



Australian
Pasifika
Educators
Network

WESTERN SYDNEY
UNIVERSITY



Australian Pasifika Educators Network Conference Program

**Pasifika Connections: Strengthening,
Deepening and Expanding our
Educational Relationships.**



Centre for
Social Justice
& Inclusion



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01

Foreword from APEN Chairs

Talofa lava, Malō e lelei, Ni sa bula vinaka, Kia orana, Kia Ora, Taloha ni, Faka'alofa lahi atu, Kam na mauri, Talowha, Gud de tru, Kaselehliā, Halo olgeta, Ia orana, Aloha mai e and warm Pacific greetings to you.

On behalf of the APEN 2023 conference organising committee, and the APEN Executive we welcome you to the 2023 Australian Pasifika Educators Conference. This conference promises to be a vibrant gathering of minds and ideas, and we are incredibly excited to have you here.

As educators, we are acutely aware of the significant challenges currently facing the education sector in Australia and globally. This conference presents a unique opportunity for us to collectivise our mana, our strengths, and our tautua (service leadership). Through the powerful process of talanoa, we will ideate and create new opportunities, aiming to bring transformative change to our communities. Together, let's embrace these challenges as catalysts for innovation and community empowerment.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Western Sydney University Pasifika Achievement to Higher Education (PATHE) and the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion, Pasifika Programs for their invaluable support and collaboration in making the Australian Pasifika Educators Network Conference a reality. Your dedication to fostering inclusive education and social justice is not just commendable but forms the very backbone of our collective efforts.

We are deeply thankful to Western Sydney University Senior Leadership, for providing us with the opportunity to host this significant event on Parramatta South Campus. Your continued support has been instrumental in creating a platform where ideas can flourish and meaningful dialogues can take place. A special note of appreciation to Matai Watches and Samoa Tourism Authority for their generous support. Your contributions play a crucial role in acknowledging and celebrating Pacific educators in Australia.

We eagerly anticipate the rich dialogues and collaborative efforts that will emerge from this conference, confident that they will mark a significant step forward in our collective journey towards educational excellence and empowerment in our Pasifika communities.

Fakaaue, Meitaki Maata, Fa'afetai tele lava,



Tofa Amanda Moors

Tofa Amanda Moors-Mailei
Co-Chair



Bronwyn Williams

Bronwyn Williams
Co-Chair



Australian
Pasifika
Educators
Network

Message from Western Sydney University Pro Vice Chancellor Engagement and Advancement



Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy

Greetings to our esteemed colleagues, speakers, and participants.

I am delighted to extend a warm welcome to each and every one of you to the Australian Pasifika Educators Network Conference hosted by Western Sydney University. It is a pleasure to have you gather here at our Parramatta South Campus to celebrate Pasifika cultures and to engage in meaningful conversations that will shape the future of education. Western's mission and values define who we are and ensure our students succeed and our communities thrive, so we are honoured to support this event.

At Western Sydney University, we are globally focused and committed to making a positive impact on the 48,500 students currently enrolled and studying with us, and the communities where they live and work. The values of boldness, fairness, integrity and excellence are embedded within our staff and student population and ensure that Western graduates create a positive impact professionally and make a lasting difference in their communities, locally and globally.

This conference serves as a platform for educators, researchers, and policymakers to come together, exchange ideas, and collaborate to enhance the educational landscape for Pasifika communities. The theme of this year's conference - 'Pasifika connections: Strengthening, deepening and expanding our educational relationships'— reflects this collective commitment to promoting inclusive and culturally responsive education that empowers Pasifika learners.

As Pro Vice-Chancellor, I am inspired by the dedication and passion each of you bring to the field of education. Your presence and participation in this Conference signifies a shared commitment to advancing not only academic excellence but also the holistic well-being of Pasifika students. As someone deeply passionate about sociology and education, I am extremely pleased to witness the convergence of academia, research, and practice in this gathering. The commitment of scholars, educators, and practitioners to elevate Pasifika education is truly commendable.

May this conference be a catalyst for innovative ideas, insightful conversations, and lasting collaborations that positively impact Pasifika education here in Australia.

Warm regards,

Professor Alpha Possamai-Inesedy
Pro Vice-Chancellor Engagement and Advancement

Message from Malaemie Fruean OAM, NSW Council for Pacific Communities



Malaemie Fruean OAM

Message for the Conference Program from Malaemie Fruean OAM

To all delegates, presenters, and the organising committee of the 2023 Australian Pasifika Educators Network Conference,

It is with great pride and a deep sense of community spirit that I extend my warmest greetings to each one of you. As we gather for this significant conference, we are reminded of the power of education, the strength of our collective voices, and the transformative impact we can have on our communities.

