

ROLE SUMMARY

Role title:	Cruise Strategy Delivery Lead (CSDL)
Reports to:	Destination Development Project Manager
Direct reports:	Nil
Date:	June 2026
Purpose of role:	The Cruise Strategy Delivery Lead is responsible for enabling the delivery of projects identified in the Pōneke Cruise Evolution – Wellington Regional Cruise Strategy 2025, with a particular focus on Horizon 2 projects and outcomes. The role acts as the central point of coordination between strategy, governance and delivery, ensuring the region's cruise ambitions translate into tangible outcomes. Operating in a largely non-operational capacity, the position serves as the key conduit between the Governance Group, WellingtonNZ and CentrePort Wellington, to align stakeholders, maintain momentum and support effective implementation of strategic projects. Cruise is an important contributor to Wellington's tourism and visitor economy, supporting economic development, business growth and employment. This role is critical to unlocking the future potential of the cruise sector and supporting the ambitions of Destination Pōneke, Wellington's destination management plan, including the goal of doubling the region's visitor economy to \$5 billion. Working collaboratively across local and central government, iwi, industry organisations, tourism operators and other key stakeholders, the Cruise Strategy Delivery Lead will identify opportunities, remove barriers and facilitate the delivery of projects that enhance the regional cruise proposition. A strong emphasis will be placed on developing and strengthening visitor experiences, growing product and experience offerings, increasing dispersal throughout the region, and ultimately lifting shore excursion participation and visitor spend. The focus is on immediate impact identifying, progressing and supporting delivery of priority projects outlined in the Pōneke Cruise Strategy. This is an 18-month fixed term role from commencement date due to specific external funding for the role.

ROLE DESCRIPTION

Key responsibilities: specific actions, tasks or areas of responsibility this role will oversee.

Area of responsibility	Actions/Tasks
Strategic Growth & Partnerships	• Work with CentrePort, WellingtonNZ, Greater Wellington Regional Council and Wellington City Council to translate the Pōneke Cruise Strategy into clear priorities, work programmes, and actions for the cruise sector. • Strengthen relationships with ground handlers, shore excursion teams and cruise lines to understand market needs, identify product gaps, and support the development of experiences that drive future growth and visitor spend • Lead with a stronger, unified message for Wellington, backed by a consistent voice across councils, iwi and operators to support the national cruise recovery. • Attend all Governance and Operational Team meetings and maintain momentum through regular reporting and updates.
Visitor Value & Destination Distinctiveness	• Work with operators, ground handlers and cruise lines to identify gaps and develop new experiences that drive passenger spend and regional dispersal. • Support the development of differentiated experiences by vessel segment, including passenger movement, diverse offerings, and regional dispersal options including high-value visitor experiences. • Create signature moments that surprise and delight, converting passengers into Wellington advocates (e.g., distinctive welcome, unexpected creative encounters, touchpoints with locals). • Enhance existing comprehensive communication systems ensuring all stakeholders are informed and prepared.

Seamless Operations & Capability	- Support seasonal planning to ensure Wellington is cruise-ready - Stay up to date with bottlenecks and friction points across the visitor journey from port arrival through to city and regional experiences. - Build tourism capability across local operators to better service cruise passengers and increase spend.
Sustainable Prosperity & Balance	- Build community understanding and maintain social license through transparent engagement and proactive communication, working with mana whenua. - Position Wellington's environmental leadership as a competitive advantage while building stakeholder understanding of cruise sustainability initiatives.
Insights, Performance & Reporting	Provide concise monthly reporting that synthesises market trends, emerging risks, delivery progress, and data-driven insights for evidence-based decision-making.
Health, safety, wellbeing and compliance	- Take an active role in identifying and mitigating any health and safety risks to yourself and others. - While at work, take reasonable care for your own health and safety and ensure what you do does not negatively affect the health and safety of others. - Comply, as far as you possibly can, with any instructions, policies, procedures or guidelines given by WellingtonNZ in relation to health, safety and compliance. - Report any potential hazards or risks to health and safety or the environment as soon as is possible to take immediate action to minimise or mitigate these if it is not potentially harmful to your own health and safety. - Initiate the necessary documentation required for offsite work (e.g. RAs) and ensure documentation is completed and signed off at least 48 hours prior to the activity beginning.
WellingtonNZ collaboration	- Maintain a "WellingtonNZ-wide" perspective with all of your work - Consider how your role links and contributes to other areas of WellingtonNZ, and actively engage when required - Communicate with fellow WellingtonNZ colleagues on work, initiatives and projects

- Actively collaborate and participate in WellingtonNZ-wide initiatives and projects.

