

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Ground-breaking Online Māori Language Portal Launched

Mā tini, mā mano, ka rapa te whai

With collaboration, worlds can be conquered

Māori language and customary practices are central to Māori philosophy, knowledge, practice, identities, and indeed the uniqueness of Māori culture. It is a critical component of Māori wellbeing and supporting te reo Māori revitalisation, learning and scholarship is a key goal of Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga (NPM) and its partner centre Te Ipukarea Research Institute, at Auckland University of Technology (AUT).

A new and ground-breaking online Māori language portal has recently been launched to support Māori language learners and researchers. This portal - Tomokanga Rauemi Reo Māori - was developed out of NPM's research project, Te Whare Matihiko o Te Reo Māori, led by Professor Tania Ka'ai, the late Professor John Moorfield (Te Murumāra) and the team at Te Ipukarea.

The portal has been created to give language learners and researchers at varying levels a primary place to connect to the many and varied Māori language resources that are available online. NPM Principal Investigator and project lead Professor Ka'ai comments; "Although still in its early stages of development, the site is already creating links between online resources. It operates in a way similar to a library catalogue with both basic and advanced search functions and has the capacity to bring up search results of pages that relate to Māori language groups, courses and resources."

Each page is tagged with key words, and the typical user will be anyone searching for support during their Māori language journey. The types of pages linked to from Tomokanga Rauemi include university courses, websites, coffee groups, Facebook groups, blogs, YouTube channels, immersion childcare, or any social media page where te reo Māori is the dominant feature.

Only accessible print resources are included to ensure that the portal is kept relevant and contemporary, and it will provide a much-needed e-repository to disseminate critical material often created or produced by Māori language speakers which can empower other learners of the Māori language contributing to the preservation and survival of the language.



The research project is contributing to Māori language revitalisation by collating oral, visual digital and written sources, and is determined to ensure that mātauranga and tikanga Māori can be more easily accessed. More importantly, the portal can connect people to the many different resources that can help them in their language journey. These resources are often presented in many different places and can be difficult to find. Tomokanga Rauemi Reo Māori provides a single location that people can visit- he tumu herenga waka, herenga rauemi.

The project also investigated what effect and impact the provision of online Māori language resources can have on language users and learners and the accessing and application of Māori knowledge and customs.

The AUT and Te Ipukarea researchers were able to gather over 1000 different types of resources to support the learning, teaching, and maintenance of te reo Māori at the time of the sites launch, and expect this to grow quickly over the months ahead.

Professor Ka'ai continues; "As a team we suffered the sad loss of Professor John Moorfield, Te Murumāra, in the middle of this project. John was a Professor of Māori Innovation and Development at AUT and not only worked as a specialist in Māori language, literature and culture but was at the forefront of developing new technologies that brought language learning to the masses. We are sure that he would be proud of the work we have completed in this project, excited about the future possibilities for te reo Māori within this dynamic and ever-changing environment and that he would be grateful to Dr Dean Mahuta for stepping in to continue this work."

Professor Poia Rewi, NPM Deputy Director comments; "Nāna, nā Te Ipukarea, tēnei o ngā pūmotomoto o te ao Māori, ki te ao Māori i huaki e toro ai ōna mātauranga ki te ao, e toro mai ai hoki te ao ki a ia. Me uta mihi, ka tika. From Ngā Pa o te Māramatanga's perspective it is always exciting to see the results of our projects emerge for our communities and stakeholders. It is particularly important to us when the wider public are able to witness and make use of the outstanding work Māori researchers are involved in every single day. NPM aspires to include the language and customary practices as a central thread throughout all of our projects, and the team based at AUT and Te Ipukarea have been working within the theme and on this NPM project since 2016. It is just one aspect of their considerable research outputs, but we know it will contribute to our communities, our language and language learners in many positive ways over the years ahead."

Tomokanga Rauemi Reo Māori can be found online at [www.maorilanguageresources.nz](http://www.maorilanguageresources.nz)

## ENDS

***Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga (NPM)** is a Centre of Research Excellence hosted at the University of Auckland comprising 21 research partners and conducting research of relevance to Māori communities. Our vision is Māori leading New Zealand into the future. NPM research realises Māori aspirations for positive engagement in national life, enhances our excellence in Indigenous scholarship and provides solutions to major challenges facing humanity in local and global settings. Visit [www.maramatanga.ac.nz](http://www.maramatanga.ac.nz)*

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