My journey, from Whangārei in New Zealand to South West Sydney, has been a testament to the resilience and vibrancy of our Pacific culture. Over 38 years in Australia, my engagement with various communities, whether through the Southwest Multicultural and Community Centre or the NSW Council for Pacific Communities, has reinforced my belief in the power of cultural competency and community capacity building.

Receiving the Medal of Order of Australia was not just a personal honor but a recognition of the vital role our Pasifika communities play in enriching Australian society. My work with the Pacific Seasonal Programs as a stakeholder of Community Connections across regional NSW and ACT has further highlighted the importance of building strong networks and fostering a sense of pride in our diverse cultural heritage.

Lets embrace this opportunity to share knowledge, insights, and experiences. To our esteemed presenters and keynote speakers, your expertise and perspectives are invaluable in guiding our discussions and inspiring action. To the delegates, your participation and engagement are crucial in turning ideas into impactful initiatives. And, finally to the organising committee, your dedication and hard work in bringing this conference to life are truly commendable.

May this gathering bring opportunities to create new inspiring collaborations, bold innovations, and continue to empower our community with strength and resilience.

Wishing you all a fruitful and inspiring conference.

Warm regards,

Malaemie Fruean OAM

Manager, Southwest Multicultural and Community Centre
Chair, NSW Council for Pacific Communities
Multicultural NSW Advisory Board
Police Multicultural Advisory Council
NSW Office of Sport Multicultural Advisory Council



04

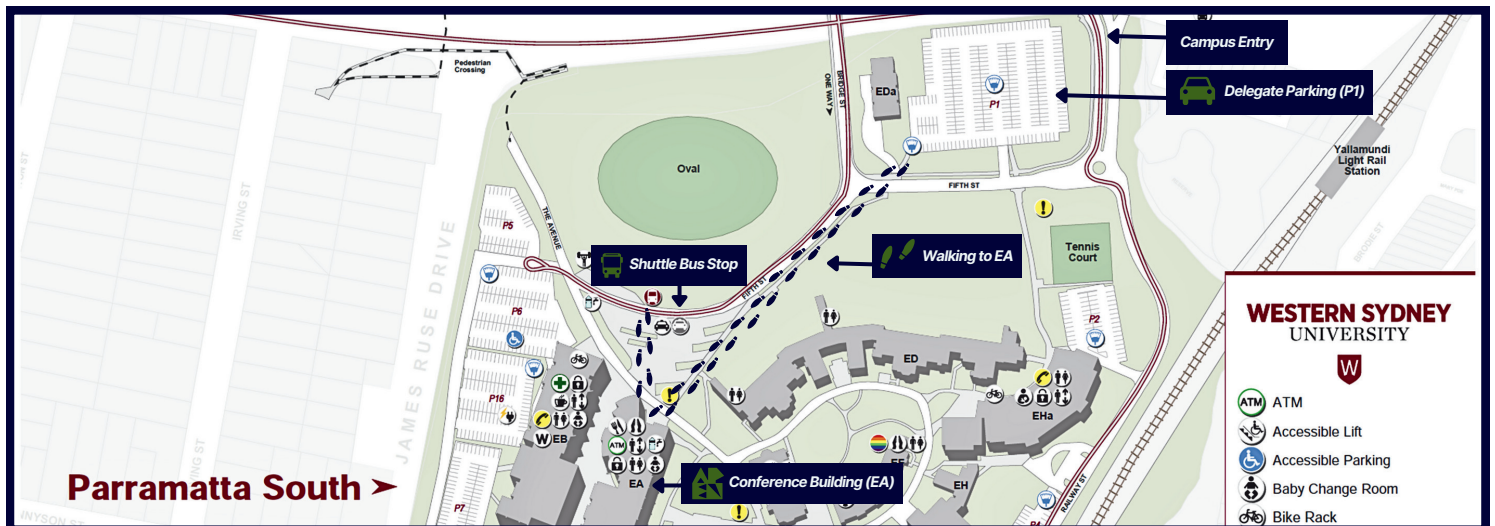
Venue & important conference information

Location: Parramatta South Campus, Western Sydney University

Building Location: Building EA, Ground Level, Room 19 (EA.G.19)

Address: Victoria Rd, Rydalmere NSW 2116

More Info: <https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/future/our-campuses/parramatta-south-campus>



Car: Take the James Ruse Drive exit off the M4. Entry is via Victoria Road. If you are driving Eastbound on Victoria Road and are in the left-hand lane, a safer way to access campus is to turn left at Bridge Street and use the overpass to enter Parramatta South campus. There is ample parking available at Parramatta South (P1) which will be the first carpark on the right upon entry. Parking waivers are available, please visit our [website](#).



Shuttle Bus: Our free shuttle bus takes you between our Parramatta City, Parramatta North and Parramatta South Campuses. Check out the [Shuttle Bus Schedule](#) for more information, including live tracking. The Shuttle will stop right at the front of the campus which is where you will find Building EA.



