

Board Member Candidate Information

APRIL 2025



Nau mai haere mai

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the OnTrack Racing New Zealand Board Member position. We have put together this information pack to help you consider the opportunity.

In this pack you will find:

- A copy of the advertisement
- Board meeting calendar
- An indicative recruitment timeline
- The OnTrack Story of Industry-Led Change
- OnTrack Charities Register documents can be [found here](#)
- More information about OnTrack can be [found here](#)

We are seeking 2–3 Board Members. These are paid positions and the remuneration is \$12K for Directors and \$18K for the Chair.

If you are interested in applying, please send your CV and Cover Letter to apply@amytea.co.nz before the closing date of **27 April 2025**. You are also welcome to call me to discuss the roles further.

Ngā mihi nui,

Jo Bell

021 173 3523 | jo@amytea.co.nz



Board Member



- Support mental health and well-being in the racing community
- Ensure a sustainable, productive future for NZ's racing industry
- Seeking a diverse range of skills and experience across 2-3 Appointees

Mō mātou | About Us

OnTrack was born out of a collective effort across the three racing codes to address mental health challenges within its workforce. Recognising the pressures of long hours, financial stress, and high expectations, OnTrack was developed as a mental health and suicide prevention programme tailored specifically for the racing community. The programme was developed through extensive industry consultation, to shape the programme and build ownership.

OnTrack provides practical tools like training programmes, peer support networks, and suicide prevention courses. We also feature an accreditation system that encourages workplaces to commit to mental well-being, offering measurable benchmarks for progress. Our field-based team ensures that support is available where it's most needed—at race meetings, stables and events.

Our long-term goals include normalising mental health conversations in the workplace and establishing New Zealand as a leader in workforce well-being and suicide prevention. With backing from key stakeholders and funding partners, OnTrack is set to continue its work, contributing not only to improved mental health outcomes but also to greater workforce sustainability and productivity in the racing industry.

Mō tēnei tūranga mahi | About this role

We are now seeking 2-3 new Board Members to join our Board in 2025.

Key Responsibilities will include:

- Providing strategic direction and oversight for OnTrack's initiatives
- Helping foster relationships with key stakeholders and partners

- Ensuring the organisation's activities align with its mission and values
- Promoting mental health and well-being within the racing community and establishing New Zealand as a leader in workforce well-being and suicide prevention.

This is a paid governance role with an expected commitment of approximately 6-8 hours per month.

Ko wai koe | About you

We are seeking a broad range of skills and experience for these appointments to ensure diverse representation of views and expertise across the Board.

At least one of the appointees will ideally have a deep understanding and passion for grassroots racing, preferably with experience in the field.

Other attributes across the Board Members will include strong communication, collaboration and stakeholder engagement skills. Experience in governance, leadership, or industry advocacy would be beneficial, but above all will be your deep commitment to our mission and values.

The Board will instigate an internal process to appoint a new Chair, once these appointments have been finalised.

Me pēhea te tuku tonu | How to apply

To apply, please email your cover letter and CV to apply@amytea.co.nz

Applications close Sunday, 27th April 2025.

You must have the right to live and work in Aotearoa New Zealand to apply for these roles.

Board Calendar



Early June/July – date TBC

In person



Tuesday 19 August

Online



Tuesday 21 October

In person



Tuesday 9 December

Online

Recruitment timeline



Sunday 27 April

Role closes



Friday 9 May

Review of applications completed



Monday 19 May

Panel interviews this week (dates TBC)



Late May– early June

Appointments confirmed

The OnTrack story of industry-led change



The New Zealand racing industry is more than a sport – it's a way of life.

For the 40,000 people who dedicate their days to the track, from stable hands, trainers, and jockeys to administrators, racing is not just a job; it is an identity. It is a world built on passion, resilience, and a deep sense of camaraderie.

