

Ako Aotearoa Southern Regional Forum

19 August 2025 | Christchurch



Cultivating Thought Leadership and Excellence in
Teaching | Shaping the Future of Education

He Whakatipu Hautūtanga Whakaaro me te Akoako
Kounga | Hei Hanga i Te Anamata o te Mātauranga

Nā āheitanga ā-mātauranga,
ko angitū ā-ākonga
Building educational capability
for learner success

Ako
AOTEAROA

Programme

Note: This programme is subject to change

Time	Action
8.30	Registration opens
9.00	Mihi whakatau – Te Akātoki o te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha Māori Students' Association and Charmaine Tukua-Pouwhare
9.15	Welcome / Overview: MC – Tai Samaeli, ACE Aotearoa
9.25	Cultivating Thought Leadership and Excellence in Teaching – Cheryl de la Rey, Tumu Whakarae Vice-Chancellor, University of Canterbury, Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
10.05	Beyond 2040 – Dr Eruera Prendergast-Tarena, Kaiwhakatere, Tokona Te Raki
10.45	Te Paramanawa o te Ata / Morning Tea
11.05	Using Generative AI to Support Foundation/Bridging Ākonga – AI Research Project – Dr Selena Chan, Ara Institute of Canterbury
11.35	Kōrerorero / Discussion, Sector collaboration in tertiary education
12.05	Ngākau pono – the importance of authenticity in teaching practice – Tākuta Phil Borell, 2024 Te Whatu Kairangi Kaupapa Māori Awardee, University of Canterbury, Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
12.35	Tina / Lunch
1.15	Designing Intelligence: Building Tools for the Education We Need Next – Graeme Smith, Ako Aotearoa
1.55	Shaping Tomorrow: The Future of Education Panel Chair – Tai Samaeli, ACE Aotearoa Panel Members: Josie Ogden Schroeder – CEO The Kind Foundation Dr Cheryl Doig – Kai Titiro Wāheke Futurist Dr MahMah Timoteo – Moana Vā Sandra Fernandes Videira Gordon – Te Wānanga o Aotearoa

Time	Action
2.35	Celebration of Ako Aotearoa Poroporoaki: MC – Tai Samaeli, ACE Aotearoa, Jennifer Leahy, Sector Services Manager
3.00–3.30	Tea Ahiahi / Afternoon Tea

Catering for this event is supplied by On Group. A not-for-profit registered charity who helps to deliver support services to students.

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Mihi whakatau

Presenter: Charmaine Tukua-Pouwhare



Charmaine Tukua-Pouwhare, Senior Educator, Ara Institute of Canterbury is a distinguished Māori educator with more than 25 years of dedicated service in adult and community education, particularly in the revitalisation of mātauranga Māori. As a senior educator at Ara Institute of Canterbury, she has profoundly influenced the delivery of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori programmes, focusing on foundational education in adult literacy, broadcasting and engineering. Throughout her tenure, Charmaine has served as a kaiako, programme leader, and currently as the operations coordinator at Te Puna Wānaka, Ara's Māori education unit. Her leadership has been instrumental in enhancing Māori learners' engagement and success in tertiary education. Her commitment extends beyond the learning environment; Charmaine has actively contributed to national literacy training and qualification delivery, ensuring culturally responsive educational practices. She was honoured with the 2022 ACE Aotearoa Educator of the Year – Tangata Whenua award, recognising her outstanding service and contribution to Māori education.

Cultivating Thought Leadership and Excellence in Teaching

Presenter: Cheryl de la Rey



Professor Cheryl de la Rey has been the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Canterbury since 2019. Prior to her current position Cheryl held a number of leadership positions in tertiary education in South Africa including being Chief Executive of the Council of Higher Education and Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Pretoria for just under a decade. She has served on several boards; most recently the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and is currently the Chairperson of the Association of Commonwealth Universities (ACU) and the Universities NZ Education Committee. Her field of academic specialisation is Social Psychology and she has published widely in the broad area of intergroup relations. She is currently serving as a member of the International Union of Psychological Science Presidential Task Force on Psychological Science Diplomacy.