Train: Catch the train to Parramatta station, then it's a short walk to our Parramatta City campus at 169 Macquarie Street. From there, our free shuttle bus will take you to Parramatta South campus.

Venue & important conference information

Catering

Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be available during the Conference. Catering is included in your registration fee. Please refer to page 11 to review the program schedule.

Dietary Requirements

If you have not specified your dietary needs during registration, please send an email to **James.Perez@unsw.edu.au** by **Wednesday 28 November**.

Location of event

The Conference will be located in the Building EA, Ground Level, Room 19 (EA.G.19).

Internet

Free WiFi is available throughout Western Sydney University. To access the WiFi -

Username: Western-Event

Password: Western@2023

Registration Desk

The registration desk is located in the foyer space of Building EA on ground level upon entry. The registration desk will be open from 8am.

Name Badges

For security purposes, delegates and speakers are asked to wear their name badges to the sessions. Entrance into sessions is restricted to registered delegates only.

Program

Distribution of physical copies will take place during registration for Conference attendees.

Presenters

Please ensure that you are available in your presentation room at least 10 minutes prior to the start of the session. Speakers will need to upload their presentations onto the computer in the session room before the session starts.

Lost and Found

Any found item may be turned into the Registration Desk.

Security

Please ensure that you take all items of value with you at all times when leaving a room. Do not leave bags or laptop computers unattended.

Call Western Sydney University Campus Safety & Security on **1300 737 003** if you have immediate concerns for your personal safety. The Parramatta South campus security team number is (02) 9685 9169. They are located in Building EJa.

Emergency Details

In an emergency telephone 000 for Ambulance, Fire Service or Police.

Conference Team

Events lead:

Talalelei Tutaia – 0424 531 605

Conference convenors:

Bronwyn Williams – 0411 576 890

Tofa Amanda Moors-Mailei – 0431 157 534

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Australian Pasifika Educators Network



The Australian Pasifika Educators Network (APEN) is a national volunteer-led, non-for-profit, community organisation. We are teachers, school executives, university academic and professional staff, community educators and advocates dedicated to advancing the educational experiences, opportunities and positive outcomes for Pasifika learners and communities.

APEN's approach is to better understand the experiences of Australian Pasifika learners and educators through talanoa, dialogue and research that informs culturally responsive policy and best practice and by facilitating opportunities to connect, support and celebrate Pasifika educators, learners and communities.

In 2021, Western Sydney University's Pasifika Achievement To Higher Education (PATHE) program and the UTS Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion organised an online conference for Pasifika educators in Australia, aiming to foster connections, share best practices, and devise strategies for enhancing educational opportunities for the Pasifika communities.

The event attracted almost 200 educators from Australia, New Zealand, and Pacific Island nations, spanning various educational sectors. Feedback was highly positive, with attendees appreciating the platform for networking and dialogue. Participants were encouraged to share their educational successes and reflect on the necessary changes to make such experiences more commonplace.

The online conference was the start of our journey to galvanise a national coalition of Pasifika educators. The four broad themes that emerged from discussions, activities and post-event evaluations called for bold, intentional, and comprehensive responses and solutions to better educational outcomes for Pasifika learners, educators, and communities in Australia. These themes became the catalyst and paradigm shift needed to begin to chart the blueprint for an Australian Pasifika Educators Network and an Action Plan.



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Keynote Speaker



Professor Katerina Teaiwa

Professor, School of Culture, History & Language; Vice-President, Australian Association for Pacific Studies.

Professor Katerina Teaiwa is a distinguished interdisciplinary scholar, artist, and educator of Banaban, I-Kiribati, and African American heritage, hailing from Fiji. Currently a Professor of Pacific Studies in the School of Culture, History, and Language at the College of Asia and the Pacific, she's recognised for her pioneering efforts. Katerina established ANU's first Pacific Studies teaching program and has held various significant roles, including Head of Gender, Media, and Cultural Studies, and Deputy Director for Higher Degree Research Training from 2020 to 2022. Her expertise extends to advocacy and cultural policy consulting with organisations like UNESCO, DFAT, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, contributing extensively to publications like the New York Times and the ABC, addressing critical Pacific issues.

Moreover, Prof. Katerina's rich involvement extends beyond academia. She's a practicing visual artist with an ongoing research-driven exhibition titled "Project Banaba," exhibited at Carriageworks, Sydney. Her dedication to education and Pacific affairs has been widely acknowledged, earning her prestigious awards like the Australian University Teacher of the Year 2021 and recognition from the Pacific Women's Professional and Business Network of NSW as "Educator 2020." Her leadership spans diverse roles, from serving as President and Vice-President of the Australian Association for Pacific Studies to chairing the Oceania Working Party of the Australian Dictionary of Biography, showcasing her immense contributions to the scholarly and cultural landscape.



