Jiangxi Sister Province Strategy for NZ Local Government

Prepared by Eastern Bridge Limited
Author: Simon Appleton
Simon@easternbridge.co.nz
0223969590

Executive Summary

This strategy proposes a structured and collectively governed sister province relationship between participating New Zealand local governments, iwi, schools and Jiangxi Province, China. It has been designed to operate at provincial scale while preserving local autonomy, managing risk, and maintaining compliance with New Zealand law and local government mandates.

Jiangxi Province has a population of approximately 45 million and an economy operating at a scale far larger than that of any individual New Zealand council. Individually, most councils lack the scale, resourcing, and sustained international engagement capacity required to build meaningful relationships at this level. A collective model addresses this asymmetry. By working together under a shared provincial framework, councils and iwi aggregate scale, reduce duplication of effort, share cost, and present a more coherent and credible partner to Jiangxi authorities. This increases the likelihood of sustained provincial attention, coordinated work programmes, and practical opportunity development.

Key Framework Principles

- Enabling rather than prescriptive: Does not constitute a trade agreement or commit councils to specific projects
- No standing financial obligation: Costs arise only when councils elect to participate in specific initiatives
- Local autonomy preserved: Individual councils and iwi retain ownership of their direct friendship agreements
- Flexible participation: Engagement may range from light involvement to active programme participation

Governance is structured to separate political oversight from operational delivery. The provincial-level relationship is held collectively, either through Bay of Plenty Regional Council or a formally constituted Steering Group of participating councils and iwi. Eastern Bridge Limited acts as programme lead under clear oversight arrangements. The model embeds integrity controls covering travel, gifts, data handling, and reporting. All activity is subject to transparent, stage-gated opportunity tracking, quarterly reporting, and annual review. Withdrawal mechanisms are available to participating councils.

Conservative scenario modelling indicates potential for facilitated economic, education, tourism, and cultural exchange activity over a three-year horizon, subject to private sector and institutional participation. These projections represent enabled opportunity rather than guaranteed returns. Non-economic benefits, including youth mobility, volunteer programmes, iwi exchange, and institutional partnerships, form an integral part of the framework.

This proposal does not replace or duplicate central government functions and operates within established national policy settings. Its purpose is to provide a disciplined, transparent and scalable platform through which New Zealand local governments and iwi may engage internationally at a level commensurate with provincial China, while retaining local control and managing reputational and financial risk.

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Jiangxi Province and City Breakdown

Demographics

Jiangxi has a population of approximately 45 million, positioning it as a mid-sized Chinese province with significant domestic market depth. Recent data now shows a net population gain of 13,000, suggesting stabilisation rather than decline. While natural growth remains subdued, inward migration and internal economic rebalancing are helping offset demographic pressures. The province remains predominantly urban (63.8%), indicating ongoing structural transition from rural to urban settlement patterns.

1. Population Overview

Indicator	Value
Total Population (end-2024)	45.0 million
Urbanisation Rate	63.77%
Rural Population	36.23%
Net Population Change (2024)	+13,000
Net Migration Trend	Small inward-migration mostly from Guangdong
Internal Migration Trend	Urbanisation into Nanchang +102,200 in 2024

2. Age Structure (End-2024)

Jiangxi's age structure is relatively balanced but trending toward gradual ageing. Approximately 19.7% of the population is over 60, 19.6% under 15, and over 60% is working-age (16–59). This provides a substantial labour base today, though demographic ageing will increase fiscal and healthcare pressures over the next decade. The sizeable school-age and tertiary pipeline continues to support education and talent exchange opportunities.

Age Group	% of Population	Approx. Population (millions)
0–15	19.55%	~8.80m
16–59	60.73%	~27.33m
60+	19.72%	~8.87m

3. Education Enrolment (2023)

Level	Students (millions)
Kindergarten	1.61m
Primary School	4.23m
Junior Middle School	1.91m
High School	0.97m
University (Undergraduate)	1.05m
Graduate Students	0.04m

**Total tertiary (incl. postgrad): ~1.09 million students*

4. Urban vs Rural Population

Category	%	Approx. Population
Urban	63.77%	~28.70m
Rural	36.23%	~16.30m

**Comparison: Slightly more urbanised than China national average (~39% rural).*

5. Economic Structure (GDP Composition – 2024)

Jiangxi's GDP (RMB 3.42 trillion) reflects a diversified economy transitioning from agriculture toward industry and services. The tertiary sector now accounts for 52.4% of GDP, secondary industry 40%, and agriculture 7.6%. While manufacturing remains strong— particularly in EVs, lithium, copper, and solar—the expanding services sector and consumption growth signal structural upgrading aligned with China's broader economic transition.

Sector	% of GDP	Notes
Primary (Agriculture)	7.6%	Farming, forestry, fisheries
Secondary (Industry)	40.0%	Manufacturing, construction
Tertiary (Services)	52.4%	Finance, logistics, tourism, trade

**Key Point: Industry-heavy economy with strong service growth.*

6. Employment & Labour Indicators

Indicator	Value
New Urban Jobs Created (2024)	465,000
Estimated Urban Unemployment	~5.3%
National Urban Unemployment Benchmark	5–5.5%

**Precise sector employment splits (manufacturing, high-tech, R&D, tourism) are not separately published.*

7. Migration & Population Movement

Data indicates Jiangxi experienced net positive migration of 13,000 people, reversing earlier decline concerns. Migration flows are concentrated between Jiangxi and economically dynamic regions including Guangzhou (Pearl River Delta), the Yangtze River Delta (Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang), and the Beijing–Tianjin corridor. These circular migration patterns suggest labour mobility rather than permanent outflow, supporting skills transfer and remittance-based economic stability.

Indicator	Detail
Net Change 2024	+13,000
City Growth	Only Nanchang (+~102,000)
Migration Flows	Guangdong, Yangtze River Delta (Jiangsu/Zhejiang/ Shanghai), Beijing–Tianjin

8. Ethnic Composition

Jiangxi is ethnically homogeneous, with approximately 99.5% Han Chinese. Minority groups represent around 0.5% of the population. The largest groups include the She (畲族)—primarily in Shangrao and northeastern Jiangxi—and small Hui Muslim communities located in urban centres such as Nanchang and Jiujiang. Ethnic diversity is modest relative to western Chinese provinces, resulting in strong cultural continuity.

Group	%	Approx. Population
Han Chinese	99.5%	~44.78m
Ethnic Minorities (She, Hui, others)	0.5%	~0.22m
Foreign Residents	Negligible	—

A small but active New Zealand community resides in Jiangxi, comprising approximately 20 English teachers, around 10 students and 40 volunteers in 2025.

Economy

Jiangxi remains an inland, middle-income province. Urban disposable income averages RMB 47,514 annually, while rural income is RMB 22,673, reflecting a 2.1:1 gap. Living standards continue to improve, supported by steady wage growth and expanding retail sales. Pension coverage is universal, though average pension income remains modest. The income profile supports steady but price sensitive consumer behaviour.

