

Ka mua, ka muri: Looking back for the future of impact assessment



46th Annual Conference of the International Association for Impact Assessment | 20-23 April 2027



FIRST ANNOUNCEMENT AND CALL FOR SESSION PROPOSALS

Session proposal deadline: 30 July 2026

With more than 50 years of formal, legislative impact assessment behind us, we are at a pivotal moment of global reflection and renewal:

- Are we using the accumulated knowledge and experience about IA to meet emerging challenges?
- Have we followed a steady path of progress, or experienced cycles of innovation and setback?
- What valuable approaches have we left behind that we now urgently need?
- What lessons can we apply to ensure that the practice of impact assessment improves in the future?

Inspired by the Māori proverb *Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua*—beautifully described by Dame Patsy Reddy, former Governor-General of Aotearoa New Zealand, as “look to the future while being mindful of the past”—IAIA27 challenges us to move forward with intention, wisdom, and courage.

This conference is your opportunity to help define the future of impact assessment.

We invite planners, practitioners, researchers, regulators, Indigenous leaders, community and industry representatives, and early-career professionals to bring forward bold ideas, critical reflections, and practical solutions. Together, we will explore how impact assessment can evolve to meet today’s complex environmental, social, and governance challenges.

Indigenous communities, in particular, have long developed deep and place-based understandings of environmental

systems—knowledge refined over centuries and embedded within culturally grounded management practices. Recognizing, respecting, and elevating Indigenous rights and knowledge systems is not only essential for equity, but vital for strengthening the future of impact assessment practice worldwide.

Conference streams include:

- The evolution of impact assessment: how did we get here, and where are we headed?
- Being adaptive: rethinking impact assessment in a rapidly changing world
- Revisiting past practice: lessons we should not have forgotten
- Respecting traditional, cultural, and local knowledge in impact assessments
- Indigenous-led impact assessment and management
- Changing baselines and the critical role of monitoring
- Learning from past cases to better predict future impacts
- General impact assessment and each of IAIA’s special-interest Sections

Join us in shaping the future of impact assessment by drawing strength from the past, embracing diverse knowledge systems, and reimagining what is possible. Your voice, your research, and your experience matter. The future is not predetermined. Let’s move it forward together.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Procedure

Conference submissions take place in three phases.

1. Session proposals. Session proposals are invited from early June to 30 July 2026. Accepted sessions are listed on the website.

2. Paper and poster abstract submissions. From 7 September to 2 November 2026, papers and posters are invited to the accepted sessions listed online. Accepted papers and posters with the primary author registered and paid by 13 January 2027 (**no exceptions**) are listed in the final program.

3. Papers for online proceedings. Paper and poster presenters are invited to prepare 5-page papers to be included in online proceedings. Instructions for paper preparation and submission are provided to authors upon acceptance of a paper or poster abstract.

How to submit a session proposal or a paper/poster abstract

Follow the instructions at <https://2027.iaia.org>.

Submissions as a session chair, session co-chair, or presenter/speaker are limited to one per person.

Language

Submissions should be in English. English is the primary language used at IAIA conferences.

Acceptance and registration

Session chairs and paper or poster authors will receive an immediate confirmation of successful online submission. If you do not receive a confirmation of submission, do not assume it has been submitted; please try again or contact IAIA HQ (jen@iaia.org) for assistance.

The Program Committee will notify session chairs of acceptance status for sessions by 31 August 2026.

Session chairs will notify authors of papers or posters of acceptance status by 3 December 2026.

All session chairs and presenting authors or speakers listed in the final program are required to submit a registration form, with full conference fees paid, by 13 January 2027 (**no exceptions**). *Please submit a session proposal or abstract only if you will have funding to cover your travel and registration and can register and pay by this date.* Individuals not able to comply with this registration requirement will not be included in the program and proceedings.

REMEMBER: Early registration will also save you money! IAIA does not have funds available to pay registration and travel expenses for program participants.

Sponsored meetings

Sponsored meetings in conjunction with the conference must be listed in the preliminary program and on the registration form. Please contact IAIA HQ (caitlyn@iaia.org) for a proposal form. Proposal forms are due by 3 August 2026.

www.iaia.org

IMPORTANT DATES *Mark your calendar!*

Training course proposals	■ 10 June 2026 Deadline for training course proposals (<i>no exceptions</i>)
Session proposals	■ 30 July 2026 Deadline for session proposals (<i>no exceptions</i>)
Paper & poster abstracts	■ 31 August 2026 Session chairs notified of acceptance status
	■ 7 September 2026 Paper and poster abstract submission opens
	■ Preliminary program information will be posted as it becomes available. Information will be complete by 1 October.
	■ 2 November 2026 Deadline for submission of paper or poster abstract (<i>no exceptions</i>)
	■ 3 December 2026 Authors notified of paper or poster acceptance status
Sponsored meetings	■ 3 August 2026 Proposal forms due
Registration deadline	■ 13 January 2027 Registration and payment deadline for presenters and all individuals to be listed in the final program (<i>no exceptions</i>)
Proceedings	■ 31 May 2027 Deadline for papers

Technical visits, training courses, and more

IAIA27 will offer conference sessions, training courses, sponsored meetings, technical visits, and networking events that will promote learning, networking, and making unforgettable memories.

- **One and two-day training courses** are offered in the two days prior to the start of the conference. Taught by experienced instructors, these courses cover a wide range of topics.
- **IAIA conferences offer 130+ technical sessions.** No matter your sector—academia, government, industry, donor, consultant, or other—there is something for you.
- **Technical visits** will be available before and after the conference. Hosted by IA professionals, participants will learn about projects in the region as well as experience some regional culture.
- **Networking events** such as the welcome reception, newcomer network, and banquet offer entertainment and opportunities to expand your network beyond your usual circle.



About Christchurch, New Zealand

Nestled on the east coast of Aotearoa New Zealand's Te Waipounamu South Island, Ōtautahi Christchurch is a vibrant city where innovation meets natural beauty. Known as the "Garden City," it blends historic charm with bold contemporary design, shaped by a remarkable spirit of recovery, resilience, and renewal. With the Ōtākaro Avon River winding through its revitalized center, easy access to beaches and the Port Hills, and the Southern Alps just beyond, Christchurch offers a unique balance of urban energy and outdoor adventure.