
2025

MATARIKI NETWORK REPORT

(Featuring data collected January 2023 - December 2024)



MNU

**MATARIKI
NETWORK OF
UNIVERSITIES**

Partnering for a better world



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	3
Matariki at a Glance	4
Executive Board	6
Research Collaboration	8
Research Highlights	10
Research Seed Fund	12
Matariki Summer Research Programme	14
Student Mobility	16
Spotlight on the University of the Western Cape	17
3MT	19
Matariki Engagement Grants	20
Matariki Professional Services Leadership Programme	21
Looking Forward	22
Contact Us	23

WELCOME

Dear Members of the Matariki Network of Universities,
Dear Colleagues and Friends,

The Executive Board is very pleased to share the Matariki Network of Universities (MNU) 2025 Report. The following pages provide an overview of the Network's major achievements and developments since our last edition in 2023.

We are reflecting on a busy and significant two years for the MNU; including the sad departure of one of our founding members, and the exciting arrival of a brand-new member in a part of the world previously not represented in the Network. Since reviewing and refreshing our Network values and priorities just before our previous report, we have successfully set up a number of exciting new initiatives, and continue to plan ambitious and impactful activities for our staff and students. You can find out more about this throughout the report.

We were very regretful to lose one of our founding members, Dartmouth College, in June 2025, as they embark on a different pathway of internationalisation within their institution. They will be deeply missed among our membership, and we sincerely hope to remain informally connected to our colleagues there in the future. On a more positive note, we were delighted to officially welcome the University of the Western Cape to our membership in September 2024, and have already been very impressed by the positive energy and enthusiasm of our new colleagues! They have immediately and fully embraced the Network and all our activities, and we are thrilled that they have already been a part of multiple Network activities; including the Matariki 3MT and the second round of our Research Seed Fund. Reaching into new corners of the globe was one of the ambitions we set ourselves as a Network when we last reviewed our strategy at the end of 2022, and we are pleased to have made such positive progress in this space already!

Since our last report, Executive Board members have been wonderfully hosted at both UWA and Uppsala to evaluate ongoing activities and plan exciting new initiatives together. This September, the Board will come together in Durham and will be joined by both senior research colleagues and our newest formal advisory group, the Indigenous Leads. We are looking forward to developing an ambitious and impactful programme of activities with this group—one which we believe makes our Network extra special and unique.

I hope you enjoy reading our activity report, and we look forward to continuing our international journey with our esteemed members and colleagues by our side.



With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Deane', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Professor Patrick Deane

Principal & Vice-Chancellor, Queen's University (Canada)
Matariki Network Chair, 2024-2026

Matariki at a Glance

2023-2025

(FEATURING DATA COLLECTED JANUARY 2023 - DECEMBER 2024)



Partnering for a better world

matarikinetwerk.org/about/contact



Education

A total of almost

1,431

students have been involved in some sort of physical mobility programme under the Matariki umbrella over the 15-year period.

Number of students involved in online Global Citizenship Programme

203

Number of students involved in formal academic exchanges

227

Overall number of students involved in Matariki Indigenous Student Mobility Programme to date:

76

Research

Number of research
seed fund applications
received (two rounds)

60

Number of research
seed fund grants
awarded

12

Number of co-publications
between Network partners

2015-2017
783

2018-2020
786

2020-2022
1,065

2023-2024
1,063

Matariki 3MT®

Number of
contests

2

Number of
participating
students

26

Total number of People's
Choice public votes

1,342

Professional Services

4

Number of Matariki
Engagement Grants
awarded

102

Professional Services
staff participating in the
online Matariki
Professional Services
Leadership Initiative

EXECUTIVE BOARD



Dartmouth College

Sian Beilock

(MEMBER UNTIL JULY 2025)

Durham University

Karen O'Brien



University of Otago

Grant Robertson

Queen's University

Patrick Deane



EXECUTIVE BOARD

University of Tübingen

Karla Pollmann



Uppsala University

Anders Hagfeldt

University of Western Australia

Amit Chakma

(MEMBER UNTIL JULY 2025)



University of the Western Cape

Robert Balfour

(MEMBER FROM SEPTEMBER 2024)

RESEARCH COLLABORATION

Between 2023 - 2024, a total of **1,063*** co-publications between Matariki Network researchers were published.

