



Genomics Aotearoa news

Congratulations to Director Peter Dearden who has taken on an additional role as Head of Department at the University of Otago's Biochemistry Department.

New associates

Genomics Aotearoa is pleased to welcome two new associates - GeneCrypt Ltd and Wilderlab:

[GeneCrypt Ltd](#) is a start up company that has developed secure genomic data management and computation technology, in partnership with Unitec's Cybersecurity Lab. Their technology has been deployed in prototype into a New Zealand RNA therapeutics company and they are now in discussion with other research groups, here and overseas.

[Wilderlab](#) is an environmental DNA (eDNA) testing lab in Aotearoa New Zealand. It provides sampling kits and analysis for biosecurity, threatened species detection, ecosystem health evaluation, environmental impact assessment, human health and science education.

Introducing Thierry Lints

Genomics Aotearoa welcomes Dr Thierry Lints, who is working with primary and secondary school teachers to develop teacher training materials and classroom life science curricula that introduce exciting advances in genomics

alongside mātauranga Māori and the complex moral/ethical/cultural conundrums these different philosophical/scientific worldviews present.

Primary and secondary school science curricula in Aotearoa New Zealand are currently not geared to nurturing general public understanding in this area, nor to capturing the imagination of young would-be genomic biologists and bioinformaticians. Thierry's hoping his work will address this gap in public knowledge and help with long-term workforce development.

Genomics Aotearoa outreach

All the small things

Tūhura Otago Museum and Genomics Aotearoa are hosting a lively evening on **Friday February 17, 6pm-9pm** with the aim of putting science up front. The "All the small things" event in the Museum Atrium 1 features a band (Bo & the Constrictors), and in between a series of TED-like talks from leading genomicists and microbiologists;

- **Joep De Ligt and Jemma Geoghegan** (Covid response),
- **Neil Gemmell** (genomics and the Lochness monster),
- **Charlotte King** (forensics).

There will also be open labs displaying cool "small" science from several University of Otago departments, and even the opportunity to make DNA strawberry daquiris. Food trucks and a cash bar available.

See the [museum](#) website for more detail.



Exhibition tour this year

Genomics Aotearoa and Tūhura Otago Museum are working with the Touring Exhibitions Network of New Zealand (TENNZ) to look at taking the **Genome: Science of Life** exhibition around New Zealand.

Let us know if you have a venue in mind; this is a free exhibition - hosts just need to cover the freight costs.

Genome: Science of Life was created in 2022 in partnership with Tūhura Otago Museum and Genomics Aotearoa. It features incredible examples of cutting-edge research in digital displays and augmented reality. Displayed in four stories, the exhibition encompasses what DNA is, the history of the science and research, New Zealand's genomic work particularly in conservation, and how DNA sequencing in Aotearoa helped shape the world's COVID response. It also integrates augmented reality.

Early career and media training events

Media Savvy

The Science Media Centre runs workshops for scientists and researchers who want to upskill their science communications skills and engage with media. Upcoming media training opportunities include a workshop for Māori researchers on March 16-17, and a media workshop on April 20-21, both in Auckland - see [here](#) for details.

The Early Career Researcher Forum Aotearoa

The Royal Society is organising a two-day event for researchers early in their careers on **18-19 Āperira April** at Te Papa, Wellington.

This follows on from a successful event in 2021 attended by over 250 delegates, and will offer a platform to amplify the kōrero of researchers at the early stages of their careers. On offer are kaikōrero (speakers), 'on the couch' discussions, Q&A panels, meet and greet sessions, and professional development opportunities. Follow Royal Society Te Apārangi on [Eventbrite](#) to be notified when registrations go live.

Genomics Aotearoa seminar series

We started the 2023 Genomics Aotearoa seminar series with Professor **Peter Gogarten**, Distinguished Professor of Molecular and Cell Biology at the University of Connecticut, who talked about *Inteins as a tool to trace the transfer of genetic information*. Peter rooted the tree of life using an ancient gene duplication, and was also one of the pioneers to recognize the importance and the extent of horizontal gene transfer and its role in microbial evolution.

Genomics Aotearoa's next seminar is on **Friday, 3 March 2023** with **Imogen Foote** talking on *A whole-genome approach to resolve the genetic structure of Antipodean and Gibson's albatross populations*.

Upcoming bioinformatics training

Genomics Aotearoa is organising three training events in March:

- **March 8-9:** Genomics Data Carpentry (online, 10am-4pm). Register your attendance at [Eventbrite using this link](#).
- **March 14:** Introduction to R (online, 10am-4pm). Register your attendance at [Eventbrite using this link](#).
- **March 22:** RNA-seq Data Analysis (online, 10am-4pm). Register your attendance at [Eventbrite using this link](#)

Let [Tyler McInnes](#) know if you have bioinformatics training needs or would like more information. You can also visit the [training page](#) on our website for details on upcoming workshops.

Genomics events calendar

- February 15-17, 2023:** [eResearch](#) NZ conference
- March 13-16, 2023:** [11th International Rosaceae Genomics Conference](#)
- March 15-17, 2023:** GA Post-doc workshop (*registrations now closed*)
- March 16-17, 2023:** [Media SAVVY](#) for Māori researchers
- July 16-21, 2023:** [23rd Congress of Genetics](#)

Let us know if you would like to add an event.

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