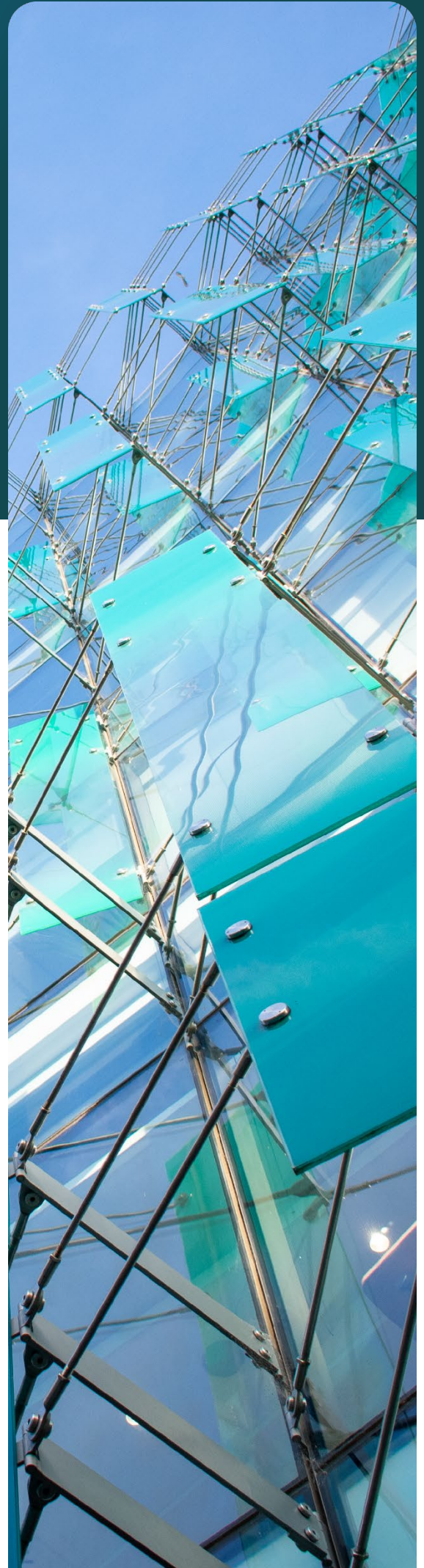




Invercargill City Council | Senior Contract Management Specialist

Position Description and
Additional Information

28 August 2026



Position Description

Position Title:	Senior Contract Management Specialist
Reports To:	Manager – Procurement and Contracts
Responsible For:	1 Direct Report
Group and Team:	Corporate Services – Procurement and Contracts
Children's Worker:	No
Delegations and Budget Responsibilities:	As per Delegations Register

Purpose

To provide expert commercial contracts leadership across Invercargill City Council, with accountability for shaping commercial arrangements, negotiating contract terms, supporting complex contract management matters and improving commercial governance, frameworks and practical contract guidance. Lead when a matter moves beyond procurement process and into commercial position, contract structure, pricing, risk allocation, major variations or complex supplier issues, while helping achieve value-for-money outcomes, effective commercial risk management and consistent commercial practice across the organisation.

Key Relationships

External to Council

- Clients/public.
- Community groups and organisations.
- Other local and regional authorities.
- Outside agencies including Government departments.
- Professional organisations.

Within Council

- Other team members in your Department/Group.
- Other Invercargill City Council employees.
- Elected Representatives.
- Executive Leadership Team.

Our Compass Values and Behaviours

Responsibility

- Take ownership of decisions and outcomes, both collectively and individually.
- We willingly share our knowledge.
- We acknowledge our mistakes, work to resolve them and learn from them.
- We give and receive feedback in a constructive manner to resolve issues.
- We do our job with total commitment.

Respect

Everyone is important, as are their views.

- We support and care for each other.
- We stop to listen, learn and understand.
- We communicate in an honest, up-front, and considerate manner.
- We maintain confidences and avoid hurtful gossip.

Above and Beyond

Take opportunities to go the extra mile.

- We take the initiative to improve our work practices to get the best result.
- We challenge ourselves and each other to make it better.
- We take pride in providing the best possible outcomes.
- We are ambassadors for our Council at all times.

Positivity

Always look on the bright side of life.

- We are approachable, interested and friendly.
- We are open and receptive to change.
- We acknowledge and praise the efforts of others.
- We work together as a team to get the job done.

