

Job Description - Honorary Consul Kingdom of the Netherlands, Christchurch

Update: Jan 2026

Region: South Island, Stewart Island and Chatham Islands

Reports to: Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Wellington

Term: Up to five years, renewable once

Role overview

The Honorary Consul (HC) represents the interests and values of the Kingdom of the Netherlands under the direction of the Embassy in Wellington. The HC promotes strong, practical ties between the Netherlands and New Zealand—supporting consular assistance, facilitating cooperation in priority areas (such as water management, climate resilience, innovative and sustainable agriculture, logistics and maritime affairs, culture and science) and fostering cohesion and connection within the Dutch community across the South Island.

Honorary consuls act strictly within the framework of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and perform tasks only at the request, and under instructions, of the Embassy. They have no political mandate and do not engage in political activity.

Core values and conduct

The HC embodies the principles of Article 1 of the Dutch Constitution (equality and non-discrimination), operates with integrity, transparency, and discretion, and enjoys an excellent reputation. The HC understands local dynamics, speaks the local language(s) and English fluently, and preferably also Dutch, and is able to build trusted relationships across government, business, civil society, Māori and iwi partners, and with the Dutch diaspora and their organizations.

Key responsibilities

1. Consular services (primary duty)

Acting at the Embassy's request, the HC supports Dutch nationals facing emergencies or vulnerability, including:

- Assistance in cases involving hospitalization, death, missing persons, crises, natural disasters, welfare concerns, or detention.
- Support in crisis response and preparedness across the region ("eyes and ears" role).
- Issuing laissez-passers with prior approval from the Embassy.
- Maintaining regular outreach to Dutch nationals, new arrivals and long-standing residents, sharing reliable information about services and preparedness.

Honorary consuls do not issue consular certificates (e.g., certificates of life). Requests are referred to Netherlands Worldwide, unless the Embassy explicitly authorizes an exception due to local circumstances.

2. Economic, cultural, scientific and innovation ties

At the Embassy's request, the HC helps strengthen cooperation and business links — particularly in areas where Dutch and New Zealand priorities align:

- Water management, climate adaptation and disaster resilience
- Sustainable horticulture, ag-tech and food systems
- Flowers, plant innovation and biosecurity collaboration
- Maritime logistics, ports and dredging
- Clean energy, circular economy and innovation ecosystems
- Research, Antarctic and Southern Ocean science, and university collaboration

Activities may include:

- Connecting local stakeholders with the Embassy, RVO and relevant Dutch partners.
- Opening doors, troubleshooting and using existing networks to facilitate cooperation.
- Supporting trade missions, delegations, company visits and knowledge exchanges.
- Monitoring market, social and sector developments relevant to the Netherlands.

The HC does not relay political messages and undertakes economic promotion only when requested by the Embassy.

3. Supporting the Dutch diaspora and community cohesion

Working closely with the Embassy, the HC plays a visible, connecting role in the Dutch community across the South Island by:

- Encouraging cooperation between Dutch clubs, language schools, cultural groups and networks.
- Supporting community events, commemorations and heritage activities that strengthen belonging and identity.
- Helping connect new arrivals, students and entrepreneurs to community networks and relevant services.
- Hosting or facilitating information sessions on consular matters where useful (e.g., travel, emergencies, preparedness).
- Promoting inclusive community engagement that reflects Dutch values of openness and equality.

This role is community-building and facilitative — not political — and is always coordinated with the Embassy.

4. Representation and liaison (on request)

- Represent the Kingdom at commemorations, national days and official events.
- Assist with visitor programmes and accompany delegations.
- Support public diplomacy and cultural visibility of the Netherlands.
- Assist with naval or port-related visits when relevant.
- Monitor developments or legal proceedings involving Dutch nationals or Dutch interests and report to the Embassy.
- Undertake hospitality and project-related visits as agreed.
- Prepare annual financial statements and budgets for allowances in line with Ministry instructions.

Required qualities and skills

- Strong, active network across local government, iwi/Māori partners, business, academia and civil society.
- Excellent knowledge of local conditions and crisis environments on the South Island.
- Proven integrity, discretion and awareness of conflicts of interest (actual or perceived).
- Credibility and access to local authorities and community leaders.
- Fluency in English and local language(s); Dutch is an asset.
- Financial independence and the ability to host from one's own office base.
- Preferably a clear personal or professional link with the Netherlands.
- Energetic, empathetic, modern in outlook, collaborative and solution-oriented; strong interpersonal and communication skills.

Working style

The Honorary Consul is a trusted local partner: pragmatic, approachable, responsive in crises, and proactive in nurturing opportunities that strengthen the Netherlands–New Zealand relationship—while always acting within the Embassy's instructions and the legal framework governing honorary consuls.