

EMERGING TALENT MEMBERS IN FOCUS



The Emerging Talent Network has been established by Infrastructure New Zealand to develop the next generation of infrastructure leaders. In this changing COVID-19 landscape we will be profiling a different ET member working in a different part of the industry each week. If you would like to be profiled, or would like to nominate someone to be profiled, please answer the questions below and send your picture through to [Tara](#).

We would like to introduce Emily Aiken from KPMG in Wellington as this week's Emerging Talent Member in Focus.



EMILY AIKEN
ANALYST - DEAL ADVISORY



1. What organisation are you with, and what do you do day-to-day (normally)?

For just over the last year and a half, I've been working at KPMG in the Deal Advisory team. Our team works across a wide range of disciplines, such as transaction services, mergers & acquisitions, valuations, economics and restructuring & insolvency. As the Wellington team is in the government hub of NZ, a lot of work is infrastructure focused and this is my area of interest, especially the social side. My day-to-day routine varies substantially based on the projects I am on, and no two days in one week are the same, but days normally involve lots of spreadsheets, client meetings, and coffee.

2. How has your work changed since going into lockdown?

The biggest change for most people since lockdown is the shift to working from home, and the uptake of new technology to keep the ball rolling. For me and the team, we are still business as usual and if anything, are busier because of it. There's been an increased focus on 'checking in' on our clients, not only to see how our engagements with them are tracking but to see if there is anything else we can do to support them in these strange times.

3. What are the biggest successes/challenges with the new ways of working? (i.e., video conferencing, lack of events and in-person meetings, etc.)

Successes:

- Our team has adapted extremely well to shifting online and still working collaboratively; we've even managed to get a new starter on board! We have weekly team catch ups and have a 'Beer o'Clock' every Friday, as well as a very competitive Stuff quiz.
- Continuing to support clients, and identifying critical pieces of work we can do for them to help better position them in the current climate and business after COVID-19.

Challenges:

- Personally, separating work and home has been a huge challenge. Having a mini office set up in the spare room means that my laptop is always there, staring at me to log on and just check if anything has come through.

4. How is your sector of the infrastructure industry going and what are your sector's biggest needs right now?

Professional services firms have a unique opportunity to support both the private and public sector, providing guidance on how our clients can navigate through COVID-19. Due to the multiple government budget announcements, our team has seen a large increase in work to help various Ministries and Crown entities identify areas of their sector that require investment, and to facilitate the delivery of stimulus packages.

5. What changes to your work or sector will endure after the lockdown is lifted?

After lockdown is lifted, I feel that workplaces in general will be a lot more mindful of work/ life balance. I often used to feel guilty if I had to work from home, however now we have been working from home for 7 weeks it is apparent we are just as productive (if not more so!) working from home with less office distractions. Increased technology capabilities have shown that travelling for meetings is not as necessary for maintaining client relationships as once thought, which means travelling for work will not be required as often. I think this is extremely important from an environmental perspective, and hope that this is something that will remain in place.

6. What are your top tips and tricks for surviving and thriving in the COVID-lockdown landscape?

Where possible, keep pretending you are going to work and try establish that work/ home separation. I've found keeping my normal routines and 'getting ready' to go to work has really helped me to keep somewhat sane. I'm lucky to have an extremely open team, and having candid conversations about how we are feeling has been very beneficial. Also, snacks coffee and walks!

To learn more about opportunities for a career with KPMG click [here](#) or you can connect with Emily on [LinkedIn](#).

LEARNING IN LOCKDOWN

In this period of change and uncertainty, we have an opportunity to invest in ourselves, learn, and prepare for the new normal. Each week we will round up the webinars and resources we've come across that will be of interest to our members. If you would like to recommend a webinar to be included in next week's profile, please contact [Tara](#).

Thursday, 21 May 2020, 1:00PM | [Transitioning to a Productive, Equitable and Sustainable Economy with Minister James Shaw](#)

Monday 25 May 2020, 6:30PM | [Aotearoa Town Hall Part 5 - Aotearoa in the World](#)

Friday 29 May 2020, 11:00AM | [Flint CxObytes with Charlotte Walshe, CEO of Jade Software Corporation](#)

