



Wellington UniVentures 2021

IMPACT REPORT





HĪKINA I TE KURA HUNA

**OUR PURPOSE IS TO LIFT LIVES
EVERYWHERE WITH KNOWLEDGE**

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01

OUR MESSAGES

Thank you for taking the time to read Wellington UniVentures' first Impact Report. We hope this report gives you some insight into how we work and some of the incredible ventures coming out of the organisation.

BOARD CHAIR**DAVID SMOL**

At the start of 2021, Wellington UniVentures' non-degree teaching part of the business transferred to Wellington Uni-Professional Limited (WUPL), a new Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington subsidiary. It was established to centralise this part of the University's business and in turn, meant that 2021 marked the first year that Wellington UniVentures operated under a commercialisation only mandate for the University.

Over the year, the team achieved their highest level of invention disclosures from research coming out of the University. They maintained strong project outcomes which saw them develop three spin out companies, secure three licenses and secure full assets after the sale of spin out company EdPotential to Education Perfect. I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of the team who have continued to seek out new opportunities and drive success for the business.

I'd also like to acknowledge the work of and thank Dugald Scott who retired as Wellington UniVentures' Board Member this year. Dugald was with us for 10 years and was integral to the growth of the organisation. Ngaio Merrick replaces him and with her breadth of experience, we know she will bring a lot of inspired insights to the role.

As we look ahead to 2022, we're well positioned to build on our successes and grow our portfolio of impact driven work.

Ngā mihi,



CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ANNE BARNETT

This year we have created our first Impact Report. This is an opportunity for us to reflect on our developments, learnings and achievements from the year. We want to acknowledge the projects we have helped to grow, the people we have worked with and the impact we have helped to accelerate from research coming out of Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington.

Despite the challenges that we faced as a result of the pandemic, we have remained resilient and adapted the way that we work, continuing to drive projects forward and connect with innovators who want to make a difference. This year we also welcomed new expertise and experience to our team particularly in the area of social science innovation, which has helped us to both advance existing projects and establish new opportunities.

Our projects range from ideas that help solve environmental issues and advances in the health sector, to developing educational tools, and building platforms that can be used in the retail space – all of which you'll read about in this report. It is because of our growth that we have been able to engage with more projects than ever before and empower researchers across different schools and faculties, helping to shape research into impactful initiatives.

We have the people, the experience and the knowledge to champion the work of our innovators and help them to navigate the commercialisation process. From postgraduate through to serial entrepreneurs, we help to create impact and support positive change for Wellington, Aotearoa and the world.

Ngā mihi,





02

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

We work with Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington’s researchers and innovators to shape their work into initiatives, products or services that create impact, both for Aotearoa and globally.



**TRUE GRIT
MANAWA TANIWHA**

WE PERSEVERE TO ACHIEVE
THE BEST OUTCOME, SHOWING
AGILITY AND BRAVERY IN THE
FACE OF UNCERTAINTY



**CONTAGIOUS ENERGY
MANAWA TĪTĪ**

WE COME TOGETHER WITH
ENERGY IN EVERYTHING WE DO...
AND THAT'S CATCHY



**EXPANSIVE THINKING
WHAKAARO ARORANGI**

WE THINK BIG AND REIMAGINE
WHAT IS POSSIBLE



**PEOPLE POWER
MANU HOUHARE**

WE COME TOGETHER WITH OUR
PEOPLE, OUR RESEARCHERS AND
STAKEHOLDERS TO SUPPORT
EACH OTHER, SHARE IDEAS
AND CREATE IMPACT

HISTORY

We are the commercialisation subsidiary of Te Herenga Waka, responsible for creating enterprises from University research.

Formerly known as Viclink, we have been translating trailblazing research from Te Herenga Waka since 1992. Starting out as a small team, predominantly focused on creating IP around University research, we have since grown to a team of 34. Our experts in commercialisation, intellectual property and contracts work to protect and develop ideas that can become life changing initiatives, focused on solving problems and building stronger societies.



