

Annual General Meeting 2025 Minutes

Retropolitan, Christchurch

5:30 PM - 8:30 PM, Tuesday 2 December 2025

Committee and Staff Present

Committee (Board): Michelle Shirtcliffe (Chair), Danielle Jones (Secretary), Kahn Mitchell (Deputy Chair), Matthew Biddick, Andy Masters, Sacha McGregor, Liz Foxwell-Canning

Operations Team (Staff): Alex Thorpe (Tech Summit & Operations Manager), Henry Lawson (Community, Event & Membership Manager)

Apologies: Hamish Watson (Note: No formal apologies were received from the floor, but an advance apology was noted).

Meeting Opened: 6:02pm

1. Confirmation of 2024 AGM Minutes

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were presented by **Michelle Shirtcliffe**. It was agreed that no amendments were required.

Motion: That the minutes of the 2024 AGM be approved as a true and accurate record.
Moved by: Matthew Biddick **Seconded by:** Andy Masters

Motion Carried.

2. Objectives of the Society

Canterbury Tech exists to create and maintain an inclusive space for the tech community to connect, so that Canterbury is home to the largest united and attractive community in Aotearoa.

The Chair acknowledged the invaluable contribution of our annual sponsors, partners, and supporters for their continued support throughout 2025.

Sponsors: AWS and Publica

Supporters: Contented and G&T Catering

3. Chairperson's Address & Strategic Outlook

2025 Highlights & Operational Changes

- **Leadership Pivot:** Following the departures of Seku Skandran and Louisa Taylor at the end of 2024, the remaining board undertook a deliberate process to redefine Canterbury Tech's direction.
- **Three-Year Strategy:** Developed a comprehensive 2025 - 2027 plan in partnership with supporter Publica, outlining three annual pillars:
 - *2025 – Create:* Ensuring the organization has everything required to deliver on its purpose and membership needs.
 - *2026 – Attract:* Developing the offering to appeal to new members while actively engaging existing ones.
 - *2027 – External Engagement:* Facilitating Canterbury Tech's role as a community connector beyond its current membership.
- **Core Values:** Formally established four membership-centered values: Inclusivity, Service, Facilitation, and Guardianship.
- **Brand Digital Overhaul:** Successfully re-platformed the Canterbury Tech and Tech Summit websites. Rebranded Tech Summit to accurately reflect its scale as a premiere national industry event.
- **Major Events Delivery:** Hosted Tech Summit at Te Pae, selling 600 tickets. Hosted TechFest during Tech Week at a new venue - The Piano - contributing 317 ticketed attendees.
- **Specialised Programming:** Ran a series of revenue-generating special events to drive financial stability, including Project Management workshops, Human Skills for Techs, Tuāhono, Health Tech NZ, and collaborative sessions with Aerospace Colab and Information Leadership.

Key Operational Challenges Noted

- **Event Attendance:** Monthly event attendance has trended downward over the last two years. This will be an active area of strategic focus for the operations team in 2026. Net Promoter Scores (NPS) for the monthly events remain exceptionally strong, averaging approximately 70.
- **Sponsorship Restructuring:** Canterbury Tech secured no new annual sponsors during 2025. In response, packages have been actively restructured into smaller, tiered, more accessible denominations to attract small-to-medium enterprises in 2026.

4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurers reported that despite a difficult macroeconomic climate, Canterbury Tech's finances have been actively and soundly managed. The financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 were circulated to members in advance.

Performance Summary (July 2024 - June 2025)

Revenue Shifts: Membership revenue fell 8.4% this year, marking the first downward trend in recent years. This drop was driven entirely by corporate/company membership churn, whereas individual memberships remained static.

Market Context: Approximately 90% of departing corporate members cited broader market and economic conditions as the primary driver for non-renewal rather than dissatisfaction with the organisation.

Financial Foundation: Highly robust financial performance from Tech Summit over the last two years, alongside positive returns from TechFest, has successfully established a financial baseline that underpins ongoing operations.

Fiscal Health: Overall operating costs are trending down, while net profit and cash reserves are actively trending up, meeting the long-term strategic goal of ensuring organisational continuity.

