

MAISci

AUT MĀORI AND
INDIGENOUS SCIENCE

Whakatūwheratanga
Opening of Biomedical Science Clinic
Te Kura Pūtaiao – School of Science

AUT

TE WĀNANGA ARONUI
O TĀMAKI MAKAU RAU

Programme

Wednesday 15 April 2026

Te Kura Pūtaiao - School of Science

WS Building, AUT City Campus | 34 St Paul Street, Auckland City

Time & Location	Activity
10:40am – 11:05am WS513 MaiSci Room	Arrival & Whakawhanaungatanga Tea and coffee available.
11:05am – 11:20am WS513 MaiSci Room	Mihi Whakatau Formal welcome led by Dr Toiroa Williams, including acknowledgements and an introduction to the kaupapa.
11:20am – 11:45am WS331 & WS332 Clinical Spaces	Clinical Walkthrough Guided visit through the clinical spaces beginning with karakia and kōrero with researchers.
11:45am – 12:10pm WS212 Laboratory	Laboratory Walkthrough Selected group will visit the laboratory with researchers. (Health and safety protocols observed)
11:45am – 12:10pm WS513 MaiSci Room	Research Presentations Virtual presentations and kōrero with researchers for remaining guests.
12:10pm – 12:45pm WSF11 Lounge	Kai & Kōrero All groups come together to share kai and hear from special guest, Dame Rangimārie Naida Glavish DNZM.
12:45pm – 1:00pm WSF11 Lounge	Poroporoaki Closing reflections and acknowledgements.

He Mihi

If western science is to become relevant to indigenous cultures, one path forward is through the language and tikanga of that culture. Māori and Pacific scientists have historically been mixing ancient ways of knowing with western ways of doing for a very long time. Adapting and passing lessons down through generations, resulting in effective tikanga and mātauranga Māori. The School of Science and MAISci whānau acknowledge these lessons as navigators to taura success in science. Our kaupapa is to create teaching, research and learning environments imbued with the importance of valuing tangata whenua and Papatūānuku in-separately.

On behalf of the School of Science, we wish to extend to you a warm welcome to our MAISci Rūma Noho. 'MAISci' stands for Māori and Indigenous Science, and we are a proud group of Māori and Pacific scientists focused on supporting our taura and Eke Tangaroa at AUT and beyond. The MAISci Rūma Noho located in (WS513) is our dedicated space for taura studying science at AUT. Our kaupapa is to manaaki our Māori and Pacific taura and Eke Tangaroa to ensure they are enjoying and achieving success in their scientific journeys.

By recognising our strong whakapapa in Aotearoa-New Zealand, we are creating support networks where, te reo, mātauranga and tikanga Māori are valued as important components of taura success. In a teaching and learning context, our taura and kaimahi work together to develop and deliver relevant and inspiring academic lessons and identify and remove hurdles to Māori and Pacific achievement in science.

Our MAISci whānau delivers a stronger voice to indigenous taura within the School of Science, embracing our commitments to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the values embedded in AUT's Te Aronui framework; '*ko te tika, ko te pono, ko te aroha*'. The MAISci Rūma Noho is a '*wāhi manaaki*' where indigenous taura feel confident and excited to be on their journeys of scientific inquiry and exploration.

Our rautaki matakite is to inspire, motivate, and support our taura and Eke Tangaroa to academic success at AUT and beyond.

Ngā mihi nui

Associate Professor John Perrott (Te Arawa)

Associate Head of School Māori Advancement
Te Kura Pūtaiao - AUT School of Science

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Kia ora Dame Naida

We are honoured to host Dame Rangimārie Naida Glavish DNZM JP (Ngāti Whātua) for our opening.

Dame Naida is widely recognised for her lifelong advocacy for Te Reo Māori, tikanga, and Māori health equity. Her courageous stand in 1984, continuing to use the greeting “**Kia ora**” while working as a toll operator, became a defining moment in Aotearoa’s language revitalisation journey and helped shift national acceptance of te reo Māori in everyday life.



Her influence has extended deeply into the health sector, where she has led transformative change in culturally safe practice. As Chief Advisor Tikanga Māori, she has supported initiatives that embed tikanga Māori across health services, including digital innovation such as the development of tikanga education tools and apps designed to improve staff cultural capability and patient experience across Te Whatu Ora and DHB settings. This reflects her ongoing commitment to ensuring Māori perspectives are accessible, practical, and embedded in everyday clinical environments.

Dame Naida has held significant leadership and governance roles, including Chair of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua and President of the Māori Party (2013–2016), and continues to serve across iwi, government, and health advisory spaces.

