

2024 Te Hono Māori Te Pou Tuangāhuru Speakers



Arama Kukutai

CFO, Plenty Unlimited Inc

Arama Kukutai is recognised for his work as a global leader in the agritech industry. He is of Ngāti Tīpa, Maniapoto, Te Aupōuri and Parihaka descent, and started his career in finance at a time when Māori organisations were beginning to actively develop forestry, farming, and fishing assets.

Arama was elected to the Board of Paranihi ki Waitotara Trust - an incorporation involved in dairy farming and aquaculture activities in NZ, Asia and Australia. He later moved to the USA to advance a global career spanning two decades including a stint as Senior Trade Representative for NZ Trade and Enterprise, based in Los Angeles.

Arama is the current CEO of 'Plenty' - an indoor, vertical farming technology company that can grow clean produce year-round, anywhere in the world. He has been an investor in Plenty and a part of it's Board of Directors since 2016.

He also co-founded Finistere Ventures - a pioneering venture capital firm aimed at bringing change to industrialised value chains, especially with respect to food production. Finistere has supported a multitude of companies across the globe and has grown an agritech community that stretches from NZ to Ireland and everywhere in between, connecting some of the leading minds across the world.



Aulani Wilhelm-Morten

Senior VP, Conservation International Centre for Oceans

Aulani Wilhelm-Morten is the Chief Strategy and External Affairs Officer at Nia Tero, an organisation focused solely on Indigenous Guardianship and the role Indigenous Peoples have played and can continue to play – in protecting lands, waters, and ocean areas as antidotes to the global climate crisis and biodiversity loss.

She joined Nia Tero in October 2023 after serving as the Assistant Director for Ocean Conservation, Climate and Equity at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. Previously she served as the Senior Vice President for Oceans at Conservation International where she co-led the Blue Nature Alliance, a global partnership to catalyze the conservation of 18 million km² of ocean. Her work bridges culture, community and science to drive innovations in policy and ocean health.

Aulani has played a pivotal role in shaping the emerging field of large-scale ocean management and co-governance, leading the establishment of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument and World Heritage Site in Hawai'i. Aulani is also the founder of Big Ocean, a network of the world's largest marine managed areas. Prior she was director of ocean initiatives for NOAA's Office of Marine Sanctuaries, and a social innovation fellow at Stanford University. Aulani is a Mellon Distinguished Scholar at Arizona State University's Center for Imagination at the Borderlands. She holds a MS degree from Stanford University and a BA degree from the University of Southern California. Previously she served as the Senior Vice President for Oceans at Conservation International where she co-led the Blue Nature Alliance, a global partnership to catalyze the conservation of 18 million km² of ocean. Her work bridges culture, community and science to drive innovations in policy and ocean health.



Che Wilson

Director, NAIA Ltd

Che was raised in a large whānau in Ohakune at the foot of Koro Ruapehu. He's had a varied career with the rare experience of being Chair, CE and chief negotiator of his iwi, a Deputy Secretary for the Ministry for the Environment, he was President of Te Pāti Māori, and he was initiated into his iwi whare wānanga prior to entering secondary school.

Che is Poukura (Director) of Naia Limited, a Māori consultancy based in Christchurch and Waikato. Through Naia, Che focuses principally in the tūpuna wisdom space as a guest speaker, researcher, leadership mentor, facilitator, resource developer and a podcaster on a range of social media platforms as well strategy and facilitation. He is currently leading a Science Challenge through Our Land and Water and leading the Tai Hauāuru research on Puanga.

Che is the chair of Te Reo o Whanganui, a board focused on the revitalisation of the Whanganui dialect. He is also a board member of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga. Che's held several directorships and appointments in primary industries, in government and iwi governance. He was also part of the first Māori delegation of Te Hono Movement in 2013 to Stanford University, and again in 2014.

In the facilitation space, Che has had the privilege of working with organisations to develop strategies, restructure organisations and navigate conflict over a couple of decades.



Quinault Childs

Research Director, Food Futures Lab, Institute for the Future

Positioned at the center of Silicon Valley California, Quinault Childs is the Research Director of the Food Futures Lab at Institute for the Future (IFF). With ties to other innovation hubs in Europe, Latin America, and Asia, 'Food Futures' is the world's leading futures organisation with a mission to prepare the world to create better, more equitable futures by disrupting short-term thinking with visions of transformative possibilities.