Per Capita Disposable Income

Category	RMB (2024)	Approx. NZD Equivalent*	Notes
Urban	47,514	~NZD 11,000	Near national urban average
Rural	22,673	~NZD 5,250	Slightly below national rural average
Urban : Rural Ratio	2.1 : 1	—	Persistent income gap

Per Capita Consumption Spending

The income differential highlights continued urbanisation incentives. Consumption expenditure (~RMB 29,758 per capita) suggests moderate discretionary spending capacity, with growth strongest in online retail and consumer services.

Indicator	RMB (2024)
Average Annual Consumption	29,758

**Observation: Urban residents retain moderate discretionary capacity after consumption.*

GDP

With GDP of RMB 3.42 trillion and 5.1% annual growth, Jiangxi demonstrates stable mid-tier provincial performance. Industry remains a core pillar, particularly in metals and new energy, while services and retail continue to expand. The province's economic scale supports meaningful trade and education partnerships without the volatility of smaller inland economies.

Indicator	Value
Total GDP	RMB 3.420 trillion
GDP Growth	+5.1% YoY

GDP by Sector

Sector	RMB (Trillion)	% of GDP
Primary (Agriculture)	0.261	7.6%
Secondary (Industry)	1.369	40.0%
Tertiary (Services)	1.791	52.4%

Jiangxi Investment in New Zealand

Jiangxi's agribusiness and advanced manufacturing sectors are increasingly outward-facing, with tangible investment links to New Zealand. According to Jiangxi Provincial Government commercial reporting, Jiangxi entities have invested approximately:

- *NZD 34 million into honey processing in the Bay of Plenty*
- *NZD 12 million into tourism infrastructure*

Additional capital into plastics manufacturing, medical device R&D, and solar generation

Firms including Aotai Plastics, Jiangxi Inke Medical, and Jinko Solar have established commercial footprints. Provincial authorities have signalled further interest in expanding investment through the sister-province framework.

Retail Sales (2024)

Category	RMB (Trillion)
Total Retail	1.282
Urban Retail	1.058
Rural Retail	0.224
Online Retail	0.294

Top Imported Consumer Products by Category into Jiangxi

Imported consumer goods entering Jiangxi are concentrated in beauty and skincare products, wine and spirits, mother-and-baby goods, and health supplements. These categories reflect rising middle-class consumption preferences and cross-border e-commerce integration. Average order values range between RMB 300–1,000 depending on retail channel, indicating both mass and premium market segments.

Product Category	Evidence
Beauty / skincare (cosmetics)	Named in Ganzhou imported-goods centre coverage
Alcohol (wine/spirits)	Named in Ganzhou imported-goods centre coverage
Mother & baby products	Cited as a major imported category in Jiangxi CBEC-import retail context
Health supplements / wellness products	Cited as a major imported category in Jiangxi CBEC-import supply chain/retail context

Major Agriculture & Food Production Outputs (2024)

Product	Output
Grain (Total)	21.96m tons
Rapeseed	1.513m tons
Tea Leaves	83,000 tons
Cotton	21,000 tons
Tobacco	25,000 tons
Pork	2.529m tons
Poultry/Meat	3.636m tons

Manufacturing & High-Tech Industries

Indicator	2024 Output
Passenger Vehicles	570,000
New Energy Vehicles (EVs)	165,000

"New Three" Export Products (2023)

Product	Export Value (RMB)	Growth
Solar Panels	34.42b	+42.7%
Lithium Batteries	4.39b	—
EVs	6.71b	—

Industrial Output Highlights

Sector	Key Outputs
Textiles	52.87bn meters cloth
Garments	110.26m pieces
Paper	26.34m tons
Cigarettes	64.49bn sticks
Liquor	347m litres
Rare Earths	14,349 tons
Polysilicon	111,400 tons

Trade Profile (2024)

Jiangxi recorded total trade of RMB 470.75 billion in 2024. Exports (RMB 304.55bn) are led by solar panels, lithium batteries, EVs, textiles, and machinery. Imports (RMB 166.20bn) focus on industrial raw materials such as copper ore, lithium concentrate, polysilicon, and machinery components. Trade patterns reflect Jiangxi's role as an industrial production and processing hub.

Goods Trade

Indicator	RMB (billion)
Total Trade	470.75
Exports	304.55
Imports	166.20

Major Exports

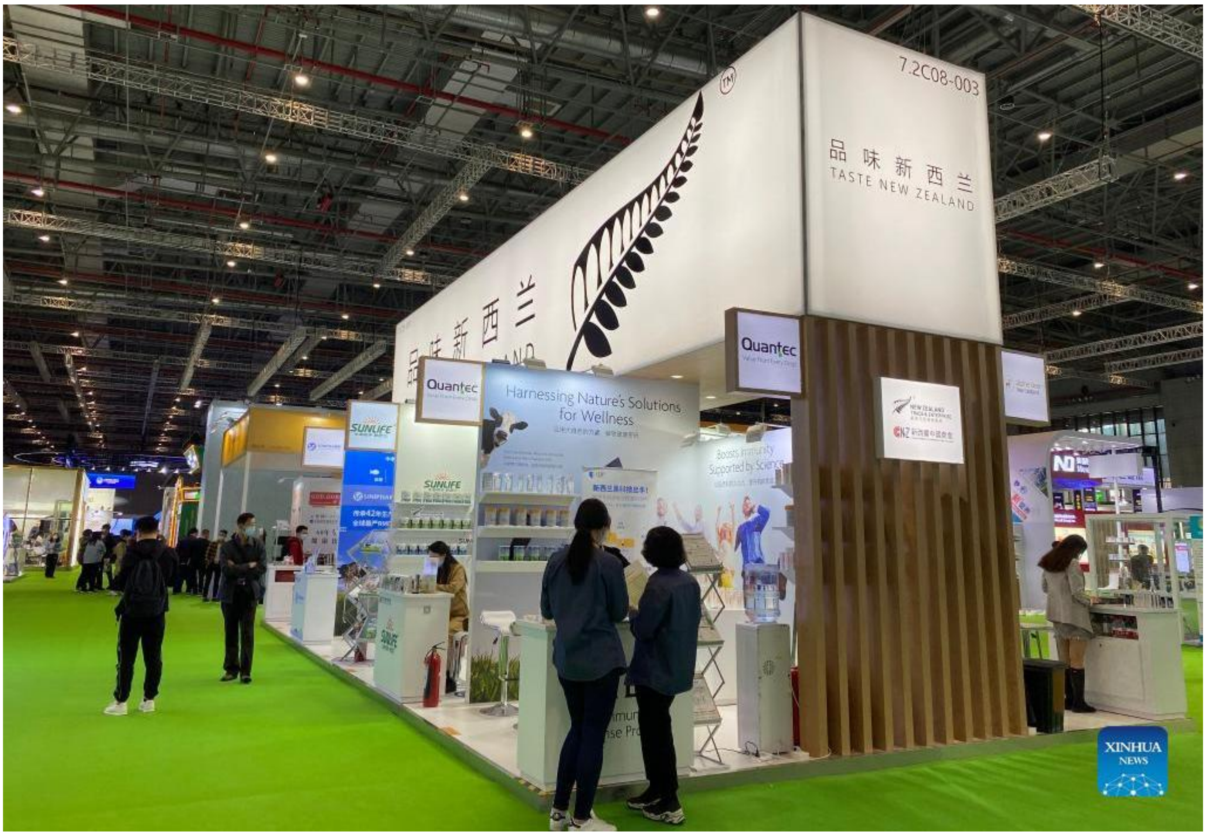
Major Export Categories	Major Import Categories
Solar cells	Copper ore
EVs	Lithium ore
Lithium batteries	Polysilicon
Textiles & garments	Steel
Ceramics	Industrial chemicals
Machinery	Machinery components
Rice noodles / pork / tea	—

