



Women in AI Awards 2023

ASIA-PACIFIC

Advisory Group New Zealand Pacific



CHAIR



JEWELROCK
THE PINNACLE OF EVENT EXPERIENCES

Advisory Group New Zealand Pacific



PATRON

Professor Kate Crawford

Research Professor | USC Annenberg
Senior Principal Research | Microsoft Research
Author | Atlas of AI (Yale, 2021)

Professor Kate Crawford is a leading scholar of the social, political, and ecological implications of artificial intelligence. She is a Research Professor at USC Annenberg, a Senior Principal Researcher at MSR in New York, and the inaugural Abeona Visiting Chair for AI and Justice at the École Normale Supérieure. She leads the Knowing Machines Project, an international research collaboration about the epistemic foundations of machine learning. Over her twenty year career, Kate also produced groundbreaking creative collaborations and visual investigations. Her project Anatomy of an AI System with Vladan Joler won the Beazley Design of the Year Award, and is in the permanent collection of the MoMA in New York and the V&A in London. Her collaboration with the artist Trevor Paglen, Excavating AI, won the Ayrton Prize from the British Society for the History of Science. Crawford's latest book, Atlas of AI was described as "a fascinating history of data" by *the New Yorker*, a "timely and urgent contribution" by *Science*, and was named one of the best books of the year by both *The Financial Times* and *New Scientist*. In June, *Atlas of AI* won the Best Information Science book award from the Association for Information Science and Technology.



CHAIR

Megan Tapsell

Chair | AI Forum NZ
Head of Pacific Technology | ANZ

A technology leader bringing a consciousness and ethics into technology and the people enabling it. I'm specifically focused on increasing our Māori and Pacific participation and proud to be ambassador for our Aotearoa and Pacific Women working in AI.



Dr Mahsa McCauley

Founder and Director | SheSharp

Director | Women in Technology

Senior Lecturer | Auckland University of Technology

Dr Mahsa McCauley is a Senior Lecturer and Director of Women in Tech in AUT's School of Computer, Engineering, and Mathematical Sciences. She is a well-recognised leader in AI and machine learning. She is also the founder of the charitable trust She Sharp, a women's technology networking and learning group, where she works to encourage young New Zealand girls to consider what a career in technology offers. She founded She# in the hope of bringing about the much-needed change in the gender split in tech and believes that we must work together to solve this!

She was named the Emerging Leader category winner in the 2013 Westpac Women of Influence Awards and was one of ten finalists for the 2018 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year. In 2019 she was the Champion Award winner of the YWCA Equal Pay awards, and in 2020 presented the Massey University Distinguished Alumni Award.



Sachi Taulelei

Head of Design | ANZ

Sachi has worked in digital and design for over 25 years, spending most of her career creating and designing digital experiences centred on people. She's led a number of digital transformational programmes of work for private and public organisations across Australia and New Zealand. She's a self-proclaimed 'people person' and is happiest when she's bringing passionate, inspired and motivated teams of people together to do their best work.

As a proud Pasifika woman, she has a particular interest in diversity, equity and inclusion. She has spoken out about the need for more diversity within the technology workforce and the impact it can have on the technology we create. She has a strong volunteer involvement across life's spectrum, forever curious about what's important to people. As a mum of two, she understands the need to grow and foster our next generation of leaders. She mentors and coaches Pasifika youth and is a Trustee on the Young Enterprise Trust Board. She also volunteers at the local hospice as a Biographer and is a member of the Volunteers Advisory Council.



Dr Qurrat Ul Ain

Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Artificial Intelligence

Qurrat Ul Ain is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Artificial Intelligence at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. She received her B.Sc. degree in computer engineering from the University of Engineering and Technology, Taxila Pakistan, in 2009, and her MS degree in computer science from International Islamic University, Islamabad Pakistan, in 2013. She joined the Victoria University of Wellington New Zealand in 2016, receiving her PhD degree in Computer Science in 2020. Her research interests include Medical Image Classification, Skin Cancer Detection, Pattern, Recognition, Evolutionary Computation, Machine Learning, and Artificial Intelligence. She has published many research articles in top-ranked international conferences and peer-reviewed journals. She has been serving as a reviewer for many top conferences and peer-reviewed journals as well.

