e-pānui
NPM
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MAHURU | SEPTEMBER 2025

Kua tino māhana te whenua.
The earth has now become quite warm

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TE PŪRONGO NŌ NGĀ POU MATARUA CO-DIRECTORS UPDATE

Summer is nearly upon us, and, with that, we look forward to welcoming a new cohort of researchers into the NPM whānau through our annual Summer Internship projects and NPM-Borrin Legal Internships. Each year our interns get the opportunity to work alongside senior NPM researchers on 'real world' projects and become part of a wider community of researchers committed to advancing our collective vision of flourishing Māori futures.

We're also excited to announce that applications for our NPM PhD scholarships are now open! The deadline is 10 November so be sure not to miss it. Our 'Promising Futures' research team is also looking to recruit Māori PhD graduates from the 2023 and 2024 Te Kupenga o MAI programme. If you recently graduated with a PhD and are interested in sharing your experiences and insights with us, please get in touch with our team - details can be found later in this e-pānui.
Mauri ora!

Ngā Pou Matarua | Co-Directors

- Professor Tahu Kukuta
- Professor Melinda Webber

KAUPAPA MATUA

Annemarie Gillies.

NZ Archaeological Database Needs Māori Input

There are about 74,000 registered archaeological sites in the country and most are of cultural significance to Māori. A NPM research project will improve the way archaeological information is being characterised and will likely have implications for all hapū and iwi in relation to their significant sites, according to Professor Annemarie Gillies (Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Awa, Te Arawa).

These significant sites include middens, burial sites, maara kai, terraces and battle grounds. The sites are registered on Archsite, a website operated by the New Zealand Archaeological Association Incorporated, Heritage New Zealand and the Department of Conservation. Many of the sites have storied histories that link them to iwi and hapū, but those connections are largely invisible in the platform. This oversight is a situation Annemarie and her research team wanted to remedy.

Annemarie is working alongside Ngā Hapū o Waimārama to create a more culturally appropriate labelling system for Archsite. Their aim is to ensure the database reflects and acknowledges mātauranga, tikanga and hapū kōrero rather than relying solely on generic archaeological information.

Annemarie's irāmutu - Ana Te Whaiti, Airini Gillies, and Ejay Gillies - were recruited by Ngā Hapū o Waimārama Māori Committee to work alongside their aunt. After many months of research, meetings and wānanga with the hapū, the team created a set of digital tags that can embed Māori provenance, cultural protocols and permissions into the Archsite platform.

The team are working to have these changes integrated into the platform in the near future. This change will enable archaeologists to be more knowledgeable about the whenua and its history, as well as giving them information pointing to which hapū they need to approach for further access and guidance about archaeological significant areas.

"This research was about reclaiming our cultural narratives, protecting our data sovereignty and getting Māori values into national heritage systems. This is a first for the country - no one has ever done this in the archaeological context," says Annemarie. This work has been done as a result of the Local Contexts Traditional Knowledge Labels system developed for Indigenous communities to communicate specific rules and protocols for the use and sharing of traditional knowledge and sharing of biocultural data.

A significant outcome of the project was the development of a workflow model that allows for scaling beyond Waimārama to other hapū and iwi. Annemarie is now working with Archsite to allow greater database access for other iwi and hapū who may want to do similar work for their own significant sites.

Given climate change and flooding in some parts of the country, she believes the time is right for Māori to take control of the archaeological information and hapū mātauranga regarding their whenua. "Māori aspirations to record their local histories associated with people and places has become even more urgent especially as the landscapes change."

Because the project has been led by the hapū, one of the many positive qualities of the project has been the capacity building which it developed for the coming generations. "Developing skills and cultivating a greater connection to my whenua has given me more confidence to be involved in hapū and iwi matters. Because of this project I am keen to be more involved in decision making and contribute more to our people, marae and kura," says Airini Gillies.

The team is hoping that their project will also strengthen relationships with archaeologists. "It has established boundaries for how archaeologists need to engage with hapū around culturally significant sites. We are open for collaboration and the building of relationships with archaeologists, so that we both benefit, and it is no longer a one-way street, with no benefit back to the hapū," says Ana Te Whaiti.