TE PAEWAI

As part of Te Herenga Waka, Wellington UniVentures was gifted a te reo Māori name which links closely to that of the University. Te Paewai was given to tie back to the University's metaphor of the waka. The 'paewai' is the joint or baton that holds the barge to the hull and is what gives the waka depth, making it a vessel for ocean ventures. The paewai is structurally integral and enables the canoe to travel long distances.



03

OUR YEAR AT A GLANCE

Throughout 2021, our team worked to advance existing projects and drive new opportunities and ventures. We engaged with more researchers and projects than ever before and welcomed several successful spinout companies.



**56 ACTIVE
INNOVATION
PROJECTS**



**\$9.03M:
TOTAL INCOME**



**381 LIVE PATENTS
AND APPLICATIONS**



70 DISCLOSURES



**7 SPIN OUTS, LICENSES
AND EQUITY DEALS**



**12,595 STUDENTS
BENEFITTING
FROM KIVA**



**\$7.2M: CAPITAL
FUNDS RAISED**

by Wellington UniVentures
alumni companies



**FLEXIBLE WORKING
MODEL LAUNCHED**

Launched our new flexible working
model internally to help innovators
create new ventures

04

CASE STUDIES AND SUCCESS STORIES

The research we are shaping is inspiring and impactful, both economically and in addressing societal challenges. There are many highlights from the year but these are just a few. See all of our projects here:
www.wellingtonuniventures.nz/portfolio

SHALINI DIVYA WINS AT 2021 KIWINET AWARDS

Wellington UniVentures nominated Dr Shalini Divya and her work with Tasmanlon in the 2021 KiwiNet Commercialisation Awards, with Dr Divya winning the Breakthrough Innovator Award. This award recognises entrepreneurial researchers who are making outstanding contributions to research commercialisation in New Zealand. Dr Divya's work into safe, sustainable aluminium-ion battery technology was seen to have huge potential, not only for New Zealand, but for the 400 million people across the globe living in energy poverty.



\$950K

IN PRE-SEED FUNDING TO DEVELOP TASMANION AND CREATE PROTOTYPES FOR INDUSTRY



TASMANION BECAME A WELLINGTON UNIVENTURES SPINOUT COMPANY IN 2021

BREAKTHROUGH ENERGY FELLOWS

Wellington UniVentures supported the application of Dr Franck Natali on to the Breakthrough Energy Fellows. This programme was founded by Bill Gates to support the development and adoption of new clean technologies that can help the world achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Dr Franck Natali was accepted on to the inaugural programme for this work which revolutionises the way ammonia is produced, making the process more economically feasible and environmentally friendly.



IN APRIL 2021, A NEW AMMONIA SYNTHESIS REACTOR WAS INSTALLED TO ACCELERATE THE SYNTHESIS PROCESS OF AMMONIA



EARLY LAB PROOF-OF-CONCEPT AMMONIA PRODUCTION WAS VALIDATED BY AN EXTERNAL THIRD PARTY

BRA PROJECT

Sisters Xuxu and Aida Amoozegar-Montero are both PhD students at Te Herenga Waka. With Xuxu's 3D design research and Aida's research into the experiences of women who have undergone reconstructive surgery, the pair have collaborated to develop a new bra measuring and design system. Helping this project to take shape, the Wellington UniVentures team have been guiding Xuxu and Aida through the early stages of their entrepreneurial journey.



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MEASUREMENTS IN THE BRA PROJECT'S NEW DESIGN SYSTEM



THE PAIR JOINED THE KIWINET EMERGING INNOVATOR PROGRAMME

ALLEGRO ENERGY SPINS OUT

In the fast-growing renewable energy market, researchers at Te Herenga Waka have developed water-based electrolytes for use in all kinds of energy storage devices. At the end of the year, Allegro Energy became the latest venture to spin out of Wellington UniVentures, providing clean and green energy storage solutions for a renewable energy economy.