Qurrat Ul Ain is a member of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE), Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), IEEE Computational Intelligence Society, and Artificial Intelligence Researcher Association (AIRA). She has been serving as a reviewer for more than twenty international journals and conferences. She is also a member of the Evolutionary Computation Research Group (ECRG) and Feature Analysis, Selection, and Learning in Image and Pattern Recognition (FASLIP) at Victoria University of Wellington.



Dr Christopher Laing

Chief Technology Officer | Qrious

Dr Christopher Laing is a business leader, technologist, and expert in Artificial Intelligence. He has worked in companies of all sizes, from the coal face of agile startups to executive roles in multinational corporations. He is the proud father of two little female AI-engineers-in-training, and in his spare time is the Chief Technology Officer of Qrious, New Zealand's largest firm of data and AI specialists. Christopher is a former Executive Council member of the New Zealand AI Forum, a former Board Member of NZ Tech, and is a passionate supporter of growing the New Zealand technology industry.



Shivonne Londt

Solutions Architect | Amazon Web Services

I am an experienced technologist, involved with technical leadership and empowerment of customers and their teams for 20 years. I bring strategic thinking, a solid technical background, and an agile mindset. I connect business and technology teams to create innovative, customer-centric, collaborative solutions to deliver value. My experience as a Solution Architect with AWS, as well as with an extensive Salesforce rollout, and transforming teams in agile ways of working, allows me to guide other companies on that journey.

For the last year, I have worked as a Solution Architect in the Public Sector team of Amazon Web Services, focussing on Weather and Research, as well as Justice, Public Safety and Transport customers. Before my current role, I held the Technology Area Lead (Head of Engineering) for Omni-Channel Assisted Channels & Integration at ANZ NZ. I was previously seconded as the Programme Manager for the Frontline Process Automation Technology team at ANZ. For the five years before that, I managed and led the Digital and Assisted Channels teams within ANZ Technology, building and growing their agile and technical capability. Before these senior leadership roles, I held technical leadership and engineering roles in various organisations.



Dan Walker

Global Co-Chair | Indigenous at Microsoft

Ngāti Ruanui | Ngā Ruahinerangi | Ngāti Kahungunu ki Wairoa
Maniapoto | Tūhourangi

Dan Walker is a Pou Tuarā of Ngāti Ruanui iwi, Director of NZ Māori Tourism and Auckland Unlimited, and a variety of other community and Māori board roles. Most importantly, he is a proud dad to three awesome tamariki - Josh, Tyler and Maia.



Jannat Maqbool

Principal Advisor | Ecosystem Advisory

Jannat is an Australian born Punjabi and mother of three based in the Waikato, New Zealand. She is a CPA and former CIO with a Masters in Digital Business and is actively engaged in the New Zealand technology ecosystem. With a focus on leveraging technology in innovative ways to benefit people and planet, Jannat is a Principal Advisor across Asia Pacific with Ecosystem, a technology research firm based in Singapore.



Hilary O'Connor

Vice President of Channel Partnerships | Soul Machines

Hilary O'Connor is a keen technology advocate and evangelist with a passion for innovation, and a wealth of experience in the tech industry. She joined Soul Machines over 4 years ago, where she built and oversees their global channel partnerships program. Prior to this she was at Google where she worked within their Cloud technologies business as Customer Engineering Lead, after having spent close to a decade at Microsoft, predominantly as Lead Technology Strategist. She has previously held consulting and, earlier on in her career, development roles, with companies such as Cap Gemini, Deloitte and Datacom.



Professor Michael Witbrock

Professor | University of Auckland (NAOInstitute/SAIL)

Founder and Chair | AI for Good Foundation (AI4Good.org)

Advisor | Robust.AI

Michael Witbrock is a professor of computer science at The University of Auckland in New Zealand, directing the Strong AI Lab (SAIL). The Lab works at the intersection of machine learning, reasoning and natural language understanding, focusing on maximizing the benefit of AI to NZ entrepreneur sand businesses, and achieving the best social and civilizational impacts of increasingly powerful AI. SAIL is part of the NAOInstitute, a broader collaboration of transdisciplinary researchers in Artificial, Natural and Organisational Intelligence.

