

Professor Airini

Airini is the Dean, Faculty of Education and Social Work, Thompson Rivers University, BC, Canada. Concurrently, Airini is Adjunct Professor, Victoria University (Melbourne, Australia), a honorary appointment for distinction in advancing research in education, diversity and lifelong learning, and Adjunct Professor AUT University (Auckland, New Zealand). As a Fulbright Scholar at Howard University, Washington DC, Airini researched how to convert higher education policy into better results for under-served students. Airini's current research focuses on designing 21st century systems to close gaps in education success and lift social outcomes.

Airini has led strategy and policy development in OECD and developing nations, including the Cook Islands' 15-year education strategy (ECE to tertiary) (budget value NZ\$112 million) and the Tongan teacher education review (budget value \$9 million). Airini worked for the United Nations Education and Scientific Co-operation Organisation Paris office, as project leader for international education resource development. In 2011 Airini was invited to provide future global directions for UNESCO action in Higher Education. She was an invited editor for the UNESCO-affiliate APCEIU (Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding) based in Korea and published on international civics education. She held a Ministerial appointment to the UNESCO NZ Education Sub-Commission, and was instrumental in advancing the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network (NZ). She has published on public policy development and reform for national and international contexts.

In Canada Airini provides leadership in curriculum reform at all levels. She was appointed to the BC Ministries of Education and Advanced Education's *Think Tank for Personalized Learning in Graduation Years* (2015). In 2016 the BC School Superintendent Association funded the first province-wide research into effective practices by senior school district leaders that Airini is co-leading (CDN\$75,000).

Airini has significant education strategy and change experience. She has more than 15 years experience in senior administration roles in higher education. At TRU Airini is responsible for approximately 110 full-time and part-time Faculty members, 9000 enrolments per year, and a budget of CDN\$9.3 million. Programs include teacher education, social work and human services at both undergraduate and graduate levels, and academic access programs. Since commencing (Nov 2014), Airini has led the start-up of First Nation language and culture studies, and the Indigenous student research mentoring program: *Knowledge Makers* (CDN\$50,000). With her skilled team, ECE teacher education has been expanded to Indigenous communities to BC's rural communities (Williams Lake-4 Nations, Prince George-17 Bands) and the Faculty has secured Ministry of Education funding to co-lead with School District 73 the development of BC's first K-16 curriculum, intentionally linking schooling to university education. Further program developments include BEd specialisations in Trades and Technology, and in Science, Technology and Mathematics; and the significant expansion of open access learning/distance education courses. Airini is an invited member of the governance group: the Green College Advisory Board, UBC.

Previously Airini was the founding leader for the highly regarded School of Critical Studies in Education (2008-2013) within the Faculty of Education, at NZ's highest ranked research university, The University of Auckland. The Faculty of Education at that time rose to be ranked 24th out of the world's Faculties for Education (2013 QS World University Rankings by Subject) and top in New Zealand. CRSTIE created a unique focus on social and economic development through critical approaches to education issues. Airini led this interdisciplinary team of up to 75 staff and annual revenue of NZ\$10.4 million (2008-2010), attracting the largest level of government research performance funding in the Faculty in its first two years. From 2001-2004 Airini led the world's largest team of Pacific teacher educators, with staff and students from more than eight Pacific nations. During three restructures of the Faculty (2004, 2007, 2011) Airini provided executive leadership as General Manager (Pacific Development), Associate Dean, and Head of School.

Airini was selected for the leadership team that designed the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan of The University of Auckland (NZ\$870 million annual revenue). She was also instrumental in advancing the University's 2008 strategy to grow the University's External Research revenues to NZ\$270 million by 2012; a target that was exceeded. From 2008-2011 Airini was an invited member of the Senate's Equity Taskforce that led target-setting for equitable access by indigenous students to the University.

Airini has particular expertise in social and economic development through education. In 2010 she was contracted to evaluate the NZ\$10 million Māori and Pacific Education Initiative, which aimed for Māori and Pasifika children fully engaged in NZ society and able to build, manage and grow their economic base. In 2011 Airini had a lead role in securing NZ\$9 million (over two years) for professional development in secondary schools to lift achievement in secondary qualifications by Māori and Pasifika students (n=4,398), and students

Professor-Airini with special needs. She led the establishment of NZ's first postgraduate qualifications in Pacific language education and Pacific bilingual education, and first degree-level specialisation in Pasifika early childhood education. Airini was special advisor to the CEO Ministry of Pacific Islands Affairs in 2007 on Pacific education futures. She supervised mental health research drawing on Pacific knowledge traditions about therapeutic practices. Airini co-led the establishment of *World University Network* research into students who are first in their family to enrol in university (Australia, Canada, NZ, South Africa, USA), and has published internationally on factors influencing postgraduate student success (Canada, USA, NZ).

