

Pohiri (formal Maori welcome)

Te Arawa Specific Kawa / Protocol

Nau mai, haere mai ki Rotorua

Overview of the Pohiri process (cultural welcome) for the 2019 IUHPE World Conference Rotorua, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Te Arawa

Te Arawa is a confederation of Māori iwi and hapu (tribes and sub-tribes) based in the Rotorua and Bay of Plenty areas of Aotearoa New Zealand who trace their ancestry to the crew of the Te Arawa Waka (ocean faring vessel) that arrived centuries ago. It is the Te Arawa people who will lead and host visitors and delegates in all of the cultural protocols at the conference.

Te Arawa is a tribal area that is renowned for their use of strict protocols, particularly during the pohiri process. A general rule is to take cues from the tangata whenua (home people) and observe/respect their advice if it is given. Please ASK the conference organisers if you are unsure.

The karanga or call of welcome

Particular things to note for overseas visitors include the different roles of men and women during the pohiri process. Women are the first voice to be heard during the pohiri process with the karanga (calling) onto the marae. The karanga is traditionally carried out by a female. The caller for the tangata whenua holds the title of kai karanga and is the first to call. The caller who replies for the manuhiri (visitors and delegates) holds the title of kai whakatu. The purpose of the karanga is to weave a spiritual rope allowing safe passage for the manuhiri to enter onto the marae.

For this conference we will not be holding the pohiri at a marae (traditional meeting place) but at the Energy Events Centre (EEC) instead. Visitors and delegates should assemble for the pohiri outside the front of the EEC at least 15 minutes before the start of the pohiri. We advise participants to follow cues from the local participants.

The wero

The wero (challenge) is another part of the pohiri ritual that can be accorded on special occasions. Traditionally the wero was carried out to ascertain the intentions of the visiting group. Wero were executed by the fastest and fittest male warriors of the tangata whenua. The warrior carrying out the wero will usually place a taki (dart) on the ground in front of the visiting group. Dependent on the way in which the taki (dart) was placed down and picked up, would deem whether the manuhiri had come in peace, or with warlike intentions.

A wero will be laid down at the beginning of the 2019 IUHPE Conference at the Energy Events

Centre to open proceedings. Again follow cues and observe the process.

Moving into the venue

Generally, women will lead the visiting group onto the marae with men following close behind. In this instance the EEC will be the venue rather than a marae but all protocols will still be adhered to. The manuhiri (visitors and delegates) then proceed to walk slowly into the EEC Plenary hall. The kaikaranga (callers) from the host and visitors may karanga (call) to each other throughout this process. The leading kaikaranga for the visitors may stop temporarily at the entrance point (the entire visiting group will stop also) in order to remember those that have passed on. She will then continue leading the visitors into the whareniui.

Upon entering the building, the home people will guide the visitors to their seats.

There will be two sets of seats on the stage facing each other. These seats will form a paepae tapu (sacred speaking platform) for the formal speakers and dignitaries. Once everyone is seated, the home people will begin the whaikōrero (speeches) portion of the pohiri process.

Te Arawa usually observe a kawa/protocol whereby the speeches alternate between the home people and the visiting people. This can vary depending on the number of speakers and who are on the speaking platform. The kaikōrero will ensure that the home people are directed appropriately regarding this.

A waiata or song will follow every speech that is made from both the home people and the visiting people. This song is to show support for the speech that has just been given and it is appropriate for the entire visiting group to stand in support of their speaker even if you don't know the song.

The speeches will conclude with the home people. After this the paepae tapu will signal for the manuhiri or visitors to stand and move over to the home people's side to hariru or greet them with a hongiri. This is a chance to share the breath of life with each other and cement the union of the home and visiting people as one group.

Please note that Maori kawa/protocol separates what we call tapu (sacred) activities from noa (non-sacred) activities. Food/drink are considered to be noa or non-sacred and where possible should NOT be taken into EEC until after the pohiri has concluded. Please try to observe this important facet as much as possible. Other general rules to consider that are related to this and will keep you safe include the need to avoid:

- sitting on tables
- sitting on pillows used for your head
- loud talking during the speeches
- general misbehaviour

It is usual practice for a karakia (acknowledgement/ blessing) to be said before any meal. This will occur before every meal at the conference. Please do not begin to eat until this has occurred. If in doubt, wait to be told by the home people that it is ok to eat before starting.

Overall, we hope that the pohiri process is an enjoyable one for everyone involved. The rules

outlined above are a general guide to ensure you are safe throughout this process, however, a Conference organiser or representative will be with you throughout to clarify any other situations that may arise.

Glossary

Hariru Shaking hands or personal greeting after the speeches

Hongi Pressing of noses (signals the end of the pohiri process)

Kaikaranga Women who deliver the formal call of welcome

Karakia Sacred recital, prayer, spiritual acknowledgement

Karanga Call of welcome

Kawa Local protocols

Manuhiri Visitors

Māori Indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand

Paepae Tapu Sacred platform for speech making

Pōwhiri Formal welcoming process

Taki Dart

Tangata Whenua Locals, people of the land

Waiata Song, music

Wero Welcome challenge performed by a warrior

Whaikōrero Formal Speaker