



NGĀ MEA HIRAHIRA YEAR IN REVIEW

RESEARCH FOR TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

- ▶ Health researchers were awarded a \$1.2m grant. The **Health Research Council grant** will advance point-of-care testing in rural Aotearoa, improving access to on-site diagnosis and treatment for infections like Strep A, influenza, COVID-19, and RSV.
- ▶ Muhammad Saad Khan was recognised by the healthcare technology community for his PhD research, receiving the prestigious **Consortium for Medical Device Technologies (CMDT) Early Career Research Award** and the People's Choice Research Poster Award.
- ▶ Associate Professor Bridget Stocker and Associate Professor Mattie Timmer are part of an international team awarded funding for a project aiming to **improve the effectiveness of vaccines against major diseases**. The team was awarded a contract with a total value of \$15.7m (US\$9.2m) from a vaccine discovery programme run by the National Institutes of Health's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases in the United States.
- ▶ A team of VUW researchers were a recipient of a **2024 ISIF Asia award for Outstanding Research** in Digital Development for their research into Realtime Detection of Border Gateway Protocol (BGP) anomalies.
- ▶ Dr Zaramasina Clark, from Te Kura Mātauranga Koiora—School of Biological Sciences, was awarded a **fellowship worth \$650,000** from the Health Research Council of New Zealand (HRC) for a study in infertility.
- ▶ Researchers Justin Brookes, Jasmine Hall, and Alexandra Winter-Billington were awarded **Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao Fellowships**. The fellowships, administered by the Royal Society of New Zealand, are provided to talented Māori and Pasifika researchers who work in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, or Mathematics. The three fellowships are each worth \$800,000 over four years.
- ▶ A New Zealand School of Music—Te Kōkī **senior research fellow Dr Inge van Rij won the 2024 H. Colin Slim award**. The American Musicological Society award is recognised internationally as one of the most prestigious prizes in musicology. It is presented to 'a musicological article of exceptional merit by an established scholar'.
- ▶ **Marine animal forests were discovered** in the shallow waters around Wellington by Te Herenga Waka researchers studying life beneath the waves.
- ▶ Our **Autism Clinic** is piloting a new programme to identify and support children showing signs of autism. The programme has trained 300 health and education professionals, and free support will be provided over 20 weeks to 60 children and their families in the Wellington region.
- ▶ Researchers are working closely with the community to understand the family-building experiences of trans and non-binary people. Their new project, **Warming the Whare**, is a three-year participatory action research project partnering with two perinatal mental health services committed to trans-inclusive service delivery.



O TE TAU



PREPARING STUDENTS FOR AN EXTRAORDINARY LIFE

- Toloa Lapita, the **new Pasifika student space** on Kelburn campus, opened on Friday 4 October. The space has largely been organised by students. A focus of the space was to make it inclusive of all the different Pacific Island nations from across Polynesia, Micronesia, and Melanesia.
- International success in cricket for Law student Ben Sears saw him awarded the top title of **Sportsperson and Sportsman of the Year** at the Blues Awards.
- Alumni, corporate sponsors, and University staff raised \$40,960 to help students pay expensive power bills during the Wellington winter. This outpouring of support meant that nearly twice as many students benefited from the **Winter Energy Grants** this year compared to last year.
- **The Post Wellington Gold Awards** saw dozens of alumni celebrated at a glittering 1920s-themed event at The Embassy on 22 August 2024, with alumni receiving awards for new thinking and emerging businesses.
- Marama Labs, a company which got its start in the School of Chemical and Physical Sciences, closed an **investment round with \$3.1m**. The start-up's CloudSpec tech makes it quick and easy to test wine samples. The new funding will help the company expand into the global wine market and life sciences industry. Marama Labs was spun-out by Wellington UniVentures, which helps academics commercialise their research.
- Nine graduates were announced as **winners in the 2024 New Zealand Architecture Awards** and two in the **Australian Pattern Book Design Competition**.
- **Alumna Meredith Ross-James received a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship**. Meredith graduated in May 2024 with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons, first class) in Philosophy. She was on the Dean's List for three consecutive years and received the Maurice Goldsmith Prize for the top graduating Philosophy student.