Keynote Speaker



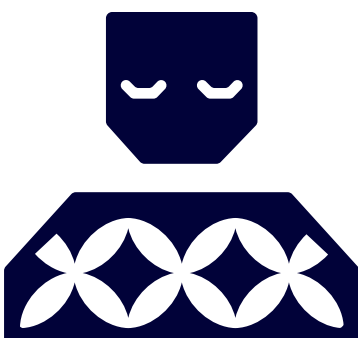
'Alopi Latukefu

Director, The Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education

'Alopi Latukefu is the Director of The Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education. He boasts an illustrious career bridging Australia's diplomacy, aid, and foreign policy. His recent role as Director for the Global Education and Scholarships team in DFAT, overseeing the prestigious Australia Awards scholarship program, highlights his expertise. With nearly two decades of experience in Australia's aid and foreign policy landscape, including advising ministers on Pacific affairs and engagements with countries like China, Japan, and India.

Prior to his public service tenure, 'Alopi contributed significantly to the university sector and worked extensively with First Nations organisation's in Northern Australia. Notably, his involvement in projects such as the Outback Digital Network to improve telecommunications access and his tenure as CEO of Goolarri Media Enterprises in Broome underline his commitment to community development. His deep engagement with Pacific issues dates back to the mid-'90s, where he played a pivotal role in establishing the South Pacific Information Network (SPIN) during his time at the Islands-Australia research program at ANU.

Beyond his professional endeavours, 'Alopi's upbringing in Papua New Guinea and his family's legacy in education and community work profoundly shaped his outlook. His parents' contributions to education in the Pacific and his connection to Jewish-German refugee heritage inform his dedication to refugee rights. Additionally, his passion for music and singing, showcased through occasional Jazz gigs, adds a vibrant dimension to his diverse interests and talents.



Panel Speakers



Charlie Palupe

*Director, Strategic Governance
Queensland Department of Education*

Uta'ileu'o Charlie Robertson Palupe, known as Charlie, is a transformational leader specialising in governance, public policy, and legislation. As the Director, Strategic Governance at the Queensland Department of Education, Charlie brings over 16 years of extensive government experience, crafting evidence-based advice for senior executives and ministers. Hailing from Samoan villages and shaped by a diverse upbringing, Charlie holds a strong commitment to procedural integrity and innovative learning in policy implementation. With a robust academic background spanning politics, public administration, and business management, Charlie advocates for impactful public policies aimed at enhancing individuals' lives and community wellbeing. His expertise lies in navigating complex governmental frameworks and environments, driving towards positive outcomes that empower thriving communities.



Dr Vaoiva Natapu-Ponton

*Senior Research Fellow - Pathways in Place
DVC (Indigenous, Diversity and Inclusion) Griffith University*

Vaoiva (Iva) Ponton completed her PhD in education at the University of Melbourne. She investigated the motivations of Melbourne-based Samoan students to learn, what concerns them, and impediments to their educational success. She has spent the last 25 years as an educator, and is interested in strategies to enhance student success in the transition from school to the tertiary sector. Iva is passionate about utilising Pacific methodologies when supporting communities to achieve educational and social outcomes with success. Her favourite way to unwind is to walk on the beach.



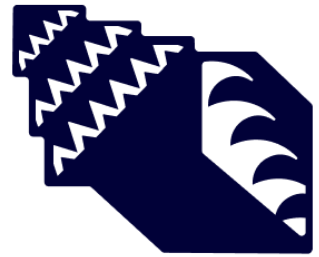
Sione Funaki Teisi

*Student Learning Support Officer
Thomas Reddall High School*

Sione Funaki Teisi is a proud Tongan with roots in the villages of Vaini, Tongatapu, and Falaleu, Vava'u. He is deeply passionate about fostering Pasifika youth leadership and advocating for excellence in academia within the community. Sione draws inspiration from the remarkable voyages of his ancestors across the world's greatest ocean, believing that the Pasifika community can achieve greatness by embracing this legacy. Alongside nearing the completion of his degree, Sione dedicates his weekdays to making a difference in students' lives by enhancing their literacy and numeracy skills. Engaged as a dancer at Matavai Pacific Cultural Arts Centre, he also takes an active role in facilitating Talanoa workshops, aiming to raise awareness about mental health and depression within Pasifika families. Sione strongly advocates for empowering Pasifika youth to use their voices for positive change, encouraging them to embrace their heritage and drive progress for their community, believing that collective success arises from individual achievements.

06

Program Schedule



8:00am to 9:00am

Registration Open

9:00am to 9:40am

Conference Opening

- Acknowledgement to Country
Matilda Harry, Young Wiradjuri scholar and leader.
- Welcome from Western Sydney University
Pro Vice Chancellor, Professor Alpha Possimai-Inesedy
- Message from Malaemie Fruean OAM, NSW Council for Pacific Communities Chairperson.
- Welcome to APEN Conference 2023
Bronwyn Williams, Co-Chair & Co-Founder of APEN.

