

Who are we?

Southland Mature Employment Services (SMES) Ltd / Trust is a local registered charity that has assisted mature individuals to gain access to employment and is the Program Director of the New Zealand Champions.

What is this for?

New Zealand Champions was designed for SMES Ltd / Trust for employees in participating workplaces with workplace improvement ideas called the **New Zealand Champions Club** or those with promising new business ideas called the **New Zealand Champions Ideas Growth Fund**.

Interested in learning more or participating?
Check out our website!



nzchampions.co.nz

New Zealand Champions is administered for and on behalf of Southland Mature Employment Services (SMES) Ltd / Trust by Accounting Centre Southland.

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For more information, please contact Kerran Larson:
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Got a great idea for workplace improvement?



We want to hear it!

New Zealand ChampionsTM

**A new Southland incentive
for 2026 / 2027**



Are you an employee with an idea for workplace improvement?

- Employees in participating Southland workplaces submit ideas for workplace improvement in conjunction with their employer
- Ideas are assessed for suitability and viability using a local review panel and integrated AI software
- The best ideas are commended to their businesses
- These employees could be awarded up to \$1,000 and a Champions Trophy if their idea is accepted!

Terms and conditions apply.

New Zealand Champions was born from an idea of Kerran Larson, director and trustee of Southland Mature Employment Services (SMES) Ltd / Charitable Trust, about modernizing both the old “suggestion box” concept, and the process of attaining entrepreneurial funding. This was supported by fellow director / trustee Ruth Lieshout.

These ideas were in response to rising enquiries from mature employees seeking redeployment in Southland. SMES Ltd decided that their goal was to create a platform that fosters innovation, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship.

With the collaboration of Accountant Jayden Prattley, the idea grew into a dynamic initiative addressing declining employment opportunities while helping employees and entrepreneurs turn ideas into reality.



*Have a business idea?
Need some financial assistance to test it?*

- SMES Limited / Trust is offering grants to those with promising business ideas and who are needing finances to test their concept and turn it into a reality
- Get up to \$3,000 in incubator support, depending on the use of the funds
- Your idea will be reviewed using a local review panel and integrated AI software
- Your idea should lead to the potential creation of employment opportunities in Southland

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