Her services to Māori and the wider community have been formally recognised through multiple honours, including appointment as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit (ONZM) in 2011 and promotion to Dame Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit (DNZM) in 2018. She is also a Justice of the Peace (JP).

She has also received major national recognition including the Blake Medal (2023) and Te Tohu Oranga Angitu Lifetime Achievement Award (2024), acknowledging her lifelong contribution to language revitalisation, Māori health advancement, and public sector transformation.

We acknowledge her presence and the continued impact of her mahi in strengthening tikanga Māori, health equity, and wellbeing for whānau across Aotearoa.

Acknowledgments

The organising committee wish to thank all those who supported this kaupapa and the presence of AUT Executive and Te Ara Hauora a Pūtaiao – Faculty of Health and Environmental Sciences leadership teams, in particular the MAISci rōpū and Professor Paul Sowman as Head of School of Te Kura Pūtaiao – School of Science.

We acknowledge our student’s past, present, and future who will enter and use these spaces. May they always feel welcome and a strong sense of belonging within our MAISci rōpū. We also acknowledge the Offices of Māori and Pacific Advancement for their continued support of ākongā, and the Eke Tangaroa programme guided by Professor Georgina Stewart as Kaiurungi, whose stewardship strengthened Māori and Pacific academic advancement across the university.

We recognise the leadership of Professor Tania Ka'ai, Te Ihorei (Director) of Te Ipukarea Institute for Indigenous Knowledge, and Professor Denise Wilson, FHES Associate Dean Māori Advancement, whose work continues to uplift kaupapa Māori research. We also acknowledge the retirement and enduring contribution of Professor Pare Keiha QSO, former Pro Vice-Chancellor Māori and now Professor Emeritus, whose legacy continues to shape the university.

We are humbled by the presence of all attendees of this kaupapa and offer a special acknowledgement to Dame Rangimārie Naida Glavish DNZM JP for her continued service and presence today.

Mauri ora ki a koutou katoa!



**Associate Professor
John Perrott**

(Te Arawa)



Dr Chris Puli'uvea

(Tonga)



Dr Toiroa Williams

(Te Whakatōhea, Ngāi Tai,
Te Whānau a Apanui)



Te Haua Taua

(Waikato, Waiohū,
Ngāpuhi)

Advancing precision medicine for Māori and Pacific communities

The opening of the Biomedical Science Clinic marks an important step in advancing research focused on improving health outcomes for Māori and Pacific communities. It reflects a commitment to developing science that is innovative, relevant, and responsive to the needs of our people.

This kaupapa brings together AUT's biomedicine and medical diagnostics researchers with MAISci Māori and Indigenous Science Rōpū and Te Ranga Tukutuku AUT Māori Research Network. Through this collaboration, the clinic provides a space to strengthen Māori and Indigenous research capability while supporting work that is grounded in community and real-world impact.

A central feature of the clinic is the introduction of the Xenith flow cytometer, secured through AUT capex investment with support from Thermo Fisher Scientific. This technology enables detailed analysis of the immune system from blood and a wide range of biological samples, significantly expanding AUT's capability in immunology and precision medicine research. It also supports a unique research programme focused on the intersection of immunology and genetics in Māori and Pacific populations, an area that remains largely unexplored both in Aotearoa and internationally.

The clinic builds on existing work such as Te Whare Ārai Mate, which partners with Māori and Pacific communities to better understand how the immune system responds to disease. This research contributes to more targeted and effective approaches to healthcare that are tailored to these communities.

This kaupapa reflects a step forward in building research capability, strengthening partnerships, and growing expertise within the university. It signals a long-term vision to advance knowledge and support improved health outcomes for Māori and Pacific peoples.



Researcher Highlight

Dr Chris Puli'uvea is a Tongan immunologist and Senior Lecturer in Biomedicine and Molecular Diagnostics at AUT and a lead academic to this kaupapa. He joined the School of Science in 2023 as part of the Eke Tangaroa programme, supporting the development of Māori and Pacific academic leadership.



His research centres on how genetic variation influences immune system function in Māori and Pacific peoples. These groups are often underrepresented in global research, limiting how well current medical advances reflect their needs. Dr Puli'uvea's work addresses this gap by examining how population-specific genetic variants shape immune responses and impact health.

This research spans conditions such as infectious diseases, cancer, and autoimmune disorders, with a focus on informing more precise and effective approaches to healthcare. His work contributes to the growing field of precision medicine, with the aim of developing solutions that are better aligned with Māori and Pacific communities.

Dr Puli'uvea's work has been recognised through the Mana Tūāpapa Future Leader Fellowship, supporting him to advance this research over the coming years. He has also been acknowledged for his strong commitment to community engagement, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, where he played a key role in communicating health information to Māori and Pacific communities in accessible and meaningful ways.