9:40am to 10:00am

Keynote Address

- Professor Katerina Teaiwa
- 'Alopi Latukefu

10:00am to 10:30am

Panel Discussion

- Sione Teisi, Charlie Palupe, Dr Vaoiva Natapu-Ponton.

10:30am to 10:45am

Morning Tea Break

10:45am to 11:30am

Concurrent Workshop Session 1

11:40am to 12:10pm

Concurrent Workshop Session 2

12:15pm to 1:00pm

Lunch Break

1:05pm to 1:35pm

Concurrent Workshop Session 3

1:45pm to 2:15pm

Concurrent Workshop Session 4

2:30pm to 3:15pm

Fono Session

3:20pm to 3:40pm

Afternoon Tea

3:40pm to 4:40pm

Plenary Session

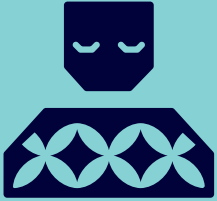
5:00pm

Conference concludes

5:30pm

Social Event

Commercial Hotel, 2 Hassall St, Parramatta NSW 2150



Concurrent Workshop Session 1

10:45am to 11:30am

A Decade of Transformative Impact: The Journey of Pasifika Achievement To Higher Education (PATHE)

 **Jane Sio and Bronwyn Williams, Western Sydney University**
Chair: Sepi Seuala

Room: EA.G.36

"I have learnt the powerful bond every Pacific Islander has with each other. Each of us has the potential to achieve our dreams, it just takes a little push..." (High School Student, 2022) Since its inception in 2012, Western Sydney University's Pasifika Achievement To Higher Education (PATHE) has diligently championed the cause of higher education for Pacific communities in Sydney, initially focusing on supporting enrolled students before expanding its scope to include outreach to prospective Pasifika school students in response to the evolving needs. Through the sharing of our collective experiences, achievements, and the challenges we have addressed, we emphasise the critical need for continuous support for underrepresented groups such as Pacific peoples in higher education. This underscores the untapped potential within each of us, reinforcing the notion that our aspirations are achievable with the right guidance.

Fa'asamoa Bidwill

 **Giorgio Di Scala and Mekiafa Oli, Chifley College Bidwill Campus**
Chair: Nashwa Karafotias

Room: EA.G.38

Social identity – a sense of 'us-ness' is an important component of a long, healthy, productive and satisfying life. It gives us the resilience to cope with life's difficulties and the ability to empathise with others. Come with us on a journey of culture and language where we explore the idea of fa'asamoa Bidwill - the Sāmoan way, in Bidwill. Fa'asamoa Bidwill is an intercultural exploration where we develop a deeper appreciation of the unique identity of our school community.

Digital storytelling: la fai ma va'aiga a fanau through the eyes of our children

 **Theresa Tupuola-Sorenson, Pacific Kids' Learning**
Chair: James Perez

Room: EA.1.29

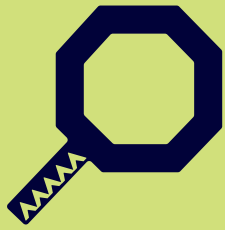
Pacific Kids' Learning has a vision of filling the digital space with culturally affirming animations in English and various Pacific languages. We are deliberate about our work at the grass roots of Pacific communities, to carve out a unique pathway that gently guides the stories of our young people and their elders into the digital vā. Through the Pacific Digital Stories project and the Young Pasifika Animators workshops, we have co-designed over 100 professional animations through the eyes of our children and with the blessings of their village. These will be housed in PKL's new digital library that will launch in January 2024. Digital platforms and programs are often built and sold to underserved communities, very rarely are they engineered or built by them. This is a movement that amplifies the Pacific voice, that reimagines learning through Pacific innovation, strengthens deeper connections through the digital vā by redesigning culturally-intelligent technology.

Tautai Navigating Aspirations - Supporting the wellbeing of young people in education

 **Tia Suemai & Taua Suemai, Charis Mentoring Inc.**
Chair: Talalelei Tutaia

Room: EA.1.33

Tautai is Charis Mentoring Inc.'s flagship Cultural Identity Program that has been designed, developed and customised to support the growing wellbeing needs of Pasifika Young people in Education. Tautai has been delivered in secondary schools across Melbourne Metropolitan (Australia) over the last 10 years and more recently in Porirua:Wellington, Kaikohe:Northland and Otago:South Auckland (New Zealand) over the last 3 years. Tautai has developed its own Pasifika ecological model of mentoring that leverages the strengths of community to support the wellbeing and aspirations of our Tupulaga (Young People). After 10 years of delivery, data and deep listening, key pillars have been identified that has led to the successful wellbeing outcomes for young people in educational and community settings.



