



31 March 2010

NZahead launched

NZahead comprises 16 societal performance measures for New Zealand, categorised into social, economic, and environment. The measures are available at www.nzahead.org

Trends, comparisons with other countries, grades and proposed targets for 2015 are provided, along with text explaining why the measure matters, how New Zealand is performing and what is being done to improve the measure.

The project has helped the team here to better understand New Zealand's strengths and opportunities for improvement and will be used to inform the Institute's work program.

[Click here](#) to read the opinion piece summarising the overall conclusions.

World Economic Forum

Each year the World Economic Forum compiles the Global Competitiveness Index. Last year 133 countries were included and the index provides a wealth of comparative data for the countries.

The information is very helpful for the New Zealand Institute, as we often use the data for our research. It is important to have New Zealand included.

Much of the data for each country is collected from a survey of business leaders. It is always a struggle in New Zealand to get enough people to complete the survey so this is a plea for your help. If you are a business leader and would be willing to participate in the survey let us know and we will include you if we can. Please email Lisa_Bailey@nzinstitute.org

Standing on the shoulders of science

The [discussion paper](#) focused on getting better value from New Zealand's innovation ecosystem has been well received; feedback indicates it is regarded a very good guide to what needs to be done to lift performance.

The New Zealand Institute is now working to make the proposals more operational and to advocate adoption.

A follow-on project, working with many participants in the innovation ecosystem, has been launched to 'ensure supply of talent and capital'. That project has three phases; understand the gap, develop solutions to close the gap, and identify how the solutions will be implemented.

We have established dialogue with the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology to ensure stronger 'market input earlier' in the research and development process. The Institute is also advocating stronger governance input for public research funding decisions where the purpose is commercial results. It is important to gain input from people who have direct experience of the formation and development of new businesses targeting international markets.

The solution proposed for 'managing the innovation ecosystem as a whole' is to establish an innovation council chaired by the Prime Minister.

[Click here](#) to read an opinion piece calling for an innovation council.

Encouraging a 'more supportive culture' is being progressed by defining the desirable cultural characteristics in a positive way and communicating what should be taught to ecosystem participants, to educators, and others.

The CRI Taskforce considered the proposals in *Standing on the shoulders of science* when forming recommendations. However, the question of how commercial opportunities should be transferred from within the CRI's to businesses is still being worked on.

In conclusion, the five proposals from *Standing on the shoulders of science* are all being progressed.

The New Zealand economy

The New Zealand Institute has joined the conversation about improving the economy. The importance of the opportunity from innovation is being highlighted.

Further, an investigation of reasons for the GDP per capita gap with Australia has been launched. Work to date has revealed that the labour productivity gap exists in all major sectors of the economy and that innovation performance and capital availability are two important reasons why New Zealand underperforms.

[Click here](#) to read an opinion piece on these conclusions.

Further work in April and May will focus on the contribution of the quality of the workforce to the GDP per capita gap.

Navigating the 21st Century

A brief and high level presentation on how the 21st Century might unfold, identifying some implications for New Zealand, is loaded onto the website. The content is best understood as a presentation where there is an opportunity for questions and answers. However, the document on the website should make the overall argument clear.

[Click here](#) to read this presentation.

Staff news

The New Zealand Institute is delighted to announce that Catherine Harland will join the team as a Project Leader in May. Catherine trained as a social scientist and has worked as a market researcher, a local government politician, a manager within a central government agency, a consultant in the local government sector and a policy analyst. Catherine is keen to contribute her public sector knowledge, research and administrative skills to lifting the level of debate, and helping improve New Zealand's future.

Dan Bidois, our researcher, will leave the Institute in August to take up a Scholarship to pursue public policy studies in the US. We congratulate him on his admission to Harvard's MPP program.

Thank you for your interest in The New Zealand Institute.

Dr Rick Boven
Director