



The Charities Register: what's in it for the public, funders and other users?

In short, the Charities Register will help the public, funders and other users to make better-informed decisions about charities they may wish to support financially, volunteer for, or whose services they may wish to use.

What is the Charities Register?

The Charities Register is a "live" database of charities registered by the Charities Commission under the Charities Act. It holds information about the charities, their work, and their finances.

If a charity is on the Register it has proved to the Commission that it has a charitable purpose, and its name and officers comply with the Charities Act's criteria.

Anyone can look at the Register at **www.charities.govt.nz** to find specific information about charities - for example, their activities, charitable purpose, and financial position.

Why do we need a Charities Register?

The Register will help build and maintain public trust and confidence in the charitable sector by making information about charities easily and publicly available.

It can provide useful information to funders, the public, and others who may need to make important decisions based on the information it contains. It will also provide better information to government, from

which it can make more effective policy decisions.

Charities that want to be tax exempt on the grounds of charitable purpose must register with us before Inland Revenue will consider them as eligible for charitable tax exemptions. This is because Inland Revenue can be sure that every charity on our Register has met the criteria to be considered charitable under New Zealand law.

Depending on their policies, some funders may only release funding to charities listed on the Register. The reasons for this may vary but in some cases, this is because they can be assured that those charities are eligible for charitable tax exemptions, have been through the registration process, and met the statutory tests.

Does registration under the Charities Act affect a charity's legal status?

No. Registration with us does not incorporate a charity or impact on its legal status. Charities that wish to have the legal status of an incorporated entity must register with the Companies Office under

other Acts such as the Incorporated Societies Act, the Charitable Trusts Act or the Companies Act. This means that some charities will register with both the Charities Commission and the Companies Office.

Are all charities on the Register?

No. Registration is voluntary, so not every charity will choose to register.

How can the Charities Register help the public, funders and other users?

The Charities Register makes it easy for people to:

- search for information about the services of particular charities
- search for information about the charitable purposes of registered charities
- search for information about charities that have applied to them for funding
- find contact details of registered charities
- find out where a charity operates, the sector in which it works, and who its beneficiaries are
- find out how a charity is governed and who its officers are

- access financial and other information.

In short, the Charities Register will help the public, funders and other users to make better-informed decisions about charities they may wish to support financially, volunteer for, or whose services they may wish to use.

What information is on the Register?

The following information about each charity is publicly available on the Register:

- name, address and unique registration number
- names of the current officers and of all officers since the charity was first registered
- a copy of its rules
- the application for registration (including all required accompanying information and documents)
- financial information including annual accounts (after annual returns have been provided).



The Charities Commission restricts public access to certain information and documents if it considers it in the public interest to do so. This means that in some cases, we do not show particular information on the public Register.

How do people access the Register?

Anyone can look at the Register at www.charities.govt.nz to find specific information about charities – for example, their activities, charitable purpose and financial position.

Alternatively, people are welcome to enquire about a particular charity by calling our free information line 0508 242 748 or contacting us at info@charities.govt.nz or PO Box 8072, Wellington.

Further information

For more information about the Charities Register or registration under the Charities Act, please visit www.charities.govt.nz.

You can also call our free information line – **0508 242 748**.