Racing in New Zealand operates under three distinct codes, Thoroughbred, Harness, and Greyhound racing. Together, they form the backbone of an industry that generates significant economic value. Yet behind the thrill of the race lies a tougher reality. The long hours, financial pressures, and relentless expectations take their toll. Research conducted in 2024 by Griffith University revealed some alarming findings: 42% of industry participants experience moderate to severe depression, and 11% have considered suicide. These figures highlight a

significant challenge that affects not only individuals but the sustainability of the industry itself.

For too long, struggles with mental health have been an unspoken part of the industry, tucked away behind a culture of stoicism and silent endurance. Recognising these challenges, racing industry leaders took decisive action, establishing a dedicated mental health and suicide prevention programme tailored specifically to the unique context of racing.

OnTrack was not created as an outside intervention, but as a movement from within, with a commitment to empowering the racing workforce to look after one another.



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Entain



SUPPORTED BY



The power of racing's collective identity

Racing's identity is shaped by a community, shared experiences, and loyalty. This strong social identity is the industry's most powerful asset.

The racing community has always been characterised by its tight-knit, family-like atmosphere, where participants are united by their love for their animals, competition, and tradition. This deep sense of belonging has long been the industry's greatest strength. OnTrack honours this by building on the strong foundations of connection and camaraderie. Now we have the opportunity to channel that collective spirit into creating a culture where looking out for one another is simply part of who we are.

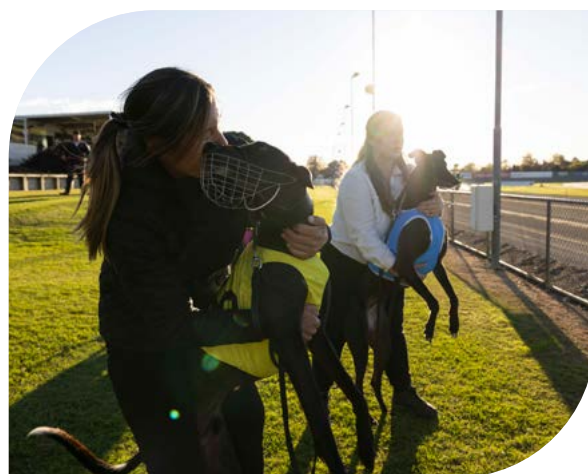
"We're tough, but even the toughest have breaking points. We just never talked about it before."

INDUSTRY PARTICIPANT, 2024

OnTrack's approach is grounded in the Social Identity Model for Collective Action (SIMCA), which recognises that people are most likely to take action when they:

- Feel connected to a group identity (Racing's tight-knit community)
- Recognise a shared challenge (mental health issues and stigma)
- Believe in their collective ability to create change (Empowering industry participants with lived experience as Champions)

By leveraging these three socio-psychological factors, injustice, efficacy, and identity, OnTrack transforms mental well-being from an individual burden to a shared community responsibility. This identity-driven strategy doesn't just change behaviours, it reshapes cultural norms, driving sustainable change through the power of collective action.



Learning from the racing community

OnTrack did not begin with solutions, it began by listening. Through a year-long consultation process, voices from across the industry were heard.

OnTrack began with a comprehensive research approach, encompassing six methodical phases:

1. A global scan of international interventions
2. Review of existing mental health initiatives in New Zealand
3. Industry-wide survey conducted by Griffith University
4. Establishment of steering groups and industry leads
5. Focus groups to gather qualitative insights
6. Direct conversations with industry participants

This thorough approach ensured that OnTrack was built on solid evidence whilst ensuring the voices of racing were heard and the approach remained relevant to the specific culture of racing.

A critical insight emerged early, traditional help-seeking approaches would face significant barriers in an industry characterised by stoicism and self-reliance. Instead, OnTrack adopted an innovative help-offering framework that aligns with the industry's existing strengths of camaraderie and collective responsibility.



Watch our video



"You have done a lot of research in the industry so a relationship can be developed."