RANGAHAU | RESEARCH

Mapping Technologies Improve Dairy Farm Ecosystem

Created by Nathan Galluzzo, large scale renderings of Tahamata Incorporation Farm give the board a bird's-eye view of what is currently occurring on the farm and how practices impact the farm's future resilience.

A farm in the Horowhenua has been undergoing an environmental transformation over the past three decades and research from NPM has helped hasten the shift.

NPM researchers Professor Huhana Smith (Ngāti Tukorehe, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga) and Moira Poutama (Ngāti Tukorehe, Ngāti Wehiwehi, Ngāti Kikopiri, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga) both whakapapa to the Tahamata Incorporation coastal lands in Kuku. Over the past 30 years they have worked on a variety of projects to uplift the farm's mauri regarding its fresh water and wetland resilience, using an holistic approach for long term environmental and economic progress.

"While we were implementing strategies such as wetland, and freshwater revitalization, other things occurring on the farm such as sand dune management and farm drainage were areas that could be improved," says Huhana.

The dairy farm is on coastal land, and features a salt marsh, an estuarine region, sand dunes and the Ōhau River, all interconnected and impacting each other. To get the best out of the whenua economically and environmentally, Huhana and Moira decided - in a very literal sense - to get a bigger picture of what was happening on the farm. Previously, they had commissioned large-scale aerial photos. This time they opted for a very different approach that involved walking, talking, and technology.

To gain greater insights Moira enlisted the help of a trainee GIS mapping specialist, artist and ecologist Hayden Fowler. Landscape architect Nathan Galluzzo offered his skills and Derrylea Hardy continued as a long-term collaborator on the project.

Armed with equipment and harnessing the hundreds of hours of kōrero tuku iho that had been undertaken with hapū members over the years, researchers and members of the hapū undertook hīkoi covering every corner of the farm. This enabled the research team to gain the footage they needed. Large scale, highly detailed 3D maps using the photogrammetry/drone camera requirement and LiDAR data were created, and this information has proved to be a game changer, says Huhana.

The 3D topographical renders enable people to understand how the climate, hydrology, farm geology, as well as farming practices relate and impact each other. Nathan used sophisticated software to virtually 'fly' people over the farm, enabling the Tahamata Board and its shareholders to visualise what future transition to a more climate resilient farm might look like. "While we are lucky not to have been hit hard like some areas, it is coming here eventually, and so we wanted to help our farm become more environmentally and economically resilient to this", says Huhana.

To really tackle climate change challenges, Huhana and Moira had to get their heads around how carbon credits and emissions reduction practices would work on the farm. As well as learning about the mapping technologies, the entire project has been a huge amount of up-skilling and learning for them.

She says Tahamata Incorporation's Board is future focussed and are part of Massey University's Whenua Haumanu Programme which encourages the nurture of land through pastoral farming practices. "Tahamata has accepted these findings with interest and the mapping technology is a huge asset with other resources to build capacity and drive future decisions for the benefit of the farm and its shareholders," says Huhana.

"One of the beautiful things is that we have a board who want to do what is right for the whenua as well as help the farm be socially and culturally astute, environmentally sustainable and economically viable," she says.

"The board has said to keep moving forward, but they also want to be involved and kept up to date. This path will be a win for everyone, and it will be a massive transformation of our coastal whenua. Ultimately, our research team, as an active kaitiakitanga research group, are enabling our people through this process to be whole with the whenua, our awa, our ngutu awa and repo once again."

KŌRERO WITH NPM RESEARCHERS

Each month we feature one of our NPM lead researchers. This month our kōrero is with Dr Karen Wright Matakitenga researcher and senior lecturer at Te Kupenga Hauora Māori.

Karen Wright in her playing kit with the whānau fan club.

Ko wai tō ingoa, nō whea koe?

Ko Karen Wright tōku ingoa. He uri ahau nō Kāi Tahu. Ko Te Rau Aroha, ko Murihiku ngā marae. I tipu ake au ki Tāmaki Makaurau, ā, e noho ana mātou ko tōku whānau ki reira ināianei.