Beyond 2040

Presenter: Dr Eruera Prendergast-Tarena, Ngāi Tahu, Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui



Dr Eruera Prendergast-Tarena leads a social innovation lab, Tokona te Raki: Māori Future Makers, based in Ōtautahi. Tokona te Raki develops and uses Māori social innovation tools and techniques to design and test solutions to complex challenges and create better futures.

His work supports people, communities, organisations and sectors to come together, unweave old ways of knowing and doing before reweaving new solutions to create change. He has led a range of initiatives designing new approaches, imagining new horizons, driving systemic change and empowering Māori youth to tackle complex problems and lead long-term transformation.

He is a passionate advocate for people reclaiming their ability to determine their own future and how we can use Te Tiriti as a guide to moving forward together as a nation.

Using Generative AI to Support Foundation/Bridging Ākonga - AI Research Project

Presenter: Dr Selena Chan



Dr Selena Chan is an educational/capability developer at Ara Institute of Canterbury/Te Pūkenga. Her work includes facilitating curriculum development, technology-enhanced learning/integration of AI projects, and academic educator development. She has published widely in vocational research journals and recent publications include two monographs, *Identity, pedagogy and technology-enhanced* (2020) and *Digitally enabling 'learning by doing'* (2021); and two edited books *'Reshaping VET in Aotearoa'* (2022) and *'AI in Vocational Education'* (2025). She is the co-editor of the *AVETRA International Journal of Training Research* and on the editorial board for the *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*. She is currently co-editing another book, *'Post-Reform of Vocational Education'* to record the achievements and mahi undertaking between 2019 and the reversal of reform in 2024/2025.

Ngākau pono – the importance of authenticity in teaching practice

Presenter: Dr Phil Borell, Ngāti Ranginui



Dr Phil Borell is a leading voice in the integration of Mātauranga Māori and sport within tertiary education. As a Senior Lecturer at the University of Canterbury, Phil has pioneered kaupapa Māori-led approaches to teaching and mentoring that empower Māori students pursuing careers in sport and health. Phil's innovative contributions include the development of Te Ao Hākinakina, a new major within the Faculty of Health that combines sport, whakaaro Māori, and te ao Māori. This programme provides a dedicated pathway for Māori students to explore sporting careers rooted in their communities and cultural identity. In 2024, Dr Phil Borell received the Te Whatu Kairangi, Kaupapa Māori Award which is presented to individuals or groups whose practice incorporates te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and mātauranga Māori.

Designing Intelligence: Building Tools for the Education We Need Next

Presenter: Graeme Smith



Graeme Smith – Writer · Educator · Intelligence Architect– works at the intersection of education, technology, and culture — designing future-fit tools and systems to help educators thrive in times of change.

With a background in adult education, curriculum design, and capability development, he has consulted for government agencies, tertiary institutions, and education providers across Aotearoa New Zealand. His work spans literacy and numeracy strategies, cultural capability frameworks (like Tapatoru and Te Whare Tapa Whā), and the integration of generative AI into learning systems.

In 2025, he co-developed AIHOA — Aotearoa's first public-facing education GPT — and continues to lead innovation through adaptive tools like SCRIBE, ALEC, and MILES.

He is also the author of *Education is Over: Adapt or Die* — a tactical manifesto for educators navigating the AI disruption. The book offers mental models, strategy tools, and provocations for those ready to evolve.

Graeme is a systems thinker and storyteller, committed to tools that carry meaning and support transformation. He believes that in a world where the rules are shifting, educators need more than new tools — they need new intelligence.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/graeme-smith-thisisgraeme/>

Shaping Tomorrow: The Future of Education

Presenters: Josie Ogden Schroeder, Dr Cheryl Doig, Dr MahMah Timoteo, Sandra Fernandes Videira Gordon, chaired by Tai Samaeli



Tai Samaeli is the Sector Capability Manager for ACE Aotearoa and a former Executive Assistant at Ako Aotearoa. With many years of experience across the education spectrum—from early childhood to tertiary—Tai brings deep insight and commitment to adult and community education. A passionate advocate for the sector, he combines his love of the performing arts, technology, and emerging AI tools to bring creativity and innovation to his work.

