

Te Ara Whakamua

Navigating Our Doctoral Futures

Programme Objectives:

This programme provides doctoral candidates with essential professional skills and strategic insights needed to thrive across diverse career pathways. Through eight interactive workshops facilitated by industry experts, academic leaders, and cultural advisors, participants will develop transferable competencies spanning communication, leadership, resilience, critical thinking, problem solving, entrepreneurial mindsets, data literacy, cross-cultural collaboration, and ethical decision making. Grounded in Te Aronui framework and Te Tiriti principles, the programme integrates Māori and Pacific perspectives alongside professional development, cultivating resourcefulness and contextual intelligence while honouring cultural values. By addressing the evolving demands of both academic and non-academic employment landscapes, Doctoral Futures empowers researchers to leverage their specialised knowledge for maximum impact, adapt to technological transformations, and confidently navigate complex professional environments in their chosen fields while contributing meaningfully to a thriving Aotearoa New Zealand.

Programme Materials:

Participants will receive a welcome pack with a personal development workbook that serves as both a reflective tool and practical guide. The workbook will contain activities that connect different skill areas, reflective prompts based on Māori and Pacific values, and reference information.

Timeline: 13 August – 15 October 2025 (excluding mid-semester break)

Duration: 8 to 10 Weeks

Time and location: All sessions will run from 10 am to 12 pm in Room WU524 (5th floor of the WU Building) at the Graduate Research School.

Session 1: Te Hononga – He whāriki mō te Haerenga

(The Connection – A Foundation for the Journey)

Building Research Community & Cultural Foundations

Date: Wednesday 13 August 2025

Theme: Whakawhanaungatanga, Cultural Connections & Research Landscape.

Facilitators: Tangaroa Paul, Daysha Tonumaipē'a, and Professor Mark Orams.

The opening session will establish the foundation for our collective learning journey. Beginning with a formal mihi whakatau led by Tangaroa Paul, participants will engage in relationship-building activities where they share their research journeys and cultural backgrounds. Professor Mark Orams will guide an exploration of the research landscape in Aotearoa, while a culturally significant metaphor will be introduced to frame the entire

programme. Through interactive activities and guided reflection, doctoral candidates will position themselves within a Te Tiriti context and begin developing meaningful connections that will support them throughout their professional development.

Key components:

- Formal mihi whakatau led Tangaroa Paul.
- Whakawhanaungatanga activities to build connections and share research backgrounds.
- Reflective exercises on personal positionality within Te Tiriti context.
- Introduction to Pacific and Māori metaphor that will frame the entire programme.
- Exploration of current trends in global research with Professor Mark Orams.

Session 2: Te Whakamana

(Empowering Ourselves)

Resilience & Wellbeing for Professional Success

Date: Wednesday 20 August 2025

Theme: Self-knowledge, Emotional Wellbeing & Professional Resilience

Facilitators: Alexis Pritchard and Dr Hilda Port

In this collaborative workshop, Alexis Pritchard and Dr. Hilda Port will integrate evidence-based resilience strategies with diverse perspectives on wellbeing. Drawing from Dr Port's expertise in psychology and Tongan cultural practices, the session will connect individual wellness to supportive professional environments. Participants will develop personalised resilience practices that address burnout prevention, stress management, and professional goal-setting, while exploring how concepts like manaakitanga can strengthen their capacity to navigate challenges. Through reflective exercises and practical tools, doctoral candidates will cultivate holistic approaches to maintaining wellbeing throughout their professional journeys.

Key components:

- Diverse perspectives for resilience and maintaining wellbeing in professional settings.
- Practical strategies on stress management and burnout prevention.
- Goal-setting exercises to doctoral studies and career development.
- Self-assessment tools for emotional resilience and professional challenges.
- Development of personalised resilience practices for academic and career success.

Session 3: Te Tūhono Mātauranga ki te ao mahi

(Connecting knowledge to the world of work)

Transitioning from Academia to Industry Careers

Date: Wednesday 27 August 2025

Theme: Translating Academic Skills to Professional Contexts.

Facilitators: Employability and Career Team

The Employability and Careers team will lead this comprehensive workshop on transitioning doctoral skills to industry, with a focus on maximising professional impact. Participants will learn to translate academic achievements into industry-relevant competencies while developing strong professional identities. The session will explore how doctoral research skills can benefit various sectors, addressing both individual career advancement and organisational growth. Through personalised CV reviews, interview coaching, and professional branding strategies, doctoral candidates will develop tools for navigating industry transitions successfully while leveraging their unique research expertise in professional contexts.

Key components:

- Overview of career paths suited to doctoral graduates across sectors.
- Translation of academic skills to industry-relevant competencies.
- Personalised CV and LinkedIn profile reviews.
- Interview techniques and salary negotiation approaches.
- Professional branding strategies for PhDs in diverse industries.

Session 4: He Reo Pono, He Reo Tika, He Reo Aroha

(A voice of integrity, guided by ethics and compassion)

Communicating Research Across Cultures & Contexts

Date: Wednesday 3 September 2025

Theme: Research Communication Across Cultural Context.

Facilitators: Dr Anaise Irvine and Daysha Tonumaipé'a (Jessica Worchel as back up)

Dr Anaise Irvine and Daysha Tonumaipé'a will co-facilitate this workshop on effective research communication across different contexts. Building on Daysha's experience addressing inequity in Māori and Pacific communities, participants will learn to adapt their technical content for various audiences while maintaining research integrity. The session will address strategies for creating compelling research narratives that resonate with different stakeholders. Through practical exercises and personalised feedback, doctoral candidates will develop skills to communicate complex ideas clearly and respectfully, preparing them to share their research with academic peers, industry partners, community stakeholders, and the general public.

