



Zespri Governance Development Programme (ZGDP)

Guide 2026

Overview

Welcome to the Zespri Governance Development Programme guide. In this guide you will find out about the programme, how to apply and where to go for more information.

The Zespri Governance Development Programme aims to identify and support potential future leaders within the New Zealand kiwifruit industry. The programme will introduce successful candidates to governance and leadership possibilities and allow them to gain an appreciation of their capacity and potential for future engagement in governance within the industry.

New Zealand kiwifruit growers and industry leaders are the foundation on which the wider New Zealand kiwifruit industry is built. Our industry is comprised of an increasingly diverse range of people, which we are striving to reflect within the programme. Given the increasingly competitive international market, kiwifruit industry governance must reach global standards, and we must continue to develop governance and leadership within our community.

Programme details

The programme consists of a number of components designed to further participants' governance experience and knowledge.

To gain the most from the programme, participants must be available and commit to the following key dates:

7 -8 July - Interview dates

23 July - Session 1, introduction and handover

31 Aug - 4 September - Company Directors Course - Auckland

2 Nov - 4 Nov - Domestic Industry Tour

24 February - Māori Governance Workshop

3 March - Local Industry Tour

(Which is subject to change if necessary).

There will be further dates confirmed for Director Dinners and Workshops over the course of the 12 months.

Participants will become members of the Institute of Directors NZ and participate in their week-long Company Directors Course (CDC). The course comprises of board simulation exercises, bringing to life case studies that highlight the unpredictable nature of business and the human nature of directorship. Topics covered in the course include:

- Best practice corporate governance
- Strategy
- Law
- Finance
- Culture
- Risk

The CDC is a pre-requisite to becoming a Chartered Member of the Institute of Directors, which can be obtained through the Chartered Member Assessment. This assessment will also be a requirement of the GDP.

The programme will incorporate a Māori Governance workshop in relation to the industry and public speaking / personal branding training which will have a tailored leadership component to enable participants to identify individual development opportunities.

Participants will also attend regular participant workshops and dinners with leading business figures who will speak on a particular subject to give participants exposure to their experience and expertise.

Participants will gain exposure to Zespri Board and Executive members through networking and mentoring events.

As part of the programme, participants will be part of a Domestic Governance Tour. The tour will visit a number of organisations throughout New Zealand, giving participants access to some of the top leaders within New Zealand's primary industries. Costs of this trip are partially covered by Zespri - please see the 'Programme fees' section on page 5 for more information.

There will be various assessments throughout the duration of the programme to confirm your graduation of the Zespri Governance Development Programme.

Set out below is an indicative programme timeline (which is subject to change).

Timeframe	Activity
July - Sept	Session 1 - Introduction and Handover event
	Directors Dinner 1

	Company Directors Course - Auckland
Oct - Dec	Session 2 - Strength Finders workshop
	Zespri Board Directors Dinner
	Domestic Tour
	End of Year function
Jan - Mar	Session 3 - Communications and building your brand
	Māori Governance workshop
	Local Tour
Apr - June	Directors Dinner 2
	Session 4 - Simulated Board workshop
	Session 5 - Presentations and round table
	Graduation Dinner

Formal report and presentation

Each participant must report back with a presentation at the Handover Event in July 2027. The report comprises of responses to three questions as follows:

Q1 - How has this programme helped prepare you for a future governance role in the kiwifruit industry?

Q2 - Key themes of Domestic Tour, compare and contrast the different companies / industries.

Q3 - Qualitative reflection; personal growth, highlights and downfalls. What were your expectations?

Additional considerations

The programme is aimed at those committed to Governance leadership within the kiwifruit industry, within the next 3 - 5 years. There is an intensive workload throughout the year which requires substantial commitment from participants.

Participants are expected to independently pursue governance roles and use the knowledge, skills and experience gained on the programme within the New Zealand kiwifruit community.

Participants are invited to join the Zespri Alumni Network (ZAN), which will ensure further governance learning and networking opportunities over the long term.

Key dates

The programme will run for 12 months, beginning in July 2026 with the Graduation dinner in June 2027 and handover event in July 2027.

Applications close **5pm Friday June 19, 2026**. All applicants will be notified of their application outcome no later than Thursday 9 July, 2026.

Eligibility

The Zespri Governance Development Programme is open to participants from the kiwifruit industry, and Kiwifruit adjacent roles, with a genuine interest and commitment to obtaining a governance role within the next 3 - 5 years.

Potential candidates may include (but are not limited to):

- Post-harvest directors / Senior Management
- Other industry directors
- NZKGI forum members
- Suitably qualified growers

Selection process and criteria

The Selection Committee will seek to recruit a diverse cohort of quality participants. Applications will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated interest in governance and leadership, with the aspiration to begin in a governance role, if not already, within the next 3 - 5 years
- Leadership experience in career to date
- Commitment to the kiwifruit industry and wider community
- Effective communication and ability to build relationships
- Critical thinking ability and business acumen
- Proven integrity and respect of peers / colleagues
- Availability and commitment to the full programme
- Will be a strong ZGDP participant representative

Applicants do not have to fulfil all of the criteria in order to be selected.

Final selection will be at the discretion of the Selection Committee.

Programme fees

Zespri covers 50 percent of the programme costs. The remaining 50 percent is to be paid by the participant, or where the participant is supported by post-harvest or an industry group, it is expected that they will contribute 25 percent of the costs.

Estimated programme cost per participant - \$16,000

Zespri pays \$8000, participant pays \$8000 or where the participant is supported participant pays \$4000 and supporting party pays \$4000

Participants will be invoiced at the conclusion of the programme.

How to apply

Potential candidates must complete the application form and email it along with their CV to laura.gaveika@zespri.com.

Applications close **Friday 19 June 2026** at 5pm.

Contact

For more information about the Zespri Governance Development Programme, contact Laura Gaveika, Programme Manager - Governance Development

Email - laura.gaveika@zespri.com