

Dynamic new BYATA board revved up to get youth travel going!

The Backpacker Youth Adventure Tourism Association (BYATA) is excited to unveil its new board for the 2024/2025 term. The refreshed team is poised to lead BYATA in reigniting youth tourism and driving innovation.

BYATA maintains continuity within its core leadership with Haydn Marriner (Chair), Laura Crowther (Vice Chair), and the election of Brian Westwood as BYATA President.

Chair Haydn Marriner said, "I am thrilled to welcome our new and returning board members and leverage their expertise. Together, we're committed to advocating for the interests of youth and backpacker travellers while advancing new industry standards."

Returning board members include Brett Duncan from Adventure Hostels, Sarah Christie from JUCY and Star RV, Lucy Haslam from Kiwi Experience, and Chris Sperring from YHA. This solid foundation of skills and experience ensures the continuation of the extensive and complex work needed to safely navigate the youth and backpacker sector through the coming year.

New to the board are Matt Southerden from Stray Travel, Hannah Ploeger from Navigate Travel, and Drew Hamilton from Experience Co. Their fresh perspectives and industry expertise will inject new energy into BYATA's initiatives while providing broader sector representation on the board.

"The next two to three years will present challenges for our industry. The global tourism infrastructure we've relied on for the past 20 years is facing significant pressure. High travel costs, limited housing availability for workers, and increased levies and fees are all impacting the appeal of travelling and working abroad. However, within these challenges lie opportunities. It takes smart, passionate people to harness these, and I believe this board is brimming with the right talent to get our youth travel sector thriving," says Marriner.

BYATA is excited to welcome its new board. Their fresh energy and enthusiasm are set to propel the association forward. Their dedication and vision will be key to achieving our goals and fostering a vibrant future for youth adventure tourism.

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BYATA represents over 130 members from the accommodation, transport, attractions, and activities sectors. International youth travellers make up a significant portion of holiday arrivals, generating substantial economic impact.