

## MCGUINNESS INSTITUTE MEDIA RELEASE – 28 MARCH 2016

### *Baby Box, Same Idea, Different Continents*

#### **TacklingPovertyNZ Workshop**

**Queenstown, 29 March 2016**

Wendy McGuinness is thrilled to announce that Jennifer Weber, the Chief Education Officer from [The Baby Box Co](#) is joining us in Queenstown on Tuesday, 29 March 2016 (tomorrow) at the start of the *TacklingPovertyNZ* tour. “Jennifer is based in Alberta, Canada and was flying to Australia to meet with officials and staff there. When she heard about the workshop and what the 36 *TacklingPovertyNZ* participants were doing, she decided to fly over and meet them in person.”

You can learn more about their recommendations in the *TacklingPovertyNZ* booklet, found [here](#).

Below is an image of the *TacklingPovertyNZ* booklet and December 2015 participant, Lydia Hollister-Jones, presenting the New Zealand Treasury Chief Executive Gabriel Makhoul with a baby box at the [3 March 2016](#) event at the New Zealand Treasury.



“Jennifer has agreed to join the Queenstown Lakes workshop as a speaker and a participant. I have asked Jennifer to share her experiences in Alberta where officials in the province of Alberta have rolled out a pilot scheme of the programme, providing 1,500 baby boxes (see more on this story below).”

Jennifer is also impressed with local initiatives to create a baby box for kiwi babies. “It is interesting to see the boxes sitting next to each other and to appreciate that the gap in baby care is apparent across the world.” Jennifer’s contact details can be found below.



See image and news article at [http://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our\\_stories/enthusiastic-response-to-pepi-packs/](http://ngaitahu.iwi.nz/our_stories/enthusiastic-response-to-pepi-packs/)



See image and news article about the Alberta experience at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/baby-box-canada-is-adopting-of-one-of-finlands-smartest-ideas-a6833376.html>

### About the Tour

- *TacklingPovertyNZ* is the second tour the McGuinness Institute has undertaken. The first was during 2014 with *TalentNZ* (where we visited Auckland, Gisborne, Napier, Hastings, Kaikoura, Christchurch and Dunedin – ending with a finale in Wellington). The *TacklingPovertyNZ* workshop is connected to the *TalentNZ* project, in that poverty often results in wasted talent.
- We learnt from the December 2015 *TacklingPovertyNZ* workshop in Wellington that poverty is personal and local. It can only be defined by those living in poverty and as such it is difficult to measure and assess. We learnt that a national conversation is needed, which means we need to not only go to local communities to understand what is happening, but also to share nationally what is working or not working.
- At the December 2015 *TacklingPovertyNZ* workshop, five councils showed a keen interest to engage. Each of these have been asked whether they would like us to organise a one-day workshop in their town, city or region. All five councils responded in the affirmative. These are: Far North District Council, Gisborne District Council, Manawatu District Council, Queenstown Lakes District Council and Rotorua Lakes Council.
- Queenstown Lakes District Council was the first to invite us and offered to be a test case in terms of collaboration and process – an offer that enables the Institute to test the process so that the workshops held in the second part of the year are useful and insightful. We thank Queenstown Lakes District Councillors and in particular Mayor Vanessa van Uden and Councillor Cath Gilmour for making this possible.
- Each one-day workshop will start with a presentation from six of the 36 diverse participants who came together in Wellington to produce the *TacklingPovertyNZ* booklet (published February 2016).
- The six [participants](#) (from the 2015 *TacklingPovertyNZ* workshop) who will be joining us in Queenstown include Ali Bunge, Monique Francois, Eden Iati, Elizabeth Maddison, Caitlin Papuni-McLellan and Regan Thwaites (left to right).



- At the end of each one-day workshop we will prepare a brief overview discussion paper describing what we found and what we learnt. We will try to map local issues and local solutions – ideally looking for solutions that might help other local communities. This paper will be public and given to the Chief Economist at the New Zealand Treasury. The overarching aim is to contribute to a national conversation on poverty reduction.

### **About Queenstown Lakes workshop 29 March 2016**

This one-day workshop is the first in a series sparked by the national *TacklingPovertyNZ* workshop held in Wellington over three days in December 2015. This initial workshop was an initiative of the McGuinness Institute in collaboration with the New Zealand Treasury. The tour aims to continue the national conversation on how to tackle poverty in New Zealand.

Participants will hear from the New Zealand Treasury's Chief Economist, Dr Girol Karacaoglu, and Dame Diane Robertson, Chair of the Data Futures Partnership Working Group, followed by local speakers. These presentations will provide a broad national and local context for the conversation around how to tackle poverty in New Zealand. The afternoon's discussions will focus on the challenges and opportunities facing the local community, and participants will then present their proposals for local solutions at a public event in the evening. The workshop will take place at the Queenstown Memorial Centre, 1 Memorial St, Queenstown, from 9.00 am to 5.30 pm. The workshop will culminate in a public presentation by the participants from 6.00 pm to 7.30 pm.

If you are interested in attending either the workshop or the public presentation that evening, please register your interest by emailing [qld.tacklingpoverty@qldc.govt.nz](mailto:qld.tacklingpoverty@qldc.govt.nz). Special thanks to local collaborators Queenstown Lakes District Council and Catalyst Trust, and local sponsors The Rees Hotel and Deco Backpackers.

### **About the December 2015 workshop**

In December 2015, the McGuinness Institute undertook a three-day workshop in collaboration with the New Zealand Treasury. The purpose was to explore ways to reduce poverty in New Zealand. To see the finale presentation, or those of speakers, please watch the Institute's YouTube [TacklingPovertyNZ Playlist](#). To read the participants recommendations [download](#) their booklet (published February 2016) or click [here](#) to learn more about the 2015 workshop.

### **About the McGuinness Institute**

The McGuinness Institute is a non-partisan think tank working towards a sustainable future, contributing strategic foresight through evidence-based research and policy analysis. We endeavour to undertake research that is independent, innovative and relevant in an educational, professional and ethical manner.

### **Links of interest**

*TacklingPovertyNZ* website: [www.tacklingpovertynz.org](http://www.tacklingpovertynz.org)

*TalentNZ* website: [www.talentnz.org](http://www.talentnz.org)

McGuinness Institute website: [www.mcguinnessinstitute.org](http://www.mcguinnessinstitute.org)

Baby Box Co website: [www.babyboxco.com](http://www.babyboxco.com)

Baby Box Australia website: [www.the-baby-box-co-australia.myshopify.com](http://www.the-baby-box-co-australia.myshopify.com)

### **Attachments**

1. A copy of the *TacklingPovertyNZ* booklet (published in February 2016). This booklet can also be found [here](#).
2. The *TacklingPovertyNZ Queenstown* workshop flyer.
3. The *TacklingPovertyNZ Queenstown* workshop programme.
4. A few photos of the baby boxes.
5. A few photos from the *TacklingPovertyNZ* workshop held in December 2015.
6. A photo and bio of Jennifer Weber

**For more about the Queenstown Lakes District Council workshop, please contact the following speakers**

Mayor Vanessa van Uden, Queenstown Lakes District Council

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Dame Diane Roberston, Chair of The Data Futures Partnership Working Group

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**For more information about Baby Box Co**

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**For more information about the tour**

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