What are your areas of research?

As a senior lecturer at Te Kupenga Hauora Māori, Waipapa Taumata Rau my research is largely centred around health system, service, and programme transformation to uphold Indigenous rights and support hauora Māori. This was prompted by the challenges, frustrations and inequities that I saw and experienced during the 15 years I worked within the health system as a junior doctor, general practitioner, and public health medicine registrar. My research has explored te Tiriti o Waitangi and decolonisation as frameworks to support transformation and covered diverse research topics including alcohol-related harm, COVID-19, acute rheumatic fever, and antimicrobial stewardship. I am currently embarking on a NPM funded Matakitenga research project examining how data and digital health technologies used in primary care can support hauora Māori.

What excites you about your work?

I enjoy research that aims to understand different ways of doing things and to influence policy to see structural and systems change. To do this, I collaborate and engage with incredible researchers, clinicians and whānau which is a highlight of my mahi. I am continually inspired by and able to learn from the passionate and committed people I work with. I also get a kick out of supporting and seeing others grow and develop in their hauora Māori research and learning journeys. It is reassuring to know that there are so many students, clinicians and researchers out there seeking to understand how they can be effective in their mahi and support hauora Māori.

Our NPM vision is flourishing Māori futures. What does that mean for you?

I see this as an intergenerational aspiration for thriving whānau, hapū, and iwi that is connected to tino rangatiratanga and structural transformation. For me, flourishing Māori futures is about recognising that people, culture, and place are deeply interconnected. In my research, this means that I think about flourishing in broad terms inclusive of hauora, sustainability, relationships, and identity. I also see it as making space for diverse Māori realities so that we can be uniquely Māori without judgement, discrimination, or expectation.

Lastly, can you tell us something surprising about you?

I started playing football last year! After watching one of my daughters play for many years, I realised I really wanted to be out there playing as well as supporting from the sideline. This isn't the usual time of life to start playing football, but I'm loving it so far and having lots of fun. I also got to play alongside my daughter this season which was pretty awesome!

NGĀ MANAAKITANGA | OPPORTUNITIES

2026 NPM PhD SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS OPEN!!

We are calling for applications for our 2026 PhD Awards. Our programme focuses on developing the next generation of Māori research leaders who can set and pursue impactful research that contributes to building a flourishing future for Māori. Our PhD Scholarship grant is a key strategy in achieving this goal.

The submission date for your PhD must be before 30 September 2028. The scholarship provides a stipend of $36,050 per year, plus $9,785 for professional development support, for a duration of two years. Successful applicants will receive a complimentary registration for the NPM Biennial International Indigenous Research Conference and NPM professional excellence activities. In this round, we aim to support a total of five PhD scholarship awards.

Applications Close: Monday, 10 November 2025.
For more information:
https://www.maramatanga.ac.nz/funding-opportunity/phd-scholarships

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CALLING TE KUPENGA O MAI GRADUATES

A research project about the experiences and impacts of Te Kupenga o MAI on Māori PhD graduates is being launched. If you are a Māori PhD graduate from the 2023 and 2024 MAI programmes, we invite you to find out more:
maipromisingfutures@auckland.ac.nz

MAI JOURNAL

MAI JOURNAL NEW ISSUE PUBLISHED - VOLUME 14, ISSUE 2, SEPTEMBER 2025!

We're pleased to announce the publication of MAI Journal Volume 14, Issue 2 — a general issue featuring 12 articles and two commentaries that explore themes of wellbeing, education, housing, health, and systemic transformation.

From whatu pedagogy and teenage māmā Māori experiences, to rangatahi-led insights on racial bias and Indigenous governance of freshwater, these works reflect the lived realities, aspirations, and innovations of Māori and Pacific communities.

All articles are freely available to download, along with the full issue PDF. Read and download here: MAI Journal Volume 14, Issue
2https://journal.mai.ac.nz/10.20507/MAIJournal.2025.14.2

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HUI, CONFERENCES, WORKSHOPS, WEBINARS, EXHIBITIONS, EVENTS

TAIKURA AOTEAROA TRI-ACADEMY INDIGENOUS SUMMIT

This Summit is the second of three that have been agreed between the Royal Society Te Apārangi, the Royal Society of Canada, and the Australian Academy of Sciences to establish an international, Indigenous-led research agenda.