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YEARS FROM RESEARCH DISCOVERY TO SPINOUT COMPANY

\$1.5t

THE FORECASTED GROWTH OF THE PORTABLE BATTERY MARKET BY 2024

KIVA TACKLES BULLYING ACROSS AOTEAROA

Wellington UniVentures licenses the bullying prevention programme, KiVa. In 2021, KiVa was adopted into schools across the Canterbury region with help from The Rātā Foundation. The Foundation invested funds to implement the programme over the next three years. This investment allowed eight schools in the regional Kāhui Akos (cohort) to undertake training and become a KiVa school.



\$70K

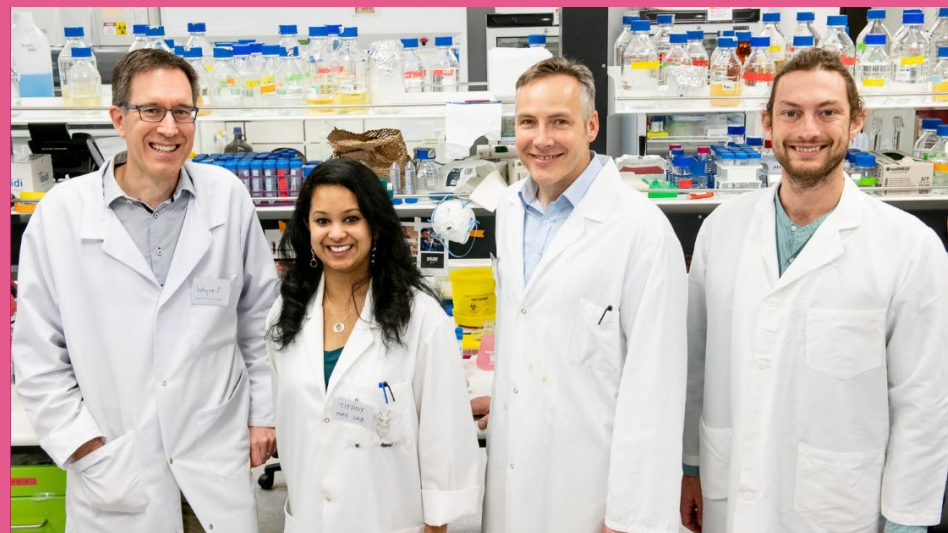
THE AMOUNT OF FUNDING PROVIDED BY THE RĀTĀ FOUNDATION

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MORE SCHOOLS BENEFITTING FROM THE KIVA PROGRAMME

BREAKTHROUGH ENERGY FELLOWS

Researchers at Te Herenga Waka and the University of Waikato jointly discovered several novel thermostable RNA ligase enzymes. We have been supporting them on the path to implementation of this research for microRNA (miRNA) sequencing as a molecular tool for the diagnosis of chronic diseases.



100°C

THE ENZYMES CAN OPERATE AT ELEVATED TEMPERATURES, ENABLING THEM TO ACT ON MIRNAS THAT COMPETITOR ENZYMES DO NOT RECOGNISE

1ng

THE ENZYMES OFFER INCREASED SENSITIVITY COMPARED TO COMPETITOR ENZYMES TO IMPROVE THE DETECTION OF RARE MIRNAS THAT MAY BE INDICATORS OF DISEASE

04

ORGANISATION AND PEOPLE

‘People power’ is one of Wellington UniVentures’ core values and what drives our projects forward and on to success. We’ve welcomed new team members, promoted internally and empowered our staff to become leaders.



