



Te Mana Tangata Whakawhanake  
**MacDiarmid Institute**  
Advanced Materials & Nanotechnology

A highlight this quarter was the announcement that Co-Directors Professor Nicola Gaston and Professor Justin Hodgkiss had been appointed Fellows of the Royal Society of New Zealand Te Apārangi (FRSNZ). "For us this honour is all the more special because Professor Gaston and Professor Hodgkiss follow in the path of both our founder Sir Paul Callaghan and our namesake Alan MacDiarmid." (MacDiarmid Institute Board Chair Hēmi Rolleston, on the announcement). [Read more here.](#)



Professors Justin Hodgkiss and Nicola Gaston

## News and Updates

### [Significant piece of science history donated to New Zealand](#)

University of Utah Distinguished Professor Joel Miller visited the MacDiarmid Institute in January, delivering a seminar, visiting our researchers and presenting the Institute with an original sample of conducting polymer that Alan MacDiarmid's Nobel Prize was awarded for. Professor Miller was a long-time friend of Alan MacDiarmid, describing Alan as a 'generous guy who always had New Zealand in his heart'.



### [Connecting with Indigenous whānau at NASA to build a Māori Aerospace sector](#)

A team led by Principal Investigator Associate Professor Pauline Harris and including our Strategic Manager Māori, Kirsty Doyle, will join twelve other New Zealand research teams to conduct a joint six-month feasibility study looking at Earth observation research with NASA.



### [Associate Investigator Dr Nate Davis is one of four Institute-related researchers selected for KiwiNet's Emerging Innovator Programme.](#)

Nate will be working with Wellington UniVentures and experts from KiwiNet to identify a path to market.



[International engineering firm Spirax Sarco is the first commercial co-sponsor for our Discovery Scholarships](#)

"Awesome to have a large international engineering company keen to improve diversity in engineering and engineering related science" - Deputy Director Māori Associate Professor Pauline Harris from [Massey University](#) welcoming our latest Discovery Scholarship co-sponsor.



[Registrations are now open for AMN11](#)

Join us 9 – 13 February 2025 in Ōtautahi to hear Nobel Prize Laureate Mounqi Bawendi (pictured right) from Massachusetts Institute of Technology Roisin Owens from University of Cambridge, Beatriz Roldan Cuenya from the Fritz-Haber-Institut der Max-Planck-Gesellschaft and more. There will also be a 'Science outside the lab' stream, covering the challenges and opportunities of commercialising fundamental science. [Register here](#).



[We hosted our colleagues](#) from Kyoto University's [iCeMS](#), including Professor Susumu Kitagawa, for a two-day symposium, discussing the interface of data-materials science and cell biology.





[Our annual NanoCamp took place in Auckland.](#) The students explored nanoparticles and solar cells, visited the Photon Factory and spent a day at Tiritiri Matangi Island.



[We also welcomed ten rangatahi from around the motu to Te Whanganui a Tara for DiscoveryCamp](#) at our Te Herenga Waka-based nanotechnology and materials science labs. The students enjoyed building their own solar cells (pictured).



You can now catch up with our Regional Lecture Series 2023 online to hear about new sustainability technology, based on deep science, that's making its way into the world with clear potential to address some of the challenges we're facing. [The video of the Tauranga event is now on our website.](#)



Belinda Turner, Communications Officer for the South Australian Node of the Australian National Fabrication Facility (ANFF-SA), visited in January to talk about ANFF-SA and their [Microengineering School programme](#). The free four-day programme will next take place 2-5 July. For more information, please email [Belinda.Turner@unisa.edu.au](mailto:Belinda.Turner@unisa.edu.au).