What You Will Do *(provided as a guide only)*

Leadership

- Lead, coach and motivate team members, promoting employee engagement with constructive feedback, openness, acknowledgement and trust.
- Encourage a workplace culture of shared ideas, problem solving and mutual support within and across teams that empowers others to achieve results that are responsive, business like, well planned, safe and successful.
- Create a team culture, supported by processes and practice, that views health, safety and wellbeing as a critical element of business as usual.
- Supervise team member performance and ensure the effective delegation of work tasks.
- Work alongside management to ensure that the annual performance development is carried out in accordance with Council's Performance and Remuneration Framework.
- Promptly raise concerns relating to the performance of team members with management so that an appropriate support/development plan can be put in place.
- Alongside management, work within the financial activities and budgets under your control in accordance with Council guidelines, timelines and delegated responsibilities.

Commercial Contract Leadership

- Provide commercial leadership on higher-value, higher-risk or more complex contracts, helping shape workable contract arrangements and clear commercial positions.
- Coach and support others on commercial negotiation, contract terms, risk allocation and variation approaches, while escalating legal issues where formal legal advice is required.
- Build strong working relationships with business owners, procurement staff, legal advisers and suppliers to support commercially sound and practical contract outcomes.
- Provide specialist leadership through influence, sound judgement and clear advice on complex commercial matters, including when issues should be escalated for legal input or management decision.
- Contribute to building commercial capability across Council by sharing knowledge, practical guidance and lessons learned from negotiations, variations and complex supplier matters.
- Act as Council's recognised commercial contracts specialist, providing authoritative advice on complex commercial arrangements, supporting strategic procurement activities and promoting consistent commercial practice across the organisation.

Commercial and Contract Management

- Lead the ongoing improvement of Council's commercial contract management frameworks, templates, guidance and tools by identifying practical opportunities to strengthen commercial governance, usability, consistency and risk management.
- Provide input into updates to frameworks, templates and guidance based on lessons learned, commercial issues, audit findings and changes in legislation, policy or market conditions.
- Support the implementation and consistent application of commercial governance practices, standard contract models and commercial documentation across Council.
- Lead the development and practical use of commercial templates, contract models, guidance notes and commercial schedules that support consistent and workable contract arrangements.
- Lead negotiation of commercial terms, pricing structures, risk allocation and key departures from standard terms across goods, services and works contracts, and support the development of clear and workable final contract arrangements.
- Support structured commercial management throughout the contract lifecycle by providing advice on significant contract transitions, renewals, extensions and major variations.

- Provide expert commercial advice on contract structures, pricing models, delivery frameworks, supplier obligations and commercial governance appropriate to a local government environment, supporting strategic, higher-risk or complex supplier matters including major variations, formal performance escalation and commercial disputes.
- Identify, assess and manage commercial risks associated with contract terms, pricing mechanisms, major variations and significant supplier issues, ensuring risks are identified early and appropriate mitigation strategies are developed.
- Engage legal advice as required for non-standard terms, significant disputes, formal notices, interpretation issues or other matters requiring legal input.
- Work with procurement team and business owners to ensure commercial documentation, approvals and governance information are complete for negotiation, variation and escalation decisions.

Procurement and Tendering Support

- Support procurement planning by providing input on commercial models, contract approach, risk allocation and proposed terms to help inform the route-to-market process.
- Support procurement and tender processes by advising on commercial departures, contract terms, negotiation strategy and preferred contract structure as sourcing activity moves toward award.
- Apply relevant procurement, probity and governance expectations within the commercial aspects of tendering and contract formation, working alongside the Procurement Specialist on process requirements.
- Provide commercial input into business cases, procurement strategies and governance recommendations where contract structure, commercial risk or market considerations may influence procurement outcomes.

Risk, Compliance and Governance

- Monitor commercial compliance and governance obligations, identifying emerging risks, gaps or improvement opportunities and recommending practical actions to strengthen commercial outcomes.
- Support consistent commercial governance by applying approved templates, guidance and escalation pathways, and by identifying where updates or management action may be needed.
- Contribute to the ongoing maturity of Council's commercial governance framework by identifying improvements arising from contract negotiations, supplier issues, audits, legislative change and lessons learned.
- Support business owners on strategic, higher-risk or complex supplier matters, including major variations, formal performance escalation and commercial disputes, while day-to-day supplier performance remains the responsibility of the operational business owner.