Based on first author, each Matariki Network partner's total number of co-publications between Network partners includes:

- Dartmouth College - **148**
- Durham University - **224**
- University of Otago - **267**
- Queen's University - **331**
- University of Tübingen - **299**
- Uppsala University - **452**
- University of Western Australia - **395**

Of the **1,063** publications from 2023-2024, the top fields of publication include**:

- Medicine
- Biochemistry, Genetics & Molecular Biology
- Physics & Astronomy
- Earth & Planetary Sciences
- Social Sciences
- Multidisciplinary

* Data collected by Matariki Secretariat, June 2025.

** Data collected from SciVal. *NB* - coverage of the Humanities and Social Sciences from this source occurs less frequently than the Natural Sciences.

RESEARCH COLLABORATION

The table below shows the breakdown of co-publications between each Matariki Network partner during 2023 and 2024*:

	Dartmouth College	Durham University	University of Otago	Queen's University	University of Tübingen	Uppsala University	University of Western Australia	Total
Dartmouth College		26	2	53	28	25	14	148
Durham University	26		12	22	46	64	53	223
University of Otago	2	12		22	26	41	169	273
Queen's University	53	22	23		25	151	60	334
University of Tübingen	28	46	26	25		118	47	298
Uppsala University	25	64	41	151	118		58	457
University of Western Australia	14	53	169	60	47	58		401

* Data collected by Matariki Secretariat, June 2025

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

The International Research Training Group (IRTG2804) Women's Mental Health Across the Reproductive Years attended the Autumn School 2024 on 7th to 10th October in Uppsala, an event co-hosted with WOMHER (Women's Mental Health during the Reproductive Lifespan, Uppsala University) that brought together researchers from various disciplines to explore Women's mental health research across disciplines. Highlights included inspiring career talks sparking new ideas and aspiration for many attendees, engaging networking events offering a unique atmosphere to connect, and insights into well-organized accessible Scandinavian registry data for enabling robust research, making this Autumn School an inspiring and collaborative experience for all participants.

This outstanding Tübingen-Uppsala collaboration developed over many years in connection with the former Matariki research theme "Brain and Mind, Integrative Neuroscience." The Tübingen Lead is Prof. Dr. Birgit Derntl, Faculty of Medicine.



Women's Mental Health – Participants of Joint Research of Tübingen and Uppsala



Photograph taken by Dr Thomas Nygren whilst visiting University of Western Australia

During 2024, Dr Thomas Nygren from Uppsala University was at the University of Western Australia for two months as a visiting researcher (Matariki Fellow). During his tenure Dr. Nygren engaged in extensive academic collaborations, with a particular focus on disinformation studies. His scholarly activities included the publication of significant research, the initiation of interdisciplinary projects concerning AI and media literacy, and the delivery of invited lectures. Furthermore, he cultivated strategic networks and laid the foundation for continued international partnerships aimed at developing AI-driven educational tools and advancing global efforts to counteract misinformation through critical thinking initiatives.

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Thanks to the help of Matariki's travel award from Otago's Internationalisation Committee, Uppsala University and University of Otago have been brought closer together and formed strong connections between pharmacy researchers.

The initial connection was made when Professor Pauline Norris from Otago's Va'a o Tautai – Centre for Pacific Health received the travel award to visit the Department of Social Pharmacy at Uppsala last June.

The relationship has been strengthened over the past couple of months with a visit to the Otago School of Pharmacy by Associate Professor Susanne Strömdahl from Uppsala's Department of Medical Sciences.

Susanne's visit focused on a joint research project into Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) – a leading cause of hospitalisation amongst newborn babies.

The project, with Otago School of Pharmacy's Dr Amber Young, aims to understand preferences for maternal RSV vaccines and infant monoclonal antibody treatments to ultimately increase immunisation uptake and decrease RSV among infants.

Susanne says she's really enjoyed her time in Dunedin.

"I've been fortunate to be working with a great team here, which has provided me with a deeper understanding of both the New Zealand health care system and culture. I've also enjoyed learning about Māori culture and that the University of Otago aspires to include the concept of whanaunatanga into its programmes. I think it was a very successful visit and will lead to ongoing collaborations between the University of Otago and Uppsala University."



