

A photograph of two men embracing outdoors at sunset. The man on the left has long hair tied back and a beard, wearing a maroon shirt and a watch. The man on the right is wearing a dark shirt. They are smiling and looking at each other. In the background, other people and trees are visible under a bright, hazy sky.

TE KURA ROA

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



WHAREWAKA, PŌNEKE

26– 27 MARCH 2024



Melanie Mark-Shadbolt

Ngāti Kahungunu, Ngāti Porou, Te Arawa, Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Raukawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Whakatohea, Rangitane, MacIntosh, Gunn.

Melanie is an indigenous environmental advocate who specialises in understanding and applying mātauranga Māori to biosecurity and biodiversity issues. She has a specific interest in decolonising ideologies of conservation and restoration to address injustices and harm caused to indigenous peoples and our planet.

Melanie is the Chief Executive of Te Tira Whakamātaki, a Māori environmental not-for-profit and recently returned as the Kaihautū Ngātahi – Co-Director Māori to the Biological Heritage National Science Challenge. She provides governance, direction and support to several boards and groups including the Resilience to Nature’s Challenges National Science Challenge, Trees That Count Board, and Better Border Biosecurity Collaboration Council.

Melanie was the former Deputy Secretary Tūmatakōkiri (Māori Rights and Interest) at the Ministry for the Environment. While at the Ministry she was named the NZ Public Policy Westpac Women of Influence (2021), and her team was named the 2021 Diversity Works – Mātauranga Māori Award winners. Alongside her TTW team she has won several biosecurity awards including the inaugural Dave Galloway Innovation Award 2016, the inaugural Māori Biosecurity Award 2017, and Biosecurity Science Excellence Awards in 2018, 2019, and 2022.



Professor Leonie Pihama

Te Ātiawa, Ngā Māhanga a Tairi, Ngāti Māhanga.

Leonie Pihama is a mother of six and a grandmother of six. She is Professor of Māori and Indigenous Research and is working as Research Director at Tū Tamawahine o Taranaki and is Director of Māori and Indigenous Analysis Ltd, a Kaupapa Māori research company. Leonie is a leading kaupapa Māori educator and researcher. She was a recipient of the Hohua Tūtengaehe Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship (Health Research Council) and the inaugural Ngā Pae o Te Maramatanga Senior Māori Fulbright Scholarship at the University of Washington. In 2015, Leonie was awarded the 'Te Tohu Pae Tawhiti Award' (NZARE) for excellence in Māori Educational Research and the 'Te Tohu Rapuora Award' (Health Research Council) to recognise significant contribution to Māori health excellence and leadership with the whānau at Te Kotahi Research Institute. Leonie has directed a number of Research Institutes including The International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education (IRI, University of Auckland) and Te Matapunenga o Te Kotahi (Te Kotahi Research Institute, University of Waikato). She served on the Māori Health Committee for the Health Research Council and on a number of key boards including Māori Television, Te Mangai Pāho, and Ngā Pae o te Maramatanga. Leonie recently completed two Health Research Council projects, 'He Oranga Ngakau: Māori Approaches to Trauma Informed Care' and 'Honour Project Aotearoa'. She was MBIE He Punaha Hihiko: Vision Matauranga Capability Fund Placement recipient for two years with Tū Tama Wahine o Taranaki supporting the publication of 'He Punaha Hohourongo: Taranaki Violence Prevention Strategy'.

She is a Principal Investigator (PI) on the following projects: 'Titiro whakamuri, kōkiri whakamua' exploring land based healing practices for wāhine in Taranaki as a part of the Tangata Whenua Tangata Ora HRC Māori Health Programme led by Whaariki Research Centre; a co-PI with Professor Linda Tuhwai Smith on 'He Waka Eke Noa: Māori cultural frameworks for violence prevention and intervention'. She has recently been granted an MBIE Endeavour for the project 'Kaupapa Māori: Creating An Indigenous Model for System Change in Aotearoa' jointly with Professors Linda Tuhwai Smith, Graham Hingangaroa Smith and Jenny Lee-Morgan and Dr Matt Roskrudge. She has also just been awarded a Marsden Fund grant for the project 'He Kare-a-roto: Māori understandings and expression of emotions' with Professors Jenny Lee-Morgan and Rangi Matamua. Leonie was recently made a Fellow of the Royal Society of New Zealand.



Professor Meihana Durie

As a student at Massey in the 1990s, Professor Durie began to channel his interests across all things Māori into the cultural, academic and creative projects that have now grown into a rich and varied career. While undertaking a PhD on the place of Māori ritual in contemporary society, Professor Durie developed a suite of Māori health programmes, Kawa Oranga, at Te Wānanga o Raukawa in Ōtaki. That led to the establishment of Ngā Purapura, a Māori health and wellbeing facility, also at Raukawa.