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DEEPENING RELEVANCE AND IMPACT

- ▶ Te Herenga Waka **launched the Bachelor of Popular Music (BPM)**. The BPM is a groundbreaking degree that opens a world of creative possibilities for students passionate about popular music. From electronic music to songwriting, the BPM will offer students a unique blend of creative practice, technical training, and critical study, equipping students with the skills needed to succeed in an ever-evolving industry.
- ▶ The University's **draft Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression policy** was released for consultation. At Te Herenga Waka, we welcome our role as critic and conscience of society and see this as crucial to the functions of a university. The draft policy is intended to act as a starting point to gather a diverse range of views on what the exercise of academic freedom and freedom of expression looks like in our University.
- ▶ The University's **Health, Safety, and Wellbeing Strategy** was approved by the University Council in July 2024. This follows consultation with staff on the draft Strategy, which included a series of staff forums.
- ▶ Te Herenga Waka was recognised among **the world's best film schools**. Our Film programme was again named in The Hollywood Reporter's list as one of the top 15 film schools in the world—for the third time in four years.
- ▶ Dr Jesse Pirini, Co-Director of The Atom Innovation Space and a Senior Lecturer in Management at the Wellington School of Business and Government, received a prestigious **Fulbright New Zealand Scholar Award**.
- ▶ Alumni were recognised in the **King's Birthday Honours** List 2024. Business leader Theresa Gattung was recognised with the highest honour, being made a Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit; and Katie Sadleir was made a Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for her services to sports governance and women.
- ▶ The University's sustainability efforts have again been recognised in the **Australasian Green Gown Awards**, the most prestigious award of sustainability best practice within the global education sector. Growing our Future, the University's reforestation project, was a finalist in the 'Nature Positive' category; and the sector-wide climate scenarios project, a collaboration between Aotearoa's universities, was a finalist in the 'Powerful Partnerships' category.
- ▶ The University rocketed up the rankings in the **Randstad NZ Employer Branch Research study**, with a move to number 8 in 2024. We were the only university in the top 10. The 2024 Randstad study asked people what they looked for in an employer, and what they prioritised when moving onto their next job. The top five work factors were found to be: job security, equity, good training, attractive salary, and benefits—and most importantly, work-life balance.
- ▶ Kabini Sanga, Associate Professor of Education at Te Herenga Waka, **partnered with researchers at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT)** on a new project to capture the stories of Australian South Sea Islanders (ASSI). The project was awarded a \$1.5m ARC Discovery Indigenous grant.



O TE TAU



GROWING OUR IHO

- ▶ **Ngā Mokopuna, formerly known as The Living Pā, formally opened** on 6 December 2024, on the anniversary of the opening of the original wharenui in 1986. Over a thousand people from the local community flocked together for the dawn opening ceremony. It will be a new cultural landmark for Wellington and, as an aspiring Living Building, it pushes the boundaries of what sustainable buildings can be by placing mātauranga Māori at its heart.
- ▶ Taiawa Wellington Tech Hub, a **new co-working space** that will see innovative local businesses based at Te Herenga Waka, opened in June 2024. Confirmed tenants include carbon management businesses Cogo and Carbon Invoice, online shopping charity donation app Virtue, and scientific literature review assistant Litmaps—with room for more!
- ▶ Let's Talk Tiriti! In February, we ran a **session for staff on Te Tiriti o Waitangi**. It gave our people an opportunity to have a free, frank and friendly chat about Treaty matters. Over 100 people registered for this event.
- ▶ Professor Rawinia Higgins (Tūhoe), our Deputy Vice-Chancellor—Māori and Engagement won the Māori governance category of the 2024 **Women in Governance Awards**.
- ▶ Wahine Māori health practitioner Professor Bev Lawton (Ngāti Porou) NZOM, was recognised with a **prestigious award** named after esteemed Māori cancer researcher Dr Maairie Goodall.
- ▶ A new **memorandum of understanding (MOU)** was signed between Te Herenga Waka and the University of Western Sydney, with a focus on exchange for Indigenous scholars—both students and academic staff.
- ▶ Te Kawa a Māui was awarded a **Prime Minister's Scholarship**. The scholarship will enable a group of five Māori students enrolled in a Te Kawa a Māui paper at Te Herenga Waka and five Māori students from the University of Otago to participate in an Indigenous studies programme with National Pingtung University in Taiwan in 2025.