Professor Pauline Norris, left, and Dr Amber Young with Professor Susanne Strömdahl

RESEARCH SEED FUND

To further promote research collaboration within the Matariki Network, September 2023 saw the launch of the Matariki Network Research Seed Fund. Through a competitive process, we have jointly advertised, selected and funded a total of **12** collaborative bi-, tri and multilateral research projects between MNU institutions over two pilot rounds. Researchers could apply for a maximum grant of £25,000 for a project duration of 12-24 months, beginning in the first part of 2024. Successful research projects are expected to ultimately result in outcomes such as third-party funding applications, larger-scale collaborations and significant joint publications.

In early 2025, the Matariki Executive Board agreed to fund a third round of the grant which will be launched in late 2025. The call will follow the same pattern as the previous two and we are already looking forward to seeing what new and exciting collaborations emerge!

Projects funded during the first two rounds:

2023/24

- *"Ethical use of Gen-AI in Higher Education"*
- Lead partner: Uppsala, in partnership with **UWA, Queen's, Durham, and Otago.**
- Subject: Ethics

- *"Understanding the evolution of basaltic fissure eruptions to mitigate their hazard"*
- Lead partner: Durham, in partnership with **Otago and Uppsala.**

Subject: Earth Sciences

- *"The SWAN Universe Project: Simulations for Wallaby and the Nearby Universe"*

Lead partner: UWA, in partnership with **Durham, Dartmouth, and Queen's.**

Subject: Physics

- *"Creating Cultural Heritage for the Medical and Health Humanities"*

Lead partner: Queen's, in partnership with **Uppsala and Durham.**

Subject: Art History/Gender/Medical Humanities

- *"The role of shear margins in rapid ice sheet acceleration"*

Lead partner: Otago, in partnership with **Tübingen and Durham.**

Subject: Geology



RESEARCH SEED FUND

2024/25

- *"Advancing ocean renewable energy systems through physics and machine learning"*
- Lead partner: UWA, in partnership with Otago and Uppsala.
- Subject: Science (Earth & Oceans)

- *"Novel antibiotics against gram-negative pathogens"*
- Lead partner: Uppsala, in partnership with Otago and Tübingen.
- Subject: Medicinal Chemistry

- *"Projecting Plausible Past and Pandemic Pathways (5P)"*
- Lead partner: Durham, in partnership with Otago and Tübingen.
- Subject: Archaeology

- *"Towards improved understanding and prediction of suicide risk among youth: A transnational collaborative project"*
- Lead partner: Queen's, in partnership with UWA.
- Subject: Psychology

- *"Deepfakes: An interdisciplinary approach to protect democracy, identity and business vulnerability"*
- Lead partner: UWA, in partnership with Durham, Otago and UWC.
- Subject: Social Sciences

- *"Identifying potential risk factors and longitudinal narratives of body image, appearance altering behaviours and eating disorders in South African adolescents"*
- Lead partner: Durham, in partnership with UWC.
- Subject: Psychology

- *"Caring for the other half: Strengthening sanitation governance to improve menstrual health in urban informal settlements"*
- Lead partner: UWC, in partnership with Queen's and UWA.
- Subject: Political Studies



MATARIKI SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Network partners Durham University and Queen's University have set up a bilateral pilot scheme offering undergraduate students the chance to spend their summer (8-14 weeks) working on special research projects in each other's institution. Four students have been selected for travel during the inaugural year of the programme, which we hope to be able to extend to other Network partners in the future if successful.

"I am entering my third year of studies in computing with a specialization in cognitive science at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. This summer, I am working with Dr. Bronwyn Reichardt Chu at the Centre for Extragalactic Astronomy at Durham University on a project that investigates how spatial resolution impacts our ability to characterise stellar feedback effects in galaxies. Much of our work involves spatially binning observational data to better understand how feedback processes shape galactic evolution. Through this project, I hope to gain hands-on experience at the intersection of computing and astrophysics, while also learning from the expertise of my supervisors and colleagues at Durham. I'm especially looking forward to the opportunity to expand my thinking in a research environment, approaching problems with the curiosity, patience, and critical perspective."



Janevra Pier, Queen's University student currently working at Durham University



"I am a second year BSc Psychology student at Durham University, completing an 11-week research internship this summer at Queen's University, Canada through the Matariki network. Throughout the internship I am working within Queen's Development of Social and Emotional Communication Lab under Dr Michele Morningstar to investigate the neural correlates of adolescents' emotion recognition abilities."