Tai works actively to empower ACE educators through continuous learning, collaboration, and strong networks. He supports the ACE in Ōtautahi Community of Practice in Christchurch, helping to strengthen the local ACE landscape. Though a self-described introvert, Tai thrives on sharing ideas and knowledge, creating space for others to do the same. His work continues to champion the value of ACE and drive professional growth and connection across Aotearoa.



Josie Ogden Schroeder

Ko Ingarangi te whakapaparangi mai.
I whānau mai ahau ki Ahitereiria.
I tipu ake ahau i Tamaki Makaurau.
Ko Ōtautahi te kainga.
Ko Iringa o Kahukura te maunga whakaruruhau
Ko Whakaraupō te moana o te rohe
Ko ngati pakeha e te iwi. Ko tangata tiriti ahau.

He kaiwhakahaere au, i Te Kind Foundation
Ko Josie Ogden Schroeder toku ingoa.

Pākehā and tangata tiriti, Josie's ancestors are from England and Europe. She is married to Stephen and has three children. She grew up in Auckland, but has lived in Christchurch for the past 32 years, now settled in the beautiful Whakaraupō – Lyttleton Harbour. She considers herself a parent first, a youth worker second, and a "CEO" third.

Josie has been the Chief Executive Officer of The Kind Foundation since 2008. It is a social service agency, social enterprise and charitable trust all in one! The Kind Foundation generates income from a number of its business ventures, which it then in turn invests into provision of programmes that help people learn, be well, and have social connection. At a big picture level, The Kind Foundation is interested in investing effort into influencing and championing systemic change that creates an equitable society.

Josie has work experience in youthwork, health and fitness, and outdoor education. She has a Post Graduate Diploma in Not For Profit Management, a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Laws, and spent a period of time serving in the NZ Police. She moonlights also as a (Clifton) strengths coach.



Dr Cheryl Doig is a futurist, weaver and connector, often known as the #futuresaunty. She has a passion for growing futures literacy and strategic foresight through her company, Think Beyond (<https://thinkbeyond.co.nz/>). Cheryl has a long history in education including as a school principal, a trustee for the establishment of three new schools and as convenor of two Future of Learning Conferences. She is currently chair of Ako Ōtautahi Learning City Christchurch, a trust focused on growing Ōtautahi as a learning campus with a focus on equity, access and innovation.

One of Cheryl's recent projects has been the creation of a resource called Intergenerational Ambition: A Wayfinding Guide for the Future focused on the need to consider future generations in Aotearoa. Cheryl is an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the University of Canterbury and the founder of both the Ōtautahi Futures Collective and Oceania Futures. She is one of 12 people selected globally to support the Dubai Future Forum as a Friend of the Forum.



Dr MahMah Timoteo is a multidisciplinary teacher, Pacific student advisor, and researcher whose work bridges climate change, Indigenous liberation, queer liberation, body liberation, and well-being. She holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Canterbury, where her doctoral research explored the lived experiences of Pacific peoples navigating climate change spaces in Aotearoa.

MahMah is deeply committed to uplifting community voices and advocating for systemic change, both within and beyond academia. She is a proud member of Moana Vā, a Pacific rainbow organisation based in Ōtautahi, and co-hosts the podcast Two Fat 'Fine, which celebrates queer, fat joy.

Her presence spans lectures, workshops, panels, and festivals – creating spaces that challenge oppressive systems while centering joy, rest, and collective care. Through their research, advocacy, and social media presence, Dr MahMah continues to inspire and connect with communities across Aotearoa and the Pacific.



Sandra Fernandes Videira Gordon is a 3D visual artist, designer, maker, and educator with a background in conceptual design and creative model-making. Her practice bridges traditional craftsmanship with digital tools and sustainable methods. Originally from Portugal, she brings international experience from the UK and Europe and now calls Aotearoa home. Sandra is currently studying at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, where she is embracing Te reo Māori and deepening her understanding of Te ao Māori.

