# URONZ Conference 2026: From Disruption to Direction

**Draft Programme at September 2026**

| Time | Session |
|---|---|
| **19 November** | |
| 10-10.30am | Welcome and Mihi Whakatau |
| 10.30-11.15am | *Keynote*<br>**Trust in science, misinformation, and the role of universities**<br>Prof Damon Salesa, *Vice-Chancellor, AUT* |
| 11.15am-12pm | *Presentation*<br>**Research's economic impact**<br>Dr John Roche, *Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor* |
| 12-1pm | Lunch |
| 1-2pm | *Centrepiece panel discussion*<br>**The future of the research funding system**<br>Dr Emma Blott, *Chair, RFNZ*<br>Prof Brett Cowan, *Pillar Lead, RFNZ*<br>Dr Danette Olsen, *GM Science System Investment & Performance, MBIE*<br>Prof Peter Hunter, *Pillar Lead, RFNZ* |
| 2-3.15pm | *Presentation*<br>**Working with PROs**<br>Dr Jess Robertson, *Earth Sciences New Zealand*<br>Dr Linda Johnson, *Bioeconomy Science Institute*<br>Prof David Murdoch, *New Zealand Institute for Public Health and Forensic Science* |
| 3.15-3.45pm | Break |
| 3.45-5pm | *Short presentations*<br>**He Ara Whakamua: Māori Research Engagement, Partnership and Equity in Practice**<br>Speakers TBC |
| 5.30-7pm | Networking event (TBC - optional) |
| 7- 9pm | Conference dinner (optional) |
| **20 November** | |
| 9-10.30am | *Short presentations from all universities*<br>**The changing role of the research office** |
| 10.30-10.45am | Break |
| 10.45-11.30am | *Presentation*<br>**AI in Research Management**<br>Nicholas Kearns, *Assoc. Director Research Operations and Governance, UoA* |
| 11.30am-12.15pm | *Concurrent sessions*<br>Topic 1: **Global positioning & international funding** |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Topic 2: **Research Integrity: The glue that holds everything together**<br><br>Topic 3: **Tertiary Research Excellence Fund**<br>Dan Haines Cohen and Abby Cuttriss, *Principal Advisors, Tertiary Education Commission* |
| 12.15-1 | Lunch |
| 1-1.40 | *Concurrent sessions*<br>Topic 1: **Managing energy - workplace wellbeing**<br>Prof Candice Harris, *Professor of Management, AUT*<br><br>Topic 2: **IP policy, risk & negotiation**<br><br>Topic 3: **Digital Science session**<br>Digital Science |
| 1.40-2.20 | *Concurrent sessions*<br>Topic 1: **National Security: Managing risk for the Tertiary Sector**<br>Blair Whittaker, *NZSIS Director of Operations*<br>Antonia Butler, *NZSIS Engagement Manager*<br><br>Topic 2: **Professional development for research managers**<br>ARMS |
| 2.20-2.40 | Break |
| 2.40-4 | **Special Interest Group Meetings** |
| 4-4.15 | Close |