INDUSTRY PARTICIPANT, 2024



Working together, the co-design approach

Unlike external interventions that often face resistance, OnTrack was developed through extensive industry consultation. Steering groups and industry leads represented all three racing codes, ensuring comprehensive buy-in from across the sector.

“Looking forward to see what else you guys achieve in this space! The work you are doing is so very important and much needed,” commented an industry participant following initial presentations.

The Strategy Workshop marked a significant milestone in OnTrack’s development. For the first time, industry representatives united to collectively envision a mentally resilient future for New Zealand racing. Through structured collaboration, participants:

- Unified around a common purpose to address mental health stigma
- Developed a clear vision through to 2028
- Identified specific, measurable outcomes for the programme

From this workshop emerged the Programme Logic, a strategic framework that aligns all activities with the industry’s long-term objectives. This framework ensures that investments in mental health support directly contribute to workforce sustainability and industry productivity.

The message was clear, mental health challenges were real, but so was the willingness to address them.

This collaborative approach transformed potential resistance into ownership and engagement. When participants recognised their own experiences reflected in the programme design, they became advocates rather than merely recipients of support.



“Understanding how important listening is and how to move forward in helping those that need help.”

ONTRACK CHAMPION, 2024

A structure built for racing

The insights gathered shaped the foundation of OnTrack. By embedding itself in the racing world, OnTrack ensured that support was not an external force imposed on the industry, but a framework owned and led by the people within it.

OnTrack's programme was designed to be practical, accessible, and deeply integrated within the industry's existing structures:

- **OnTrack to Action and OnTrack Yacks**
Industry-wide awareness training designed to reduce stigma and initiate supportive conversations.
- **OnTrack Champions**
A network of trained peer supporters embedded within the racing community, equipped to identify signs of distress and connect people into appropriate support.
- **OnTrack to ASIST**
Suicide First Aid for those who feel they can contribute by providing comprehensive skills for intervention during crisis situations.

OnTrack works for everyone, no matter their size

OnTrack works for everyone, no matter their size

We know that not everyone in racing works in a large organisation or club. In fact, many people in our industry operate with just one or two staff, or even work on their own.

That's why OnTrack is built to be flexible and accessible. Whether they're a trainer with one stable hand, a jockey, a farrier, or a small community club, everyone can be part of building a stronger, more connected racing family.

No big teams or a big budgets are necessary, just a willingness to look out for each other. Having one person trained as a Champion can already make a difference.

Together, small steps create powerful change.

"Talking to someone who gets it, who's been there, that's what made the difference for me."

ONTRACK CHAMPION, 2024



Leaders from within

The OnTrack Champions Programme represents a key innovation in the industry's approach to mental health. Unlike traditional support services that exist outside daily operations, Champions are trusted peers who understand the unique pressures of racing from firsthand experience.

This strategic investment in peer leadership creates several advantages:

- Increased accessibility of support within the workplace environment
- Enhanced credibility through shared industry experience
- Sustainable support embedded in existing structures
- Cultural change driven from within rather than imposed externally

"I am new to the racing industry but can relate due to my own experiences," shared one participant, demonstrating how personal connection enhances engagement with the programme.

"The content of this programme was highly effective, one of the best presentations I've ever experienced. Good reiteration of key messages, clear answers for questions."

ONTRACK CHAMPION, 2024



Setting new standards in the workplace

To ensure lasting change, OnTrack established an accreditation framework that formally recognises workplaces committed to mental well-being. This structured approach:

- Establishes consistent industry standards
- Requires 80% workforce training and at least one Champion per 10 workers
- Creates measurable benchmarks for progress
- Offers tangible benefits for recruitment and retention

“That the industry is taking mental health seriously and being proactive in a very sensitive area,” observed one participant, highlighting how accreditation signals organisational commitment to staff wellbeing.

