

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

NZUWIL DISCIPLINE POD PROGRAMME



Sarah Edwards

Lincoln University

I am a Lecturer in the Department of Environmental Management at Lincoln University. I am the academic co-ordinator of postgraduate qualifications in Environmental Management, and I teach core courses in the department's undergraduate and postgraduate degree programmes.

In my research I use conceptual tools from the field of Science and Technology Studies (STS) to study environmental management issues. In my PhD I examined the risk management of research into genetically modified organisms in New Zealand. More recently I have worked on a project exploring the role of science advisors in freshwater governance in the Canterbury region. I have also conducted research on urban risk and resilience in the context of the Canterbury earthquakes, including a recently completed project within National Science Challenge 11: Building better homes, towns and cities.

Prior to embarking on an academic career I worked as a High School science teacher for a number of years, and I have taught in schools in the UK, Japan and New Zealand. I have an honours degree in Psychology from the University of Nottingham, undertook my teacher training at the University of London, and have a PhD in Environmental Management from Lincoln University.

I have held a part-time position at Lincoln since 2017. Outside work I spend my time with my young daughter, preferably at the beach or out for a walk.

[Note: Discipline Pod Participant in 2020]



Deirdre Hart

University of Canterbury

I lecture in coastal science and geography, and coordinate the Masters in Urban Resilience and Renewal in Te Kura Aronukurangi, the School of Earth and Environment, UC. Also, I am one of the UC Proctors (student integrity and behaviour). Teaching for me is a joyful activity, full of new insights and ideas with each new student cohort.

My key research foci include multi-hazards; river mouth lagoons and other coastal hydrosystems; coastal hazards including climate change effects; and tides and related ocean processes. I find working across disciplinary boundaries exciting and enriching: I work closely with engineers, planners, ecologists, oceanographers, and community engagement specialists, amongst others.

My degrees are from UC (BSc hon, MSc) and UNSW (PhD).

I have a 9 year old daughter, Ella, and enjoy gardening, walking and reading.

[Note: Promoted to Professor in 2022. Discipline Pod Participant in 2020.]



Sandeeka Mannakkara

University of Auckland

Sandeeka is a University of Auckland graduate, who started her career as a structural engineer and then proceeded to earn her PhD at the University of Auckland's department of civil and environmental engineering. She specialises in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction, city resilience and climate change adaptation. She has been working as a Research Fellow on a number of Government-funded projects following her PhD, and started her new role as Lecturer in Climate Engineering at UoA's department of civil and environmental engineering this year.

Outside of work matters of importance to her are family, friends, equity and diversity. Her hobbies include music, reading, art, travel, dogs, tv shows and movies. She enjoys going to the gym, yoga, meditation and cooking.

[Note: Promoted to Senior Lecturer in Feb 2023. Discipline Pod Participant in 2020]

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Lena Waizenegger

Auckland University of Technology

Lena Waizenegger is a lecturer in Business Information Systems at the Auckland University of Technology. Lena received her PhD in Information Systems from the University of Innsbruck, Austria in July 2017. During the first two years of her PhD at the University of Innsbruck, she was part of the EU-project “Learning Layers” exploring information learning and knowledge transfer at the workplace. Furthermore, she led the research project “Boost”, where she investigated how distributed and co-located teams leverage connectivity to improve their collaboration.

During the last two years of her PhD, she was working as the project manager of an international research project at the University of Auckland for which she was able to acquire research funding from the Austrian Ministry of Science, Research and Economy.

Her main research areas are ubiquitous connectivity, conversational agents and digital disconnection. Lena participated in two renowned Doctoral Consortia (International Conference on Information Systems and Hawaii International Conference on Systems Sciences). Her research has been published in various peer-reviewed conference proceedings such as ICIS, HICSS, ECIS and in the Cutter Business Technology Journal.

In her free time, Lena goes snowboarding, hiking, mountain-biking and to the gym.

[Note: Promoted to Senior Lecturer in January 2021. Discipline Pod Participant in 2018.]



Bing Xue

Victoria University of Wellington

I am currently a Senior Lecturer in the School of Engineering and Computer Science at Victoria University of Wellington. My research focuses mainly on evolutionary computation, feature selection, feature construction, multi-objective optimisation, image analysis, transfer learning, data mining, and machine learning. I have over 100 papers published in fully refereed international journals and conferences and most of them are on evolutionary feature selection and construction.

I am currently the Chair of the IEEE Task Force on Evolutionary Feature Selection and Construction, IEEE Computational Intelligence Society (CIS), Vice-Chair of the IEEE CIS Data Mining and Big Data Analytics Technical Committee, and Vice-Chair of IEEE CIS Task Force on Transfer Learning & Transfer Optimisation. I am also an Associate Editor/member of Editorial Board for five international journals and a reviewer of over 50 international journals. I am the Finance Chair of IEEE Congress on Evolutionary Computation (CEC) 2019, a Program Co-Chair of the 31th Australasian AI 2018, ACALCI 2018, and the 7th International Conference on SoCPaR2015, and I am also a tutorial chair, special session chair, or publicity chair for many other international conferences.