The objective of the summit is to bring together Indigenous Fellows, thought leaders, and knowledge holders from Aotearoa New Zealand, Canada, and Australia to progress the kaupapa of collaborative international Indigenous-led research. Māori Fellows involved in the initiative include NPM senior researchers and co-directors, past and present.

When: 24- 26 November 2025
Where: AUT, 55 Wellesley Street East, Auckland
For more information and details on registration: Academy@royalsociety.org.nz
https://www.royalsociety.org.nz/events/taikura-aotearoa-tri-academy-indigenous-summit/

WIPCE 2025 AOTEAROA

The World Indigenous Peoples' Conference (WIPCE) 2025 takes place in
Tāmai Makaurau. It will feature national and international speakers, academic and community presentations, networking sessions, symposiums, panel discussions, seminars, workshops, cultural excursions and a village marketplace.
Where: Aotea Centre
When: 16-20 November 2025, 11am - 7pm daily
Cost: Free to public
Learn more: https://wipce2025.com/teaoputahifestival/

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NPM 2025/26 SUMMER INTERNSHIP GRANTS AWARDED

We are excited to announce the recipients of our Summer Internship projects and our Borrin Legal Internships. We are grateful for the support of project supervisors who will work with 12 interns to grow their research skills and knowledge as they get 'hands on' experience across a diverse range of projects.

Intern: Aria McKee | Ngāti Porou
Project: Te Rere o te Pīwakawaka: Exploring pūrākau, mōteatea, and whakataukī to reframe ADHD
Supervisor: AProf. Byron Rangiwai
Institution: Ngā Wai a te Tūī, Unitec

Intern: Denise Paora | Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Kahu
Project: Ngā Pou Māreikura: Mapping Literature to Wāhine Māori Wellbeing and Belonging
Supervisor: AProf. Deborah Heke
Institution: Ngā Wai a te Tūī, Unitec

Intern: Eilensia Williams-Ransfield | Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Raukawa ki te Tonga
Project: Whare Tangata Ora: A Whakapapa informed review of mātauranga Māori and literature
Supervisor: Miss Deanna Haami
Institution: Massey University

Intern: Madison Mackie | Ngāti Maniapoto
Project: Exploring Neurodivergence and Māori Wellbeing through Indigenous-Informed Technology
Supervisor: Dr Hazel Abraham
Institution: AUT

Intern: Kelly Wilson | Ngāti Te Rangi
Project: Hāpai te hauora: Breathing your ancestors into life
Supervisor: Dr Teah Carlson
Institution: Massey University

Intern: Mareikura Waiti | Te Rarawa, Te Aupōuri, Ngāti Pikiao, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti
Project: Te mana o te reo Māori: Analysing word choice in assessments written in Māori
Supervisor: Dr Julia Wilson
Institution: The University of Otago

Intern: Kaitlyn Mclean | Te Arawa, Tūhoe, Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairarapa, Kāi Tahu
Project: Ko te Hua o te Rengarenga: He Maumaharatanga - Supporting the archiving and analysis of Māori women's leadership histories
Supervisor: AProf. Mere Skerret
Institution: Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington

Intern: Anahera Whaanga-Smith | Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou, Rongomaiwahine
Project: He aha te utu mō te kai? Exploring the economic benefits of kai sovereignty
Supervisor: Dr Kenneth Taiapa
Institution: The University of Otago

Intern: Maria Reti | Ngāti Kahungunu ki te Whanganui-a-Orotu, Ngāti Hineuru, Tuhoe
Project: Pharmacist Precepting for Cultural Safety in Aotearoa New Zealand
Supervisor: Dr Lisa Kremer
Institution: The University of Otago

Intern: Arpo Deer | Kāi Tahu
Project: Matihiko whakairo Māori, rorohiko hoahoaina hangarau - Carving Māori experiences with 3D digital technologies
Supervisor: AProf. Rory Clifford
Institution: The University of Canterbury

NPM 2025-26 BORRIN LEGAL SUMMER INTERNSHIP GRANTS

This partnership between the Borrin Foundation and Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga supports Māori students with a strong interest in law, justice, and social equity to develop advanced research skills under the guidance of an expert Māori legal researcher. Two grants have been awarded for 2025-26.