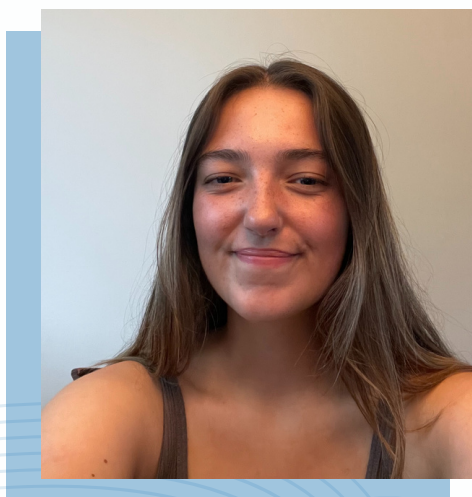
Polly Clayton, second year BSc Psychology student at Durham University

MATARIKI SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAMME

"Using the new WALLABY 21-cm radio astronomical survey, I will be testing predictions of computer simulations of galaxy formation assuming different candidates for dark matter particles against observations made. For the most part, this will be done by comparing properties derived from virtual observations of objects in the simulations to properties observed by the ASKAP (Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder) telescope. By comparing against the known dark matter content from the simulations, we are able to check for biases that could hinder our ability to measure galaxy structure and test dark matter hypotheses."



Luca Comitès, third year Integrated Masters Theoretical Physics student



Claire Dudley, fourth year student at Queen's University also working at Durham University