Job outcomes: visible and measurable evidence of success in the role (in line with Cruise Strategy)

Outcome:	Key Goal:	Measurement
Unified Leadership & Governance:	• Goal 1: Establish integrated governance structure with documented roles, responsibilities and decision rights by October 2026	Governance structure operational
	• Goal 2: Build unified CentrePort-WellingtonNZ partnership with joint KPI's by October 2026	Partnership and joint KPIs established between CentrePort and WellingtonNZ by October 2026
Enhanced Economic Value:	• Goal 3: Increase average economic value contribution to match comparable ports	Passenger average economic value contribution (target \$750)
	• Goal 4: Increase shore excursion participation rate.	Increase shore excursion participation rates by 10%
	• Goal 5: Increase annual regional economic impact of cruise	Annual regional economic impact (target \$180m to \$200m)
	• Goal 6: Achieve top tier passenger satisfaction across all cruise lines	Passenger satisfaction ratings by cruise line (Cruise Strategy suggested target 9.0)

Premier Destination Status:	Goal 7: Grow Wellington's market share of cruise	% of New Zealand voyages by 2029/30 (target: 80% to 82%)
	Goal 8: Achieve consistent 120 number of port calls annually	% of New Zealand passenger volume by 2029/30 (target: 12% to 13%) Port calls per season by 2030/31 (target of 120 port calls per season)
	Goal 9: Grow the number of new cruise ready products available for visitor purchase	Grow the number of new cruise ready products available for visitor purchase by 20% by 2027/28 season
Community Wellbeing & Sustainability:	Goal 10: Maintain strong community support for cruise tourism	Wellington City Council Community support survey (target: 90%+ positive)
	Goal 11: Enhance understanding of Wellington's environmental leadership and cruise industry sustainability efforts	% of cruise visitors participating in signature conservation experiences (target: % TBC) Number of influencers participating in cruise ship sustainability visits (target: number TBC)

Competencies: specific skills, traits and competencies necessary to be successful in the role.

Competency	Description of competency
Functional skills and experience	- Strong experience in the Cruise sector, partnerships, delivery, or project/programme management (5+ years experience) - Ability to operate credibly across governance and operational environments

- Confident engaging with international and industry stakeholders
- Understanding of tikanga Māori and developing meaningful iwi relationships (or willingness to learn)
- Proven ability to turn strategy into action
- Pragmatic, well-organised, and outcomes-focused
- Excellent communication skills, including reporting, presenting and business writing

Creating a vision

- Understanding the strategic context
- Challenging the status quo
- Accepting challenges
- Committing to the vision.

Leading with purpose

- Living our values
- Having the courage to question and speak up
- Adapting your style to meet individual needs.

Making things happen

- Giving timely and constructive feedback
- Staying close to the issues
- Collaborating for better decision-making
- Recovering quickly from setbacks.

Building an awesome team

- Valuing uniqueness and differences in others
- Trusting others
- Sharing information, collaborating and helping others.

Being authentic and inclusive

- Recognising your own strengths and areas for development
 - Asking for and responding positively to feedback
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- Questioning and challenging others with respect
- Owning your mistakes.

Values: our purpose and values which bring to life WellingtonNZ's aspired culture.

Purpose	To make the Wellington region thrive as a place to live, visit, study, work, do business, and invest
Better together	• We are collaborative • We back each other • We celebrate our differences and experiences • We create and share ideas together • We focus on teamwork and empower individual brilliance
Passionately curious	• We are brave • We think differently and give it a go • We seek to understand before being understood • We embrace the possibilities of tomorrow
Choose joy	• We bring and share joy in our work everyday • We celebrate our wins and learn from our losses • We have fun and get the mahi (work) done • We give praise and recognition