Commercial Insights and Continuous Improvement

- Analyse commercial trends, contract issues and negotiation outcomes to identify opportunities to improve Council's commercial practices, contract models and value-for-money outcomes.
- Share lessons learned, practical guidance and commercial insights to build capability across Council and promote consistent commercial decision-making.

Note: Specific performance measures for this position will be discussed between you and your manager through the performance development plan process.

What You Will Bring

The below qualities, knowledge and skills are the key focus for this position and are used to assess an applicant's suitability for the role and the incumbent's performance in the position.

Education and Qualifications

Essential:

Bachelor's degree in commerce, law, procurement, business or a related discipline, or equivalent relevant experience in commercial contracts or procurement
Full New Zealand Driver's Licence

Desirable:

Professional qualification or accreditation in procurement, commercial management or contract management such as CIPS or WorldCC

Knowledge, Skills and Experience

Essential:

At least 5 years' relevant experience in commercial contracts, contract negotiation or procurement in a complex organisation, ideally within local government, infrastructure or the public sector
Proven experience drafting and negotiating commercial contracts, managing major variations and resolving complex contractual issues
Sound understanding of commercial contract principles, procurement practice, contract risk allocation and when to engage legal advice
Knowledge of public sector procurement expectations, commercial governance requirements and practical contract management approaches
Strong commercial acumen and analytical capability, with a practical and solutions-focused approach
Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including the ability to explain contractual matters clearly to non-specialist audiences
Ability to build effective working relationships across a complex stakeholder environment
Strong organisational skills, with the ability to manage multiple priorities and deadlines
High level of integrity, professionalism, and commitment to public sector values

Desirable:

Experience working with infrastructure, capital works, or technical service contracts
Experience aligned to NZ Government Procurement Rules and local government contracting frameworks
Experience developing practical templates, guidance or training to improve commercial and contract management capability

Agreement

Employee

Name

Sign

Date

Manager

Name

Sign

Date

Note: From time to time it may be necessary to consider changes in the position description in response to the changing nature of the work environment, which includes technological and statutory change. Such changes may be considered as part of the performance development review process or as required.

What We All Do

Customer Commitment

Treat customers with respect – taking the time to listen, learn and understand.
Present a positive image of Council by ensuring an efficient, courteous and professional service to customers at all times.
Acknowledge problems and complaints, identifying and promptly acting on solutions.

Continuous Improvement

Evaluate and review work practices and processes within all areas of responsibility to ensure that they are effective and efficient and implement improvements where appropriate.
Identify and propose additional business or service opportunities that enhance Council's existing capabilities.

Health, Safety and Well-being

Promote a safe and sound working environment and a culture of safe and responsible behaviours and attitudes.
Adhere to Health, Safety and Well-being policies and procedures, enabling a safe and healthy work environment for all workers and members of the public.

Civil Defence Emergency Management

Assist Council in preparing for and responding to an emergency.
After establishing the safety of members of your household, you may be assigned duties to assist Council and/or Emergency Management Southland in an emergency.

Other Duties

Undertake duties from time to time that may be in addition to those outlined but which fall within your capabilities and experience.

Our Process



OUTREACH AND ADVERTISING | Applications close Thursday 24th September

Potential candidates identified through targeted search; applications reviewed and responded to.



APPLICANT SCREENING | 12-24 September

Initial screening of applications as they are received. This may include a discussion with candidates about their motivations for applying. We aim to run a timely and efficient process.



SELECTING AND SHORTLISTING | 25 September

Once the role has closed our team will present the most qualified candidates to the client. Within this period, all applicants will receive notification of the status of their application.



CANDIDATE INTERVIEWS | Late September

Decipher Group prioritises a robust and consistent interview framework, based on a behavioural and competency-based assessment. Candidates will be advised of the interview structure and who will be present on the panel. All interviewed candidates will receive prompt feedback and will be advised of next steps once we have debriefed with the interview panel.



VETTING AND DUE DILIGENCE | Late September

We conduct thorough background checks and referencing to further assess competencies of preferred candidate/s. Decipher Group utilises a third-party provider for pre-employment and probity checks such as criminal history, qualification, employment history and bankruptcy. Our team will notify you in advance prior to us contacting your referees. Throughout the entire process, candidate confidentiality and privacy remain an absolute priority.