New Zealand products in Jiangxi

Jiangxi's growing middle-class consumption aligns strongly with New Zealand's premium food and lifestyle exports. Products entering the Jiangxi market include:

- *Fresh seafood, lamb and beef*
- *Honey (including the Bay of Plenty brands Comvita, Manuka Performance, Pakihi Valley)*
- *Zespri kiwifruit, Zealong tea, Rocket apples*
- *Health supplements*
- *New Zealand ice cream*
- *Hawke's Bay and Gisborne wines*
- *Bay of Plenty pet food products*
- *Milk powder and infant formula*
- *Boating and marine equipment suited to Jiangxi's lake systems*

These flows demonstrate diversification beyond traditional commodity trade.



Logistics & Infrastructure

Despite being inland, Jiangxi benefits from strong multimodal logistics infrastructure. Nanchang Changbei International Airport serves as the primary aviation gateway (~10m passengers annually), while Jiujiang Port integrates the province into the Yangtze River trade corridor. High-speed rail and expressways link Jiangxi to coastal export markets, supporting manufacturing competitiveness.

Aviation Infrastructure

Airport	Location	Passengers (millions)	Cargo (tons)	Notes
Nanchang Changbei (International)	Nanchang	10.2m	59,991	Main international gateway; expansion underway (12m capacity)
Ganzhou Huangjin	Ganzhou	1.91m	4,740	Regional hub
Yichun Mingyueshan	Yichun	0.587m*	—	Regional
Jingdezhen Luojia	Jingdezhen	0.475m*	—	Regional
Jiujiang Lushan	Jiujiang	0.016m*	—	Small regional

Rail & Road Connectivity

Feature	Strategic Role
High-speed rail network	Links to Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou
Freight rail hubs	Nanchang, Jiujiang, Yichun
Industrial rail corridors	Connect factories to coastal ports

Expressways

Indicator	Detail
Major Expressways	4 north–south corridors
Strategic Links	Links to Guangdong, Zhejiang, Hubei

** Strategic Position: Central China logistics corridor.*

Inland Ports & River Logistics

Jiangxi operates multiple comprehensive bonded zones, including Nanchang and Pingxiang, alongside six national cross-border ecommerce pilot zones. These platforms support import/export processing, bonded storage, and digital trade expansion. Cold-chain logistics infrastructure is also expanding to support agricultural exports and imported perishables, reinforcing Jiangxi's integration into global supply chains.

Port	Location	Capacity	Notes
Jiujiang Port	Yangtze River	>90m tons	500,000 TEU capacity; 3rd largest Yangtze container port
Nanchang Port	Gan River	Bulk cargo	Coal, steel, grain
Poyang Lake Port	Near Nanchang	Bulk cargo	Expanding river trade

Trade Connectivity:

- Weekly services to Shanghai, Ningbo
- International links to Japan & SE Asia
- ~49.5% of river trade tied to Belt & Road partners (2024)

Bonded Zones & Logistics Hubs

Facility	Location	Function
Nanchang Comprehensive Bonded Zone	Nanchang ETDZ	Import / Export processing
Pingxiang Bonded Zone	Pingxiang	Cross-border ecommerce
Export Processing Zones	Nanchang	Manufacturing exports
Bonded Cold Storage	Nanchang/ Jiujiang	Agri & seafood logistics

E-Commerce Infrastructure

Indicator	Detail
National CBEC Pilot Zones	6
Bonded Logistics Centers	1
Major Jiangxi based logistics centres	JD Logistics, Pinduoduo, Cainiao Network (Alibaba Group), SF Express, ZTO Express, YTO Express, Longnan Cross-Border E-Commerce,
Focus	Agri-products, specialty foods, livestream sales, supplements, cosmetics

Retail & Distribution Network

Retail sales reached RMB 1.282 trillion in 2024, with urban consumption dominating. Major retail chains include Wanda, RT-Mart, Yonghui, and Lianhua. E-commerce is rapidly expanding, supported by JD, Pinduoduo, and livestream commerce ecosystems. Online retail now exceeds RMB 290 billion annually, reflecting digital consumption growth. Retail Sales (2024)

Category	RMB (Trillion)
Total Retail	1.282
Urban Retail	1.058
Rural Retail	0.224

> *Major Retail Chains Present: Wanda (万达百货), RT-Mart (大润发), Yonghui (永辉), Lianhua (联华)*

Education & University Profile

Jiangxi hosts over 7 million K–12 students and a strong higher education sector anchored by Nanchang University (Double First Class discipline) and several engineering-focused institutions. Vocational education is robust, producing approximately 300,000 graduates annually aligned with provincial industrial clusters.

Major Universities

University	Specialisation	International Activity
Nanchang University (211 Project)	Comprehensive	~1,000 international students; joint degree programmes
Jiangxi Normal University	Teacher education	Strong international exchange
East China Jiaotong University	Rail transport, engineering	Engineering exchange programmes
Jiangxi University of Finance & Economics	Business, economics	Overseas partnerships
Jiangxi University of Science & Technology	Engineering, materials	Industry-focused
Jinggangshan University	Comprehensive	Regional exchange activity

Internationalisation Snapshot

Jiangxi universities maintain joint programmes and exchange agreements, with Nanchang University hosting around 1,000 international students. Study-abroad agencies and provincial-level international education platforms actively support outbound mobility. The province demonstrates capacity for structured institutional partnerships in engineering, business, and applied sciences.

Indicator	Detail
International students	~12,000 (most popular majors: Chinese language, medicine, engineering, business)
Joint degree programmes	Economics, Engineering, Public Relations, Health
International partners	Russia, United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Japan, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand* (est 2026)
Provincial oversight	Jiangxi Education Department (省教育厅)

Primary & Secondary Education (2023)

Level	Students (millions)
Primary School	4.23m

Junior Middle	1.91m
Senior High	0.97m

> ** Estimated total Jiangxi outbound long-term primary/secondary students per year: 15,000 – 25,000. Estimated total study holiday tours per year 140,000*

International K–12 Presence

Feature	Detail
International schools	Dozens (mainly in Nanchang)
Curricula offered	IB, AP, foreign-affiliated programmes
Study-abroad agencies	Concentrated in provincial capitals

Vocational & Technical Education

Indicator	Detail
Annual vocational graduates	~300,000
Focus sectors	Machinery, electronics, hospitality
Alignment	Supports Jiangxi's industrial base

> ** Estimated total Jiangxi outbound tertiary students per year: 28,000 – 35,000*

Bay of Plenty–Jiangxi Education Exchange

Education exchange between Jiangxi and New Zealand has deepened under the Bay of Plenty–Jiangxi sister-province framework:

In both 2024, 2025, 40 Jiangxi students studied in the Bay of Plenty, contributing over NZD 0.5 million to the local education sector

Fifteen Bay of Plenty students annually travel to Jiangxi on scholarship-funded exchanges

More than NZD 6 million in scholarship funding is available for New Zealand participants

Plans are underway to establish a Jiangxi Education Centre in New Zealand to support teacher upskilling and professional development

Two New Zealanders are currently studying degree programmes in Jiangxi

Estimated Outbound Study Destinations

Destination	Estimated Jiangxi Students	% Share	Typical Annual Spend per Student (RMB)
United States	8,000	25%	220,000–300,000
United Kingdom	5,500	17%	200,000–280,000
Australia	5,000	15%	180,000–260,000
Japan	4,000	12%	120,000–180,000
Canada	3,500	10%	180,000–250,000
Germany	1,800	5%	120,000–180,000
New Zealand	**1,200**	**4%**	**160,000–220,000**
South Korea	1,000	3%	100,000–160,000
Other Europe/Asia	3,000	9%	120,000–200,000

Type of Overseas Study & Average Spend (Jiangxi Profile)

Study Type	Estimated Share of Jiangxi Students	Typical Duration	Estimated Annual Spend (RMB)
Undergraduate Degree	35%	3–4 years	180,000–260,000
Master's Degree	40%	1–2 years	200,000–300,000
PhD	5%	3–5 years	150,000–220,000
High School	5%	1–3 years	220,000–300,000
English / Foundation	8%	6–12 months	80,000–160,000
Short-Term / Exchange	7%	Weeks–6 months	40,000–100,000

Tourism

Tourism contributes approximately RMB 620–650 billion annually to Jiangxi's economy. The sector is driven by natural attractions (Mount Lushan), cultural heritage (Jingdezhen porcelain), red tourism, and eco-tourism. Domestic visitors account for the overwhelming majority of revenue, with international tourism remaining a smaller but growing segment.

Tourism Revenue (2024)

Indicator	Value
Total Tourism Revenue	RMB ~620–650 billion
Total Tourist Visits	~540–560 million trips
Tourism Share of Provincial GDP	~18–19% (direct + indirect impact est.)

** Revenue includes domestic and international tourism receipts.*

Tourism Revenue Composition (Estimated by Attraction Type)

Tourism Segment	Estimated Share	Estimated Value (RMB bn)
Natural Scenery (Mount Lushan, Poyang Lake, mountains)	35%	~220
Historical & Cultural (Jingdezhen porcelain, Nanchang heritage)	30%	~190
Red Tourism / Revolutionary Heritage	15%	~95
Festivals & Events	10%	~65
Rural & Eco-Tourism	10%	~65

Visitor Origin (2024 Estimated)

Category	Share of Visitors	Share of Revenue
Intra-Jiangxi (internal travel)	45%	35%
Domestic (other Chinese provinces)	52%	60%
International	3%	5%

International Tourism Snapshot

Indicator	Estimate
International Visitors	~1.5–2.0 million
Avg Spend per Intl Visitor	RMB 6,000–9,000
Major Source Markets	Japan, South Korea, Southeast Asia

Estimated Outbound Travel Volume

Jiangxi residents undertake an estimated 1.8–2.2 million outbound trips annually. Primary destinations include Thailand, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Europe, Australia, and the United States. Average spend ranges from RMB 7,000–12,000 for Asia trips and RMB 20,000–35,000 for long-haul travel. New Zealand captures a modest but high-value segment.

Indicator	Estimate
Jiangxi outbound tourists per year	~1.8–2.2 million
Avg Spend per outbound trip	RMB 7,000–12,000 (Asia)
Long-haul Spend (inc NZ)	RMB 20,000–35,000

Outbound Destination Breakdown (Estimated)

Destination	Share	Avg Spend (RMB)
Thailand	18%	6,000–8,000
Japan	15%	8,000–10,000
Singapore	10%	8,000–11,000
South Korea	8%	6,000–9,000
Malaysia	7%	6,000–8,000
Europe (Italy/France etc.)	10%	18,000–28,000
Australia	7%	18,000–25,000
United States	8%	25,000–35,000
New Zealand	**3–4%**	**20,000–30,000**
Other Asia	10%	6,000–10,000

Bay of Plenty Tourism Growth

Tourism flows have strengthened markedly since 2024. Jiangxi tour groups visiting the Bay of Plenty increased substantially in 2024–2025, contributing an estimated NZD 0.6 million to the regional economy in 2025. Sister-province collaboration has enabled curated package tours centred on indigenous cultural tourism, food experiences, and regional visits to Whakatāne and Ōpōtiki districts. Expansion is planned for 2026, with targeted marketing and delegation activity supporting further growth in high-value cultural and group travel.

Prefecture-Level City Comparison

City	Population (m)	GDP 2025 (NZD bn)	GDP per Capita (NZD)	Avg Age (mean)	Nominal GDP Growth 2025	Avg Household Disposable Income (NZD)
Nanchang	6.7	180.9	27,124	36.8 yrs	4.31%	33,452
Ganzhou	8.96	116.0	12,949	38.2 yrs	5.60%	22,623
Jiujiang	4.5	94.4	20,889	38.0 yrs	5.51%	28,444
Shangrao	6.4	87.5	13,723	38.7 yrs	5.78%	24,000
Yichun	4.9	87.3	17,829	37.9 yrs	5.83%	26,667
Ji'an	3.8	69.0	16,000	38.9 yrs	6.46%	24,444
Fuzhou (Jiangxi)	5.1	51.1	14,444	38.5 yrs	5.75%	23,333
Yingtan	2.8	32.4	16,667	37.2 yrs	5.42%	26,222
Pingxiang	1.8	28.4	15,759	39.1 yrs	5.25%	23,778
Xinyu	1.2	27.0	22,624	37.0 yrs	6.31%	30,000
Jingdezhen	1.7	26.4	16,222	39.3 yrs	0.88%	24,889

City Profiles

Nanchang

Population: 6.7m. GDP: NZD 180.9bn.
Jiangxi's capital and economic centre, Nanchang leads in digital economy development and hosts the World VR Industry Conference. With the province's highest GDP per capita and strong household incomes, it functions as Jiangxi's innovation, education, logistics, and international engagement hub.

Ganzhou

Population: 8.96m. GDP: NZD 116.0bn.
China's rare-earth capital, Ganzhou hosts China Rare Earth Group headquarters and major materials innovation projects. It is resource rich with a growing industrial base and steady GDP growth. Its scale and mineral assets make it strategically significant for advanced materials and battery supply chains.

Jiujiang

Population: 4.5m. GDP: NZD 94.4bn.
Located on the Yangtze River, Jiujiang is Jiangxi's principal port and logistics hub. With strong petrochemical, manufacturing, and port-based trade industries, it connects inland production to global markets. Jiujiang's strategic location underpins its stable economic growth and trade facilitation role.