Concurrent Workshop Session 2

(11:40am to 12:10pm)

Navigating Whiteness in Education utilising Pacific Methodologies

 **Dr Iva Natapu-Ponton, Griffith University**
Chair: Charlie Palupe

Room: EA.G.34

Navigating educational spaces predominantly occupied by Whiteness is a learned behaviour; one that requires years of observing and understanding nuances to be able to reach certain accolades or achievements. Without such skills to develop an awareness of politicised/colonial agendas, one can find systematic expectations quite overwhelming. Drawing on the authors published research, this presentation focuses on examination of how contemporary discipline structures create and perpetuate epistemological and structural racism and resistance to non-white identities, knowledge and perspectives. This includes capturing the challenges involved when teaching a Western curriculum to students who are unfamiliar with colonial ways of being and knowing in both secondary education and tertiary levels. Rather than perpetuating this disabling effect on students from diverse backgrounds in learning environments, the use of Pacific/Pasifika Methodologies such as Talanoa, Teu le Va and Fonofale enabled and empowered students to succeed and achieve in educative goals. From commencement of studies to completion, supporting students to navigate educative spaces despite limited access or resource support is fundamental. Moreover, traversing these spaces as a Pacific educator in high schools and as an academic in tertiary spaces, has required immersion in understanding a myriad of expectations that have been unfamiliar.

Insights from the 2023 Pilot of the UTS Pasifika Professional Mentoring Program

 **Amanda Moors-Mailei & Christine Afoa, University of Sydney Technology**
Chair: Paniani Patu

Room: EA.G.36

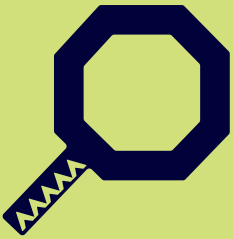
The 6-month pilot of the UTS and Pasifika Professionals Network (PPN), 'Pasifika Professional Mentoring Program' aimed to empower Australian Pasifika university students and Pasifika professionals while incorporating Pacific cultural methodologies into its framework. This presentation explores the transformations experienced by participants, including increased self-confidence, strengthened cultural identity, and expanded professional networks. It also delves into the facilitators' experiences in embedding Pacific cultural values, highlighting both challenges and successes. The program demonstrates its potential to bridge the gap between academia and professional development, honoring Pacific heritage and offering valuable insights for future iterations.

EdTech and the promotion of Pacific Languages in schools: Te Reo Māori and Gagana Sāmoa on Education Perfect

 **Te Ariki Te Puni, Education Perfect**
Chair: Deidre Williams

Room: EA.1.29

Education Perfect is the leading ed-tech company in ANZ schools. We provide thousands of curriculum-aligned interactive resources online to support more than 50k teachers in 3,000 schools worldwide. EP has a presence in +85% of secondary schools in Aotearoa and approximately 50% of Australia. Through formative and summative assessments, teachers can track student progress and achievement with real-time data. The tool allows for easy differentiation by identifying students' strengths and weaknesses and allocating remedial next steps. Education Perfect started life as Language Perfect in Ōtepoti Dunedin 15 years ago and built its platform around language teaching and learning. EP offers Beginners', Intermediate and Advanced lessons in nine languages. This includes 18 kete of listening, speaking, reading and writing lessons in te reo Māori, where we weave lessons on greetings, colours and whānau with cultural elements such as pōwhiri, mihimihi and whakataukī. These lessons have been accessed by almost 105K students, teachers and professionals across three separate courses. EP also produced a 30-lesson Beginners' Samoan course in partnership with MoE and FAGASA this year. Further, these courses support teachers in their cultural competency PLD and teacher registration process. Now, we're bringing them to Australia! Join Te Ariki Te Puni, Head of Māori initiatives at EP, as he provides a glimpse into these two courses and learn how you can incorporate them into your schools and communities.



Concurrent workshop Session 2

(11:40am to 12:10pm) (cont..)

Listening to Pasifika children: Applying Pacific research methodologies to child-focused participatory action research

 **Holly McAlister, Dr Suzanne C Hopf, Prof. Sharynne McLeod**
Charles Sturt University
Chair: Sepi Seuala

Room: EA.1.33

Communication is an essential factor in children's participation in education and community. Children are, therefore, often participants in speech, language, and hearing research. Historically, research projects have not necessarily valued children's voices or views and have relied on the thoughts and interpretations of adults to gain insights that aim to improve outcomes for children. Research conducted with children with Pasifika heritage have utilised Western academic methodologies, which are unlikely to be culturally appropriate. Method: A review of the literature within these fields in the Pacific region was conducted. Analysis using Shier's Participation Matrix determined the level of children's involvement throughout each research stage. Results: Pacific-based researchers have supported children to share their experiences to support educational and speech-language therapy outcomes. Most projects have utilised a consultation process with these children at the implementation stage of the project only, rather than implementing child-focused participatory action throughout. Cultural considerations such as community consultation may have been conducted (e.g., talanoa for Fiji-based research), however, this has again included adults rather than the children themselves. Conclusion: Future child-focused participatory action research projects should be designed with or by children to further improve engagement and outcomes for children and families in the Pacific region.





