nzsee
NEW ZEALAND SOCIETY FOR EARTHQUAKE ENGINEERING

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Kia ora,

Welcome to the October 2026 issue of the NZSEE newsletter. It's a busy time for the Society, with the Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2026 gathering momentum, fellow and award nominations, seminars and conference news all happening at once.

The Building (Earthquake-prone Buildings) Amendment Act 2026 received royal assent on 25 September. The methodology for the new Act is currently being drafted and will be available for consultation, likely during November. We will update you as soon as we have confirmed dates for seminars and to gather your feedback and comments for submission on the methodology.

Two deadlines to note. Nominations for Fellows 2027 close **Friday, 13 November, 12pm**, and all 2027 Awards applications and nominations close **Monday, 30 November, 11:59pm**. These are two weeks apart, so please check the dates for each.

This month we're hosting a reconnaissance seminar on the 2026 Venezuela and Colombia earthquakes, in Christchurch on 27 October and in Wellington and online on 29 October. Our Non-Structural Elements seminar series starts in Christchurch on 24 November and travels to Dunedin, Auckland, Taupō and Wellington. Registrations are also open for PCEE 2027 (16–18 February), with early bird pricing until 15 January, and the papers and keynote sessions from the 2026 Conference are now available online.

Elsewhere in this issue, the Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake has announced $3.6 million for eight new research programmes, and we're sharing an upcoming AI in the Built Environment event in Auckland.

Upcoming events

Date	Event	Location
27 and 29 Oct	Venezuela and Colombia earthquake reconnaissance seminar	Christchurch, Wellington, online
24 Nov to 4 Dec	Non-Structural Elements seminars	Christchurch, Dunedin, Auckland, Taupō, Wellington
15 to 18 Feb 2027	PCEE 2027 Workshops and site tours 15 Feb, conference 16–18 Feb	Te Pae, Christchurch

Other events of interest

Date	Event	Location
4 Nov	AI in the Built Environment	Mott MacDonald, Auckland

NZSEE Fellows 2027: Call for Nominations

The Management Committee is calling for nominations for election as NZSEE Fellows, recognising members who are highly respected in earthquake engineering and have given exceptional service to the Society.

Closing date: Friday, 13 November 2026, 12pm

Nominees must have been an Ordinary Member for at least five years. Nominations must be made by three current financial members, using the completed nomination form, including a brief supporting statement.

Send completed nominations to exec@nzsee.org.nz

View the eligibility criteria and download the nomination form

NZSEE Awards 2027: Call for Nominations

Applications and nominations are open for the NZSEE annual awards. **All awards close 11:59pm Monday, 30 November 2026, with no extensions.**

You can apply or be nominated for more than one award, but each needs a separate submission tailored to its criteria. This is particularly encouraged for the Ivan Skinner Award and the Emerging Women Leaders Award, so check your eligibility for both.

Please submit applications and nominations directly to the Executive Officer at exec@nzsee.org.nz.

Note: NZSEE and the Awards Committee may choose not to give an award in any category in any year. The judges' decisions are final, and no correspondence will be entered into.

The awards:

Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake / NZSEE Ivan Skinner Award ($15,000 prize)
Open to practitioners and researchers contributing to reducing the impacts of earthquakes on New Zealand communities, and to people from disciplines beyond engineering who are making significant contributions to earthquake impact reduction in New Zealand.
Ivan Skinner Award criteria and how to apply

Natural Hazards Commission
Toka Tū Ake

NZSEE / QuakeCoRE Emerging Women Leaders in Earthquake Engineering Award ($15,000 prize)
Recognises and celebrates younger women from engineering practice and/or academia who demonstrate emerging leadership in earthquake engineering. The award aims to foster greater participation of women in leadership roles in the discipline, and the prize supports recipients' career development and goals.
Emerging Women Leaders Award criteria and how to apply

QuakeCoRE
NZ Centre for Earthquake Resilience
Te Hiranga Rū

John Hollings Seismic Resilience in Practice Award
Recognises case study projects from practice that aim to provide enhanced seismic resilience in an earthquake. Projects may be new builds or seismic retrofits, and can be a building, structure or infrastructure.
John Hollings Award criteria and how to apply

Otto Glogau Award ($2,000 prize)
Recognises the author(s) of the best paper published in the NZSEE Bulletin in the last three years. All authors are eligible, whether or not they are NZSEE members, and self-nomination is welcome. The prize may be used to buy books or support other activities that advance earthquake engineering.
Otto Glogau Award criteria and how to nominate a paper

NZSEE Research Scholarship ($10,000)
Supports students undertaking earthquake engineering research projects at New Zealand universities and research institutes. It aims to promote research in earthquake engineering and encourage students of high ability to pursue advanced studies in the field.
Research Scholarship criteria and how to apply

Non-Structural Elements: From Research to Real-World Design

Seminar Series 2026

Join us for a paid seminar (member and non-member rates available) on the seismic behaviour and design of non-structural elements, including how to apply the new BRANZ Code of Practice on current projects.