Intern: Kahukura Jones | Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa
Project: Articulations of honourable kāwanatanga from submissions opposed to the defeated Treaty of Waitangi Principles Bill 2025
Supervisors: AProf. Clive Aspin & Dr Heather Came
Institution: Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington

Intern: Mairangi Campbell | Tuhoe, Ngāti Porou, Rongomaiwahine
Project: Examining tino rangatiratanga in post-Treaty settlement Aotearoa through the Matike Mai reports
Supervisor: AProf. Andrew Erueti
Institution: Waipapa Taumata Rau – The University of Auckland

MĀORI RESEARCHERS HITTING THE HEADLINES

RNZ
September 05
Marae must be resourced to respond to natural disasters
2025 New Zealand Esri Young Scholar Award winner, Haukapuanui Vercoe on the need to resource marae to respond to natural disasters.
https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/572142/marae-must-be-resourced-to-be-able-to-respond-to-natural-disasters-researcher

Waatea News
September 09
Kotahitanga Fund and Ōhanga Ki Te Ao Indigenous economic summit
Professor Matt Roskruge on the announcement of an economic summit and $30M Kotahitanga Fund
https://waateanews.com/2025/09/09/matt-roskruge-professor-at-massey-university-6/

RNZ
September 08
Tāmaki Makaurau by-election
Associate Professor Lara Greaves on the low voter turnout.
https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/572388/tamaki-makaurau-by-election-low-turnout-not-a-surprise-says-political-scientist

NZ Herald
September 17
Urgent Waitangi Tribunal hearing on Māori citizenship rights
Demographer Professor Tahu Kukutai appeared as an expert witness.
https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/keisha-castle-hughes-tells-waitangi-tribunal-of-barriers-for-maori-tamariki-born-abroad/YTSGI3IDKJHALHKXWFWIXGJXJU/

Waatea News
September 17
Renowned linguist and scholar Prof. Margaret Mutu
Prof. Mutu comments on 50 years since the first Te Wiki o Te Reo Māori, born from the 1972 Māori Language Petition.
https://waateanews.com/2025/09/17/professor-margaret-mutu-renowned-linguist-and-maori-studies-scholar/

One News
September 17
What is real? What is not? – AI-generated voice speaks with iwi dialect
Māori academic, AProf. Te Taka Keegan has created the world's first AI-generated voice, speaking in the Waikato-Maniapoto dialect.
https://www.1news.co.nz/2025/09/18/what-is-real-what-is-not-ai-generated-voice-speaks-with-iwi-dialect/

The Post
September 18
Call for Māori to build own AI tools to combat authenticity issues
AProf. Te Taka Keegan, has a warning for people turning to popular AI tools for information about Māori language and culture.
https://www.thepost.co.nz/nz-news/360825679/call-maori-build-own-ai-tools-combat-authenticity-issues

Waatea News
September 23
Professor Jason Mika comments on Māori Business
Jason Mika highlights the resilience and innovation driving the Māori economy.
https://waateanews.com/2025/09/23/professor-jason-mika-leading-voice-maori-business-and-enterprise-at-auckland-business-school/

Stuff
September 28
Award winning doctor calls out 'skinny privilege' in New Zealand healthcare
Dr Jamie-Lee Rahiri talks about the impacts of weight-loss surgery on whānau Māori.
https://www.stuff.co.nz/wellbeing/360836744/award-winning-doctor-calls-out-skinny-privilege-new-zealand-healthcare

The Hui
September 28
Wahine from Tokoroa at the cutting edge of scientific research
Dr Jamie-Lee Rahiri has received the L'Oreal-UNESCO For Women in Science international award.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VR8K3c88g9w

Kāti rā ngā kōrero mō tēnei wā,

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