

16th June 2022

To All Clubs and Regions

New Zealand Bridge Online Bridge Strategy Consultation: Call for Expressions of Interest

New Zealand Bridge has established a Working Group tasked with the development of a new strategy for the future of Online Bridge from 2023 and beyond. The strategy will be wide ranging and encompass online play (club sessions, general play and tournaments of all types and levels), online teaching, online learning, training and technical support. The Working Group has three members – Kate Terry, Chair, John Skipper and Sam Coutts.

We are about to embark on a major Consultation exercise [see the next page for more information and the timetable] with all key stakeholders and interested parties. The Consultation will include face-to-face meetings, Zoom/virtual discussions and written submissions. Prior to sending the Consultation questions next week we are seeking expressions of interest for the following:

1. **Club Feedback Meetings: We would like to hear from Clubs who are interested in hosting a meeting to give their feedback and contribute to the development of the Online Bridge Strategy.** This could be a face-to-face meeting or a video call using Zoom or similar. The Working Group, supported by other Board members plan to meet with a range of clubs, including those who are currently running online sessions and those who are not. This could be a meeting with your club committee or a town-hall style session, perhaps at the end of one of your playing sessions, where club members could hear a short presentation about the initiative and then give their feedback on the Consultation questions.
2. **Online Bridge Strategy Thinktank: We are seeking nominations for a Thinktank to work alongside the Working Group.** The Thinktank will be an integral part of the development of the Online Bridge Strategy. Membership will comprise one representative from each of our seven regions, this was supported at last weekend's National Conference, and around five individuals who bring the perspective of different stakeholder groups. The Thinktank will convene in early July. It will meet regularly from then until the close of the Consultation (12th August) and then at least weekly from Mid-August to late September. It is expected that meetings will be held using Zoom or similar.

If your club is interested in holding a Consultation meeting and/or you would like to nominate someone to join the Online Bridge Strategy Thinktank please contact Kate Terry, Chair, Online Bridge Strategy Working Group, kate.terry@nzbridge.co.nz. **The deadline for receipt of expressions of interest is 5pm on Wednesday 29th June 2022.**

ABOUT THE CONSULTATION

The Consultation will invite the views of all key stakeholders including:

- Regional committees
- Clubs
- Players (club players & tournament players; Junior, Intermediate & Open Grades; All Ranks)
- Directors
- Other interested parties

It will be more qualitative, inviting feedback and discussion, rather than quantitative (e.g. survey based).

There are a number of considerations which underpin our approach to the Consultation. These include:

- Inclusivity – all views are genuinely sought and welcomed
- The importance and place of face-to-face bridge. An important element of the strategy will be the interplay between face-to-face and online bridge and ensuring both formats are readily available to those who want to play them.
- Ensuring the new online bridge strategy encourages and enables:
 - Participation in the game of Bridge
 - Access to the game of Bridge
 - Enjoyment in the game of Bridge, including the social connection that is important to so many
- Acknowledgement of the huge number of current and future players who will never wish to play bridge online and those who may choose to play all or most of their bridge online
- Future proofing – this strategy is about 2023 and beyond, it will be regularly reviewed and will need to evolve over time. What will bridge look like in 2030?

Timetable

Date	Activity
WC 13 June	Notice to all stakeholders about Consultations, invitation to put themselves forward for meeting, also expressions of interest in being part of Online Bridge Strategy Thinktank
WC 13 June	Contact regional committees re face-to-face/Zoom meetings
WC 20 June	Consultation questions and process shared with clubs, regions & other stakeholders
30 th June-7 th July	Clubs and other stakeholders contacted and meetings scheduled Thinktank membership confirmed and 1 st meeting scheduled
July-Mid Aug	Meetings with regions, clubs and key stakeholders Thinktank meets to review meeting outcomes and start drafting strategy
Fri 19 th Aug	Consultation closes
WC 29 Aug	Draft Strategy shared with NZB Board
September	Working Group and Thinktank finalise strategy Strategy approved by New Zealand Bridge Board
30/9/22	Report back to New Zealand Bridge AGM New Zealand Bridge Online Bridge strategy shared with all clubs and regions

