansen says the Foundation has the potential to really boost the non profit sector.

"Companies want to do the right thing, and we make that easy, through setting up successful matches between appropriate non profits and corporates."

With founding director Jude Mannion building a base of funds from last year the Foundation office was established by February 2003.



Ms Hansen says The Foundation here was inspired by the Robin Hood Foundation in New York. "But there is no affiliation to it. We are completely standalone. Jude loved what they were doing and saw the opportunity to help here in New Zealand."

"What the Robin Hood Foundation offers is a unique opportunity for non profit organisations to break the cycle of dependence on annual fundraisers by pairing up with business. The business feels good, and the non profit organisation benefits. It's a win-win for all," she says.

"It's very stimulating and exciting work. We're having a very positive response with 500 non profits registering so far and we are looking to build on that."

Information can be seen at [www.robinhood.org.nz](http://www.robinhood.org.nz) where organisations can register details.

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The Robin Hood Foundation.  
Strategic Philanthropy



Pleasance Hansen

## A Brave New World?

How would it be if businesses were as involved in the non profit sector as traditional government agencies such as the Departments of Internal

Affairs and Child Youth and Family or the Ministry of Social Development?

How might that change the landscape for the non profit sector?

It's a question the Robin Hood Foundation has pondered a number of times since its launch last year.

As Jude Mannion, the founder of the Robin Hood Foundation puts it - "Businesses want to do the right thing, but they don't always know how. So we work with our business partners to find non profit organisations for them to partner with and build long term sustainable relationships".

What makes Robin Hood unique in New Zealand is that it works at a senior level in companies determining how to differentiate brands through their values, enabling staff to make a difference and inspiring their consumers at the same time. It then works with companies and non profits to deliver measurable outcomes.

Another string to their bow is that they not only partner companies to non profits, they also create clusters of companies to support the same non profit, again a powerful strategic approach.

Where businesses already have non profit partnerships the Foundation offers assistance in enabling that relationship to become part of the company's strategic plan.

The Foundations' Board takes responsibility for funding the Foundation, so the time spent working with business and non profit partners is delivered at no charge.

The Foundation, which has already attracted some of New Zealand's leading companies as partners, works to ensure the partnership between both business and non profit is one of mutual learning's and benefits.

Since beginning in her role as the Non Profit Director in January this year, Pleasance Hansen has been working with a number of non profit organisations to ascertain their readiness to engage in a long term business partnership.

Responses have been very positive - from both sides, including feedback from the business members that they're finding the in-depth analysis useful.

"This is an invaluable service for us as we have neither the resource or expertise to do it even half as well", Alison Sykora Region Corporate Affairs Manager Coca-Cola Oceania.

"What we're about is setting up long term relationships to move some of the stress off non profits having to go through the annual funding and re-application round each year," said Pleasance Hansen

Non profit organisations can register with the Robin Hood Foundation, through the website:  
[www.robinhood.org.nz](http://www.robinhood.org.nz) <<http://www.robinhood.org.nz/>>

For further information contact Robin Hood Foundation at:  
[Robinhood1@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Robinhood1@xtra.co.nz)  
Ph 09 3733 916

## Grant Seekers and Grantmakers – how feedback can assist grantmakers

A session was recently run at a conference for people from community organisations from around the country, about how to get funding from non-government funders. Participants were asked for any comments they would like to pass back to the funders, on how the relationship between "them and us" can be improved.

Comments included:

- It would be great to have more feedback after the application has been sent – for example, an acknowledgement that it has been received, and an indication of how long it will take to reach a decision.
- It would also be good to have more useful feedback after you have turned an application down.
- We sometimes feel in a bind: funders often fund only part of the cost of a project – but then get twitchy about us applying to more than one place for that purpose, sometimes called 'double dipping'.
- We really like commitments to funding for several years – one year at a time gives no certainty that programmes can continue.
- It is still hard to get money for
  - Ongoing operating costs
  - Administration
  - Advocacy
  - Travel
- Can funders collaborate more, to simplify the process of seeking funds? Not to the extreme of leaving only one place to go, but could some efficiencies be explored?
- Do, or could, funders have a role in assisting community groups to collaborate?
- "Umbrella" arrangements (where an unincorporated group works under the wing of one that is incorporated) do not suit funders long term; it means that projects incorporate separately to get funding – but you don't like fragmentation, and often, nor do we.
- What at first glance may seem to funders to be duplication – two or more groups doing the same thing – may not be if you look harder. Differences between services mean that there are more options, which mean that more service users can find something that suits them.

No doubt you have heard many of these points before. Next time your organisation is reflecting on its grant making practices, they may offer food for thought.

Francie Russell – Community Trust of Wellington  
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