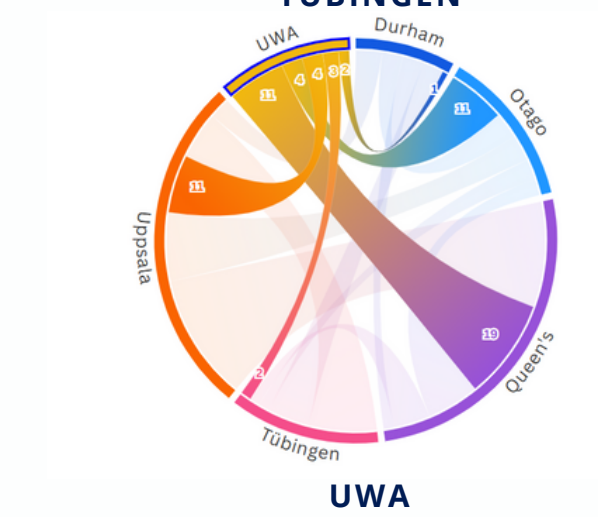
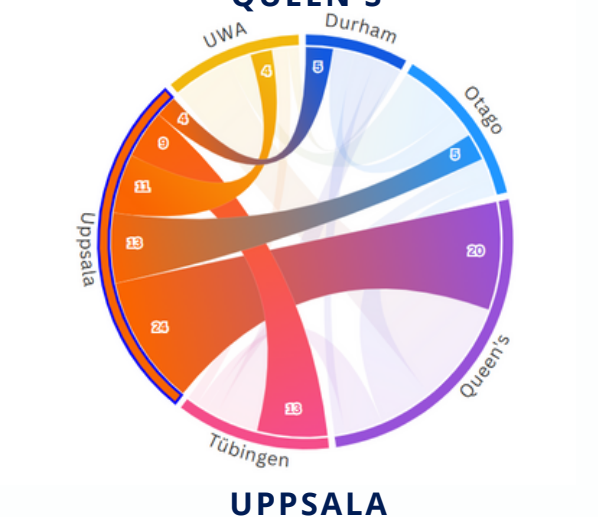
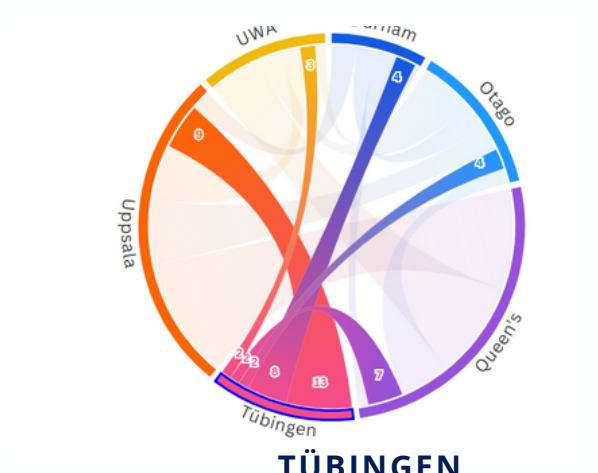
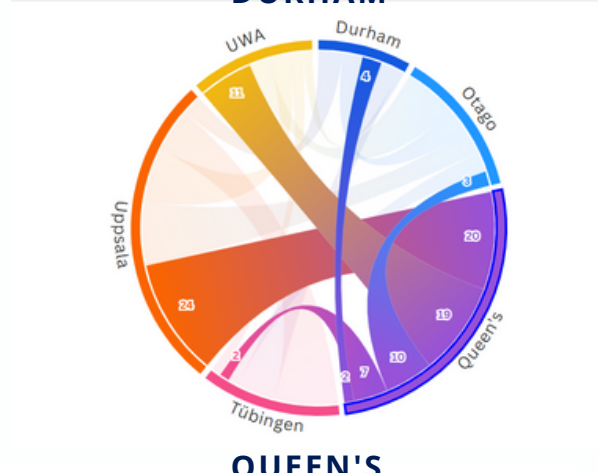
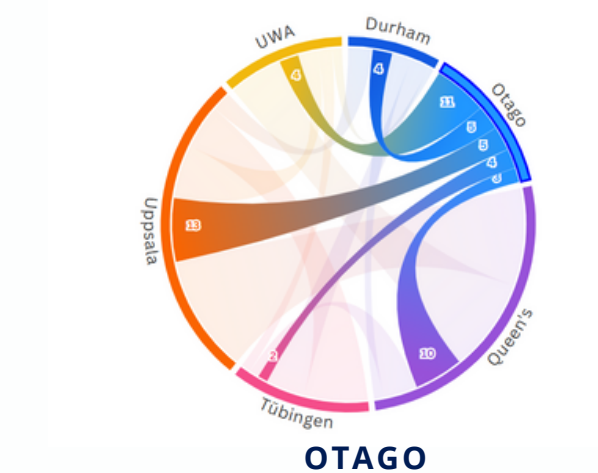
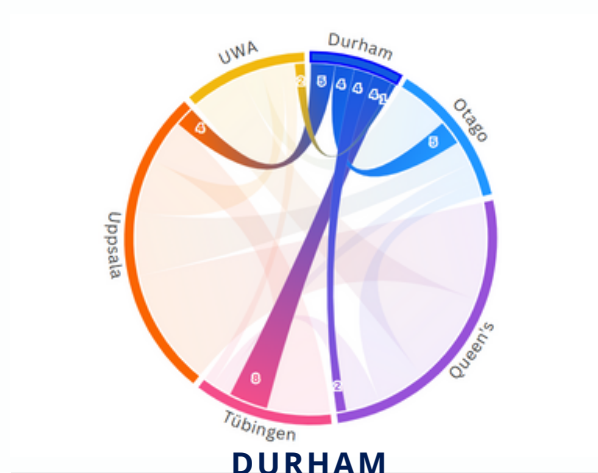
"My position as a fellow is to curate and code candidate-level information on British Elections dating back to the 1830s. The material collection aspect of my position has given me the unique opportunity to engage and source material from archival materials, protected historical documents, physical books, online data, and through liaising with the British Electoral Commission – all of which provide practical experience in data collection beyond my prior education. Further, Professor Umit has gone above and beyond to ensure I get a well-rounded academic experience, bringing me to conferences and presentations in Durham and Newcastle."

STUDENT MOBILITY

A critical part of the Matariki Network is promoting and supporting the exchange of students between the Network partners. The Sankey graphs on this page showcase the 2024/2025 student mobility flow between Matariki Institutions.

*** These graphs can be read by following the coloured flow-path connecting the listed Matariki Network partners. Within each pathway, student numbers are shown next to their home institution - i.e. Durham sent 5 students to Uppsala and Uppsala sent 4 students to Durham. ***

Graphs created by Matariki Network Secretariat.



SPOTLIGHT

University of the Western Cape

On the 4th September 2024, The University of the Western Cape (UWC) became the newest official member of the Matariki Network.

Matariki Network Chair, Professor Patrick Deane, Vice-Chair, Professor Anders Hagfeldt, and University of the Western Cape's then Rector and Vice-Chancellor, Professor Tyrone Pretorius, signed the Network MoU, officially confirming the new Network member. The signing of the MoU took place on the first night of the annual meeting of the Matariki Network Executive Heads and Leads in Uppsala.

This is the first time that the Matariki Network has welcomed a new member since its original founding. The Network believes the values and ethos of University of Western Cape fit well within its guiding principles and values, and thoroughly looks forward to future collaborations and exchanges with its newest member.

