

Presidents Report to the AGM of WILNZ: 4 May 2023

Tena koutou katoa

As President of WILNZ for 2022, I am pleased to present this report that provides an overview of our activities.

Firstly, I would like to gratefully acknowledge the Executive Board for their continues work for WILNZ and the generous time, skills, and knowledge they have contributed. I would also like to thank the wider WILNZ community for their support of the Board, and the sponsors/supports of WILNZ for their financial contributions that allow us to continue to serve the NZ WIL community.

WILNZ's strategic goals include to advocate for WIL, foster good practice, cultivate relationships and manage sustainable WIL operations. WILNZ has been able to advance each of these strategic aims. The WILNZ conference, being our main event, feeds directly and significantly into each of the strategic goals, and our conference needs to be acknowledge as our biggest contribution. In addition to the conference, further progress has been made to achieve our goals.

Advocating for WIL: A number of WILNZ board members were part of the Universities NZ (UNZ) WIL Working Group that developed a strategic plan for WIL for NZ along with other important support documentation such as a WIL quality framework, guidance of good practice, and student conduct. This information was provided to the universities VCs, through the DVCAs committee, and feed into information provided to our political leaders. As the purpose of the WIL Working Group was fulfilled, the group was disestablished mid 2022. As part of transitioning institutional representation, at the finishing of the UNZ group, each of the universities not represented on the WILNZ Board were co-opted onto the Board.

Additional gains for advocacy have also occurred through higher profile representation of WILNZ members within their own institutions and providing these members with support from the WILNZ community.

Fostering good practice: Fostering good practice is inherent within the WILNZ community ethos. WILNZ held a strong webinar series over 2022, bringing a number of overseas as well as local presenters to share their insights and guidance. The webinar topics including challenging spaces such as wellbeing and equity. A number of WILNZ members also contributed to webinars held by our Australian counterpart association (ACEN) to broaden the fostering beyond NZ. Along with University of Waikato, WILNZ is the main supporter of IJWIL. IJWIL has continued to grow and is highly regarded by the international WIL community. The literature published through WILNZ continues to inform WIL practitioners, research, policy makers, and PhD students across the world, and WILNZ should be proud of enabling IJWIL to grow in success. As part of the WILNZ 2023 conference, a preconference research workshop was held that was particularly well attended by emerging researchers.

Cultivating relationships: Core to the WILNZ community is the sharing and supporting of peers through building relationships with other WIL practitioners. WILNZ has extended it relationships to

now have representation from all universities in NZ and also Te Pūkenga. In addition, the WILNZ community has grown significantly as WIL continues to gain wider practice and profile, as evidenced by half the attendees at the 2023 WILNZ conference having not attended a WILNZ conference before. The WILNZ Board is also actively maintaining relationships with our counterparts associations, such as WACE, CEWIL, CEIA, ACEN, and SASCE.

Managing sustainable WIL operations: This is part of fostering good practice, however, with two themes of long-term sustainability of practice and alignment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs). The latter requires more development work, however, much of our prior activities align with some of the UN SDGs goals. The long-term sustainability of practice is supported by the nurturing of emerging WIL practitioners through the supportive nature of the WILNZ community and the contributions by some board members to the Global WIL Modules. Sponsorship is important for financial sustainability of WILNZ, with WILNZ having made significant advances in securing sponsorship over the last 12 months. We can proudly say that WILNZ now has sponsorship/institutional membership from all the NZ universities, along with important partners such as Ako Aotearoa, Lumivero (Sonia), and Datacom.

With the 2023 AGM occurring after the WILNZ 2023 conference, it would be remiss to not mention the conference. The conference was a huge success, with the highest number in attendance and presentations ever. The conference was held at a premium location, supported by two insightful and future-focused keynotes that challenged our thinking as we plan ahead. The budget reporting of the conference is still to come, however, we are confident that the conference has generated a surplus that will enable to fund our activities for the year ahead.

Speaking personally, reflecting on the progress WILNZ has made over the last 12 months, I can't help but be immensely proud of what we have achieved. Reflecting back further and thinking of the recent big changes and events, WILNZ has achieved significant success built on prior success. We have successfully transitioned to a new association name (a well-timed and much needed change), navigated through the COVID pandemic and subsequent turmoil within our institutions, held online and blended conferences when we could not have fully in-person conferences, and now has landed firmly back on our feet as 'normality' (whatever that is) starts to return. In short, we should all be very proud on what we have been able to collectively achieve through WILNZ.

There are some challenges ahead as our community grows. We will need to adapt and respond to the changes occurring around us and within our WILNZ community. However, I am confident that with the supportive community, and the productive Board, that we will successfully manage these challenges and changes.

There have been many people who have significantly contributed to the success of WILNZ. I have not acknowledged these people by name as that would significantly add to the length of this report – a reflection on how great our community has been in regards to contributing to WILNZ. It is my sincerest hope these people will see their contributions within our success and also reflect with proud on our collective effort along with enthusiasm to continue to contribute.

I look forward to the next year ahead, confident in the knowledge that WILNZ is making a significant and productive contribution to the wider NZ WIL community.

Nga mihi nui

Karsten Zegwaard

President, WILNZ