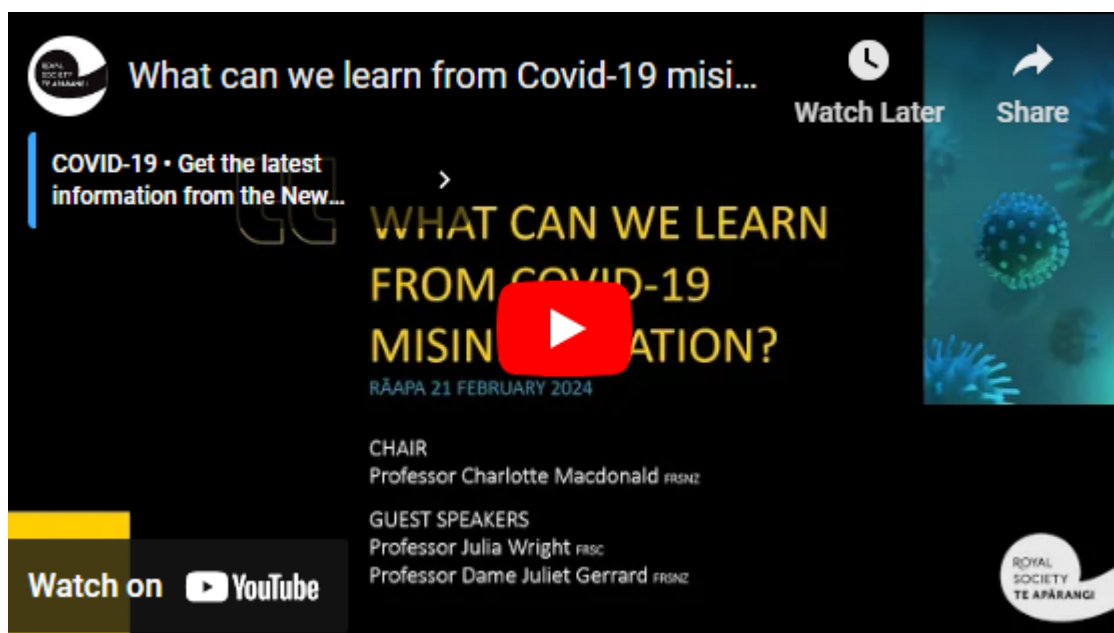


## Recent Media

[This article](#) (featuring comment from Co-Director Nicola Gaston) confirms that the Wellington Science City project has been cancelled and goes on to discuss the prospect that National Science Challenge funding may not be reinvested in other sector priorities when the programme ends this year. [Nicola was also featured on RNZ's Nine to Noon offering comment on the ongoing turmoil in the tertiary sector.](#)



[EI Professor Dame Juliet Gerrard, New Zealand's Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor and a Fellow of Royal Society Te Apārangī, and Professor Julia M Wright, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, spoke about the nature and context of misinformation \(and missed information\) in science and health, its effects during the Covid-19 pandemic, and what can be learned for future pandemics and other crises.](#)



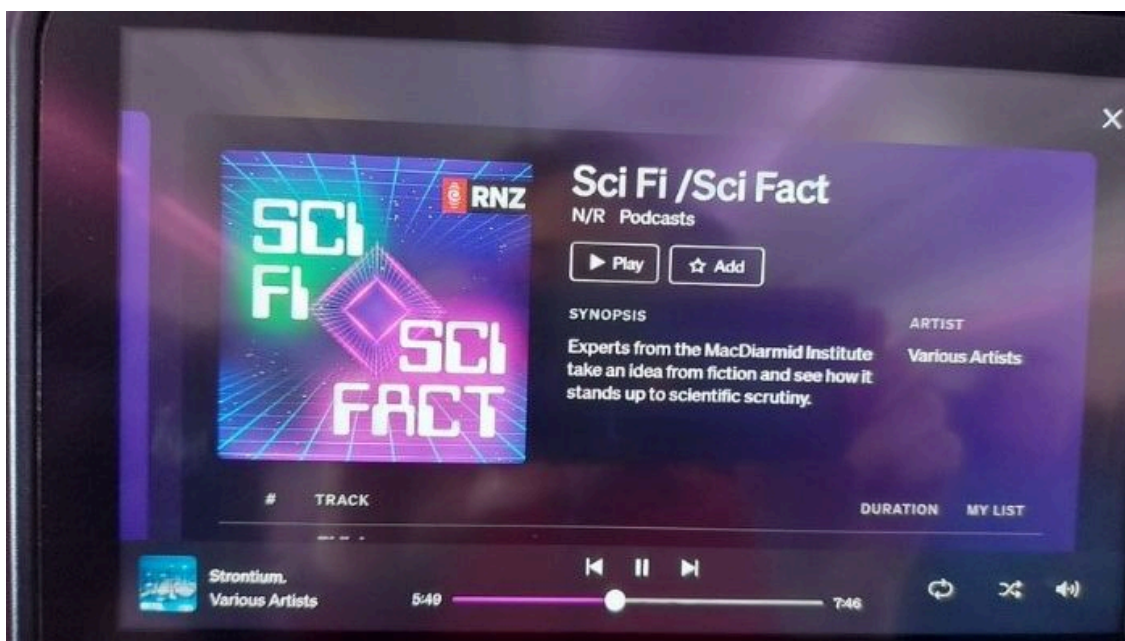
[Associate Investigator Dr Erin Leitao](#) contributed to this [Science Media Centre expert reaction to the EPA banning the use of use of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances in cosmetic products from the end of 2026.](#)





[Read here about PhD student Sophie McArdle](#) and her work with [Principal Investigator Professor Aaron Marshall](#) on redox flow batteries. The story not only talks about Sophie's journey into this area of research but is also a great example of how MacDiarmid commercial seed funding, KiwiNet, and MBIE funding can all have important roles to play in identifying and pursuing commercial problems with technological solutions.

Our 'Sci Fi Sci Fact' podcast took off – literally, and is now available on Air New Zealand international's Inflight entertainment. Check it out next time you're heading overseas on Air New Zealand and hear our researchers take an idea from science fiction and see how it stands up to scientific scrutiny. You can also [check out the podcast here](#).



[Please give our TikTok a follow](#) and check out the videos of some of the Massey Uni crew - with the reels already clocking up good numbers of views.

That's it from us for now. Thank you for your continued interest in and support for the MacDiarmid Institute and if you know anyone who is interested in signing up to our quarterly email newsletters, [please let us know](#).



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