

CASE STUDY

Hind Management

Inclusive Workplace Award
Medium-Large Organisation Winner



After identifying gaps in leadership roles for Māori and Pasifika and limited opportunities for people with disabilities to access hospitality careers, Hind Management set out to create new pathways to employment and embed inclusion in ways that can be seen and felt.

Hind Management is the parent company that manages Sudima Hotels throughout New Zealand.

“Our success relies on guests feeling comfortable and welcome, and that starts with caring for our employees,” says Director of People and Culture Christine Hurring.

“With strong diversity intentions, we recognised that inclusion needed to be more than just rhetoric. It required going beyond convenience and being very intentional in our practices.”

Hind put in place several initiatives to reach under-represented communities.

Its Open Doors Disability Internship Programme offers structured, supported internships for neurodivergent people and people with disabilities. Launched in partnership with Choices NZ and Recreate in 2025, it allows interns to choose work in the support office or a hotel department. Mentors work with the interns, focusing on ability not limitation.

Hind has also adapted its recruitment processes to make them more accessible, developing Easy Read position descriptions, providing interview questions in advance and asking candidates what accommodations would help them participate fully.

The Jhunjhnuwala Māori & Pasifika Internship Programme was developed in 2025 in recognition of inequitable access to careers in tourism and hospitality. Interns gain hands-on experience across hotel functions and mentorship from Māori and Pasifika leaders. Financial incentives help ease transport barriers, while a training bonus supports continued career growth. Interns are encouraged to bring their full selves to work.

Hind's Māori Leadership Hui is an annual wānanga that brings together Māori leaders and emerging talent from across its hotels. The 2025 hui blended professional development with cultural connection – including local storytelling, te ao Māori learning, and leadership coaching.

“It has become a cornerstone of our inclusion strategy, strengthening identity, confidence, and belonging at all levels,” says Christine.

Māori and Pasifika representation in hotel teams has increased to 24 per cent across the group, with three Māori leaders promoted following participation in the Māori Leadership Hui.

Hind's retention rate soared to 71.23 per cent in 2025, a figure Christine believes reflects the cumulative impact of the organisation's people-focused strategies.

But the success of these programmes is about more than numbers.

Georgie completed an Open Doors Internship in the Housekeeping Team at Sudima Christchurch Airport. Her strong work ethic, positive attitude and bright personality left a lasting impression on the team and, at the end of her internship, she was offered a permanent job.

While the Open Doors Internship Programme is designed to provide meaningful work experience and build confidence for people with disabilities, the impact extends far beyond the individuals who participate, Christine says.

One of the programme mentors commented, “It's changed how we see talent. Everyone brings value when given the right support – it's up to us to make sure the door truly stays open.”

The programmes are now embedded into Hind's ongoing people practices, with Open Doors operating year-round, the Māori and Pasifika internship aligned with annual workforce planning, and the Māori Leadership Hui part of its People & Culture calendar.

Te Uru Tāngata Centre for Workplace Inclusion Chief Executive Maretha Smit says Hind stands out for demonstrating what inclusion looks like when it is operationalised at scale.



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“This is not a single initiative or a symbolic programme — it is a coherent system of interventions across the employee lifecycle, backed by measurable outcomes, leadership KPIs and continuous iteration.

“What is particularly compelling is the organisation's learning posture: they are explicit about what hasn't worked, what they are still building, and how that drives further action. That maturity — combined with tangible employment outcomes for underrepresented groups — positions Hind as a credible model of what is possible in a complex, people-intensive sector like hospitality.”

Strategies for success

- Launched the Open Doors Disability Internship Programme offering structured internships to neurodivergent people and people with a disability.
- Adapted recruitment processes to make them more accessible.
- Introduced disability training and resources to empower teams.
- Developed the Jhunjhnuwala Māori & Pasifika Internship Programme to create more equitable access to careers in tourism and hospitality.
- Created an opportunity for Māori leaders and emerging talent from across Sudima's hotels to connect at an annual Māori Leadership Hui.



Results and benefits

- The Open Doors programme runs year-round, with interns placed across multiple hotels.
- Māori and Pasifika representation in hotel teams has increased to 24 per cent across the Sudima group.
- Three Māori leaders were promoted following participation in the Māori Leadership Hui.
- Hind's retention rate has increased to 71 per cent.
- The 2025 Employee Engagement Survey results show more than 90 per cent positive sentiment in questions related to belonging, support, and inclusion.