Key components:

- Development of compelling research narratives with Anaise Irvine.
- Strategies for adapting technical content for non-specialist audiences.
- Cultural protocols for communicating research in diverse contexts with Daysha Tonumaipé'a.
- Creation and refinement of research "elevator pitches".
- Personalised feedback on presentation style and engagement techniques.

----- Mid semester break -----

Session 5: Ngā Tapuwae Rangahau

(The research footsteps)

Academic Career Pathways & Early Career Insights

Date: Wednesday 24 September 2025

Theme: Building Academic Profiles & Career Strategies.

Panel Discussion: Early Career Research Network with Elba Ramirez, Yanbin Liu, Shabnam Jalili-Moghaddam, Rerekura Teaurere, and Tangaroa Paul

This panel discussion features early career researchers whose work span multiple disciplines and cultural contexts. The panel will share personal journeys from PhD to academic positions, addressing both universal challenges and unique considerations for diverse researchers. Discussions will explore building competitive academic profiles, work-life balance, publication strategies, and maintaining cultural connections within academic settings. By presenting multiple perspectives on academic career development, the session provides doctoral candidates with both practical career strategies and frameworks for considering how their research can contribute to broader academic communities.

Key components:

- Panel featuring diverse early career researchers.
- Personal journeys from PhD to academic positions across different disciplines.
- Strategies for building competitive academic profiles in various fields.
- Practical advice on postdoc applications and grant writing.
- Discussion of balancing various responsibilities with academic demands.

Session 6: He Kete Raraunga, He Kete Tikanga

(A basket of data, a basket of protocols)

AI, Technology & Ethical Data Practices

Date: Wednesday 1 October 2025

Theme: AI Literacy, Future Skills & Ethical Technology Application.

Facilitators: Associate Professor Mahsa Mohaghegh and Dr. Tania Haerekitera Wolfgramm

This workshop will equip doctoral candidates with the knowledge and strategies to leverage technological advancements in their career paths. Associate Professor Mahsa Mohaghegh will guide participants in understanding how AI and emerging technologies are reshaping workplace demands within their specific fields. The session will examine how these technological transformations create both challenges and opportunities for researchers, helping participants identify unique human skills that complement rather than compete with AI capabilities. Dr. Tania Haerekitera Wolfgramm will bring perspectives on indigenous data sovereignty through her work with Hakamana AI. Participants will develop strategies for positioning their expertise in technology-driven environments, ensuring they can engage with technological advancement responsibly and ethically in their future careers.

Key components:

- Analysis of how AI and emerging technologies reshape workplace demands across disciplines.
- Identification of unique human skills that complement rather than compete with AI capabilities.
- Strategies for positioning doctoral expertise as valuable in technology-driven environments.
- Introduction to indigenous data sovereignty principles and ethical technology development.
- Development of personalised upskilling plans that enhance employability.
- Creating action plans for adapting research skills to technological change.

Session 7: Ngā Hua o te Mātauranga*(The fruits of knowledge)***Research Commercialisation & Entrepreneurship****Date:** Wednesday 8 October 2025**Theme:** Commercialisation, Entrepreneurial Mindsets & Innovation**Facilitators:** Chris Hil and Abi Thampi from AUT Ventures with Professor Ella Henry

Chris Hill and Abi Thampi from AUT Ventures will be joined by Professor Ella Henry to explore pathways from research to entrepreneurship. Professor Henry's expertise in Māori development and business leadership will enhance discussions about diverse models of enterprise. The session will showcase success stories from alumni who transformed research into businesses, including Abi Thampi's own journey. Through interactive exercises on identifying commercial potential, negotiation skills, and ideation techniques, doctoral candidates will discover entrepreneurial opportunities within their research. Networking with mentors from relevant industry sectors will provide valuable connections for future entrepreneurial endeavours.

Key components:

- Exploration of commercialisation processes with Chris Hill and Abi Thampi from AUT Ventures.
- Success stories and diverse entrepreneurship models with Professor Ella Henry.
- Interactive exercises on identifying commercial potential in research.
- Negotiation and ideation exercises for entrepreneurial development.
- Networking with entrepreneurs and industry representatives.

Session 8: Te Amorangi ki Mua, Te Hāpai ō ki Muri*(The leader at the front, the support behind)***Cross-Cultural Leadership & Professional Growth****Date:** Wednesday 15 October 2025**Theme:** Cross-Cultural Leadership & Professional Growth.**Facilitators:** Professor Lesley Ferkins, Gareth Jones, and the RED team.

This closing workshop focuses on leadership development for diverse professional environments. The session will integrate multiple leadership approaches, exploring how to build high-performing teams, establish productive partnerships with diverse stakeholders, and enhance cross-cultural communication in global contexts. Leadership will be connected to both professional effectiveness and relationship building. The workshop will conclude with guided reflection led by the RED team on programme learnings, changed career intentions, and next steps for professional growth, celebrating the collective journey while preparing participants for their individual paths forward.

Key components:

- Development of versatile leadership capabilities.
- Insights on balancing academic achievements with leadership.
- Strategies for building and managing high-performing teams across sectors.
- Cross-cultural communication competencies for global environments.
- Closing reflection with RED team on programme learnings and future directions.