Shangrao

Population: 6.4m. GDP: NZD 87.5bn.
An industrial and manufacturing centre, Shangrao is home to solar PV giants such as Jinko Solar. The city balances advanced manufacturing with strong agricultural output. Its growing digital transformation initiatives position it as a competitive export-oriented manufacturing base.

Yichun

Population: 4.9m. GDP: NZD 87.3bn. Partnered with South Waikato District Council.
Yichun is Jiangxi's lithium battery and new-energy cluster, central to China's EV supply chain. With one of the province's highest growth rates, it anchors photovoltaic and energy storage industries, reinforcing Jiangxi's transition toward clean energy manufacturing.

Ji'an

Population: 3.8m. GDP: NZD 69.0bn.
Ji'an demonstrates strong GDP growth and maintains a diversified industrial and agricultural base. It plays a supporting role in regional manufacturing networks and is increasingly integrated into provincial industrial upgrading strategies.

Fuzhou (Jiangxi)

Population: 5.1m. GDP: NZD 51.1bn. Partnered with Whakatāne
District Council.
Fuzhou has a balanced industrial and agricultural profile with moderate growth. It supports regional manufacturing and logistics networks and contributes to Jiangxi's broader industrial diversification strategy.

Yingtan

Population: 2.8m. GDP: NZD 32.4bn. Partnered with Kawerau District Council.
Yingtan is China's copper capital, with industrial revenue reaching RMB 520bn in its copper cluster. It represents one of the most mature and specialised industrial ecosystems in the province, focused on metals processing and value-added upgrading.

Pingxiang

Population: 1.8m. GDP: NZD 28.4bn.
Pingxiang benefits from cross-border e-commerce pilot zones and bonded logistics facilities. It plays a role in trade facilitation and light manufacturing, though its economic scale remains modest relative to larger prefectures.

Xinyu

Population: 1.2m. GDP: NZD 27.0bn. Partnered with Ōpōtiki District Council.
Despite smaller population size, Xinyu has strong per-capita GDP performance and solid industrial foundations. It supports materials and manufacturing sectors and shows above-average growth, positioning it as a compact but productive industrial node.

Jingdezhen

Population: 1.7m. GDP: NZD 26.4bn.
The historic porcelain capital of China, Jingdezhen maintains cultural significance and tourism appeal. While economic growth has been modest, the city continues to leverage its heritage brand for cultural tourism and creative industries.

Relationship Management

Relationship Structure

The sister-province relationship operates at multiple levels, from the overarching provincial framework down to individual city-to-city friendships. This multi-tiered structure enables both strategic coordination and local flexibility.

Relationship Structure by Level

Level	NZ Entity	Jiangxi Entity	Role	Ownership
Provincial Umbrella	Bay of Plenty Regional Council or Steering Group (currently Eastern Bay of Plenty Joint Committee)	Jiangxi Provincial Government (via Foreign Affairs Department)	Formal sister province relationship	Collective NZ ownership
Steering & Coordination	Steering Group (participating councils + iwi reps)	Jiangxi Foreign Affairs Department	Strategic direction, work plan oversight	NZ collective
Programme Delivery	Eastern Bridge Limited (Programme Lead)	Jiangxi Foreign Affairs Department	Day-to-day coordination & implementation	Contracted delivery
City Pairings	Individual NZ Councils / Iwi	Individual Jiangxi Cities	Non-binding friendship agreements	Direct local ownership

Governance

The Governance Table sets out clear accountability across the Sister Province framework. Participating councils and iwi retain full sovereign mandate and approve any financial commitments. The Steering Group provides strategic oversight and approves the annual workplan. Eastern Bridge Limited serves as Programme Lead for the overarching relationship, managing coordination and Jiangxi liaison within agreed scope. Additional commercial programme leads may be appointed for sector initiatives. Importantly, there is no standing financial obligation for councils or iwi to maintain partnership status.

Level	Entity	Mandate / Authority	Decision Rights	Financial Position	Notes
1	Participating Councils	Strategic mandate holder	Approve entry, Approve projects, approve funding	No annual fee. Pay only if opting into delegation or cofounded initiative	Retain full sovereignty
2	Participating Iwi	Treaty partner & strategic Participant	Approve participation in initiatives affecting their rohe	No annual fee. Pay only if opting into specific initiative	Engagement consistent with Treaty principles
3	Steering Group	Oversight body	Approves annual workplan, scope changes, expansion of partnership	No operational cost	Quarterly meetings – made up of reps from participating councils and iwi
4	Programme Lead (Overarching Relationship) – Eastern Bridge Ltd	Operational delivery within approved mandate	Day-to-day coordination & Jiangxi liaison	Cost recovery only where services requested	Holds relationship continuity
5	Programme Leads	Operational control (Commercial Initiatives – optional)	Manage sector- within sector mandate specific activities (e.g., trade, tourism, education)	Project funded only	Appointed as needed
6	Advisory Iwi, Business, Education, Network	Advisory only	No binding authority	No cost	Quarterly advisory engagement

Decision-Making & Escalation Process

Decision-making follows a defined escalation pathway to protect mandate clarity and political oversight. Operational coordination sits with the Programme Lead (Eastern Bridge Limited). New initiatives or material changes require Steering Group approval. Any financial commitment must be approved individually by the relevant council or iwi. Issues escalate Programme Lead → Executive Sponsor → Steering Group → Council if required. This structure ensures transparency, Treaty alignment, and no unintended financial exposure.

Decision Type	Authority
Operational coordination	Programme Lead (Eastern Bridge)
Scope adjustment within workplan	Steering Group
New initiatives / annual workplan	Steering Group
Financial commitment	Individual council or iwi approval
Political risk issue	Steering Group / Council

Escalation Path: Programme Lead -→ Steering Group →Council (if required)

Risk Matrix

The Risk Ownership Framework clarifies where accountability sits within the Sister Province relationship. It reinforces that participating councils and iwi retain sovereign authority over funding and participation decisions, while governance oversight is exercised collectively through the Steering Group. Eastern Bridge Limited, as Programme Lead, manages operational risks and reporting, with any appointed commercial programme leads responsible for sector specific risk controls. This separation ensures that political, financial, legal, and reputational risks are clearly allocated, monitored at the appropriate level, and escalated through defined governance pathways.

