

Collective action for a changing climate – online symposium

Friday 30 October 2026

Hosted by TEU's Tiakina te Taiao | Climate Action Network

WELCOME

Climate change and environmental challenges affect workers, students and communities across Aotearoa New Zealand. Education has an important role to play in creating a more sustainable and liveable future — through the people we educate, the knowledge and research we produce, and the actions our institutions and sector take. Unions also have an important role in shaping fair and equitable responses to change and advocating for workers and communities.

This symposium brings people from education and the wider union movement together to explore how we can contribute to inclusive and equitable responses to climate change and sustainability. Through conversations about learning, research, work, policy and action, we will share ideas and examples of how collective action can make a difference.

TEU's five mātāpono provide interconnected questions that run across the programme:

Mana Mahi — decent and sustainable work: How can workers and unions shape a fair and just transition?

Mana Taurite — equity and inclusion: Who experiences climate impacts and transitions differently, and how can responses advance equity?

Mana Taiao — environmental justice: How can we reduce environmental impacts and contribute to a sustainable future?

Mana Tiriti — Te Tiriti relationships: How can Te Tiriti, mātauranga Māori, Māori leadership and aspirations shape responses to climate and environmental change?

Mana Mātauranga — quality tertiary education: How can teaching, learning and research develop the knowledge and capabilities needed for a changing climate?



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TERTIARY EDUCATION UNION

Programme

9.00am	Whakatau Welcome	Speakers Ti Lamusse Garrick Cooper
9.05am	Introduction to the day and housekeeping	Symposium Organising Committee
9.20am	Panel 1 – Learning for change How can education contribute to climate action and a more sustainable and equitable future?	Krushil Watene Chris Eames Becky McCormack Jennifer Frost (facilitator)
10.30am	Paramanawa Morning tea	
11.00am	Panel 2 – Research that powers change How can climate and sustainability research connect with communities and contribute to change?	Sandy Morrison Tom Robinson Sara Walton Breeze Robertson (facilitator)
12.10pm	Kai o te rānui Lunch	
12.40pm	Panel 3 – Leading change by example How can those of us working in tertiary institutions lead through our actions, and demonstrate what a just transition can look like in practice?	Sophie Bond Annie Te One Matthew Scobie Jenny Ritchie (facilitator)
1.50pm	Paramanawa Afternoon tea	
2.20pm	Panel 4 – Collective union action What role can unions play in achieving a fair and just transition? How could unions work together for change?	Isabella Lenihan-Ikin Martin Graham Jen Natoli Rachel Bolstad (facilitator)
3.30pm	Whakawātea Conference close	Ti Lamusse Garrick Cooper

Panelists



Ti Lamusse

Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union

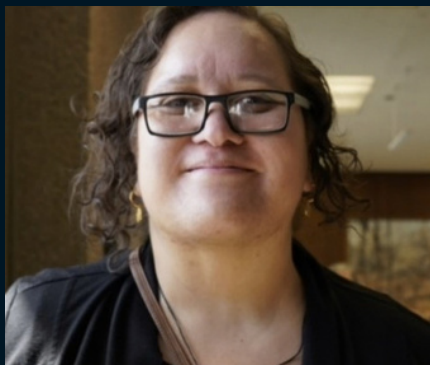
Ti Lamusse is Te Tumu Whakarae Tiriti | National President Tiriti of Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union.



Garrick Cooper

Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union

Garrick Cooper is Te Tumu Whakarae—Māori | National President—Māori of Te Hautū Kahurangi | Tertiary Education Union.



Krushil Watene

Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland

Krushil's research addresses fundamental questions in ethics, politics, and Indigenous philosophy. In particular, it engages at the intersections of diverse philosophical traditions, pursues collaborative trans-disciplinarity, and recognizes the critical role of local communities for global change.



Chris Eames

Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato | University of Waikato

I work in the School of Education at the University of Waikato. I teach, conduct research and foster curriculum development in sustainability and climate change education, including for the OECD and the Solomon Islands government.



Becky McCormack

New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE)

Becky McCormack is the National Learning Manager for the New Zealand Association for Environmental Education (NZAEE). With a secondary teaching and environmental education background, she is passionate about place-responsive approaches that strengthen relationships with te taiao and build young people's agency.

Panelists



Sandy Morrison

Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato | University of Waikato

Sandy describes herself as tribally grounded, globally informed and whānau tested against the everyday realities in which whānau exist.

