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## **Southern Centre Multi Sensory Facility Wins World Leisure Innovation Prize**

Christchurch's Southern Centre multi sensory unit has been labelled a world-class facility with its win of an international award for innovation and excellence.

The Southern Centre was last week awarded one of the first World Leisure Innovation Awards by the World Leisure Organisation. The prize was presented to Southern Centre Coordinator Lindsey Keith in Hangzhou, China, as part of the gala opening ceremony of the World Leisure Expo.

Based at QEII Park, the Southern Centre is a Christchurch City Council facility, run in partnership with the Southern Centre Charitable Trust. The facility was the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, designed specifically to be fully inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities.

Lindsey Keith said to receive international recognition for the Southern Centre and such a prestigious global award was absolutely phenomenal. "The Southern Centre has always aimed to be a world leader in multi sensory facilities and the World Leisure Innovative Award confirms our success in achieving this status."

"It took six years of hard work by my predecessors Trisha Ventom and Sarah Kelly to get the facility operational. It was such a revolutionary new concept it took many hours to raise the funds to build it and just as many designing the state-of-the-art interactive equipment and getting it manufactured."

"This award is as much for their innovation and for the team who have since been successfully involved in operating and promoting the facility to an increasing number of clients each year."

The Southern Centre was one of only four awarded by the International Adjudication Panel from more than 60 entries. Panel Chair Dr Karla Henderson praised the standard of entries and "the emphasis applicants placed on building sustainable social and environmental communities through leisure".

The [World Leisure Organisation](#), founded in 1952, is a world-wide non-governmental association dedicated to discovering and fostering those conditions best permitting leisure to serve as a force for human growth, development and well-being. World Leisure pursues these goals through education, research and informed advocacy.