Concurrent workshop Session 3

1:05pm to 1:35pm

UTS Pasifika Tautai Leadership Program: Culturally responsive education for empowering Pasifika high school students.

 **Christine Afoa, University of Technology Sydney**
Chair: Bronwyn Williams

Room: EA.G.36

This presentation introduces the UTS Pasifika Tautai Leadership Program, a 12-week program delivered by UTS Pasifika Programs to students in three Sydney high schools. Delivered across three terms, the program explores Pacific cultural ontologies and epistemologies to enhance students' academic and cultural identities, nurture leadership qualities, boost confidence and broaden their awareness of future educational and employment opportunities. Departing from traditional mentoring models, this program adopts a group-based, strengths-based approach that celebrates the strengths and resilience of Pasifika youth, making it a promising model for empowering Pasifika students in their educational and professional journeys.

Understanding language socialisation practices of Pacific Island Families in Australia.

 **Dr Suzanne C Hopf, Dr Kate Daellenbach, Holly McAlister, Prof. Sharynne McLeod**
Charles Sturt University
Chair: James Perez

Room: EA.G.38

Education success and language proficiency go together. Knowing more than one language (multilingualism) has social and cognitive benefits. Young Australian-based Pacific Islander children benefit from learning and maintaining their Pacific Island language. Aim: To better understand the language socialisation practices of caregivers of Australian preschoolers with Pacific Island heritage. Method: An online survey asked caregivers about language socialisation behaviours (e.g., proficiency, use, language beliefs, language use rules). Results were analysed using a case series approach that applied within- and between-case comparisons. Results: Caregivers had positive beliefs about the benefits of maintaining a Pacific Island language, but prioritised English use and proficiency. Pacific Island language use was noted in specific contexts. Greater efforts to maintain Pacific Island language use occurred in families who had household language use rules. Conclusion: Pacific Islander families are engaging in a balancing act of valuing their homeland language histories within an English-dominant culture. The caregivers in this study made choices, took efforts to support the Pacific Island language, and had beliefs in the benefits of multilingualism. Future studies are required to better understand the variability in factors that play into language socialisation processes for Pacific Island families in an English-dominant society.

CLUE. Create Learn Understand and Educate.

 **Rose Fuapago Vunileva, CLUE**
Chair: Nashwa Karafotias

Room: EA.1.29

This presentation delves into research and experiences in advancing the future of education, with a focus on instructional design, course development, and Learning Management Systems. Highlighted is the critical importance of expanding perspectives during content creation to establish inclusive educational pathways and embrace diversity. Through such approaches, there's potential to bridge significant educational divides and fundamentally transform pedagogical methodologies. The discussion aims to explore these innovative methodologies to enhance learning experiences universally.





Concurrent workshop Session 3

1:05pm to 1:35pm (cont..)

Exploring Synergies in Pasifika Research Methodologies for Sustainable Education in the Diaspora



Joseph Tutonga Houghton, University of Canterbury

Chair: Esita Sogotubu

Room: EA.1.33

The diverse nature of Pasifika communities in diasporic settings such as Australia and New Zealand, means that educators and researchers regularly negotiate multiple identities, voices and cultures in their work and research. In a field where we are becoming increasingly conscious of cultural and ethnic hybridity, it is important to reflect on the dynamic that can arise when different Pacific cultures and traditions intersect. My doctoral research utilised the Tivaevae (Cook Island) and Talanoa (Samoa, Fiji, Tonga) methodologies to explore Pacific voice within a New Zealand secondary school context, connecting with student, parent, and teacher participants. I conclude that there are specific synergies between the methods which supported my research and are relevant to future research in the field of Pacific education in the diaspora. This presentation will explore the synergies between Pasifika research methodologies and the findings from the research, particularly as they pertain to supporting the sustainability of Pacific communities in secondary education. The presentation will also examine student, family, and teacher voice when it comes to engaging Pasifika communities in secondary education.