As the recipient of a Health Research Council Postdoctoral Māori Health Fellowship, Professor Durie widened his research to include rangatahi and whānau centred wellbeing, and the notion of flourishing or te puawaitanga. He then returned to Massey in 2017 to take over as head of Te Pūtahi-a-Toi, the School of Māori Knowledge, and became Deputy Vice-Chancellor Māori in 2020.

Professor Durie's academic journey has been enriched – and occasionally diverted – by his longstanding interests in Māori cinema. Among other projects, in 2008, he co-directed a short film, “Warbrick”, which captures the final moments in the New Zealand Māori rugby team’s tour of the UK in 1888. Māori cinema is an area he believes brings with it a platform upon which to share the stories of tangata whenua and he hopes to help support new opportunities for those who might aspire to pursue similar pathways.



Associate Professor Sacha McMeeking

Sacha is currently the Associate Professor of Māori Wellbeing at UC and a Co-Director with the Child Wellbeing Research Institute. Her research focuses on evidencing and explicating the impact of kaupapa Māori social transformation and the regeneration of mana motuhake.

She was the Head of Māori and Indigenous Studies following roles with Ngāi Tahu and the establishment team for the South Island Whanau Ora Co.

missioning Agency, Te Putahitanga o Te Waipounamu. She has been an instrumental contributor to the development of He Ara Waiora, the mātauranga Māori wellbeing framework adopted by The Treasury.



Hana-Rawhiti Maipi-Clarke

He uri tenei nō ngā hau e whā o te motu, nō Ngā Puhi, Waikato, Taranaki, Ngāti Porou, me Ngāi Tahu.

Ko ana waewae kaipakiaka e noho ana ki te riu o Waikato. E ngakau nui ana tenei toki ki nga takahanga katoa o te Ao Maori.

A wahine Maori who needs no introduction, Hana, the newly appointed Hauraki Waikato candidate and member of Parliament for Te Pāti Māori is a young, fierce and articulate rangatahi whose passions for people, culture and whenua are driving change, and making waves across the motu.



Tame Malcolm

No ngā Wai Ariki o Okataina, Rotoiti, Rotorua ia. Ko Ngāti Tarāwhai, Ngāti Pūkiao, Ngāti Ngārarānui, Tapuika, me Ngāti Ruanui ōna iwi.

Born in Rotorua, Tame considers himself blessed to have been raised in Te Ao Māori. He showed a keen interest in the forest from a very young age. He was encouraged and supported by his parents and wider whānau to pursue this interest through trapping, hunting, wānanga and university. Tame has spent his entire career working in pest management and Te Ao Māori approaches to predator control.

He has worked for regional councils and research institutes, as well as running his own pest management company. Tame first worked for DOC in 2006. Prior to starting in his current role at DOC, he was General Manager for a not-for-profit Māori environmental organisation. He is still actively involved in supporting his iwi, hapū, marae and Ahu Whenua Māori trusts. Tame still does some hands-on pest management, usually with his Dad. This helps gather data for his PhD which is on Te Ao Māori approaches to pest management.



Cheyenne Wilson

Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāti Awa.

Cheyenne is Kaiwhakahaere Matua of Te Kaharangi Hono, a specialist Māori Agribusiness and whenua Māori advisory firm. Cheyenne grew up in rural Southland and has a deep technical knowledge of farm systems. She is a governance group member for Our Land and Water National Science Challenge, council member of Muka Tangata, the People, Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council, and a trustee for the charity Meat the Need. Cheyenne is the previous chair of He Tātai Rangahua, the Food and Fibre Youth Council.

A finalist in the Ahuwhenua Young Māori Farmer of the Year in 2018, she is a role model for youth in the sector. Cheyenne shares her journey to encourage and support rangatahi to pursue career opportunities in the food and fibre industry. She is committed to building the capability of tangata whenua. She is an advocate for Farmstrong and Lean on a Gate and mental well-being within the rural sector.

Cheyenne recently graduated from Lincoln University with a Bachelor of Environment and Society.



Te Aorere Pewhairangi

Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau a Ruataupare

Te Aorere grew up in Palmerston North, immersed in Te Reo through Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa Māori (Te Kura Kaupapa o Mana Tamariki), then at the age of 13, started learning English. Te Aorere went to Massey University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Māori Studies and Media Studies) and has completed his master's degree researching Māori broadcasting and was lucky enough to get first-class honours.

He is a Social Media star promoting Te Reo Māori, Mahi Kai, and the impacts of climate change through his Waewae the 35 Kaupapa on TikTok and Instagram. This recently engaged advocate likes long walks on the beach, bicep curls and the soulful sounds of S-Club Seven.