Non-structural elements are critical to life safety, building functionality and seismic resilience. Recent research, full-scale testing and earthquake observations are changing how they should be designed, coordinated and reviewed. The seminar covers earthquake reconnaissance, the new Code of Practice, emerging research and testing, and practical design, coordination and documentation.

Location	Date	Time	Venue
Christchurch	24 Nov	1:00–4:00pm	University of Canterbury, John Britten 102 Conference foyer
Dunedin	25 Nov	1:00–4:00pm	WSP Dunedin, 197 Rattray Street
Auckland	1 Dec	9:00am–12:00pm	University of Auckland, Newmarket Campus
Taupō	2 Dec	1:00–4:00pm	WSP Taupō, 80 Tūwharetoa Street
Wellington	4 Dec	9:00am–12:00pm	Massey University, 50 Tasman Street, Mount Cook

Find out more and register for the seminar

Pacific Conference on Earthquake Engineering 2027



Registrations are now open for the Pacific Conference on Earthquake Engineering, **16 to 18 February 2027 at Te Pae, Christchurch**. Pre-conference workshops and site tours will run on **Monday 15 February**.

Early bird registration closes 15 January 2027.

To register at the member rate, you need to be an NZSEE member (Ordinary, Life, Young Professional or Student). Not a member yet? Join NZSEE to get discounted conference registration, along with a number of other member benefits.

Register for PCEE 2027 | **Join NZSEE**

NZSEE 2026 Conference: Papers and Keynotes Now Online

Papers from the 2026 NZSEE Conference in Wellington are now available online, free to all.

Browse the 2026 Conference papers

Keynote and plenary sessions from the conference are also available to watch on the NZSEE YouTube channel. Watch the sessions.

NZSEE Events

Upcoming Seminar: 2026 Venezuela and Colombia Earthquake Reconnaissance Update – Christchurch | Wellington | Online

Speakers: Julian Rincon and Santiago Pujol

The 2026 earthquakes in Venezuela and Colombia provided an opportunity to compare building performance under design approaches focused on life safety versus post-earthquake functionality. Reconnaissance of reinforced concrete (RC) frame and wall buildings showed that structures with well-distributed RC walls generally outperformed more flexible frame buildings, resulting in lower damage and better functionality after the earthquakes. Similar trends were observed in retrofitted buildings, where interventions that increased system stiffness through added RC walls were more effective than member-strengthening approaches alone. Nevertheless, stiffness alone was insufficient; satisfactory performance also depended on ductile detailing, adequate wall distribution, and the avoidance of critical irregularities. Through comparative case studies and damage statistics, this presentation explores how seismic design and retrofit strategies can move beyond collapse prevention towards improved post-earthquake functionality.

Christchurch

When: Tuesday, 27 October 2026

Time: 12:00–1:00pm

Where: University of Canterbury, John Britten Conference Foyer

Find out more and register here.

Wellington | Online

When: Thursday, 29 October 2026

Time: 12:00–1:00pm

Where: Engineering New Zealand, Kopa presentation room, Level 6, 40 Taranaki Street, Wellington 6011 | Online

Find out more and register for the Wellington event here. Register for the online event here.

$3.6 Million for New Natural Hazards Research

The *Natural Hazards Commission Toka Tū Ake* has invested $3.6 million in eight new research programmes to help protect New Zealand homes, support better planning and development decisions, and reduce the future cost of natural hazard damage. The research will explore earthquake risk, building resilience, flood adaptation, coastal cliff collapse and fires following earthquakes. Read about the programmes on NHC's website.

Other Events of Interest

AI in the Built Environment

Hosted by Mott MacDonald in partnership with the AI Forum New Zealand. An evening of short presentations, a panel discussion and networking on how organisations across the built environment are using AI to unlock value from data, improve decision-making and tackle complex infrastructure challenges.

Wednesday 4 November 2026, 4:30–7:00pm

Mott MacDonald Auckland, Ground Floor, 30 Daldy Street, Auckland Central

Free for members and non-members. Spaces are limited.

Register for AI in the Built Environment