The Matariki Network Chair, Professor Patrick Deane, stated: "Since its founding, the Matariki Network has brought its member institutions together around shared priorities, and in a commitment to mutual support. As it moves deeper into its second decade, and with renewed and enlarged strategic purpose, this group of critical university friends is delighted to welcome the University of the Western Cape to membership."



SPOTLIGHT

University of the Western Cape

Rector and Vice-Chancellor Professor Tyrone Pretorius wrote an official statement on behalf of UWC: “As the former Chancellor of the University of the Western Cape (UWC), the late Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu often reminded us, “I am because you are. We are because they are.” These words perfectly capture the essence of this partnership. Rooted in the African philosophy of Ubuntu, it is an idea that emphasises that no human being exists in isolation; we are all interconnected, and our lives gain meaning through our relationships with others.

For UWC, this partnership is about harnessing the power of collaboration to achieve far more together than we ever could alone. We are excited to bring our unique perspectives to the table, particularly in areas such as social justice and inclusive education, and we look forward to learning from the diverse experiences and expertise within the Matariki Network. This agreement is a clear declaration of UWC's resolve to partner for a better world, a world where education and research transcend borders and bring about positive, lasting change.

At UWC we believe in the African proverb “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together” – and it is therefore with a great deal of excitement and anticipation that we are joining the Matariki Network.”



Since joining at the end of 2024, UWC has already participated in the 2024 Matariki 3MT competition, and its researchers are involved in three of the approved projects in the second round of the Matariki Research Seed Fund. We are all looking forward to where this new partnership will take us next!

Matariki 3MT®

The Three Minute Thesis Competition (3MT®) celebrates the exciting research conducted by Doctor of Philosophy students. Originally developed by The University of Queensland, 3MT® helps to advance students' academic-, presentation-, and research communication skills.

The competition develops students' ability to effectively explain their research in three minutes, in a language appropriate to a non-specialist audience. It also offers an international stage for their work; being a unique opportunity for students from across our member institutions to find out more about the exciting research being carried out across MNU.

Winners of our recent contests are as follows:

2023

- First Place – Tyla Alexander (University of Otago) – "Home invasion"
- Runner-up – Favour Onyeogaziri (Uppsala University) – "Cut the Net"
- People's Choice – Hwei Min Ng (University of Otago) – "From ordinary to extraordinary: exploring unique grain fibre bread for gut health and beyond"

2024

- First Place – Sara Stickley (Queen's University) – "Trust your gut... Microbiota: It may be the key to uncovering childhood asthma risk"
- Runner-up – Josie Quin-Conroy (UWA) – "Thinking with both sides of the brain"
- Runner-up – Linda Wilson (UWA) – "Beyond the birds and the bees: Engaging beekeeper's knowledge of the environment to improve management of public lands in South-west Western Australia"
- People's Choice – Miriam Schiele (University of Tübingen) – "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Preposition: English flexibility vs German precision"

All participants received a Matariki 3MT® certificate, with winners also receiving attractive cash prizes.

Videos from all five of our 3MT® competitions so far can be viewed on our [YouTube channel](#).



Matariki Engagement Grants

Following on from the success of the Matariki Leadership Programme which has been running since 2021, the Matariki Network has launched a new funding opportunity for Professional Services staff across the Network – The Matariki Engagement Grant.

The Matariki Engagement Grant (MEG) is intended to enhance personal- and career development, professional leadership expertise and international collaboration. The first call closed at the end of April 2025. Successful applicants identified a collaboration project commencing in late 2025 and running for a maximum of 12 months. The lead collaborator will work with at least one other Matariki institution and share their learning and any other outputs with the Matariki Network in the form of a short summary report. Grants have been awarded up to a maximum of £5,000 per project, with an overall budget of £20,000.

The following project applications have been successful this year:

- 'International Collaboration for Research Office Excellence', Martin Gagnon (Otago), Queen's & Durham
- 'Co-creating an Ethical Leadership Programme rooted in Matariki Global Citizenship - Trans-University Collaboration', Chantelle Cumming (Durham) & UWC
- 'Towards equitable and sustainable acquisitions practices in research libraries: A critical reflection on open futures and transformative models of academic journal e-content', Mark Asberg (Queen's), Durham, Otago, Tübingen, Uppsala, UWA and UWC
- 'Stories of Belonging and Social Connection: A Micro-video Series Introducing Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) and Wellness Learning at Queen's University and University of the Western Cape', Danielle Dias (Queen's) & UWC.

