

CANDIDATE BRIEFING

Youth Tourism & The Working Holiday Market

A targeted tourism, regional economic and workforce opportunity

This briefing outlines the high value nature of Youth Tourism and the working holiday visa market and sets out a simple low-cost opportunity to drive high value international visitor growth that will benefit all of Aotearoa, New Zealand.



Young travellers represent a significant growth opportunity for NZ.

International youth visitors already deliver high value to New Zealand. We believe the addition of some focused youth-oriented marketing in targeted source countries can add significant additional economic value off a very strong base.

577,000

Holiday visitors aged 18–34

31%

Of total holiday arrivals to
YTD June 2026

≈\$2.6bn

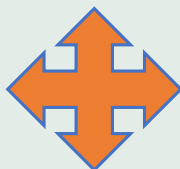
Value to the economy

\$4,500

Average spend per trip



STAY LONGER



EXPLORE MORE



HIGH LIFETIME VALUE

Add \$5m focused marketing for TNZ to increase youth arrivals by just 10%

This will add a further \$256m to the economy. ROI of 50:1

But, Working Holiday Visa arrivals are falling



AUSTRALIA

415,000

\$4.0bn

Australia has the same challenges of distance, cost of travel, global events, yet has increased it's youth arrivals by 13% and 22% revenue.

Australia regards youth and specifically working holiday makers as one of only four core high value visitors.

Tourism Australia Strategy 2035.

Working Holiday Visa (WHV) visitors are an important strategic component of the overall international visitor market. Not only do they provide direct economic benefit from their spend but they provide a regular lightning workforce that supports regional New Zealand economies.

COVID taught us that New Zealanders will not work part time or temporary jobs in the regions. WHV visitors do. This workforce is non-permanent so does not impact on immigration.

If we are to maximise productivity while growing all holiday visitor arrivals, then it is essential we grow WHV arrivals.

The path toward growth is clear and in your hands!

Establish a clear mandate for Tourism New Zealand to grow international youth arrivals, including a dedicated Working Holiday Visa attraction strategy.

Recognise the segment 1

Recognise WHV visitor as a priority visitor, regional, economic and workforce segment.

Commission a strategy 2

Direct officials, TNZ and INZ to develop a coordinated attraction strategy.

Target growth markets 3

Focus activity on the United Kingdom, France, Japan, United States and Germany.
Low cost youth oriented campaign investment.

Set measurable outcomes 4

Incremental arrivals · expenditure · length of stay · regional dispersal · ROI · workforce contribution.

Strategic opportunity: connect visa administration with international tourism marketing capability.

PRIORITY MARKETS

Germany

United Kingdom

France

United States

Japan

BYATA

Backpacker Youth Adventure Tourism Association

BYATA is a collective of 120 tourism businesses (activity, service, transport & accommodation suppliers) which rely heavily on the 18-34 year old international holiday and working holiday market.

BYATA advocates for the sector, working closely with MBIE, TNZ, TIA, HNZ, RTNZ and other Tourism Associations with the objective of growing the market in a constructive and positive manner for industry, community and the environment.