55%

OF RESEARCHERS WE ENGAGED WITH IN 2021, WE ENGAGED WITH FOR THE FIRST TIME

7

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS SUPPORTED ON TO THE KIWINET EMERGING INNOVATOR PROGRAMME

2

SCHOLARSHIPS LAUNCHED

11

NEW STAFF MEMBERS

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MEMBERS OF STAFF ARE BOARD MEMBERS TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

1

INTERN JOINED AS PART OF OUR NEWLY ESTABLISHED INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

EMERGING INNOVATORS

The KiwiNet Emerging Innovator Programme provides targeted support to early career researchers who will become the future innovators of New Zealand. Seven of the researchers we nominated across biology, chemistry, physics, architecture and design, and two from the Robinson Research Institute were accepted on to the programme in 2021. We also supported the first humanities student in New Zealand on to the programme.



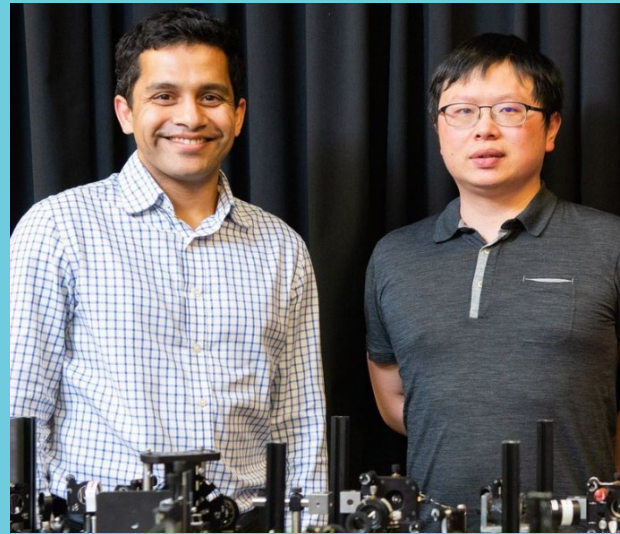
NEW BOARD MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

After a decade of service as Wellington UniVentures' Board member, Dugald Scott retired from his role in November. Over this time, Wellington UniVentures underwent significant growth. Dugald supported the organisation on this journey and we'd like to thank him for this dedication and experience. Ngaio Merrick was appointed as our newest member of the Board, bringing with her extensive commercialisation knowledge and a comprehensive understanding of the ecosystem.



MOVERS AND SHAKERS

An important part of growing a team is providing staff with the necessary resources to develop their skills and expertise. Many of our team members go on to become leaders and CEOs of the social enterprises and spinouts that they helped to develop and it's fantastic to see them continue to contribute to our ecosystem. Senior Commercialisation Managers Ryan Graves and Ashwath Sundaresan both moved on from their roles in 2021 to take new positions as a CEO and Investment Manager respectively..



JEREMY BLOOMFIELD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP LAUNCHED

Supporting early career researchers, in 2021 we launched the Jeremy Bloomfield Memorial Scholarship. In memory of Jeremy Bloomfield, Wellington UniVentures' Senior Education Programme Manager who suddenly passed away in 2019, the scholarship helps the translation of education or environmental research innovations that benefit the community.

The scholarship was awarded to Baptiste Roucau who is developing a research project to help children learn how to successfully navigate disagreements and build their intellectual and emotional resilience.

RECOGNISING OUR TEAM

We recognise the skills and capabilities of our team and aim to nurture their development. We reward effort and commitment and encourage staff to upskill and learn from each other. Over the course of the year, several of our staff were promoted, moving into more senior roles and taking on more responsibilities.



NEW STAFF TO DRIVE SOCIAL SCIENCES INITIATIVES

Lisa McLennan joined the team to engage with researchers in the humanities space, helping to develop projects across the University's psychology, social sciences and education portfolios. This supports our wider strategy as we increase our focus on impact.

Looking to the future of Wellington UniVentures, we aim to actively grow across a wide range of sectors, not just those traditionally associated with commercialisation, and connecting with those in the humanities faculties is a fantastic step for us.



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FIND OUT MORE

We hope you have enjoyed reading our first Impact Report. You can find out more on our website: www.wellingtonuniventures.nz