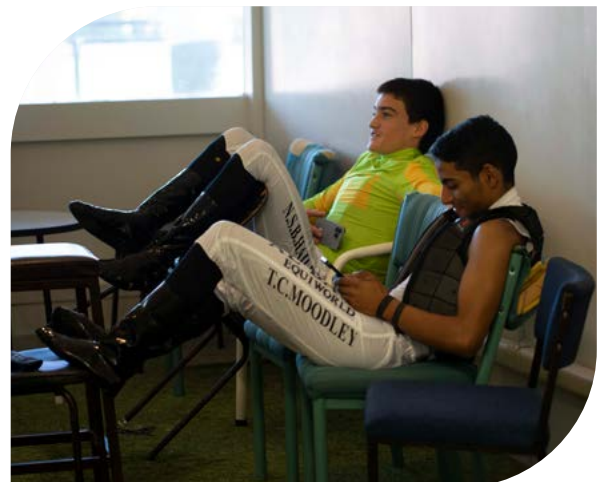
Beyond Training

Unlike traditional mental health programmes that operate from a distance, OnTrack’s field team is present where racing happens, at race meetings, stables, and events. This presence reinforces the collective identity and normalises mental health conversations in real-time.

The role of the OnTrack Community Support Champion provides direct case management support to workers and their families when things are getting tough. Working together, they develop individual support plans, connect people to services, and maintain contact to ensure the plan is working. This proactive, field-based approach reinforces OnTrack’s visibility and trustworthiness, ensuring participants feel supported within their familiar surroundings.

“It’s about being there for each other, not waiting for someone to ask.”

ONTRACK CHAMPION, 2024



Measuring impact & ensuring sustainability

In partnership with Griffith University's Australian Institute for Suicide Research and Prevention, OnTrack has implemented a comprehensive evaluation framework that tracks:

- **Short-term outcomes:** Awareness, stigma reduction, and mental health literacy
- **Medium-term outcomes:** Behavioural change and leadership development
- **Long-term outcomes:** Reduced suicide rates and improved workplace culture

This evidence-based approach enables continuous improvement while demonstrating return on investment to stakeholders and funders.

Financial Foundation for Growth

OnTrack is funded by TAB NZ and Entain Group, with backing from the codes and many industry stakeholders. This reliable funding base enables:

- **Comprehensive programme design and delivery**
- **Research and evaluation in partnership with Griffith University**
- **Strategic growth of the Champion network**
- **Ongoing field presence at racing venues**

This financial stability reflects the industry's recognition that investing in mental wellbeing represents a sound business strategy for long-term sustainability.

Value Beyond Mental Health

OnTrack delivers value that extends beyond mental health outcomes. By addressing workplace culture and psychosocial hazards, the programme contributes directly to:

- **Enhanced workforce retention in a competitive labour market**
- **Reduced absenteeism and increased productivity**
- **Improved industry reputation**
- **Long-term industry sustainability through workforce development**

"Keen to help further in any way I can," offered one participant, demonstrating the programme's success in building engagement and ownership.

Looking to the Future

Looking ahead to 2028, OnTrack envisions a racing industry where:


- **Mental health conversations are normalised within workplace culture**
- **The Champion network provides consistent, accessible support across all three codes**
- **Accredited workplaces set the standard for the industry**
- **New Zealand racing is recognised internationally for its approach to workforce wellbeing**

By creating a scalable and culturally adaptable model, OnTrack hopes to share its model with other racing jurisdictions, positioning New Zealand as an international leader in mental well-being and suicide prevention.

While challenges remain, the programme's evidence-based, co-designed approach positions it for sustainable impact across the racing industry.

"So grateful that this initiative is happening in our industry, great work OnTrack," summarised one participant, capturing the positive reception to date.





“Just knowing
there’s someone
at the track who
gets it, who’s there
to help, makes a
huge difference.”

INDUSTRY PARTICIPANT, 2024





Building a stronger racing community.

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ontrack.org.nz