Her teaching philosophy is grounded in inclusivity, collaboration, and the belief that creativity thrives through making and shared learning. She has supported both students and staff in design education settings, encouraging open-ended, hands-on exploration and interdisciplinary thinking.

Event Photographer

Heather Milne



Heather Milne is a digital photographer based in Christchurch, New Zealand. She draws on her observations and experiences of trauma, recovery, and transformation to create photographs that document social and environmental change, and shared community experiences. Over the past five years, her photography has included themes such as gender, art accessibility, urban decay, natural disasters, and public grief.

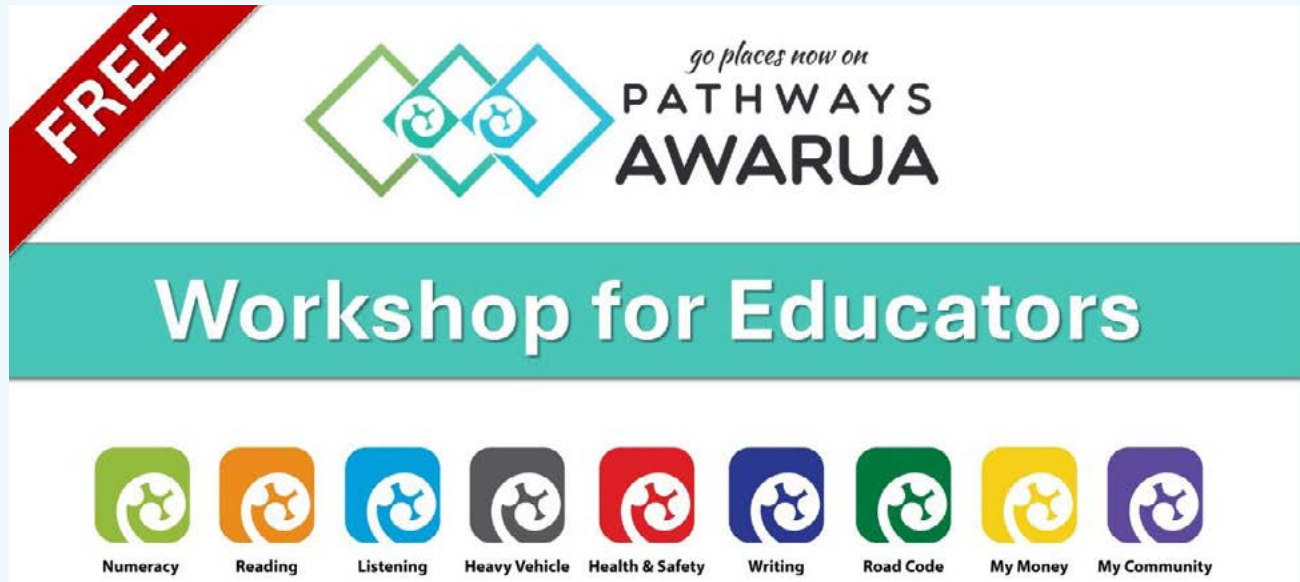
In addition to exhibitions and volunteer photography, Heather's commercial work covers events, architecture, art collaborations and portraiture throughout New Zealand, and she balances this with parenting her teenagers, and drinking coffee.

heatherjoyphotographs.co.nz

Post-forum workshops

Pathways Awarua Workshop

with Michael Grawe



Format: In-person workshop

Date: Tuesday 20 August 2025

Time: 1pm – 3:30pm

Location: Braintree Wellness Centre, Christchurch

This practical session is ideal for tertiary educators looking to support learners in building essential literacy, numeracy, and life skills. You'll gain hands-on strategies for using Pathways Awarua, a free online platform developed by TEC with over 500 interactive learning modules, including Ako Aotearoa's Language, Literacy and Numeracy Educator Pathway and the Neurodiversity Educator Pathway.

