

21st PECERA Annual International Conference
Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington, New Zealand

Visionary navigators: Advocating for children, families and early childhood education.

Announcing the deferral of the conference until 2021

Our warmest greetings to you all.

At this time of unprecedented upheaval and disruption to our daily lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we hope that you are all keeping safe and well.

Over the past three weeks as it has become clear that the COVID-19 situation will have an ongoing and significant impact on large gatherings and international travel, the conference organising committee and the PECERA International Executive Board have explored a range of possible options for this year's conference in great detail. As an organising committee, we are particularly appreciative of the advice and support from the Executive Board.

We wish to advise that the decision has been made to defer the conference until 2021. As you will appreciate, this decision was not made lightly, and we are disappointed that we will not be able to host you in Aotearoa New Zealand until next year.

A very large number of abstracts, for both posters and paper presentations, had been submitted for this year's conference. We will be contacting each submitter via email to offer the following options:

- 1) To hold the abstract over until the 2021 conference here in Wellington.
If submitters choose this option, we will continue with the review process and will advise on the outcome. We also intend to enable abstracts to be updated so that where presentations were reporting on in-progress research, further findings will be able to be included in the abstract and presentation.
- 2) To withdraw the abstract from this conference.
If submitters choose this option, we are able to offer the opportunity to have the abstract review process completed and, if the abstract is accepted, issue a certificate of acceptance and citation that can be used as authentication that the abstract was accepted for the PECERA 2020 Annual International Conference.

A further call for papers will be made towards the end of 2020 for the 2021 conference.

A number of people have also registered for the conference. We will be in touch with you individually to ask you whether you would like your registration held over until the 2021 conference or your fee refunded.

We are very sorry that we have had to take the decision to defer the conference. However, the circumstances around COVID-19 are well beyond our control and, at the end of the day, we draw upon the words from a Māori song or waiata:

*Hutia te rito o te harakeke,
Kei whea te kōmako e kō?
Kī mai ki ahau;
He aha te mea nui o te Ao?
Māku e kī atu,
he tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata*

If the heart of the harakeke (flax) was removed, where will the bellbird sing?

If I was asked what was the most important thing in the world;

I would be compelled to reply,

It is people, it is people, it is people.

The actions by our governments (and those around the rest of the world) are being taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and thus to save the lives of many, many people.

Wherever you are, we hope that you and your families, your friends, your work colleagues and students are safe – and remain safe – over the coming weeks and months. And we look forward to the time when we can gather together for the conference in 2021.

With all our best wishes

Sue Cherrington

On behalf of the Conference Organising Committee