Motion: That the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2025 be received and adopted.

Moved by: Matthew Biddick **Seconded by:** Sacha McGregor

Motion Carried.

5. Committee Elections and Resourcing

Resourcing Updates

Following the leadership departures at the tail end of 2024, Liz Foxwell-Canning graciously stepped off the board to serve in a contract CEO role throughout 2025 to steady foundational delivery. Liz has now concluded her contract to return to the board. For the 2026 calendar year, Alex Thorpe has been formally brought on in part-time Operations Manager roles to jointly manage day-to-day operations and member engagement with Henry Lawson.

Board Changes & Election Results

In accordance with the constitution, two long-standing board members formally stood down at this AGM. The Chair extended deep thanks to:

Danielle Jones: For two years of exceptional board service, including stepping in as Secretary for the last 6-9 months to spearhead the constitutional review.

Kahn Mitchell: For three years of comprehensive service as Deputy Chair, event sub-committee lead, MC, and stakeholder manager.

A high-caliber field of twelve nominees put their names forward for the 2025 online election. The two newly elected board members are:

Peter Barrowclough: An experienced tech commercialization leader, former CEO of Lincoln Agritech for 14 years, founder of the national Business Incubator programme, and former member of the Canterbury Development Corporation board for nine years.

Miho Tanaka Gump: A global tech and innovation leader with deep roots in Munich and Berlin XR communities, founder of international startups, contributor to Tuāhono and UC Online, and current business development lead at ARGUS Mantech specializing in aerospace and medtech partnerships.

The confirmed Board for 2026 comprises seven members: Michelle Shirtcliffe, Matthew Biddick, Andy Masters, Sacha McGregor, Liz Foxwell-Canning, Peter Barrowclough, and Miho Tanaka Gump.

6. Constitution Modernisation

Members were briefed on the comprehensive modernization of the Canterbury Tech constitution to ensure mandatory compliance with the new Incorporated Societies Act 2022 ahead of the statutory re-registration deadline on 5 April 2026. The board extended its gratitude to Stephen Moe and the team at Parry Field Lawyers for their legal guidance throughout the drafting process.

The key constitutional changes clarify governance and optimize member experience by introducing clearer organizational purposes, modernized digital meeting/voting mechanisms, updated financial reporting standards, clearer dispute resolution pipelines, and stricter scrutiny requirements if a loan is obtained.

The following three motions were put forward to the floor and passed as **Special Resolutions**:

Motion 1 (Adoption): That the existing constitution be repealed and the new constitution, as circulated to members, be adopted.

Moved, Seconded, and Carried.

Motion 2 (Board Quorum): That clause 7.5 be updated to increase the board meeting quorum from a flat rate of four (4) individuals to two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of active board members.

Moved, Seconded, and Carried.

Motion 3 (Board Term Limits): That clause 8.3 be amended to stipulate that elected board members must retire after serving a maximum term limit of four (4) consecutive years. *Moved, Seconded, and Carried.*

Moved by: Michelle Shirtcliffe **Seconded by:** Sacha McGregor

7. Membership Insights & 2026 Programming Priorities

The board summarized insights from the annual membership survey to outline 2026 content directions:

Most Valued Offerings: Peer-to-peer networking, high-quality guest speakers, and discounted member passes to the Tech Summit.

Desired Focus Areas: Software development tools and practices, software quality/failures, digital transformation, innovation & R&D, and corporate leadership.

Perceived Sector Challenges: Talent recruitment/retention (people & capability), scaling revenue models, emerging technology adoption (e.g., AI), and broader macroeconomic market uncertainty.

Key Opportunities Identified: AI implementation, general IT scaling, exploring new export markets, and driving regional revenue growth.

To directly address this feedback, the 2026 program will purposefully diversify speaker selections and technical topics across the monthly schedule, Tech Week, and Tech Summit.

8. General Business

No general business items or questions were raised from the floor.

9. Upcoming Dates & Events

- **16 September 2026:** Tech Summit 2026 at Te Pae (Tōpuni) Convention Centre.
- **1 December 2026:** Next Annual General Meeting.

Meeting Closed: 6:23pm