[Note: Promoted to Professor and is now Deputy Head of School. Discipline Pod Participant in 2018]

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Karyn Rastrick

University of Waikato

I am a lecturer in the Waikato Management School. I research how the strategic use of information and communication technology can improve outcomes in emergency management and health care. In human terms, my recent work has helped reduce triage times for melanoma patients and shorten waitlist for faster care for critical cases.

I have three PhD students and teach in the areas of digital business and emerging technologies. I teach at first year level and masters and I am the qualification convener for our Masters of Digital Business. I have a Bachelor of Management and a PhD from Waikato.

I love enjoying the outdoors and exploring new places here and overseas with my family. I also have an artistic side.

[Note: Appointed to Director – Digitisation strategy at Waikato University in June 2019. Discipline Pod Participant in 2018]



Sarah Marshall

Auckland University of Technology

I am a lecturer in Mathematical Sciences at Auckland University of Technology. My area of expertise is operations research, with a particular focus on stochastic modelling. My current research focuses on stochastic modelling applied to remanufacturing systems, inventory management and warranty costs analysis. At AUT I teach statistics, probability, stochastic modelling and operations research to students at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. I am the Industry Liaison for the Master of Analytics, which involves sourcing industry-based projects for students in the final semester of the programme.

I began my tertiary education at Victoria University of Wellington, where I completed a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration in Economics and a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Operations Research. After graduating, I worked in the Australian stockbroking industry before returning to New Zealand to complete a Master of Science in Statistics and Operations Research at Victoria University of Wellington. I completed my PhD in Management Science at the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom in 2012. I taught in the Department of Management Science at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow for three years before beginning my current position at AUT in 2014.

After living abroad for almost 7 years, I am enjoying living back in NZ and being closer to family and friends. In my free time, I enjoy sewing, gardening, photography and sampling craft beer.

[Note: Promoted to Senior Lecturer in December 2017 at AUT. Now a Senior Lecturer at the University of Auckland from October 2023. Discipline Pod Participant in 2017.]



Mary Low

Waikato University

Mary Low is a senior lecturer at the University of Waikato. Her qualifications are BA Dip Ed USP MMS Dip Acc & Fin PhD Waikato. Her current role in Waikato Management School is Accounting Convenor, School of Accounting, Finance and Economics. She is a Chartered Accountant member of Chartered Accountants Australia + New Zealand. She is also a Fellow member of CPA Australia.

Mary teaches in the area of financial and management accounting and supervises the research projects of the masters of professional accounting programme. Her research interests include financial reporting issues, ethics and accounting education.

[Note: Promoted to Associate Professor. Discipline Pod Participant in 2017.]

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Bilinda Offen

University of Otago

I am a lecturer at University Of Otago College of Education. I teach Primary Mathematics and Statistics to undergraduate and Masters Students. I also supervise in Post Grad Diplomas and research Masters Degrees. My research interests lie in the pedagogy of how children learn maths and how schools can use teacher appraisal processes to improve student learning outcomes. Prior to working at Otago University I worked in a variety of schools in a variety roles, culminating in Principal of a small rural school.

After high school I worked in offices, and completed a Diploma of Management by correspondence with the Wellington Business Institute. I began my tertiary education whilst I had three children, and by the time I completed my Teaching Diploma and Bachelor of Education Studies at Otago University I had four children. I completed a Masters in Education by distance learning with the University of Tasmania while teaching full time and raising my family. The Masters Degree naturally led to a Doctorate in Education, which I completed at Massey University while working at Otago University.

I continue to enjoy study and am currently doing papers with Te Matauranga o Aotearoa in Tikanga Maori, and at Stansford University I am completing an online paper in Growth Mindsets and Mathematics. I am a proud Granny of a one year old, and in between flitting off to Auckland once a month to visit him, caring for the many animals on our life style block and gardening, I have been known to fit in the odd meal with my husband and to read crime novels that have no relation to teaching or mathematics!

[Note: Discipline Pod Participant in 2017.]



Ting Wang

University of Otago

I am a senior lecturer in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics at the University of Otago. My research field is multidisciplinary centering on the interface of statistics and geophysics. My main research interest is in the development of statistical models and their application to real-world problems in geosciences. I work on theoretical and applied methods of point processes and hidden Markov models for seismic and volcanic hazards, and signal-processing techniques to extract useful signals from noisy datasets including hydrological time-series data of strongly time-variant fluid flows and GPS time-series data of ground deformation.

I teach statistics in both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and give workshops on statistical modeling for postgraduate students and staff. I supervise a number of Honours, Masters and PhD students in Statistics.

After finishing my BSc and MSc in Statistics at Beijing Normal University, I came to New Zealand and completed my PhD in Statistics at Massey University. I started working at the University of Otago in 2012.

I like travelling, hiking, playing badminton and pingpong, sewing, and gardening.

[Note: Promoted to Associate Professor in February 2021. Discipline Pod Participant in 2017.]