

MEDIA RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Time to celebrate our scientists

New Zealand's world-renowned response to Covid-19 shows what can be achieved by acting on good science, and during lockdown many New Zealanders have become fans of our country's science heroes.

As nominations for the 2020 Kudos Science Excellence Awards open, science is clearly more relevant than ever before.

Nominations for this year's Awards opened on Wednesday 20 May and will include more scientists than in previous years, as well as new and broader categories.

"While many of our scientists live and work across the Waikato region, there are many who's work take them further afield into the Rotorua district and the wider Bay of Plenty region, working in primary industries such as forestry, horticulture, agriculture and apiculture," says Kudos Science Trust CEO Soteria Ieremia.

"With many of these scientists having strong links to the Waikato's tertiary institutes and science industry, we're casting the net wider to shine a light on how their work is impacting not only New Zealand, but the world," she says.

The new University of Waikato Vision Mātauranga Award spans all seven categories to recognise a scientist for enabling the innovation potential of Māori knowledge, resources and people. This award further highlights the ongoing work of scientists across all disciplines, and recognises the growing number of Kudos nominations in Vision Mātauranga, a vital and valuable part of New Zealand's science landscape.

Nominations have also been opened up to the biocontrol and food sectors, with the Hamilton City Council Primary Industries Award replacing the agricultural science award.

The Greater Waikato region is a thriving, and expanding, hub of science, with the highest number of scientists and laboratory technicians per capita in its workforce in New Zealand, and based on a 2016 MBIE report, is the only region where this is expected to rise. The recent announcement that the New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology's head office would be based in Hamilton further compliments the science and technology output of the region.

"Covid-19 has shown us the critical role scientists play in keeping us safe, and when we return to the new 'normal', we'll again be looking to them to guide us through big issues like climate change," she says.

"We're fortunate in not having to look far afield for scientific expertise. We've got internationally renowned and respected scientists right under our noses, scientists like Prof. Craig Cary and Prof. Kim Pickering who feature in the top 1% of most influential scientists worldwide".

Nominations for the 2020 Kudos Science Excellence Awards close midnight Monday 20 July 2020, and Awards winners will be announced on 10 September 2020 at the Kudos Awards Gala Dinner at Claudelands Events Centre.

Details on how to make a nomination are available at thekudos.org.nz. The categories are:

- University of Waikato Vision Mātauranga Science Award
- Wintec Secondary Science Teacher/Educator Award
- Waikato DHB Medical Science Award
- Waikato Regional Council Environmental Science Award
- Hill Laboratories Laboratory Technologist Award
- Datamars Engineering Science Award
- Hamilton City Council Primary Industries Award
- The Kudos Lifetime Achievement Award

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The Kudos Science Trust established the Kudos 'Science Excellence' Awards in 2007 to recognise the region's contribution of almost 25% to New Zealand's research, discovery and innovation, and still remains New Zealand's only regional science awards.

The Kudos Science Trust is the Greater Waikato region's science advocate, supporting science education and community science engagement, connecting industry and celebrating science achievement and excellence.

**The Kudos Awards Gala Dinner event will observe all restrictions and rules imposed by the NZ Governments Covid-19 Response.*

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