Tamoko & Waimirirangi Ormsby

Tamoko Ormsby – Ko Tainui, Ko Mataatua, ko Takitimu
ngā waka.

Waimirirangi Ormsby – Ko Waikato, Ngatiwai, Ngati
Tura, ko Te Whanau a Apanui nga iwi.

Products of the Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa and
Wharekura full immersion te reo Māori movements.
Tamoko and Waimirirangi have a passion for the
development of self-sustainable rural communities,
under indigenous and culturally integrated design
frameworks. Their work is dedicated and committed to
advancing the rights of Indigenous peoples', and in
doing so, elevating the importance of te ao Māori,
mātauranga and te reo Māori in the protection and
restoration of our taiao and taonga species.

Tamoko and Waimirirangi are the co-founders of Pipiri
Ki a Papatūānuku (PKP) which is an environmental
movement dedicated to giving back to our earth.
Waimirirangi and Tamoko are a dream team of
kaupapa driven creatives passionate about the things
they believe are important, above all else being Māori
(Indigenous). Their connection to the mountains and
waterways in which we descend from are at the core of
this initiative and the main reason why they started
Pipiri Ki a Papatūānuku – June On Earth.



Naomi Aporo

Ngāti Kahungunu, Rangitāne, Ngāti Wahiao Tūhourangi, Ngā Puhi, Ngāi Tahu.

Over the last twenty years Naomi has had a broad and varying career across areas such as strategy, operational modelling, organisational design, post settlement structuring, organisational development, business performance, risk management, and capability development. More recently her focus has turned to Māori agribusiness, and the environment through the National Land and Water National Science Challenge.

In her role as Kaihāpai Māori the Challenge she is responsible for ensuring integrity in the Challenge's commitment to have Te Ao Māori at its heart and ensuring equal investment into Māori led research Kaupapa.

Out of mahi Naomi and her husband Hamuera Manihera are committed to revitalisation of kōrero tuku iho and traditional practices associated with kākahu weaving.



Tākuta Ferris

Tākuta is a descendant of Takitimu, Kurahaupō and Horouta waka with whakapapa connections to Kāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Ngāti Kuia, Ngāti Apa, Rangitāne, Ngāti Kahungunu and Ngāti Porou.

Amongst many things, Tākuta is a father, an artist, an academic, a fisherman, a kaihaka and more recently, a politician. Tākuta has a deep connection and responsibility to land and sea and to date, his professional and personal lives have been around building and advocating for the vitality of these things, including our tamariki mokopuna who will inherit these taonga. Tākuta is a strong advocate for mana Motuhake and building a strong, resilient and thriving Aotearoa Hou.

Tākuta is a member of Parliament for Te Pāti Māori and is our MP for Te Tai Tonga.



Dr Ruakere Hond

Nō Taranaki, nō Ngāti Ruanui.

Ruakere Hond is a proponent of localised Māori language revitalisation and Māori community development, and is a member of the Waitangi Tribunal and active in Te Mātāwai (a statutory Māori language leadership body). He lives at Parihaka and was very involved in the Parihaka Reconciliation process, including as a member of Te Kawe Tutaki, the Parihaka Redress Steering Group.

Ruakere is a former Māori Language Commissioner, Chair of Te Ataarangi and Acting CEO of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangī (Māori tertiary education institution).



Rereata Makiha

Te Mahurehure, Te Arawa.

Rereata is a pou tikanga adviser for the Auckland Council, he has ties to many to marae across Auckland, particularly to Te Mahurehure Marae Pt Chevalier. The former broadcaster and journalist is a leading authority, writer and speaker on Mātauranga Māori – particularly the Maramataka and star navigation.

Rereata is a member of the Society of Māori Astronomy Research and Traditions and co-founder of Te Potiki National Trust, which administers the Māori Maps website that connects Māori descendents to their marae. He is also vice president at the Māori – Malay–Polynesian Secretariat.



Professor Tahu Kukutai

Ngāti Tiipa, Ngāti Māhanga, Ngāti Kinohaku, Te Aupōuri.

Tahu is Professor of Demography at The University of Waikato and Co-Director of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga Centre of Research Excellence. Most of Tahu's research is in relation to Māori and Indigenous demography and data sovereignty. She has undertaken work for iwi, hāpori, and Government agencies, and provided strategic advice across a range of sectors.

Tahu is a founding member of the Māori Data Sovereignty Network Te Mana Raraunga and the Global Indigenous Data Alliance, and is a Board member of Pūhoro STEMM Academy. She has degrees from The University of Waikato and Stanford University, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society Te Apārangi.