Risk Ownership Framework

Role	Risk Responsibility
Councils / Iwi	Approve participation in initiatives; retain sovereign funding authority
Steering Group	Oversight of strategic and reputational risks
Programme Lead (Eastern Bridge Limited)	Operational risk management and reporting
Commercial Programme Leads (if appointed)	Sector-specific risk management

Operational Risk Matrix

The Operational Risk Matrix identifies the primary risks associated with managing an international sub-national relationship and outlines practical mitigation measures aligned with New Zealand local government standards. Risks are assessed by likelihood and impact, with clear accountable owners assigned. The matrix emphasises political sensitivity, expenditure transparency, data protection, regulatory compliance, and reputational safeguards. It reflects a conservative, stage-gated approach to engagement, ensuring no commitments exceed mandate or legal authority. This structure provides councils and iwi with assurance that participation is governed by disciplined risk management and regular oversight.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures	Accountable Owner
Political / Geopolitical Sensitivity	Medium	High	Keep scope within local government functions; avoid foreign policy positioning; engage MFAT where required; clear communication framing; formal Council mandate	Steering Group Chair
Sensitive Expenditure (Travel, Hospitality, Gifts)	Medium	High	Pre-approved travel; gift register maintained; public reporting of delegation costs; follow council procurement and expenditure policies	Programme Lead / Council
Data / Privacy Issues (Cross-border data)	Medium	High	Data minimisation; avoid sensitive datasets; no sharing of personal data without consent; legal review of agreements; Staff awareness of PRC data laws	Programme Lead
PRC Regulatory Constraints / State-Secrets Risk	Medium	High	Avoid restricted topics; structured agendas; no access to restricted data; written due diligence before site visits; rely on official channels	Programme Lead
NZ Legal & Procurement Compliance	Low–Medium	High	Legal review of all binding agreements; anti-corruption clauses; procurement discipline; documented approvals; audit trail maintained	Programme Lead / Steering Group / Council
Reputational Risk (Community Cohesion / Media Scrutiny)	Medium	High	Transparent reporting; Treaty consistent engagement; stakeholder communication plan; clear articulation of benefits; no over-promising economic outcomes	Steering Group
Market Volatility (e.g. Export education, tourism fluctuations)	Medium	Medium	Diversify sector lanes; stage-gate commercial initiatives; avoid dependency on single sector; conservative projections	Programme Lead
Biosecurity / Health Disruptions (Pandemic, border closure)	Low–Medium	High	Insurance coverage; remote engagement fallback; staged commitments; contingency planning for delegations	Programme Lead / Steering Group / Council
Foreign Interference / Undue Influence	Low	High	Align with NZ security guidance; maintain transparency of engagements; no informal commitments; written records of meetings; vet intermediaries; governance oversight of delegations	Programme Lead

SWOT Analysis

Jiangxi Province SWOT (NZ-Facing Perspective)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Large provincial economy (~RMB 3.4 trillion GDP) with diversified industrial base • Strong manufacturing clusters (rare earths – Ganzhou; lithium – Yichun; copper – Yingtan; solar – Shangrao) • Expanding digital economy and innovation agenda (R&D intensity >2%) • Established agricultural output (rice, tea, pork) supporting agri-trade alignment • Existing Sister Province relationship with Bay of Plenty • Improving transport infrastructure (Jiujiang Port, high-speed rail, airports)	• Inland location increases logistics complexity vs. coastal provinces • Lower per capita income compared to China's coastal provinces • Demographic pressure from ageing population • Limited global brand recognition compared to major coastal cities • Some regulatory/data constraints create higher transaction costs • Export performance subject to national trade volatility
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Growing demand for high quality food imports • (seafood, beef, lamb, dairy, honey) • Industrial upgrading requiring skills partnerships & applied R&D collaboration • Expanding middle class driving outbound tourism & education demand • Green transition agenda aligning with NZ clean-tech expertise • Sister-province framework provides structured subnational engagement	• Geopolitical tensions affecting NZ–China perception • Commodity price volatility • (lithium, rare earths) • PRC regulatory shifts affecting foreign cooperation • Domestic economic slowdown reducing outward investment appetite • Reputational risks if projects are poorly governed

New Zealand Local Government SWOT

Strengths	Constraints
• Trusted democratic institutions with transparent governance • Strong regional brands (Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Gisborne) • Premium food, education, tourism reputation in China • Strong Treaty partnership framework enabling iwi engagement • Existing Sister Province track record & exchange history	• Limited internal resourcing for international engagement • High public scrutiny of overseas travel & expenditure • Small economic scale compared to Chinese provincial demand • Limited commercial leverage without business buy-in • Coordination challenges across multiple councils
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Platform model allows shared risk and regional coordination • Stage-gated opportunity sizing reduces overpromising • Education exchanges and volunteer programmes build soft-power relationships • Clean-tech pilots and skills cooperation aligned with local mandates • No standing financial obligation lowers barrier to participation	• Foreign interference or undue influence concerns • Community perception risk if benefits not visible • Market volatility (education, tourism) • Biosecurity or border disruptions

Five-Year Strategic Roadmap

The Five-Year Strategic Roadmap sets out a staged, low-risk pathway for developing the Bay of Plenty–Jiangxi relationship.

Phase	Year	Strategic Objective	Key Activities	Financial Model	Measurable Milestones
Foundation	Year 1	Establish governance, confirm participating mandate clarity, and deliver low risk pilots	• Formalise governance structure • Operationalise Steering Group • Establish risk register & reporting • Deliver 2–3 pilot initiatives (education exchange, volunteer placements, sector roundtable)	No annual fee Activity-based participation only Delegation costs borne only by participating entities No pooled funding	Governance operational Quarterly reporting active 2–3 pilot activities delivered Advisory network established Risk register reviewed twice
Expansion	Years 2–3	Develop structured sector lanes and deepen participation	• Formalise 2–3 priority sector packages (education, clean-tech, trade, tourism) • Expand participation (optional) • Increase inbound/ outbound delegations • Develop conservative opportunity pipeline • Appoint Commercial Programme Leads if required	Written project agreements only No automatic co-funding Cost recovery for specific initiatives No standing financial commitment	3–6 sector initiatives active Defined opportunity pipeline Increased exchange flows At least one municipal/ clean-tech pilot delivered Annual performance reporting
Consolidation & Scaling	Years 4–5	Institutionalise proven initiatives and scale selectively	• Scale only proven initiatives • Formalise recurring exchange programmes • Strengthen R&D and university partnerships • Expand tourism & agri-trade where proven • Conduct independent evaluation	Multi-year agreements only where justified Maintain no standing cost policy Separate commercial activity from governance	Sustained annual activity pipeline Repeat exchange flows Multi-year programme agreements in 1–2 sectors Independent evaluation completed by Year 5

Performance & KPI Framework

The framework emphasises conservative tracking, recognising that councils enable rather than own commercial outcomes. Metrics are designed to be transparent, auditable, and aligned with local government accountability standards. Performance is reviewed quarterly, with annual recalibration to reflect participation levels, market conditions, and stakeholder capacity. This ensures realistic expectations and disciplined programme management over time.

