



10 November 2017

## **A Decade of Infratil Sponsorship of Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand and the New Zealand Youth Choir**

Infratil has committed to extend its sponsorship of the New Zealand Youth Choir (NZYC) to 2021.

"This sponsorship will give Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand certainty of funding and help their planning" said Infratil Chairman Mark Tume. "It also means that Infratil will have been a supporter for a decade."

The New Zealand Youth Choir has achieved iconic status in New Zealand's choral sector after winning the 'Choir of the World' title in 1999 and several other major awards over the years including the recent win of the Grand Prix at IFAS 2016 at its last international tour to Europe. NZYC is comprised of 50 singers from around the country aged 18 to 25.

"Infratil's continued support means a lot to our young singers and our organisation", says Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand Chair Andrea Gray. "It allows us to continue delivering a high level of excellence for the singers' development, but also to work strategically with our colleagues in the New Zealand Secondary Students Choir."

Infratil has also increased its funding to help Choirs Aotearoa New Zealand more actively support the New Zealand Secondary Students Choir, which trains 13-18 year old singers and, like the New Zealand Youth Choir and Voices New Zealand, perform overseas and in New Zealand at functions of national significance.

The New Zealand Youth Choir plays a vital part in our choral 'eco system', the choral pathway and a professional pathway as musicians or high achievers in other fields. In its nearly 40 year-long existence more than 1,000 young singers have been trained since 1979.

Prominent former New Zealand Youth Choir include internationally renowned singers like Jonathan Lemalu, Teddy Tahu Rhodes, Anna Leese and the three Sol3Mio performers. Others go on to be music teachers from primary to tertiary level or contribute to their local communities by directing and conducting local community choirs. There are more than 21,000 registered choral singers, 230 chamber and community choirs and over 280 school choirs in New Zealand.

Andrea Gray said "This generous sponsorship will directly impact on over 100 young singers in the coming years, but will contribute to a wider and longer impact in the community."