

NZ Sport Receives Performance Enhancing Injection from Government

High performance sport in New Zealand recently received its biggest injection yet with the New Zealand Government announcing a \$15 million investment into the high performance National Training Centre that will be jointly run by AUT University and the Millennium Institute of Sport and Health (MISH).

Based at AUT Millennium Campus on Auckland's North Shore, the National Training Centre will work in association with 3 regional Satellite training centres, which are at the core of the Government's national sports strategy.

As a renowned leader in sports science research, AUT University will partner with MISH - a well established provider of excellent sporting facilities and coaching services. The ultimate aim of the new high performance centre is to produce more world-class sporting champions by combining the best of sports research, coaching and management expertise from AUT University, Millennium Institute of Sport and Health and the NZ Academy of Sport.

Bringing AUT and MISH expertise together will greatly enhance a collaborative

approach to research and training and our contribution to elite sport, says MISH CEO Mike Stanley.

"The centre will be a multi-disciplinary centre of excellence fully committed to propelling our next generation of athletes onto a world stage. It will help drive the development of high performance sport in New Zealand through education, research and coaching."

In 2009, AUT University invested \$18M to form the AUT Millennium Trust in partnership with MISH. University Vice-Chancellor Derek McCormack says the Government investment was a significant boost for taking high performance sport to the next level in New Zealand.

"While New Zealand is renowned as a great sporting nation, performing extraordinarily well on passion, natural ability and pride alone is simply not enough for developing future athletes - the focus has to be on unlocking human potential through leading science and innovation," says McCormack.

"The weight of AUT's sport research and scientific expertise will sit behind our athletes and beside their coaches and managers, ensuring that solutions to their training, medical, nutritional, technical and performance needs are informed by the latest research and knowledge available."

The high performance training centre will be a training ground for champions in the lead-up to the 2012 London Olympic Games in London and other future sporting events. It will provide our best athletes, coaches, training specialists and scientists a dedicated world class training, testing and research facility spread across two levels. The additions will nearly double current floor space - these will include the creation of a high performance zone to complement existing facilities, containing:

- Sport Science centre for anthropometry, biomechanics, exercise physiology, hormone, nutrition
- Environmental chamber
- Strength and conditioning centre
- Recovery and rehabilitation centre
- Athlete Life Centre (lounge/study)

Other facilities include:

- Expanded medical and specialist facilities
- Significant additional office, education and meeting facilities
- New public health and fitness centre
- Additional accommodation
- 50 x 25m Olympic swimming pool

Construction is planned to start in November, with the first facilities available in September 2011, in time for athletes preparing for the London Olympic Games.



Artists impression of the new High Performance National Training Centre

AUT applauds significant investment into health research by the Health Research Council

The talent of AUT University's health research was recently recognised after receiving over \$8 million from the Health Research Council (HRC) - the best result AUT has ever had from an HRC funding round.

Research examining the current and future burden of stroke in New Zealand will receive over \$4.9 million. Professor Valery Feigin, Director of AUT's National Centre for Stroke, Applied Neuroscience and Neurorehabilitation, currently heads this stroke research programme in collaboration with researchers from the University of Auckland, Waikato University, Waikato Hospital and the Ministry of Health.

Pacific children's health research will also benefit from the funding round with Professor Phillip Schluter leading a study which assesses the hearing in 11-year-old Pacific children. The study receives over \$730,000.

Professor Kathryn McPherson heads two Health and Rehabilitation Research Institute projects which receive significant funding; these include a study into traumatic brain injury recovery (over \$730,000) and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (over \$140,000).

From the Centre of Physical Activity and Nutrition, Dr Scott Duncan's 'Healthy Homework' research into physical activity and nutrition interventions for children receives over \$1.1 million.



Dr Geoff Dickson, Associate Dean (Research) for the Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences says this is a fantastic result for AUT University.

"Our health research keeps on going from strength to strength in terms of research output and research income. AUT's new generation of researchers are not only producing an outstanding calibre of work but are also contributing to the development of a research-led university. This is a real investment into the future of health research."

AUT has just completed its first decade as a University and it is interesting to reflect on North Shore Campus developments during that time. In 2000 there were approximately 3,000 students with around 300 in four postgraduate programmes. Today there are over 7,000 students with around 1,300 enrolled in nearly 30 postgraduate programmes, including many engaged in doctoral research. The campus is now the base for the country's largest health science faculty (in terms of discipline/programme range and total student numbers) and significant and rapidly growing schools of education and sport and recreation. Postgraduate expansion has been closely linked with the establishment of research institutes and centres - recently funded research projects feature in this edition. New facilities include a state of the art convention and lecture theatre complex where Waitemata DHB hosted their 2010 Health Excellence Awards last week - one of many recent occasions when local organisations have used the facility. I was pleased to welcome participants and guests in my dual roles as University PVC/Dean and Acting Chair of the DHB. Much greater engagement with local organisations including the DHB has been another feature of the past 10 years, resulting in extensive ties with North Shore schools and sport and community organisations. The establishment of the new AUT Millennium Campus will greatly expand sports research and training facilities. It will team the University's nationally renowned expertise in sports science and related fields of health and management with the coaching expertise of the Millennium Institute of Sport and Health and the NZ Academy of Sport. This positions North Shore as the national leader and centre for high performance sport. While present times are challenging I am confident that the University will continue to play a central role in driving and stimulating community growth, prosperity and wellbeing during its next decade.



Max Abbott, Pro Vice-Chancellor, North Shore

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