



Health & Safety Guidelines – COVID-19

The government in Aotearoa New Zealand has recently updated their [COVID-19 policies](#). Under these new policies, organisations are now responsible for setting their own COVID-19 policies and culture to keep each other healthy, particularly those more vulnerable to the effects of the virus.

Given the circumstances, we have drawn from recommendations made by [Te Pūnaha Matatini](#) and [others](#) to create a COVID-19 policy intended to keep our He Pito Mata conference delegates as safe and healthy as possible.

Below we outline our COVID-19 policy for participation based on four interventions shown to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other viruses: (1) stay home if feeling unwell; (2) good indoor ventilation; (3) daily Rapid Antigen Test (RATs); and (4) indoor masking.

1. Stay at home if feeling unwell

If conference delegates feel unwell in any way (even if they test negative for COVID-19), we encourage them to stay at home or their accommodation. This will be one of the most essential aspects of keeping others at the conference healthy.

2. Indoor ventilation

Te Papa, being a national museum, is well insulated and ventilated. Te Papa operates with 10% fresh air and 90% recycled air. Both the fresh air and recycled air are filtered through pre-filters, primary filters and carbon filters.

The bulk of the building receives between 6-8 air changes per hour with specific areas such as toilets and workshops receiving up to 12 air changes per hour.

3. Daily Rapid Antigen Test

We encourage conference delegates and speakers to take a RAT each day before they attend the conference. We will also have on hand some free RATs available if participants start to feel unwell.

4. Masks

Wearing a mask is important because it not only lowers the chance that the masker will contract COVID-19, but it also reduces the chance that they will spread the virus to those around them. Although mask wearing is not compulsory, we are asking conference delegates to strongly consider wearing a mask when not eating, drinking or presenting.

Masks will be freely available to all attendees.

If you have any further questions please contact us at events@royalsociety.org.nz