



Pōwhiri process

Nau mai, haere mai! Welcome!

A traditional Māori welcome is called a pōwhiri. Marae are not the only places where pōwhiri take place; pōwhiri can happen almost anywhere.

The practice of pōwhiri entails the home people (tangata whenua) welcoming and hosting visitors (manuhiri) onto their home.

If this is to be your first pōwhiri experience the best way to be prepared is to arrive with an open mind and an open heart! Pōwhiri are held for the safety and wellbeing of both visitors (manuhiri) and home people (tangata whenua). We acknowledge you may feel intimidated before you arrive, however the pōwhiri process is a loving and respectful beginning of a new relationship.

Māori is the language used during pōwhiri. While pōwhiri may vary according to the occasion and the tribal area, Māori language still guides pōwhiri.

Before the pōwhiri (welcome)

It is considered impolite to join a pōwhiri once it is underway. Therefore, please arrive early and assemble as a group. Please also ensure that your group has a speaker and kaikaranga organised. If you wish, you may give a koha to the designated last speaker. However, please note that a koha will not be necessary on this particular occasion.

During the pōwhiri

During the pōwhiri we ask for all cell phones, cameras and video capturing devices to be turned off. We also ask if all participants could refrain from eating and drinking during the pōwhiri process. Failing to follow these simple rules is considered a breach of tapu (sacredness).

In terms of where you will be positioned during the process, you will essentially follow the lead of the primary kaikaranga.

All women will walk on with the kaikaranga and the men will follow the group of women.

When seating, we ask all men to seat themselves in the front rows and for all women to sit in the remaining rows behind the men.

Once seated, please do not walk in front of a speaker while they are speaking.

Upon the completion of the welcome, we ask you as the manuhiri to harirū (shake hands) and hongī (press noses) with the tangata whenua.

Glossary

Waharoa – Gateway to the venue

Manuhiri – Visitors

Tangata whenua – People of the land

Karanga – Call

Mahau – Veranda of the Marae

Kaikaranga – Woman who call to the people

Whaikorero – Formal Speech

Kaikorero – Male who speaks

Paepae – The seat where the speakers sit

Waiata - Song

Hariru – Shaking of hands, hongiri

Hongi – pressing of noses

Kawa – Rules set by the marae

Whare Kai – Dining Room

Tapu – Sacred

Noa – Not sacred (Normal)

Tangata whenua (home people/locals)

The tangata whenua are the local people. When they are welcoming and hosting a group, they are responsible for them. They begin the welcome when the group of visitors has assembled at the gate.

Manuhiri (visitors)

The visitors who have never been there before are known as waewae tapu (sacred feet). Distant visitors are known as manuhiri tūārangi (visitors from afar). Usually the group will organise their kaikaranga (caller), their kaikōrero (speakers) and collect koha (the donation) to be given to the tangata whenua.

Waharoa

The manuhiri meet at the front of the marae, outside the entrance in the area referred to as the waharoa, waiting to be called on.

Karanga

The karanga is an exchange of calls that takes place during the time a visiting group moves onto the marae or into the formal meeting area. The karanga indicates the start of the pōwhiri. A kaikaranga (caller) from the tangata whenua will begin to call and she will be responded to by a kaikaranga from the manuhiri. The manuhiri will begin to approach the tangata whenua and the calling will continue. The kaikaranga (women caller) stands at the front.

Haka pōwhiri

When the manuhiri are being welcomed onto the marae, the host people will sometimes welcome them with a haka pōwhiri (ritual action chant).

Paepae (Seating area)

Manuhiri move into the building and move to the seats allocated to them. The men sit in the front and the women at the back, with the kaikorero sitting on the paepae (bench for male speakers/leaders) at the front of the group of seats. Everyone remains standing until the Tangata Whenua motion everyone to sit.

Whaikōrero

Whaikōrero (Māori speeches) are given by both hosts and visitors on the marae. Tangata Whenua start the whaikōrero. The kaikōrero will stand and present their kōrero. This is followed by a waiata that the group sings in support of their speaker(s). The speaking role then moves to the manuhiri who follow the same process.

Waiata

At the conclusion of each speech the speaker and a number of supporters will sing a waiata (song). Often these are traditional waiata.

Koha

The koha is a gift by the manuhiri to the tangata whenua. It is usually placed on the ground by the final speaker from the manuhiri. Once the speaker is seated, someone from the tangata whenua will pick it up.

Harirū and hongī

At the conclusion of the formal proceedings the manuhiri will be invited to come and hongī (press noses) and harirū (shake hands) with the tangata whenua. The hongī is the process of sharing the breath of life.

Kai

After the Hongī, everyone then gathers in the Whare Kai where the formal process of the Powhiri is ended. Everyone has something to eat and drink to bring things back to noa and lift the tapu of the formal process.

We look forward to meeting you all!