DECISION AND ONBOARDING | Late September – Early October

Following a rigorous evaluation, a conditional offer of employment will be made, subject to the completion of the above stage. Our team will communicate regularly with both the client and the successful candidate during this period. At the conclusion of the recruitment process, all remaining candidates will be notified, with the opportunity for feedback.

Senior Contract Management Specialist

- Lead complex commercial contract matters
- Strengthen value, rigour and performance
- Build contract capability across the organisation

Turn good contracts into better commercial outcomes.

Invercargill City Council manages significant contracts across infrastructure, roading, water, waste and the many services required to keep a city operating. The opportunity now is to manage the contract lifecycle, and strengthen what happens after the contract is signed.

ICC is seeking an experienced Senior Contract Management Specialist to bring greater commercial rigour to complex, high-value contracts, strengthen contract management capability and help ensure Council captures the value, performance and outcomes it has contracted for.

This is a senior specialist role with the opportunity to make a measurable commercial impact across the organisation. Sound like you?

About the Role

Reporting to the Manager – Procurement and Contracts, you will be Council's recognised specialist in commercial contract management. Working alongside procurement, legal advisers and operational contract owners, you will step in where matters move beyond procurement process into commercial position, contract structure, pricing, risk allocation, major variations, supplier performance or complex contractual issues.

You will lead and support complex commercial negotiations, advise on contract structures and risk, strengthen commercial governance and provide practical guidance across the contract lifecycle.

A key part of the role will be building capability. Contract owners sit throughout Council, so rather than taking ownership away from the business, you will coach and support managers to become more commercially confident and effective in managing their contracts.

You will also continue to develop Council's contract management frameworks, templates, tools and practices, using lessons from supplier issues, negotiations, variations and contract performance to lift capability across the organisation.

About You

We are looking for someone who has genuinely managed complex contracts in the real world. You will understand what happens when contract terms meet operational reality – when a major variation lands, supplier performance slips, commercial positions become difficult or an organisation needs to decide when to negotiate, escalate or seek legal advice.

To support your success, you will build and maintain effective commercial relationships with key suppliers, balancing collaboration and challenge to improve performance, manage risk and deliver value for Council.

Your background could be commercial, legal, engineering, infrastructure, construction, procurement or contract management. The common thread will be significant hands-on experience with complex, high-value contracts and strong commercial judgement.

You will bring:

- Significant experience in commercial contracts, contract negotiation or procurement within a complex organisation.
- Proven capability negotiating contract terms, pricing, risk allocation and major variations.
- Strong commercial acumen and an ability to identify where value or contractual position may be at risk.
- Experience resolving difficult supplier and contractual issues.
- The ability to coach others and explain complex commercial matters in straightforward language.
- Strong relationship and influencing skills, enabling you to work effectively with operational managers, procurement, legal advisers and suppliers.
- A practical, solutions-focused approach and sound judgement about when matters require escalation.
- Experience with infrastructure, civil, capital works or technical service contracts would be particularly valuable, as would exposure to public sector procurement and contracting environments.

Why Invercargill City Council?

This role arrives at an important point in ICC's commercial maturity. Strong foundations and frameworks are already in place; the opportunity now is to turn those into consistently strong commercial practice across the organisation.

You will have the scope to influence significant contracts, build capability and deliver outcomes that can be measured in stronger supplier performance, reduced commercial risk and better value for Invercargill's ratepayers.

Add to that the Southland lifestyle – affordable living, minimal commuting and exceptional outdoor experiences within easy reach – and this is an opportunity to combine a genuinely interesting commercial challenge with a different way of living.

Flexible working arrangements and relocation support are available for the right candidate.

How to apply

For a copy of the position description and to apply, visit the Decipher Group website on [Job opportunities - Decipher Group](#). To discover more about Southland and Invercargill City Council www.southlandnz.com and www.icc.govt.nz.

For a confidential discussion about the role; contact Lisa Edwards on 021 240 4410 or by email to lisa@deciphergroup.co.nz

Applications close: 24 September 2026

Please do not email us your CV and Cover Letter.
Please use the *Apply Now* link on our website.