Session 4

1:45pm - 2:15pm

Empowering Pasifika Students and Strengthening Community Bonds: Real-Life Strategies from Our School

 **Raymond Savaiinaea, Agene Tema, Zephaniah Tevita,**
Bennett Road Public School
Chair: Charlie Palupe

Room: EA.G.36

This presentation aims to equip participants with insights on the benefits of embracing diversity in education. It explores the role of diverse backgrounds as bridges connecting people from different cultures, fostering empathy, tolerance, and acceptance. Additionally, it addresses the evolving educational landscape in the age of technology, emphasising the diverse ways individuals absorb information and the need to adapt our approach. Participants will leave with a clear understanding of how to enrich their learning environments, celebrate unique perspectives, and adapt their teaching methods to cater to diverse backgrounds, ultimately preparing students for success in a global society where differences are the norm. The core message is that by embracing diversity and finding purpose in education, participants will be empowered to navigate the complexities of the world with wisdom, empathy, and a profound sense of belonging.

Teacher Expectations and Pasifika Students in Australia

 **Broady Kata, Victorian Department of Education**
Chair: Talalelei Tutaia

Room: EA.G.34

Do teachers have lower expectations of Pasifika students in secondary schools across the country? Some of the best-known educators, John Hattie and Christine Rubie Davies among others, have produced studies proving the devastating effects teacher expectations can have on Māori and Pasifika young people. Despite this, we know that teacher expectations have the largest effect size on positively improving the learning outcomes of students. In this workshop, we will delve into current research exploring the correlation between teacher expectations and outcomes experienced by Pasifika young people post-secondary education. We will share experiences within the education system and identify challenges that might influence teacher expectations with the aim of developing solutions for the future. What can we do to change how teachers perceive Pasifika young people in their classrooms?

Recognising translingual expertise in a small, rural Indo-Fijian community

 **Dr Alexandra Diamond, University of South Australia**
Chair: Esita Sogotubu

Room: EA.1.29

Research indicates that when largely monolingual English speakers encounter “non-native” speakers of English, they tend to make judgements about their English, ignore their contributions to conversations, and make meager efforts to achieve mutual understandings (Dooley, 2009). Such linguistic behaviours are extremely problematic in linguistically diverse schools because culturally responsive pedagogies require genuine, shared understandings with students’ families (Rigney, 2023). This presentation explores how families in a small, rural Indo-Fijian community demonstrate ‘translingualism’, or linguistic assumptions, dispositions, and strategies for effective communication across linguistic codes (Canagarajah, 2013). It draws on qualitative, ethnographic data generated across two years in partnership with community members, with ethics clearances from the University of South Australia and Fiji’s Ministry of Education, Heritage and the Arts. The presentation aims to support conference delegates to engage more authentically with Pasifika students, families and communities by recognizing, respecting and using students’, families’ and their own translingual skills. Canagarajah, A. S. (2013). *Translingual practice, global Englishes and cosmopolitan relations*. Routledge. Dooley, K. (2009). *Intercultural conversation: Building understanding together*. *Journal of adolescent & adult literacy*, 52(6), 497-506. <https://doi.org/10.1598/JAAL.52.6.4> Rigney, L.-I. (2023). *Global perspectives and new challenges in culturally responsive pedagogies: Super-diversity and teaching practice*. Routledge.

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APEN Executive Committee

The Australian Pasifika Educators Network Executive Committee Group operates as the primary decision-making and organisational body of APEN. Tasked with overseeing strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation, the Executive Committee ensures that APEN's objectives align with its vision and mission. Their leadership drives the network's initiatives, ensuring the empowerment and advancement of Pasifika educators and communities in Australia.



Amanda Moors-Mailei,
Founder & Co-Chair



Bronwyn Williams,
Founder & Co-Chair



Paniani Patu,
Deputy Co-Chair



Deidre Williams,
Deputy Co-Chair



Esita Sogotubu
Finance



Talalelei Tutaia
Events



Ropeti Huntley
Communications



Christine Afoa
Secretary



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Memberships



Sepi Seuala
Partnerships & Engagement



James Perez
Public Officer



Dr. Vaoiva Natapu-Ponton
Executive Member



Charlie Palupe
Executive Member

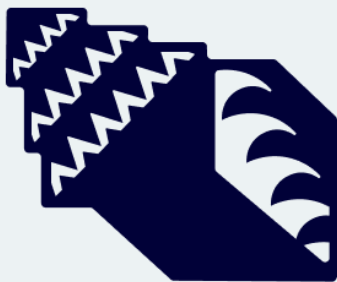


Dr. Gemma Malungahu
Executive Member

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Join APEN

We are a voluntary organisation dedicated to facilitating and promoting educational opportunities, amplifying perspectives and experiences, and championing systemic and structural change. APEN celebrates successes and achievements for Pasifika educators, learners and communities with the vision to see Pasifika educators, learners, and communities thrive in Australia.



Membership

Membership is open to all Pasifika and non-Pasifika educators who are committed to supporting and learning from and with Pasifika educators, learners and communities. If you want to join our network, please complete one of the below options:

Online Membership Link

<https://www.pasifikaeducators.com.au/membership>

or Scan QR