Sandy's work in the University of Waikato's Faculty of Māori and Indigenous Studies spans climate change, sustainability, adult education and Indigenous development.



Tom Robinson

Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury

A Senior Lecturer Above the Bar in Disaster Risk & Resilience at University of Canterbury and the Science Lead for the AF8 (Alpine Fault Magnitude 8) programme, Tom's work focuses on understanding and modelling disaster risk as something dynamic — recognising that hazard, exposure, and vulnerability all change over time, often in ways our current risk models don't fully capture.



Sara Walton

Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka | University of Otago

Professor Sara Walton researches sustainability, climate change and business, with expertise in carbon footprints, climate readiness and low-carbon transitions, and extensive applied work with partners such as BRANZ, OceanaGold and Stuff. She was a science lead for the Āmiomio Aotearoa circular economy project and is developing a national Climate Action Tracker, alongside writing regular commentary in the media.



Sophie Bond

Ōtākou Whakaihu Waka | University of Otago

Sophie Bond is a geographer whose work focuses primarily on community responses to social and environmental change. This work is focused on two overlapping themes. The first involves research with grassroots communities seeking justice and self-determination, and is grounded in theories of environmental democracy and climate justice. The second theme relates to community engagement in planning and governance. Recent work in these areas involves a focus on climate justice and climate change adaptation and includes a ten-year research collaboration with both communities and local authorities in South Dunedin.



Annie Te One

Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington

Annie Te One (Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Mutunga) is the current tumuaki of Te Kawa a Māui. Annie's PhD from the Australian National University focussed on iwi and local government relationships in Wellington and the Hutt Valley. She worked on the Mana Wāhine Inquiry (WAI2700) for the Waitangi Tribunal, is a key researcher on 'Generation Kainga' a rangatahi-centred MBIE funded research project, and was awarded a Fulbright in 2023 to teach and research at the University of Hawaii and the University of Washington. Her research interests include Maori and Indigenous politics, Maori responses to climate change, kainga, and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Panelists



Matthew Scobie

Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury

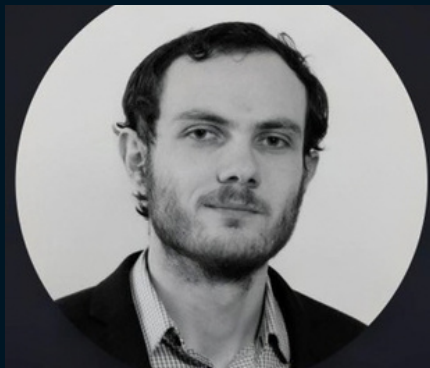
Matthew Scobie (Kāi Tahu - Kāti Huirapa, Tauīwi) is an Associate Professor at the University of Canterbury. He researches Māori political economy, critical accounting, and critical management studies



Isabella Lenihan-Ikin

Rhodes Scholar and lawyer

Isabella Lenihan-Ikin is a Rhodes Scholar and lawyer based in Tāmaki Makarau. She recently returned from the University of Oxford, where she studied a Masters and a DPhil in Clinical Medicine 'Labouring under climate change: outdoor workers' perceptions of climate-health risks and solutions in Aotearoa New Zealand'. Isabella has worked across the union movement for NZEI Te Riu Roa, Aotearoa Legal Workers' Union and as the National President of the New Zealand Union of Students' Association.



Martin Graham

Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi | Public Service Association

Martin Graham is a PSA Walking Delegate at Auckland Council and National Co-Convenor of the PSA Eco-Network, leading efforts to put workers at the centre of climate action. His work focuses on advancing a just transition, climate bargaining, and ensuring kaimahi have a seat at the table wherever climate decisions are made.



Jen Natoli

NZEI Te Riu Roa

Jen Natoli has worked for trade unions across three countries for nearly 25 years, most recently with NZEI Te Riu Roa. Jen's previous mahi in Taranaki with Council of Trade Unions and E Tū focussed on just transition policy and frameworks for real engagement with unions and the workforce, looking decades into the future. As an advocate, Jen helped union members win collective bargaining rights around the future of work and just transition approaches.

Conference Organising Committee

Rachel Bolstad Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa | NZCER

Jennifer Frost Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland

Eziaku Rasheed Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa | Massey University

Jenny Ritchie Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Auckland

Breeze Robertson Te Whare o Wānanga o Waitaha | University of Canterbury

Noel Zeng Waipapa Taumata Rau | University of Auckland



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