While maintaining a strong interest in knowledge capture and natural language understanding, his current research goals involve developing and using quasi-logical systems, which retain approximations of the formal properties of logic while adding the learnability and flexibility of distributed representations which have the full representational power of natural languages. Prof. Witbrock is the author of numerous publications in various fields and has dabbled in web design and implementation, genetic design and parallel computer architecture. He is very interested in entrepreneurship around AI, and in the social and economic outcomes of advances in AI. His broader interest in AI and society has been pursued, among other things, as a co-founder and chair of AI4Good.org, and as a board member for AI Forum NZ.



Iqra Shahzad

Senior Specialist Lead | Data and AI, Deloitte

Iqra Shahzad is passionate about Data and AI. Currently, she works as a Data and AI Senior Specialise lead at Deloitte. She has focussed on the Design and implementation of Big Data and AI Solutions for enterprises and government and for empowering organisations take data driven decisions and the make use of AI technology in the most impactful ways.

Iqra has designed and developed solutions that have empowered organisations in a variety of industries including Mining, Health, Retail, Manufacturing, Start-ups and Government. Iqra has managed researched and has focussed on maximising data driven value to improve organisational and business outcomes. Areas of Expertise Include: Machine Learning, MLOPS, Big Data, Cloud



Winona Ngaro Malifa

Digital product designer

Data analyst

Co-founder | Navāgate

Winona Ngaro Malifa is of Niuean, Cook Island and American Samoan ethnicity. A Data Analyst by trade who transitioned into digital product design. Her first master's focused on qualitative and quantitative data on Pasifika Women currently within the tech industry and utilised their stories as a baseline to develop new engagement and enablement frameworks to address the lack of female Pasifika representation. Her second Masters in User Experience and design focused on implementing and embedding indigenous thinking within user-centred design and testing tools.

Winona is passionate about increasing Pasifika women in the tech industry who will have a voice in developing the technological algorithms that influence decision-making. She is determined to play her part in ensuring that Pasifika people are equipped for the rapid technological advancements that will affect their future. In addition, Winona has a strong interest in data interpretation and how it weaves the narrative of Pacific peoples.



Frith Tweedie

Principal Consultant | Simply Privacy Ltd

Frith Tweedie is a Principal Consultant at Simply Privacy, where she helps private and public sector clients develop good privacy and responsible AI practices. She has over 20 years' experience as a commercial lawyer specialising in privacy, technology and IP law. Before joining Simply Privacy she was the General Counsel and Chief Privacy Office at Auror and prior to that established and led the New Zealand and then the Australian Digital Law teams at EY Law.

Frith has a particular passion for considering the interface between digital technologies and privacy/ethics, including AI and biometrics. She is on the Executive Committee of the AI Forum NZ and the AU-NZ Advisory Board of the IAPP.



Sandy Antipas

Business Development Manager | ASI Solutions, New Zealand
Tech education specialist

Sandy Antipas came to NZ with his parents as they immigrated to build a new life. Sandy as a parent today with two beautiful children has taken what he's seen from his parents and has put into his practice the building of a "better" future with his children.

Sandy's first career was as a student, then as a media broadcaster. Sandy won various media awards and lead many Radio Surveys to be one of the most successful Wellington radio personalities by having the #1 Rated show in the same afternoon drive slot on two different stations.

Sandy then targeted technology as the industry to be in and Sandy moved from using the microphone, to using the microchip as his bread and butter. Multinationals Canon, Sharp and IBM Sandy now shares his skills with ASI NZ. Communication skills are essential in effective story telling, and IT companies were bad at it.

Sandy is always looking out to do things "better" and that includes his skills and his knowledge of current tool sets. You will often see Sandy talking about "better" technologies or demonstrating them online.