

NEWSLETTER

2nd half Highlights: July – Dec 2025

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PEARL OF THE ISLANDS
FOUNDATION INCORPORATED



NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As the new year begins, we take a moment to reflect with deep gratitude on the friendships, partnerships, and collaborations that have shaped PIF's journey. In 2025, PIF engaged in a wide range of initiatives aligned with our core pillars; dialogue, education, and humanitarian aid programs across New Zealand.



One of the year's most significant achievements was the opening of our new Youth & Community Centre, Elevate Youth. This centre represents an important step forward for PIF, a dedicated space where young people can learn, grow, and connect, and where our wider community can continue to gather and build strong, supportive relationships. Our representation of Aotearoa at international platforms such as International Festival of Language & Culture (IFLC) and the Sustainable Development Goals Conference (SDGs) 2025 was another meaningful milestone that highlighted our shared values on the global stage.

In this newsletter, you'll find highlights from the second half of 2025, showcasing interfaith collaborations, cultural programs, and community outreach initiatives. These stories reflect our ongoing commitment to fostering dialogue, strengthening education, and serving communities across Aotearoa's rich multicultural landscape. Each initiative, conversation, and shared experience has strengthened our vision of a more inclusive and compassionate society.

As we step into 2026, PIF remains steadfast in its mission to promote understanding, connection, and service through meaningful action. We look forward to continuing this journey together and deepening our impact through shared purpose and collaboration. May the new year bring renewed hope, unity, and kindness to all.

- Yalcin Solak -

ELEVATE YOUTH - NEW YOUTH & COMMUNITY CENTRE OPENING



We are proud to announce the opening of our new Youth & Community Centre in Avondale! The vibrant facility features meeting rooms, a sports area, a library, a community gathering space, and a prayer room, serving as a hub for youth and community initiatives.

This centre was made possible through the generous support of Always Ethical, whose commitment to empowering communities has been instrumental in turning this vision into reality.

Saturday and holiday school programs for community children have already been successfully conducted, and we look forward to creating many more opportunities for learning, connection, and service. PIF remains dedicated to fostering youth development and strengthening community engagement through meaningful initiatives.



NEW ZEALAND DELEGATES SHINE AT SDGS 2025 IN NEW YORK

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Conference 2025, organized by the Journalist and Writers Foundation (JWF), US in alignment with the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), brought together global leaders, diplomats, academics, and activists to discuss actionable solutions for sustainable development, peace, and social justice.



Alison Mau, Co-Founder of TIKA, represented Aotearoa at SDGs 2025, speaking on the growing threat of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. Her insights highlighted the urgent need for global awareness, policy intervention, and collaborative action to protect vulnerable communities.

Rahul Watson Govindan, Advisory Board Member of PIF represented New Zealand as the moderator for Round 1: The Role of Interfaith Dialogue for Sustainable Peace and Development. Rahul shared his expertise on how interfaith engagement fosters understanding, cooperation, and long-term peace, encouraging open dialogue and diverse perspectives for practical pathways toward collaboration.



Our New Zealand delegates also participated in a high-level reception, a memorable Manhattan Cruise Tour, and institutional visits during their US tour, offering a unique opportunity to connect with participants from 30 countries, a perfect blend of culture, networking, and celebration on the journey toward sustainable peace and development.



SYDNEY STUDY TOUR 2025



PIF Advisory Board members, management, together with the Little Pearls management team and teachers, participated in a study tour to Sydney.

As part of the visit, the group toured Amity College schools and early childhood centres, engaging in meaningful discussions and exchanging valuable insights on best practices in education and community engagement.

The tour also included team-building activities, giving participants the opportunity to explore Sydney's iconic landmarks and strengthen connections across teams.

It was an enriching and memorable experience for all involved.

IFLC SYDNEY: CELEBRATING CULTURE AND TALENT

This year's International Festival of Language and Culture (IFLC) in Sydney concluded on a high note, bringing together students from 12 countries to showcase their incredible talents on a single stage. The IFLC, held every two years, is a prestigious platform where young performers celebrate their cultural heritage while fostering intercultural understanding and global friendships.

PIF was proud to represent New Zealand at the event, performing the Haka and a traditional Maori dance, sharing our rich cultural traditions with an international audience. It was a vibrant and inspiring celebration, and we are truly grateful for the opportunity to connect with Kiwi culture and participate in such a meaningful experience.



ABRAHAMIC INTERFAITH DIALOGUE 2025



The Abrahamic Interfaith Dialogue 2025 series brought together communities in Auckland, Wellington, and Dunedin, uniting Muslim, Jewish, and Christian voices in meaningful dialogue centred on faith, hope, and spiritual resilience.