Che Wilson

Ngāti Rangi-Whanganui, Tūwharetoa, Mōkai Pātea, Ngāti Apa, Ngā Rauru.

Che Wilson was raised as part of a large extended whānau at the foothills of Mount Ruapehu and has been involved in tribal activities and leadership from a young age. He was granted access from the age of 11 and entrusted with knowledge from his tribal Whare Wānanga.

Che is the Managing Director of Intugen Limited. Through Intugen, Che focuses principally in the tūpuna wisdom space as a guest speaker, consciousness coach, resource developer, and a podcaster on a range of social media platforms as well strategy and facilitation. Che, until recently, was the Chair and Chief Negotiator for his iwi Ngāti Rangi to settle historic grievances.

Che is a director on Ātihuā-Whanganui Incorporation (brand name AWHI) which supplies red meat, dairy, fibre, and manuka honey to the local and export markets, is the chair of Te Reo o Whanganui, a board focused on the revitalisation of the Whanganui dialect and a trustee on Ngā Tāngata Tiaki o te Awa o Whanganui (the board that governs the tribal interests and represents the voice of the Legal Personality for the Whanganui River). He is also on the Māori Advisory for Southern Cross Health and Te Kāhui Raraunga Trust. Che is also the chairperson of Tekauaarua – The Kings Advisor Council.



Atawhai Tibble

Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau a Apanui, Tuwharetoa,
Whanganui, Raukawa ki te Tonga.

Atawhai is an experienced Maori strategic advisor, policy analyst, indigenous wellbeing and data expert, community leader, agitator and innovator. He's also a bit of a bilingual rapper, singer and songwriter.

He is an advisory board member on Te Punaha Matatini, and is involved in two significant local hapu research initiatives: first is Kia Whitingia is a solar power energy scheme involving 4 marae, kaumatua flats and homes and a state of the art battery, where solar is both generating cheap energy and the battery is storing excess that is helping to address energy poverty; second is the development of a water scheme in his valley that also enables the whanau to be better guardians and kaitiaki.



Dr Willy-John Martin

Ngātiwai, Ngāti Whātua, Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāpuhi.

Pou Pūtaiao/Director, Māori Science, Innovation and Technology
Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

Dr Willy-John Martin is the inaugural Director Māori Science, Innovation and Technology at the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE). His work spans across broad areas including science policy, research investment mechanisms and monitoring, strategic relationship management at the interface of science and Te Ao Māori, Capacity Development and futures thinking.

Willy-John was a key leader in the extensive consultations and discussions undertaken with Māori and the research sector during the Green and White papers of the former Te Ara Paerangi Future Pathways programme. He has also led the development of new initiatives to deliver to Māori and Aotearoa whānui interests in SI&T, including the first Tiriti Statement released by MBIE for the SI&T sector.

Willy-John's expertise brings together extensive science sector and Māori expertise. He has a PhD in Cellular and Molecular Bioscience and was a researcher of immune conditions of priority to Māori and Indigenous peoples at the Malaghan Institute of Medical Research in New Zealand, and the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Australia.

He was also the Manager Vision Mātauranga and Capacity Development at the Science for Technological Innovation National Science Challenge, and the founding deputy chair of the Senior Māori Science Leaders group, Rauika Māngai.



Kristie-Lee Thomas

He uri a Kristie-Lee no Ngāti Mutunga o Wharekauri me Te Ātiawa.

She's passionate about bringing people and knowledge systems, particularly Mātauranga and disaster risk science together in ways that best support hāpori in preparing for disaster events and climate change.

She currently works part time at UC on rangahau projects, co-leading RNC's Te Whanake Te Kura i Tawhiti Nui research programme and teaching into the UC Master of Disaster Risk and Resilience programme whilst she studies towards her doctorate.



Dr Acushla Sciascia

Ngāruahinerangi, Ngāti Ruanui, Te Ātiawa.

Acushla is a mātauranga Māori researcher and champion and is co-lead of Whanake te Kura mātauranga Māori programme in the Resilience to Natures Challenges National Science Challenge as well as the mātauranga ā iwi programme for He Mouna Puia, Transitioning Taranaki to a Volcanic Future research programme.

Acushla also operates within the public sector as a researcher, evaluator and strategist with a research background primarily emerged in kaupapa Māori research, specifically Māori negotiating and navigating new technologies and online environments.

Her research interests have transitioned into the climate change space. She was on the National Risk Assessment Framework for Climate Change panel and will begin a Ngā Puanga Pūtaiao Fellowship in 2024 around building resilience whānau and marae resilience.

She is passionate and committed to championing mātauranga Māori across disciplines, working towards the recognition of the value and mana of our knowledge system in its own right and the opportunities to produce better research and outcomes within RSI when mātauranga Māori is central to the solution.