Activity KPIs

Category	Indicator	Measurement Method	Reporting Frequency	Accountable Role	Target / Standard
Activity KPIs	Delegations Hosted	Number of inbound / outbound delegations delivered	Quarterly	Programme Lead	Minimum 1 per year (stage dependent)
Activity KPIs	Education Exchanges	Number of students participating (inbound / outbound)	Quarterly	Programme Lead	Year 1: Pilot level Years 2–3: Growth phase Years 4–5: Sustained flow
Activity KPIs	Volunteer Placements	Number of volunteers placed annually	Quarterly	Programme Lead	Maintain or increase annually
Activity KPIs	Sector Roundtables	Number of formal sector engagement sessions	Quarterly	Programme Lead	Minimum 2 per year

Pipeline KPIs

Category	Indicator	Measurement Method	Reporting Frequency	Accountable Role	Target / Standard
Pipeline KPIs	Opportunities Identified	Number of structured commercial or sector opportunities logged	Quarterly	Programme Lead	Conservative growth year-on-year
Pipeline KPIs	Conversion Rate	Percentage of identified opportunities progressing to formal agreement or delivery	Annual	Steering Group	10–35% (conservative range)
Pipeline KPIs	Value Enabled (Not Owned)	Estimated value of facilitated agreements or activity enabled (NZD)	Annual	Programme Lead (reported to Steering Group)	Tracked as a pipeline; no guaranteed revenue
Pipeline KPIs	Quarterly Reporting Delivered	Governance dashboard submitted on time	Quarterly	Programme Lead	100% compliance

Governance KPIs

Category	Indicator	Measurement Method	Reporting Frequency	Accountable Role	Target / Standard
Governance KPIs	Risk Reviews Completed	Risk register formally reviewed and updated	Quarterly	Programme Lead	Minimum 4 per year
Governance KPIs	Treaty Engagement Maintained	Documented engagement with participating iwi where relevant	Quarterly	Steering Group	Evidence of consultation where applicable

Financial Transparency & Cost Model

The Financial Transparency & Cost Model is designed to provide political certainty and protect participating councils and iwi from unintended financial exposure. There is no standing membership fee and no automatic co-funding obligation associated with maintaining the Sister Province relationship. All financial commitments require sovereign approval by the participating entity before proceeding. Costs arise only when a council, iwi, or organisation elects to participate in a specific delegation, project, or commercial initiative. Eastern Bridge Limited may generate revenue from independently contracted commercial services; however, governance coordination remains separate from commercial activity.

Category	Position	Who Pays	When Triggered	Notes / Safeguards
Relationship Maintenance	No standing fee	No cost to councils or iwi	Ongoing	Governance coordination managed by Eastern Bridge Limited (EBL) without annual subscription
Governance & Reporting	Included within relationship coordination	No cost to councils or iwi	Ongoing	Quarterly reporting, risk monitoring, and liaison provided without charge
Participation Status	No membership subscription	No cost	Upon joining as partner	Observer, Active, or Strategic Partner status does not create automatic financial obligation
Delegation Participation	Cost recovery applies	Participating council or organisation	When attending inbound or outbound delegation	Each entity pays its own travel, accommodation, and logistics; no pooled funding required
Delegation Hosting Costs	Shared or activity-based	Hosting entity only	When hosting official visit	Costs scoped in advance; no retrospective cost allocation
Sector Roundtables / Workshops	Activity-based	Participating entities	When delivered	Venue and logistics costs agreed beforehand
Clean-Tech / Pilot Projects	Project-funded	Participating entity only	Upon written project approval	No automatic co-funding from all partners
EBL Revenue – Commercial Activities	Independent commercial income model	Commercial clients (NZ or Jiangxi)	When requested; private agreement entered into with commercial entities to deliver services	EBL may earn revenue from: • Facilitation fees • Project management contracts • Commission-based trade introductions • Education programme delivery • Delegation logistics services • Export / market-entry advisory services
Separation of Governance & Commercial Income	Structural safeguard	N/A	Always	Commercial income earned by EBL does not create financial obligation for councils; governance decisions remain independent

Value Proposition by Stakeholder

Joining the Jiangxi Sister Province relationship provides New Zealand councils and iwi with a structured, low-risk platform for international engagement that is aligned with local government mandates and Treaty obligations. The framework enables economic, educational, cultural, and youth opportunities without creating ongoing financial liability or commercial exposure for councils. There is no standing membership fee, and all financial commitments require sovereign approval by the participating entity.

The relationship offers access to a 45-million-person provincial economy with established industrial clusters in advanced manufacturing, agribusiness, clean technology, and education. Councils act as conveners and enablers rather than commercial operators, supporting trade facilitation, tourism growth, education exchanges, and municipal collaboration in areas such as waste minimisation and energy efficiency. Youth and volunteer programmes provide fully funded international pathways, strengthening long-term people-to-people connections.

Governance safeguards are embedded throughout, including quarterly reporting, risk oversight, clear escalation pathways, and separation between governance and commercial activity. Iwi participation is incorporated at governance level, ensuring Treatyaligned engagement. The model is stage-gated and scalable, growing only where proven value exists. In essence, the relationship provides access without overexposure and opportunity without automatic obligation, positioning participating regions for disciplined, measurable international collaboration.

Key Financial Principle

No financial commitment without written approval

Stakeholder	Core Value Proposition	Practical Opportunities	Risk / Cost Position	Measurable Outcomes
Local Government	Structured, low-risk international engagement platform aligned to economic development and community outcomes	• Trade facilitation (agri, clean-tech, manufacturing) • Education exchange partnerships • Tourism growth • Municipal clean-tech pilots • Regional branding in Jiangxi	No standing financial obligation; pay only for opted-in initiatives; governance oversight retained	• Sector initiatives delivered • Delegations hosted • Opportunities enabled (pipeline tracked) • Tourism and education growth indicators
Iwi	Treaty-aligned participation in an international relationship with equal governance voice	• Cultural exchange (kapa haka, waka ama) • Indigenous tourism development • Education and rangatahi exchanges • Potential iwi-led export or trade facilitation	No automatic cost; opt-in only; governance representation embedded	• Documented iwi engagement • Cultural exchanges delivered • Youth participation numbers
Business	Market access facilitation and structured introductions into Jiangxi industry clusters	• Agribusiness exports (seafood, lamb, honey, dairy) • Clean-tech and energy pilots • Manufacturing partnerships • E-commerce channels • Investment pathways	Commercial model; cost recovery or commission-based facilitation; no council subsidy implied	• Opportunities identified • Conversion rate • Trade value enabled (not owned)
Education Providers	Student exchange programmes and skills collaboration	• Short-course delivery • Teacher upskilling agreements • Tertiary partnerships • Study tours • Scholarship pathways • Fee-paying international students	Activity-based agreements; no standing levy; written programme contracts	• Student exchange numbers • Revenue generated • Formal partnership agreements
Youth	International exposure, scholarships, and employability development	• Volunteer placements in Jiangxi • Scholarship-funded study exchange • Cultural immersion • Leadership development	No cost to volunteers where scholarship-funded; programme rules apply	• Volunteers placed • Scholarships awarded • Post-programme employment or education progression

Treaty / Iwi Partnership Framework & National Alignment

Embedding a Treaty / Iwi Partnership Framework and clear National Alignment is critical to the credibility and long-term sustainability of the Bay of Plenty–Jiangxi relationship. International engagement must reflect Treaty principles of partnership, participation, and protection to ensure Māori interests are respected and reputational risks are reduced. Clear alignment with national government settings further protects councils by keeping activities within statutory local government functions, complementing rather than duplicating MFAT or NZTE roles, and adhering to security and compliance expectations. This ensures the relationship remains responsible, transparent, and politically defensible.