Quinault focuses on exploring the intersection of food systems, society, and climate change, describing possible futures where each of those things look very different than they do today. His work is a mix of projecting current-day data into the future, gathering insights from food systems leaders, and developing experiential, imaginative "edible futures" of food.

Before IFF, 'Quin' was involved in launching startups in the food space, including a circular food waste company and the first zero-waste grocery store in Texas.

Quin has a Master of Science in Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Studies and a Bachelor of Science in Human Factors Engineering, both from Tufts University in Massachusetts. He is renowned for his expertise in food systems and culture, climate, agriculture, water and environmental resources, complex systems, as well as public speaking.



Rangī Mātāmua

Professor, Massey University

Rangīānehu Mātāmua is a NZ indigenous studies and Māori cultural astronomy academic. He is currently a Professor of Mātauranga Māori at Massey University.

Rangī is a pioneering Māori scholar who has revolutionised understandings of Māori astronomy, and in particular Matariki. His research has been ground-breaking in terms of its contribution to mātauranga Māori, and he has enlightened both national and international populations on the mātauranga of astronomy.

Situated at the interface between mātauranga Māori and Western science, Rangī's research is helping to reconnect people with maramataka – the Māori lunar calendar, and the environment. Rangī is also part of a wider movement, reclaiming indigenous astronomy as part of a continued process of decolonisation.

He was awarded the 2019 Prime Minister's Science Communication Prize, the 2020 Callaghan Medal for science communication from Royal Society Te Apārangi, the 2020 Matariki Awards for Education, and he was the 2023 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year. Of Ngāi Tūhoe descent, Rangī says Ruatāhuna in Te Urewera is the place he goes when he needs to return home to rest and reset.



Tina Porou

Managing Director, Poipoia Ltd

Tina is of Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāi Tāmanuhiri, Rongomaiwahine and Ngāti Rakaipāka descent. She founded Poipoia, a kaupapa Māori company committed to providing environmental services to iwi, hapū, the public and private sector.

Tina has worked as an environmental planner and a tangata whenua advocate in the natural resource management space for over 20 years. Her projects include developing papakāinga houses for social wellbeing, facilitating environmental restoration programmes, engaging in national policy interventions on water, climate change and biodiversity, while also working with iwi and councils to enable stronger decision sharing relationships. Tina has specialty experience in freshwater, geothermal development and cultural impacts. She has a wide network of hapū and iwi across the country.

Tina was made a member of the NZ Order of Merit for her service to Māori and the Environment in 2016 and won a Sir Peter Blake Emerging Leader Award in 2015. Tina sits on the Lake Taupō Forest Trust, Ngāti Porou Forests, Pahi i Taua Inc., Aisa NZ Foundation and Tupu Angitu.

Based in Wellington, Tina has two children Te Rina and Meihana, and is a top shelf kōka to her five nieces.



Tori McNoe

UniServices, Arataki Whaneketanga Haumi - Investment Development Lead

Tori McNoe - Te Arawa, Ngāti Tahu / Ngāti Whaoa, Ngāti Raukawa is 26 years old and currently works at UniServices where she looks to indigenise the research and investment intersection of Aotearoa. She led the establishment of Investment Roopū Māori providing investment and development advice for Māori in the research sector.

An impressionable young Māori wahine, Tori holds a Bachelor of Criminal Justice and a Bachelor of Arts. Sociology and Psychology. She is passionate about how young people fit into the innovation ecosystem and has experience bringing rangatahi to the space. She served on the MBIE Canterbury Regional Skills Leadership Group, was the first wahine Māori Chair of the University of Canterbury Students' Association, and is the former Chair of the Canterbury Momentum Investment Committee.

Tori helps to create pathways for youth in STEM as a Trustee of the Science Alive! Board. She has been named on the founding 'Top Diverse Directors List' by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities and Superdiversity Institute and was a finalist in the Young Leader - Women of Influence Awards in 2020.

Through everything she does, and with her whānau and whakapapa in mind, she aims to serve her vested interest in rangatahi, governance, and how the two spaces merge in the innovation ecosystem intergenerationally.