

Memorandum of Understanding between the New Zealand Sign Language Board and Deaf Aotearoa

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) outlines the relationship between the New Zealand Sign Language (NZSL) Board and Deaf Aotearoa, and the intention of both parties to work collaboratively to implement policies, practices and understanding in government and wider society to ensure the promotion and maintenance of NZSL.

While being distinct entities, both the NZSL Board and Deaf Aotearoa share a common purpose: to advance the linguistic rights and social equality of Deaf NZSL users through ensuring acquisition, use and promotion of NZSL, and through supporting the maintenance of a thriving NZSL community. The provision of well-aligned advice will strengthen work towards maintaining and promoting the status of NZSL to Government.

Each entity provides independent advice to Government on policy matters that impact on the language rights of the Deaf community, in the roles of a Government advisory Board, the NZSL Board, and Deaf Aotearoa in their role, under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities, as a Disabled Peoples Organisation (DPO). The Disabled Persons Organisation (DPO) status of Deaf Aotearoa means that there is an obligation, under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to consult with Deaf Aotearoa on the strategic approach and the overall work programme of the NZSL Board. The NZSL Board may also consult with other organisations, agencies and the Deaf community. It is not expected that the NZSL Board would consult with Deaf Aotearoa on operational issues or funding allocations.

The NZSL Board and Deaf Aotearoa will arrange meetings to discuss strategic goals. These could be Board to Board meetings or representatives of the NZSL Board and Deaf Aotearoa. Working together will be achieved through:

1. Knowing and understanding each other's work
2. Identify opportunities for collaboration
3. Respect each other and supporting each other's role

The NZSL Board and Deaf Aotearoa Board will periodically identify a set of work programmes where collective impact and collaboration is considered important to the promotion and maintenance of NZSL (see appendix). To give effect to this MOU we will commit to meeting at least twice a year.

The MOU will be reviewed every two years.

NB: The MOU describes the NZSL Board's commitment to working with Deaf Aotearoa but does not prevent either party from having similar agreements with other organisations.

Signed:



Rhian Yates

Chair, NZSL Board



Oliver Ferguson

President, Deaf Aotearoa

Appendix

Agreed work programmes for 2020/21

Name of work programme	Date agreed	Date concluded
Progress access to NZSL in education	22.09.2020	