Treaty / Iwi Partnership Framework

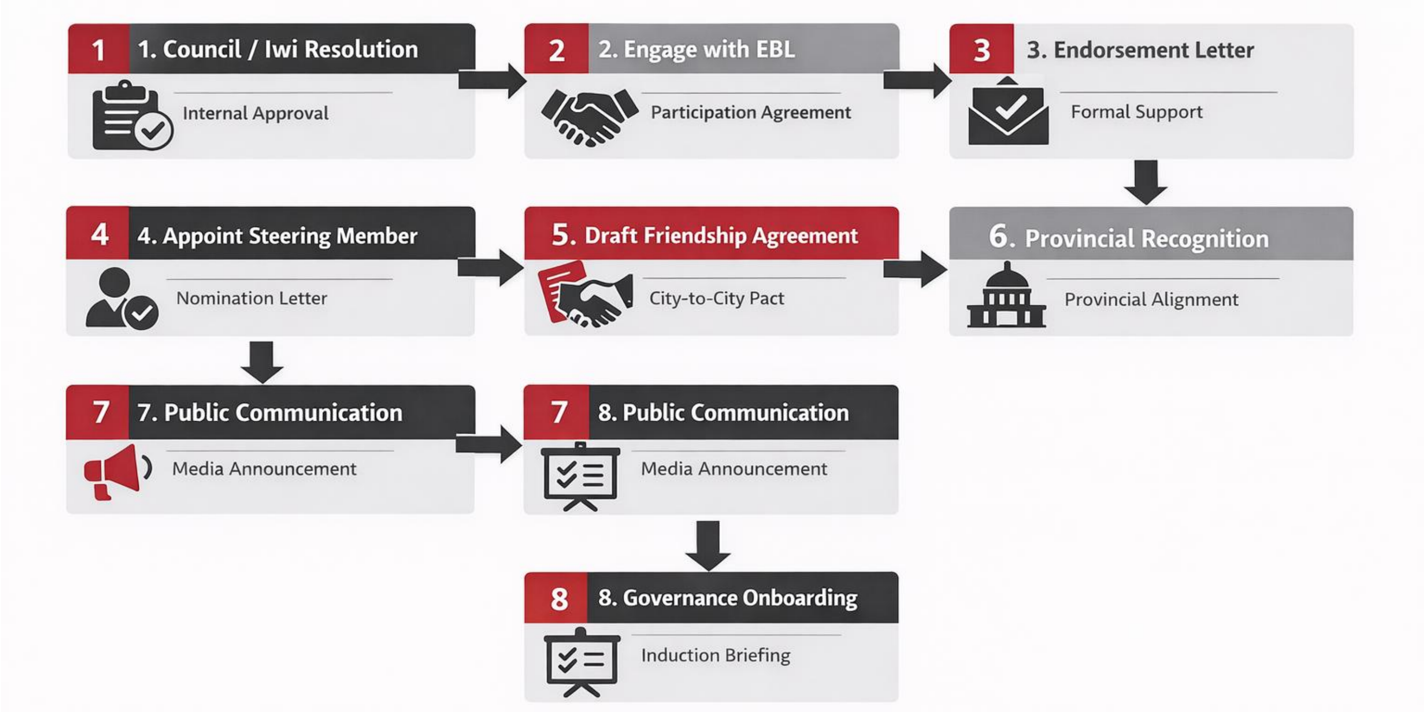
Category	Principle	Operational Application within the Jiangxi Framework	Governance Safeguard
Treaty Partnership	Co-governance approach	Iwi representation at Steering Group level; equal advisory voice in strategic direction; early engagement on initiatives affecting Māori interests	Formal governance structure; documented engagement; no initiative proceeds in a rohe without engagement
Cultural Protocol Alignment	Cultural protocol alignment	Delegations incorporate tikanga Māori where appropriate; pōwhiri or mihi where relevant; reciprocal respect for cultural practice	Cultural briefing prior to international engagement; advisory oversight
Economic Pathways for Māori Enterprises	Economic participation	Facilitation of Māori-led export, tourism, creative industries, and agribusiness engagement in Jiangxi; support for iwi enterprise introductions	Participation voluntary; no automatic funding obligation; commercial agreements separate from governance
Protection of Mātauranga Māori	Protection of indigenous knowledge	No sharing of indigenous knowledge without explicit consent; intellectual property protections embedded in agreements	Legal review of agreements; confidentiality clauses; written consent protocols
Engagement Expectations	Ongoing engagement	Ongoing communication with participating iwi; quarterly updates; ability to opt in or out of initiatives	Transparent reporting; clear mandate boundaries

National Alignment

Category	Position	Operational Clarification	Compliance Mechanism
Foreign Policy	Not foreign policy	Sub-national cooperation within local government mandate; no diplomatic positioning	Council mandate; communication framing; MFAT awareness where required
National Trade Agencies	Not replacing MFAT or NZTE	Complementary role focused on facilitation and relationship-building; does not duplicate national trade negotiations	Clear referral pathways to NZTE / MFAT when appropriate
Statutory Scope	Within local government functions	Activities aligned to economic development, community wellbeing, education, tourism, and cultural exchange	Legal oversight; Council approval of initiatives
Security Compliance	Compliant with NZ security guidance	Transparent engagement; record keeping; no sensitive data exchange; vetting of intermediaries	Risk matrix oversight
Financial Prudence	No automatic co-funding	Participation voluntary; sovereign funding approval required	Written agreements; audit trail maintained

Process to Formally Join the Relationship

Local governments and iwi may join the Bay of Plenty–Jiangxi Sister Province relationship through a structured, low-risk process that preserves sovereign mandate and financial control. Participation is voluntary and does not create a standing financial obligation. Entry begins with an internal resolution confirming intent to participate, followed by a participation agreement with Eastern Bridge Limited (as Programme Lead) and a non-binding Friendship Agreement with a Jiangxi city and, where appropriate, the province. Partners may nominate a representative to the Steering Group. All financial commitments remain subject to separate written approval, ensuring clarity, transparency, and political confidence



Step	Action	Responsible Party	Key Document / Instrument	Notes / Safeguards
1	Internal Council / Iwi Resolution	Council or Iwi Authority	Council resolution or formal minute	Confirms mandate to explore or join; no financial obligation created at this stage
2	Engagement with Eastern Bridge Limited (EBL)	Council / Iwi + EBL	Participation Agreement (NZ-based agreement)	Defines role of EBL as Programme Lead; confirms no standing financial commitment; clarifies scope and cost-recovery principles
3	Formal Letter of Endorsement for EBL / Simon Appleton	Council / Iwi	Letter of Endorsement	Recognises EBL as relationship coordinator; does not transfer sovereign authority
4	Identification of Steering Committee Representative (Optional but Recommended)	Council / Iwi	Nomination letter	Appoints elected member or senior official to Steering Group; ensures governance voice
5	Drafting of Friendship Agreement	Council / Iwi + Jiangxi City	Non-binding Friendship Agreement (City-to-City)	Sets intent, principles, and areas of cooperation; not legally binding; no financial obligation implied
6	Provincial-level Recognition	Jiangxi Province + NZ Partner	Friendship or Cooperation Confirmation	Aligns city agreement within broader provincial framework
7	Public Communication	Council Communications Team	Media release / website update	Clear framing: economic development, education, cultural exchange; not foreign policy
8	Governance Onboarding	Programme Lead (EBL)	Governance induction briefing	Risk matrix, reporting expectations, Treaty alignment, escalation pathways confirmed

Produced by Simon Appleton | Contact: 0223969590