The Auckland gathering, the 7th in the Children of Abraham series, was proudly presented by Holy Trinity Cathedral in collaboration with PIF and Beth Shalom Progressive Congregation. Speakers from the three faith traditions reflected on the theme “Women of Faith,” sharing profound insights into figures such as Mary, the mother of Moses, Hajar, and Khadijah. Their stories highlighted the strength, courage, and lasting impact of women in scripture, offering inspiration across generations.



In Wellington, the dialogue continued with faith representatives offering reflections under the theme “New Beginnings, New Hope: Faith Responses in a Changing World.” Their contributions explored how faith communities can nurture hope, compassion, and resilience in today’s rapidly changing environment. The evening also featured a beautiful musical performance from all three traditions, creating a heartfelt expression of unity and shared hope for the future.



The Dunedin event, originally cancelled due to severe weather, was later held successfully online, once again embracing the theme “Women of Faith.” Christian, Jewish, and Muslim speakers shared inspiring reflections on faith, wisdom, and unity, reaffirming the importance of interfaith understanding and connection during challenging times.

CELEBRATING HARMONY AND SHARED VALUES: FRIENDSHIP EVENTS WITH SEOULURIM CHURCH



We were honoured to partner with Seoulurim Church for a meaningful cultural exchange celebrating dialogue, understanding, and friendship. The collaboration began with a presentation by PIF's Youth and Community Engagement Coordinators to a visiting group from Korea, introducing the basics of Islam, the mission of PIF, and the shared moral values found in Islam and Christianity. The group also visited a local mosque, engaging in open and respectful conversations about faith and community life.

The exchange concluded with an Evening of Friendship, a vibrant celebration featuring haka performance, Korean musical, drama performances, traditional singing, and a shared dinner.

This initiative was a true reflection of unity in diversity and the inclusive spirit of Aotearoa New Zealand. PIF extends heartfelt thanks to Seoulurim Church for their partnership in fostering intercultural and interfaith friendship.

EMPOWERING OUR COMMUNITY WITH WATER SAFETY SKILLS

With the support of Drowning Prevention Auckland, PIF recently delivered a series of water safety sessions for our community members. The programme began with an engaging awareness session that covered essential knowledge on staying safe around water, highlighting key risks and practical steps to prevent drowning.

The initiative also included a hands-on pool session, where participants learned vital skills such as how to respond in a drowning situation and how to safely assist someone else in distress. These interactive exercises helped build confidence and equipped attendees with life-saving techniques that can make a crucial difference in emergencies.



GLOBAL FRIENDS MEET-UP

A vibrant evening of food, culture, and connection brought together our Iranian, Turkish, and Russian friends as part of the Global Friends Meet-Up with Roskill Together and Welcoming Communities. The gathering celebrated diversity and friendship, creating meaningful moments of sharing and understanding.



STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY THROUGH DIALOGUE AND CONNECTION

PIF welcomed Board Members and Imams from the Mt. Roskill and Pakuranga Mosques, creating a warm space for rich conversation and renewed commitment to working together.



Our monthly dinner meet-ups with members of the Asylum Seekers Support Trust also continued, each one strengthening our growing partnership.

We were also delighted to host a networking session and dinner with our Afghan brothers, providing an opportunity to reconnect, deepen relationships, and share conversations that foster unity and mutual respect.



These gatherings reflect the heart of PIF's dialogue initiatives, bringing people together across cultures and backgrounds through shared experiences, meaningful engagement, and a commitment to peace and understanding.

PROMOTING HEART HEALTH IN OUR COMMUNITY

With the support of the Heart Foundation, PIF hosted an insightful awareness session on the importance of maintaining a healthy heart. Participants gained valuable knowledge on heart-healthy habits, risk factors, and practical steps to support long-term wellbeing. A free blood pressure check was also offered following the presentation, giving attendees an opportunity to assess their own heart health.



ART MASTERCLASS WORKSHOP FOR ŌTARA-PAPATOETOE COMMUNITY



We extend our sincere gratitude to the Ōtara-Papatoetoe Local Board for their generous funding support, which made it possible to host a joyful Turkish Lamp Making workshop for the local community.

Residents and members of the local business community enjoyed a vibrant, hands-on creative experience, crafting their own mosaic lamps in a session delivered by Art Masterclass NZ, the creative initiative of PIF.

A special thank you goes to Manukau: Heart of the South for generously sponsoring the venue and helping bring this event to life.