Lisa Edwards
Senior Business Partner
Decipher Group

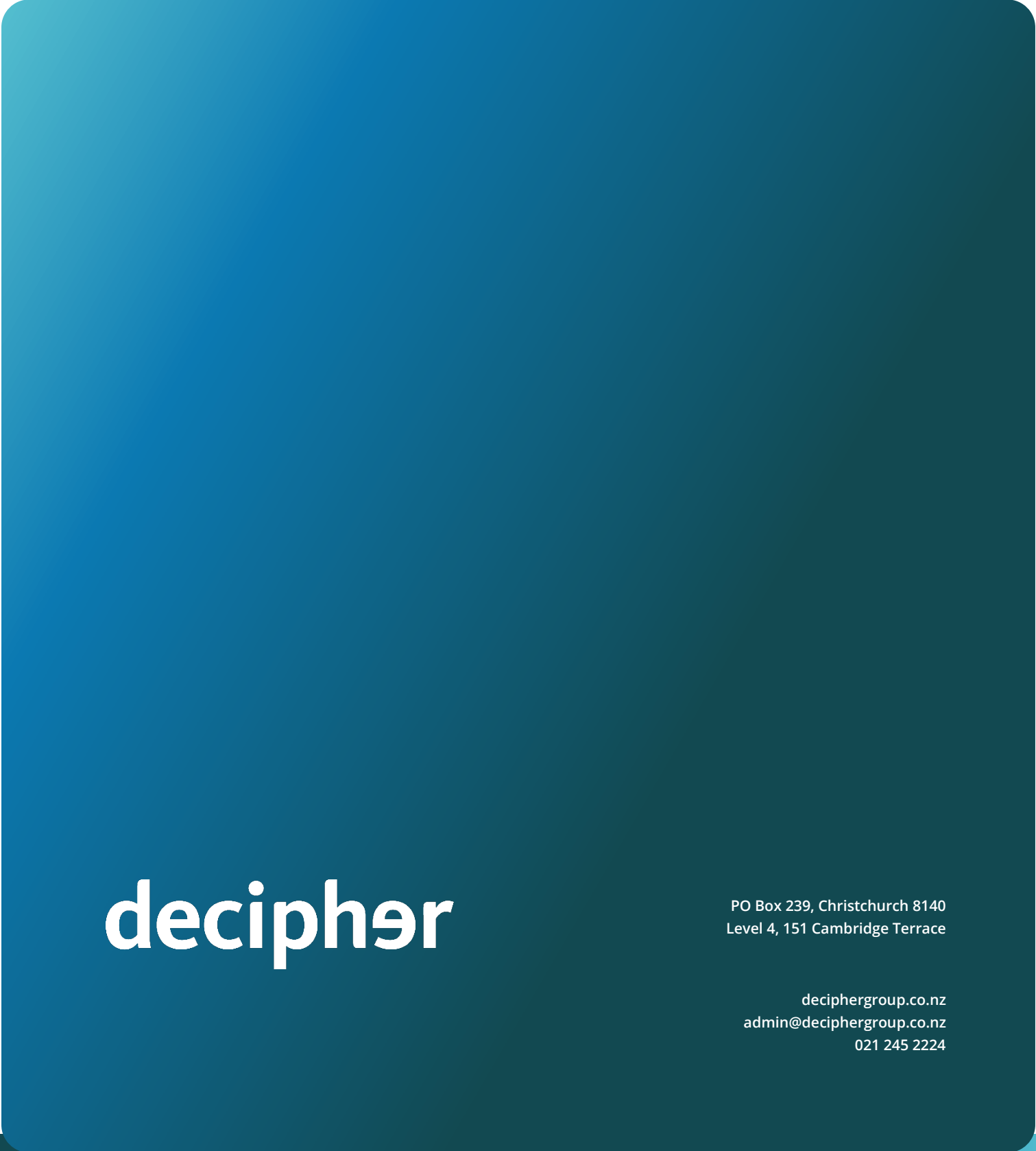
Relationship focused
Evaluative
Interested
Driven

decipher

Our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

Decipher Group cares deeply about helping individuals achieve their full potential and supporting organisations to thrive by working toward a more progressive future.

Fostering a culture of inclusion and belonging that truly values individual differences, backgrounds, and perspectives ignites creativity and new ideas – and this is part of what makes our team exceptional. For us, progress is the only goal worth benchmarking.



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PO Box 239, Christchurch 8140
Level 4, 151 Cambridge Terrace

deciphergroup.co.nz
admin@deciphergroup.co.nz
021 245 2224