As Senior Policy Analyst, NZ Ministry of Education Airini led key policy development areas of literacy, achievement by all, and curriculum, particularly The Arts. She secured government support for policy initiatives with a budget value of NZ\$63 million, including national distribution of approximately NZ\$18.5 million per annum of Reading Recovery expertise with six-year-olds (1,500 staff, 13,500 students, 1,500 schools) and the establishment of culturally relevant literacy expertise in Māori medium education (Resource Teachers: Literacy (Māori)). Airini was seconded in 2012 to the Tertiary Education Commission (NZ\$2.7 billion annually to fund tertiary education provision) as Principal Advisor, Pasifika to lift system performance for unprecedented levels of Pasifika tertiary participation and achievement. Airini played a key role in setting the new investment approach for all tertiary education organisations, with the expectation of parity, at least, for Māori and Pasifika students by 2018. Airini was appointed (2012) to the Ministry of Education's inaugural Pacific Research Advisory group to advise government on Pasifika education research priorities for NZ. She had a lead role in the establishment of national standards for adult and community education in NZ. Airini was appointed by the Minister of Education to the Teaching Matters Forum to establish the NZ\$20 million National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence (Ako Aotearoa). Airini has provided leadership to the NZ government in tertiary education to improve quality measures in the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF), adult literacy outcomes, foundation education, and strategy for outcomes-based education research and development. Airini is the inaugural Chair for the PBRF Pacific Research Panel (2015-); one of 13 Panels responsible for more than NZ\$275 million in government funding for university research.

Airini was commissioned by the NZ Ministry of Women's Affairs to provide policy leadership on women's graduate outcomes and to increase the conversion of tertiary qualifications to employment. She was appointed by the NZ Minister of Women's Affairs as the sole education specialist on the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (2012). Airini has published on success factors for women in university leadership.

The New Zealand Governor General appointed Airini to the Sir Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Board (2010-2013), distributing grants to enable 'ordinary citizens' to travel overseas and return with understandings to help advance home communities. She was a member of the Adult and Community Education Professional Development Board (\$0.9 million over two years for grants for improved quality in adult rural and continuing education), the Manukau Institute of Technology School of Secondary-Tertiary Studies Advisory Board (offering students an alternative route to complete senior schooling and to a two-year vocational and technical qualification), the Royal Society of NZ, and the Pacific Circle Consortium. She was a member of the BEST Pacific Institute of Education Advisory Board (a private tertiary provider), and governance boards for NZ Association for Research in Education and the \$10 million Starpath project investigating factors affecting success in schooling and transitions to tertiary education by Māori, Pasifika and low income students. Airini was the only education specialist invited by NZ's Children's Commissioner to join the 2012 Expert Advisory Group to plan actions to overcome child poverty in NZ. As a result, more than NZ\$319.1 million over five years of government funding was assigned to child poverty solutions.

Airini has a PhD in curriculum and instruction, from the University of British Columbia, and two Masters degrees in Business Administration and in Education (awarded with Distinction). She is a trained elementary school teacher. Airini is fluent in English, successfully completed Certificate studies in te reo Māori through two years of night classes, and has intermediate fluency in French. She was selected by the World Bank Institute for a global cohort studying the economics of education (2012-2013), and has undertaken Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). Airini has published three co-edited books, and more than 65 quality-assured publications and reports on education. She has led or contributed to securing external research and development grants totalling in excess of NZ\$22 million (2002-2016). Airini has presented over 60 conference papers and 30 invited presentations and keynotes. Airini's 5-year research *Success for All*, investigating good university teaching practices with under-served groups, was awarded the NZARE Group Research Award. Airini was Executive Editor for the international journal *Pacific-Asian Education* (2011-2014).

Airini was born in New Zealand and has been a NZ representative in two sports. She is reputedly the only woman ever to be selected, based on merit, for a NZ Men's representative sports team. Airini is an outdoors adventurer. In 2012 Airini kayaked across the Cook Strait, one of the most dangerous and unpredictable waters in the world. She now has plans for adventures in her new home of British Columbia, Canada.