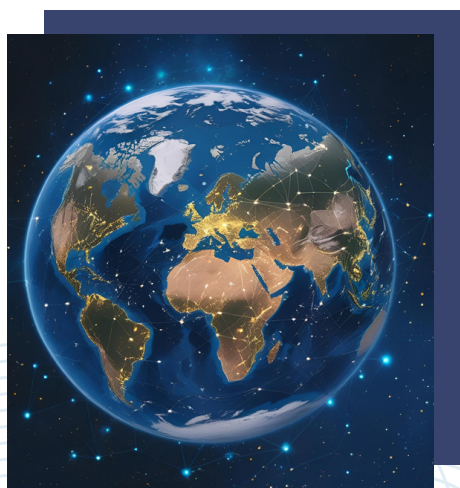
We are very much looking forward to watching these projects develop and will share results and outcomes in subsequent reports.

Matariki Professional Services Leadership Programme

Following its inception back in 2021, the Matariki Professional Services Leadership Initiative continues to go from strength to strength. After two successful rounds in 2021 and 2023, previous participants were invited to re-connect in the first half of 2024 as part of an informal Alumni Programme to discuss topics such as “The Self-Aware Leader”, “Positive Change Leadership” and “Leadership in Complex Problem-Solving”. This opportunity aimed to further develop the leadership proficiency of participating managers; as well as provide a space to continue solidifying the networks previously established in their former cohorts, collegial learning, and development of new ideas within the areas of leadership and professional services.

September 2024 – June 2025 saw the latest round of this online personal- and professional development programme, which was attended by almost 60 delegates from Durham, Otago and Queen’s. The programme was split into four sessions, as follows:

- *“Self-Awareness – Focusing Attention & Managing Distractions” – Led by Jane Davis, Director of The Flourishing Institute (New Zealand);*
- *“Organisational Values & Leadership” – Led by Patrick Deane, Principal & Vice-Chancellor of Queen’s University;*
- *“Kindness & Leadership” – Led by Helen Teague, Organisational Development Specialist, Invisible Grail;*
- *Concluding panel – Featuring Shaid Mahmood (Pro-Vice-Chancellor for EDI at Durham University), Tanya Syddall (Director of Property & Campus Development at University of Otago), and Mark Asberg (Vice-Provost & University Librarian at Queen’s University).*



The Matariki Professional Services Leadership Initiative is designed to connect Professional Services colleagues from across the Network. A new edition is planned for late 2025/early 2026 and an invitation to participate will be extended to all Network members.

LOOKING FORWARD

Reflecting on our latest reporting period, I am filled with pride and optimism about both what we have achieved as a Network and the plans we have in place for exciting things to come.

Losing a longstanding member, Dartmouth, has brought a degree of sadness and uncertainty over the last few months, but the timing of our newest member joining us has ensured a renewed excitement and optimism among our partners and stakeholders. UWC promises to be an excellent addition to our membership, and I am very much looking forward to their involvement in all aspects of our activities.

I am delighted with the ongoing success of the new Matariki Research Seed Fund and am also pleased to have finally been able to launch a modest financial support scheme for our Professional Services staff, too. Collaboration across geographical- and cultural boundaries is of the utmost importance; particularly during a time of such uncertainty across many aspects of our global landscape.

On behalf of the Secretariat, I want to express heartfelt appreciation to the many individuals throughout the Network who have generously dedicated their time to Matariki's governance and leadership, as well as those who have actively contributed to our various working groups. Your involvement is crucial to ensuring that Matariki continues to deliver meaningful value to its members. A sincere thank you also goes to everyone who has taken part in one of our initiatives. I trust the experience has been rewarding and impactful, and I hope you will remain engaged with the Network moving forward.

Looking ahead, I am optimistic about what the coming years hold for our Network and its members, as we expand Matariki's vision of "partnering for a better world" to new regions around the globe.

Lucy Turzynski



Lucy Turzynski
Matariki Network Secretariat





DARTMOUTH



University
of Otago

OTAKOU WHAKAIHU WAKA

NEW ZEALAND'S FIRST UNIVERSITY



EBERHARD KARLS
UNIVERSITÄT
TÜBINGEN



UPPSALA
UNIVERSITET



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WESTERN
AUSTRALIA



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

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 Matariki Network of Universities