https://events.humanitix.com/pathways-awarua-workshop?_gl=1*1xahwo0*_gcl_

Resource Launch | Using Generative AI to support foundation/bridging ākonga

with Dr Selena Chan, Tricia Lewis, Rory Collins and Dr Amit Sarkar



Format: Online

Date: Tuesday 26 August 2025

Time: 12pm – 1pm

Ako Aotearoa is pleased to support Dr Selena Chan and the research team from Ara Institute of Canterbury, Hagley Learning Centre and Otago Polytechnic as they present the final report from their AARIA co-funded research project.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) is now readily accessible and represents on-going challenges for all sectors of education. In this free webinar, the team will share the work undertaken in 2024 to integrate Gen AI into foundation/bridging programmes. The project included the development of a chatbot – Ako AI – to support the ākonga by providing them with feedback on their writing, which we will demonstrate during this webinar.

<https://ako.ac.nz/professional-learning/conferences-and-events/resource-launch-using-generative-ai-to-support-foundation-bridging-akonga>

Pūtahi Mātauranga | Knowledge Centre

Our website-based Knowledge Centre has over 1500 free resources available to those working in tertiary education, vocational and workplace training. This wide range of practical resources support staff to build teaching and learning practice to benefit learners.

The evidence-based tools, guides, videos and other outputs are developed from our research, projects and other initiatives. We encourage people to download from ako.ac.nz/knowledge-centre and share widely.

Our Manako programme

Ako Aotearoa's Manako team focuses on building educator capability to enhance cultural capability and Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) success for all learners. 'Manako' means "aspiration" and "hope" in te ao Māori.

Some key components to the Manako programme include the Dyslexia-Friendly Quality Mark and the Tapatoru Ako Professional Practice Award. The programme also involves high-quality professional learning and development courses and workshops, online educator pathways hosted on Pathways Awarua plus leading work on learner agency and digital literacy.

Huihuinga Tāngata | Strategic forums and sector events

We are proud to run strategic events in priority areas of tertiary education in Aotearoa. These events include the Regional Forums hosted by our Northern, Central and Southern Hubs, and Tuia Te Ako (our national Māori tertiary education hui). We also collaborate, sponsor and contribute to a range of sector events organised by other groups.

Find us on:

 facebook.com/AkoAotearoa  linkedin.com/company/ako-aotearoa  instagram.com/ako-aotearoa

Connect with us

Jennifer Leahy

Sector Services Manager
for Southern region

jennifer.leahy@ako.ac.nz
021 748 496

Jennifer has extensive experience and skills in the research and facilitation of training and education programmes and has represented Adult and Community Education on our Southern Region Hub Advisory Group for many years. She facilitates the Adult and Community Education (ACE) Ōtautahi CoP, which meets face-to-face every six weeks at various ACE venues around the Christchurch. The group enjoy networking and keeping up to date with ACE and Ako Aotearoa news.



Te Pātaka Mātauranga Māori | Storehouse of Māori Knowledge

Since June 2022, our Pātaka or storehouse has been making it easier for visitors to our website to find content relating to Mātauranga Māori, Kaupapa Māori, success for Māori learners and building cultural capability. Visit ako.ac.nz/te-pataka-matauranga-maori and explore the Pātaka's four kete:



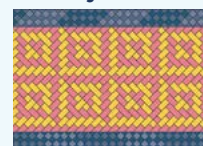
Te Kete Rauemi Mātauranga
Kete of Māori Resources



Te Kete Āheitanga Ahurea Māori
Kete of Cultural Capability
Pathways



Te Kete Hāpai Akoako
Kete of Professional
Learning and Development



Te Kete Huihuinga Tāngata
Kete of Events

Communities of Practice

We facilitate two online communities of practice (CoP): our Manako CoP is for educators in the adult language, literacy and numeracy space. You are welcome to join at facebook.com/groups/alnacc and participate in the discussions. Our Neurodiversity CoP is for anyone with expertise or interest in neurodiversity. Contact Graeme at Graeme.Read@ako.ac.nz if you'd like to join. We are pleased to support the development of other CoPs in the tertiary sector, whether it be within your own organisation or across institutions.

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