His research aligns closely with the capabilities of the Biomedical Science Clinic, including the use of advanced technologies such as the Xenith flow cytometer. Together, this supports deeper investigation into immune function and strengthens AUT's ability to deliver impactful, community-informed research.

Dr Puli'uvea's work reflects a clear focus on building knowledge that leads to practical outcomes, contributing to improved health and greater equity for Māori and Pacific peoples.

MAISci Rōpū

MAISci weaves mātauranga Māori, Pacific knowledge systems, and Western science together, embedding tikanga and te reo Māori into science education to reflect the knowledge traditions of Aotearoa and support taura to succeed as themselves.

The MAISci Rūma Noho (WS513) is a dedicated wāhi manaaki where Māori and Pacific taura can connect, belong, and be supported.

Through teaching SCIE606 Vision Mātauranga Science Practice in Aotearoa, and relationships with iwi, Pacific communities, and Pūhoro STEMM Academy, we support taura to engage confidently with Indigenous communities.

In 2025, the MAISci Rōpū and SCIE606 team received the Waipuna-ā-rangi | Kaupapa Māori Educator Award, recognising our kaupapa Māori-led approach to science education.



We acknowledge the leadership of Professor Hannah Buckley for her support in establishing and growing MAISci, during her time as Head of School and now as Associate Dean Transformation.

Meet our MAISci whānau across teaching, research, and community engagement:



**Associate Professor
John Perrott**
(Te Arawa)



**Professor
Georgina Stewart**
(Ngāpuhi, Pare Hauraki)



Dr Leilani Walker
(Te Whakatōhea)



Dr Taniela Lolohea
(Tonga)



Dr Chris Puli'uvea
(Tonga)



Dr Antony Vavia
(Mitiaro, Cook Islands)



Dr Valance Smith
(Ngāpuhi, Waikato, Ngāti
Haina, Ngāti Pākehā)



Te Haua Tauga
(Waikato, Waiohua,
Ngāpuhi)

Weaving connections

We are proud to support the kaupapa being launched today and to contribute to its ongoing impact for our communities.

Te Ranga Tukutuku our newly established Māori Research Network weaves together Māori researchers across communities, faculties and disciplines to strengthen, connect, and support Māori research through collaboration.



Meet our Whakaruruhau (Governance group):

Chair | Assoc Prof. Rachael Ka'ai Mahuta

Te Pou Herenga – Community | Te Warena Taua MNZM

Te Kāhui Poipoi Rangahau rep | Tui Barbarich Tawera

Professors

Prof. Aaron Gilbert, Business School

Prof. Jacque Kidd, Health and Environmental Sciences

Prof. Tania Ka'ai, Te Ipukarea Institute

Prof. Hinematau McNeill, Te Ara Poutama

Associate Professors

Assoc Prof. Teena Brown Pulu, Te Ara Poutama

Assoc Prof. Peter McGhee, Business School

Assoc Prof. John Perrott, School of Science

Early Career Researchers

Sophie Coomber, Law School

Dr Sam Guy, School of Science

Dr Yo Heta-Lensen, School of Education

Dr Toiroa Williams, Te Ipukarea Institute

Professional Staff

Karina Donaldson, Health and Environmental Sciences

Kristie Elphick, Business, Economics and Law

Sonia Mehana, Te Ara Poutama

Tania Smith Henderson, Te Ipukarea Institute

Doctoral Students

Toa Kasi Raukura Ruth Keeti Amoamo, Te Ara Poutama

Cath Healey, Health and Environmental Sciences

Uenuku Jeffries, Design and Creative Technologies

Jyl Lind, Business School

Anna McLeish, Culture and Society

Join our network today! Become part of a growing collective that builds connections and uplifts Māori research for our communities we serve.

Membership options include:

- **General Membership** for current AUT Māori students, researchers and staff.
- **Affiliate Membership** for alumni, collaborators and supporters in Aotearoa and internationally



Scan the QR code to register your interest



MAISci Team at Pō Whakamānawa - Matariki Awards Finalists' Evening



SCIE606 teaching Team at Matariki Awards Presentation



Visiting MP's Hon Peeni Henare & Hon Willie Jackson in MAISci Rūma

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TE RANGA TUKUTUKU
AUT MĀORI RESEARCH
NETWORK

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**“Mehemea ka moemoeaa ahau, ko ahau anake.
Mehemea ka moemoeaa taatou, ka taea e taatou.”**

Naa Te Puea Hērangi CBE

*“If I am to dream, I dream alone. If we all dream
together, then we shall achieve.”*

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